
SUPPLEMENT TO THE ‘MIDDLE WAY’

(Madhyamakavatara)

TRANSCRIPTS OF REVIEW CLASSES

WITH JAMPA GEDUN

January 2000 – May 2001

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Review Class with Jampa Gendun

January 18 (Tuesday)

Motivation for our studies of the Middle Way

Without the wisdom realizing emptiness we will never be free from suffering. Kensur Yeshey Tupden (in *Path to the Middle*) says that to the degree we understand that the referent object of our conception of true existence does not exist, there will result a commensurate diminishment of our suffering. And not only will *we* understand but we can then impart this wisdom to *others*. We should be observing this precious opportunity to study Madhyamika with this motivation.

Resources

We have several resources for this text:

- ❖ A translation by George Churinoff of Chandrakirti's root text, *Supplement to the Middle Way* (we will refer to this as *Supplement*), along with the autocommentary, '*Explanation of the Supplement to the Middle Way*' (we will refer to this as *Autocommentary*)
- ❖ A translation by Jeffrey Hopkins of the first five chapters of Lama Tsongkhapa's commentary, *Illumination of the Thought* (we will refer to this as *Illumination*)
- ❖ The transcripts of Geshe-la's current teachings
- ❖ The transcripts of Geshe-la's teachings on *Supplement* ten years ago
- ❖ A translation by Martin Wilson of *The Mirror of the Clarification of the Thought*, another commentary on Chandrakirti's *Supplement*, written by the first Dalai Lama

Reviewing the handout: ***Middle Way – Madhyamika – Studies***

Background

Madhyamika has gone through many different changes in how it has been viewed in the West. At times it was viewed as nihilism, as though nothing existed. At other times it was taken as setting out an absolute ground, like a god. There have also been linguistic views of Madhyamika, equating Nagarjuna with Wittgenstein, who had a great concern with language. Soteriology is the idea that there is a purpose behind the doctrine presented, for Buddhism, namely nirvana, liberation from suffering. All the teachings of Shantideva and Nagarjuna were done for a soteriological purpose – they are not simply a philosophical venture. The purpose of Madhyamika study is to overcome ignorance and thereby free ourselves from suffering and help others to do the same.

Chronology & key figures

For additional biographical information please refer to the introduction to Robert Thurman's *The Central Philosophy of Tibet* (originally published as *Speech of Gold*) and Jeffrey Hopkins' *Meditation on Emptiness* (pp. 353-364).

- * Shakyamuni Buddha – Many of the Buddhist dates are given in reference to the nirvana of Buddha so the chronology uses those dates (A.N. = after nirvana).
- * Nagarjuna – Nagarjuna was prophesied twice by Shakyamuni, once saying that there would be a monk named Naga who would appear 400 years after his death and, secondly, there is a similar reference in the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*. Nagarjuna's name comes from two words, *naga* and *Arjuna*. *Nagas* are dragons that have their abode in the ocean and have treasures such as wish-granting jewels and so on (the hooded snakes that often appear in images of Nagarjuna are nagas). *Arjuna* is a character from Hindu mythology who protected the kingdom and tamed his enemies. Nagarjuna could be translated then as "one who has achieved his goal with the aid of the dragons." Nagas appeared to Nagarjuna and took him to their land to reveal the *Perfection of Wisdom* teachings to him. Nagarjuna was completely devoted to Shakyamuni Buddha and his teachings and merely wanted to propagate the *Perfection of Wisdom* teachings that were in danger of being lost. Among the texts he wrote is *Treatise for the Middle Way*, also known as *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way, Called Wisdom* (we will refer to this as *Fundamental Wisdom*). *Fundamental Wisdom* is *tsa wa she rap* (*rtsa ba shes rab*) in Tibetan; *tsa wa* means "root or fundamental" while *she rap* means "wisdom." Some say that Nagarjuna lived for 600 years and that he was a great alchemist, and thereby able to transmute substances into the means to live forever. He kept a local king alive using the

same substances but the king's son, wanting to succeed his father, became somewhat impatient with his father not dying and asked Nagarjuna for his head. Previously Nagarjuna had gone out to get some kusha grass and was not mindful and stepped on a bug, thus creating the karma to be killed. So, he handed the prince a blade of kusha grass and with it, the prince cut off Nagarjuna's head. There are predictions that his body and head will be rejoined someday.

- * Aryadeva – He was the chief disciple of Nagarjuna. Geshe-la related the story of Aryadeva in class today. Thurman's text relates other parts of this story. Aryadeva and Nagarjuna are called **Model Madhyamikas** since everything they say can be taken as being from an authority on the subject.
- * Asanga – Asanga was the charioteer or founder of the Mind-Only system.
- * Buddhapalita – Some actually call Buddhapalita the founder of the Prasangika-Madhyamika. He wrote a commentary on *Fundamental Wisdom* called *Buddhapalita's Commentary on (Nagarjuna's) 'Treatise on the Middle Way'* in which he used many consequences in clarify the Madhyamika.
- * Bhavaviveka – Bhavaviveka in his *Lamp for (Nagarjuna's) Wisdom*, *Commentary 'Treatise on the Middle Way'* refuted Buddhapalita while trying to comment on Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*, using autonomous syllogisms extensively in his text. He insisted that, although phenomena do not truly exist, they do exist by way of their own character. From the point of view of Prasangika, this was fallacious and not a point to be taken lightly, since liberation was at stake. Bhavaviveka became the founder of the Svatantrika-Madhyamika.
- * Chandrakirti – Chandrakirti rejected Bhavaviveka's position and wrote his *Supplement to the Middle Way* (in Tibetan, *dbu ma la 'jug pa*), saying that Buddhapalita in fact got it right and had interpreted *Fundamental Wisdom* correctly. How Chandrakirti refuted Bhavaviveka is explained on p.2 of the handout, primarily involving the assertion that using autonomous syllogisms is incorrect and only consequences are correct for generating an inferential understanding of emptiness. This is why Geshe-la and others call Chandrakirti the founder of the Prasangika-Madhyamika. He is called a **Partisan Prasangika** because he commented on the Madhyamika in a way as to differentiate views his position from Mind-Only and Svatantrika interpretations of Madhyamika.
- * Shantarakshita – He is the founder of the Yogachara-Svatantrika while Buddhapalita was considered the founder of the Sautrantika-Svatantrika sub-school.
- * Lama Tsongkhapa – He composed *Illumination of the Thought*.
- * Jedzün Chogyi Gyeltshen – He was the author of the textbooks of the Sera Je Monastery and composed a commentary clarifying the difficult points of Lama Tsongkhapa's text.

Model vs. Partisan Prasangikas

For clarification of the distinctions of these terms, see pp. 431-432 of *Meditation on Emptiness*.

Texts which are the basis for study

Chandrakirti wrote the *Supplement*, his commentary on *Fundamental Wisdom*, in verse and then wrote the *Autocommentary* in prose to comment on his text. *Fundamental Wisdom* mainly set out the profound, that is, the view of emptiness. Chandrakirti supplements this from the point of view of the profound by differentiating the Madhyamika view of Nagarjuna from the Mind-Only and the Svatantrika interpretation and from the point of view of the vast, the bodhisattva practices, by setting out the stages of path, grounds, and results.

January 19 (Wednesday)

Concerning tenets

The Buddha did not teach tenets but rather taught people according to their needs and dispositions – it was only much later that the schools of thought systematized, given various names and classifications. The four tenet systems of Great Exposition, Sutra, Mind-Only and Middle Way represent a gradation of teachings, with the view of Prasangika (within the Middle Way) as the final thought of the Buddha.

Consequences vs. autonomous syllogisms

The issue regarding using consequences as opposed to autonomous syllogisms will come into play in the sixth chapter. Buddhapalita commented on *Fundamental Wisdom* using a great number of consequences primarily to refute the Samkhya position. He himself did not use the name Prasangika (meaning "consequence") to define

his view since he was simply elaborating on the Madhyamika view that he held. In refuting Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka wrote the *Lamp of Wisdom*, making extensive use of autonomous syllogisms, from where his school of thought derives its name Svatantrika (meaning “autonomy”). The idea of an autonomous syllogism presupposes inherent existence – the Autonomy School holds that all three elements of a syllogism (subject, predicate and sign) inherently exist. Prasangika holds that they do not inherently exist. Chandrakirti defended the views of Buddhapalita as the reflecting the true intent of Nagarjuna and therefore of the Buddha through writing the *Supplement*. The dispute between these two systems of thought involved the method for developing an inferential realization of emptiness and this disagreement on whether to use consequences or autonomous syllogisms is what gave these two Madhyamika sub-schools their names.

Reviewing Illumination of the Thought

Introduction

After Lama Tsongkhapa’s homage to the key figures we’ve discussed, the actual text begins. There are four parts to *Illumination*, beginning with the meaning of the title.

1 The meaning of the title

The “Middle Way”

All four tenet systems see themselves as being the “Middle Way” – this is the hallmark of the Buddha’s teachings so each school has a way of calling itself the Middle Way. Each superior system in the hierarchy of the tenet systems says that the schools below “got it wrong.” Even our own thinking is a gradual process though, as we cannot just immediately understand the most profound view of emptiness. We must gain an inferential understanding and so on until we gain an actual experience of the realization of emptiness. This can be a frightening process – the metaphor given is we can see ourselves standing on the shore of river, secure in our naïve realism. We accept that the way things appear is how they actually exist. So, as we begin to investigate reality, we wade into the water and begin to float but we must hold onto a log to keep from drowning. This is the log of substantial existence, true existence, and, finally, inherent existence. Eventually we become more secure and, upon reaching a full realization of the Prasangika, we let go of the log and float confident in the view. Kentsur Yeshey Tupden says that we believe everything comes from “out there,” thinking everything is in their very nature the way that we see it as. We must make the transition from that view to seeing that it comes from our own mind. Concerning this, in *Path to the Middle*, he says that Svatantrika apportions 50% to the side of the mind and 50% to the side of the object; Chittamatra gives 70% to the mind, 30% to the object; and Prasangika says that it is 100% from power of the mind. We often hear of the fear surrounding this profound view and this is why emptiness is so frightening.

So “Middle Way” can be seen in many ways. Regarding behavior, various ascetic practices are the extreme that a Middle Way overcomes on the one hand and the excessive indulgences with objects of our senses are overcome on the other. However, here “Middle Way” is referring to overcoming the extremes of permanence and annihilation. Permanence is sometimes called reification, referring to the way that we solidify things. We place a quality on objects that they don’t possess – this is reification. Annihilation is taking away the qualities that objects do have – conventional existence. The Middle Way is a centrist position between these two extremes.

Madhyamakavatara

- *Madhyamika* – This term refers generally to a text or person who proclaims a system of the Middle Way. In the context of the title of a text, it is often spelled as *Madhyamaka*.
- *Avatara* – This is translated as “supplement” by Jeffrey Hopkins but others, even his students, do not translate it similarly. Anne Klein, for example, translates it as “entrance,” others say “entry.”

How Chandrakirti’s text “supplements”

Lama Tsongkhapa, similar to other authors, pose questions that allow for them to elaborate on various points. Sometimes these are the views of opponents. Here he poses the question of what way Chandrakirti supplemented *Fundamental Wisdom*. Lama Tsongkhapa often uses Jaya-ananda as an example of how one can

interpret things wrongly (although occasionally Jaya-ananda is cited as one who got it right). On p.2 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa refutes Jaya-ananda's belief that the *Supplement* teaches conventional and ultimate natures extensively, saying that Nagarjuna's text uses more forms of reasoning than Chandrakirti's *Supplement* so the way it "supplements" cannot be that. The number of words does not make a text extensive but rather the number of subjects covered. Lama Tsongkhapa says that there are two ways that this text "supplements" – one in terms of profound and one in terms of the vast.

Supplements in terms of the profound

After Nagarjuna wrote *Fundamental Wisdom*, the Chittamatra and the Svatantrika schools evolved. So Chandrakirti felt it was necessary to write the *Supplement* to refute these two schools of thought. To exemplify this, Geshe-la taught briefly on the eight uncommon tenets or difficult points of the Prasangika that serve to refute the Chittamatra and Svatantrika. These eight will come in the sixth chapter, where the perfection of wisdom is discussed (please refer to the transcript of the morning of January 18).

The eight uncommon tenets – points clarified

- ← Mind-basis-of-all: There is a school of Chittamatra that believes there are eight consciousnesses, one of which is the mind-basis-of-all. This is refuted by Prasangika.
- ← Refutation of self-knower. Mainly a refutation directed at Chittamatra.
- ← Use of consequence in view of refuting the inherent existence of the elements of autonomous syllogisms. Refuting Svatantrika.
- ← Assertion of external objects. Mainly refuting Chittamatra.
- ← Distinction between Svatantrika and Prasangika regarding realizations of hearers and solitary realizers: The Svatantrika position is that in general hearers and solitary realizers do not realize the selflessness of phenomena while Prasangika holds that they do. According to Prasangika, there is no difference between the realization of selflessness of the person and selflessness of phenomena in regard to the subtlety of the object of negation; the only difference is the basis of the object of negation, either persons or phenomena other than persons. Mainly a refutation of the assertion of Svatantrika.
- ← Distinction between Svatantrika and Prasangika in regard to Foe Destroyers: Attaining Foe Destroyer is contingent upon destroying the afflictive obstructions. In Prasangika, this means destroying the conception of inherent existence while in Svatantrika it means destroying the conception of a self of persons (that is a conception of a self that is substantially existent, self-sufficient). Hinayanists achieve this state upon entering the Hinayana path of no more learning. For a bodhisattva who has not previously completed the Hinayana vehicle, in Prasangika it would be attained at the eighth ground while in Svatantrika, it would be attained simultaneously with buddhahood. In Prasangika, the afflictive obstructions are the conceptions of inherent existence while the knowledge obstructions are the residue or traces of the conception of inherent existence. Refuting Svatantrika.
- ← Disintegratedness: Disintegratedness is how Prasangika establishes the connection between an action in its result. All products are characterized by production, abidance and disintegration. That disintegration is an impermanent phenomena. There is a difference however between this "disintegration" (*'jig pa*) and "disintegratedness" (*zhig pa*), a state of having disintegrated. Geshe-la mentioned also the term "cessation" (*'gags pa*), which is the same as the first but different from the second term above. A unique tenet of Prasangika.
- ← Uncommon presentation of the three times.

Supplements in terms of the vast

From the point of view of the vast, meaning the various stages of the path, Nagarjuna did teach on the Four Noble Truths, the Three Jewels, and so on, but using them only as bases of emptiness. So Chandrakirti supplemented Nagarjuna in regard to the vast in four ways (see p.2 of *Illumination*, third paragraph from the bottom). Chandrakirti sets out the three practices of ordinary beings, the grounds of Superiors, and the result.

Fundamental Wisdom as a Mahayana text

As to why Nagarjuna's text is included in the Mahayana basket, on p.2 of *Illumination*, the fourth paragraph from the bottom, Lama Tsongkhapa explains this, saying that it explains the profound in limitless forms of reasoning and a Hinayana trainee requires no such reasonings since they are not training to help others. A

Mahayana trainee needs to teach others according to their dispositions. There is no difference in the subtlety of the realization of emptiness between Hinayana and Mahayana according to Prasangika, only in regard to the basis for the object of negation. Some concerns have been raised about that reason for distinguishing this as a Mahayana text (which were discussed in Geshe-la's class on the afternoon of January 19 as well as in the review class of January 20).

January 20 (Thursday)

Recap of how Chandrakirti's *Supplement* augments Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*

- * Profound – It seeks to set off its own system from the systems of Mind Only and Autonomy Schools that had developed since the writing of *Fundamental Wisdom*. An example of how this was done are the eight “difficult points.”
- * Vast – It seeks to show the practices, stages and paths of the bodhisattva that were not explicitly set out in *Fundamental Wisdom*. For example, he set out the three practices and the ten grounds of the bodhisattva.

Clarification of reasons why *Fundamental Wisdom* is a Mahayana text

The general reason that's given is that *Fundamental Wisdom* teaches limitless reasonings to realize emptiness. Geshe-la said yesterday that in general Hinayana sutras do not give many reasonings on selflessness of phenomena. Moreover there are two vehicles established in Buddhism – these vehicles are classified depending on the “load they can bear.” The Hinayana practitioners have a lighter load that they bear; the Mahayana practitioner has a greater load. There are two ways we can look at this distinction. From the point of view of **tenet** (in Tibetan is *grub mtha*, meaning “established conclusion”), we can classify the teachings as Hinayana or Mahayana, based on the fact that Hinayana does not even assert a selflessness of phenomena. From the Hinayana point of view of tenet, the Buddha did not teach selflessness of phenomena. The second way of looking at this is from the point of view of **path**, where this concerns the motivation behind the practice, distinguishing between the wish for one's own liberation alone or for countless others. A significant point here is that *Fundamental Wisdom* was written for someone who wishes to have an array of reasonings that will work not just for oneself but also for others.

The five reasonings

Geshe-la presented five different reasonings in the context of discussing the way the text supplements in regard to the profound. These reasonings all approach the same subject, emptiness, although they all do so in a slightly different way. We will cover these all in much more detail in the sixth chapter but here they are briefly (most of these are covered in Hopkins' *Meditation on Emptiness* – the page references are given below at the end of the explanations below):

- < **Diamond fragments (or diamond slivers)** – The idea here is that even a part or fragment of a diamond has all the same characteristics as the whole diamond itself. The main syllogism used in this reasoning is: A thing (subject) is not inherently produced because of not being produced from self, from naturally existent other, from both, or causelessly (pp. 131-150)
- < **Lack of being one or many** – This reasoning was seen in our studies of *Ornament*. A thing (subject) is not inherently existent because it is not inherently existent one nor is it not inherently existent many. It is not inherently existent one because it has parts – something that is inherently existent one would exist as a homogenous whole, and not have parts. It is not inherently existent many because there is no inherently existent one so there cannot be inherently existent many (pp. 64-65)
- < **Four alternatives** – This reasoning is a consequence that analyzes whether one cause produces many results, and so forth. The basic syllogism used here is: A product (subject) is not ultimately produced because (1) ultimately only one effect is not produced from only one cause, (2) ultimately one effect is not produced from many causes, (3) ultimately many effects are not produced from only one cause, and (4) ultimately many effects are not produced from many causes (pp. 155-160).
- < **Four extremes** – This reasoning involves examining effects, asking if a cause produces an effect which is existent, non-existent, both, or neither. One of the four can be seen as follows: An existent effect (subject) is not ultimately produced because whatever exists ultimately must always exist (pp. 151-154)
- < **Dependent-arising** – This is called the “king of reasonings.” The syllogism here is: A thing (subject) does not inherently exist because it is a dependent-arising. This reasoning is said to refute the two extremes of

permanence, which is refuted by it being “dependent,” and annihilation, which is refuted by it being an “arising” (pp. 161-173).

2 Obeisance of the translators

Geshe-la explained why Manjushri is the object of homage here but it is also explained in note 15 on p.72 of *Illumination*.

3 Meaning of the text

3A Expression of worship

Chandrakirti offers homage to great compassion, since it is the root of the Mahayana. But he is also setting out the three practices of an ordinary being?compassion, non-dual wisdom, and mind of enlightenment?which are the means of entering and progressing on the Mahayana grounds and paths. The first two verses are his justification of paying homage to great compassion. In the *Autocommentary*, he calls compassion “bhagavati” because he is giving the name of the result to the cause. Jaya-ananda gives another reason that Lama Tsongkhapa refutes.

3A1 Praise of great compassion without differentiating its types

Chandrakirti pays homage to compassion in the first four verses of *Supplement*. In the first two verses Chandrakirti tries to justify why compassion is the object of homage. The title of this section refers to the fact that he is praising compassion in general, as the foundation. In the second section it will be differentiated into compassion observing mere sentient beings, phenomena, and the unapprehendable (“unapprehendable” meaning the object of negation, the referent object of the conception of inherent existence).

In spite of saying that compassion is not differentiated here, we can see that there are **two types of compassion** being discussed in this section: (1) Compassion that wishes to free from suffering and (2) a compassion that wishes to protect others from suffering. The great compassion Chandrakirti is paying homage to is the great compassion that wishes to protect sentient beings from suffering, not just that which wishes them to be free from suffering. The great compassion that is the object of homage is part of the sixth cause in the sevenfold cause and effect, exceptional resolve. Hearers and solitary realizers do have the first type of compassion but not the second.

3A1A Compassion as the main cause of a bodhisattva

3A1A-1 The way hearers and solitary realizers are born from Kings of Subduers

Within Hinayana tenets, the bodhisattva path is set out but it is not practiced, the idea being that it is beyond their scope, thinking that only one person in this eon has achieved it, Shakyamuni Buddha.

⟨ **Hearers** – Hearer is *shravaka* in Sanskrit – there are different connotations in each language.

1. There are several ways of understanding *shravaka* but in Tibetan it came over as *nyen tho* (*nyan thos*), where *nyen* means listen and *tho* means hear. Upon listening to the teachings, they practice them and cause others to hear about what they have achieved.
2. Another connotation of *shravaka* in Tibetan: *tho drok* (*thos grogs*), with *tho* meaning hear and *drok* meaning proclaim. Here it means that the hearer listens to teachings on the Mahayana and proclaims them to others but does not practice them.
3. Also *shravaka* can mean “disciple.” Bodhisattvas could be called *shravakas* in this sense of being disciples but they do not fulfill the etymology, so they do not fit the actual meaning of the name *shravaka*. Geshe-la explained this idea by giving the example of “definition.” It engages the name “definition” but it is not the name “definition.” Why? Because it is not a definition; it is a definiendum.

January 21 (Friday)

Side discussion: Query regarding a buddha being a permanent phenomenon

Is a buddha a permanent or impermanent phenomenon? It is a permanent phenomenon since one of the four bodies, the nature body is permanent so the phenomenon called a buddha is permanent. Then how can a hearer be born from a buddha if a buddha is permanent? In this context “buddha” must be referring to a buddha

superior or an effect that is the state of separation (an example is the state of separation from the obstructions that occurs upon attaining a path of release).

- ⟨ **Solitary realizers** – In Sanskrit this is *pratyekabuddha*, also called middling realizers of suchness and there is a dispute concerning the Tibetan translation. The Tibetan term for buddha is *sang gye* (*sangs rgyas*), with *sang* meaning “awakened,” “purified,” or “clear” and *gye* meaning “extend” or “open.” A buddha has awakened from (or purified) the two obstructions and extended his mind to all objects of knowledge. When *pratyekabuddha* came into Tibetan, they kept the root of *buddha* (*rang sangs rgyas*), and although Jeffrey Hopkins doesn’t translate it as such, Lama Tsongkhapa agrees that “solitary buddha” would be an acceptable meaning. His logic is that if *buddha* is taken to mean “realizer” then in the Consequence school that is so. *Buddha* as “realizer” of suchness can be applied to all three. There are distinctions between path and tenet. A Hinayana foe destroyer must be a proponent of Mahayana tenets since they have destroyed the foe but by way of path they are necessarily of the Hinayana. “Middling” means that solitary realizers are in-between, in the sense that their accumulation of increase of merit and wisdom over one hundred eons makes them superior to hearers but they are inferior to the buddhas since they do not have the fully-qualified collection of merit and wisdom, and they do not have the great compassion nor the omniscience of buddhas. Therefore they are in between the two – they are middling realizers of suchness. In order to attain a buddha’s enlightenment, bodhisattvas must collect three countless eons’ worth of merit over the five paths of the Mahayana (as shown in the transcript). The collection of merit mainly leaves the imprint for the form body of a buddha while the collection of wisdom mainly leaves the imprint for the truth body of a buddha. In the case of a solitary realizer, no such collection occurs (this is why the term “increase” is used instead of collection – the Sanskrit *sambhara* is etymologized on p.6 of *Illumination*). In our study of the *Ornament* solitary realizers were established as having greater realization and abandonment than hearers but that is an Autonomy tenet. Solitary realizers make three prayers: (1) to not rely on teachings of a master in their last rebirth, (2) to be born where no buddhas or hearers are present and (3) to be able to teach with bodily gestures. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said that there is a certain amount of pride in them but they still have compassion since they want to teach. There is another Tibetan term used for solitary realizer, *rang gyel* (*rang rgyal*) – *rang* means “self” and *gyel* means “conqueror.”
- ⟨ **Subduer** – In Tibetan, the term is *thup be wang po* (*thub p'i dbang bo*), with *thup ba* meaning “able” (*muni* in Sanskrit) and *wang bo* meaning “mighty,” “lord,” or “king” (*indra* in Sanskrit). Although both foe destroyers and buddhas are subduers, only buddha bhagavans are called “king of subduers” (or “mighty subduers”).

Method of teaching to hearers and solitary realizers

The buddhas teach especially on dependent-arising and by hearing those teachings, and reflecting and meditating upon them, hearers and solitary realizers achieve the level of hinayana foe destroyer. There are realizations of the twelve links of dependent-arising in regard to the thoroughly afflicted phenomena and then also for the completely pure, as we saw in our studies of the *Ornament*. The twelve links can be observed in regard to the thoroughly afflicted phenomena in the forward order (seeing that from ignorance arises compositional actions, and so forth) as well as the reverse order (aging and death arise from birth, and so forth). They can also be observed in regard to the completely pure class of phenomena in the forward order (with the cessation of ignorance comes the cessation of compositional action, etc.) and also in the reverse order (the cessation of aging and death arises from the cessation of birth, etc.).

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

January 24 (Monday)

Note: Although these review transcripts will often indicate the object of negation for the Prasangika-Madhyamika school as “inherent existence,” this is solely an attempt to distinguish it from the “true existence” that was discussed as the object of negation in our studies of the Svatantrika-Madhyamika view in Maitreya’s *Ornament*. In Prasangika, the terms “true existence” and “inherent existence” are equivalent, and there are many other terms that can also be used, as Jeffrey Hopkins points out in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.36). So, although there may be times when the term “true existence” is used in regard to object of negation of Prasangika, it will be clearly indicated when it is used as referring to the Svatantrika object of negation.

3A1A-1 The way hearers and solitary realizer are born from buddhas
Although we covered most of this section last week, there are a few final points to cover.

Query regarding the term *tattva-buddha*

On p. 5 of *Illumination* there is a comment from Lama Tsongkhapa regarding the use of the term *tattva-buddha*. Lama Tsongkhapa is suggesting that a more appropriate term for translating the term “buddha” in this context is “realizer” (in Tibetan *gong du chud pa*). In our present Tibetan translation of *Supplement*, it is translated as *sang gye* which is the usual Tibetan equivalent of “buddha” but the word “buddha” has several other meanings such as awakening, opening, and realizing. It would have been preferable to use a Tibetan equivalent in keeping with the latter meaning.

Query regarding how solitary realizers who do not depend upon a buddha in their last lifetime are said to be born from buddhas.

There are different types of solitary realizers as is indicated in note 25 of *Illumination* (p.72-73). Regarding the first type, the rhinoceros-like solitary realizer, the question is raised as to how solitary realizers who do not depend on the buddha’s teachings in their last life can be said to be born from the Buddha. Lama Tsongkhapa says that still they depend the Buddha’s teachings from previous lives so they *are* dependent upon the teachings of a buddha but not directly in that last lifetime. However, it is possible that there are other ways that the buddhas influence solitary realizer practitioners.

3A1A-2 The way buddhas are born from bodhisattvas

This section pertains to the third line of *Supplement*. An objection can be seen when logically one might think that, if hearers and solitary realizers are born from buddhas, how could buddhas be born from bodhisattvas? There is an epitaph for bodhisattvas, *gyel we se (rgyal pa'i sras)*, with *gyel wa* meaning “conqueror” and *se* meaning “offspring” or “child.” In the light of being called children of the conquerors, if bodhisattvas are children of buddhas, how can buddhas be born from bodhisattvas? Geshe-la gave the example that one man can be seen as both father (of his children) and a son (of his father). Similarly a bodhisattva can be both a child of a certain buddha and give birth to another buddha. The way that bodhisattvas are children of buddhas is that, by listening to the teachings of buddhas, they progress on the path through their influence and care.

Two ways that buddhas are born from bodhisattvas

There are two ways elaborated in the text as to how buddhas are born from bodhisattvas: one involving a substantial cause and the other involving cooperative conditions. In the example of a clay pot, the substantial cause is the clay while a cooperative condition is the potter. Regarding the substantial cause here, there is a continuum of consciousness that attains the state of buddha after previously having been a bodhisattva. This is called the **attribute of state** (Hopkins uses “viewpoint of state”). The state of the continuum a certain bodhisattva develops into the state of a buddha. In the same way that the clay becomes the pot, a bodhisattva becomes a buddha. Regarding the cooperative condition, there are bodhisattvas who cause others to uphold the teachings, progress on the path and attain buddhahood. This refers to novice bodhisattvas and is called **instilling them to uphold**, especially the mind of enlightenment. This is similar to the way that a potter makes the pot, in that he acts as a cooperative condition to creating the pot out of the clay. An example is, while Shakyamuni Buddha was a bodhisattva, various other bodhisattvas, such as Manjushri, acted as cooperative conditions for him to eventually attain buddhahood. Once a bodhisattva is no longer a novice, such influence is not necessary

– upon attaining the middling level of the path of accumulation, the bodhisattva achieves irreversibility from highest enlightenment in that her mind of enlightenment cannot degenerate.

January 25 (Tuesday)

Scriptural authority for saying buddhas are born from bodhisattvas

In the *Autocommentary*, it mentions that, besides the reasons given above, which establish that buddhas are born from bodhisattvas, there is also scriptural authority for saying so. In the passage in the *Pile of Jewels Sutra*, it indicates that the new moon (the bodhisattvas) is the object of homage rather than the full moon (the tathagatas). *Tathagata* in Tibetan is *de shin shek ba* (*de bzhin gshegs pa*), with *de shin* referring to “thus,” and *shek ba* meaning “having gone.” In other words having realized emptiness.

Four ways that the result is praised by praising the cause

Chandrakirti is praising the result through the cause and indicating the importance of compassion in doing so. He mentions four ways that, by praising the cause?bodhisattvas, the result?buddhas, is praised. These can be seen on p.11 of *Autocommentary*. In the first one, there is the term “perfect cause” which we also saw in Geshe-la’s teachings today – *Hun sum Toshoku ba* (*Hun sum Tosho’s pa*), which literally means “the best thing going.”

3A1A-3 The three main causes of bodhisattvas

Chandrakirti sets out three main causes of bodhisattvas: (1) great compassion, (2) non-dual awareness, and (3) the altruistic mind of enlightenment.

The order of the three practices

Why is Chandrakirti presenting the three in this order? Geshe-la said today that there is a cause and effect relationship between these three. In the light of whom the *Supplement* is primarily written for, the sharp-facultied trainee in the Mahayana, Geshe-la gave a process of developing these three practices.

(1) In developing great compassion you develop powerful wish to protect all beings from suffer. Now the question naturally arises as to whether and how to actually do this.

(2) You examine how you might do this by examining what the root of suffering is – the conception of inherent existence. In examining whether that conception is correct or not, you examine the nature of ignorance, determining whether the referent object of that conception of inherent existence is existent or not. One examines whether the way objects are conceived to exist by ignorance is in fact the way they actually exist. One finds that they do not exist that way, that is, phenomena do not inherently exist. Ignorance is a wrong consciousness, a knower that is mistaken with regard to its referent object. It can be eliminated by a correct cognition, i.e. a wisdom realizing non-inherent existence. So, seeing that that ignorance can be removed, one sees that the basic cause of suffering can be removed as well as all obstacles to being able to be of maximum assistance to others in doing this.

(3) Finally, out of this develops a determination to achieve such a capacity to be of maximum benefit to other. That is, one commits oneself to achieving enlightenment for the sake of all sentient being. Thus, in practice, a mind of enlightenment is supported by some wisdom of reality.

The realization of emptiness that is being referred to here is an inferential understanding of emptiness.

Compassion

Compassion is said to be the root of the four (hearers, solitary realizers, bodhisattvas and buddhas) – in this context it is from initial great compassion that bodhisattvas are born. As we saw earlier, buddhas are born from bodhisattvas and hearers and solitary realizers are born from buddhas, so compassion is the root. Although we might also suggest that there is compassion within the continua of all four of these that acts as some sort of cause for each to attain their own enlightenment, it is in the above way that Chandrakirti is calling compassion the cause or root of them. Recall that here we are speaking of the compassion that wishes to protect others from suffering, and not simply that which wishes that sentient beings be free from suffering.

Altruistic mind of enlightenment

Geshe-la said that there is no difference between the mind of enlightenment in the present context and that which was discussed in our studies of the *Ornament*. There is a definition given on the Jan. 24 handout, the

heading of which is “From *General Meaning* by Jedzunba (1).” A fully qualified mind of enlightenment has two objects of observation: one’s own welfare, namely enlightenment (the **object of attainment**), and others’ welfare (the **object of intent**). Geshe-la gave several explanations of how one might itemize “others’ welfare.”

Non-dual awareness

In this context, Geshe-la said that this is the wisdom (*shes rab*) that is free from the two extremes. There are many possibilities of what these two extremes are: permanence and annihilation, existence and non-existence, things and non-things. Basically these are all referring to the same concept. When we speak of “existence” it is referring to the extreme of inherent existence, a mode of existence that is not ultimately established. Geshe-la said in his past commentary that “things” refer to samsara and “non-things” to nirvana, so this wisdom is realizing those two to not inherently exist.

January 26 (Wednesday)

Regarding an alternative order of the three practices

In the last paragraph in the passage on p. 11 of *Illumination*, it appears to present a different order of the three practices from what we discussed previously. There it indicates the order would be first compassion, then the mind of enlightenment, and finally non-dual awareness, but in the case of the sharp-facultied bodhisattva, non-dual awareness would precede generating the mind of enlightenment (as it indicates on p.10 of *Illumination*). However, in this passage, Lama Tsongkhapa is talking about a fully qualified altruistic mind of enlightenment and not the three causes of a bodhisattva. It seems that there is no pervasion that great compassion is generated first though either (as we will see in the quote from Shantarakshita on p.15).

Objection regarding the third cause, the mind of enlightenment

These three practices are the *causes* of a bodhisattva and *not* the *properties* of a bodhisattva. These three will bring about a novice bodhisattva. An objection is raised, questioning how the third, mind generation, can be a cause of a bodhisattva when it occurs simultaneously with the birth of the bodhisattva. This is similar to a race, where crossing the finish line makes one the winner – it occurs simultaneously with winning so how could crossing the finish line be the cause to win the race? The response to this dispute is that what we are speaking of here is a non-fully qualified mind of enlightenment. It is contrived mind of enlightenment; it directly arises independence upon reasoning, meditation and effort. When the mind of enlightenment arises spontaneously and uncontrived again and again, that is then a fully qualified mind of enlightenment. If we examine the definition given on the Jan. 24 handout, it specifies the mind generation “indicated *in this context*.”

Objection regarding the second cause, non-dual awareness

There are other possible interpretations of the term “non-dual” – someone could suggest, for example, that which we discussed in our studies of the *Ornament*. There were three attributes to this non-dual awareness: (1) subject and object are not ascertained as distinct, (2) there is no appearance of conventionalities, and (3) there is no appearance of true existence. The problem with this interpretation of non-dual is that this occurs only on the path of seeing, and here we are talking about that which occurs prior to entering the Mahayana path. The non-dual which is meant in the present context refers to an awareness free from the two extremes of permanence and annihilation.

3A1B Compassion as the root of the other two causes of a bodhisattva

In this section we will look at Chandrakirti’s assertion that, of the three causes or practices, great compassion is in fact the cause or root of the other two. He justifies this by saying that this compassion, which wishes to protect sentient beings from all three types of suffering, is important in the beginning, the middle and the end, using the analogy of a seed, water and ripeness. As we saw earlier, great compassion is important in the **beginning** since, having seen others’ suffering and wishing to protect them from suffering, one determines that one will definitely become a buddha for their sake. It doesn’t allow the bodhisattva to become apathetic but rather becomes the seed of a rich harvest. It is important in the **middle** like water, since one must keep the bodhicitta from degenerating since it is the motivating force behind the practice of the six perfections. It is important in the **end**, since if a buddha did not have compassion, she would not be able to enact the welfare of others by turning the wheel of Dharma. This is not to imply that there could be a buddha without compassion but that compassion is essential to the nature of a buddha.

Query regarding the chart on the Jan. 24 handout

If we examine the chart on the Jan. 24 handout (from *Compassion in Tibetan Buddhism*, by Guy Newland), we can see that the compassion in this context is not compassion that is important in the end but is compassion that is important in the middle and beginning. As to why it is not that which is important in the end, this is the great compassion that is the cause of a novice bodhisattva. But this does leave some question as to why it *is* compassion that is important in the middle.

Query regarding the terms “mercy” vs. “compassion”

There are two different Tibetan terms, *tse wa* (*brtse ba*) and *nying je* (*snying rje*). Although each of these might be translated as either “mercy” or “compassion,” the first is more often translated as “mercy” or “caring,” similar to the affection of a mother for her child. The second is the term more generally translated as “compassion.”

3A2 Homage to great compassion within differentiating its types

We will be differentiating three types of compassion but the second and third will be discussed together. These three are all great compassions, and each actually observe sentient beings; the difference is simply in how these sentient beings are qualified. These sentient beings appear differently to them since in the second and third, the sentient beings are qualified by impermanence and emptiness respectively. These three are all compassion in that they all have the same subjective aspect of wishing sentient beings to be free from suffering (this is reiterated on p.14 of *Illumination*).

The **first** of the three is compassion observing mere sentient beings without being qualified by impermanence or emptiness. This means that this compassion has the subjective aspect as mentioned but the observed object, sentient beings, appears without being qualified by either impermanence or emptiness. The **second** is compassion observing sentient beings qualified by impermanence and the **third** is compassion observing sentient beings qualified by the unobservable, that is, emptiness. The third is translated as unapprehendable but we will use the term unobservable (*dmigs pa med pa*). (See Review Class handout of Feb. 1, for a discussion of the meaning of qualified, and so forth.)

January 27 (Thursday)

3A2A Homage to compassion observing sentient beings

This is compassion observing mere sentient beings not qualified by either impermanence or non-inherent existence.

The view of the transitory collection

Regarding this first type of compassion, Geshe-la spoke about the view of the transitory collection, which is the root of cyclic existence in Prasangika. The reason it is called view of the “transitory” is that the aggregates that are the basis for this view are transitory or impermanent and this view conceives of that collection as a real ‘I’ or ‘mine.’ The way it operates is that, by mistakenly conceiving of an inherently existent ‘I’ we exaggerate the distinction between ourselves and others leading to attachment. This conception of an inherently existent ‘I’ is a “small error” in a sense that creates a “large problem” – we develop attachment and aversion based on such an ‘I’ that is separated or set off from others.

Referring to a later passage in Chandrakirti’s *Autocommentary*, Geshe-la described the relationship between the view of the transitory collection and ignorance as being like an ocean and a blue river, respectively. However, in *Meditation on Emptiness*, Jeffrey Hopkins uses a slightly different analogy, saying ignorance is like the dimness that surrounds a rope in a dark area that causes one to misconceive the rope as a snake, which is like the view of the transitory collection. There is some dispute as to what the view of the transitory collection observes, some saying that it observes the aggregates and others say that it observes the mere I, the person imputed on the aggregates. Some schools define this view as a afflicted wisdom or knowledge, where the knowledge has made false analysis of the nature of the conventional I. In those schools it is being called one of the five object-ascertaining mental factors, wisdom or knowledge (*shes rab*). Regardless of the above, in the

Prasangika view, it is both an afflicted knowledge and an afflicted view and we must remove the view of the transitory collection as a real ‘I’ or ‘mine’ to be liberated from cyclic existence.

Metaphor of the well

One reason why the view of the transitory collection is brought up is that it elucidates the metaphor Chandrakirti uses to describe sentient beings and cyclic existence as a means for the cultivating compassion. In this metaphor, sentient beings are represented by a bucket that is drawn up and down a well by a rope on a pulley mechanism. There are six components that are compared:

1. The rope – Sentient beings, as the bucket, are bound by the rope of afflictions and karma, which leave us with no control over our lives.
2. The operator of the pulley mechanism – The operator who pulls the rope represents the mind, moreover improper conceptualization, which impels the process.
3. The pulley mechanism (or windlass) – This symbolizes endless rebirth in that one turn of the windlass is followed by another. Similarly sentient beings wander from the peak of cyclic existence down to the most tortuous hell, one rebirth followed by another.
4. The bucket – Sentient beings, like the bucket, naturally go downward to the lower realm without much effort. It is much more difficult to do move upwards.
5. The quick rotation of the pulley mechanism – In this metaphor, the quick rotation of the windlass refers to the inability to tell exactly where each of the three sets of thorough afflictions begins and ends. These three groups are the thoroughly afflicted afflictions, actions, and rebirth. The twelve links can be classified into these three. There are rounds of the twelve links of dependent arising operating simultaneously so it is difficult to say where a single round begins.
6. The well – The bucket is continually being battered and no matter where the bucket is on its journey within the well, it is still within the well. Similarly sentient beings are constantly battered by the three types of sufferings as they journey in the well of cyclic existence, never free from it no matter where they are in it.

3A2B Homage to compassion observing phenomena and the unobservable

Here Chandrakirti speaks of the other two types of compassion together, using a single analogy.

Compassion observing phenomena

The first of these two is compassion observing phenomena, referring to compassion observing sentient beings who are imputed in dependence upon mere phenomena, such as the aggregates. When one determines that sentient beings are disintegrating moment by moment, one sees them as empty of being permanent, partless and independent. Then one can go on to see them as lacking a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. A self does not have its own character independent of what it is being imputed upon. When someone has a compassion observing sentient beings, wishing them to be free of suffering, conjoined with above realization of impermanence, the sentient beings appear to be like the moon, rippling on the surface of the body of water, constantly disintegrating from moment to moment. What is appearing to this compassion is sentient beings qualified by impermanence (or a lack of substantial existence).

Compassion observing the unobservable

The third type of compassion, that observing the unobservable, refers to compassion observing sentient beings who lack inherent existence. “Unobservable” is an abbreviation for “unobservable as inherently existent.” This entails someone having a realization of emptiness of inherent existence and when they have a mind of compassion, wishing sentient beings to be free from suffering conjoined with realizing sentient beings as not inherently existing, the sentient beings appear like the reflection of a moon in water. We might normally grasp at the reflection as being real but here we see it for what it is – just a reflection and not a real moon.

Reasons for presenting these two types of compassion

Why does Chandrakirti speak of these two? It’s likely that there is a difference in the quality of these types of compassion. If we simply look at sentient beings and see how they are going through the all various types of suffering, and if further we understand that their suffering is arising from their erroneous view of the self, then we see that the basis of all this suffering is a simple error of thought we would moved to think how pitiful that sentient beings continue to suffer so unnecessarily. They could be free of it. So, it seems that, understanding how suffering arises in these sentient beings, we see how the basis of this suffering is so unnecessary. So such a

type of compassion would probably induce a far greater compassion than that observing mere sentient beings alone.

January 28 (Friday)

Query concerning the three types of compassion

The more you examine this topic, the more questions that arise. Lobsang Gyatso used to say, “If you don’t have doubts, you aren’t thinking.” Today in class, Geshe-la answered a question concerning a person on the uninterrupted path of seeing having compassion of the first type but not the other two. There is still some lack of clarity on this issue.

The path of seeing has two main divisions, the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise and the exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment. The exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise has two further divisions: the uninterrupted path and the path of release. On the uninterrupted path of seeing, it is as if a thief is thrown out the door, meaning that one has developed the antidote to the afflictive obstructions and moves them. On the path of release, it is as if the door is closed so that the thief will not return, meaning that a cessation of those afflictions is attained. This concerns the uninterrupted path of seeing, which is the portion of the meditative equipoise of the path of seeing where the bodhisattva has the initial direct realization of emptiness and develops the antidote to a portion of the afflictive obstructions. The experience of this is said to be “like water poured into water.”

So why don’t they have the third compassion especially in this case since the bodhisattva has attained a realization of non-inherent existence? If we examine the definition of this third compassion (see the Jan. 24 handout) to see if all attributes are satisfied. The condensed definition makes it clear saying that, in order for it to be compassion observing the unobservable, it must be “explicitly conjoined with the wisdom realizing the non-true existence of sentient beings.” Let’s examine the two words here: “explicitly”.

Regarding the term “explicitly”

There is always mind generation in the continuum of a bodhisattva. Even though we say this, we can make a distinction as to two occasions, one where it is manifest and one where it is not manifest. At the time of the uninterrupted path of seeing, the mind generation is not manifest but we must say it still exists at that time. In order for a compassion to be this third type, it must be “explicitly” conjoined with the realization of non-true existence of sentient beings, meaning that both the great compassion and the realization of non-true existence must both be manifest at the same time. “Explicitly” here then means that both awarenesses must be simultaneously manifest.

Examining the nature of the first type of compassion

So, on the uninterrupted Mahayana path of seeing, we are saying that the first type of compassion is in the continuum of that bodhisattva. Why? Once again, if we look at the definition of this first compassion (see the Jan. 24 handout), especially the condensed one, we see that to be this compassion, it simply is qualified by being “not explicitly conjoined with either the wisdom...” The great compassion within the continuum of the bodhisattva on the uninterrupted path of seeing, it is this type of compassion because neither of those two are “explicitly conjoined” with it.

A bodhisattva has the first type at all times, except when the second or the third are present. The first and the second are mutually exclusive and first and third are mutually exclusive. The second and the third are mutually exclusive except in the case of a buddha superior. We’ll discuss this further.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

January 31 (Monday)

3A2B Homage to compassion observing phenomena and the unobservable

Reviewing Feb. 1 handout

Using the section called “Some notes on differentiating the three types of great compassion” of the Feb. 1 handout, we will try to resolve some doubts around how compassion observing impermanence and phenomena are differentiated.

1. Compassion observing sentient beings

We might argue that all sentient beings are in fact impermanent and are in fact empty of inherent existence so how can we say they do not *appear* as either of those two in this first type of compassion. When we say “qualified by” we mean that the observer is apprehending that quality. For example, if there is a man who is a thief but you do not know he is a thief, then he appears as a mere man, not qualified as being a thief. For someone else who does know that that man is a thief, then to that person, that same man appears qualified as a thief. Compassion observing sentient beings is like the first of these two; mere sentient beings without them being qualified by either impermanence or emptiness are being apprehended by the person. The person is not apprehending these sentient beings to be either impermanent or empty.

2. Compassion observing phenomena

Although the description for this second type says “qualified by either impermanence or the lack of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self,” let’s just look at the first of these two qualifications. As mentioned in the latter part of the description on the handout, sentient beings must *appear* as being impermanent in order for the compassion to “observe sentient beings as *qualified by* impermanence.” The object of the compassion is not impermanence but rather sentient beings qualified by impermanence. So, to have the second type of compassion, you must have previously *apprehended* sentient beings as impermanent and be presently apprehending them as such. The person is both apprehending sentient beings with a compassion which wishes to protect them from suffering and with a wisdom apprehending them to be impermanent. This is what it means to be *explicitly* conjoined.

Looking at the terms *apprehend* and *realize*

Is there a difference between having *apprehended* impermanence and having *realized* impermanence? Let’s look at how these terms are distinguished. To **apprehend** or conceive (*‘dzin pa*) means the object is being taken to mind – the object must appear to that awareness but also be taken as the object of that awareness or be “held” by that awareness (note that to *apprehend* does not necessarily imply a conception, even though it is occasionally translated as “conceive”). To **realize** (*rtogs pa*) an object the object does not have to appear but to apprehend means that the object does have to appear. An example of this is, in the Sautrantika school, the yogi observes the aggregates and, through generating a yogic direct perceiver, eventually realizes selflessness of persons through observing the aggregates. The selflessness of persons does not appear to the yogi since it is a permanent phenomenon since in Sautrantika permanent phenomena cannot appear to direct perceivers, only impermanent phenomena. This is a case of something being *realized* but not apprehended. We *realize* in two ways, through inference and through direct perception. To *realize* means to remove superimpositions (or qualities that you have imposed upon objects). To *apprehend* does not imply that there is a correct ascertainment of the object.

3. Compassion observing the unobservable

This is similar to the second except that here the sentient beings being observed by compassion are qualified by emptiness, meaning that they *appear* as empty to the person and are being apprehended by such by wisdom.

Regarding the term *conjoined*

In the description of *conjoined* on the handout, when we speak of “continuum,” we are talking about the continuum of the being made of up body and mind. The primary consciousnesses and the accompanying mental

factors taken together and over time are considered a continuum, not just a single awareness. These minds and mental factors operate simultaneously. “Accompanying” means that a previous consciousness that is still present is influencing or affecting the present consciousness – in this case great compassion is being influenced by a factor of wisdom.

Regarding the term *explicitly conjoined*

Explicitly conjoined means that, not only are they conjoined but *both* are simultaneously manifest as well – meaning that they are both operating and apprehending their object. The meaning of “manifest” is easy to ascertain but “non-manifest” is not so easy.

Regarding the term *qualified*

This means, just as in the case of the thief, that to a particular awareness, for the object to be *qualified* by a particular quality, the object must be appearing as that quality (in the case of the thief, the man must be appearing to be a thief, to be *qualified* as being a thief). It’s tricky though since he appears as a thief but may not be apprehended as a thief. We must discern between simply appearing as such due to being affected by a previous awareness and be apprehending as such by a present awareness.

Distinguishing the term *appear* from *apprehend*

First let’s look at what it means to **appear**. In the case of observing the man who is a thief, previous understandings affect how the man appears to you. When your mind is conjoined with, that is, affected by, the previous understanding of a man as a thief, then that man appears to you as a thief. Similarly, all phenomena appear to us to be truly existent due to habituation to the conception of true existence from beginningless time. That way of conceiving objects actually causes objects to appear as truly existent.

‘Appearing qualified by’ means conjoined which means one accompanying awareness is affecting another. ‘Explicitly conjoined’ means that the accompanying awarenesses are both manifest. Conjoined means that it must be affecting the mind at that time while explicitly conjoined means that it is manifest as well. The real point behind all this discussion is the differentiation between manifest and non-manifest consciousnesses. In the definition of compassion observing phenomena that was on the Jan. 24 handout, there are two parts: first that it is “compassion” and secondly that it is “explicitly conjoined with wisdom realizing impermanence.” Both of these awarenesses—compassion and wisdom—are simultaneously manifest. If we were to just have the compassion “conjoined” with the wisdom realizing impermanence, then the wisdom realizing impermanence is not manifest – in that case it is still influencing the compassion but it is not manifest. Sentient beings are appearing as impermanent but in the first they are apprehended as being impermanent. Both of these are possible for an ordinary being. For example, if someone is wearing sunglasses, the snow mountain appears green – they are simply apprehending snow though and not “snow as green.” The snow still is appearing green. If we actually look at the snow and apprehend it as green then it is similar to it being “explicitly conjoined” with green. So, looking at snow through sunglasses, although the snow appears as green you don’t have to necessarily apprehend it as green. Also, there are many cases of a person having previously realized impermanence, but that past realization not affecting their present compassion. This, then, would be the compassion observing sentient beings.

February 1 (Tuesday)

Past references in our studies of *Ornament*

There were at least two instances in our studies of *Ornament* where we saw “explicitly conjoined” or “conjoined”:

- (1) The distinctions between aspirational and practical mind generation (also called wishing and engaging) – Are these both mind generation (or bodhicitta)? Yes. How are they distinguished? The second one is engaging in the six perfections while the first only wishes to engage but is not actually engaged in the six perfections. Shantideva says this is like the difference between wishing to go and actually going. Technically we say that practical mind generation is mind generation that is *explicitly conjoined* with the practice of the six perfections while aspirational mind generation is that which is not explicitly conjoined with the practice of the six perfections.

- (2) The complete aspect application – There we said that if it is a bodhisattva's path, it is conjoined with a wisdom cultivating a compendium of the aspects of the three exalted knowers. So what does the word conjoined mean? That the bodhisattva's mind is being influenced by that wisdom.

“Explicitly conjoined” means not only under the influence or affected by an accompanying awareness, but both awarenesses are simultaneously actually active or manifest in the mind. It is said that when two things are conjoined, when one develops the other develops with it; when one degenerates, the other degenerates with it. In the light of that, we saw in a passage in today's teachings the word “influenced,” (p.20 of *Illumination*, third paragraph from the bottom). There we spoke of the bodhisattva superior ground being influenced by great compassion, so we could say that the great compassion develops with the development of the bodhisattva grounds.

Reviewing the examples on Feb. 1 handout

In between the two sections that we already discussed on Monday, there were seven examples given on the Feb. 1 handout, using A as great compassion, B as the wisdom realizing impermanence and so on. To review them briefly:

1. This is the second type of compassion – because the wisdom realizing impermanence is manifest or “explicitly conjoined” simultaneously with the compassion
2. This is the third type of compassion – for basically the same reasoning given in the first example
3. This is the first type of compassion – because it is not “explicitly conjoined” with the wisdom realizing impermanence of sentient beings
4. This is the first type of compassion – for basically the same reasoning used in the third example
5. This is the first type – since non-manifest compassion is still compassion, and although the wisdom realizing impermanence of sentient beings is manifest, both compassion and that wisdom are not manifest so it cannot be the second type of compassion.
6. This is the first type – for the same basic reasoning given in the fifth example
7. This is both the second and the third types of compassion – but this one is qualified by being a only in a buddha superior (although that is not explicitly stated). A buddha superior does not have the first type of compassion, compassion observing sentient beings.

The first six of these could all be generated even before entering the path but the last one is found only in a buddha superior since two realizations of impermanence and emptiness are manifest simultaneously.

Promise to compose

On p. 15 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa says that although there is no explicit promise to compose, it is implied by the explicit expression of worship.

Four qualities of a treatise

In *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa puts forth the four qualities of a treatise by establishing them for Chandrakirti's *Supplement*:

1. Subject matter – The subject matter is the vast and the profound.
2. Uncommon purpose – The uncommon purpose is to supplement Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* from the two points of view (from the point of view of the profound, to set it off from Chittamatra and Svatantrika, and the vast, to set out the stages and the path, etc.).
3. Essential purpose – There are both the temporary and the final essential purposes presented. The temporary essential purpose is begins with practicing the meanings of the text one has come to know through hearing and reflecting and extends through progressing on the four learning paths of a bodhisattva. The final essential purpose is to achieve the effect ground, buddhahood.
4. Relationship – The relationship is that the essential purpose depends on the purpose, which in turn depends on the text itself.

3B Actual body of the text

There are two divisions, the causal grounds and the effect ground. The causal grounds bring about the effect ground.

3B1 Causal grounds

3B1A Ways of practicing the paths of this system in general

Through hearing and reflecting one will find conviction in the way to practice the pure path, and then one goes on to develop the wisdom arisen from meditation. There are two ways of meditating that Geshe-la mentioned in class (although there are many others): (1) The first type is when one generates the mind in the entity of the object, for example, cultivating compassion. (2) In the other type, there is a distance between the mind and its object. The mind *does not become* the object but *realizes something about* the object, for example, when meditating on impermanence. Both could be classified as what we call “analytical meditation.” The distinction between these two is how the mind is actually generated in the aspect of the object (e.g. compassion) while no such generation occurs in the second. There are other ways of classifying meditation as stabilizing and analytical but that is not the specific distinction we are speaking of here.

The seven practices of the bodhisattva in *Precious Garland*

Lama Tsongkhapa begins with a quotation from *Precious Garland*. It speaks of the six perfections – on the ten grounds there are said to be ten perfections but the last four can be seen as inclusive within the sixth, the perfection of wisdom. There is an additional practice, that of compassion, which make up the seven practices of a bodhisattva according to Nagarjuna.

Other practices

Nagarjuna lays out in other texts the numerous other practices that are a part of the path: developing the mind of enlightenment, examining precious human rebirth, the means of developing faith in the teaching, and so forth. In addition, Lama Tsongkhapa makes references to the works of Shantideva (and other masters) that have their source in Nagarjuna’s *Fundamental Wisdom*.

February 2 (Wednesday)

Reviewing Feb. 1 handout

Inference through conviction

In *Illumination*, the second verse on p. 18 (from Nagarjuna’s *Precious Garland*) says that “from giving there arises wealth.” Geshe-la talked about this particular line, specifically by speaking about “inference through conviction,” the process how one can come to understand that this statement is correct. There are some notes on this topic in the handout of Feb. 1 (the section titled “Some notes on inference through conviction”). Since early Indian times, there were disputes around the number of valid means of understanding. In Buddhism there are two means of validly realizing an object: inferential cognition and direct perception. Direct perception depends upon the power of the object itself (e.g. seeing a pen) while inference depends upon a correct sign, proof or reason. Several terms related to this are discussed in the handout.

Valid cognition

The idea of “incontrovertible” gets at what really makes something a **valid cognition**, or *tshe ma* in Tibetan (*tshad ma*). The word *tshe* means “to measure.” One of the hallmarks of Buddhism is that there are no absolutes so how do we determine what is real and what is not? We must take something as a standard against which to measure what is real and true and what is unreal and false. In Buddhism we use the standard of a buddha’s knowledge. Buddhism is a pragmatic system of training the mind – it has a soteriological purpose in that it is a means to liberate one from suffering. “Pragmatic” refers to the question, “Does it deliver the goods?” and Buddhism professes to do that, but, in spite of that, we cannot treat it as an absolute.

The seven stages of consciousness

Right now our minds are plagued by wrong consciousnesses which are the sources of all our sufferings. There is one system of looking at the development of consciousness in seven stages. First there is **wrong consciousness**, for example the conception of true existence. This is followed by the three types of doubt – each of these three is a progressive step in the process of abandoning that wrong consciousness: **doubt tending toward the non-factual, equal doubt** and **doubt tending toward the factual**. Then there is a **correct assumption**, meaning here that you’ve decided that things do not truly exist. It is correct but it is not based on a correct reason or on experience. The sixth stage is **inference**, and this could be developed even prior to entering the path, and is especially important on the path of preparation, as a conceptual understanding of emptiness. But it is limited in

its ability to overcome the discordant class of thought,. It cannot remove the afflictions, only suppress them. The seventh, **direct perception**, however, can remove the conceptions of true existence along with its seeds. It is the only way of interrupting the patterns of our mistaken thinking so that they will not occur again. As a footnote, there are other occasions in *Awareness and Knowledge* where we speak of there being seven types of consciousnesses, so there the three types of doubt are condensed into one and in addition there are two other types of consciousness: “subsequent cognition” and “appearing but not ascertained.”

Three types of phenomena

There is one way of classifying phenomena into three types: **manifest**, **slightly hidden** (which are necessarily realized initially by an ordinary person based upon an inferential cognition depending upon correct forms of reasoning) and **extremely hidden phenomena** (which are known primarily by inference through conviction). All three of these are described on the handout.

The three types of inference and the threefold analysis

The fact that in general you gain wealth through generosity is a slightly hidden phenomenon. It is not an extremely hidden phenomenon but the subtle workings of this cause and effect as to what the exact specific cause is for a specific effect of wealth is an extremely hidden phenomenon. So, even though the Buddha has said many things, these must be “checked out” by means of a threefold analysis. Towards the end of the handout, the specific ways that each of these three types of phenomena is analyzed is given. To some extent, there is still reliance upon scripture in this analysis but the conviction or belief one develops has a force that will overcome its opposing view. If you can gain an inference through conviction you will strengthen the correct view in your consciousness.

3B1B Ways of practicing on the level of common beings in particular

In this context, a “common being” means a non-superior, someone who has not had a direct realization of emptiness. Lama Tsongkhapa addresses the objection being raised in this section (that Chandrakirti should begin his explanation with the practices of a common being and not the grounds of a superior) by saying that Chandrakirti has already discussed the practices of a common being – the three practices discussed in the homage to compassion—great compassion, non-dual awareness, and the mind of enlightenment. The bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation and path of preparation also practice these three practices but Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to emphasize the need to practice the accumulation of the collections of merit and wisdom. We must develop wise hearts and kind minds through a combination of the union of method and wisdom.

Ha-shang and stopping conception

On p.19 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa speaks about how to go about practicing and addresses some wrong ways that people might understand non-dual wisdom. In particular he, without naming names, addresses the thinking of Ha-shang, a Chinese master who had a famous debate with Kamalashila in Tibet in the eighth century. He is actually quite highly regarded in many circles. It appears that Ha-shang is saying that it is necessary to stop conceptual thoughts to rid oneself of ignorance. In the thinking of the Tibetan scholars, when one seeks to get rid of the conception of true existence, that ignorance is vulnerable in regard to its referent object, true existence. By developing a realization that understands that the referent object doesn't exist, you can destroy ignorance. So, identifying the referent object is very important and Ha-shang is being faulted for not correctly identifying the referent object.

It is said that there are two possible errors in negating the referent object, one, that you don't negate enough (leaving something over, for example, inherent existence as the Svatantrikas do), or two, that you negate too much (you negate conventional existence as will, leaving nothing). Ha-shang is accused of the second error. He identified “conception” with “the conception of true existence” so in his thinking, if you stop conception, you stop the conception of true existence. For more on Ha-shang, see *Path to the Middle*, by Anne Klein, pp.66-70.

Contaminated virtuous actions

Contaminated virtuous actions are said to be like golden chains – there is only one thing that will free you from suffering – uncontaminated wisdom. However, the golden chains of contaminated virtuous actions still must be practiced since one must still “value the conventional” (as Manjushri said to Lama Tsongkhapa). The importance of the uncontaminated in regard to one's virtuous actions is that, once having gained a direct

realization of emptiness, the perfections then become a surpassing perfection – before that they bind one to samsara because they are contaminated. So you must have a store of merit from practicing the perfections to attain the uncontaminated wisdom that truly perfects one's practices.

3B1C Presentation of the ground of bodhisattva superiors

3B1C-1 Presentation of the ten grounds in common

"In common" refers to the general similarities and differences of the grounds and not to looking at them individually. Basically a **ground** is a consciousness, a clear realization that acts as a support for the development and growth of excellent qualities, just as the earth is a support for all that grow on it.

The ten grounds

This section starts with a quote by Nagarjuna from *Precious Garland*, asserting that, just as there are eight grounds of the hearers so are there ten grounds of the bodhisattvas. Those eight grounds were listed by Geshe-la and are also listed (with some slight differences) in the note on p.73 of *Illumination*. Over the course of the path of seeing and the path of meditation there are ten grounds that the bodhisattva will work through. On each of the grounds, the bodhisattva will specialize in a particular perfection – this is not to say that they are not practiced on the other grounds but that they are brought to their consummation on a particular ground.

Four ways of explaining the grounds in common

There are four ways of looking at the grounds in common and the first is in regard to their nature or entity.

(1) Their nature

The nature of the ground is the uncontaminated wisdom of meditative equipoise. In this context, Chandrakirti is using "ground" in the sense of ultimate ground. This is his principal usage of the word. Ultimate ground, ultimate mind generation, ultimate bodhicitta, ultimate mind of enlightenment are equivalent and refer to an exalted wisdom directly realizing emptiness is conjoined with special method, great compassion and so forth.

February 3 (Thursday)

At the bottom of p.13 of *Autocommentary*, a point is brought up, saying that a bodhisattva's uncontaminated exalted wisdom is called a ground. There appears to be a contradictory statement towards the bottom of p.21 of *Illumination*, where it says that the grounds should not be considered to be just meditative equipoise since grounds include states subsequent to meditative equipoise. Why is there this difference? Chandrakirti is principally explaining the ultimate grounds. But "ground" is occasionally used to include the states subsequent to meditative equipoise as Lama Tsongkhapa indicates.

In *General Meaning*, Jedzunba's commentary on *Supplement*, he says the entity of a ground is the uncontaminated exalted wisdom of a bodhisattva. He doesn't specify ultimate ground in his definition but in general this is what we are speaking of as a ground. But there are occasions when the term is more inclusive.

Uncontaminated and contaminated according to Vasubandhu

At the bottom of p.19, a dispute is brought up about what "uncontaminated" means. The first meaning indicated here is in that given in Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* (*Abhidharmakosha*). The subject of *abhidharma* relates to higher wisdom, and includes phenomenology, cosmology, and mainly involves the higher training in wisdom. There are two main texts *abhidharma* texts: Asanga's *Compendium of Knowledge* and Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge*. "Uncontaminated" according to Vasubandhu's text means "that which is amenable to contaminations" (or concomitant with contaminations). "Amenable" means it is conducive to the increase of, or suitable to induce, the contaminations. According to that definition, a table, for example, is contaminated because it could serve as an objective condition for the increase of attachment in the person observing it.

Uncontaminated and contaminated according to Prasangika

The above is not accepted by Prasangika, as Lama Tsongkhapa says on pp.19-20, indicating that "**contaminated** is anything polluted by ignorance – the conception of true existence – or its predisposing latencies. The **uncontaminated** is wisdom free from those pollutions..." It would appear from this position that objects like a table would not be considered uncontaminated in the Prasangika view. For the bodhisattva on the

ten grounds, until attaining the eighth ground, the conception of true existence is manifest but once she is on the pure grounds it is not, although there are still the latencies of that ignorance. Therefore, it is only the ultimate grounds which are uncontaminated. This is the uncommon assertion of the Prasangika.

In the first full paragraph on p.20, when the text says “alternating” it means that there is an alternation between the uncontaminated mind and the contaminated mind as the bodhisattva moves between the states of meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment on the ten grounds.

Regarding pollution by the latencies

When we say that a non-conceptual meditative equipoise on emptiness is not polluted by the latencies, this is in relation to the absence of the appearance of true existence. How is the latency of ignorance expressed? As an appearance of true existence, so in meditative equipoise, objects do not appear as truly existent. This is not to say that the latencies do not *exist* while the bodhisattva is in meditative equipoise on emptiness, only that the mind is not *polluted by*, meaning affected by, those latencies. When we speak of the latencies as being the knowledge obstructions, or the obstructions to omniscience, we are referring to the way that things appear to not be dependent. It's as if they have big thick lines drawn around each of them, existing independent of things around them, and that way of phenomena appearing to us is what keeps us from having omniscience.

Regarding non-dual wisdom

On p.20, the question comes up again concerning non-dualistic wisdom, in regard to whether it is the same as what was discussed in the context of the three practices. The difference is that in regard to the non-dual wisdom in this context, it is the lack of ascertaining subject and object, while that in the three practices it is the freedom from the two extremes of permanence and annihilation. The person in meditative equipoise is experiencing the realization of emptiness like “water poured into water” – there is no sense that the object is cut off from the subject perceiving it. There is no sense of duality in that realization of emptiness.

Regarding removing the stains

On p.20, Lama Tsongkhapa speaks about Chandrakirti's assertion of knowledge and wisdom that are free from ignorance, so the ignorance must be incidental to the mind and not inherent. The comparison is made to a metal garment that is cleaned of all stains by fire but is not destroyed itself in the process.

February 4 (Friday)

(2) The qualities with which they are thoroughly conjoined

In the third to last paragraph on p.20, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the bodhisattva's superior wisdom of meditative equipoise is similar to the hearer and solitary realizer in that they both directly cognize suchness but different in that, first of all, it is influenced, or conjoined, with great compassion. Great compassion as presented here is that which is qualified as being an exceptional resolve to protect others from suffering. When we speak of exceptional resolve, or special thought, in the context of the sevenfold cause and effect, there it has an aspect of compassion and an aspect of love. It also entails an analysis of how one might actually protect others from suffering and bring them to perfect happiness which then leads to the seventh step, the effect of committing oneself to become a buddha for the sake of all others, bodhicitta.

A second differentiation from hearers and solitary realizers is that the bodhisattva also possesses the multiple sets of twelve features and so on. Thirdly, as Lama Tsongkhapa has explained earlier, there is the difference of the bodhisattva having trained in limitless forms of reasoning on selflessness of phenomena whereas the hearer and solitary realizer disciples have not trained in such.

(3) The way they are called 'grounds'

This uncontaminated wisdom is divided into ten parts, making the individual ten grounds.

(4) By etymology

The Sanskrit term for ground is *bhumi*. Just as the ground acts as a source or basis for everything on it, so do these grounds act as a support for the auspicious qualities.

The four common features for positing the grounds

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the individual grounds are posited based upon four common features:

1. The twelve sets of qualities – The first has twelve sets of one hundred qualities, the second has twelve sets of one thousand, and so forth.
2. Attainment of greater and greater power – Each ground is able to remove a subtler obstruction than the previous ground and so the bodhisattva is able to advance to the next superior ground.
3. Perfections – Each ground takes up a specific perfection or surpassing practice.
4. Mode of rebirth – As the bodhisattva moves higher on the grounds, there is “the higher and higher increase of births of fruition.” These are explained on p.21 of *Illumination*.

Progression of the true cessations on the grounds

The realization in meditative equipoise itself is not different – just as the trails of many birds in the sky cannot be differentiated. But there is a difference in terms of seeing the truth body. When you achieve an uninterrupted path, the object of abandonment has been “thrown out” due to the force of the antidote that has been generated by the uninterrupted path. Immediately following is a path of release, and the true cessation that occurs simultaneously with it. As one progresses through the grounds, this cessation also progresses or “grows” until it is the truth body of a buddha, like the waxing of the moon. From the second ground, the bodhisattva can see the cessation of the obstructions from the first ground, from the third ground the bodhisattva can see the cessation of the obstructions from the second ground, and so on. Finally, at buddhahood, the bodhisattva is able to see the cessation of all obstructions, similar to seeing the full moon after many days of its waxing. This is the truth body of a buddha.

Progression of bodhicitta on the grounds

Does the altruistic mind of enlightenment or bodhicitta increase throughout the grounds? In our studies of *Ornament*, it was said that the conventional mind generation increases as the ultimate mind generation increases.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

February 4 (Friday)

3B1C-2 Presentation of the individual grounds

3B1C-2A The five grounds, the Very Joyful and so forth

3B1C-2A1 **First ground, the Very Joyful**

3B1C-2A1A Entity of the ground being qualified described in brief

As Lama Tsongkhapa says in the first paragraph, in brief this first ground is conjoined with great compassion and its roots of virtue are dedicated with the prayers of Samantabhadra.

Mundane and supramundane paths and beings

The paths of accumulation and preparation are mundane while the paths of seeing, meditation, and no more learning are supramundane paths. Although one abides on a mundane Mahayana path, one is not necessarily a mundane being since there are Hinayana Foe Destroyers who abide on the two Mahayana mundane paths. They are superiors although they are not Mahayana superiors. The afflictive obstructions are abandoned over the first seven grounds of the Mahayana. Since this Foe Destroyer has already abandoned those, it might seem that he should enter the Mahayana on the eighth ground but it is necessary that they enter at the Mahayana path of accumulation. Why? Since it is both a collection of merit and wisdom that is required for the progressing on the paths and the attainment of buddhahood. Geshe-la mentions that the ordinary being who is definite in Mahayana lineage (who has not previously entered a path) will achieve buddhahood faster than the Hinayana Foe Destroyer who enter the Mahayana path at the same time. Why this is so is because those of the Hinayana vehicle are dull compared to those of definite Mahayana lineage and the Hinayana Foe Destroyer due to prior habituation will tend to lapse into absorptions of peace which is a hindrance to his progress on the Mahayana path.

February 7 (Monday)

3B1C-2A1A Entity of the ground being qualified described in brief

We are now discussing the first five grounds. When we study the sixth chapter, we will be looking at the sixth ground, which emphasizes the perfection of wisdom. The first ground is the first supramundane ground. In this context, Geshe-la mentioned that a bodhisattva definite in lineage would reach buddhahood faster than a bodhisattva who had previously completed the hinayana path.

Regarding the four results of virtuous endeavor

Here, Lama Tsongkhapa mentions that in the Prasangika view an **approacher to stream-enterer** is necessarily a superior; this approacher exists only on the *uninterrupted path* of the path of seeing. The lower boundary of an **abider in stream enterer** begins on the *path of release* of the path of seeing, and his/her *upper* boundary would depend on which of the different types of stream enterer he/she is. Asanga's view is that an approacher to stream enterer is *not necessarily* a superior; in other words, the bodhisattva becomes an approacher to stream enterer upon the commencement of his final meditative session on the supreme mundane quality of the path of preparation. In that same session he will attain the path of seeing. Therefore Asanga says he is an approacher to stream enterer even when he is on the path of preparation. Note that here when Lama Tsongkhapa refers to «great of the great bodhisattvas practicing with belief,» it means those on the paths of preparation and accumulation.

An approacher is engaging in effort to achieve one of the **four virtuous endeavors**:

1. **stream enterer**
2. **once returner**
3. **non returner**
4. **foe destroyer**

Here the bodhisattva is making effort mainly to abandon the **three thorough entanglements**:

- a) the view of the transitory collection,
- b) the view holding bad views and conduct as supreme, and
- c) afflicted doubt.

The view of the transitory collection can be said, *in general*, to be the root of cyclic existence. Here, we are talking about the *acquired* view of the transitory collection; this is necessarily acquired *in this life*. This is *not* the root of cyclic existence. Why? Because animals do not have this acquired view, and yet they have the root of cyclic existence.

3B1C-2A1B Features qualifying the first ground in detail

3B1C-2A1B-1 Features beautifying one's own continuum

3B1C-2A1B-1A Individual features beautifying one's own continuum on the first ground

3B1C-2A1B-1A1 **Feature of attaining a meaningful name on the first ground**

In these next three sections, we will discuss the **eight features beautifying one's own continuum** on the first ground. The first of these is:

(1) Attaining a meaningful name

A bodhisattva has generated the ultimate mind – ultimate mind generation – so is termed an «ultimate bodhisattva.» We could translate bodhisattva as «the heroic mind with respect to enlightenment.» The Tibetan word *jang chub* (*byang chub*) is a translation of the Sanskrit word *bodhi*. Geshe-la said that *bodhi* refers to «suchness,» and *sattva* refers to a realization, so this can be translated as meaning «someone who has directly realized suchness.» However, here we use the term «ultimate» to differentiate between the bodhisattva of this case and an «ordinary» bodhisattva.

When it says (p. 25) knowing phenomena «not in accordance with the imputations by or findings of *childish common beings*,» it refers to bodhisattvas on the paths of accumulation and preparation who have not *directly* realized emptiness of true existence.

3B1C-2A1B-1A2 Four features of birth in the lineage and so forth on the first ground

(2) Being born into the tathagata lineage

It is mentioned here that the bodhisattva is born into the tathagata lineage. He is said to be definite in his path and will definitely attain buddhahood.

February 8 (Tuesday)

There are two reasons given for why the bodhisattva is born into tathagata lineage: (1) he has passed beyond all ordinary levels, having become a superior and (2) is fulfilling his purpose of becoming a buddha. In other words, he is aware of how close his goal is. At the mahayana path of accumulation, he was born into the buddha lineage (by generating bodhicitta), here he is born into the tathagata lineage (by directly realizing emptiness). The Prasangika assert that upon attaining any of the paths

of seeing of the three vehicles that Superior will definitely complete the paths of their respective vehicle.

(3) Abandoning the three thorough entanglements

The bodhisattva also abandons the **three thorough entanglements**, which we mentioned earlier:

- a) the view holding bad views and conduct as supreme,
- b) the view of the transitory collection, and
- c) afflicted doubt.

This doubt is specified as *afflicted* because, for example, doubt as to whether phenomena truly exist or not would be doubt, but not necessarily *afflicted* doubt; it would be a healthy kind of doubt. These three are singled out because they particularly obstruct one's progress to liberation. That is, by having the first, one does not wish to go on the path, by having the second, one takes the wrong path, and by possessing the third, one is hesitant about what may in fact be a correct path and does not engage in it. The bodhisattva *intends* to go, but it is said he does not *wish* to go. This is related to the fear of emptiness; if one does not have a great amount of merit, one can develop fear of going out of existence completely. Doubting the path can cause a type of paralysis with respect to the path.

(4) Attaining an excellent joy

Here, the bodhisattva attains an extraordinary joy due to attaining many excellent qualities and powers.

(5) Ability to vibrate a hundred world systems

The bodhisattva is able to vibrate 100 hundred world systems.

3B1C-2A1B-1A3 Three features of advancing to higher grounds and so forth

(6) Advancing to higher grounds

The bodhisattva advances from ground to ground, due to not being content with his attainment of a particular ground and is enthusiastic about progressing.

(7) All paths to bad migrations have ceased

Here, also, all paths to bad migrations have ceased. Lama Tsongkhapa says that although from the patience (tolerance) level of the path of preparation one does not go to bad migrations due to incompleteness of the causes, the *seeds* still remain at that level. At the path of seeing, one has overcome the seeds *by means of their antidotes*. At the tolerance level of path of preparation, one has achieved a **non-analytic cessation** of the taking of lower rebirths. This is similar to deep sleep, in that one does not have anger, although one has not actually *abandoned* anger. At the first ground, one has achieved an **analytic cessation**, in having applied the antidotes.

(8) All levels of ordinary beings are ended

Here, it talks about the aggregates and so forth being abandoned by the path of seeing. This bodhisattva has abandoned taking a rebirth in a lower realm, for example, as a hell being. This is the meaning, in this context, of abandoning the aggregates, constituents, etc. If it is *abandoned* by the path of seeing, it is not necessarily an *object of abandonment* of the path of seeing. The objects of abandonment of the path of seeing are specifically the acquired afflictive obstructions, so an object of abandonment is necessarily a consciousness or its seeds. But it can be said that the aggregates of a hell-being are abandoned on the path of seeing though they are not an *object* of abandonment of the path of seeing.

3B1C-2A1B-1B Feature's beautifying one's own continuum in brief

Here, we are talking about the eight approachers and abiders. The **eighth superior** refers to the eighth of the **eight approachers and abiders** counting downwards:

1. abider in the result of foe destroyer
2. approacher to foe destroyer
3. abider in the result of never returner
4. approacher to never returner
5. abider in the result of once-returner
6. approacher to once-returner
7. abider in the result of stream enterer
8. **approacher to stream enterer**

Each of the eight results, or fruits, has particular objects of abandonment, for example the stream enterer mainly abandons the three thorough entanglements. When the bodhisattva attains the first ground, it is the first time he/she actually begins to uproot the afflictive obstructions. The bodhisattva on the first ground is being likened to the hinayana stream enterer.

3B1C-2A1B-2 Features outshining others' continuums

3B1C-2A1B-2A On the first ground, outshining hearers and solitary realizers by way of lineage

The bodhisattva on the first ground outshines hearers and solitary realizers by way of his merit of mind generation, but not yet by way of intelligence. «Lineage» here refers to the special pure thought, a conventional mind generation.

Here, Geshe-la enumerated **four ways of classifying conventional mind of enlightenment**:

1. on the paths of accumulation and preparation, the **mind generation practicing through belief**;
2. on the impure grounds, the **mind generation of special pure thought**;
3. on the pure grounds, the **mind generation of full fruition**, and
4. on the buddha ground, the **mind generation of fully abandoned obstructions**.

These are all conventional mind generations. In short, at this point the bodhisattva does not outshine hearers and solitary realizers by way of the direct realization of emptiness, ultimate mind generation, but by the conventional mind generation of special pure thought.

February 9 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2A1B-2B On the seventh ground outshining hearers and solitary realizers by way of intelligence

Here, at the seventh ground, the bodhisattva outshines the hearers and solitary realizers not only by way of conventional mind generation, but also by way of his/her realization of emptiness. The Tibetan word *lo-i dop* (*blo'i stobs*) means literally «the force of mind,» or the «power of mind.» Hopkins translates this as «intelligence,» which may not entirely convey its meaning.

In what way does the bodhisattva have greater power of mind at the seventh ground? It is not just by way of conventional mind generation nor merely by way of a direct realization of emptiness. On the sixth ground the bodhisattva attains an **uncommon absorption of cessation**, an exalted wisdom of direct meditative equipoise on reality (*dharmat*,) that is qualified by a surpassing practice of the perfection of wisdom (see handout, Feb. 21). He then attains skill with regard to that absorption on the seventh; that is, he is able to enter into and arise from this in the shortest time of a complete action. Previously, it was difficult to enter into and arise since in the context of the direct realization

of emptiness, his mind experiences emptiness in a manner of water poured into water; on the basis of this ability, the bodhisattva outshines the hearers and solitary realizers.

For Prasangika, there are two types of absorption of cessation: **common** and **uncommon**. Prasangika explanation of the common is the same as in the lower schools, in that it is a non-associated compositional factor, being a stopping of gross feelings and discriminations. However, Geshe-la has mentioned before that the common is an *exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise* that has ceased appearance of duality/inherent existence; it is common because *all* superiors have it. The uncommon is only posited by Prasangika, and it exists from the sixth ground and up. On the fifth ground, the bodhisattva achieves *enhanced concentration*, allowing him to attain the surpassing perfection of wisdom and an uncommon absorption of cessation on the sixth ground. He then attains skill with regard to this absorption of the seventh.

Note: Although in Anne Klein's book *Path to the Middle* Khensur Yeshey Tubden speaks extensively about the absorption of cessation, we should be aware that there may be differences between his presentation and Geshe Jampa Gyatso's, as they are coming from different textbook traditions.

There are three different assertions as to why the bodhisattva outshines hearers and solitary realizers on the seventh ground, which Lama Tsongkhapa refutes:

1. The first, saying that the bodhisattva is now better at abandoning knowledge obstructions, is wrong because one does not actually begin to abandon the knowledge obstructions until the eighth ground.
2. On the seventh ground, the bodhisattva is capable of leaping over levels of meditative stabilization. Lama Tsongkhapa says there is no source that states the seventh ground bodhisattvas are in any way unique in this regard.
3. The wisdom of the seventh ground approaches the eighth. Lama Tsongkhapa says that such a reason does not eliminate any doubts.

Discussion of February 9 handout («object of observation,» «objective aspect,» etc.)

Object of observation

An **object of observation** is the basis upon which superimpositions are eliminated are being made. The basis upon which the mind is operating Referring to the uninterrupted path of the first ground, the object of observation is said to be *all phenomena*, because the bodhisattva eliminates the acquired superimposition of true existence with regard to all phenomena. The object of observation does not have to appear or be observed, as in the case of a direct realization of emptiness. One sees only emptiness; we do not see all phenomena. What is *appearing*, or being observed, is only emptiness, but the basis upon which the mind is working is all phenomena. The mind is eliminating the acquired conception of true existence with respect to all phenomena.

An **aspect** is an *attribute, quality, or feature*. An objective-aspect is the feature of the observed object which is being taken to mind. It may or may not exist. Looking at the first example, an «eye consciousness apprehending rabbit's horns,» it is seeing the objective aspect of rabbit's horns This is the same as the **object of engagement**. The object of engagement in this case is a «non-existent clearly appearing.» There is no **referent object** (this is also known as the *determined object* and *the conceived object*), because non-conceptual consciousnesses do not have referent objects. A direct perceiver does not have a referent object, since it only sees the object directly, not by way of a meaning generality or mental image. To a non-conceptual consciousness, the objects of engagement

and **appearing object** are the same. For a conceptual consciousness, the appearing object is *always* a meaning generality. The **subjective-aspect** is also known as a *knower-aspect* (Tib: *zhes rnam*), the attribute of the consciousness which is doing the knowing, that is operating on the object, for example it might be compassion with the attribute of wishing sentient beings to be free from suffering or a wisdom realizing impermanence, etc.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

February 21 (Monday)

Note: Since we are currently caught up with Geshe-la's teachings, today and tomorrow we will cover some questions related to the material in the quizzes.

Quiz 1

3B. How can we say that Chandrakirti supplemented Nagarjuna, since Nagarjuna's text is said to be more extensive in its reasonings from the point of view of the profound? We could say that Chandrakirti's text is something like an "add-on." We can see that misinterpretations of Nagarjuna's text arose, e.g. by Asanga and Bhavaviveka, so clearly Nagarjuna *can* be misinterpreted. So from this, we can see the need for Chandrakirti's composing the *Supplement*, i.e., to distinguish it from the Chittamatra and Svatantrika systems that had arisen after Nagarjuna. Chandrakirti also supplemented the profound by identifying clarifying certain tenets specific to Prasangika. Nagarjuna did not explain the vast in *Fundamental Wisdom* except in an implicit way, such as teaching the emptiness of the four noble truths, so Chandrakirti also supplements Nagarjuna by expanding the presentation of the vast.

7. In reference to great compassion, instead of "thoroughly protecting all vulnerable sentient beings," it would be more accurate to say "thoroughly *wishing to* protect all vulnerable sentient beings."

Quiz 2

3. Regarding the terms "permanence" and "annihilation"

Note that in the context of non-dual awareness, it is not accurate to say that this is a wisdom free from eternalism and nihilism, since these are extreme *views*, not extreme *states*. It is better to say *wisdom free from the two extremes of permanence and annihilation*. We could also say that the term "permanent" (*rdak pa*) is open to misinterpretation, because in our general Western conception, this implies that something does not go out of existence, that is last forever, whereas in *Collected Topics*, the definition is "a common locus of a phenomenon and the non-momentary." In the Buddhist context, a permanent phenomenon *can* go out of existence [e.g. the emptiness of a cup] but it does not change from moment to moment. In short, we have the *views* of eternalism, or existence, and nihilism, or non-existence.

Quiz 3

1B. The observed objects of the three compassions

We have to ask if the *observed object of* a consciousness is the same as the *object that is observed by* the consciousness. We will look at the pervasion between these two.

Again using the example of the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing, the *observed object* is **all phenomena**, while *that which is observed* is **emptiness**. The observed object is the basis upon which the mind is operating, i.e. eliminating superimpositions. As another example, it is possible that when the eye consciousness apprehends the ears of a rabbit it apprehends the ears as horns, the ears are the observed object but what is observed by a wrong consciousness is not the ears, but rabbit's horns. In order for something to be observed, a phenomenon has to appear. Regarding the observed object it the basis for the apprehension, whether the apprehension is correct or incorrect. In other words, the mind cannot operate on a non-existent; it must have something to operate on.

The difference between *apprehend* and *realize*

An eye consciousness can *apprehend* (*'dzin pa*) or "take hold of" a rabbit's horns, but cannot *realize* (*rtogs*) a rabbit's horns. Apprehend only means "to hold" the object; it does not denote

whether the consciousness is correct or incorrect. It just means that the consciousness is involved in the that particular object. Realize means to “understand” an object. By realizing, you eliminate superimpositions with regard to the object. When an eye consciousness apprehends the color blue, it apprehends blue but doesn’t apprehend the blue *as blue*. It also realizes the color blue in that it eliminates possible superimpositions such as the color being red. When we talk about a person, which is a non-associated compositional factor, we can say that the eye consciousness *see* a person without *apprehending* her, because the eye consciousness cannot apprehend a person. The eye consciousness only apprehends color and shape. A non-associated compositional factor cannot be apprehended by an eye consciousness; it can only be apprehended by a mental consciousness.

February 22 (Tuesday)

Manifest and non-manifest consciousnesses

A few points from before regarding the three types of compassion being conjoined with another awareness where the other awareness is not manifest. There are different ways of explaining non-manifest. Panchen Sonam Drakpa said a consciousness must be manifest, that there is no such thing as a non-manifest consciousness. Jedzun Chögyi Gyeltsen says there *are* non-manifest consciousnesses.

There is a Tibetan word, gog-gyur (*lkor gyur*) meaning “hidden.” Jeffrey Hopkins, in *Emptiness Yoga*, translates this as “subliminal.” For example, the non-manifest compassion conjoined with the manifest consciousness directly realizes emptiness on the path of seeing, is “subliminal,” that is, “below the surface.” When someone dies, there is a feeling of sadness associated with everything you do. This feeling is similar to a non-manifest consciousness. “Explicitly conjoined” means that both consciousnesses have to be manifest.

Absorption of cessation

Bodhisattvas outshine hearers and solitary realizers on both the first and seventh grounds. On the first ground, they outshine by way of their *lineage* or conventional mind of enlightenment. On the seventh ground, they outshine them by way of *intelligence*. This outshining on the seventh ground relates to the **absorption of cessation**.

On the February 21 handout, Jedzun Chögyi Gyeltsen’s definition of the absorption of cessation (from the Prasangika viewpoint) is: “an exalted wisdom directly realizing emptiness distinguished by (1) abiding in a type free from attachment to the Peak of Existence and attained in dependence on the supramundane path, which is its means of attainment and (2) being an actual absorption of the Peak of Existence.” All bodhisattva superiors have a direct realization of emptiness, but not all of them have the absorption of cessation. The uncommon absorption of cessation is “qualified by the surpassing practice of the perfection of wisdom.” On the sixth ground and below, it is said that the bodhisattvas take two moments to arise from the absorption of cessation; on the seventh ground and above, they only take one moment.

Discussion of upcoming topics

We say that the bodhisattva on the first ground does not outshine hearers and solitary realizers on the first ground by way of realization. From this we can infer that hearers and solitary realizers necessarily realize the emptiness of inherent existence. This is a unique assertion of Prasangika. All Buddhist tenet systems assert that one must overcome the afflictive obstructions in order to attain nirvana. They disagree, however, on what constitutes afflictive obstructions. All schools below Prasangika say that the principal afflictive obstruction is the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. The conception of an inherently existent self is not an object of abandonment for them, while for Prasangika this is the main afflictive obstruction.

Self-sufficient, substantially existent and inherently existent

Self-sufficient denotes an object having its own character; a substantially existent object is able to appear to awareness without another object appearing previous to it. Inherent existence, on the other hand, denotes a mode of existence which is not merely imputed. This is a more subtle object of negation.

In general, there are varied levels of objects of negation in terms of coarseness and subtlety:

1. the unitary, permanent, independent self of persons
2. self-sufficient, substantially existent self of persons
3. true existence
4. inherently existence

The two lower schools assert a non-existence of #1 and #2. They do not assert a selflessness of phenomena. The mahayana schools below Prasangika assert the *object of negation* is divided into two a **self of persons** and a **self of phenomena**, the first (the non-existence of #2) being more subtle than the second (the non-existence of #3). The lower schools posit the conception of the self of persons as the main *obstruction to liberation*, i.e. nirvana. This would be the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. The mahayana schools below Prasangika posit the conception of the true existence as a *knowledge obstruction* (the hinayana schools do not posit any knowledge obstructions). Therefore, one can be liberated with the realization of selflessness of persons without having the realization of the selflessness of phenomena.

In Prasangika there is no difference from the point of view of subtlety object of negation; the selflessnesses of both persons and phenomena are equally subtle from the point of view of the object of negation. The difference is in terms of the *basis* of negation. When the basis of the selflessness is persons, it is selflessness of persons, when the basis is phenomena, it is selflessness of phenomena. In both cases the selflessness is the non-existence of #4.

On p. 37 of *Illumination*, Nagarjuna says “as long as the aggregates are [mis]conceived, so long is there [mis]conception of an ‘I.’ When this conception of an ‘I’ exists, there is action which results in birth.” First, in meditation, you need to identify the object of negation. Otherwise, it’s lack of existence will not shake you, or undermine your belief that it exists. In *lam rim* teachings, it says that in meditation it is easier to begin with the self of persons than with the self of phenomena, since we’re more familiar with it. Here, it seems to say that you have to realize the non-inherent existence of phenomena before realizing the non-inherent existence of the “I.” You cannot have a *fully qualified* realization of emptiness of inherent existence of the person without understanding the non-inherent existence of phenomena. That is, you cannot negate the inherent existence of the person while holding the aggregates to inherently exist.

February 22 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2A1B-2C1A Clarification of the thought of the commentator, Chandrakirti

We are going to look at Chandrakirti’s thought on hearers and solitary realizers realizing non-inherent existence. The first argument to prove that hearers and solitary realizers realize the emptiness of inherent existence is the teaching in *The Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, saying that bodhisattvas do not outshine hearers and solitary realizers by way of intelligence until the seventh ground. In the *Supplement* (p. 18), Chandrakirti presents three lines of reasoning supporting the fact that hearers and solitary realizers realize emptiness.

We will look at the following consequence: the first ground bodhisattva as the subject, outshines hearer and solitary realizers by way of intelligence because of his/her direct realization of emptiness.

For Bhavaviveka, for example, the reason is established (i.e. that the first grounder directly realizes emptiness), and has asserted the pervasion, but would not want to accept the thesis, that the

bodhisattva outshines hearers and solitary realizers by way of intelligence, because this would contradict the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*.

Chandrakirti presents three lines of reasoning:

1. If that were true, the first ground bodhisattva would outshine hearer and solitary realizers in the same way that he outshines sages who advance on the path by way of grossness and peace.
2. Like non-Buddhists (forders; Tib: *mu sdeg pa*), hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers would be unable to abandon subtle increasers along with the seeds of three realms because of lacking realization of the emptiness of inherent existence. The consequence is that they cannot have destroyed the foe, the afflictions, because they have not realized the emptiness of inherent existence.
3. Hearer and solitary realizers would lack a fully qualified realization of selflessness of persons because of conceiving the basis of imputation, the aggregates, to inherently exist.

Meditation on grossness and peace

In this type of meditation, the meditator looks at the imbalance in the way an object is being viewed, i.e. how we exaggerate the good qualities of something and ignore its bad qualities. Even disagreeable things can appear nice, such as when we're in love with someone. The meditator focuses on the drawbacks of the desire realm the advantages of on the next higher level of existence, for example, the first concentration. Through this process the mind of the meditator begins to withdraw from the lower and tend toward the higher. The meditator suppresses the coarse attachment to the desire realm. The attachment or desire is being suppressed. As a "last resort," a type of this suppression can also be done by simply turning away from the object of desire. "Suppressed" has the meaning of turning away from the objects of the afflictions due to the level of concentration. In other words, the afflictions have not been abandoned; when the cooperative causes arise, the afflictions will arise again. So Chandrakirti is saying that if the above syllogism were true, hearers and solitary realizers would not actually abandon the afflictions, since they would not realize emptiness, just like sages who attain "worldly paths" through suppressing afflictions.

Subtle increasers

On p. 74 of *Illumination*, note 61, Jeffrey Hopkins quotes Lati Rinbochay as saying that subtle increasers are "'subtle' in that they have beginninglessly been difficult to identify." Basically, this refers to the afflictions.

Referent object of ignorance

In *Awareness and Knowers* (*blo rik*), conceptual consciousness is said to have a **referent object**. This is synonymous with conceived object, determined object, and object of engagement. Ignorance conceives of things in terms of how they exist. It believes they exist in the way they appear, i.e. inherently. In Tibetan, it often literally says that something is "held as true" (*bden bar 'dzin*) So as long as we hold to the truth of the referent object, i.e. truly existent aggregates, we will hold the person as truly existent.

February 23 (Thursday)

Discussing handout entitled 'Demonstrating that all hearers and solitary realizers realize non-inherent existence' from Jedzunba's General Meaning

The three consequences to saying that hearers and solitary realizers do not realize non-inherent existence

(1) like those free of mundane attachment, they, too would be outshone by bodhisattvas who have generated the first [ultimate] mind even by way of their intelligence.

In the same way that the first ground bodhisattva outshines those sages who suppress the afflictions by way of mundane paths that view the lower level as gross and the upper level as peaceful, the

first grounder also outshines the hearers and solitary realizers. Hearers and solitary realizers, by way of their realization of a self-sufficient substantially existent person, can temporarily abandon the manifest afflictions.

Are the sages that use this mundane path method free from all mundane attachment? They can become free from all mundane attachment except the attachment to the Peak of Cyclic Existence; they can suppress all attachment from Nothingness and below.

(2) like the non-Buddhists, they, too would not abandon all subtle increasers related to the three realms.

(3) because of erring in observing a self-entity of form and so forth, they would not realize the selflessness of persons due to observing a self-entity of the aggregates, the cause of imputing true existence to the self.

Chandrakirti posits that hearers and solitary realizers could not develop a fully-qualified realization of the selflessness of persons because they still superimpose true existence on the aggregates, the basis of imputation of persons. If we hold that the basis of imputation inherently exists, then the phenomena that we impute to it will also be held to be inherently existent.

However, in Lama Tsongkhapa's *Small Lam Rim*, he says that it is easier to first realize the selflessness of persons followed by realizing the selflessness of phenomena. This seems to be contradictory. In order to reconcile this apparent discrepancy, Jedzunba says: "If one holds to the tenet of a self of phenomena the realization of the selflessness of persons is not possible." In other words, as long as we are not holding to the self of phenomena, we would not be inhibited from realizing the selflessness of person. Thus, one must be prepared to realize the selflessness of phenomena in order to be able to realize the selflessness of person.

In *Study of Svatantrika*, Donald Lopez presents an alternative explanation on page 121.

Doubt that one can attain liberation by realizing the sixteen attributes

This doubt says that by realizing the 16 attributes of the four noble truths, one can directly realize the selflessness of persons and abandon all the afflictive emotions along with their seeds and attain nirvana. Tsongkhapa replies such a realization, the realization of the non-existence of the self-sufficient, substantially existent self is not a fully qualified realization of the selflessness of persons. These passages in both Abhidharma texts and Dharmakirti's *Commentary on 'Compendium of Valid Cognition'* that establish that one can achieve liberation by merely realizing the non-existence of a self-sufficient substantially existent self (coarse selflessness of persons) are to be interpreted. The Prasangika position is that by directly realizing this coarse selflessness of persons, one can merely suppress the manifest afflictions.

The Way of Classifying Each of the Four Noble Truths into the Two, Subtle and Coarse

Subtle true sufferings are the contaminated aggregates produced by the conception of true existence conceiving the person to naturally (or inherently) exist.

Coarse true sufferings are the contaminated aggregates produced by the view of the transitory collection conceiving the person as substantially existent in the sense of self-sufficiency.

The same formula applies to the other three truths. In general, the subtle level is induced by a subtle affliction, the conception of inherent existence, while the coarse level is produced by the conception of a substantially existent self of persons.

The contaminated aggregates within the coarse true sufferings are produced by a coarse conception of a self of persons. In contrast, the contaminated aggregates within the subtle true sufferings are

produced by a subtle conception of a self of persons, the conception of inherent existence of persons. Therefore, a coarse conception of a self of persons acts to produce a coarse true suffering; a subtle conception of a self of persons acts to produce a subtle true suffering. Contaminated aggregates are those aggregates that assumed by the force of contaminated karma and afflictions.

Regarding true cessations, a true cessation is an abandonment or separation from a portion of the afflictions such that it will not arise again. In Prasangika it is an emptiness. It does not appear that a coarse true cessation is an actual true cessation because it is merely a temporary abandonment.

There is some disagreement as to whether it is appropriate to classify all 16 attributes into subtle and coarse. Jamyang Shayba says that it is appropriate, while Jedzunba says that it is not since the attribute of impermanence which is a true suffering is necessarily subtle impermanence. According to *Path to the Middle*, coarse impermanence is momentariness, while the subtle aspect of impermanence is impermanence qualified by a lack of inherent existence.

3B1C-2A1B-2C1B This is also the system of Shantideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*

Doubt that one can attain liberation by realizing the sixteen attributes

This doubt is the same doubt that was addressed by Chandrakirti above; here Shantideva addresses it. The opponent says that since one is liberated from the afflictions through the paths perceiving the sixteen attributes, one does not need to perceive the emptiness of inherent existence.

Shantideva says that according to the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*, one must realize non-inherent existence in order to achieve liberation. When we are talking about the realization of the sixteen attributes, we are essentially referring to the realization of the non-existence of a self-sufficient substantially existent self. According to Shantideva, such a path can only temporarily suppress the manifest afflictions. The power impelling a future rebirth through the force of contaminated karma still remains.

February 25 (Friday)

Clarification

These outlines mainly are setting out the positions of Chandrakirti and Shantideva; they are not trying to exhaustively *prove* these positions.

Continuing Shantideva's position

Shantideva says that merely by realizing the 16 attributes of the four noble truths, the power of projecting karma has not been overcome. One would only be able to temporarily stop the manifest coarse afflictions; the projecting karma would not have been overcome, and one would not become a foe destroyer in this manner. Therefore, it is similar to those who have attained an absorption of non-discrimination. It is merely a temporary abandonment.

Objection

Objection by opponent: by realizing the lack of a self-sufficient substantially existent self, one is able to stop attachment/craving, the eighth link in the twelve links of interdependent arising. Therefore, the karmic formations would not be activated and the cycle of twelve links would be stopped. This is in accordance with the two Abhidharmas, Asanga's *Compendium of Knowledge* or *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (higher Abhidharma) and Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* or *Abhidharmakosha* (lower Abhidharma).

The opponent's position is that by means of cultivating the four noble truths, one can eliminate the craving that is induced by afflicted ignorance and be free from the 8th link and therefore become liberated from cyclic existence.

Prasangika reply that since you accept two types of ignorance, an afflicted ignorance and a non-afflicted ignorance, why do you not accept two types of craving induced by them. In which case, by means of the path of realizing the 16 attributes of the four noble truth you merely abandon the craving induced by the first but the craving induced by the second still remains and, thus, you are not liberated from cyclic existence.

For Prasangika the chief ignorance is the conception of true/inherent existence, and one must eliminate the craving induced by it. Thus, craving which is the 8th link is the craving that is induced by the conception of inherent existence. Merely by abandoning the manifest conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent self, one does not abandon the seeds of either level of craving.

Shantideva says that attachment/craving occurs due to the ignorance that conceives of inherent existence. Therefore, if one does not have the view of emptiness of inherent existence, one would conceive of feelings to inherently exist and would thereby generate the attachment not to be separated from pleasurable feelings and attachment wanting to be separated from unpleasurable feelings. Therefore, one would not be free from the 8th link. Thus, one must overcome the conception of the feeler and the feeling to be inherently existent.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

February 28 (Monday)

3B1C-2A1B-2C1B This is also the system of Shantideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*

We have been discussing the assertion that Hinayanists also cognize non-inherent existence. All the systems below Prasangika hold that hearers and solitary realizers need not realize non-true existence in order to be liberated so this is a unique tenet of our tradition. All Buddhist schools assert a selflessness of persons with both a coarse and a subtle selflessness delineated. From the point of view of Prasangika, all schools beneath them are only establishing a coarse selflessness of persons at best and, according to our tradition, a realization of the coarse selflessness of persons is insufficient to remove the afflictive obstructions.

Objection concerning the temporary abandonment of craving

The opponents are saying that meditating on the sixteen attributes of the four noble truths will allow one to overcome the craving that is the eighth link of the twelve links of dependent-arising, and thereby the subsequent links will be abandoned. To address this, there is a quote from Shantideva (*Illumination*, p.32), that says, "This attachment is not afflicted but why is it not like obscuration?" Our tradition is making a suggestion in response to the opponents, saying why wouldn't there also be both an afflictive and a non-afflictive craving in the same way that the lower schools assert an afflictive and non-afflictive ignorance?

This is also mentioned in a passage from *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.261), where Daniel Cozort says that this is pertains to a controversy over the status of certain persons who were regarded as foe destroyers but who still had a signs of craving. Shantideva is suggesting that among such "arhats" there was only a suppression of the manifest craving and not an abandonment of the afflictive obstructions themselves. From the Prasangika point of view, only the coarse manifest craving at most has been abandoned in any of the lower systems since to become an arhat one must abandon the subtle through the realization of non-inherent existence.

Regarding afflictive and non-afflictive

As indicated above, the lower schools assert an afflictive ignorance and a non-afflictive ignorance. **Afflictive** means that it is an obstruction to liberation. Recall that in Svatantrika, afflictive ignorance is the conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent self of persons. In Svatantrika non-afflictive ignorance is the conception of true existence, a knowledge obstruction. Also recall that the measure of true existence in Svatantrika is whether an object established from its own side by way of its own uncommon mode of subsistence without being posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness. Geshe-la said that Prasangika does not accept a non-afflictive ignorance and this is in the context of those who say that the knowledge obstructions are not a consciousness so they are not an ignorance. The view of the transitory collection along with its seeds is the root of cyclic existence in Prasangika since those are what must be abandoned within the twelve links.

Difference between selflessness of persons and phenomena

It is important to emphasize in our discussions that the difference between the selflessness of persons and of phenomena in Svatantrika is posited in terms of the object of negation, but in Prasangika the difference between those two is posited in terms of the basis upon which a self is being negated?persons or phenomena. In Svatantrika, phenomena can be seen in the light of being "empty of a self of persons" in that they are empty of being objects of use of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self of persons.

Refutation that meditation on the sixteen attributes removes acquired afflictive obstructions

Jaya-ananda is asserting that the acquired afflictions can be abandoned by the path of the four noble truths but not the innate afflictions (*Illumination*, p.33). Tsongkhapa refutes this saying that to abandon either the acquired or innate afflictive obstructions, one must abandon both the conceptions and their seeds. **Acquired** are also sometimes called artificial or intellectually formed, meaning that one has obtained these views through one's studies of incorrect tenets. There are both manifest and seed levels to the acquired obstructions. **Manifest** are actively conceiving objects in the wrong way while **seeds** are the potency to see them as such. **Innate** is referring to an instinctual holding to objects as inherently existent and there are also manifest and seed levels to these. Tsongkhapa asserts that only the realization of non-inherent existence at the path of seeing will remove

the acquired conception of true existence while the innate are removed on the path of meditation on the second through the seventh grounds. The latencies of those conceptions, i.e. the knowledge obstructions, are abandoned on the eighth through the tenth grounds of the path of meditation.

Regarding coarse and subtle

Jeffrey Hopkins, in his translation of *Illumination* adds annotations referring to some afflictions and so forth as being either coarse or subtle. When we speak of coarse and subtle in this context, the subtle afflictions are not abandoned by meditation on the four noble truths, only the coarse. The **coarse** are those afflictions that are induced by the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person while the **subtle** are those afflictions that induced by the conception of inherent existence. But keep in mind that these are only used by Hopkins and are not actually found in Lama Tsongkhapa's text.

Regarding the term “fully qualified”

When the text speaks of “fully qualified” as in a fully qualified realization of the selflessness of persons, it means that one must realize the non-inherent existence of a self of persons and not other realizations. Remember that the conceptions of a self of persons and phenomena are afflictions in Prasangika and this is a unique tenet of our tradition. The wisdom realizing the emptiness of true existence is what abandons the conception of both a self of persons and a self of phenomena.

3B1C-2A1B-2C2A Sources in Mahayana sutras proving hearers' and solitary realizers' cognition of the non-inherent existence of phenomena

Having considered passages by Chandrakirti and Shantideva, Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to examine the Mahayana sutras that support the Prasangika view.

Quotes from the *Questions of Adhyashaya Sutra*

In the sutra quoted by Lama Tsongkhapa there is a magical display wherein, when the magician conjures up an image of a desirous woman, the attachment arises in a man witnessing the event. If he were to meditate upon the impermanence, misery, etc. with regard to the woman to combat this desire, the Buddha says this is not correct a practice. The point being made here is that as long as you hold the aggregates to truly exist no matter how much you meditate on the four noble truths you will never be liberated. The mere meditation on the coarse four noble truth is not a correct mode of practice for those seeking liberation.

“Golden chains”

Similar to the example in the sutra just discussed, it is also said that any practice that is conjoined with the conception of inherent existence cannot be an actual cause for liberation. One example is prostrating to a buddha while holding that buddha to be inherently existent. Such actions are like “golden chains” – yes, they are virtuous but they do perpetuate cyclic existence. Only the cultivation of the realization of non-inherent existence will allow one to achieve liberation. However, Geshe-la indicated that this idea of golden chains is different from what is being posited in this sutra concerning the magician and the woman so one should not think of oneself as “a stupid person” when one has performed such actions.

February 29 (Tuesday)

Quotes from the *Sutra on the Miserliness of One in Trance*

In a quote from this sutra, it mentions “the four errors.” According to Geshe-la's initial teaching on this, these four are sometimes posited as:

1. Apprehending the impermanent as permanent
2. Apprehending what is in the nature of suffering to be in the nature of happiness
3. Apprehending the impure as pure
4. Apprehending the selfless as possessing a self

Geshe-la did say though that these four are interpreted differently by different scholars and he agreed that the following way of interpreting them makes sense since, as presented below, the four are more easily seen as errors that keep one from achieving liberation.

The four ways of seeing the four noble truths in reality

There is another set of four that follows in Lama Tsongkhapa's text, which are a listing of the four ways that the four noble truths must be realized. Seeing them in the opposite way would keep one from liberation and so in that way their opposites could also be interpreted as "the four errors." These four are:

1. *Seeing all products as not inherently produced* – Products here refers to either pervasive compounded suffering or all compounded phenomena. Seeing this means one knows **true sufferings** in reality.
2. *Seeing the sources for all phenomena as not inherently existent* – The sources are karma and afflictive emotions, which are the origin of suffering. Seeing this means that one knows **true origins** in reality.
3. *Seeing all phenomena by their very nature as passed beyond sorrow* – All phenomena are by nature beyond suffering because they do not truly exist. Seeing this means that one knows **true cessations** in reality.
4. *Seeing all phenomena as inherently unproduced* – This realization is the cultivation of a path. Seeing this means one knows **true paths** in reality.

In short, meditation on the four noble truths in their conventional sense cannot remove the afflictions but realizing them in the way elaborated above, essentially the non-inherent existence of the four noble truths, will do so. Those who meditate on the four noble truths without a realization of non-inherent existence may think that they have overcome these errors but they have not. Lama Tsongkhapa says that upon death, perceiving that they will not be liberated but will be reborn instead, such a result may be a cause for doubting the words of the Buddha, and cause them to fall into a great hell.

Lama Tsongkhapa says that if you hold that hearers and solitary realizers only meditate on the four noble truths then you will conclude that they do not realize emptiness. Doing so you will then conclude that all the hearer and solitary realizer superiors and foe destroyers have not actually attained such a level of realization and thereby will break the 14th root bodhisattva vow by denigrating the Hinayana.

Quotes from the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes a discussion from this sutra concerning those who have attained stream enterer, saying that if they were to think of themselves as truly existent or the fruit of stream enterer as truly existent, then they would not have attained anything. This point is also mentioned by Khedrup Je in his *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.236) which is translated by Jose Ignacio Cabezon. Khedrup Je says it is not the fact of simply thinking one has attained the fruit but rather that one thinks of this as truly existent that makes this an erroneous apprehension of the self. The stream enterer disbelieves in the referent object of the conception of true existence and has abandoned the acquired conceptions of true existence, but they have not abandoned the innate conceptions of true existence. He still has the ignorance that holds phenomena to truly exist although he has realized that phenomena do not truly exist. So there is a distinction being made here between the person as a holder of Hinayana tenets and the person who practices the Hinayana path. This passage is simply to emphasize the fact that Hinayanists must cultivate the view of the emptiness of inherent existence to be liberated.

3B1C-2A1B-2C2B Sources in treatises and in Hinayana sutras

Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to examine treatises and Hinayana sutras that confirm that hearers and solitary realizers realize emptiness.

Quotes (stanzas 35-37) from Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*

Nagarjuna indicates that in order to eradicate the view of the transitory collection completely, that is, the self of persons, it is necessary first to come to disbelieve (*sun ma 'byin*) in the referent object of the conception of the self of phenomena.

Regarding meaning generalities and conventional truth

The definition of a meaning generality of pot is a superimposed factor that, although not being a pot, appears to be a pot to the conception conceiving it. So it is a factor that we superimpose on an object, but not the actual object itself. Our ignorance is holding objects to exist as true. The Tibetan term for conventional truth (*kun rdzob bden pa*) is not literally that – a more literal meaning is a "thoroughly false truth" or a "truth for a concealer," with concealer meaning ignorance. Anytime you look at an object, for example a table, it appears to inherently exist. It is not the shape or the color of the table but the way the table appears to exist that is the element that is false with regard to the appearance of the table. The concealer that is ignorance comes along accedes to this false appearance. We must come to disbelieve in the referent object of that ignorance – the true existence of the table.

A mental image is kind of like a map, in that they refer to an actual place but are not the actual place themselves. In the case of a mental image of a truly existent phenomenon, that image is like an imaginary map, which has no actual point of reference in reality. As long as the aggregates are misperceived as truly existent, one cannot overcome completely the view of the transitory collection. If you haven't disbelieved in the referent object of the conception of truly existent aggregates, then you will not realize personal selflessness and be liberated.

March 1 (Wednesday)

View of the transitory collection doesn't bind the first ground bodhisattva in cyclic existence

Lama Tsongkhapa says that Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (35cd) teaches "that due to the presence of the view of the transitory as real 'I' and 'mine,' actions binding one to cyclic existence are accumulated and through the force of these actions one is born in cyclic existence." The bodhisattva on the first through seventh grounds still has the ignorance that is the view of the transitory collection but that bodhisattva no longer takes rebirth by the power of contaminated actions. This might seem to be related to the fact that this bodhisattva has had a direct realization of emptiness but so has the Hinayana superior so why is that so? Geshe-la said in a later teaching that there is more to why a bodhisattva does not take rebirth by the power of contaminated actions. Basically this is accomplished by the force of having accumulated the equivalent of one countless great eon of merit, something the Hinayana superior has not done.

Analogy of a camera photographing a vase

One analogy for this might be a camera with a scratched lens taking a photograph of a vase. The an actual vase is the **object of observation**. The photograph represents the **appearing object of a conception**, i.e. a meaning generality, or mental image (*don spyi*). The photograph refers to something in reality in that it is a representation of the vase but yet it is not the actual vase. Just as with a meaning generality, you can come to understand the appearance of the vase from a photograph so it does assist in coming to understand the object of observation. Since there is a scratch on the lens, the vase in the photograph appears as a vase with a crack in it, and this cracked vase is the **referent object** of the photograph. Due to the imperfection, the camera taking the photograph observes the vase to actually have a crack (like the referent object) although the actual vase (the object of observation) does not, in fact, have such a crack. But this appearance is due to having a scratch on the lens. Once the photographer come to understand that there is a scratch on the lens, he no longer believes the in the referent object of the photograph – the cracked vase. It still appears in the photographs he takes but he does not believe in that element of the photograph. He knows it to be false.

The meaning of this analogy is as follows: the scratch on the lens is the **appearance of true existence** due to the knowledge obstructions, the camera is **ignorance**, **observed object** is all phenomena, the photograph, the **appearing object**, is the mental image of a truly existent pot, and the **referent object** is truly existent object vase. The photographer is someone on the path of seeing who has come to disbelieve in the referent object ignorance conceiving true existence.

To elaborate further, the photographer, having seen "cracks" in all the vases that are photographed, checks out the lens and realizes that there is a scratch that causes them to appear as cracked. He no longer believes in the cracked vases, the referent object, although since the lens is still scratched, they still appear as cracked in all the photographs. Similarly, all phenomena appear to sentient beings as truly existent due to the predispositions of ignorance from beginningless time. The function of ignorance is a misknowing of the way an object exists. It hold to a false appearance as true. Initially there is a growing disbelief in the referent object of ignorance by wisdom. Eventually the ignorance itself is eliminated and finally even the false appearance.

Continuation of discussion of the quotes (stanzas 35-37) from Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*

As we discussed earlier, the first stanza indicates that as long as one conceives of the aggregates as truly existent, one cannot have a fully qualified realization of the non-inherent existence of the 'I'. The second stanza speaks of the three pathways, which we've discussed earlier when we spoke of the metaphor of the bucket in the well. In brief, these three pathways are thoroughly afflicted affliction, action and rebirth (the third is also called suffering or production). There is a continuous process of these three being generated, just like the wheel of a

firebrand. The third stanza speaks of the wheel being not inherently existent, and once one sees the reality of phenomena, the conception of an truly existent ‘I’ ceases and thereby actions and rebirth cease.

Eighth ground bodhisattva is not a foe destroyer

Generally when we say foe destroyer we mean someone who has “destroyed the foe,” often meaning specifically the afflictive obstructions, but, although a bodhisattva on the eighth ground has abandoned the afflictive obstructions, she is not a foe destroyer. Why? She has not fulfilled the object of her training, i.e. she has not obtained the Mahayana path of no more learning. The bodhisattva on the eighth ground who has previously completed the Hinayana, is he a foe destroyer. He does have a Hinayana path of no more learning in his continuum but this could be a subject of debate.

Misinterpretations of Chandrakirti

Someone says that Chandrakirti is putting forth a common selflessness of persons that is also established by the lower tenets but this is rejected by Lama Tsongkhapa. This is a subtle selflessness of persons that is uncommon to the Prasangika and is realized by superiors in all vehicles.

March 2 (Thursday)

The seven facsimiles of direct cognizers and the four types of superficial errors

In *Autocommentary*, Nagarjuna provides additional verses from *Precious Garland*. Regarding stanza 357 and the statement that “the eye, by mistake, apprehends the wheel of a firebrand,” Geshe-la gave a brief introduction to a topic discussed in *Awareness and Knowledge (blo rig)*. There are seven facsimiles of direct cognizers: those which are mistaken with respect to shape, color, activity entity, number, time and size (see *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, by Lati Rinpoche, p.112). All seven of these can be classified into four types of superficial causes that bring about errors. There four types of superficial causes that bring about errors (see *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p.52):

1. Cause of error existing in the object
2. Cause of error existing in the basis
3. Cause of error existing in the abode
4. Cause of error existing in the immediately preceding condition

Lati Rinpoche gives examples of each of these:

1. A consciousness perceiving a circle of fire due a firebrand being whirled around quickly.
2. Seeing a single moon as double due to a fault in the eye (Geshe-la said such a fault might be due to pressing lightly on the eyeball).
3. When riding in a boat or a car, seeing the trees moving as you pass them (the “abode” creates a misperception of the trees actually moving when it is you who are actually moving).
4. Seeing everything as red when one is overcome by anger.

Additional quotes (stanzas 357-365) from Nagarjuna’s *Precious Garland* in *Autocommentary*

Although Geshe-la mentioned the above in the light of stanza 357 of *Precious Garland*, he didn’t comment on much else in regard to this set of verses. In his earlier teachings in 1985 he did expound on them somewhat (pp.59-61 of Geshe-la’s *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*). Stanza 357 speaks of how we see the “present objects” as existing from their own side. In Stanza 358, if you substitute “unreal” instead of “meaningless” in this and the following stanzas, perhaps it is easier to comprehend the meaning. The lower schools assert that the elements exist but in Prasangika they are “unreal” as objects. Stanza 359 says that if each of the elements were inherently existent then they would exist independent of each other. However, as indicated in the next stanza, if they existed as an assemblage, they would lose their individual characteristics. All the various materials are composed of the four elements and, according to the proportion of each of them, those materials have various characteristics. Nothing could evolve out of them if each of the elements were inherently existent so no evolutes, or secondary elements, could exist. In the same way, as Nagarjuna indicates in Stanza 361, the other four aggregates, having no real essence, are unreal as ultimate objects as well.

Stanza 362 says that, similarly if happiness and suffering existed inherently, we could never change them. Technically speaking we have never experienced real happiness since we are always in some state of suffering. As indicated in Stanza 363, if you see the non-inherent existence of feelings, it will undermine your attachment

to pleasurable feelings and your aversion to non-pleasurable ones. An ultimate mind sees dependent-arising itself as being non-inherently existent. Nagarjuna continues, saying in Stanza 364 that the mind is similarly unreal and so is also asserted to not inherently exist. Finally in Stanza 365, he concludes by saying that this process of seeing migrators as unreal, one can “pass beyond sorrow.”

Additional quote (stanza 366) from Nagarjuna’s *Precious Garland*

Stanza 366 from *Precious Garland* is quoted in both *Illumination* and *Autocommentary*. As was mentioned earlier, the first ground bodhisattva no longer takes rebirth in cyclic existence due to the force of karma and delusions. This is due not only to her disbelief in the referent object of the conception of true existence but moreover to her having accumulated the equivalent of merit over one countless great eon. Nagarjuna indicates in this stanza that it is through their compassion (and prayers) that the bodhisattva superiors continue to take rebirth in cyclic existence.

Question regarding the hundred rebirths of a first ground bodhisattva

As we discussed earlier, the first ground bodhisattva has the abilities of emanating a hundred rebirths and so forth, and someone asked Geshe-la the last time he taught this, which one of these hundred goes on to attain enlightenment? According to Geshe-la this is one of those four phenomena that are inconceivable to ordinary beings (the power of substances, the power of mantra, the power of karma, and the powers of the buddhas and bodhisattvas). Specifically he said (p.63 of Geshe-la’s *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*), “It is possible for a bodhisattva to divide his consciousness into many parts to manifest each form.”

Hinayana sutra

There is one Hinayana sutra cited here, the one with the five similes for the five aggregates. Geshe-la also discussed these more extensively in his previous teachings (pp.62-63 of Geshe-la’s *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*). This verse is used to establish how hearers and solitary realizers realize the selflessness of phenomena but the two lower schools hold that this verse teaches impermanence and not emptiness. This verse is also used by some scholars to say that the Mahayana sutras are in fact the teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni. To someone who refuted the Mahayana, Geshe-la says you could challenge how that person would uphold the Hinayana. If they said that the Hinayana teaches sutra, abhidharma, and vinaya, then the Mahayana would logically be also accepted since those are also taught there.

March 3 (Friday)

The following were some of the main points in Geshe-la’s question and answer session today:

- The first ground bodhisattva disbelieves in the referent object of the view of the transitory collection but that in and of itself is insufficient to overcome the continuation of rebirth in cyclic existence through the force of karma. The main cause for this is the accumulation of the equivalent amount of merit for one countless great eon that occurred on the paths of accumulation and preparation.
- Geshe-la dismissed the assertion that the ignorance within the twelve links does not exist in the continuum of a superior due to projecting karma not existing in that continuum. Geshe-la said that assertion was according to *Abhidharma* and is not true in Svatantrika (or Prasangika).
- In the question on the relationship between a number of key terms, Geshe-la said the following. The **conception of the self of phenomena and of persons** both have the same mode of apprehension and are only distinguished by their objects. The **first link (ignorance) in the twelve links of dependent-arising** is the innate conception of a self of persons. The **view of the transitory collection** is a conception of a self of persons, viewing the ‘I’ or ‘mine’ and conceiving them to exist inherently. The **root of cyclic existence** is the conception of a self of persons. We do know that the ignorance that is the first link of the twelve links ceases to exist for the bodhisattva at the path of seeing (although it may not be said to be “abandoned” since the path of seeing does not abandon innate conceptions of true existence). Geshe-la said there is a reason why the bodhisattva ceases to generate any contaminated karma after the path of seeing but did not have time to elaborate.

Quote from Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*

Here Nagarjuna brings out the distinction that some hearers were not taught these teachings due to not being proper vessels for them. Nonetheless they were taught to hearers.

Quote (stanza 386) from Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*

There follows a passage based on another stanza (386) from *Precious Garland*, where two terms are used, “non-production” in the Mahayana and “extinction” in the Hinayana, and Lama Tsongkhapa asserts that these are both referring to emptiness. In this passage when it speaks of “extinction,” it is generally referring to the extinction of the aggregates. Lama Tsongkhapa gives a lengthy discussion on “extinction” and Geshe-la brought out a few points on this.

Regarding nirvana

Nirvana is a true cessation. In general there are four types of nirvana: two associated with the Hinayana: (1) nirvana with remainder and (2) nirvana without remainder. Then there is (3) non-abiding nirvana, the nirvana of the Mahayana. Lastly there is (4) natural nirvana, the emptiness of phenomena, which is only nominally a nirvana.

The lower schools on nirvana with and without remainder

According to the lower two schools who hold the aggregates to truly exist, to attain a nirvana without remainder is to say that the contaminated aggregates must come to an end to abandon true sufferings. Nirvana is a liberation, a true cessation of suffering that is attained by abandoning the afflictive obstructions such that they will never arise again. In the lower schools, a person attains a true cessation, a nirvana within their continuum, by having abandoned the afflictive obstructions but they still have the body that arose due to afflictive emotions and contaminated karma so that body is a true suffering. Since the nirvana is conjoined with a true suffering, it is considered a nirvana with remainder. Upon death, there is a disintegration of the aggregates and the being comes to an end. There is no more driving force for the continuity of the being since desire drives continued rebirth. The body and mind cease just like a flame being extinguished – this is nirvana without remainder. His Holiness the Dalai Lama once said this would seem like cosmic suicide – if that is the spiritual goal, he'd rather stay in samsara!

In *Cutting Through Appearances* (pp.205-206) there is a discussion of the lower schools' position on the afflictive and non-afflictive ignorance that we discussed earlier this week. In Vaibhashika, there is “non-afflictive ignorance,” which mainly is what is abandoned to attain the state of all-knowing, a state different from the omniscience posited by the upper schools. This state of all-knowing was only achieved once in this eon – by Shakyamuni Buddha. He attained the four skills that allowed him to work with disciples in skillful ways but at the end of his life, he too attained a nirvana without remainder and ceased to exist.

The higher schools on nirvana with and without remainder

The higher schools do not hold such beliefs. In Prasangika, nirvana without remainder is attained first, since it is defined in that school as a Hinayana nirvana qualified by the vanishing of the appearance of true existence. So it comes down to whether or not the appearance of true existence is occurring or not. The level of latencies of ignorance cause the foe destroyer to take a mental body and reside in solitary peace that is eventually disturbed by a buddha who encourages them to enter the Mahayana and abandon the remaining obstructions. When a foe destroyer arises from meditative equipoise and is in subsequent attainment, the appearance of true existence returns so there is a nirvana with remainder at that time.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 6 (Monday)

3B1C-2A1B-2C2B Sources in treatises and Hinayana sutras

Extinction and non-production

Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* says that the word "extinction" in the Hinayana sutras is equivalent to "non-production" in the Mahayana sutras in that they both teach emptiness. In the Hinayana context, extinction means the extinction of the suffering aggregates. Non-production, in the Mahayana context, means the non-existence of inherent production. Extinction is said to be equivalent to emptiness, which is equivalent to non-production. The following argument shows how this can be misinterpreted.

Someone says here that extinction and non-production are equivalent, which is correct, but his reason for saying so is wrong. This person says that if the aggregates – e.g. the body – inherently existed, they could not become otherwise, i.e., they could not become extinct. This person says that because Hinayana accepts the extinction of the aggregates, they must also accept that the aggregates do not inherently exist. Lama Tsongkhapa says that this interpretation is very wrong. This leads to the absurd consequence that products and emptiness are synonymous. Hinayana says that sprouts inherently exist while emptiness does not exist, because phenomena truly exist. So, according to Lama Tsongkhapa, emptiness and a non-inherently existent sprout would, for the Hinayanist, be equally non-existent. For a hearer tenet holder, a sprout as asserted by Prasangika, is a non-existent. The reason given does not establish why extinction and non-production are equal in meaning emptiness.

Two types of nirvana

All schools accept the attainment of nirvana by abandoning the afflicted obstructions. There are two types of Hinayana nirvana – **nirvana with remainder** and **nirvana without remainder**. What do we mean by "remainder"? All the schools below Prasangika would say that remainder is the suffering contaminated aggregates assumed under the influence of afflictions and karma, that is, the continuum of the foe destroyer is still contains the suffering aggregates. Nirvana without remainder is attained at the time of death of the foe destroyer. The suffering aggregates cease. Prasangika assert remainder means the manifest appearance of true existence. Therefore, they would say that one realizes nirvana with remainder first, that is, on the occasion of the meditative equipoise of the path of no more learning. For that foe destroyer the aggregates are extinct since no conventionalities are appearing. However, he has not yet died. Basically, a nirvana without remainder is a Hinayana nirvana in which there is a vanishing of the manifest appearance of true existence. When the foe destroyer arises from meditative equipoise, conventionalities again appear, and he has a nirvana with remainder, the appearance of true existence. He therefore alternates between these two. (Daniel Cozort discusses this topic in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School*, pp. 252-258.)

Primordial extinguishment

According to Prasangika, non-inherent existence is realized in meditative equipoise by foe destroyers, although it is not asserted by Hinayana tenets. Hinayana says the foe destroyer's continuum is severed at the time of death. According to Prasangika, there is no person who has actualized nirvana without remainder in the way that Hinayana posits it, because if the aggregates become extinct or go out of existence with regard to an arhat, there would be no actualizer to actualize the nirvana without remainder. A person whose aggregates have been destroyed would be dead.

For Prasangika, nirvana without remainder does not refer to an extinguishment of the aggregates; they say the aggregates are extinguished *in emptiness* rather than in the sense of being destroyed. The way that extinction and non-production both mean emptiness is to take extinction as meaning that the aggregates are primordially extinguished, i.e., they are lacking in inherent existence. Prasangika says to those who hold hearer tenets: if extinction, as you say, is by way of antidote and antidote means that the aggregates disintegrate at death then, just as there is no such thing as a "dead person," there is no foe destroyer who has attained nirvana without remainder, since the person would be non-existent upon its attainment. In other words, there is no foe destroyer who can have attained nirvana without remainder; this cannot be what extinction means.

Lama Tsongkhapa says it is acceptable to explain extinguishment as being so-called in terms of primordial extinguishment. Primordial extinguishment and absence of inherently existent production come to mean the same thing for Prasangika.

3B1C-2A1B-2C3 Dispelling objections to the teaching that hearers and solitary realizers cognize the non-inherent existence of phenomena

Bhavaviveka and Buddhapalita

Here, we are looking at Bhavaviveka's objection to Buddhapalita. Bhavaviveka says that if the Hinayana sutras teach the emptiness of phenomena, then the Mahayana sutras are meaningless. Lama Tsongkhapa asks if he means they are senseless (1) in general, or (2) that their teachings on selflessness of phenomena are senseless. If the first, it implies that the Mahayana sutras teach only selflessness of phenomena, whereas the Mahayana sutras also teach the bodhisattva grounds, prayers, dedications, practices, and so forth. If he means the second objection, implying that the Mahayana teaching is redundant, it is wrong because the Mahayana teaches selflessness of phenomena extensively with limitless forms of reasoning, whereas the Hinayana only teaches it briefly.

Signlessness

In the context of the three doors of liberation, signlessness refers to phenomena not having inherently existent causes. In the present context, it refers to the absence of signs of inherent existence. Nagarjuna indicates that Buddha taught signlessness fully in the Mahayana, and not in the Hinayana. Because non-inherent existence of all objects is the same, one can realize emptiness of all objects through realizing emptiness of one object, so this is not what "fully" refers to. It refers to the fact that Mahayanists use limitless reasonings whereas the Hinayanists use only limited reasonings. Why? The Mahayanist needs to abandon the knowledge obstructions rather than just the afflicted obstructions. The bodhisattva's mind is "broadened" by using the many different forms of reasonings.

True existence of emptiness

On p. 41, it talks about someone's position that emptiness truly exists. Chakba Chogyi Sengge wrongly maintained that emptiness truly exists. For something to truly exist, it must be found by a reasoning consciousness analyzing for the ultimate. For example, when we analyze a pot, we never find the pot. Emptiness is similar in that it does not truly exist. Since the way emptiness appears accords with the way it exists, this makes emptiness an ultimate truth so it's possible Chakba Chogyi Sengge is saying that emptiness is truly existent because of this fact. In the direct realization of emptiness, the only thing appearing is emptiness and it does in fact, exist the way it appears.

March 7 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2A1B-2C3B Dispelling objections not set forth in Chandrakirti's commentary

Realizations of solitary realizers

This discussion revolves around a quote from the *Ornament*. Here, solitary realizers are said to not realize the subject as empty of true existence, although they do attain "abandonment of the thought of an object." There are two interpretations presented, the first of which is wrong. The first interpretation says:

- (1) "Solitary realizers meditate on the meaning of a reasoned refutation of the true existence of external objects, as laid down by the Madhyamikas." This assertion is wrong, because, as Aryadeva says, "He who sees the suchness of one phenomenon sees the suchness of all phenomena." In the teachings on *Ornament for Clear Realizations*, when we looked at the four yogic grounds, it was said that solitary realizers do not abandon the conception of the consciousness as truly existent. If one could realize the lack of true existence of an object, one could realize the emptiness of true existence of the subject just by turning one's attention to it and relying on the same line of reasoning.
- (2) The second interpretation of the passage says "On the basis of having meditated on the meaning of a reasoned refutation of external objects in accordance with Chittamatra, solitary realizers abandon the

conception that external objects exist.” According to Chittamatra, external phenomena do not exist as substantially different from the consciousnesses perceiving them. On the basis of realizing this, the solitary realizer realizes that subject and object are not truly existent different substances. This accords with Haribhadra’s interpretation in our discussion of *Ornament*.

Correction to Illumination, p.42: Where it says “...solitary realizers who *compound* the truth of subjects and the Chittamatrins...,” the word “compound” should be “propound.”

Though the majority of solitary realizers are temporarily followers of Chittamatra tenets, the Prasangikas say that some solitary realizers abandon the conception of truly existent objects and therefore realize the emptiness of external phenomena and if one realizes this, one can realize the emptiness of all phenomena. Yogachara Svatantrika (Haribhadra’s school) posit three types of persons in three vehicles – great, middling, and small corresponding to sharp, middling, and dull faculties. Hearers realize selflessness of persons, solitary realizers realize non-duality of subject and object, and bodhisattvas realize emptiness of true existence. Prasangika would hold that although all three realize non-true existence, they are differentiated by how quickly they realize the ultimate view on non-inherent existence.

The element of qualities

For Prasangika, the preceding verses established that solitary realizers realize emptiness. On p. 43, the verse beginning “The element of qualities...” is also used to prove that Hinayanists realize emptiness of inherent existence. “Element of qualities” refers to the naturally abiding lineage, meaning dharmadhatu or emptiness. In *Ornament*, we studied two types of lineages: naturally abiding and developmental lineage. **Naturally abiding lineage** is that which is suitable to be transformed into the uncompounded body of a buddha. The **developmental lineage** becomes the compounded body of a buddha.

Here, we are discussing the naturally abiding lineage on the occasion of the path. When some factor acts as the cause of the qualities of a superior, it is said to be lineage. The *basis* being observed is lineage; the path consciousness observing it is *what is based*, or the *dependent*. This consciousness progresses on the path on the basis of observing the lineage. One’s mind develops the qualities of a superior and so forth. This emptiness has no divisions, so lineage cannot be differentiated from the point of view of its being an emptiness, but we can make divisions by way of the paths, or the consciousnesses that observe lineage. These divisions are by name only; that is, they are imputed.

There is an objection, saying that all our minds are empty, so all sentient beings abide in lineage. We all have emptiness of the mind, but this does not mean that we abide in lineage. We abide in lineage when the path consciousness takes the emptiness of the mind as the basis of observation. This begins at the path of preparation. Simply *having* lineage does not mean *abiding* in lineage.

According to Prasangika, we can establish three lineages, because the persons of each vehicle, by observing lineage on the occasion of the path, goes on to develop the qualities of a superior and the enlightenment of their respective vehicle. So, all superiors realize emptiness of inherent existence.

Two modes of Hinayanists

In Svatantrika, it is usually said that hearers and solitary realizers do not realize emptiness, although there are exceptions. Prasangika agrees on the presentation of two modes, those who are and who are not presently proper receptacles for the realization of emptiness.

March 8 (Wednesday)

Recap of discussion on Maitreya’s *Ornament*

The two quotes from *Ornament* make reference to a rhinoceros-like solitary realizer, one of the three types delineated previously. We have examined these two quotes and come to the conclusion that from the Prasangika point of view, these quotes indicate that the solitary realizer realizes the suchness of phenomena. There are two alternatives that are considered and dispelled, one that the solitary realizer realizes only the suchness of object and not subject while the other is from the viewpoint of Chittamatra, and this entails the assertion that external

objects do not exist. The Followers of Scripture in the Chittamatra school assert a mind-basis-of-all, and from that consciousness, the subject and the object both arise simultaneously through the activation of a latency. By coming to realize this non-dual nature of subject and object, one can realize that external objects do not exist and that only subjects exist.

Levels of faculties and the relation to the profundity of teachings

Yogachara-Svatantrika asserts three persons of the three vehicles with three levels of faculties. In that school, the idea is that there are different views presented based on their faculties as Lama Tsongkhapa sets out on p.42. Prasangika asserts three levels of faculties in terms of how quickly an individual is able to penetrate the view of emptiness. A bodhisattva is trying to be of greatest benefit to all disciples of all three vehicles and since most of these disciples are not ready for the profound teaching that all phenomena do not truly exist, texts such as *Ornament* can be interpreted as setting out an inferior view. As such, these texts are skillful presentations that serve as stepping-stones to the most profound view of Prasangika-Madhyamika. Remember that one can be a Hinayanist or a Mahayanist by either tenet or by path. So one can be a Hinayanist by way of motivation but still subscribe to Mahayana tenets. The Hinayanist who subscribes to Hinayana tenets would eventually have to study Mahayana tenets (specifically Prasangika-Madhyamika) to realize emptiness. Those disciples who are not ready for a more profound teaching are given a coarser view that meets their individual needs.

Quote from *Ornament* regarding lineage

From this very quote itself we can understand that lineage, which here is emptiness, is not different and so it cannot be divided. By observing this emptiness on the bodhisattva path, it serves as a nominal cause for attaining buddhahood. You cannot make a distinction between non-affirming negations but you can distinguish between that which is based on that emptiness, i.e. the observing consciousnesses that observe that lineage. In the *Ornament*, there are thirteen divisions of natural abiding lineage in the sense of acting as a base for the thirteen the Mahayana achievings. Likewise, you can speak of three different lineages (hearer, solitary realizer and bodhisattva), and each which will achieve their respective goal (small, middling and great enlightenments). By observing the lineage, they will go on to attain their respective results. Regardless of this, not all beings are said to be receptacles for the teachings on emptiness. Lama Tsongkhapa shows that there are two modes being exhibited in *Ornament*, one where emptiness is taught and one where it is not. Arya Vimuktisena and Haribhadra are even quoted by Lama Tsongkhapa to support this view.

3B1C-2A1B-3 Surpassing feature on the first ground

3B1C-2A1B-3A The giving of abiders on the first ground

On the Feb.4 handout, there is a definition of the bodhisattva superior's first ground from Jedzunba's *Ocean*. In each of the ten grounds there will be a focus or emphasis on one of the ten perfections. Here on the first ground, the measure of force is given primarily to the perfection of generosity or giving. From the first ground onwards, the bodhisattva's path consciousness is conjoined with the wisdom directly realizing emptiness, and this realization will affect the practices of the ten perfections on each of the corresponding grounds. Giving is the antidote to miserliness so here the bodhisattva can give away freely without any trace of miserliness. On the second ground there is not even a slight transgression of ethics, even in dreams, but this does not exist on the first ground. So there is a progression regarding these ten perfections throughout the ten grounds.

Internal and external signs

There are two signs by way of which these are understood: an internal sign and an external sign. The internal sign (the absence of miserliness) is not suitable to appear to others while the external sign is what allows others to infer the realization of that bodhisattva. Here the external sign is a "sign of effect," similar to the example of the sign of smoke that is used to infer the existence of fire. In general, there are three types of reasons or signs: sign of nature, effect, and non-observation. This is the second. So what is the sign of effect that is necessary to infer that this is a first ground bodhisattva? A bodhisattva freely giving away her own flesh with devotion is used to infer an inner quality which is not obvious.

The first supramundane cause of enlightenment

This supramundane perfection of giving is said to be the first **supramundane** cause of a buddha because it is conjoined with the wisdom directly realizing emptiness. All ten of these perfections are consciousness, not

physical activities, and they are all conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness. Generosity is said to be the intention to give although there is much room for discussion on exactly what this entails.

3B1C-2A1B-3B The giving of those with a lower basis

Lama Tsongkhapa proceeds to look at giving in two ways, first giving in terms of a lower basis, meaning non-bodhisattvas, and in the next section, giving with a higher basis, meaning bodhisattvas.

3B1C-2A1B-3B1 Attaining the happiness of cyclic existence through giving

Realizing that some type of material base is needed to attain even the mundane happiness of cyclic existence, the Buddha taught generosity first since it is the cause for material well being. There are four types of generosity:

1. Giving of materials – This includes all physical resources and so forth that are of benefit to others.
2. Giving of Dharma – This can be thought of as any education, not just the teaching of Dharma.
3. Giving of protection – This is often called giving fearlessness, protecting beings from fear.
4. Giving of love – This is training in the thought of wishing others to be happy.

Is it necessary to have a beneficial attitude in giving for it to be a cause for material prosperity in the future? Geshe-la said the answer to this is no. For example, people with ulterior motives, such as profit motives in business, will also attain wealth and prosperity through their giving. The point in that though, is that even in those cases there is benefit to the giver so it is that much greater when the intention to give is accompanied by a wish only for others' welfare.

March 9 (Thursday)

3B1C-2A1B-3B2 Attaining the happiness of nirvana through giving

Through having given to holy beings in the past, patrons can be influenced by those beings and in the future attain even the happiness of nirvana through their giving.

3B1C-2A1B-3C Bodhisattva's giving

This is the giving of those with a higher basis, bodhisattvas.

3B1C-2A1B-3C1 Extraordinary benefits of bodhisattva's giving

We don't normally see the relationship between our giving and the results of our giving. Due to this, ordinary people not seeing an immediate effects from one's generosity, may give up the practice due to this. However, bodhisattvas do experience an immediate happiness in seeing the recipient of their giving satisfied and made happy. The bodhisattva experiences joy in the same way that a parent gets extreme joy from the happiness that their child experiences. Bodhisattvas also see the long-term effects of giving and develop great joy at that as well. As practitioners, we can implement this type of thinking in our practice of tong-len, for example. By taking the time to experience the result of the pleasure you get from giving to others in that practice, that will reinforce the intention to give through uniting it with the joy you experience.

3B1C-2A1B-3C2 Importance of discourse on giving for both the compassionate and the non-compassionate

When the Buddha gave a discourse on the ten perfections, generosity was the most important of these ten for both bodhisattvas and ordinary people. Lama Tsongkhapa says that "giving induces the happiness of high status and definite goodness." Although here it does say giving induces the *happiness* of high status and definite goodness, usually it is said that the practice of ethics is what is the *cause* for high status and definite goodness. On the basis of giving one acquires the basis for the practices of ethics, patience, and so forth so without the basis of generosity, one cannot progress in the perfections.

3B1C-2A1B-3C3 The joy attained by bodhisattvas when giving

We have spoken of two types of joys, the immediate result of seeing the person satisfied, and the long-term result of one's generosity but here there is another way of describing the bodhisattva's joy. It is said that a bodhisattva experiences even more happiness than that which a Hinayana foe destroyer experiences on simply being asked to give. Chandrakirti's root text indicates that the bodhisattva actively participating in the world experiences greater bliss than the foe destroyer residing in their solitary peace of nirvana. In modern scientific

terms, one might even suggest that there is a physiological change in the bodhisattva (perhaps an increase in the endorphins that induce pleasure in the body) that makes one to experience such bliss at the mere request from another to “give.” The mere prospect of giving, seeing the happiness in the recipient, and understanding the long-term benefits from that giving all bring a bodhisattva immense joy.

3B1C-2A1B-3C4 Whether or not suffering occurs when a bodhisattva gives away his body

Absence of pain in a superior bodhisattva

For a bodhisattva who has attained a ground, the bodhisattva experiences no physical or mental suffering by literally giving away their own body, “just as is the case when mindless things are cut.” In the *Questions of Gaganaganja Sutra*, quoted in both *Illumination* and *Autocommentary*, it compares this to a grove of *shala* trees, saying that when a single tree is cut down, there is no subsequent worrying or pain in the remaining trees. Similarly, there is no pain in that bodhisattva due to the supreme, completely purified patience of the bodhisattva, that is “equal to space.” Although similar to a foe destroyer in that the bodhisattva does not feel any pain, he does continue to empathize with pain in others through his compassion. Compassion is called that which interrupts peace so that is why the bodhisattva stays involved with others and does not withdraw into solitary peace.

Presence of pain in an ordinary bodhisattva

It is said that an ordinary bodhisattva will experience physical pain in the cutting of the body and will also experience mental suffering, due to the threat of dying from such actions. However, in the course of experiencing that mental suffering he is able to identify that much stronger with the suffering of others, especially hell beings and those afflicted with great suffering. From that experience the courage and determination to end the sufferings of these other beings is strengthened.

Also, unlike the superior bodhisattva, the ordinary bodhisattva can give away parts of their body but not their lives. However, even a bodhisattva must be discriminating in when and how he gives. Mother Teresa used to suggest that patrons “give until it hurts just a little bit.” The idea behind her advice is that one should constantly push the limits of one’s giving but not give too much since the pain of loss becomes a negative reinforcement and may cause one to stop giving.

Possible reasons for the absence of pain in the bodhisattva after the first ground

Upon attaining the path of seeing, some say that the bodhisattva attains a body of the nature of mind – perhaps that is why the superior bodhisattva no longer experiences such pain. However, if one does not hold that there is a body in the nature of mind upon the path of seeing then one would still have a physical body and so it’s a bit unclear why that bodhisattva would not feel pain with injury to that body. There are other possible reasons why the bodhisattva no longer experiences pain. One possible reason is that the bodhisattva now has a direct realization of the non-inherent existence of both the I and the body, and this would eliminate the experience of pain. A second possible reason is that the bodhisattva, having completed the practice of exchanging self and others, is totally without self-cherishing so there is no basis for the pain to arise.

Regarding the terms “surpassing” and “supramundane”

In our discussions of the ten perfections, sometimes they are referred to as *surpassing* perfections and here surpassing means a measure or force of mind that is created by a particular ground. The surpassing perfection of each of the ten occurs with the respective ground but all ten would be *supramundane* once the bodhisattva enters the first ground.

March 10 (Friday)

Points learned in questions with Geshe-la this morning

- In response to the question regarding what constitutes attaining a “disbelief” in the referent object of the conception of true existence, Geshe-la said that this occurs with a “realization of emptiness.” Geshe-la went on to say that, in the Sera May tradition, some say that even a correct assumption of emptiness is a realization of emptiness. One meaning of a correctly assuming consciousness is a factually concordant controvertible awareness that arises depending neither upon reasoning or experience. This consciousness is

not particularly stable nor does it eliminate superimposition with respect to its object, so it's curious that some would say this. When we speak of this "disbelief" in the context of the first ground, the bodhisattva in subsequent attainment will have times when ignorance will arise but due to his path consciousness being conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness, he no longer believes in the referent object of the conception of true existence. So just because that mental factor of ignorance arises, it doesn't mean that the bodhisattva accepts it, or "buys into it." Is the referent object of this ignorance the appearance of true existence or is it a truly existent object? We only speak of a referent object when the ignorance is manifest so it must be a "truly existent object," which in fact does not exist. The appearance of true existence is a knowledge obstruction, a predisposition that is not a consciousness according to Jedzunba. Geshe-la was trying to differentiate between the bodhisattva and the ignorance within the bodhisattva's continuum – the bodhisattva is able to repudiate the referent object even when the ignorance arises. In summary, the "disbelief" in the referent object of the conception of true existence can occur even prior to the path then, and Geshe-la confirmed that this disbelief is not the primary factor for the bodhisattva to cease taking rebirth in cyclic existence due to karma and afflictions.

- Geshe-la said that the surpassing perfection of giving arises on the path of seeing but it is not manifest until subsequent attainment. This implies that it arises on meditative equipoise of the path of seeing.
- Geshe-la also said that giving and the intention to give are mutually inclusive. This means that giving in this context is a consciousness, not the "physical activity" of giving although he did say that one must "actually give" in the course of perfecting one's practice of giving.

3B1C-2A1B-3D Divisions of the perfection of giving

Mundane and supramundane perfections

We can divide the perfection of giving into two, the supramundane and the mundane. Those perfections such as generosity that are conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness are termed supramundane perfections. The way this is expressed in giving, for example, is that the bodhisattva realizes that the three spheres (the giver, the gift and the recipient) are all empty of true existence. On the other hand, any generosity where there is an attachment to any of the three spheres as truly existent would be a mundane perfection. And, if you are not conceiving the three spheres to either truly exist or not truly exist, it seems it would be mundane. To have a supramundane perfection, it must be conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness, since, as Lama Tsongkhapa says, it must be "conjoined with the uncontaminated wisdom empty of observing gift, giver, and receiver as truly existent."

Regarding the term "perfection"

Paramita is the Sanskrit term that we are translating as perfection; in Tibetan, this is *pha rol tu phyin ba* (sometimes shortened to *phar phyin*). *Phar* means "over there" and *phyin* means "having gone" so a more literal translation might be "transcendent" or "gone beyond." The ultimate "beyond," the final "perfection," is buddhahood so the object which is gone to is buddhahood. But we can also apply the term "perfection" to the means for going "beyond." In that way, we give the name of the result to the cause and call the means of attaining buddhahood by the name "perfection." In summary then, we can talk about two types of perfections, the means and the object of one's efforts. With regard to the means, the practice of generosity while conceiving of the three spheres to truly exist would be mundane and when conjoined with the direct realization of them to not truly exist would be supramundane but both are perfections in that they both are means of going "over there."

Training in giving

We must train in giving even in our imagination. Geshe-la mentioned tong-len specifically as a means of generating the mind of giving. We must also give actual substances, such as water, to the lower and higher fields. Lower fields here mean the poor and needy while the higher fields refers to the Three Jewels. We must do such while conceiving the three spheres to not inherently exist. In *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, Shantideva says we should give away our body, resources, and roots of virtue to others. With the knowledge that they are going to be lost anyway at death, he suggests that it is preferable to make use of them now and "give away without regret."

3B1C-2A1B-3D Conclusion by way of expressing the features of the first ground

Chandrakirti uses the term “water-crystal jewel,” which is said to refer to the moon. Geshe-la told one story in his current teachings concerning this term and the last time Geshe-la taught this text, he told a different story (pp.86-87, Geshe-la’s *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*).

Three ways that the first ground is similar to the moon

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the Very Joyful ground is similar to the moon in three ways:

1. Just as the moon abides in a high place, so the first ground abides in the mind of the highly realized bodhisattva.
2. Just as the light of the moon beautifies the sky, so the first ground beautifies the mind of the bodhisattva with the light of wisdom.
3. Just as the moon dispels the darkness of the night, so the first ground dispels the darkness of confusion obscuring the view of emptiness and is victorious over the acquired afflictive obstructions..

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 13 (Monday)

3B1C-2A2 Second ground, the Stainless

On each of the ten grounds the bodhisattva is bringing to full force one of the ten perfections. Here on the second ground, called the Stainless, the perfection of ethics is brought to its fulfillment. Each of the grounds is a foundation upon which certain qualities are developed.

3B1C-2A2A Thorough purification of ethics on the second ground

3B1C-2A2A-1 Sublimity of ethics on the second ground

Ethics is said to be the intention to abandon non-virtuous or negative actions. The perfection of ethics is said to be the abandonment of faulty ethics so that one does not even have faulty ethics in a dream. In the light of this, do you have to *have* faulty ethics to practice the perfection of ethics? The answer to this would seem to be no.

Ethics vs. morality

Is there a difference between ethics and morality? In the English language there are perhaps some differences in these two terms in common usage. In Tibetan, the term is *tshul khrims*, *tshul* means conduct or manner and *khrims* has the meaning of codes or rules, but the translation of this term is rendered as either ethics or morality, depending on the translator.

Three types of ethics

There are three types of ethics:

1. Restraining from non-virtuous behavior
2. Cultivating virtuous types of behavior
3. Benefiting living beings in general

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said once that the ethics of Buddhism could be summed up in two simple ideas: if you are able to help others then do so, but if you cannot at the very least do no harm them. Proper ethics is not indulging in the afflictions which act as motivators for faulty actions.

Two types of ethics

Ethics can also be divided by two in regard to the type of infraction one is avoiding:

1. Formulated infractions – This refers to the infractions of formulated codes, such as vows or promises that one consciously makes to avoid specific behavior.
2. Natural faults – This refers to natural codes, something that by its very nature entails faulty behavior.

To clarify these two, killing in general is an example of a natural fault but with a vow not to kill, it also becomes an infraction of a formulated code. Drinking alcohol is an example of something that is *not* a natural infraction, but rather is only an infraction when someone has taken vows to not engage in consuming alcohol. Regarding the ten non-virtues, all ten are natural infractions but in terms of the first four (killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and lying), they could also be root infractions of a formulated code (for example, for a monk or a nun).

Etymology of *shila*

The Sanskrit term for ethics is *shila*, but the connotation of that term is *proper* ethics, not just ethics. It has the connotation of not indulging in the afflictive emotions as motivators nor indulging in the negative actions that arise from these motivators. The etymology of this word is the attainment (*lati*) of coolness (*shila*), signifying that proper ethics means having cooled the fires of regret in breaking vows due to indulging in afflictions. The fires of regret that are being cooled refers to the unpleasantness of contrition, the uncomfortable feeling of wishing one had not committed a particular action. One example of how this uneasiness can manifest is that in a person who has lied, such regret may actually induce verbal stuttering. One Nyingma lama has even suggested that one can examine one's own mind after having committed an action and determine the morality of one's actions based upon the type of feelings one has. If there is a coolness or peace with oneself then the action is ethical but if there is the fire of disturbing or conflicting

emotions, then the action is suspect. Another etymology is that proper ethics is called, due to being a cause of happiness, it is taught by the excellent

Geshe-la said later that the Sanskrit word for improper or faulty ethics is *duh shila* – *duh* comes from *duhkha*, the term that is general translated as suffering or dissatisfaction. The Buddha sometimes used very common terms in unusual ways – this term *duhkha* was also used to describe when a wheel was not fitting right on the axle, causing it to grind down and not operate properly. Similarly *duh shila* entails unbefitting conduct that causes one to suffer.

The ten abandonments

Lama Tsongkhapa says that in terms of its entity, proper ethics are said to be only seven abandonments, but from the point of view of entity as well as its motivators, there are an additional three. The seven abandonments are the abandonments of the three non-virtues of the body and the four non-virtues of speech; there are a total of ten abandonments with the additional abandonments of the three mental non-virtues that act as motivators of the first seven. When we speak of these abandonments as the ten virtues, does it mean that they only include the abandonment of the negative actions, or does it mean some sort of positive action is included as well? It doesn't seem to be necessary but it would appear to be an eventual result of one's having abandoned actions (for example, abandoning killing would eventually lead one to protect life, not just cease killing). According to Prasangka, the abandonment of the first seven are form whereas the abandonment of the latter three are mental.

Actions and paths of action

The first seven are said to be both paths of action and actions but the last three are only paths of action, not actions. When we studied the *Ornament*, we said that, according to *Abhidharma*, action is the mental factor of intention so the last three are not actions but they are all motivators of action. In *Abhidharma*, all physical actions have an intention that accompanies them but the last three are not intention. Why are all ten called paths of actions? Because they are paths to taking various rebirths.

3B1C-2A2A-2 Thorough purification of features in dependence on ethics

Complete and incomplete paths of action

In *Autocommentary*, there is an extensive discussion on the ten abandonments (pp.25-26). In regard to these ten paths of action, we often speak about whether they are complete or incomplete. For reference, there is a similar discussion on these ten in the light of what makes them complete or incomplete in His Holiness the Dalai Lama's *Opening the Eye of New Awareness* (pp.54-58). There are often said to be either four or five branches for making a path of action complete. In the context of killing, the five branches are as follows:

1. *Basis* – In the action of killing this is a sentient being other than oneself.
 2. *Thought* – This involves identifying without error the sentient being one is intending to kill.
 3. *Execution* – This entails the actual committing of the action of killing, done either by oneself or by causing another to do the killing for oneself.
 4. *Affliction* – Although in the act of killing hatred is usually the motivation, in general any of the three poisons (desire, hatred or ignorance) can act as the motivating affliction behind an action.
 5. *Completion* – This occurs when the being one is killing dies before the person committing the killing dies.
- When these are spoken of in terms of four branches, the affliction and the thought are combined into one.

March 14 (Tuesday)

Three types of formulated codes

Lama Tsongkhapa says that not only does the bodhisattva refrain from what is prohibited but also “fulfills all the positive achievements.” So not only are there restrictions but there are also prescriptions of the types of activities to engage in. Geshe-la spoke of three types of formulated codes:

- (1) *Formulated restrictions* are, for example, a monk or a nun is not to eat at certain times, specifically not eating after the noontime meal. In the bodhisattva vows, this is exemplified by the vow to not praise or criticize others.
- (2) Also there are *formulated practices*, for example, monks or nuns are to engaging in the three month (rainy season) retreat or in the case of the bodhisattva vows, thinking of helping others while eating food.

- (3) The third type is called *formulated permissions*, for example allowing monks or nuns to dance or sing when it is for a religious purpose. There is also a portion of the ordination vows that someone can break with the stipulation of requesting permission to do so.

3B1C-2A2A-3 Superiority of ethics on the second ground over the first ground

In *Illumination*, someone says, “Isn’t it so that the first ground bodhisattva also practices all ten perfections?” The answer is yes, but they are not surpassing until their respective grounds. Here on the second ground there are the surpassing practices of both generosity and ethics in the continuum of the bodhisattva.

Vows are form according to Prasangika

Chandrakirti’s root text speaks about the restraining of the sense doors being the cause for the bodhisattva becoming like an autumn moon. This verse is used by Prasangika to substantiate that vows are form, since the bodhisattva is “always pure, beautified by them, serene and radiant.” Geshe-la spoke about vows being form in his last teachings (Geshe-la’s *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*, p.98). In that teaching, Geshe-la said that “forms that are vows” is one of the five types of form according to Prasangika-Madhyamika. One reasoning that is used to say that vows are form is that, in order to refrain from engaging in physical actions, a physical form is needed.

3B1C-2A2A-4 Another cause of the thorough purification of ethics

Practicing purely in the context of the perfection of ethics entails more than what would normally be involved in, for example, a monk practicing “pure ethics.” Geshe-la said that a monk who holds all his vows purely but observes the three spheres as truly existent does not in fact have the “pure ethics” of this context. In that example, the three spheres are the sentient beings with respect to whom the abandonment has occurred, the antidote itself and the monk himself, so viewing those three as truly existent would be faulty ethics in this context. Would a first ground bodhisattva monk have pure ethics? It would seem so although he does not have the surpassing perfection of ethics. It seems that “pure ethics” requires a direct realization of emptiness and having a mind conjoined with that in the practice of ethics. So again, one can have pure vows of ethics but not have pure ethics in this context.

Two types of view of the transitory collection

Geshe-la indicated that viewing the three spheres as truly existent means viewing the ‘I’ and ‘mine’ to be truly existent. Regarding this, he says there are two types of view of the transitory collection, one common to the lower schools and one that is uncommon to the Prasangika-Madhyamika. When Geshe-la taught *Middle Way* previously, he mentioned that the observed objects of each of these are the same but there are different objects of negation (Geshe-la’s *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*, pp.100-101)

In regard to the **common** view of the transitory collection, Geshe-la said that the object of negation is a self-sufficient, substantially existent ‘I’. What do we mean by self-sufficient? The person is viewed as carrying the load of the aggregates or as a person in charge of the aggregates, like a king commanding his subjects. What do we mean by substantial existence in general? A way of existing where the object is able to appear to an awareness without another object necessarily appearing previous to that. To clarify this, an example of a phenomenon that is NOT substantially existent is a person since, in order for a person to appear, the aggregates of the person must first appear. In Prasangika nothing is substantially existent since all phenomena are imputedly existent. Regarding the **uncommon** object of negation, it is an inherently existent ‘I’ or ‘mine’. Geshe-la said that the self is perceived to exist from its own side, as if you can find it upon analysis.

3B1C-2A2B Praise of ethics

3B1C-2A2B-1 Enjoying the fruits of giving in a happy migration depends on ethics

To enjoy the fruits of one’s generosity, the practice of generosity alone will be insufficient since one needs the practice of ethics to attain a favorable rebirth in order to do that.

3B1C-2A2B-2 Enjoying the fruits of giving in continuous lives depends on ethics

Chandrakirti says that, in a sense, to make the most of our investment in generosity we should compound our interest and not withdraw the principal. The fruits of generosity are like a harvest that we get from a previous

crop – you must plant some seeds from it for future harvests or you will exhaust your resources. We can plant seeds for future resources most effectively in the human realm since here we can choose to act virtuously.

3B1C-2A2B-3 Liberation from bad migrations is extremely difficult for one bereft of ethics

When due to faulty ethics one takes rebirth in a bad migration, it is difficult to create the causes for either resources or happy rebirths in the future. Chandrakirti uses the image of a hero being bound and thrown into a ravine, and no one will come to save him. Now that we have the freedom of a precious human rebirth we should try to avoid this consequence.

The four maturations of karma

When we speak of the karmic effects or maturations, there are four types (Geshe-la just taught on these today in class and related them to the four opponent powers):

1. Fruitional effect – This is the overall realm in which a being takes rebirth. This dictates the type of embodiment one has, including its ability to provide satisfaction or dissatisfaction specific to that realm.
2. Effect similar to the cause experientially – This is the notion that “as you sow, so shall you reap.” For example, by having taken life you yourself have a short life.
3. Effect similar to the cause functionally – This is a tendency to repeat the same types of actions one has done in the past. Beings have a predisposition to perform certain actions due to the past propensity to engage in them.
4. Environmental effect (also called the governing or dominant effect) – The Tibetan term for this has nothing to do with “environment” but perhaps in the English language it’s descriptive of the nature of this effect. The primary qualities that this effect produces are the immediate surroundings and the resources one has at one’s disposal. For example, the effect of having killed would be to be born in a barren place, where things have difficulty surviving and growing.

These are the four overall effects that an individual karma can bring.

Two maturations

In this section there is a reference to the “two maturations” and we also see another reference to “two maturations” in a future section of *Autocommentary* (3B1C-2A2B-5 in relation to the results of the ten non-virtues) but it’s possible these are different. In Geshe-la’s past commentary, he said the “two maturations” are the two effects similar to the cause (taken as one) and the environmental effect. It seems that Jeffrey Hopkins thinks the two maturations are as is spelled out on p.55 of *Illumination*, in his annotation to the quote from *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*. There he translates them as the “two undesirables” and explains them to be “a birth in a bad migration and later birth as an unfortunate human.” When Chandrakirti lists two maturations in that later section (p.29 of *Autocommentary*), those two are both effects similar to the cause experientially according to Geshe-la.

March 15 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2A2B-4 Reason for discoursing on ethics after discoursing on giving

In order to assure that the resources of giving are not wasted, the Buddha, having taught on generosity proceeded to teach on ethics. Ethics is the foundation upon which all things exist, animate and inanimate. To have resources uninterruptedly in the future, it is essential to practice ethics in addition to giving. Why? Since we can best continue our practice of giving only in higher rebirths and a rebirth in a bad migration may cause us to have few chances to gain that opportunity again. In summary, the physical basis for experiencing those resources is as important as the resources themselves so even bodhisattvas must have a temporal concern for taking rebirth in a happy migration, even though their ultimate goal is to achieve enlightenment.

Precious human rebirth: the eight freedoms and ten endowments

This subject can be easily related to our studies of *lam rim*, specifically the need to attain a precious human rebirth, with the eight freedoms and ten endowments. His Holiness the Dalai Lama says that we need a long-term perspective to achieve the goal so in order for us to continue our practice of Dharma uninterruptedly in future lives.

The eight leasures or freedoms are (as listed in *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism* by Geshe Acharya Thubten Lodan, pp.199-202):

Four situations of being free from the non-human states:

1. Freedom from birth in the hells
2. Freedom from birth in the hungry spirit realms
3. Freedom from birth in the animal realms
4. Freedom from birth as a long-life god

Four situations of being free from Dharma practice if reborn human:

5. Freedom from being reborn in a remote and irreligious land
6. Freedom from being born when the Buddha has not come
7. Freedom from being born mentally deficient or mute
8. Freedom from holding wrong views

The ten fortunes or endowments are (as listed in *Path to Enlightenment in Tibetan Buddhism* by Geshe Acharya Thubten Lodan, pp.202-204):

Five endowments which are personal or internal:

1. Being born as a human being
2. Being born in a central land
3. Being born with complete sense-organs
4. Not having created the five extreme negative karmas
5. Having faith in the objects

Five endowments which are circumstantial or external:

6. Being born when the Buddha has appeared
7. The Buddha or his hearers give Dharma teachings
8. The Dharma remains
9. There are followers of the Dharma
10. People have love for others

These eighteen qualities are the most conducive context for one to practice the Dharma. We have the ability to choose and we, ourselves, become the outcome of those choices. We are the only ones who can make these choices – or we will be like a being bound and cast into a ravine, with no one else to save us.

Attaining a precious human rebirth again

These eighteen qualities are the outcome of a combination of practicing ethics and making prayers. One way to talk about ethics is to examine what it means to be a human being. To be human must mean more than simply chasing after “bigger, better, more.” One of the hallmarks of humanity is love, and in order to ensure that we have this opportunity again, we must practice love. In combination with prayer, we will achieve a rebirth in which we can continue our practice of the Dharma. We must put some time into creating the resources necessary for this life but we must also be concerned with creating the causes for favorable conditions in future lives.

3B1C-2A2B-5 Praising ethics as a cause of both high status and definite goodness

This section reiterates that ethics is the cause for attaining favorable rebirths as well as the definite goodness of liberation and enlightenment. In *Autocommentary*, Chandrakirti begins by quoting the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, which sets out the effects of having engaged in non-virtuous actions. Each of the ten non-virtues produces two undesirables: the fruitional effect of a birth in a bad migration and then, if one is reborn from that, an unfortunate human rebirth.

Fruitional effect of actions in terms of their heaviness

In that quote, the sutra indicates that the fruitional, or fully ripened, effects are rebirth in the hell realms for the heaviest (or great) degree, in the animal realm for middling degree, and in the hungry ghost realm for the lightest (or small) degree. This way of explaining the three lower realms is different than what we see in *lam rim*. Geshe-la said that in the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, the suffering is considered less for a hungry ghost due to the superior intelligence to an animal. In *lam rim*, the suffering is considered less for an animal due to the

indefinite life span of animals, many of which can have quite short life spans. Hungry ghosts have a much longer span of life than animals so their suffering could be seen as greater.

Factors that determine the weight of karma

Lama Tsongkhapa also speaks about how there are three degrees to the various actions in regard to the three lower realms. Geshe-la spoke of four factors that determine the weight of karma:

1. **Field** – Certain objects are more powerful with regard to actions committed towards them. For example actions towards your lama and your parents are heavier than that towards other beings.
2. **Execution** – Ways of performing an action are also determinants. For example, killing slowly rather than quickly is a heavier karma.
3. **Thought** – The intensity of the accompanying thoughts can make the karma heavier. For example, killing with intense anger is a heavier karma.
4. **Thing or entity** – The example that Geshe-la gave was in relation to size being a factor of entity, giving as an example that the killing of an elephant would be heavier than killing an ant.

There are an additional two factors that some texts say are also considered in the weight of an action:

5. **Nature** – This refers to certain actions being heavier by their very nature. For example, among the ten non-virtuous actions, of the first three physical actions, in general the first (killing) is heaviest, the second (stealing) less heavy and the third (sexual misconduct) less heavy yet. The four verbal actions are also set out serially from heaviest to lightest (lying the most serious and idle talk the least). However with regard to the mental actions, they are set out in reverse order (wrong views being the heaviest, harmful mind less heavy and covetousness the lightest of those three).
6. **Repetition** – An action that is repeated often is heavier than an action that is done only occasionally or infrequently.

The four opponent powers as counter-agents to the four types of effects

Geshe-la indicated that one can purify each of the four types of effects through one of the four opponent powers. He related the four opponent powers to the four types of effects as follows:

1. Fruitional effect – The power of the **thorough application of the antidote** offsets this effect.
2. Effect similar to the cause experientially – The power of **repudiation** or regret is the counter-agent.
3. Effect similar to the cause functionally – The power of **refraining** or determination to not repeat the action counteracts this result.
4. Environmental effect – The power of **reliance** or the base counteracts this.

By the means of applying the four opponent forces, we can create a condition whereby these results will never mature or ripen and we will never have to undergo the effect of them. We can eliminate the potency of the seed, like scorching it so that it does not grow, or, barring that, we can at least lessen the effect of the maturation of that seed. For example, the result of one of these seeds that could ripen into rebirth in a hell realm might be experienced as a headache in the human realm, or as a reduction in the amount of time spent in a hell realm, compared to what would have been experienced without such opponent powers having been applied.

Power of repudiation

The power of the base or reliance is sometimes taught first but often repudiation is taught as the first factor. This term is the same we are using for “disbelief” so we can apply this by bringing to mind a wrong action and contemplating the incorrectness of that action. When we develop a sense of regret, this is not guilt about having done the action – it’s not due to a defect in our character but rather that we simply made a mistake and did something that brought harm to ourselves or others. There is a story that relates the idea of regret that is being spoken of here. There are three men in India who sit down to share a meal and they are all eating portions from the same dishes of food set on the table. After eating, one of them falls dead, then the second rolls around on the floor in pain, and the third, seeing all this, thinks that it must be the food that is the cause of his friends’ suffering. At that moment, although he isn’t in any pain at the present, he develops a great regret from having eaten it, knowing the suffering that is in store for him.

Power of reliance

We can create negativity in regard to two fields, either sentient beings or buddhas. We are trying to commit ourselves to the Buddhist way of life but yet at times we fail. In the power of reliance, we re-commit ourselves to the Three Jewels and to our wish to enact the welfare of others. If you took a vow to not kill, for example,

since you took that vow in front of the Buddha, when you break that vow you have committed a negativity in relation to the Buddha. So, by relying upon the Three Jewels, you can create the foundation for opposing that negativity. We also commit actions that harm sentient beings so when we do that, we develop compassion and use sentient beings as a support for opposing that non-virtuous action.

Power of refraining

By determining that one will not perform that negative action for some realistic time frame, one interrupts the pattern of repeating the same actions.

Power of antidote

Traditionally there is a list of skillful actions, such as prostrations, mantra recitation (specifically the one hundred syllable mantra of Vajrasattva), text recitation (specifically the *Heart Sutra* for example), meditation (specifically on emptiness for example), and making tsa-tsas or offerings. If you apply these antidotes repeatedly and thoroughly and with a sincere sense of regret, these can be highly effective. If you apply these seriously enough, the Mahayana sutras say that there is no action, no matter how serious that you cannot purify.

The three scopes or perspectives

As Dharma practitioners, we need to work towards having a large perspective – most people have only a concern about now, the moment, and are unwilling to put off any gratification. We must put off immediate gratification of our wants and needs for a greater benefit. If we think in terms of lifetimes, we know we must practice ethics in order to ensure attaining high status. This is the **small** scope or perspective as it is taught in *lam rim*. Then we enlarge our perspective again, and see the unsatisfactory nature of samsara, seeing it to be like carrying a bunch of thorns on our back, or like having a fish bone caught in our throat. With the wish for liberation from suffering, we attain the **medium** scope or perspective. Then we enlarge our perspective once more and see the suffering of others as well and, by including them in our view, we eventually achieve the **great** scope, the motivation of complete enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.

The three enlightenments

The *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* also sets out the effects of virtuous actions in terms of the three enlightenments: that of a hearer, of a solitary realizer, and of a buddha. A being of medium scope, as set out above, gains renunciation with regard to cyclic existence, and determines to attain liberation, the enlightenments of a hearer or a solitary realizer. A being of great scope, as set out above, additionally acquires great compassion and mind generation and proceeds on the bodhisattva path to attain highest complete enlightenment. All three of these enlightenments have as a foundation the practice of the ten virtues – the working basis in which this all takes place is the practice of those ten virtues.

March 16 (Thursday)

Hearer vs. solitary realizer enlightenment

In *Illumination* (p.55), in the quote from *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, there is mention of the solitary realizer as one who “penetrates the suchness of profound dependent-arising” while the hearer is indicated only as one who has the “wisdom cognizing selflessness.” In spite of this quote, there is no difference in the wisdom realizing selflessness between the hearers and solitary realizers but there is a difference in the method of understanding that selflessness. They both realize the same emptiness but the solitary realizer would probably develop that wisdom in a different context. Both hearers and solitary realizers have uncontrived renunciation of cyclic existence and so both fall into the category of beings of the middle scope. A person of small capacity or scope has not even entered a path yet.

3B1C-2A2C Example of non-mixture with what is not conducive to ethics

The metaphor that is used here for non-mixture is a corpse that is thrown in the ocean is eventually washed to the shore (by nagas according to Lama Tsongkhapa). The interpretation of this is that, like the ocean, the bodhisattva with the perfection of ethics, will not live with faulty ethics. This can mean either living with oneself with faulty ethics or another with faulty ethics. It may refer to both, in that the bodhisattva doesn't indulge in faulty ethics and doesn't live or abide with those who do have faulty ethics.

3B1C-2A2D Divisions of the perfection of ethics

Just as with the perfection of giving, here there are two divisions, **mundane** and **supramundane**. The mundane is not conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness while the supramundane is conjoined with the direct realization of the emptiness of the three spheres.

3B1C-2A2E Conclusion by way of expressing the features of the second ground

The second ground is called Stainless (*dri ma med pa*) so here the etymology of that name is given. Chandrakirti says that the second ground is like an autumn moon. Recall that the etymology of the Sanskrit for ethics (*shila*) involved the cooling of the fires of regret. So here the autumn moon cools in a similar way but moreover, in India, in the autumn once the monsoon has cleared away all the dust or mist in the air, there is a “stainless” moon visible. Lama Tsongkhapa says that although this bodhisattva is not “of cyclic existence,” he is “the glory of the world.”

Bodhisattvas without bodhisattva vows

When Geshe-la said that there are bodhisattvas who do not have bodhisattva vows, he gave the example of one who has adopted the aspirational mind of enlightenment through ceremony or ritual and has not taken the bodhisattva vows of practical or engaging mind of enlightenment. Apparently it is possible to generate the mind of enlightenment with only having had that ceremony and then taking the bodhisattva vows after one has entered the Mahayana. When the aspirational ceremony is conferred, there are eight precepts (avoiding the four black actions and engaging in the four white actions) that are assumed but these are not called “bodhisattva vows.”

3B1C-2A3 **Third ground, the Luminous**

The third ground is called the Luminous (*'od byed pa*) and here the perfection is of patience or tolerance. Often we have some resistance to the idea of patience – Chogyam Trungpa referred to patience as dam-like and it's hard to think about “damming up” our anger. If we really examine patience though, we are simply talking about maintaining an undisturbed mind in the face of whatever happens. Patience is one of the main antidotes to anger. The arising of anger requires two cooperative conditions: frustrated desire and identifying someone who is doing the frustration or blocking you from getting what you want. So the fewer desires you have, potentially the less anger you will have. The main cause is an unhappy or disturbed mind. So, if moreover you can keep a happy mind, you can avert anger in a more fundamental way. This is the practice of patience, maintaining a happy mind, no matter what type of irritation or annoyance arises.

Three types of patience

In *lam rim*, there are said to be three types of patience:

1. The ability to bear harm inflicted by others
2. The ability to bear the hardships in serving others or the difficulties of life in general
3. The ability to bear definitely practicing the Dharma.

In regard to this last one, being willing to endure this legitimate suffering in our practice is important. Most of our suffering is illegitimate but forbearance here can be quite profitable. Recall the idea of the nature of the three entanglements, the first being not wanting to travel the path at all. To progress, we must develop some type of tolerance in our practice of the Dharma. When we say willing to forbear in our practice of Dharma, “Dharma” can be said to refer to emptiness here too, as in the Dharma forbearances of the path of seeing.

Patience as the antidote to anger

Part of talking about patience is its function as an antidote to anger. Prior to the arising of anger, we can see how patience can be an antidote but once you become angry and the mind is disturbed, you can then begin to reframe the situation so that it ceases to become a source of unhappiness. This process of diffusing the anger is part of the practice of patience. In *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.256), Jeffrey Hopkins defines anger, one of the six root afflictive mental factors, as “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).” Patience is the antidote for this type of intention to harm. There is an underlying “irritation” that can be the beginning of anger (for example, hearing an annoying sound) but that feeling in itself is not anger.

3B1C-2A3A Description of the third ground – the base of qualities

Lama Tsongkhapa says the fire of wisdom of the third ground burns all the fuel of the objects of knowledge, which Geshe-la says refers to the knowledge obstructions, but they are not begun to be abandoned until the eighth ground. Lama Tsongkhapa says that the third ground is “able to extinguish all elaborations of duality during meditative equipoise.” On the path of preparation, there is the heat level, which is a preliminary sign of the “burning” of the conceptions of true existence that does not actually begin until the path of seeing. Here the third ground is in a similar relation to the eighth ground, since it is a preliminary indication that the force is being developed to begin to overcome the knowledge obstructions on that later ground. The metaphor of the light is used here –here there is a light that appears “just before sunrise” but the full light is that which will overcome the knowledge obstructions.

Two appearances to the third ground bodhisattva

There are two appearances to the bodhisattva on the third ground: One appears to the wisdom of meditative equipoise, namely that subject and object appear to the third grounder like water poured into water. However, there is a second appearance that occurs in subsequent attainment, which is an appearance of copper-colored light that is like the color of the sky just before sunrise. Such a light portends or heralds the arising of the sun, which is the exalted wisdom of the eighth ground. The appearance of true existence that is the knowledge obstructions are not abandoned until the eighth ground but here there the third ground portends that ability.

March 17 (Friday)

“Desire and hatred are completely extinguished...”

When Nagarjuna says that desire and hatred are extinguished, this is in reference to the five outer sense sources of the desire realm, but this is discussed more in a later verse of Chandrakirti’s root text (3.11) so we will learn more about it then.

3B1C-2A3B Qualifying features of the third ground

3B1C-2A3B-1 Surpassing patience on the third ground

How we can distinguish the patience from that generated on the first and second grounds from that of the third ground bodhisattva? It seems that those bodhisattvas are unable to take the person harming them as a basis for cultivating even greater patience and compassion. In Geshe-la’s previous teaching he said that the third ground bodhisattva will actually use the actions of one harming oneself as a means of developing even greater compassion through being mindful of the great sufferings that this person is creating for themselves through their actions. Another source says that the imprint of self-cherishing is removed at this point so that also distinguishes the third ground from the previous two grounds.

Nine possible bases of anger

Geshe-la spoke about the nine possible bases of anger, which act as the basis for our developing anger towards other beings. There are three possible objects of harmful mind and each of those has three divisions based upon the three times:

- A. Those **harming oneself** in the past, present and future
- B. Those **harming one’s friend** in the past, present and future
- C. Those **helping one’s enemy** in the past, present and future

The measure of surpassing perfections

The absence of the discordant class appears to be the quality that the surpassing perfection of each of the ten entails. The measure of force of a surpassing perfection of giving is being able to give away anything, even one’s body, without subtlest miserliness arising. The measure of force of a surpassing perfection of ethics is that one does not have faulty ethics, even in a dream. The measure of force of a surpassing perfection of patience is that the bodhisattva does more than maintain an undisturbed mind at someone inflicting immense harm upon his body in that he also generates great compassion towards the mutilator. Lama Tsongkhapa says that not only does that bodhisattva have that measure but also sees the three spheres as being non-truly existent. Geshe-la mentioned in his previous commentary says that this passage indicates two types of patience among the three – enduring hardship or suffering and also the patience of thinking about the Dharma, specifically contemplating the view of emptiness.

Third ground bodhisattva sees the three spheres “as like reflections”

Lama Tsongkhapa also says that the bodhisattva sees the three spheres “as like reflections” and Geshe-la said this means “like illusions.” Regarding seeing phenomena as like illusions, the illusory-like appearance and the appearance of true existence both appear simultaneously to the bodhisattva superior in subsequent attainment. The example of the magician’s trick is used to describe how the horse or elephant that is conjured up appears to truly exist but the magician does not believe in that appearance – instead the magician sees it as illusory-like.

3B1C-2A3B-2 Way of observing other patience

3B1C-2A3B-2A Unsuitability of anger

3B1C-2A3B-2A1 Unsuitability of anger due to its being senseless and very faulty

If upon being harmed by someone else, our anger would remove that harm to ourselves, then maybe one could justify anger. However, anger does not do that but rather exacerbates the situation by creating more suffering in those around us and, furthermore, creating more suffering for us in the future. Geshe-la spoke about how we can have anger towards both animate and inanimate objects. Lama Tsongkhapa points out here simply that anger does not work the way we would hope it would to redress the harm done to us. These arguments appear quite valid when we analyze them but such logic is usually forgotten when the emotions arise and we end up repeating the same negativity.

3B1C-2A3B-2A2 Contradiction of not wanting suffering in the future and making a harmful response

Why do we practice Dharma? Because we don’t want to suffer. One can see this in the way that anger actually serves as the cause for our suffering. The substantial cause of all our suffering is our own karma. The people and situations around us are simply the cooperative conditions for those karmic seeds to ripen but they are not the substantial cause. Yet we identify those beings and situations as the true cause and this is incorrect thinking. If you never created the cause there is no opportunity for such misfortunes to arise. Not wanting to suffer and harming others are contradictory.

Bearing the misfortunes of one’s own karma

Lama Tsongkhapa mentions two types of effects – the fruition effect and the result similar to the cause. The second is referring to the fact that, having once been born as a human, you will experience certain misfortunes. If you accept the unfavorable circumstances you experience in this life without generating anger, then you can cut through the cycle of suffering and not experience it again. If you react to your misfortunes with anger and create more karma, there will not be an end to your suffering.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 20 (Monday)

3B1C-2A3B-2A3 Unsuitability of anger due to its destroying virtue accumulated over a long time

3B1C-2A3B-2A3A Meaning of the text on the unsuitability of anger due to its destroying virtue accumulated over a long time

Over and above the other reasons we have already examined, anger is unsuitable due to being able to destroy the roots of virtue accumulated over a long period of time. In his previous teachings, Geshe-la said that anger destroys three things: (1) our virtuous actions we have accumulated in the past, (2) our wisdom in that we lose our ability to discriminate and use our reasoning, and finally, (3) our health, youth and beauty. The first of these three is what we are speaking of here. Anger is able to destroy the accumulation of merit and, since this accumulation is that which will mature primarily into a form body of a buddha, if we engage in anger it is destroying the optimal method for our being of benefit to others in the enlightened state. Specifically this collection of merit is the accumulation of the virtues from previous giving and ethics. Geshe-la indicated that anger does not however destroy the accumulation of wisdom, that which matures primarily into the truth body of a buddha.

Specific harm arising from the six possible combinations of base and object

There are three factors that can be examined in regard to anger: (1) the **base** (the person becoming angry) and the **object** (the person toward whom we are becoming angry), (2) the types of virtuous roots which are being destroyed by that anger, and (3) the measure of how much merit is being destroyed. There are six possible combinations of the first factor (bases and objects) that we can examine in the light of the other two factors.

1. A bodhisattva of higher realization becoming angry with one of lesser realization – This specifically is a non-superior bodhisattva angry at a lesser bodhisattva because in a superior bodhisattva, manifest anger does not arise. In the teachings there are also the two terms non-propheesied and propheesied: “non-propheesied” generally refers to a bodhisattva on the path of accumulation and “propheesied” generally refers to bodhisattvas after the path of accumulation. To clarify this, Geshe-la said recently that “propheesied” specifically means a bodhisattva who has attained a sign of irreversibility, while “non-propheesied” refers to a bodhisattva who has not. As we saw in our studies of *Ornament*, irreversibility means that the bodhisattva is irreversible from highest complete enlightenment. The signs of irreversibility are attained at different levels depending upon the faculties of the bodhisattva (i.e. on the path of preparation for sharp faculties, the path of seeing for middling faculties, and on the eighth ground for those of dull faculties). Also, this bodhisattva is angry due to imputing faults (attributing faults that are not really there) upon the lesser bodhisattva or using reasons that are true and exaggerating them. If the bodhisattva did that, this bodhisattva would destroy the roots of virtue created over one hundred eons (an eon is 10⁶⁰ years). It doesn’t matter whether the reasons for the anger are true or false – there will be the same consequence.
2. A bodhisattva of lesser realization becoming angry with one of higher realization – The base is a non-propheesied bodhisattva and the object of anger is a bodhisattva on the path of preparation. Geshe-la indicated on two occasions in his teachings that this resulted in destroying the roots of virtue accumulated over a thousand eons but then he also taught what Lama Tsongkhapa says in regard to this (pp.60-61 of *Illumination*). Lama Tsongkhapa, using two sources, the *Lion’s Roar of Maitreya Sutra* and the *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*, says that this bodhisattva must commence again the practice of the six perfections from the beginning of the path of accumulation onward. That bodhisattva must “bear the armor” of the six perfections and recreate the merit from the beginning for as many eons as the instants that he generated the thought of anger. Based on Shantideva’s *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, Lama Tsongkhapa indicates that this bodhisattva must also have a detention in hell for a similar time to that just explained.
3. A bodhisattva becoming angry with a bodhisattva of equal realization – Quoting Shantideva again, Lama Tsongkhapa indicates that the bodhisattva who is angry will be abide in hell for as many eons as there were instants of the negative mind that was generated as well as “the fault of destroying roots of virtue accumulated over many eons.”
4. A bodhisattva becoming angry with a non-bodhisattva – Not many details were provided for this but it does indicate that it is not necessary for the bodhisattva to begin the practice of the six perfections again and the destruction of roots of virtue is less than if the bodhisattva was angry at another bodhisattva.

5. A non-bodhisattva angry with a bodhisattva – According to Lama Tsongkhapa, the non-bodhisattva will destroy the roots of virtue accumulated over a thousand eons.
6. Non-bodhisattva angry at a non-bodhisattva – This will be explored later but basically there is the destruction of less roots of virtue than if one is angry at a bodhisattva.

Since the consequences are especially bad to become angry at a bodhisattva, and since we do not really know who is and who is not a bodhisattva, we must be mindful of that.

3B1C-2A3B-2A3B Ancillary meanings

In this section, Lama Tsongkhapa discusses the different levels of “destruction of roots of virtue” according to the intensity of one’s anger. There are three levels distinguished:

1. **Diminishing** – This implies more of a “delay” of the ripening of these virtues.
2. **Reduction** – This is a partial destruction of the roots of virtue but there is still some potency left.
3. **Complete consumption** – This is the complete destruction of the fruition of the roots of virtue so that they can no longer produce a result. However, the seed as such still remains.

Objection based on two sutra citations

Lama Tsongkhapa addresses an objection based on two sutra citations that bring into question the ability for the roots of virtue to be destroyed by anger and so forth. The first is a quote from Nagarjuna in which he cites the *Teaching of Akshayamati Sutra*, which says that the dedication of merit to enlightenment is like placing a drop of water in the ocean – as long as the ocean remains the drops of water will remain. The other quote is from the *Array of Stalks Sutra* and there the Buddha discusses the altruistic mind of enlightenment using the example of quicksilver, which acts as a catalyst for turning iron into gold without ever being exhausted itself. Similarly mind generation and the virtues associated should not be consumed by contaminated actions and afflictions. Lama Tsongkhapa addresses this objection in relation to the first sutra quote by saying that it does not indicate that such destruction of roots of virtue does not happen. Rather it means that if you dedicate your merit to enlightenment, the ripening effects of those roots of virtue will be inexhaustible until one reaches enlightenment, as long as it is not destroyed by anger. Lama Tsongkhapa explains the other sutra quote as indicating that the contaminated actions and afflictions cannot destroy the mind of enlightenment in the way that the mind of enlightenment can waste or destroy the contaminated actions and afflictions. The altruistic mind of enlightenment is like quicksilver, in that it is a catalyst that helps to remove the contaminated actions and afflictions but the mind generation is not destroyed in the process. Recall that in our teachings on the *Ornament*, one of the benefits of developing Mahayana mind generation was that “any previously created cause for [rebirth in] the lower realms is purified and the creation of any future negative actions is stopped.”

Objection concerning the nature of the “destruction of the roots of virtue”

Another objection is raised by someone saying that this “destruction of roots of virtue” simply means that the fruition will be delayed or postponed but not destroyed. In other words, this person is suggesting that there would be negative consequences that would be incurred from one’s actions but then eventually one would experience the fruits of their roots of virtue. Lama Tsongkhapa says that this assertion is inconclusive. Thoroughly applying the four opponent powers to the negative karmic seeds does not make the seeds non-existent but rather makes them impotent or infertile. They are like a burnt or scorched seed, in that, no matter what types of conditions arise, the effects from them will not be experienced, just as the scorched seed will not germinate, as is mentioned later in *Illumination* (p.62) in a quote from Bhavaviveka. Lama Tsongkhapa cites two additional examples – that at the peak level of the Mahayana path of preparation, wrong view no longer manifests and at the tolerance level of the Mahayana path of preparation, the bodhisattva will no longer take bad migrations. Although this is so it does not mean that the seeds for either of those are absent, but that they simply will not ripen into those results at the respective levels.

The order of the fruition of karma according to *Abhidharmakosha*

Furthermore, in relation to the above objection, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Vasubandhu in *Treasury of Knowledge* who gives the order of how karmic seeds ripen. The order is that the **heaviest** karma will ripen first. If all seeds are equal in heaviness, then the most **proximate**, meaning that which is closest to the time of death, will ripen. If they are equal in proximity, then the next factor is the action that we are most **accustomed** to will ripen first. Again, if they are of equal familiarity, then the determining factor is the earliest time when the action was committed (“**what was done before**”). In the meantime the other seeds are not destroyed but rather they are

only blocked in terms of their ripening, so in such cases one action ripening can delay the fruition of other actions. This is simply the process of how fruitional karma ripens and is not to say that there are not cooperative conditions that would also affect which karma matures (for example, the state of mind at one's death).

March 21 (Tuesday)

Two ways that anger harms

Lama Tsongkhapa points out two specific ways that anger can be of great harm:

1. The capacity to quickly generate new paths is harmed – For example, in the case of the bodhisattva on the great level of the path of accumulation, he would have to re-accumulate the merit that was accumulated on the path of accumulation if his anger manifested.
2. The fruitional effect of good migrations is undermined

There are similar detrimental effects to one's roots of virtue whether one ascertains that a person who is a bodhisattva is such or not, as well as whether one's reasons for anger are true or not.

Distinction between two types of roots of virtue

Anger and wrong view are said to be the main causes of destroying roots of virtue. In Geshe-la's teaching (13-16 March, 2000, p.29), he made a distinction between the roots of virtue that are destroyed by each of these. Geshe-la said that there are two types of roots of virtue: "*inborn roots of virtue*" (roots of virtue attained by the force of rebirth) and "*roots of virtue created through application*" (those which arise through application of effort in this present life). Geshe-la said that wrong view destroys both of these two types while anger only destroys the virtue created through application of effort in this life. And yet, in all the examples above, it seems that there are huge amounts of roots of virtue that anger would destroy, so it would appear that it would be hard to have that much virtue accumulated only through application of effort in this life.

Additional activities that destroy roots of virtue

In addition, the *Akashagarbha Sutra* says that the root infractions of bodhisattva vows destroy roots of virtue previously generated. Shantideva's *Compendium of Instructions* says there are three activities that destroy virtues: (1) aspiring to a household because of strong attachment to goods, (2) being inflated with the pride of conceit, and (3) forsaking the doctrine. It is also said that "misguided regret" can offset the positive karma that one attained from the action in the first place (for example, giving away an object and then later regretting having given it away). Geshe-la said in regard to this that you could include misguided regret in the category of wrong view with regard to the law of cause and effect.

3B1C-2A3B-2A4 Stopping anger by reflecting on the many faults of impatience

Lama Tsongkhapa gives a brief summary of the faults of impatience as Chandrakirti spelled out in his root text. If someone is powerless, perhaps their impatience only hurts themselves but if they are in a position of power, your impatience may actually harm many others. In brief, the faults of impatience are to be unpleasant in appearance, to be led to "the unholy," to lose one's ability to discriminate between right and wrong, and to be reborn in bad migrations. By even being mindful of the regret that you know you will feel afterwards can often lead you to catch yourself before you get angry and so avoid these faults.

3B1C-2A3B-2B Suitability of observing patience

3B1C-2A3B-2B1 Reflecting on the many advantages of patience

The qualities of practicing patience are mostly the opposite of the above faults: one has a beautiful appearance, is cherished by holy beings, be skilled in knowing right and wrong, will be born in good migrations, and exhausts non-virtues accumulated through anger.

The four trainings in virtue

Geshe-la taught that "to be patient is to be undisturbed in the context of the four types of trainings in virtue:

1. Not upbraiding when others upbraid you
2. Not becoming angry when someone becomes angry at you
3. Not beating although one is beaten
4. Not exposing others' faults although others have exposed your faults

These four are sometimes associated with the 17th secondary rules of the bodhisattva vow, the first of the set of four vows to avoid infringements that damage the perfection of patience.

3B1C-2A3B-2B2 Summary exhortation to observe patience

We should recognize the nature of anger to avoid it. In the west we have a term called “righteous indignation,” where one takes a stand with force due to the righteous nature of the cause. Khensur Losang Thubten has said that there are two occasions where one can justify anger. One occasion is when it is nested in compassion, for example, when a child misbehaves in a dangerous way and out of compassion the mother gets angry at the child for the benefit of the child. Another occasion occurs when there is subliminal anger, where one is not really aware of the anger that is beneath the surface – at those times it may be useful to indulge in that experience so that one can actually identify their anger and then address it properly.

3B1C-2A3B-3 Divisions of the perfection of patience

Just as we saw in the other two perfections we have examined, there are two divisions, mundane and supramundane. The distinction is again whether or not the perfection is conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness. The three spheres in regard to patience are the agent (oneself), the object (the person or thing toward which one is abandoning anger), and the action of practicing patience itself (maintaining an undisturbed mind).

3B1C-2A3B-4 Other pure features arising on the third ground

There are a number of other features that are being presented in the context of the third ground and Geshe-la gave brief explanations on each of them. In this section Lama Tsongkhapa mentions the *pure* perfection of patience and this simply means “surpassing” in the context of this section on “pure features”. We have seen all these features in our studies of the *Ornament* but there are also a number of additional resources that can be accessed on these topics. In particular, *Walking Through Walls*, recently republished as *Calm Abiding and Special Insight*, by Geshe Gedun Lodro, and *Meditative States*, by Lati Rinpoche and Denma Locho Rinpoche, are both excellent resources on the concentrations and absorptions.

The concentrations and absorptions

There are three realms: the desire realm, the form realm and the formless realm. The form realm is divided into the four concentrations (the first through the fourth) and the formless realm consists of the four formless absorptions (infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and peak of cyclic existence). It is said that all these concentrations and absorptions are already attained by the bodhisattva as early as the path of preparation but here there is an attainment of “a training in higher meditative stabilization far superior to what he had on the preceding grounds.” This assertion will be discussed later.

Calm abiding and the eight mental contemplations

As we move through these realms, the mind becomes subtler as factors that disturb the mind are suppressed by these mundane paths. In the desire realm, this process is begun by developing the nine mental abidings that precede the attainment of calm abiding. In our studies of *Ornament*, the definition for calm abiding was: a meditative stabilization conjoined with the bliss of pliancy that is able to rest evenly as long as desired upon the mind’s observed object in reliance upon the nine methods of mental abiding (from *Ocean*). With calm abiding the meditator has a mind of the form realm mind but has not yet separated from the afflictions of the desire realm, which will be done in a sequence of eight mental contemplations, or preparations. Calm abiding itself is the first of these, the (1) **mental contemplation of a mere beginner**.

Process of moving to subtler levels

To proceed through the concentrations and absorptions, the practitioner views the lower level as gross and the level that she is advancing to as peaceful. So, after developing calm abiding she makes effort toward removing the disturbing factors of the mind in order to achieve the first concentration by examining the objects of the desire realm and the afflictions in relation to them. Primarily the meditator wants to separate from (or suppress the manifest form of) attachment to the desire realm but the other afflictions are also suppressed. There are said to be two processes to do this, one where the four noble truths are used, but here we use the other, as said earlier, where one examines the factors of grossness and peacefulness. For the movement from the desire realm to the first concentration, one can examine the numerous faults of the desire realm, compared to the beings in

the actual realm of the first concentration, as is described by Lati Rinpoche in *Meditative States* (1997 edition, pp.86-88).

The development of special insight

As human beings we have a natural process of avoiding and approaching. Whatever is seen as detrimental we avoid and what is seen as beneficial we approach. As this process of avoidance and approach is commenced in relation to the first concentration, the mind analyzes through hearing and reflecting, but there is only a similitude of a special insight at this next level, the (2) **mental contemplation of individual knowledge of the character**. When the meditator attains a union of calm abiding and special insight the (3) **mental contemplation arisen from belief** begins. Through analysis one actually induces a form of pliancy that manifests fully with the attainment of the union of calm abiding and special insight.

Divisions of desire realm afflictions

The afflictions of the desire realm are divided into three levels (the great, middling, and small), and those three divisions are further divided into three levels (great, middling, and small). These nine levels of afflictions related to the desire realm will be suppressed over the course of attaining the first concentration. “Suppressed” means that the afflictions are abandoned by a mundane path but not that they are completely abandoned along with their seeds as they would be on supramundane paths.

Just as with the desire realm afflictions, there are nine degrees of afflictions for each of the four form realms and the four formless realms. The coarsest afflictions will be abandoned first, starting with the great of the great, and ending with the subtlest, the small of the small. Each of the three mental contemplations that abandon these nine levels of afflictions are divided into three as well.

Progress towards the first concentration

When the mind is able to generate a consciousness that has the ability to act as an opponent to the great of the great afflictions of the desire realm, then one has begun the first level of the (4) **mental contemplation of thorough isolation**. The other two levels (the middling of the small and the great of the small) abandon the other two levels of afflictions (the middling of the great and the great of the great).

Then when the mind is able to generate a consciousness that is able to act as an opponent to the great of the middling afflictions of the desire realm, one has begun the first level of the (5) **mental contemplation of withdrawal or joy**. This has two more levels that abandon the other two levels of the middling afflictions similar to the previous mental contemplation.

After this follows the (6) **mental contemplation of analysis**. The meditator, although having abandoned only six of the nine levels of afflictions associated with the desire realm, thinks that all nine have been abandoned so she must analyze to determine whether or not this is so. Seeing that they are not, she goes on to develop a consciousness that has the ability to act as an opponent to the great of the small afflictions of the desire realm, the (7) **mental contemplation of final training**. With the abandonment of the small of the small level of afflictions related to the desire realm, upon attaining the path of release, the meditator has attained the actual first concentration, which is also called the (8) **mental contemplation that is the result of training**.

Resultant rebirth and causal absorption

There are two ways of looking at the concentrations and absorptions: one is in terms of resultant rebirth and the other is in terms of causal absorption. Causal absorption means that, although one has a desire realm body, for example, one can achieve a mental absorption into each of these various levels. As one does this, one creates unmoving karma and the maturation of that unmoving karma leads to the resultant rebirth, where one takes rebirth as an actual being that abides in the form or formless realm.

March 22 (Wednesday)

Progressing through the four concentrations

To advance to a subsequent level one must make effort to do so. Having attained the first concentration, initially investigation and analysis are seen to be disturbing factors, and later so are bliss and other factors that are

abandoned along the way through the remaining concentrations. One continues to proceed through these but since these are only mundane paths, they are only able to suppress the coarse manifest afflictions so the seeds are still in the continuum. What is occurring is basically that the mind is being diverted from the objects that activate the afflictions – if you remove the objective conditions that cause the afflictions of a particular realm to manifest, then you will not experience those afflictions. Each of the four concentrations has particular “branches” associated with them. In general there are three branches, the antidote, benefit and basis branches, but on each level, there are one or more individual branches within these three categories.

Progressing through the formless absorptions

In the formless realm, the distinctions between each of the four levels are not made in terms of branches but in terms of the object of observation. The bodhisattva trains in the formless absorptions but does not take rebirth in them since there is no means to teach in those realms. After the fourth concentration, one begins to analyze the grossness of form and the peace of infinite space to attain the first formless absorption. Then one sees the grossness of space and the peace of consciousness to attain the second level, infinite consciousness. To move to the third formless absorption, one observes the grossness of consciousness and the peace of nothingness, that there is nothing form or formless to be apprehended. The final level is the peak of cyclic existence, also called “without discrimination, not without discrimination”, since to achieve it one observes the gross discrimination of nothingness as coarse and, upon attaining it, only subtle discrimination remains. But even the peak of cyclic existence has afflictions and there is no higher level within cyclic existence to attain any abandonment of those afflictions through a mundane path.

The four immeasurables

These have also been discussed in the context of the *Ornament* as well but in brief, these four are:

1. *Immeasurable love* – Love is the wish that all beings have happiness. It is the antidote to harmful intent
2. *Immeasurable compassion* – Compassion is the wish that all beings be free from suffering. It is the antidote to malice
3. *Immeasurable joy* – Joy is the wish that all beings not be separated from the happiness they have. Joy is the antidote to jealousy.
4. *Immeasurable equanimity* – Equanimity is the wish that all beings be free from afflictions. It is the antidote to hatred and attachment.

The definition of an immeasurable: A cognizer which is readily distinguished by having concomitance with wisdom and meditative stabilization and which is perfectly placed on compassion and so forth in dependence upon an actual concentration which is its own empowering condition. (From *Ocean*)

Pervasion between great compassion and immeasurable compassion

In our studies of the *Ornament*, we also discussed the pervasion between great compassion and immeasurable compassion as being four possibilities:

1. Both great compassion and immeasurable compassion: The great compassion of a bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of seeing.
2. Great compassion but not immeasurable compassion: Great compassion in the continuum of a bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of accumulation who has not achieved an actual concentration.
3. Immeasurable compassion but not great compassion: Immeasurable compassion in the continuum of a Hinayana practitioner who has achieved an actual concentration but does not have great compassion.
4. Neither: Compassion that observes only one’s parents in the continuum of an ordinary being.

At that time we said that one way that great compassion is distinguished from immeasurable compassion is that while immeasurable compassion does extend to limitless number of sentient beings, in developing great compassion, you specifically develop compassion towards all sentient beings by developing compassion towards the three categories of enemies, friends and strangers. Immeasurable compassion is not specifically cultivated toward enemies.

March 23 (Thursday)

The five clairvoyances

This topic was also discussed in our studies of *Ornament*. In order to have these clairvoyances, one must have attained a concentration as the empowering condition. Briefly they are as follows:

1. Clairvoyance of **magical emanations** – This is the ability to move earth, make one into many, many into one, and so forth.
2. Clairvoyance of **divine ear** – This enables one to hear subtle and gross sounds of the universe and so forth.
3. Clairvoyance of **knowing others' minds** – This is the ability to know the level of afflictions and other qualities in others' minds.
4. Clairvoyance of **knowing previous lives** – This is knowing the past lives of oneself and others.
5. Clairvoyance of **divine eye** – This enables one to see gross and subtle forms, hidden and unhidden in whatever realms of the universe.

Three causes for the clairvoyances

In *Ornament*, we also discussed that there are three causes for these: the common cause, the projecting cause, and the actualizing cause. The **common cause** is as discussed above, having attained an actual concentration. The **projecting cause** are practices which are unique to each clairvoyance, for example, for the clairvoyance of magical emanations the projecting cause would be offering vehicles, shoes, and so forth to one's teachers. The **actualizing causes** are the way in which the clairvoyances are generated through taking their particular type of aspect to mind. For example, an actualizing cause for the clairvoyance of magical emanations would be imagining your body to be light as a puff of cotton, to be able to pass through walls, and so forth.

The three higher trainings in relation to the grounds

The question may be raised as to why these powers are being presented now, since, as Lama Tsongkhapa says, they were already attained on the first ground (actually they were attained previous to that but since Chandrakirti's text begins with the first ground, he says that they were "attained" at that time). As we mentioned earlier, Lama Tsongkhapa responds by saying that here on the third ground, "he attains a training in meditative stabilization far superior to what he had on the preceding grounds." This assertion involves the achievement of the three higher trainings: the higher trainings in ethics, in meditative stabilization, and in wisdom. Geshe-la said that the surpassing **higher training in ethics** is attained on the second ground, with the surpassing perfection of ethics that occurs there, while the surpassing **higher training in meditative stabilization** is attained on this, the third ground. The **higher training in wisdom** is divided into three levels: (1) on the fourth ground, the bodhisattva attains a higher training in wisdom in regard to the 37 harmonies with enlightenment; (2) on the fifth ground, a higher training in wisdom in regard to the four noble truths; and (3) on the sixth ground, where the surpassing higher training in wisdom is actually attained, the higher training in wisdom in regard to the twelve links of dependent-arising.

Query concerning how bodhisattvas take rebirth

Lama Tsongkhapa also indicates that the concentrations and absorptions are discussed here specifically because the question can arise as to whether this bodhisattva could be reborn by the force of the unmoving karma that attaining the concentrations produces. The answer is that they could not be reborn by that since bodhisattvas only take rebirth by the power of compassion and prayer. A bodhisattva superior does not take rebirth due to the force of karma and afflictions.

The terms *concentration* and *meditative stabilization*

The term *concentration* (*bsam gtan*) specifically refers to the level of meditative stabilization that is included in the concentrations and absorptions of the form and formless realm, while *meditative stabilization* (*ting nge 'dzin*) is a more generic term.

Meaning of "desire and hatred are extinguished"

Lama Tsongkhapa says that desire, hatred and confusion are extinguished on the third ground but what is meant is that they are only diminished. This means that they are no longer manifest even though they haven't been abandoned.

The four fetters

Lama Tsongkhapa also mentions the four fetters in this section. Fetters are that which impede freedom. These four fetters are presented in two ways, first according to the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*:

1. Desire (attachment to objects of the desire realm)
2. Form (attachment to the bliss of concentrations)

3. Existence (attachment to the existence of the formless realms)
4. Ignorance

The alternate presentation of the four fetters as follows

1. Desire
2. Existence (meaning here the attachment to both the form and formless realms)
3. Ignorance
4. View (according to Lama Tsongkhapa, these have been completely eliminated on the path of seeing)

The two obstructions

Geshe-la discussed the two obstructions in Prasangika as spelled out in Jedzunba's *General Meaning* (the definitions from this text are in the handout of Feb. 21, 2000). The Tibetan word for obstruction (*grib pa*) also means a veil or a covering.

Afflictive obstructions

Afflictive obstruction (*nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa*, often abbreviated to *nyon sgrib*) is sometimes translated as an obstruction that prevents liberation. The Tibetan term *nyon mongs* is sometimes translated as delusion but Geshe-la said it is what renders the mind unruly and disturbed, and in that sense it is more of an affliction in that it afflicts or disturbs the mind.

If it is an afflictive obstruction, is it pervaded by being an obstruction that mainly hinders the attainment of liberation? Geshe-la said no in that the attachment that is a branch of altruism in the continuum of a bodhisattva superior is an afflictive obstruction but does not fit that definition. This refers specifically to the desire or attachment that the bodhisattva does not consciously strive to abandon, but will rather use to have children and so forth as a universal king. As such this attachment would not hinder liberation but would actually assist it. In our studies of *Ornament* the definition for afflictive obstruction included the phrase “abiding in a type of” which gives room for this exception.

Two types of afflictive obstructions

There are two types of afflictive obstructions: acquired and innate. **Acquired** afflictive obstruction means those that arise due to having studied tenets, specifically to have studied that an object truly exists and come to the conclusion that an object truly exists. By this explanation it might seem that very few people would actually have this type but there is much debate on this. There are two divisions of the acquired afflictive obstructions, the manifest and the factor of a seed. The basic difference between these two is that a **manifest** acquired afflictive obstruction is a consciousness but a seed is not. A **seed** is the potency established from a previous affliction that acts as a substantial cause for the future consciousness that is of a similar type, in other words, that is the manifest acquired afflictive obstruction. **Innate** afflictive obstructions are called such since they are intrinsic, meaning that they have existed due to the influence of beginningless latencies in one's continuum. There are also divisions of these into **manifest** and the factor of a **seed**.

Knowledge obstructions

Knowledge obstruction (*shes bya'i sgrib pa*, often abbreviated to *shes sgrib*) *Shes* means to know and *bya* means objects so this is the obstruction to omniscience, the knowledge of all objects. As is seen on the handout, there are no divisions of knowledge obstructions into acquired and innate but there are both those that are **manifest** and those that are a factor of a **seed**.

March 24 (Friday)

To add another perspective on this, we will occasionally refer to some passages from *A Dose of Emptiness* by Khedrup Je, translated by Jose Ignacio Cabezon, (see handout of March 24, “Khedrup Je on the Two Obscurations”). There are several terms that are translated differently in those passages – one is that “philosophical” is the term used for “acquired”.

The acquired afflictive obstructions

Jedzunba in his definition spoke about the acquired afflictive obstructions being those that arise from “the influence of tenets polluting one's continuum” in this lifetime – in essence we can see that these are the first

barrier that we come up against in our quest from liberation. There are both the manifest afflictive obstructions, which are conceptions of true existence, and then there are the seeds, which are the imprints from having had such conceptual thoughts in the past, but *both* the manifest and the seeds are *acquired* in this lifetime.

Regarding the term “manifest”

Manifest (*mgon gyur pa*) can be used in two different senses. One way is in relation to manifest (*mgon gyur*) and hidden (*lkog gyur*), as in the terms manifest phenomena and hidden phenomena. In that context, “manifest” is more akin to “obvious,” referring to any phenomena that can be initially realized by an ordinary person through direct perception. Hidden means that those phenomena, to be initially realized by an ordinary, must be done so by inference. However, this is not the way that we are talking about manifest here. The second way this term is used (what was translated in class as “manifested” when comparing these two ways) is in the sense of being operative in the consciousness, being not dormant. Geshe-la spoke about the difference between these two, “manifest” and “manifested”, and he said that if a phenomenon is “manifested” it is not necessarily “manifest”. An example of “manifested” but not “manifest” is the conception of true existence of a pot due to being induced by tenets. Why is it not “manifest”? Geshe-la said it is because it’s not an object of one of the six engaging consciousnesses. It is “manifested” because it is an operative consciousness that apprehends the observed object and aspect. Manifest in this sense involves a consciousness apprehending an aspect or an observed object. In summary, basically the term manifest is being used here in regard to the afflictive obstructions in the sense of “manifested” as just explained, in that it refers to it being an operative consciousness.

Regarding the term “possessing concomitance”

In the Khedrup Je translation, the phrase “together with its analogues” is what is called “possessing concomitance” in our terminology in the translation of Jedzunba’s *General Meaning*. This phrase in Tibetan is *mtshungs ldan* and *mtshung* means to be in accord with, or similar with. In our studies of *Ornament* we spoke about the concomitance between the main mind and its mental factors. There are six main minds (the five sense consciousnesses and the mental consciousness) and their role as such is to cognize the basic entity of the object. There are 51 mental factors, and these are in a sense 51 functions of the mind, in that they are operative in a number of ways. There are said to be five similarities or concomitances between the main mind and the mental factors. In the example of an eye consciousness apprehending a pot these are:

1. *Sameness of base* – This refers to the reliance upon the same sense power, which is, in our example, the eye sense power.
2. *Sameness of object of observation* – This is as stated, they both observe the same object, the pot.
3. *Sameness of aspect* – This refers to the fact that they are both generated in the same aspect or image, here being pot.
4. *Sameness of time* – A mind and its mental factors arise, abide and cease simultaneously
5. *Sameness of substantial entity* – This means that the mind and its mental factors are all either virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral. They are single, meaning that they cannot be different from each other.

There are five omnipresent mental factors which can be considered in regard to this:

- Feeling – That which is an entity of the experience of pleasure, pain or neutrality
- Contact – That which distinguishes its object as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral (acts as a basis for the experience of pleasure, pain or neutrality)
- Intention – That which moves and directs the mind that accompanies it to the object (i.e. that moves the mind in general)
- Discrimination – That which apprehends the uncommon signs of an object, for example the roundness of the pot
- Mental engagement – That which directs the mind accompanying it to a specific object of observation (i.e. that moves the mind to a specific object)

How this works then is, if we say that there is attachment to the pot in this mind, then the concomitance is as follows. The main mind that is concomitant with the affliction of attachment is an afflictive obstruction, as are all the mental factors that are concomitant with it, including the five omnipresent ones above. The main mental mind is *afflicted* but is *not* itself an affliction.

Regarding the terms “seed”, “latency”, and “imprint”

Geshe-la spoke about three terms: seed (*sa bon*) latency (*bag chags*) and imprint (*lag rjes*). In our *Ornament* studies we spoke about these somewhat. There, according to Svatantrika, the pervasion between latency and seed is three possibilities with latency pervading seed. One example of that which is a latency and not a seed is a latency of a knowledge obstruction in the continuum of a bodhisattva on the final moment of the tenth ground. So in that school, there are two types of latencies – those which are seeds and those which are not.

To examine this from a Prasangika point of view, it seems that the pervasion doesn't hold. How does Prasangika define a seed? When we speak of the seed of the acquired conception of true existence, it refers to the potential to bring about a result that is similar to the same consciousness that was the cause of it. A similar description would apply for the innate conception of true existence, the innate afflictive obstructions. But there is another type of seed, the seed of the knowledge obstructions, which does not cause a consciousness similar to it, but rather gives rise to mistaken dualistic appearance as its effect. So neither of those is a definition of seed that is inclusive of all members.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 27 (Monday)

3B1C-2A3B-4 Other pure features arising on the third ground (Continued)

Afflictive obstructions

To summarize our discussion from last week, the afflictive obstructions are divided into acquired and innate and each of those divided into manifest and seed. Acquired refers to those afflictive obstructions that arise through the pollution of tenets and innate refers to those that are unlearned existing from beginningless time. Simplified we can describe these roughly as:

- ❖ Afflictive obstruction: All the afflictions (including all the root and secondary delusions but chiefly the conception of true existence) along with the concomitant consciousnesses and the seeds of those afflictions.
- ❖ Manifest: An affliction or a concomitant consciousness apprehending an aspect or observed object.
- ❖ Seed: The potential deposited by an affliction that is able to give rise to a subsequent affliction of a similar type.

Basically the difference between manifest and seed is whether they are operative or not. Acquired afflictive obstructions are synonymous with obstructions that are objects of abandonment on the Mahayana path of seeing while innate afflictive obstructions are synonymous with afflictive obstructions that are objects of abandonment on the Mahayana path of meditation.

Knowledge obstructions

Simplified these can be described roughly as:

- ❖ Knowledge obstruction: A factor of mistaken dualistic appearance and its seeds.
- ❖ Manifest: A factor of mistaken dualistic appearance that has been deposited by the conception of true existence.
- ❖ Seed: An imprint that has been deposited by the conception of true existence that can give rise to a factor of mistaken dualistic appearance.

Dualistic appearance here means the appearance of true existence. There are no acquired knowledge obstructions. Knowledge obstructions are synonymous with knowledge obstructions that are objects of abandonment on the Mahayana path of meditation.

The nature of seeds

The conception of true existence deposits both the seed of an afflictive obstruction and the seed of a knowledge obstruction. These seeds are potencies and as such are non-associated compositional factors.

Differences between Svatantrika and Prasangika regarding the abandonment of obstructions

Both schools assert both afflictive obstructions and knowledge obstructions but there are differences in terms of what they are and when they are abandoned.

In the Svatantrika presentation, afflictive obstructions are the conceptions of a self-sufficient and substantially existent self along with the afflictions and their seeds. According to this school, the acquired afflictive obstructions, along with their seeds, are abandoned by the path of seeing while the innate along with their seeds are abandoned over the course of the path of meditation. In Svatantrika the knowledge obstructions are the conception of true existence (here *true* existence is distinct from *inherent* existence that is the object of negation in Prasangika). The acquired knowledge obstructions are abandoned at the same time as the acquired afflictive obstructions while the innate knowledge obstructions are abandoned simultaneously with the innate afflictive obstructions. A person who is definite in the Mahayana lineage would attain the state of foe destroyer simultaneous with attaining buddhahood. In Svatantrika, the conception of true existence is not the root of cyclic existence, so hearer and solitary realizer disciples can attain liberation, the state of foe destroyer, without abandoning the conception of true existence and its seeds.

As we have seen, in the Prasangika presentation, the acquired afflictive obstructions along with their seeds are abandoned by the path of seeing. The innate afflictive obstructions are abandoned by the path of meditation

through the seventh ground (they have been completely abandoned upon the path of release of the eighth ground). The knowledge obstructions are abandoned by path of meditation from the eighth ground onwards.

March 28 (Tuesday)

The sequence of the abandonments of the afflictive obstructions in Prasangika

For the following sections, please refer to the handout dated Feb. 2000, titled “Mahayana Path – Prasangika-Madhyamika”.

The Mahayana path of seeing

The path of seeing abandons the acquired afflictive obstructions. In meditative equipoise there is first the uninterrupted path and then there follows a path of release. The uninterrupted path itself is the actual antidote to the obstructions. On the path of release there is a true cessation, a complete abandonment of the of a portion of the obstructions such that they will not return again. The first ground begins with an uninterrupted path while the rest of the grounds begin with a path of release. After the path of release there is the period of subsequent attainment of the first ground. After the path of release there are also occasions of the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise that are neither an uninterrupted path nor a path of release. Those occasions are instances when the bodhisattva is not yet able to generate the antidote to the next level of obstructions.

The Mahayana path of meditation

In Prasangika, the innate afflictive obstructions are divided first into three levels (big, middling and small) and then each of those are divided into three levels (big, middling and small), making a total of nine levels. The first six are abandoned on the six paths of release of the second through the seventh grounds. The uninterrupted path of the seventh ground acts as an antidote to the three small levels of the innate afflictive obstructions, so upon attaining the path of release of the eighth ground, all nine levels have been abandoned.

To explain this in detail, with the uninterrupted path of the first ground of the path of meditation, the antidote to the big of the big innate afflictive obstructions is generated. With the path of release of the second ground, the bodhisattva has attained a true cessation of that level of the afflictive obstructions. As on the first ground, there is a period of subsequent attainment, until the bodhisattva attains the uninterrupted path that acts as an antidote to the middling of the big, the uninterrupted path of the second ground. This is followed by the path of release of the third ground where a true cessation of that level of the innate afflictive obstructions has been attained. The process continues with true cessations attained for the small of the big with path of release of fourth ground, the big of the middling with the path of release of the fifth ground, the middling of the middling with the path of release of the sixth ground, and the small of the middling with the path of release of seventh ground. Finally, as said above, with the uninterrupted path of the seventh ground, the bodhisattva develops an antidote to all three levels of the small (big, middling and small) and upon attaining the path of release of the eighth ground, all nine levels of the innate afflictive obstructions have been completely removed. All of these sessions of meditative equipoise are meditations on emptiness but they grow in their ability to remove subtler and subtler obscurations.

Regarding the meaning of “extinguished”

In this section, Chandrakirti’s root text says that desire and hatred are “extinguished” but here that only means “diminished.” Lama Tsongkhapa says that they are “extinguished” due to the fact that the particular abandonments of the third ground have been abandoned on that ground. This does not mean total extinguishment of the afflictions since there are still portions of the innate afflictive obstructions that remain to be abandoned on the remaining impure grounds.

3B1C-2A3C Distinguishing attribute of the first three perfections

Chandrakirti says that these first three perfections are being presented as practices for bodhisattvas but they were emphasized by the Buddha as being easier for the lay bodhisattva while the next three (effort, meditative stabilization, and wisdom) were emphasized as easier for the ordained. Lama Tsongkhapa says that specifically the lay bodhisattva should emphasize for generosity the giving of material and protection from fear. For ethics, the perfection of ethics emphasized is refraining from faults in regard to their vows, both the 24-hour vows and the vows of a lay person and the eight brahmacharya vows (those are lifetime vows that include, for example,

refraining entirely from sexual conduct plus avoiding killing, stealing and lying, and so on, although these are Hinayana vows, not Mahayana in this context). For patience, the practice of reflecting upon the profound Dharma of emptiness is recommended for lay persons.

The latter three perfections were emphasized for the ordained bodhisattvas with the understanding that it would be easier for them to meditate and so forth due to being more secluded from society's demands. In Geshe-la's previous teachings he indicated that meditative stabilization was specifically referring to calm abiding having the object of selflessness and wisdom refers to the wisdom of special insight realizing selflessness. Effort here refers to a joy in putting effort into virtuous practices, specifically meditation on emptiness but it could be applied to the practice of all six perfections.

The first three mainly bring about the collection of merit for the form body, the last two mainly bring about the collection of wisdom for the truth body, while effort is a cause of both collections.

3B1C-2A3D Conclusion by way of expressing the features of the third ground

Once again Chandrakirti uses the analogy of light to describe this third ground, the Luminous, as the bodhisattva "abiding in the sun" that has completely dispelled his own darkness, "seeks to overcome the darkness of migrators." After the third ground, the bodhisattva has the perfection of patience, so he no longer manifests an undisturbed mind and consequently ceases to have anger.

Causal and temporal motivation

Geshe-la said that in general there are two types of ignorance: (1) that which is an ignorance with respect to suchness, the nature of things, and (2) that which is an ignorance with respect to the law of cause and effect. The first of these is the first link of the twelve links of dependent arising, although there are some who say that both types are that first link. The first ignorance is the *causal motivation* that induces us to engage in actions that bind us in cyclic existence. At the time of committing the action there is also a *temporal motivation*, here Geshe-la mentioned the second ignorance as that motivation, since it makes the action non-meritorious. But when the first ignorance is the temporal motivation then it is said that meritorious actions are committed. Either of these two temporal motivations acts to keep one in cyclic existence in this case though.

Reason for the attainment of higher training in meditative stabilization

At the third ground, the bodhisattva has attained the higher training in meditative stabilization. Why? Patience is an undisturbed mind so that factor influences the strength of one's meditative stabilization and gives rise to a pliancy that will contribute to the abilities of the fourth ground.

3B1C-2A4 Fourth ground, the Radiant

So, on the fourth ground there is a bliss of suppleness or pliancy of mind and body present that allows the bodhisattva to remove the discordant class of laziness, and attain a surpassing perfection of effort. Recall that in the development of calm abiding, there are five faults and eight antidotes – of these eight, there are four antidotes to the first fault of laziness, and pliancy is the last (preceded by faith, aspiration and effort).

Joyous effort is a virtuous mind that delights in virtue. There is a distinction between effort in this context and diligence or perseverance. Effort is always directed at a virtuous object and is always associated with joy and enthusiasm. The type of enthusiasm we have often for worldly activities is in fact a type of laziness in this context and not "effort" at all.

3B1C-2A4A Surpassing effort on the fourth ground

The fourth ground is called the Radiant (*'od 'phro ba*) since joyous effort is said to blaze forth. To this bodhisattva there is an illumination of copper-colored light that surpasses the light seen at the beginning of the third ground.

The higher training in wisdom on the fourth ground

Here on the fourth ground the bodhisattva cultivates a surpassing higher training in wisdom with regard to the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment (*byang phyogs so bdun*). These thirty-seven practices are in common with all superiors and are defined in some texts as a path that causes definite emergence from cyclic existence or

solitary peace. These thirty-seven are cultivated on two levels, the coarse (in accordance with the *abhidharma* texts) and the subtle (in accordance with the Prasangika view). In the first, the observed objects of these are qualified by the lack of a self-sufficient substantially existent self and in the second, they are qualified by the lack of an inherently existent self.

March 29 (Wednesday)

Continuation of discussion on the two obstructions...

What constitutes the afflictive emotions? The six root and twenty secondary afflictions – but in the form and formless realms there is no anger so that root affliction and all the secondary that are based on anger are not included since they do not exist. When we speak about the innate afflictions associated with the desire realm, we can see these nine levels similar to the stains in clothing and it's as if there are different types of detergent that remove each of the levels of stains. Often when we speak of antidotes in regard to the individual afflictions, there are specific ones, such as love being an antidote to hatred. However, here the antidote is the wisdom realizing emptiness and, in each session of meditative equipoise, the bodhisattva is gradually wearing down the conception of true existence and as she does that, the afflictions that are associated with the conception of true existence are being worn or washed away. For example, holding that an object is inherently pleasurable, we develop attachment, so by removing a particular level of the conception of inherent existence, we remove the corresponding level of attachment and so forth.

Meditative equipoise on emptiness in hearers and solitary realizers

In Jose Ignacio Cabezón's *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.254), Khedrup Je examines an interesting issue. It is said that these various periods of meditative equipoise throughout the path are all direct realizations of emptiness so they cannot be discerned from one another. If that is so, since hearers and solitary realizers also realize emptiness, why doesn't the meditative equipoise of those Hinayana practitioners become an antidote to the knowledge obstructions? Khedrup Je says that the knowledge obstructions cannot be overcome by wisdom alone, in that it requires being conjoined in a complementary way with the feature of method that belongs exclusively to the Mahayana. Recall the analogy of a bird needing the two wings (wisdom and method) to fly. Khedrup Je also mentions that Hinayanists lack the "limitless reasonings" that we have discussed as part of the Mahayana training.

The way in which the objects of abandonment are eliminated by the antidotes

Khedrup Je (also p.254) says that the generating of the antidote on the uninterrupted path of seeing and the abandoning of the respective afflictions occur simultaneously. He also says that the path of release is the wisdom "that in the second instant of that [process] directly understands the special kind of cessation, which is the pure essential reality of the mind is free from the stains of the adventitious [obscurations] that are abandoned [during the path of] seeing."

Regarding the status of the knowledge obstructions while on the path of seeing

If we look at the definition of manifest knowledge obstruction on the Feb. 21 handout, it says "that abiding in a type of obstruction occurring in the continuum of a learner superior who has abandoned all conceptions of true existence." Jedzünba's definition might seem to be saying that this obstruction occurs only in a learner superior who has abandoned all the afflictive obstructions so what about the knowledge obstructions in the continuum of a bodhisattva on the path of seeing? Are there manifest knowledge obstructions in the continuum of that bodhisattva? In the meditative equipoise the appearance of true existence would not be present so there would not be manifest knowledge obstructions. But then are there seeds of knowledge obstructions in his continuum while in meditative equipoise on the path of seeing? According to Prasangika, yes, there would be the seeds of knowledge obstructions in his continuum. The phrase "abiding in a type" in the definition qualifies the definition because it does not limit them to *only* occurring in the continuum of a learner superior.

We say that the bodhisattva's meditative equipoise is "uncontaminated", so it may seem that then it should not be polluted by either of the obstructions. In fact, for *Svatantrika*, the meditative equipoise of the path of seeing does *not* possess any obstructions at that time. According to Khedrup Je (p.255), Svatantrika holds "that within the mental continuum [of someone] equipoised within the path of seeing there cannot exist the seeds of any [obscurations] to be abandoned," although they can arise again when the meditator emerges from such an

equipoise. However, for Prasangika, they say that the seeds are deposited onto the basis of the mere ‘I’ that is labeled in dependence on the aggregates. So according to our tradition, Khedrup Je says that “it is not contradictory for there to exist the seeds [of the obscurations] to be gotten rid of [during the path of] meditation within the continuum of someone equipoised within the path of seeing.” So we can say that the bodhisattva still possesses the knowledge obstructions at that time, even though the meditative equipoise is uncontaminated.

Regarding the mere ‘I’

In Prasangika, the person is illustrated by the mere ‘I’ that is imputed on the aggregates and, as said earlier, this mere ‘I’ is the basis onto which the seeds are deposited. Due to asserting the existence of the law of cause and effect, all Buddhist schools must have a way to posit what it is that goes on to a future life to experience the effects of one’s karma. In Svatantrika, that which takes rebirth is the mental consciousness, while Prasangika says it is the mere ‘I’. Mind does in fact have continuity from life to life but that is not the taker of rebirth because in Prasangika, the mere ‘I’ imputed on the aggregates is that which stores the karmic seeds that are carried from life to life.

Someone may think, then when a sentient being dies, there is another mere ‘I’ imputed on the next life’s aggregates, so how is there a continuity of the seeds when there is a new and different imputed ‘I’? The answer to this is that there is never a moment when there is no basis of imputation for the mere ‘I’ so there is a definite continuity to the mere ‘I’, even though the form aggregate that acts as the basis for that imputation does change from life to life. As the mere ‘I’ goes from one existence to the next, there are always either four or five aggregates that the person is imputed upon. On the basis of that mere ‘I’ there are karmic seeds deposited and carried from existence to existence. The mere ‘I’ does have continuity and this is different from the instance of the ‘I’ that is imputed only on the aggregates of this lifetime.

The latencies of ignorance as the cause of “negative reflex actions”

Earlier Geshe-la mentioned the passage from Chandrakirti’s *Autocommentary* (p.184) about certain obstructions that Hinayana foe destroyers still have. Recall that Geshe-la said that such foe destroyers are seen to behave like monkeys or yell disparaging remarks at women. Khedrup Je (p.249-250), calls such behavior “negative reflex actions” (as translated by Cabezon), and says that they occur due to the latencies of attachment and hatred. Khedrup Je says that the latencies of ignorance are “the negative reflex actions of the mind are the aspect of mental unclarity in regard to the situation of phenomena that are difficult to understand,” and he mentions Maudgalyayana to exemplify this. Maudgalyayana was a foe destroyer and he was searching for his mother in a hell realm with his clairvoyant powers and could not find her, no matter how hard he looked. Khedrup Je says that this is due to the latency of ignorance. Such latencies in the Mahayana schools are called knowledge obstructions but these latencies are looked upon differently in other schools. In Hinayana we spoke about this as one of the four types of non-afflicted ignorance that impede the attainment of the state of all-knowingness.

The thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment

As we said earlier, the bodhisattva on the fourth ground attains a higher training in wisdom with respect to the coarse and subtle levels of the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment. There are a number of resources for these, including Geshe-la’s teachings on them in the context of the *Ornament* so we will not cover them in great detail. Most of these thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment are consciousnesses but there are a few that, according to Prasangika tenets, may not be. These thirty-seven are emphasized in the practices of hearers in that they develop a similitude of these but they are fully qualified only in a buddha. In general, the bodhisattva cultivates these along with the complete 173 aspects of the omniscient mind, in order to be able to help others on the path.

These thirty-seven are set forth in seven groups. Each of these groups is said to arise at a particular level along the bodhisattva’s path. The first three groups arise respectively on the small, middling and great levels of the path of accumulation. The fourth is associated with the first two levels (heat and peak) of the path of preparation while the fifth is associated with the last two levels (tolerance and supreme mundane quality). The sixth occurs with the path of seeing and the seventh with the path of meditation.

(1) Four close placements of mindfulness

This was defined by Jedzunba as an exalted knower having entered a path which is included in either a meditative mindfulness or wisdom upon having examined both the general and specific characteristics of bodies, feelings, minds and phenomena (from *A Presentation of Close Placements*). As mentioned in the definition, the four are the close placements of mindfulness on body, feelings, mind and phenomena. The etymology of this term is that mindfulness allows us to hold an object and having it be held close (meaning not forgotten) by mindfulness, then the wisdom factor analyzes it.

In the close placement on the body, the analysis is made in regard to both specific and general characteristics. The analysis of the specific characteristics can be done in terms of the four elements (earth, fire, water, wind) and evolutes (i.e. that which evolves out of the elements – e.g. heaviness, lightness, and so forth). This practice is used to a great extent in Theravadin Buddhism. One can also examine the body in terms of the outer, inner, and that which is both outer and inner. Outer refers to all the objects of the five senses (all external forms, which includes those which are not connected with feeling, e.g. hair or fingernails). Inner refers to the sense spheres or faculties (the subtle matter that acts as the empowering condition for the senses). That which is both inner and outer refers to the sense organs, called such since from the perspective of outside the body, they are outer, and from the perspective of inside the body, they are inner. So these are the various ways of analyzing the nature of the body.

The general characteristic that is analyzed is applicable to all four objects of the close placements of mindfulness. In *A Presentation of Close Placements*, Jedzunba says that according to *Treasury of Knowledge*, this refers to the objects having the characteristics first four attributes of true sufferings: impermanent, miserable, empty and selfless.

The object of the second close placement of mindfulness is feeling, and feelings can be categorized as pleasurable, unpleasurable and neutral. The object of the third close placement is mind, meaning specifically the main or primary mind and not the mental factors. Phenomena are the object of the fourth close placement, and are inclusive of all the remaining mental factors (other than feeling) but mainly the mental factors. In the Theravadin tradition, they would be looking at true cessations in this last category.

Reasons for meditation on the four close placements of mindfulness

Why do we take these four as objects? Through the first, one abandons grasping at the body as a dwelling place for the self. Through the second, one abandons the grasping at the feelings as a source of enjoyment of the self. Through the third, one abandons grasping the mind as the self. Through the last, one abandons grasping at phenomena, such as attachment, as that which afflicts a self. In this way one sees that there is no substrata that is being acted upon by these mental factors – they are simply mental events.

It is also said that, through the close placement on the body, one engages oneself in **true sufferings**, seeing the body as a foundation for all our suffering. Through the second, one engages in **true origins**, in that feelings are the source of our suffering. Through the third, one engages in **true cessations**, in that, because the mind is impermanent, the afflictions can be removed and the self imputed to it will still remain. Through the close placement on phenomena, one engages in **true paths**, since one can discriminate between the thoroughly afflicted phenomena that are to be abandoned and the completely pure that are to be adopted. So these four are also used to engage in the four noble truths.

March 30 (Thursday)

(2) Four thorough abandonings

The second group consists of the four thorough abandonings, which are defined in our *Ornament* studies as “exalted knowers having entered a path which is a delighted effort in rejecting and adopting with respect to abandonments and antidotes.” The “abandonments and antidotes” are fourfold: (1) the non-generation of non-virtues not yet generated, (2) the abandoning of the non-virtues already generated, (3) the generation of virtues not yet generated, and (4) the increasing of virtues already generated. Two of these might seem to not be “abandonings” in the strict sense of the term since they are adopting of virtues, but they are abandonings in the sense of abandoning the discordant class to those practices.

(3) Four legs of miraculous manifestation

The four legs of miraculous manifestation were defined in our *Ornament* studies as “exalted knowers having entered a path which is a meditative stabilization based upon the eight applications of abandonments, the antidotes to the five faults.” The eight antidotes to the five faults are seen in the context of developing calm abiding. In regard to these four legs of miraculous manifestation, this is the case of giving the name of the result to the cause in that these four provide the means for miraculous manifestation in that they are supports or causes for the magical powers to manifest. By means of these legs one can “travel” to unimaginable feats. Each of these induces a meditative stabilization that is capable of producing miraculous manifestations. The four are:

1. *Aspiration* – Here one aspires to display a magical power, to perform various feats.
2. *Effort* – Here one makes effort toward developing that miraculous manifestation.
3. *Intention* – One has the imprints of them from the past and thus enables one to produce them in this life – through familiarity with them in the past one gains the ability to perform them in this life.
4. *Analysis* – Here, through the analysis of teachings given to oneself by others, one acts to induce the miraculous emanation.

(4) Five powers

The etymology of these five “powers” is that they empower one with regard to enlightenment. Once again from our *Ornament* studies, the definition of these five in this context is: an exalted knower which independently produces its own result, a superior path. These five factors are found at different levels of the path and given different names at each level – at the levels of heat and peak of the path of preparation, they are called the five powers. The following explanation is in accordance with Geshe-la’s previous *Middle Way* teachings and with what we learned in *Ornament* and concerns the coarse aspects of the four noble truths. However these five could all be stated in regard to emptiness as well, the subtle aspect of the four noble truths.

1. *Faith* – A trusting faith in regard to adopting (true paths and true cessations) and rejecting (true sufferings and true origins) with respect to the four noble truths
2. *Effort* – A delighted effort with regard to adopting and rejecting with respect to the four noble truths.
3. *Mindfulness* – Holding the mind to the object of apprehension, the four noble truths, and not allowing the mind to be forgetful of that object
4. *Meditative stabilization* – A single-minded placement of the mind on the four noble truths
5. *Wisdom* – An analytic consciousness which discriminates the detailed aspects of the four noble truths

(5) Five forces

These are the same five factors as in the previous but this refers to them at the levels of tolerance and supreme mundane quality of the path of preparation. The difference is that the five forces cannot be overcome by their discordant class. The discordant classes are respectively: non-faith, laziness, forgetfulness, distraction, and “faulty wisdom”. This last one is referring to an intelligence or knowledge that is faulty, where one uses one’s wisdom wrongly. Through these five we are able to eventually attain a direct realization of emptiness.

(6) Seven branches of enlightenment

These are attained with the path of seeing and are said to act as a cause for enlightenment. They are:

1. *Correct mindfulness* – This refers to non-forgetfulness with regard to one’s former realizations.
2. *Fine discrimination of phenomena* – This is wisdom with regard to what is to be adopted and avoided or in regard to one’s wisdom of emptiness.
3. *Correct effort* – A delight in virtue with regard to adopting that to be practiced and avoiding that to be abandoned or in regard to meditation on emptiness.
4. *Correct joy* – This is different from the joy associated with effort in that it is the joy of gaining new realization.
5. *Correct pliancy* – This pliancy refers to the fact that one experiences a newfound bliss of body and mind through having gained the direct realization of emptiness.
6. *Correct meditative stabilization* – This is single-pointed placement on emptiness.
7. *Correct equanimity* – This is equanimity of application. Geshe-la mentioned that there are two types of equanimity: (1) equanimity of feeling, meaning a neutral feeling and (2) in calm abiding, there is equanimity the non-application of antidotes. The second is what is being talked of here in that one’s mind remains free of laxity and excitement and abides in equanimity.

(7) Eightfold path of superiors

These are the same eight referred to as the eightfold noble path in the Theravadin tradition. These are paths that lead to superior's paths, meaning the paths of meditation and no more learning.

1. *Correct view* – This is the view that familiarizes with selflessness through analysis. View is a consciousness, not just a theory.
2. *Correct realization* – This refers to that which motivates speech to others and causes others to understand one's realization.
3. *Correct speech* – This is teaching others that which one has realized and causing others to trust.
4. *Correct aim of actions* – These are pure actions of body and speech.
5. *Correct livelihood* – This is the abandonment of the five wrong livelihoods but also refers to correct modes of ethics in general.
6. *Correct effort* – This is taking great delight in endeavoring to adopt and abandon in regard to the practices and advance to higher levels of the path.
7. *Correct mindfulness* – This refers to strongly maintaining calm abiding and not forgetting the causal factors for equanimity.
8. *Correct meditative stabilization* – Here meditative stabilization refers to meditating for the sake of accomplishing special qualities such as clairvoyances.

Geshe-la said that correct aims of actions and correct livelihood could include taking of vows and since some vows are form, it would seem that some of these are form and not consciousnesses. Correct speech might also be in question as not being pervaded by being a consciousness.

These eight can be condensed into four branches:

- ❑ Branch of analysis – The first, correct view
- ❑ Branch of bringing about understanding in others – The second, correct realization
- ❑ Branch of causing others to trust – The next three, correct speech, aims of action and livelihood
- ❑ Branch of antidote to the discordant class – The last three, correct effort, mindfulness, and meditative stabilization

Seldom in Mahayana Buddhism do we talk about these eight but they are extensively taught in Hinayana. But they are indirectly taught in the context of the three higher trainings. They can also be included within those three:

- ❑ Higher training in ethics – Correct speech, aim of actions and livelihood
- ❑ Higher training in meditative stabilization – Correct mindfulness and meditative stabilization
- ❑ Higher training in wisdom – Correct view, realization and effort

Coarse and subtle aspects of the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment

When we talk of these in terms of the coarse and subtle aspects of the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment, Geshe-la said that coarse is in regard to seeing them as empty of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. It seems that you could take these various realizations as empty of such a self in the sense that phenomena can be seen as empty of being an object of use of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. Subtle would be seeing them as empty of true existence. However, when Geshe-la spoke about coarse and subtle in relation to the close placement of mindfulness on the body, he said that it could also be done in terms of cause. In that way, coarse would be seeing the body as *produced by* a conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent self and the subtle would be seeing the body as being *produced by* a conception of the an inherently existent self. Geshe-la spoke about this more in answering questions during the Friday, March 31, class (see below).

March 31 (Friday)

Review of some points from questions and answers from Geshe-la today

- * Regarding the definition of manifest knowledge obstruction, when asked if the first part of the definition was necessary, Geshe-la seemed to say that without that part, there would not be pervasion. He said that there is something that is that definition but not that definiendum – the acquired conception of true existence grasping form and so forth to truly exist. However, from what we can tell, it would seem that if it is a knowledge obstruction it is either a factor of mistaken dualistic appearance or a seed of that, and the

subject Geshe-la gave doesn't seem to meet that requirement since it is a consciousness. It comes down to exactly what a "factor" is defined as and it's not clear so perhaps Geshe-la can elaborate.

- * Regarding the quote from Chandrakirti on the latencies of attachment and anger that a foe destroyer has that cause him to jump around like a monkey and so forth, Geshe-la said these are knowledge obstructions. Geshe-la said that these latencies are conceptions of true existence depositing imprints. But these two are the latencies deposited by attachment and hatred. So, these may be a desire and attachment that conceive of true existence and lay down latencies that are knowledge obstructions. There is a related passage in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (pp.259-260). A knowledge obstruction in terms of attachment must be an imprint of attachment conceiving of true existence. We are talking about the conceptions of true existence that lay down the imprints that are the seeds of the knowledge obstructions.
- * Regarding the seeds of the acquired afflictive obstructions, Geshe-la seemed to say that they do carry forward to the next life. This is contradictory to what we said earlier when we discussed these that the acquired were attained from pollution by wrong tenets *in this life*.
- * In regard to the coarse and subtle aspects of the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment, Geshe-la spoke about them in regard to two examples:
 - ← Close placement of mindfulness on the body – Geshe-la said that the coarse level is observing the "coarse" body – that which is a result of (or appropriated due to) the conception of a substantially existent, self-sufficient self. The subtle level is observing the "subtle" body – that which is a result of the conception of a truly existent self. That is one interpretation and the other is that in the coarse level, the body itself is being observed as not possessing a substantially existent, self-sufficient self while the subtle is being observed as not truly existent.
 - ← Faith, one of the five powers – Here Geshe-la said that the coarse level is the mental factor of faith that realizes the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self and the subtle is faith realizing the emptiness of true existence. This faith *realizes* emptiness because you have faith as a mental factor concomitant with the wisdom realizing emptiness, but that faith is not a "realizing awareness." Alternatively, one could also see the coarse level as the object of faith being empty of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self and the subtle as the object of faith being empty of true existence.

3B1C-2A4C Features of abandonment

Lama Tsongkhapa says that extinguishment means that the level of the obscurations associated with this ground have been extinguished. The conception of a substantially existent self-sufficient self still exists through the remainder of the impure grounds. Geshe-la also mentioned that the conception of a permanent, partless, independent self is only an acquired afflictive obstruction, and not innate. In his previous teachings (Geshe-la's *Oral Commentary, Chapters 1-5*, p.161), he talks about Jamyang Shepa's unique assertion that there are two types of innate grasping at a self-sufficient substantially existent self. Something similar to this can also be seen in Donald Lopez' *A Study of Svatantrika* (p.115), where he describes two forms of this "coarse conception of self" (as Prasangika would call it).

In summary the main points of the fourth chapter are that the bodhisattva has abandoned the small of the big, still has the innate conceptions of true existence and has developed wisdom with respect to the coarse and subtle levels of the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment.

April 3 (Monday)

3B1C-2A5 The fifth ground, the Difficult to Overcome

The fifth ground is called the Difficult to Overcome (*sbyang dka' ba*) – *sbyang* usually means training while *dka' ba* means difficult. The fifth ground bodhisattva attains a surpassing practice in regard to the perfection of concentration (*bsam gtan gyi phar phyin*). Within the Tibetan term for concentration, *gtan* means firm or stable and *bsam* means mind.

3B1C-2A5A Description of the fifth ground

Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland*, quoted by Lama Tsongkhapa, says that this bodhisattva can no longer be overcome by maras, becomes a king in the Joyous Land and overcomes the sources of afflicted views of all Forders. After the surpassing perfection of patience on the third ground, and the bliss of pliancy on the forth,

here on the fifth with the surpassing perfection of concentration, the bodhisattva has an even more stable meditative concentration.

Meaning of “no longer overcome by maras”

There are four types of maras:

1. Mara of the aggregates
2. Mara of the afflictions
3. Mara of the lord of death
4. Mara of the sons-of-the-gods

We saw the Svatantrika interpretation of the four maras in our studies of the *Ornament* where the first three are spoken of in terms of coarse and subtle. For the first, the coarse was the contaminated aggregates that arise from afflictions and the subtle was the mental body that arises from the latency of ignorance. For the second, the coarse are the root and secondary afflictions and the subtle are their seeds. For the third coarse is the factor that uncontrollably stops the power of life through karma and afflictions, and the subtle is “inconceivable death”.

However, here we are speaking in particular about the fourth, the mara of the sons-of-the-gods, which refers to an actual type of being in the desire realm class of gods, while the others do not. It is said that this mara hinders one from passing beyond the other maras. Geshe-la said that one of these maras is Devaputra, who is equipped with five arrows and the natures of these five are described differently according to various texts. In Svatantrika, Geshe-la said they were attachment, hatred, ignorance, pride and jealousy but there are two alternate descriptions of the five arrows in the transcripts of Geshe-la’s current teachings: 1) makes one – confused, faint, crazy, die, and forgetful, and 2) makes one – intoxicated, shake, proud, obscured, and die. It is said that Devaputra can be a bad influence on Dharma practitioners in particular.

Meaning of “having overcome the sources of the afflicted views of the Forders”

Forders are non-Buddhists whose views are enumerated as the sixty-two bad views, and these sixty-two can be condensed into 14 “unspecified views”. They are called that since, when the Buddha was asked questions based on these views, he remained silent due to the fact that whatever answer he gave, it would have deepened the wrong view of the person asking the question. These fourteen are in the transcripts of Geshe-la’s teachings. The first four of the fourteen are based upon the extreme of a past beginning point, the second four are related to the extreme of a future end point, and so forth.

Geshe-la also said that we can also speak of the five afflicted views in this context. Those five are: (1) the view of the transitory collection, (2) the view holding to an extreme, (3) conception of a bad view as superior, (4) conception of bad ethics and modes of conduct to be superior, and (5) wrong view.

3B1C-2A5B Surpassing concentration and skill in means in the truths

Chandrakirti says that the perfection of concentration is surpassing but also that there is an attainment of wisdom skilled in regards to the four noble truths.

The three repetitions of the four noble truths

With regard to the Buddha’s teaching the four noble truths, there are said to be three “repetitions”. The first is in regard to **entity**, where the Buddha simply stated the entities of them, i.e. this is suffering, a truth of superiors, this is the origin of suffering, a truth of superiors, and so forth. The second is in regard to **activity**, where the Buddha stated that true sufferings are to be known, true origins are to be abandoned, true paths are to be actualized, and true cessations are to be cultivated. The third is in regard to **what has been done**, where the Buddha stated that true sufferings have been known, there are no more true sufferings to be known, and so forth.

Query concerning the two truths

A question is raised as to why there are four separate truths since the Buddha said that the truths are limited to two – conventional and ultimate truths. The reply is that indeed all of the truths are included in the two truths, conventional and ultimate, but the four truths are necessary as a means to understand the thoroughly afflicted phenomena (true sufferings and true origins) to be rejected and the completely pure phenomena (true paths and true cessations) to be adopted. Lama Tsongkhapa also states that, according to Prasangika, true sufferings, true

origins and true paths are included in conventional truths and true cessations are included in ultimate truths. In Svatantrika, true cessations are conventional truths.

The coarse and subtle levels of the four noble truths

Geshe-la gave an enumeration of the four noble truths in terms of their coarse and subtle levels. For the four attributes of true sufferings:

1. Impermanence – This is the only attribute that is not differentiated into coarse and subtle. It is only momentariness.
2. Miserable – The difference is set out in terms of the cause of the contaminated aggregates (the contaminated aggregates and true sufferings are mutually inclusive). The coarse level is when this attribute is set out in terms of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, and the subtle is when set out in terms of an inherently existent self.
3. Empty – coarse: empty of a permanent, unitary, independent self other than the aggregates; subtle: empty of an inherently existent self.
4. Selfless – coarse: non-existence of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self; subtle: non-existence of an inherently existent self.

For true origins, Geshe-la said that the difference is posited on the basis of the craving that is the source of suffering. That which is induced by the view of the transitory collection conceiving the person as self-sufficient, substantially existent is coarse and that induced by the view of the transitory collection conceiving the person as inherently existent is subtle. For true paths and true cessations, the subtle and coarse are posited similarly (these can be seen in the second part of the handout of Feb. 24, 2000, “The Way of Classifying Each of the Four Noble Truths into the Two, Coarse and Subtle”).

Regarding the assertion that a true cessation is an emptiness

There is an important word in this section, *chos dbyings*, which Hopkins translates as the “element of qualities”, *dharmadhatu*, or basically emptiness. Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna who pays homage to this “element of qualities,” which is called the “cause” of the qualities of superiors since through meditation on it, it acts nominally as the cause for becoming a superior. In Svatantrika, true cessations are conventional truths while, as said earlier, in Prasangika they are ultimate truths. However, even within Prasangika circles, there are differences of opinion. Some monastic textbook traditions, for example Panchen Sonam Drakpa of Drepung Loseling, say that they are not emptinesses. Jedzün Chogyi Gyeltshen, textbook author for Sera Monastery (our tradition), says that they are emptinesses.

Ultimate truths vs. conventional truths

So there is agreement that true cessations are ultimate truths, since ultimate truths are truths for the ultimate, that is, the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness. They appear to such a mind. In meditative equipoise, the knowledge obstructions are temporarily absent so there is no appearance of true existence, so whatever is appearing is an ultimate truth in that it exists the way it appears. To other than the wisdom of meditative equipoise, all appearances are falsities, conventional truths. An object appearing to any other consciousness necessarily appears as truly existent. They are conventional truths in that they are only true for a concealer or a deceptive consciousness. Dharmakīrti designates conventional truths as truth for a conceptuality but here we take it as truth for an ignorance. So therefore they are conventional truths.

Drepung Loseling tradition on true cessations and ultimate truths

What constitutes ultimate truth? Panchen Sonam Drakpa says there are two types: emptiness and those that are not emptiness (i.e. true cessations). True cessations appear to meditative equipoise because they are a freedom or release from a particular portion of the obscurations due to the application of an antidote such that they will not appear again. Since the true cessation is actualized on the path of release, after the actual application of the antidote on the uninterrupted path, it appears to the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise. Panchen Sonam Drakpa says it is not an emptiness because emptiness is a negation of a non-existent, i.e. inherent existence. The absence of that object is emptiness and the object itself, inherent existence, is non-existent. True cessations are also a negation but they are a negation of an existent, such as the acquired conception of true existence. Since that which is negated by a true cessation is an existent, Panchen Sonam Drakpa says it is not an emptiness.

Sera tradition on true cessations and ultimate truths

In our textbook tradition, Jedzün Chogyi Gyeltshen says true cessations are also emptinesses. Jedzünba substantiates this by saying the following. Our present mind is “covered” with the two obstructions – these obstructions are adventitious and not inherent to the mind. Coincidentally the emptiness of our mind can also be said to be “covered” by these two obstructions. When we cultivate a true path, a meditation on emptiness, and remove these obscurations “covering” the mind, we simultaneously remove the obscurations “covering” the emptiness of our mind. As a result one attains a purity of that emptiness of the mind. This is a true cessation which is an emptiness. Why? Because a freedom from the obscurations of the emptiness of the mind by is also an emptiness. Freedoms from obstruction attained by means of cultivating a path are true cessations and, because these true cessations are not different from the emptiness of the mind, true cessations are emptinesses.

Although this logic may not be easy to understand, this is somewhat in line with what we saw in our *Ornament* studies, when we spoke of the emptiness of the omniscient mind as the nature truth body. There are two divisions of the nature body: (1) a nature body that is a factor of intrinsic purity (meaning free from inherent stains) and (2) a nature body that is a factor of adventitious purity (meaning freedom from the adventitious stains). Both of these are emptinesses

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

April 4 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2A5B Surpassing concentration and skill in the truths (continued)

Some final thoughts on true cessations being emptinesses

There is not much scriptural authority upon which to rely in regard to whether true cessations are emptinesses or not. There is agreement among the various traditions within Prasangika as to true cessations being ultimate truths but obviously some disagreement over this point. If we say that true cessations are emptinesses, then we end up with two types of emptinesses: those with an object of negation that is an existent and those with an object of negation that is a non-existent. It is difficult to understand completely the logic and reasoning that is set forth to substantiate true cessations as being emptinesses and that set forth to say that they are not.

Related passage from *A Dose of Emptiness*

There is a reference in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.359), in a section that Geshe-la quoted from in class, where Khedrup Je says that Svatantrika (along with Prasangika) holds that true cessations are ultimate truths. This passage seems to be contradictory to what was taught in our studies of the *Ornament*. Other than that reference, Khedrup Je doesn't provide much more.

Related passage from *The Two Truths*

In *The Two Truths* (pp.162-171), Guy Newland makes a rather extensive presentation on this subject, providing another view of the logic from both points of view. He begins by defining what a true cessation is, describing it as “the complete and final eradication of one or more obstructions from the continuum of an individual.” An uninterrupted path, which acts as the actual antidote to the obstructions, has two results: a path of release that is a result similar in type and a true cessation, which is only nominally a result since it is a permanent phenomenon. This true cessation is directly realized by the meditative equipoise of that path of release. Since true cessations appear to meditative equipoise along with emptiness, they “exist as they appear to the minds of meditative equipoise that directly perceive them” so they are ultimate truths. Is it then the case that there are two classes of ultimate truths, emptinesses and true cessations? Or can true cessations be actually considered emptinesses?

Panchen Sonam Drakba's position as discussed in *The Two Truths*

Guy Newland first reviews Panchen Sonam Drakba's position, saying that there are two types of purity, purity from natural stains and purity from “circumstantial,” or adventitious, stains. When these exist in the continuum of a buddha, they are the nature body, and there both of these purities are a nirvana. Guy Newland says however, that “since even from the first ground a bodhisattva fully and directly cognizes reality or emptiness, while yet possessing only a partial nirvana,” Panchen Sonam Drakba and his followers (among them Kensur Padma Gyeltsen) argue that nirvana cannot be identical to emptiness.

Further, Kensur Padma Gyeltsen cites the *Intermediate Exposition of the Stages of the Path*, where Lama Tsongkhapa divides ultimate truths into two. The first are naturally pure nirvanas which are the emptinesses of inherent existence of phenomena and the second are nirvanas which are true cessations, meaning “just those which are separations from any of the seeds of the defilements.” Kensur Padma Gyeltsen argues that if the second of these two was an emptiness, it would have to be a “final nature,” meaning that it would be found by an awareness analyzing for the ultimate or final nature of phenomena. If that is so, then it follows that “it would have to be the final mode of subsistence of the mind.” If that is accepted, then, since true cessations “would have to be established as the mode of subsistence of that mind from the beginning, beings seeking release would be released without exertion, without relying on cultivation of the path.” Using this logic, it is pointless to meditate on emptiness to attain true cessations of the obstructions since everyone would already have perfect nirvana. Therefore true cessations are not emptinesses. Guy Newland sets out two other arguments to support this view (refer to pp.165-166).

Jedzun Chogyi Gyeltshen's position as discussed in *The Two Truths*

Jedzunba says that nirvana, which is a true cessation, is an emptiness and he quotes Lama Tsongkhapa on this. In his *Ocean of Reasoning*, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the absence of a conception of true existence is a nirvana. The emptiness of the mind of a yogi who has abandoned an obstruction and has attained a true cessation is a nirvana. Guy Newland continues with this argument but, since some of this will be discussed when we talk about the unique tenet of Prasangika that involves disintegratedness, we'll only touch on it briefly here. Basically the argument follows that, if you say that true cessations are not emptinesses, then perhaps you are saying that this is disintegratedness, since it is a mere stopping of these afflictions such that they will not return again, and as such it is a functioning thing. If nirvana were the impermanence of the afflictions, then anyone who could realize their impermanence would be liberated from cyclic existence and then they would not be an ultimate truth.

Three ways to conceptualize true cessations as emptinesses

Finally, Guy Newland suggests three ways that true cessations can be conceptualized, one put forth by Gen Losang Gyatso, one based on Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Element of Qualities*, and one by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In the first, one can think of them as emptinesses in that a drinking glass is clear and it reflects light. When it is filled with murky water, the glass remains clear but it loses its ability to reflect light. "Similarly, when one has not abandoned the afflictions, the mind has a clear nature of emptiness, but, marred by circumstantial afflictions, it does not have a purified, enlightened, or reflecting nature." The always present clarity of the mind and its reflective quality are fused, similar to the way that both parts of the glass are indistinguishable from each other.

The second is the analogy of the waxing moon for the truth body as Nagarjuna says in *Praise of the Element of Qualities*, which Lama Tsongkhapa quotes in this fifth chapter of *Illumination* (p.71). The third way of conceptualizing true cessations as emptinesses was given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He gave the analogy of a table (the mind) which is basically clean (empty of inherent existence) and if one pours oil on it and then wipes it away, nothing is left but a clean table. Just as the clean table acts as a basis for the oil and when the oil is wiped away, a clean table remains, so the natural purity of the mind is the foundation upon which the purity from adventitious stains, the freedom from the afflictions, is attained,

3B1C-2B The sixth ground, the Manifest

On this sixth ground of the bodhisattva, there is a wisdom developed with regard to the twelve links of dependent arising and the surpassing perfection of wisdom is attained.

3B1C-2B1 Etymology of "the Manifest" and indication that the perfection of wisdom is surpassing

Etymology of "the Manifest"

The sixth ground is called the Manifest (*mngon du gyur pa*). The etymology of this term can be seen in a note assembled by Anne Klein (see p.25, note 6). She says that the Sanskrit term is *abhimukhi*, meaning "thoroughly facing," and when it was brought into the Tibetan language, there were two possible translations of this term due to the two different shades of meaning present in the Sanskrit term. The etymology of the first of these two is that the bodhisattva is now facing towards or nearing the qualities of a buddha. This is why the sixth ground is also called "the Approaching" (*mgon du phyogs pa*) since some Tibetan translators chose this meaning of the Sanskrit term. The etymology of the second, "the Manifest", derives from the other meaning of *abhimukhi*, that the wisdom of a buddha has now become obvious or manifest to the bodhisattva. Although both have been used in the Tibetan, Anne Klein says that Lama Tsongkhapa seems to prefer the second. Geshe-la says that it is called the Manifest because the four noble truths and dependent arising become manifest or obvious objects to the bodhisattva on the sixth ground.

Regarding the surpassing perfection of wisdom

On the fifth ground, a surpassing perfection of concentration was attained. Now on the sixth, the surpassing perfection of wisdom arises through a combination of two factors. The first is that the bodhisattva abides in that concentration while observing emptiness, while secondly, directing their realization specifically at the twelve links of dependent arising. Also as a consequence to the enhanced calm abiding achieved on the fifth ground, the bodhisattva's special insight has been completely developed and so he attains an uncommon absorption of

cessation. Here on the sixth ground, the observation of the ultimate has been brought to perfection so on the remaining four grounds, the bodhisattva will begin to observe the conventional.

Types of absorptions of cessation

The uncommon absorption of cessation was mentioned previously in regard to bodhisattva on the seventh ground outshining the hearers and solitary realizers. For our discussion of this topic, we can refer to the three definitions given by Jedzünba that are presented on the Feb. 21 handout (two definitions of “absorption of cessation” and one of “uncommon absorption of cessation”).

Correction to the Feb. 21 handout: In the definition of absorption of cessation from *General Meaning*, cross out the numbers and remove the word “being.” With these corrections, the definition says that this absorption of cessation is dependent upon a supramundane path and an actual absorption of the peak of cyclic existence. There is also a corrected definition of absorption of cessation in Chittamatra from *Ocean of Sport* that is in the transcripts of Geshe-la’s class.

Here in Prasāṅgika, “cessation” refers to thusness so an absorption of cessation is an exalted wisdom absorbed in thusness. Thusness is called cessation because, through meditating on it, the resulting exalted wisdom stops or ceases the elaboration of dualistic appearance. From what can be discerned, it seems that there are either two or three types of absorptions of cessation.

← An absorption of cessation common with the first ground and above

One (which seems to be defined only as “absorption of cessation” by Jedzünba in *General Meaning*) is what we are calling a common absorption of cessation, and it can be attained from the first ground onward. It is a direct realization of emptiness associated with the elimination of coarse feelings and discrimination, and relies upon as a base of concentration the absorption of the peak of cyclic existence, which is associated with the abandonment of coarse discrimination and feeling. It is common since it occurs from the first ground onward.

← An absorption of cessation that is uncommon

The second type of absorption of cessation is the uncommon absorption of cessation, which is defined by Jedzünba in *Ocean of Sport* as “an exalted wisdom equally and directly placed on reality and qualified by a surpassing practice of the perfection of wisdom.”

← An absorption of cessation common with the lower schools

Since the definition of “absorption of cessation” from *Ocean of Sport* says that when divided, there are both a common and an uncommon, it’s possible that the definition he’s given for that one is not the common and so there may be a third type (Geshe-la addressed a question on this in the Friday, April 7, 2000 class). This third type would also be called a “common” absorption of cessation but it is common in that it is held in “common” with the lower schools. The absorption of cessation that is posited by the lower schools is a non-associated compositional factor, and is a cessation of coarse feelings and discrimination. The reason that they posit it is that, in order to avoid the mental despondency or weariness in regard to gross feelings and discrimination, by absorbing into a state where they have ceased, one is free of this weariness. But even in the realization of emptiness there is such a cessation of gross feelings and discrimination and since all absorptions of cessation are direct realizations of emptiness it doesn’t seem that Prasāṅgika posits this “common” absorption of cessation that is a non-associated compositional factor. In our studies of *Ornament*, we said that the bodhisattva used the absorption of cessation to develop dexterity in regard to the concentrations and absorptions and to enable him to train others in such meditative states.

In summary, in Prasāṅgika it seems that “common absorption of cessation” generally means the first type (from the first ground upward) but it may also refer to the one that is common to both the lower and upper schools (the third type).

Three reasons for being called “the Manifest”

Lama Tsongkhapa gives three means of explaining the etymology of the name of the sixth ground:

1. The reflection-like nature of phenomena has become manifest by way of the bodhisattva’s wisdom, in that the bodhisattva sees even emptiness as like an illusion or a reflection. This understanding of emptiness as

not truly existent has become manifest. The bodhisattva does this by understanding the emptiness of dependent arising, seeing that emptiness itself, as a dependent arising, is empty. Dependent arising is specifically examined in regard to the twelve links in both the forward and reverse order, in which the bodhisattva has become particularly skilled.

2. On the fifth ground bodhisattvas observed true paths and thus have newly attained a skill in wisdom in regard to the four noble truths. Here the bodhisattva has manifested complete skill, a fully developed wisdom, in regard to the coarse and subtle aspects of the four noble truths.
3. In regard to the etymology of “approaching”, this is approaching the perfect attainment of a buddha’s qualities.

Lama Tsongkhapa says “the truths and dependent-arising have become manifest by way of [bodhisattvas’] completing these two trainings in wisdom.” This means that the completely developed wisdom in regard to them has become manifest or, in other words, they have become manifest for this bodhisattva’s wisdom. On the basis of this surpassing perfection of wisdom, with a special insight based on calm abiding, there is a fully developed wisdom in regard to these two. It can be said then that the three higher trainings are complete in a sense, although the higher training in wisdom continues through the tenth ground.

April 5 (Wednesday)

Dependent arising

Dependent arising can be used in a variety of forms but here it specifically refers to the twelve links of dependent arising. In his previous teachings on *Middle Way*, Geshe-la went into the meaning of dependent arising by quoting the *Rice Seedling Sutra*, where the Buddha sets out in a brief form one of the most basic doctrines in Buddhism. It outlines the mode of conventionality in that everything arises in dependence upon something else. We can see this in our lives simply in terms of the fact that we will continue to experience the results as long as the causes are there and we will not experience the result if we don’t create the causes.

Dependent arising (*rten cing ’bral par ’byung ba* often abbreviated to *rten ’bral*) comes to mean *having depended – arising*, where arising is synonymous with existent. All phenomena, both permanent and impermanent, are dependent arisings so this is not only in the sense of causes and conditions. There is nothing that exists independently in that all phenomena arise from factors other than themselves.

The three levels of interpreting dependent arising

There are three different levels of interpretation: arising through (1) meeting (*’phrad pa*), (2) relying (*ltos pa*), and (3) depending (*rten pa*). The first is dependent upon causes and conditions (this is mainly how the Hinayana and Chittamatra schools interpret dependent arising). Upon the aggregation of the appropriate causes and conditions, a product comes into existence. This means that, as a cause is approaching cessation, the result is approaching production. We must bear in mind that we hold innately, and through study, positions opposed to this notion. Although we can somewhat easily understand this level of dependent arising, our ignorance conceives products to exist independently. The twelve links of dependent arising are an extension of this first level. Madhyamika though accepting such an interpretation assert it as coarse.

The second way of interpreting dependent arising is accepted by all the Madhyamika schools, but especially the Svatantrika schools, where it is put forth in the sense of all phenomena arising in dependence on or relying upon its parts. All phenomena have parts (both permanent and impermanent) and this fact is used in the main reasoning in establishing non-true existence in Svatantrika, that of not being truly existent one or many. This concept might also sound easy to understand but the fact remains that we don’t engage in reality this way – things appear to our ignorant consciousness to be a whole, homogenous unit and not consisting of parts.

The third is the most profound, and is the main interpretation of Prasangika. While they do accept the other two, they see this way of positing dependence upon terms and conceptuality (i.e. dependence upon being imputed by thought) as the subtlest level of dependent arising. In Prasangika, phenomena are not just dependent on their parts but depend on the very thoughts that designate them. In Svatantrika they also hold that all things are designated but there the emphasis is on the object or the parts themselves, in that they do have an objective existence and it is by appearing to the mind that their existence is certified. The emphasis in Prasangika is on the designating consciousness, the terms and language that we use that determines that phenomena exist at all.

There is a coordination between the designation and the object designated but the reliance is upon the imputing consciousness. Many questions can arise as to the subtleties of how this level of dependent arising functions and we will examine such issues in the weeks to come.

In summary, we can say that of these three, one is dependent arising in the sense of being dependent on causes and conditions, one is dependent arising in the sense of being dependent on parts, and one is dependent arising in the sense of being dependent on the imputing mind.

3B1C-2B2 Praise of the perfection of wisdom

Chandrakirti makes use of a metaphor, comparing this perfection of wisdom to a guide with perfect vision who leads a group of blind people (the first five perfections), to their destination (buddhahood). Without the perfection of wisdom, the first five perfections cannot bring one to buddhahood, and Geshe-la said another metaphor for this is a bird that leads its flock faultlessly to the land to which they are migrating.

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes the *Superior Sutra of the Condensed Perfection of Wisdom* that says something similar. He also cites a passage from the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, which speaks of the practice of giving with a conception of the true existence of the three spheres as being like someone with eyes standing in a dark room. A bodhisattva practicing giving without such a misapprehension should be viewed as being like a person with eyes standing in the light of the dawn. This doesn't mean that the perfection of wisdom itself is all that it takes to achieve buddhahood. One requires both wisdom and merit to do that, just like a bird needing two wings.

3B1C-2B3 Explanation of suchness in which the profound dependent arising is seen

3B1C-2B3A Promise to explain the profound emptiness

Chandrakirti begins this section with a promise to explain the profound emptiness. It is said that for holy beings to make a promise to explain means that that being will not rest until it is finished. This idea is similar to what a marathon runner once said when finishing a race a substantial period of time well after all the other runners, due to not being in prime condition. When asked why he didn't just quit the race, his reply was simply that "When you've quit once, quitting becomes an option." We can apply this to our Dharma practice – it's often easy to consider not doing daily commitments and so forth but if we hold quitting to not be an option, then we never even consider it.

Chandrakirti's analogy

A hypothetical someone asks Chandrakirti to explain the suchness of dependent arising that was spoken of in the first verse of this chapter. Chandrakirti answers that such a request should only be put to those who dwell on higher grounds, that is, those who have applied the eye-medicine of "unmistakenly seeing emptiness" to remove the cataracts of ignorance. Chandrakirti is not saying that there is no exalted wisdom directly realizing suchness but that those higher beings are the ones who have it, since their eyes are clear from the eye-medicine.

Lama Tsongkhapa's refutation of Ren-da-wa

Lama Tsongkhapa in his commentary on Chandrakirti's analogy of the eye-medicine, goes further by saying that "the eyes are not extracted" and Anne Klein in her notes to this passage (note 25 on pp.26-27) explains why this comment is made. Ren-da-wa of the Sakya order was one of Lama Tsongkhapa's teachers and he asserted that there is no consciousness that is a perfection of wisdom. Rather he asserts that "the mind becomes of the nature of suchness and does not observe any signs, such as of object known, and so forth." So in this passage Lama Tsongkhapa is refuting his own teacher, who says that the consciousness (the eye) is actually removed by the perfection of wisdom (the eye-medicine), but Lama Tsongkhapa reasserts what Chandrakirti says, that only the ignorance (the cataract) is removed.

Chandrakirti's dependence upon Nagarjuna

In *Illumination*, another hypothetical question is put forth, asking if, since the Mother Sutras make reference to suchness, Chandrakirti could at least explain it according to those scriptures. Chandrakirti says he cannot give an independent explanation on the basis of scripture since those scriptures are difficult to fathom. However, those scriptures can be understood by relying upon the profound writings of Nagarjuna, who did understand them. In dependence upon Nagarjuna's authority, Chandrakirti will explain the meaning of the profound suchness as presented in the scriptures.

So Chandrakirti is basing his explanation of the perfection of wisdom in this sixth chapter on Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*, which explicitly presents the profound view of emptiness. Geshe-la said that it seems that the first five chapters have their source in *Precious Garland*. According to Geshe-la, Nagarjuna did teach the entire stages of the path in three texts: *Precious Garland*, *Praise of the Element of Qualities*, and *Compendium of Mahayana Sutras*.

Nagarjuna as a “valid being”

Next Lama Tsongkhapa examines the issue of Nagarjuna as a “valid being” who, as such, is able to write an authoritative treatise. A valid being is one who is able to fulfill the desires of disciples in a non-deceptive manner. On the Feb.1 handout where inference through conviction is discussed, there is a definition of valid or incontrovertible scripture – a scripture found to be free of contradictions by way of the threefold analysis. The three are described on that handout and Geshe-la also reviewed them in his teaching.

April 6 (Thursday)

Reasoning of dependent arising used in the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras

Why is Chandrakirti using this opportunity to teach emptiness in the context of the realization of the suchness of dependent arising on the occasion of the sixth ground? In the three *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* (the three Mothers), the profound was set out explicitly while the vast practices in terms of method were only shown in a hidden manner (those vast practices were the subject matter of *Ornament*). In the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* the reasoning of dependent arising was the key reasoning used. So, since now on the sixth ground the bodhisattva has realized fully that emptiness itself is a dependent arising, then perhaps this is why it is taught here.

Reasoning of diamond fragments used in *Fundamental Wisdom*

However, Geshe-la said that in *Fundamental Wisdom*, Nagarjuna used the diamond fragment reasoning and not the “king of reasonings,” that of dependent arising. The meaning of the diamond fragment reasoning is that even a fragment of a diamond has all the qualities of the diamond itself and this reasoning is presented from the point of view of cause. It can be set forth in the following syllogism: Functioning things, as the subject, are not inherently produced due to not being inherently produced from (1) self, (2) other, (3) both or (4) causelessly. We will see this reasoning being used extensively in *Supplement* as well.

Nagarjuna and the Middle Way between the two extremes

Chandrakirti says that Nagarjuna unmistakably perceived the meaning of the definitive sutras on emptiness so therefore he is a valid being. There were numerous prophecies from the Buddha concerning how Nagarjuna would be born and the deeds he would exhibit, and a few of the sutras that contain these prophecies are cited, in particular, the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*. In that sutra, one specific prophecy was that Nagarjuna would revive the Mahayana teachings and that he would teach extensively on the profound, such that the extremes of existence and non-existence would be eliminated. These two extremes are due to either “overly narrow” object of negation with regard to emptiness (the extreme of permanence) or “overly broad” object of negation (the extreme of annihilation). Lama Yeshe once said that it would require extensive study and hard work to actually have a nihilistic view. In some ways a view of nihilism is easier to work from to get someone to a view of emptiness because any time you tell a student that the ‘I’ exists, students hear it as the ‘I’ “inherently” exists.

Nagarjuna is the charioteer of the Madhyamika, and Geshe-la said that a charioteer is someone who is prophesied by the Buddha and is able to clarify a system of doctrine independent of the thoughts or commentary of another human. Highlights from the story of Nagarjuna's life were set out by Geshe-la and there is also an extensive biography in one of the notes that Anne Klein assembled (pp.30-31, note 45).

Nagarjuna's three proclamations of doctrine

His life can be divided into three proclamations of doctrine that took place over the course of his six hundred years of life. The first proclamation is said to be that, while an abbot at Nalanda, he re-instituted the Vinaya. Later in this period is when he was invited by the Nagas to their realm and returned with the *One Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. The second proclamation of doctrine was his writing of the six

collections of reasonings, and among these was *Fundamental Wisdom*. During this time he visited the northern continent, called Unpleasant Sound, and was said to have brought back a number of sutras from there as well. Upon his return came the third proclamation, in which he taught on buddha nature, primarily in his text, *Praise to the Element of Qualities*.

Nagarjuna's level of realization

There is a threefold view of as to what level of realization Nagarjuna had attained. The common view is that he was an ordinary being that attained the level of first ground bodhisattva in his lifetime. A second, uncommon view is that he was a seventh ground bodhisattva who attained the eighth ground in that life. The third view is that he achieved buddhahood in that life through the secret teachings of tantra.

3B1C-2B3B Identification of those who are vessels for an explanation of the profound emptiness

Here Chandrakirti examines the qualifications of those who are proper vessels, meaning students for the teaching of the profound emptiness. In this context, exactly what level of practitioner are we talking about as being the proper vessels? It seems in parts to refer to simply those intent on the Mahayana but Geshe-la has said that the trainee intent on the *Supplement* is either a bodhisattva on the path of accumulation or path of preparation.

Three faults of an improper vessel in *lam rim*

Lam rim texts also speak of the qualifications of an improper vessel, but there it is presented in terms of how one should make oneself a suitable vessel through not having the three faults of an improper vessel. The three faults are:

- (1) *Being like a dirty or polluted vessel* – Being one who finds fault in what one hears, mixes in one's own erroneous ideas, has impure motivation, or somehow pollutes the teachings, thereby making them useless.
- (2) *Being like a vessel with holes* – Being one who doesn't remember or retain the teachings.
- (3) *Being like an upside-down vessel* – Being close-minded or lacking mindfulness, and being distracted in that nothing is heard.

Two faults that make one an improper vessel for teachings on emptiness

The reason why Chandrakirti mentions this subject is that there is some danger in improper vessels receiving teachings on emptiness because they may harm themselves greatly, just like someone who handles a poisonous snake wrongly. The specific faults that Chandrakirti points out that make one an improper vessel for the teachings on emptiness are:

1. Deprecating conventionalities – There is a saying that “a little truth can be a dangerous thing,” and this is the essence of this fault. Teachings on emptiness could be misinterpreted and one could faultily hold the view that things do not exist at all, thereby undermining the validity of nominal existence, and causing someone to fall into the extreme of annihilation. This is deprecation of the conventional – in spite of emptiness, cause and effect do exist conventionally.
2. Superimposing ultimate existence – The other fault is the extreme of permanence, where one deprecates the ultimate and misconstrues that “actions and effects pertain only to inherently existent phenomena.”

Regarding the “unwise” who abandon emptiness or realize it incorrectly

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Chandrakirti's commentary on Aryadeva's *Four Hundred*, which says that the same teaching on selflessness can be the key to peace or the road to bad migrations, depending upon one's discerning wisdom. Chandrakirti says that those unwise who “abandon it [emptiness]” or who “realize it incorrectly” will go to bad migrations upon rebirth. Geshe-la didn't really explain what these two faults are but Kensur Yeshey Tupden, in *Path to the Middle* (pp.61-62, p.63), says regarding the first of these, that to “abandon emptiness” means to exaggerate its meaning. He goes on to say that this is overextending the object of negation, where what you're negating is more than what emptiness really negates and in the process, one deprecates conventionalities and emptiness, itself. But this seems to contradict what Lama Tsongkhapa says in the next section (3B1C-2B3C, p.7) where he makes reference to “the two faults of the two types of vessels” that one must abandon.

There he indicates that the first of these two faults is “forsaking the view because of disbelief.” So there is seems that to “abandon emptiness” would mean not believing or not appreciating the view of emptiness and

thereby giving it up. He indicates the second fault as referring to “although having a facsimile of belief, [mistakenly] understanding that cause and effect are refuted by the reasoning [establishing emptiness].” So from that passage “to realize it incorrectly” is more akin to Kensur Yeshey Tupden’s description, since it apprehending the meaning of emptiness as signifying non-existence.

Signs for identifying a proper vessel for the teachings on emptiness

So how are we to identify a suitable vessel? Through two verses from Chandrakirti, he reveals one internal sign and two external signs that this person experiences. The **internal sign** is the arising of inner joy while the **external signs** from which one can infer this are that, while listening to teachings on emptiness, tears well up in their eyes and their body hairs stand on end. Lama Tsongkhapa says that such people have the seed of realizing emptiness. If upon receiving and not having misunderstood teachings on emptiness, these physical marks arise, then it is an unambiguous sign. However, even if they were not to arise, then one cannot determine the suitability of that person for the time being. Lama Tsongkhapa says though that, although it is not definite, if such persons are willing to not depart from what is set out by an excellent lama, then “they are suitable vessels for newly infusing many potencies.” In general, it is said that one who has a great deal of merit and is under the guidance of a spiritual friend is suitable for such teachings.

April 7 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3C How good qualities arise when the profound emptiness is explained to proper vessels

Finding the treasure that fulfills the meaning of life

There is the age-old question, “What is the meaning of life?” The Dalai Lama says the meaning of life is “to be happy” and the best method to be happy is to develop compassion. But that in and of itself is not enough since we must conjoin it with wisdom – the most profound wisdom is the wisdom understanding emptiness. Without such wisdom our situation will only be perpetuated or worsen. Our highest welfare and that of others will only be attained when we conjoin wisdom and compassion, and, in dependence on a Mahayana virtuous spiritual friend, we can attain the ultimate goal. In this sixth chapter of Chandrakirti’s text, we will be receiving the most precise and exact teachings on this subject so, as we see in the text, we should see this as a treasure, a rare find that will change the course of our destiny.

The necessity of the practice of ethics, generosity, compassion, patience and dedication

Recognizing the value of this “treasure”, we must determine to hold onto it and cultivate it over the course of many lifetimes, however many it takes. Therefore we must create the causes for this in the future so we first must practice **ethics**. This means we must take care to guard against faulty ethics that bring about a bad migration and cultivate the virtues that result in a good migration. But even if we attain a favorable rebirth, we need to assure that we have resources and leisure so that our time and energy is not consumed by trying to obtain such things – for this we need to practice **generosity**. If we have the resources and conditions now, then it means we have practiced giving in the past, but, to assure we will have resources in the future, we must continue to practice generosity. Then, having assured that we will have such resources in combination with a good rebirth, we must remember that wisdom without method is bondage – so we must sustain **compassion** so that we can bring about the greatest benefit to both ourselves and others. Further, with the practice of **patience**, we will not destroy our virtues through anger so that we will achieve the goal most efficiently, and also we will attain a beautiful, pleasing appearance, which is a beneficial feature for gathering others so we can impart such wisdom to them. Our patience must make us able to bear with the hardships of life in general, thinking about the profound Dharma, emptiness, and benefiting others as well. Finally, to ensure that all these practices will give the proper result and not ripen and be immediately exhausted, we must **dedicate** all these virtuous actions to the perfect, complete, enlightenment for the sake of all others.

“They respect the perfect bodhisattvas”

It is essential that we receive the profound teachings on emptiness from qualified masters, those who have a vast variety of techniques to help us understand it. Only bodhisattvas are such qualified masters since they have studied limitless numbers of reasonings to be able to teach emptiness. Developing an appreciation and respect for their abilities to do this is another important factor that Chandrakirti emphasizes.

“Seven good qualities of exalted status”

Chandrakirti is trying to help us appreciate the significance of the teaching on emptiness. The hallmark of Buddhism is dependent arising according to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the other side of that coin is emptiness. By considering all this, we can then confidently put effort into the path. And, as said earlier, in order to do that over the course of many lifetimes, we must optimize the necessary qualities. Kentsur Yeshey Tupden spells out seven qualities for an optimal situation to “empower the wisdom realizing emptiness” in *Path to the Middle* (p.72): (1) a good physical form, (2) good family or lineage, (3) resources, (4) power, (5) wisdom, (6) long life, and (7) freedom from illness.

Wisdom and method: “More wonderful than the wonderful, More marvelous than the marvelous”

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*, which says that “Resorting to actions and their effects upon understanding this emptiness of phenomena is more wonderful than the wonderful, more marvelous than the marvelous.” Geshe-la said that “more wonderful than the wonderful” indicates complete perfect causes, and “more marvelous than the marvelous” indicates complete perfect results. Chandrakirti is saying that we must cultivate both wisdom and method – this combination comes about for someone who has:

1. Abandoned the two faults of the two types of vessels (as discussed above)
2. Realized correctly (in dependence on the view of emptiness) the feasibility of all actions and agents

This second point refers to the fact that phenomena are empty because they are dependent arisings and they are dependent arisings because they are empty. All phenomena are like illusions and yet are able to perform their various functions. Illusion-like virtue gives rise to illusion-like happiness, and illusion-like non-virtue gives rise to illusion-like suffering.

Conceptual thought and the assertions of Ha-shang

The view of the Chinese master Ha-shang is mentioned again (p.8). Ha-shang was known for asserting that that all conceptions are synonymous with conceptions of inherent existence and so conceptuality itself must be stopped. It is true that all phenomena depend upon conception in Prasangika for their existence – they do not exist from their own side. Nonetheless, they do function so one should not equate conceptuality with the conception of true existence. Ignorance is a wrong consciousness in that its referent object does not exist, but there are both wrong and right conceptions. The reasoning refuting the referent object of the conception of true existence does not refute the referent object of *all* conceptions, only that of ignorance. A concordant conception is not undermined by such a refutation.

In Prasangika it is also stated that all consciousnesses aside from the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise on emptiness of a superior are mistaken in that all objects appear as truly existent. However, this doesn’t mean that all consciousnesses are wrong consciousnesses. Consciousnesses can be valid with respect to their main object of cognition in the context of being mistaken with respect to their object appearing to be truly existent. Conceptuality does indeed serve a purpose as a method to develop an inferential cognition of emptiness so one can then go on to attain a direct realization.

Harming conventional truth or ultimate truth

This point is elaborated on in the next section of Lama Tsongkhapa’s commentary. He states that if you don’t make the distinction between the view (the wisdom consciousness that refutes the referent object of ignorance) and conceptions in general, then the entire side of method would be undermined, since the referent object of all conceptions would be non-existent. You would in effect be saying that all conceptions are invalid and thereby you would be harming conventional truth. If you were to say the opposite – that all conceptions are valid – then, since ignorance holds phenomena to truly exist, you would be harming ultimate truth, because phenomena are empty of true existence. If we do not distinguish well between valid and wrong conceptual consciousnesses the conception of the view and conduct such as ethical behavior would undermine each other. If all conceptual consciousnesses are held to be valid then ignorance conceiving of true existence is valid which damages the view realizing that phenomena do not truly exist. If all conceptual consciousnesses are held to be invalid then conception such as from virtue arises happiness and so forth would be damaged. From the Prasangika point of view, it is necessary to make use of conceptuality in the path but it is necessary to make a distinction between valid and invalid conceptions.

Masters Program: *Middle Way* Review Class with Jampa Gendun – 4-7 April, 2000

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

Note: There were no review classes held on Monday, April 10, and Friday, April 14.

April 11 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3D Exhortation to vessels to listen [to this explanation of the profound emptiness]

In this section, Chandrakirti is trying to generate enthusiasm for those who are proper vessels to engage in the explanation of emptiness that he is about to present. As we saw in the previous section, the minimal qualifications to be a proper vessel are that one must believe in the doctrine of emptiness, have great merit, and, although you may not understand the doctrine completely, at least you don't depart from it but rather persist with what your lama teaches. To attain the first ground, the Very Joyful, it is essential that one have not just method but also wisdom, therefore those seeking to attain that ground are advised to listen to the profound path about to be explained.

Passage from Chandrakirti's commentary on Superiordeva's *Four Hundred*

Chandrakirti says in the commentary to Superiordeva's *Four Hundred* that persons intent on this path need to "increase clarity with respect to emptiness." This means that, of the three types of faith (longing, convinced, and clear faith), one must develop clear faith in the profound emptiness. Chandrakirti mentions the motivation of wishing to completely abandon the causes for "the great abyss" and Geshe-la said that this is the abyss of the two extremes (although Anne Klein's annotation indicates the abyss of bad migrations). In essence Chandrakirti is saying that we must create the proper circumstances for pursuing this path.

The four means of gathering disciples

Also in that passage, Chandrakirti says that such persons should practice the "four modes of gathering" (also called the four means of gathering disciples: (1) giving necessities, (2) speaking pleasantly, (3) teaching others according to their needs, and (4) practicing in accordance with what one teaches. Lama Tsongkhapa cautions that one should teach in a way that does not undermine others' belief in conventional truth and dependent arising; otherwise students may conclude that the law of cause and effect are refuted by emptiness.

Sutra quotations to inspire

On p.9 there are several sutra quotations put forth by Lama Tsongkhapa to inspire those "suitable vessels. Lama Tsongkhapa begins by quoting Nagarjuna's *Compendium of Sutra*, which in turn quotes from two different sutra sources. The first one is from the *Given by the Precious Child Sutra* and it says that even someone who listens to teachings on emptiness with doubt creates more merit than someone who practices the six perfections for a hundred thousand eons without "skill in means". This level of doubt is referring to a person with some openness in the mind as to phenomena not truly existing. According to Kentsur Yeshey Tupden, "lacking skill in means" refers to lacking an understanding of emptiness. The second quote is from the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* and it tells of the great benefits of even memorizing one stanza of a teaching on emptiness and teaching it to others. The merit is said to be even greater than that attained by offering extensive precious objects to the Tathagatas.

The third sutra quote is from the *Treasury of One Gone Thus Sutra* – Geshe-la said that this sutra passage is interpretive. It says that someone who enters into the doctrine of emptiness will no longer create the karma to be born in bad migrations. The interpretive part of this is that one not only "enters into the doctrine of emptiness" but emptiness must also be *realized*. As to what level of realization this is referring to, it would seem to at least be that of the tolerance level of the Mahayana path of preparation, since that is when it is said that the bodhisattva will no longer take rebirths in the lower realms due to contaminated actions and afflictions having achieved a non-analytical cessation.

The fourth is from the *Chapter on Taming Demons*. Here it is said that even the karma from the five deeds of immediate retribution can be "overwhelmed" by the knowledge of emptiness. It also indicates that a monk who realizes emptiness is "free from contrition for faults that have occurred and consistently does not commit them." "Free from contrition" does not mean that one has no regret – this phrase could also be translated as free from

guilt or remorse, meaning one is no longer bothered by the guilt that might be associated with one's fault. One must still have contrition or regret for one's faults but that is a rational aspect whereas guilt is irrational.

The fifth is from the *Sutra of Ajatashatru*, and Geshe-la related the story of Ajatashatru who, by killing his father who was an arhat, committed not just one but two of the five immediate deeds. Buddha told him "the father and mother are meant to be killed," meaning one must "kill" karma (the father) and the afflictive emotions (the mother), through the realization of emptiness. Due to seeing the meaning of this, he then went on to attain foe destroyer in that very life. It is said that he was able to purify the specific karma related to those two immediate misdeeds by experiencing a lesser form of suffering, rather than the fruitional results of rebirth in the hell realm.

Requirements for teaching emptiness and listening to such teachings

Lama Tsongkhapa says that there are two requirements for teaching emptiness: (1) one should have a pure motivation (i.e. not be looking for goods, services, fame, and so forth) and (2) one should be able to give a non-erroneous explanation by having a faultless understanding of emptiness. Geshe-la related the story of another geshe who said that he is not as worried about teaching to those who have studied extensively since they will detect errors that he makes in giving the teachings. However, in the case of those who have not had extensive study, one must be very careful what is said since they may not have the background to check out what has been taught to discern what is correct and what is not. There are also similar requirements for listening to teachings on emptiness: (1) one should have pure motivation for listening and (2) one should not misapprehend what has been taught.

3B1C-2B3E [Description of] how the suchness of dependent arising is explained

3B1C-2B3E-1 How the meaning of reality is explained through scripture

Now Chandrakirti begins his actual presentation on emptiness, beginning with how it is presented in sutra, specifically how it is presented concerning the sixth ground bodhisattva. The emptiness being discussed here then is the emptiness that, by being understood by the bodhisattva, will allow him to move from the fifth to the sixth ground. So this is not a general teaching of emptiness but rather one that is specific to this occasion.

3B1C-2B3E-1A Stating how reality is set out in scripture

The ten samenesses

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, in which the ten samenesses, or ten equalities, are set forth. Through discerning the meaning of these ten statements, one will be able to understand emptiness. The ten samenesses are the means of the bodhisattva progressing from the fifth to the sixth ground – they are like synonyms in that by understanding the meaning of each of them, you arrive at the same outcome, i.e. understanding emptiness. These are presented elsewhere in the context of other traditions but here they are according to Prasangika. In Asanga's *Bodhisattva Grounds*, they are taught from the point of view of Chittamatra where other-powered and thoroughly established phenomena are truly existent, while imputational factors are not. Vasubandhu's *Commentary on the "Sutra on the Ten Grounds"* is also cited as another source on these ten but there it is also taught from the perspective of a lower school.

The two generalities

The first two are generalities while the other eight are particularities.

1. Signless – All phenomena are signless. A sign means the unique mark of each phenomenon, such as a color, a shape, or a function. And, although all phenomena do have a sign, it does not serve as a sign or reason to establish that a phenomenon is truly existent. If the sign could establish a phenomenon as truly existent then it would appear to an superior's meditative equipoise, however no such signs appear in the perspective of such an exalted wisdom. All signs vanish in an superior's meditative equipoise.
2. Characterless – All phenomena are characterless. Here we are referring specifically to phenomena not existing from their own side, i.e. not having their own character or nature abiding objectively in the phenomenon itself. All phenomena are empty of having their own inherent character though, in general, all phenomena do have a character such as good, bad, long, short, etc.

The second can be roughly distinguished from the first in that sign refers to the "defining" mark while character refers to the nature of the object. So character is more akin to a feature or quality.

The eight particularities

3. Productionless – All phenomena are productionless. This refers specifically to future phenomena – all phenomena in general are without inherent production and are not produced by their own power, but here it is future phenomena that are being considered.
4. Non-produced – All phenomena are non-produced. This is the same as the previous except it refers to past and present phenomena.
5. Void – All phenomena are isolated from or void of inherent existence. Here the reference is to phenomena that are the produced and the yet-to-be-produced.
6. Pure from the very beginning – All phenomena are purified of signs of inherent existence. This is purification of any sign of, or reason for, inherent existence and this is not circumstantial, in that it is in the very nature of phenomena from the very beginning.
7. Without elaboration – All phenomena are without elaboration. Here there is a distinction made in regard to it either being asserted as a particularity of the first or the second sameness. (1) In regard to the first, this means here that there is **no elaboration of dualistic appearance**, meaning that phenomena do not appear in all their varieties to a superior's meditative equipoise. The elaboration here is the elaboration of dualistic appearance, which is due to the latencies or predispositions of the appearance of true existence. One of the marks of conventional truth is variety, the diverse characteristics of all those phenomena, but to an a superior's meditative equipoise, only emptiness appears so there is no dualistic appearance, meaning no conventional appearance. Any phenomenon other than that which appears to an superior's meditative equipoise appears with a sign of dualistic appearance. However this sign is not a *correct* sign of inherent existence but rather refers to the way that they appear as though they exist from their own side. Dualistic means that they appear to not depend on the force of the mind for their existence. They appear to be separate and unrelated, subject and object cut off and at a distance. A superior's meditative equipoise is without elaboration because dualistic appearance has vanished. (2) Lama Tsongkhapa says this sameness applies to the second one in regard to there being **no elaboration by terms and thought**. The way it does that is that "characterless" means a phenomenon not having the nature of inherent existence, or existence from its own side. If we look at pot, its entity of being able to hold water does not exist from the side of the pot, it is not the final mode of existence of the pot. If it was then it would be inherently existent. When we say that phenomena are free of elaboration here, it seems as if that aspect of an object existing from its own side is an elaboration that is created by the mind, it is not an aspect of the object itself. Phenomena are free of that aspect, so to be elaborated means to become an object of the mind – terms and conceptuality do not cause the object to be truly existent since phenomena do not have the aspect of true existence. Kentsur Yeshey Tupden says the elaboration can also mean to engender or embellish so here there is a sense of embellishing true existence on the objects of the mind.

April 12 (Wednesday)

8. Not involved in adopting and discarding – All phenomena are not involved in adopting and discarding. Adopting can refer to liberation, buddhahood, and so forth, and if they were truly existent, then they could not be adopted. The same could be said for discarding. Objects such as the afflictions, contaminated karma and so forth are able to be discarded because they are not truly existent, because they depend upon causes and conditions and so forth.
9. Like the various similes – All phenomena are the same in being like the various similes. There are seven similes presented to understand that phenomena exist conventionally but do not exist ultimately. For example, phenomena are like a magician's illusion, referring to an illusion in which a stick and a pebble are made to appear like a horse and an elephant. This simile refers to the fact that phenomena do not exist in the way they appear. Every phenomenon is like one of these similes. Although they appear to exist ultimately, they do not exist that way. What is meant by "appearance" will be examined in greater detail later when we look at the example of the magician's illusion in relation to the object of negation in Svatantrika.
10. Neither thing nor non-thing – All phenomena are the same in being neither inherently existent things or inherently existent non-things. "Things" refers to impermanent phenomena while "non-things" refers to permanent phenomena.

How the particularities are included in the generalities

It is said that realizing these ten are the means of advancing from the fifth to the sixth ground. As to how these particularities are included in the first two generalities there are differences of opinion. Jamyang Shepa says that the 7th is included in the 1st sameness, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th are included in the 2nd sameness, and the 6th, 8th, 9th, and 10th are included in both. Jedzün Chogyi Gyeltshen agrees with Jamyang Shepa on including only the 7th in the 1st, but differs in that he includes the 4th, 5th, and 6th in the 2nd, and the 3rd, 8th, 9th, and 10th in both. Lama Tsongkhapa doesn't specify most of them but does indicate that the 5th is included in the 2nd sameness and the 7th and 8th are included in both.

A few terms explained by Lama Tsongkhapa

To clarify the last sentence of the passage from the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, Lama Tsongkhapa clarifies the meaning of a few terms used there. He says that the word “sharp” refers to the quickness of wisdom analyzing emptiness. “Concordant” here refers to the similarity to the forbearance that is attained on the eighth ground in regard to the “doctrine of non-production”. Forbearance is generally stated in relation to emptiness, e.g. the forbearance level of the path of preparation where one attains a freedom from manifest fear with respect to emptiness. In his previous teachings, Geshe-la said that this forbearance is a cessation because on the eighth ground the bodhisattva has abandoned all the afflictive obstructions. In his current teachings, he associated this with the signs of irreversibility, which reflect the attainment of internal stability of method and wisdom. The signs of irreversibility are attained at one of three levels, dependent upon the faculties of the disciple (the path of preparation for the sharp, the path of seeing for the middling and the eighth ground for the dull).

Lama Tsongkhapa concludes this section by saying that there are a variety of ways that one can approach emptiness but here we are speaking of a particular method for realizing emptiness that occurs in the context of the sixth ground.

3B1C-2B3E-1B Identifying what is discordant with suchness

In this section (which has no corresponding commentary in Chandrakirti's *Autocommentary*), Lama Tsongkhapa emphasizes the importance of identifying the object of negation.

The reason to identify the object of negation correctly

Without making contact with that which is imagined by the conception of true existence, then you will not be able to refute its existence. If you have no clear object to refute (for example, a mental image of a truly existent ‘I’), then its non-existence will have no impact on your mind. We have a huge emotional investment in true existence and so we should find it difficult to let it go. In a sense, when we identify the object of negation, we are setting up the target at which to shoot our arrow of analysis. If we shoot at the wrong target we will never touch or harm the conception of inherent existence. If we have only a vague idea of what it is, similarly we won't be confronted by the hardcore reality of what emptiness negates.

When we speak about the four-point analysis in lam rim, the first step is to identify the object of negation, which is said to be the hardest step. Lama Tsongkhapa warns that we must identify it not only in regard to how it is presented in tenets but must moreover see it in regard to our own experience. We must not only be masterful in the reasonings but must further apply them to our own situation or there is no benefit.

True existence which is being negated

The true existence we are trying to identify must be more than the superficial objects of negation that other tenet systems propound. Within our continuum right now is a conception of true existence, an ignorance. Geshe-la asked today if a person who has a conception of true existence is pervaded by being a person who conceives objects to truly exist. It would seem that it is not. The difference being delineated here is similar to what is said about having anger in one's continuum not being pervaded by one actually being angry. The point is that we are not always grasping at true existence. We can conceive of the ‘I’ as being qualified by true existence, by non-true existence, or by neither of the two. Phenomena always appears as truly existent to any consciousness except the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise on emptiness but the way that one conceives of phenomena can be different in spite of that. One does not necessarily grasp at that appearance as true. This is the function of ignorance. And even when ignorance is one's continuum it is not necessary that the person, herself, will be influenced by that grasping as we have seen when a superior disbelieves or rejects the referent object conceived of by ignorance.

We are trying to negate the referent object of the conception of true existence, which is a non-existent. We are not negating the *appearance* of true existence, since that appearance does exist (although it is erroneous). Specifically we must be able to remove the innate conception of true existence. We must identify the conception of true existence, how it holds its object, and its referent object.

Kensur Yeshey Tupden on identifying the object of negation

In *Path to the Middle*, Kensur Yeshey Tupden says in regard to identifying the object of negation, (p.105) that there is a mistaken consciousness which, due to beginningless predispositions, conceives of objects to truly exist and does not see them as merely imputed by the mind. A book appears as if it's unrelated to the mind, as if it has nothing to do with the mind. In the lower two schools the mind is seen as a passive observer and the external objects "cast their image" upon the mind much like a mirror passively reflects an image – however, in fact the world is a participatory universe, we participate in the coming forth of phenomena in the world. There is a mental factor that takes the appearance of true existence and holds to that to be the way that phenomena actually exist – that is the conception of true existence.

A question is posed: There is a consciousness that simply apprehends a book and one that apprehends a book as truly existent – are these simultaneous? Kensur Yeshey Tupden says that these apprehensions happen serially, with the conception of true existence following the simple apprehension of a book. But this happens so quickly that it is extremely difficult to separate them. However, he goes on to say that the two *appearances* (the appearance of a mere book and the appearance of a truly existent book) do occur simultaneously.

April 13 (Thursday)

3B1C-2B3E-1B1 Identification of the conception of true existence in the Svatantrika school
Lama Tsongkhapa begins by examining the Svatantrika school before looking at our own tradition.

3B1C-2B3E-1B1A Identifying true existence and its conception

Let's begin by looking briefly at the measure of true existence in Svatantrika (this will be examined in greater detail later). For Svatantrika, anything that exists must be posited by the force of a non-defective awareness. If something were able to be posited by way of its own uncommon mode of subsistence without the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness, it would be truly existent – that is the measure of true existence in this school.

How objects exist in Svatantrika

We spoke previously about where the "power" of bringing forth an object's existence lies. In the two lower schools objects exist independent of the mind. In Svatantrika, objects do have their own nature but it is only through appearing to a non-defective awareness that the object comes into being – this will be exemplified by the magician's illusion, which is discussed extensively in the next section. In that example, there is an appearance of a horse and elephant "emerging" from the basis of conjuring, the stick and pebble, but that is not enough for them to exist. There must be the positing by the force of appearing to awareness, so existence is contingent upon the subject and not just the object. Without the perceiving consciousness it is only a matter of a "potential" from the side of the object. Objects have their own mode of being in that it is not the mind that determines what it is and yet objects do not exist without being posited – certified – by an awareness..

How objects exist in Prasangika

Prasangika finds fault with this tenet system in regard to this assertion. In Prasangika, there is no mode of existence that is not posited by the mind – everything is posited by conceptual consciousness. If we compared the magician's illusion to the illustrative image used in Prasangika, a coiled stripe rope mistaken for a snake, we can see the main difference that the coiled rope doesn't have the potential to be seen as a snake from the side of the object, the rope. However, the objects in the magician's illusion, the pebble and stick, do have a potential residing due to mantra in them to be seen as a horse and elephant.

Regarding meanings of the term *kun rdzob*

So in Svatantrika there is nothing which truly exists in the way that the measure of true existence is set out. There is a consciousness that conceives of phenomena to truly exist and this consciousness is called a concealer, *kun rdzob*. There are at least three uses for this Tibetan term, *kun rdzob*, and the first is the way we are using it here, meaning (1) a concealer, an ignorant consciousness that is a conception of true existence. The second is a rarely used: (2) a mutually dependent object, here being synonymous with a dependent arising so in this context the term can refer to all phenomena. The third is a more common usage and this is where some confusion can arise: (3) a conventionality, meaning an object of worldly convention.

The concealer superimposes and obscures

In Svatantrika, it is this concealer, or ignorance, that apprehends objects to truly exist. Ignorance is the concealer that inhibits the development of wisdom and it does this by superimposing true existence. To superimpose an aspect means to accede to that appearance, to believe that appearance to be correct. A consciousness that apprehends true existence is a superimposing consciousness, in that it attributes existence to what actually does not exist. This is to be differentiated from deprecation, where one attributes non-existence to what actually does exist. Although the word “superimpose” can have a sense of laying a film or cover on top of something, here it simply means to *mistake*. It is not as if it is casting an image on top of something but rather mistakenly holding the appearance to be true. It superimposes a way of existing that phenomena do not possess. Related to this idea, Geshe-la said recently that the pervasion between superimposition and deprecation is three possibilities, with superimposition pervading deprecation.

This concealer is also an obscurer, in that reality is concealed or obscured by this consciousness, and in addition, it acts as to obstruct other consciousnesses from realizing reality. Reality here refers to emptiness or non-true existence, a lack of existing independent of the mind. What causes the appearance of true existence according to Svatantrika? Geshe-la said that the appearance is caused by latencies of the conception of true existence, and here this does not refer to seeds. This concealer/ignorance observes that appearance and accepts that appearance to be true, thus making it a mistaken consciousness. Lama Tsongkhapa says on p.15 that in this school, true existence does not appear to the physical sense consciousnesses – it only appears to mental consciousness.

“Truth for a concealer”

So this concealer is concealing reality from the wisdom consciousness. What exists for this concealer is “truth for a concealer” (*kun rdzob bden pa*), or a conventional truth. [However, this is only an etymology of conventional truth and not a strict definition since Svatantrika would define conventional truth as “an object abiding in a type which is realized in a manner of dualistic appearance by its valid cognizer directly realizing it.”] A conventional truth is not a “truth” in the same way that an ultimate truth is. A “truth” is that which exists the way it appears and the only thing that exists the way it appears is emptiness, specifically the emptiness which appears to a wisdom consciousness (i.e. an superior’s meditative equipoise).

The measure of true existence

The measure of true existence in Svatantrika is: an object established by way of its own uncommon objective mode of subsistence without being posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness. If there were a phenomenon that existed in that way, it would be truly existent. Let’s examine some of the terms used in describing this measure to specify exactly what they mean.

Regarding the term “non-defective awareness”

“Non-defective awareness” is either a conceptual or non-conceptual valid cognition. How this is determined as “non-defective” is that it must be free of the influence of the conception of true existence; it must be non-mistaken with regard to its object of engagement. This is a “certifying” consciousness, in that it certifies or posits the existence of phenomena. In Svatantrika, it is by the force of the nature (or mode of being) of phenomena appearing to that awareness that objects come into existence.

Regarding the term “uncommon”

“Uncommon” means simply that it is not the common or according to the way things are. So uncommon means not according to the way things are, so in this context it means not relying on a consciousness. So in effect, although there are two parts to this measure, each part is an object of negation. The first part (“by way of its

own uncommon objective mode of subsistence”) could be considered one object of negation and the second part (“without being posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness”) could be considered another.

Objection concerning two types of non-ultimate existence

On p.15, someone objects citing a passage from Kamalashila which involves two different ways of using the word “ultimate”. This objection uses the fact that Kamalashila is saying that phenomena do not exist ultimately and asserting that “ultimately” is determined by a “reasoning consciousness”. In his answer to this objection, Lama Tsongkhapa sets out the two types of ultimates. The first type refers to that which exists in the perspective of an ultimate consciousness, here taken to be a conceptual consciousness of hearing, thinking and meditating that analyzes suchness. This is a reasoning consciousness that looks at an existent and tries to determine how it exists. For it, only emptiness exists. Nothing else. In this sense, only emptiness is an ultimate.

The second type of ultimate is an objective mode of subsistence without being posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness (i.e. the measure of true existence stated above). Since everything lacks such a mode of subsistence there is nothing which is ultimate in this sense. Thus, there are these are two different ways of positing ultimate – the first exists and the second does not.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

Note: There were no review classes held on Monday, April 17, and Friday, April 21.

April 18 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-1B1A Identifying true existence and its conception (continued)

As we discussed last week, in this section Lama Tsongkhapa is setting forth the object of negation in Svatantrika. In Svatantrika, there is some factor coming from the side of the object, some intrinsic identity, but this must appear to a non-defective awareness for the object to exist. The opposite of that, if it existed, would be a “true existent.”

Examining the mode of subsistence

The mode of subsistence of an object involves two factors: (1) an intrinsic identity – without this, Svatantrika says you could call anything anything, meaning you could impute it to be as you wish – and (2) a non-defective awareness that certifies the object’s existence. This is not an easy object of negation to discern. For example a pot is not its own final mode of subsistence. It is not its essential mode, meaning it is not “how it is”. However, it does have its own objective appearance from its own side. A pot has its respective parts and is not merely designated, in that there is a “pot-ness” about the object that does come from its side. Svatantrika equates a phenomenon with something that can be found among its bases of designation. This means then that all phenomena are “findable” upon conventional analysis even though no phenomena is found under ultimate analysis. The ‘I’, for example, can be found as the illustrative mental consciousness, which is what Svatantrika posits as that which goes on from life to life. The same could be said for a pot or a table. Conventional analysis simply looks for the object and not how the object exists. Ultimate analysis looks for how the object exists.

The two ultimates

As we discussed some last week, someone has raised an objection concerning the two ways that Kamalashila is using the term “ultimate.” Regarding the two ultimates, in the first, ultimate is a conceptual reasoning consciousness that is hearing, thinking, analyzing suchness. If the phenomenon is established to exist for this ultimate consciousness, then it is said to be an ultimate.

However, previously in this discussion, the term ultimate has been used to be what would bear the measure of true existence as established in Svatantrika and this is the second ultimate. In Svatantrika, the terms ultimate existence, true existence, and independent existence, are synonymous and are all non-existents. The terms inherent existence, existing from its own side, and objective existence, are also synonymous in Svatantrika but they *do* exist. So, the main point in this section is that Kamalashila is bringing in the other meaning for ultimate and so Lama Tsongkhapa needs to differentiate between these two ultimates.

How the conceptions of the two ultimates are differentiated

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the conception of the first, conceiving of the existence of a phenomenon to be found by this reasoning consciousness analyzing for the ultimate would be an acquired conception of true existence in that such a conception arises due studying tenets and coming to the wrong conclusion that phenomena can be found to ultimately exist in such a way. Not even emptiness is able to bear ultimate analysis. The conception of the second, that is, a conception of an object established without being posited by awareness, is a conception of true existence but it is innate, not requiring studying false tenets. So it is necessary to make the distinctions between these two types of conceptions as Lama Tsongkhapa has established them.

If a phenomenon were established by the first consciousness it would be ultimately existent. This is a reasoning consciousness searching for the ultimate. For the second, if something didn’t depend upon mind it would be ultimate, meaning that it would be its own mode of being.

Consequences of not understanding these differences

Lama Tsongkhapa concludes this section by saying that if the above is not understood then there are dangerous consequences. As said earlier, emptiness does exist for the perspective of this reasoning consciousness but is not found or established by that consciousness. This point could easily cause confusion since one can think that emptiness, since it exists for this consciousness, is also established or found by this consciousness and therefore

emptiness ultimate exists. This would be a case of too limited an object of negation since nothing ultimately exists and, therefore, an extreme of permanence. On the other hand, since nothing is able to bear analysis by such a reasoning consciousness then nothing exists for this consciousness. This would be a case of too broad an object of negation negating ultimate truth, an extreme of annihilation.

3B1C-2B3E-1B1B Indicating truth and falsity relative to worldly persons through the example of an illusion Svatantrika uses the example of the magician's illusion to show how phenomena are mistaken to exist and how they actually exist in Svatantrika. We must discern what the difference is between being posited by the power of appearing to a non-defective awareness and not being posited by that power and this illustration does that.

The example of the magician's illusion

In this example, there is a magician who is able to cast a mantric spell that affects the audience, a stick and pebble, and even the magician himself. When the spell has been cast, the stick and pebble appear as a horse and an elephant to everyone who was present.

The three witnesses

The example will be discussed from the points of view of three people: the magician himself, the audience, and the latecomer who enters the show after the spell has been cast. In the example, **the magician's** eyes are also affected by the spell he has cast. To the magician, the stick and pebble now appear as a horse and elephant due to the mantra but the magician does not adhere to them as true. He recognizes that, although there is that appearance of a horse and elephant, they are a mere appearance being, and he does not grasp at that appearance as being a real horse and elephant.

The **audience** has also been affected by the spell so they have the clear perception of a horse and elephant. However, unlike the magician, they do not recognize that this appearance has arisen due to the mantric spell but rather, they hold onto or grasp at the horse and elephant as real. To the **latecomer**, whose eyes have not been affected by the spell there is neither the appearance of a horse and elephant nor grasping at the appearance as real.

The meaning of the three witnesses

One interpretation is that the **magician** exemplifies an ordinary person (i.e. a non-superior being) who has realized emptiness by way of a meaning generality. For such a person there is the appearance of true existence, just as there is the appearance of horse and elephant for the magician, but there is no grasping at the appearance to be true.

The **audience** exemplifies an ordinary person who has no understanding of emptiness and sees a truly existent object and believes that is the way the object exists. Just as the audience adheres to the appearance of the horse and elephant to be a real horse and elephant, ordinary people grasp at the appearance of true existence of all phenomena to be true.

The **latecomer** is analogous to a superior being in meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness, to whom there is neither the appearance of true existence nor the grasping at the appearance of true existence. Similar to the latecomer's lack of either an appearance or any adherence to the appearance, there is neither the appearance of true existence nor the conception of true existence for a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise on emptiness.

April 19 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-1B1B Indicating Truth and Falsity Relative to Worldly Persons Through the Example of Illusion

The Magician's Illusion, *Illumination*, p. 16

This is used to help identify the object of negation, which is the most important point at the start. You can know the reasonings refuting true existence but if you don't identify the object of negation they will not eliminate your ignorance.

There are three types of individual in this metaphor:

1/ magician – casts mantric spell and applies a substance to the basis of conjuring – the stick and the stone. There is an emanation of an appearance from the side of the stick and stone, which is an appearance of a horse and an elephant. It is a mere appearance. The magician is likened to a person having a realization of emptiness by means of a meaning generality, or we can say a realization of emptiness in general. Even for the magician there is an appearance but there is no assent, or grasping, to the appearance as true, because he at least inferentially understands emptiness.

2/ audience – see the appearance of a horse and elephant, and grasp to them as true. This is like someone who has no idea of emptiness. Things exist the way they appear for them.

3/ latecomer – has neither the appearance of the horse and elephant nor grasping at any appearance as true. He represents someone who is having a direct realization of emptiness in meditative equipoise, or a buddha. A buddha is probably a better example.

Does a buddha have the appearance of true existence? A buddha realizes that there are appearances of true existence. The appearance of true existence is a phenomena. Does he have the appearance of the appearance or the appearance? The appearance of a blue snow mountain exists but a blue snow mountain does not. A buddha is aware of the appearance of a blue snow mountain. Do the horse and elephant appear to a buddha? Does a buddha apprehend true existence? Here we are talking about what appears to a wrong consciousness. The buddha's mind is not polluted by the knowledge obstructions thus the horse and elephant do not appear.

Does the latecomer see the stick and pebble? Geshe-la said that he does not. There seems to be some controversy here.

Lama Tsongkhapa says there is difference between the example of seeing a rope as a snake and the current example of seeing the stick and stone as a horse and elephant. When one mistakenly sees the rope as a snake the snake exists for one's mistaken consciousness but this appearance depends on the certain conditions, e.g., dim light, etc. We cannot say that the rope appears as a snake in general. In the case of the magician's illusion the basis of conjuring, the stick and pebble, in general do appear as a horse and elephant. The appearance is, in a manner of speaking, emerging from the stick and stone and are posited as such due to the force of appearing to a mistaken consciousness.

Is the appearance in this example coming from its own side? There is something from the object's side for Svatantrika. What is it that comes from the side of the object for Svatantrika? The mode of abidance of a stick and pebble does not accord with the appearance of the horse and elephant. The stick is not a horse but is the basis for the appearance of a horse even though it only appears that way to a mistaken consciousness. The conventional mode of abidance of the appearance of this horse is as a stone. It doesn't exist as a horse. Why is the eye consciousness wrong that apprehends horse? Here we are talking about an incorrect positing mind. It is not a valid cognition. The magician apprehends a horse but realizes that appearance is apprehended due to the influence of the mantra. He does not grasp to the horse as real. He knows the stone only appear as a horse through the force of appearing as such to his mistaken mind.

Jose Cabezon, from *A Dose of Emptiness* (p. 140): "Thus, although the basis of conjuring of the illusion appears to be a horse or an elephant from the magician's perspective, the basis of the conjuring of the illusion does not appear [to him] as a horse or an elephant *under the sole influence of the object's own reality (sdod lugs)*, depending also on a mind that has been affected by spells and substances...." The horse does not appear to him as a horse under the influence of the object's "own reality". The reality of a stone is not a horse. But it appears to be a horse due to his minds having been influenced by the mantra. The stone from its own mode of subsistence is not a horse, but it is posited as such through the power of appearing to a mistaken consciousness.

nominal existence = conventional existence = existing dependent on the mind

Lower schools say that objects exist from their own side independent of mind. Svatantrika says that objects exist from their own side but depend on the mind as well. Prasangika's say objects do not exist at all from their own side but exist merely in dependence on the mind.

Certification

Example: A medical student graduates from university and appears before a board of examiners for certification. From the side of the student he already has all of the requisite qualifications such as knowing how to diagnose and treat illnesses but that in itself is not sufficient to be a doctor. It is also necessary that he appear before a board of examiners and by the powers of that he is certified as a doctor. His existence as a doctor is dependent on his own qualifications and the certification of the board. In the same way it is through the force an object's own mode of subsistence appearing to a non-defective awareness that all objects exist.

First we need to understand what Svatantrika means by "positing" before trying to understand what the Prasangikas mean. Here it means to certify or validate. There is an intrinsic identity or nature possessed by an object that appears to the cognizer by the force of which the existence of the object is validated.

Lama Tsongkhapa on p. 16 at the bottom makes a distinction between being "established" and "posited". For the Proponents of True Existence, for example, Sautrantika, an established base is "that which is established by a valid cognizer". They assert that phenomena exist independent of mind but all existents, objects of comprehension, are realized or correctly known by a valid cognizer. To realize means to remove superimposition with regard to the object. An eye consciousness realizing pot removes the imposition of pillar and so forth with respect to pot. It realizes the mode of subsistence of pot but that pot's existence does not depend upon that realization. If an object exists it is known by a valid cognizer but its existence is not dependent upon that. On the other hand, in being posited the positing awareness is playing a role in establishing the existence of the object and not merely identifying its nature.

Anne Klein, *Path to the Middle* (p.121): "[In Madhyamika], any object of comprehension is posited by the power of a valid cognizer. To say that an object of comprehension is posited by the force of a valid cognizer means that the valid cognizer functions to realize or remove superimpositions with respect to that object. This is not the same as the object's being posited by the power of appearing to a valid cognizer."

April 20 (Thursday)

Object of Negation

What does it mean to be posited by the mind?

Mode of abidance, as discussed in Jeffrey Hopkins, *Emptiness Yoga* (p. 49) "'Objective mode of subsistence' means a thing's being there, right with its parts. Take, for instance, a cat. Cat is the object, and right with its parts – mind and body – cat would be there, not just designated, but with the body and mind of the cat – in, of, and by itself. The object would be self-existent; it would exist there in itself." Further: (p. 88) "'The existence of an objective mode of subsistence [means] a self-powered entity.' 'Self-powered entity' could be translated as 'an entity that is under its own power'. In the Autonomy School, an objective mode of subsistence is possible if it is posited by the mind. This may seem contradictory, and to the Consequentialists it is, but not for the Autonomists. Suppose, for instance, that a magician were to create right here for us the appearance of a luscious piece of cake. Even though it has no mode of subsistence that is not posited by our mistaken consciousness under the influence of this spell, it does have its own mode of subsistence since it is effective, causing our attraction. Just so, according to the Autonomists, all these other phenomena have their own mode of subsistence, but not one that is not posited by the mind. It falsely seems to us as if objects have an independent, uncommon mode of existence that is not posited by the mind; this is our basic error."

Donald Lopez, *A Study of Svatantrika* (p. 149): “This mode of being which is established from the object’s own side but which is posited through the power of appearing to a non-defective consciousness is the conventional mode of being of the phenomena in the Svatantrika system. Their final mode of being is their lack of ultimate existence, their emptiness of being established from their own side without depending on being posited by a non-defective awareness.”

Posited means “validated” or “certified” or “imputed” – not projected *over there*. One certifies that there is something there. This imputing is different from what a Prasangika means by imputing. In Sautrantika an object exists from its own side independent of awareness. A valid cognizer realizes an object by removing superimposition. It realizes the mode of subsistence of the object. An object doesn’t mix its nature or identity with other objects. There is no book not established by a valid cognizer.

For Sautrantika: established base = established by a valid cognizer. An object maintains its own nature. It maintains its own status of existence. It is self-powered. A valid cognizer establishes what that identity is. There is a mode of abidance independent from being observed by a mind but which is realized or identified by a mind.

For Svatantrika there is an interaction between the object and the mind. An object has its own nature, or character, and through that appearing to a non-defective awareness the existence of the object is established. The basis of imputation and the phenomenon being imputed are the same. In Prasangika the basis of imputation must be different from the phenomena being imputed.

A non-defective awareness is an awareness not affected by a conception of true existence (according to Geshe-la), while some other include, also not affected by superficial causes of error (abode, jaundiced eye, etc.). Ignorance cannot posit existence. What exists for ignorance is posited by the force of appearing to that ignorance but, in fact, does not exist. Only non-defective awarenesses can posit or validate existence.

April 20 (Thursday)

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

2 May (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-1B1B Indicating Truth and Falsity Relative to Worldly Persons Through the Example of Illusion

Valid Cognizers in Svatantrika-Madhyamika

A valid cognizer is a mind and phenomena are established by being observed by such a mind. Objects of comprehension are posited by a valid cognizer. This means that the valid cognizer functions to remove superimpositions with regard to the object implicitly negating what the object is not: a pot is not a cow, nor a shoe, etc.; a pot is a pot and this is established by a valid cognizer. To say a phenomenon is posited by the force of appearing is quite different. This means the object appears to an awareness, and by the force of appearing it is posited, or apprehended. There are objects that appear to wrong consciousnesses, and those that appear to valid consciousnesses. In the example of the magician, the horse is posited by the force of appearing to a wrong consciousness. The appearance of the horse exists. By the force of this appearance, the awareness posits a horse. A pebble does not exist as a horse; it exists as a pebble, although here it appears as a horse. Only a valid cognition posits an existent. That is, if it is an existent, it is posited the object's own mode of subsistence, appearing to a valid cognition.

Self-Cognizers

So here, what cognizer is validating or certifying the existence of the *appearance* of a horse? A wrong consciousness cannot certify an existent. In the Yogachara-Svatantrika system, when there is an eye consciousness, there is a second consciousness that *explicitly* realizes the eye consciousness and *implicitly* realizes what is appearing to that eye consciousness. This consciousness is establishing or certifying the appearance of the horse. The horse in the example appears to the magician, but the magician understands that it appears because of his consciousness being affected by the power of the mantra. The audience conceives the horse as existing from its own side; they grasp at the reality of the horse. For the magician, this is the combination of appearance and emptiness, i.e., a horse appears but is empty of being a real horse. When we talk about falsity, we talk about something existing as it appears. This type of falsity is renowned in the world. Saying that the illusory horse is a horse is a falsity renowned in the world, that is, there is no need to have studied philosophical systems to come to such a conclusion.

Reasoning Consciousnesses

The word *rigs shes* is usually translated as “reasoning consciousness.” Geshe-la discussed this, saying a *rigs shes* is not necessarily a reasoning consciousness in the usual sense of the word. For example, a direct realization of emptiness is a *rigs shes*, but is not really a reasoning consciousness, since it is non-conceptual. *Rigs* can be translated as “type,” so a *rigs shes* is a *type* of consciousness apprehending selflessness.

A falsity is when the mode of appearing and mode abiding are not concordant. So here, the point is not to say that, for example, pots are not pots. What constitutes an illusion is that something does not exist the way it appears. When we discuss the object of negation for Svatantrika, we are negating the referent object of the conception of true existence (e.g., a truly existent pen), not the appearance of the object (e.g., the appearance of a truly existent pen). There is still something coming from the side of the object. Svatantrika negates the object existing from its own side without being posited by a non-defective awareness. A pebble appears as a horse, but by the force of its appearing as a horse to one's awareness, the mind posits horse. But in this case, the awareness is defective due to the affect of mantra. In Svatantrika, the existence not posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness is the subtle object of negation.

3B1C-2B3E-1B1C Applying the Example to the Meaning

Valid cognitions and non-defective awarenesses

In the Svatantrika definition of the object of negation, is a non-defective awareness the same as a valid cognition? Why do you think it says non-defective awareness? Geshe-la said it would be ok to say that a non-defective awareness is the same as a valid cognition in this context. He did say that a non-defective awareness could mean, more specifically, one that is free of superficial and subtle causes of error. A superficial error would be for example seeing a whirling firebrand as a circle and so forth. A “deep” cause of error would be being under the influence of the conception of true existence.

A wrong consciousness can posit an object, but that object would not be an existent. The objects of those consciousnesses that are not undermined by a valid cognizer do exist. In Svatantrika, a sprout arises from a seed from its own side [note that on p. 13 of the April 12 - 14 transcript, the last paragraph should read “This is an assertion of the

Svatantrika Madhyamikas,” not the Prasangika Madhyamikas]; the existence of the seed, sprout, and the production depend on the mind, but they are not produced by the mind. In this example, a magical illusion of a horse is empty of being a horse, but this does not mean that a phenomenon such as a pot is empty of being a pot.

The reasoning of one or many

A Phenomenon does not inherently exist because of being neither an inherently existent one nor an inherently existent many. This reasoning is that something does not exist as inherently existent many because it does not exist as inherently existent one. Since all phenomena have parts, they cannot exist as a truly existent one, that is as a homogeneous unit. For something to exist truly, it must exist in all ways as it appears. The whole and parts of a phenomenon appear to *conception* as different entities, so they should *exist* as different entities. When we think of our room, the whole appears to be separate from its parts, although the parts and the whole are actually the same entity. If we think of the room, it appears not to have any parts. Does it actually exist without parts? It does not, but when we think “I going to my room” that room appear not to have parts such as floor, walls, ceiling, etc. The way it appears to conception and the way it exists are contradictory. How does this refute true existence? For something to be truly existent, it must exist in all ways as it appears. Ignorance apprehends a pen as truly existent, and here Lama Tsongkhapa is saying that the reasoning negating one or many negates that conception by negating the truth of its referent object – a truly existent pen. That pen does not exist the way it appears and therefore cannot be true.

3 May (Wednesday)

Order of realization of the two selflessnesses

In *Dependent Arising and Emptiness* by Elizabeth Napper (p. 298), there is some further clarification regarding the exam question (no. 20 in the “true/false” section) on whether one realizes selflessness of persons before realizing selflessness of phenomena. This regards the statement by Lama Tsongkhapa from the *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path (Lam Rim Chen Mo)* where he says we need to realize selflessness of persons before realizing the selflessness of phenomena. The annotation says this refers to when one *holds* the aggregates to truly exist “through the force of tenets.” This gets at Nagarjuna’s assertion that as long as you apprehend the aggregates to truly exist, you cannot realize selflessness of persons. This is discussed in the context of the stages of entry into suchness.

3B1C-2B3E-1B1C Applying the Example to the Meaning (continued)

Freedom of being one or many

Lama Tsongkhapa says, on p. 18 “no matter how the mind looks into it, it is undeniable that, although the mode of being [of parts and whole] is to be one entity, in their mode of appearance [to thought] they appear to be different entities.” The pen and its parts appear to a conceptual consciousness to be separate entities, like a pot and a pillar, while they are in fact one entity. To be one, they must not appear as separate or diverse to a direct cognition.

However, in Svatantrika, if we look for the pen, we *can* find the pen upon conventional analysis. Conventionally we will find a pen, although ultimately we will not. Lama Zopa once mentioned that we are not looking for the object, e.g. the pen; we are looking for the object of negation, that is, the *truly existent* pen. The problem is that the pen and the truly existent pen appear to us to be inextricably fused. In conclusion, for Svatantrika, a phenomenon is established by the force of its own mode of subsistence appearing to an awareness, but it is not *merely* imputed. A pot is imputed, but only through the force of its nature appearing to the mind.

4 May (Thursday)

3B1C-2B3E-1B2 Identification of the conception of true existence in the Prasangika-Madhyamika School

3B1C-2B3E-1B2A How phenomena are Posited through the Force of Conceptuality

The object of negation for Prasangika vs. Svatantrika

Geshe-la mentioned that the Prasangika system is unique in saying that even conventionally, things do not inherently exist. The basis of imputation and the phenomenon imputed are different. He also mentioned that “conventional” and “nominal” are mutually inclusive. In Svatantrika, phenomena define themselves, we do not define them. They have their own intrinsic nature, and by the force of that nature appearing, we posit them. In Prasangika, nothing comes from the side of the object; the existence of the object comes from the mind or conceptuality. For the Prasangikas, the Svatantrikas’ object of negation is not the subtle object of negation, nor is it the referent object of the innate conception of true existence; it is a fabrication of tenets. Svatantrikas differentiate between true existence, ultimate existence, and

independent existence on the one hand, and inherent existence, existing by way of its own character, and existing from its own side on the other. The former do not exist, while the latter do. Prasangikas say they are all the same, saying that no phenomenon ultimately exists, or by way of its own character, etc. Prasangika takes the radical position that the power of bringing objects into existence resides solely through the force of conception. If we can identify this conceptual process, then the opposite of that is the object of negation, i.e., a phenomenon that is not merely imputed by conceptuality.

The term *rang gi tshan nyid*, or naturally existent, means that a phenomenon has its own nature, it defines itself. If we are to label an object correctly it must be appropriate to a something coming from the side of the object itself. What is emphasized here is the role played by conceptuality in bringing objects into existence. Whenever we see any object, we are seeing it as truly existent; it appears to exist independent of our mind. A truly existence phenomenon appears, and then ignorance grasps to that appearance as true.

Imputation

When Svatantrika speaks of things being imputed, it is in terms of being validated or certified. In Prasangika, Geshe-la said things are merely imputed *over there*, implying a much greater role on the part of the mind in establishing the object. Someone mentioned the idea of an object “casting an image.” This could be one of the meanings of inherent existence, in that the mind is very passive like a mirror simply reflecting an image. It doesn’t seem to be involved at all in the existence of the object.

For Svatantrika, inherent existence appears to the sense consciousnesses since pots and so forth do, in fact, inherently exist. But the appearance of true existence does not appear to sense consciousnesses, because it is too subtle. Remember that true existence does not exist, but the appearance of true existence does exist. In Prasangika, everything we see appears to inherently exist. Ignorance apprehends this appearance to be true. Inherent existence and true existence appear to the sense consciousnesses, but are not apprehended. This is the function of ignorance. Only shapes and colors can be apprehended by an eye consciousness, although other phenomena such as impermanence, emptiness, and so forth do appear to it.

Nagarjuna’s *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* says that all things arise from beginningless ignorance, i.e., the world is a product of ignorance. So if it is a product of ignorance, it cannot exist from its own side. Also, Aryadeva’s *Four Hundred* gives the example of desire being merely imputed by conceptuality. Chandrakirti’s commentary on this emphasizes that phenomena do not bring themselves into existence; they come about in dependence on causes and conditions.

Seeing a rope as a snake

The example of seeing a rope as a snake serves to illustrate the process of imputing. Nothing coming from the side of the rope is a snake. The apparent snake is entirely dependent on the mind, which is exactly the same as the way in which phenomena come into existence through our labeling them. This gives us a sense of what it means to be merely labeled. There does have to be a valid base for labeling, if the imputed object is to validly exist, and we will discuss later the requirements for that valid base. This analogy is simply pointing to the fact that all phenomena are completely dependent on being labeled by conception.

This process is likened to the way in which we impute an “I,” which arises in dependence on the aggregates, which are themselves empty of an “I”. Although a snake wrongly imputed to a rope does not exist while a person imputed to the aggregates does exist, the process of labeling is the same in both cases. In the case of the snake, nothing about the basis of designation is a snake, and in the case of the I, nothing within the basis of designation is an I.

5 May (Friday)

In looking at the object of negation in Prasangika, we can look at the metaphor of a child who thinks there is a monster in their room; the only way we can prove that there is no monster is to eliminate the possibility of its existing in the room, and thus the fear of it is relieved. If, when we search for the object of negation we identify what it looks like and then seek it using the wisdom of analysis, we find only its non-existence and this transforms our way of relating to the world. If we appreciate the process of labeling – all phenomena are merely labeled, imputed, etc. – we see that the opposite of that is inherent existence. To do this, we can look at the analogy of seeing a rope as a snake. The appearance of a snake exists, but it only arises from within the mind in conjunction with various conditions such as dim light, etc.. Nothing about the rope makes it a snake, neither the parts nor the collection of the parts. This process is the same as the way in which we see the “I.” We label the parts of the body and mind as being the I. This analogy is only trying to get

this point across, not to say that there really is a snake or that, in fact, there is no “I”. In general, in order not to be undermined by a valid cognizer, there needs to be a coordination between the basis of imputation of the phenomenon and the phenomenon imputed to it. A rope cannot perform the function of a snake, but the aggregates can perform the function of a person, so their basis of imputation is appropriate, and is not undermined by a valid cognizer.

Identifying the object of negation

Lama Tsongkhapa says it is easiest to begin to identify the object of negation by using the self, not external phenomena. We can also extend this understanding to all sentient beings. Once we can do this, we can go on to other phenomena.

Nagarjuna mentions the person being imputed to the aggregates, and the aggregates also being merely imputed. We can continue this process infinitely; if we continue to analyze, we will not find any intrinsic nature to anything. In Svatantrika and lower we will, upon conventional analysis, find the entity of the object we are searching for. We can find the person in all the other schools, e.g. in the illustrative mental consciousness (for Svatantrika), the mind-basis-of-all (in Chittamatra), and so forth. In Svatantrika, the illustrative mental consciousness is the person that goes on to take rebirth. In Prasangika, when we search among the bases of imputation, we do not find that which is being imputed, e.g. the person. Not only is there nothing within the aggregates that is the person, neither is there something separate from the aggregates that is the person. Nagarjuna goes on to say that the self is none of the elements, nor is it separate from them.

The difference between the snake/rope and the I/aggregates is that the aggregates are able to perform the function of an I; the rope cannot perform the function of a snake.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 8 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-1B1A Identifying true existence and its conception (continued)

Illustrations of dependent arising by the force of conceptuality

We are examining the fact that phenomena are posited by the force of conceptuality so that we can understand the object of negation. It is essential that we understand the correct way that phenomena are dependent. Recall that there are three ways (being dependent upon causes, parts and conceptuality) and being dependent upon conceptuality is the subtlest. There is an illustration of this level of dependent arising that Pabongka Rinpoche used. If someone built a house or cabin with two rooms that are each exactly alike, and you wanted one room to be a kitchen and the other to be a bedroom, you would simply designate each as that. By the mere force of conceiving them as such, one becomes a kitchen and the other a bedroom. The dependence upon causes and parts is there as well but at its subtlest level, these two rooms are merely imputed by conception as a bedroom and kitchen – there is nothing that makes them that from their own side.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche often suggests another illustration, one using the idea of a pile of stones believed to be a person from a distance. He suggests that one think of that pile of stones as the ‘I’, and then try to see that ‘I’ as existing from the side of the pile of rocks. In this way we can clearly see that there is nothing from the side of the pile of rocks that makes it an ‘I’ – similarly there is nothing from the side of the aggregates that makes them an ‘I’. The aggregates are a valid basis for imputing the ‘I’ but there is nothing from their side that makes them an ‘I’. Sometimes in the course of actual meditation you step outside of the realm of dialectics, and meditate for example, on the thought that “I don’t exist”. Although that position is not logical within Prasangika, there is value in such a meditation in that it can challenge the way we think of things as solid and concrete. Thinking of the ‘I’ as a mere name, as just a word and nothing more, and such similar thoughts can evoke some useful feelings and reduce the feeling of concreteness of the ‘I’. Lama Zopa Rinpoche says that although it is certainly useful to examine the dialectics, at times it is also valuable to make use of other methods that are not logical and see what comes up. Since we find it so difficult to distinguish between the conventionally existent ‘I’ and the misconceived truly existent ‘I’, such techniques can be a helpful.

“Three points to understand well”

Just as the audience in the magician’s illusion was confident that there was a horse and elephant on the stage, so too does ignorance believe that there is an inherently existent ‘I’. That is the object of negation – the referent object of the conception of true existence. Related to this, at the bottom of p.21, Lama Tsongkhapa gives a summary of the three points he advises us to understand well:

1. *That all phenomena must be posited dependently* – This includes all three levels of dependent arising discussed previously, but here the emphasis is on a conceptual awareness that makes use of terms and concepts. However, there must be coordination between the basis of imputation and the imputed object, in that such a designation cannot be undermined by a valid cognition. For example, ice cannot boil water.
2. *That because they are just dependently imputed and dependently produced, they are not established by way of their own entity and so forth* – Phenomena are not self-powered, in that they cannot assist in bringing themselves into existence. They are not established by way of their own entity but are rather established by the force of a process of designation through language and concepts. This also means that the object designated is not the basis of designation. For example, the basis of a pen (the cap, cylinder, ink and so forth) is not the pen. It is interesting to note that in verse 99 of Nagarjuna’s *Precious Garland*, he says that “the phenomena of forms are only names.” Are all phenomena names, labels or symbols? It seems that this should be interpreted that all phenomena are merely nominally existent and not be taken in the literal sense. So it is not to say that phenomena are only names but nonetheless phenomena do not exist without being named or designated by names.
3. *That no matter what phenomenon is posited as existing, it is posited in the context of not seeking the object imputed* – In general we can talk about a consciousness that is non-analytic and a consciousness that is analytic. Here it states that it is a conventional consciousness that is non-analytic which is doing the actual imputing. If you cognize a pen, for example, then that consciousness is a conventional non-analytic consciousness. Then, if you went on to continue to search for the imputed object, the pen, that would be an analysis for the ultimate. One can also analyze conventionally, for example, examining the entity of the pen.

This can bring up a question: in the context of these types of consciousness, what is the nature of a learner's uninterrupted path directly realizing emptiness? In general it is said to be an analytical consciousness and it is analyzing for the ultimate mode of being of an object. The type of analysis in Prasangika can be determined by examining if the consciousness is looking for the entity (conventional analysis) or the mode of abidance (ultimate analysis) of the object. For example, if we take a pen, we can analyze that object to see if it is a pen or a pencil, and in that way, we can conventionally find a pen. If we perform an ultimate analysis on that pen, we find only its emptiness, the ultimate mode of abidance of all phenomena.

3B1C-2B3E-1B2B The conception of true existence that conceives the opposite of this

The process of labeling operates exactly in the way that a striped coiled rope can be seen as a snake. When we use the term merely imputed, the “merely” is used to negate any inherent existence or nature by the force of which appearing causes an object to be labeled in a particular way, meaning that there is no objective existence. The opposite of this is the object of negation, the referent object of the conception of true existence.

Regarding the term “ultimately” in Prasangika and Svatantrika

On p.22, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the term “ultimately” is used in the same sense as used in Svatantrika – an object which is established by way of a reasoning consciousness of hearing, thinking, or meditating in regard to suchness would be said to be ultimately existent. If an object were able to bear such ultimate analysis, then it would exist ultimately. There is a second way that “ultimately” is similar to the way it is used in Svatantrika – that is it refers to a way of existing that does not occur, although there is a difference between the two schools in the hallucinatory way of existing they each posit. In Svatantrika there is non-acceptance of **true existence**, **ultimate existence** and **independent existence** and an acceptance of **inherent existence**, **objective existence**, and **natural existence** (existing by way of its own character). Prasangika would say that Svatantrika, in refuting only the former three as they define them, have not gone far enough. In Svatantrika's presentation, they accept that conventional existence is as established in the latter three. However, Prasangika would not accept a conventional existence as any of those asserted by Svatantrika since, in Prasangika, none of these six ways of existing are found among objects of knowledge.

A self of persons and a self of phenomena

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the object of negation here is **inherent existence**, and distinguishes this as phenomena existing not depending upon terms and conceptuality. Lama Tsongkhapa calls this object of negation a self, meaning an object that is not merely imputed, and so we can talk about two types of a self as related to the substrata or basis. When we say that there is a substratum of persons, there is a self of persons that is held to be not merely imputed. We can say that, when there is a substratum of phenomena (meaning phenomena other than persons), there is a self of phenomena that is held to be not merely imputed. A self in this context is an object that is not merely imputed. Based on these two objects of observation, there are then two conceptions – one a conception of a self of phenomena and the other a conception of a self of persons.

Selflessness of persons and phenomena

The non-existence of inherent existence is selflessness, and that is divided into selflessness of phenomena and persons, dependent on the substratum. Selflessness of persons can be further divided into two, one related to the person in terms of one's own continuum and the other in terms of others' continua. When the self that is being conceived of to inherently exist is in terms of one's own continuum, then it is a self of persons observed by the view of the transitory collection. When the self that is being conceived as inherently existent is in terms of others' continua, then it is a conception of a self of persons but not a view of the transitory collection. The most significant type of selflessness is in regard to the ‘I’ in terms of one's own continuum.

Observed objects of the view of the transitory collection

There is some disagreement over exactly what the observed object of the view of the transitory collection is – whether it is the aggregates or the mere ‘I’ (or both). In our tradition, the mere ‘I’ is the object of observation of the view of the transitory collection. The conventionally existent ‘I’ is the mere ‘I’ which is conceived to inherently exist. Further, in regard to the view of the transitory collection, there are two subjective aspect conceiving an inherently existent ‘I’ or ‘mine’.

May 9 (Tuesday)

The ‘I’ and ‘mine’

The object of observation of the view of the transitory collection with regard to oneself is the mere ‘I’ (the conventionally existent ‘I’) and that ‘I’ is conceived of as truly existent. This only occurs when we observe an object towards which the thought of ‘I’ instinctually or naturally arises (for example we do not conceive of an ‘I’ when we observe another person other than ourselves). The mere ‘I’ is observed and conceived of as a truly existent ‘I’ or ‘mine’. There are differing views on what ‘mine’ refers to.

According to Lama Tsongkhapa, the view of the transitory collection conceiving mine does not observe “my eye”, “my ear”, and so forth. For example, observing “my ear” to truly exist would be a view of a truly existent phenomenon and not a view of the transitory collection. We can view the ear as an object possessed by me, but we do not view the ear itself as ‘mine’. ‘Mine’ is a person, not a quality that is affixed to an object like an ear. This assertion is a point of debate however.

Jedzunba says that the observed object of the view of the transitory collection observing ‘mine’ is a person, since ‘mine’ explicitly expresses an ‘I’ or person. When we observe my ear as truly existent, it is not an apprehension of a person, but rather of a phenomenon, an ear. “My ear” does not express “mine-ness”. According to Jeffrey Hopkins, Jamyang Shepa agrees with this but how he approaches discussing it in a different way. In *Emptiness Yoga* (p.113), Jeffrey Hopkins says that for Jamyang Shepa, “the my is the one who makes things into mine. Normally when we say ‘mine’, we think of the object possessed, but you can also look at the mine more as ‘my’ and thus a person, the owner.” If we take for example a hand that belongs to you, we can say that there is a person who has taken ownership or control of the hand and that is how we say “my hand”. In this way, the ‘I’ is more active in this type of thinking, in that it is taking the object as an object of use of the ‘I’. So that is a view of the transitory collection observing ‘mine’.

There are others, such as Khensur Pema Gyeltshen, who consider the ‘mine’, within the distinction of the two, persons and phenomena, to be neither of the two. How does he conclude this? It seems that he doesn’t want to say that ‘mine’ is a person but it is unclear why he can also say that it is also not a phenomenon.

Objection regarding Chandrakirti’s earlier reference to “things” as ‘mine’

On the top of p.23, an objection is raised concerning the fact that earlier (in the third stanza of the text), Chandrakirti spoke about transmigrators “generating attachment for things”, and then thinking, “This is mine.” The objector is taking this statement and asserting that Chandrakirti says that “things” are viewed as ‘mine’ so even a base such as an eye is the actual basis for the view of the transitory collection. Lama Tsongkhapa answers that Chandrakirti is referring to the adherence to ‘mine’ as truly existent “upon perceiving eyes, and so forth, as mine.”

Two ways of interpreting the meaning of ‘mine’

It seems that there are two interpretations of what we mean by ‘mine’. The first is explained as follows. The view of the transitory collection that conceives of an inherently existent ‘mine’ has an object of observation that is a “mine-ness”, meaning that the ear for example would necessarily be qualified as being ‘mine’. The ear is not the object of observation but rather it is first seen and then qualified as being ‘mine’. That ‘mine-ness’ is held to be truly existent, not the ear itself. Within this interpretation, if the ear is not qualified as being ‘mine’ then it is not a view of a self of persons and so is not a view of the transitory collection.

The second way is explained as follows. The ear, for example, can serve as an illustration for an object which is taken by the ‘my’ in the sense of ownership. The ‘my’ or ‘mine’ is a person here in that the person takes an object such as the ear and sees it as an object of ownership by the ‘I’, thereby it is ‘mine’. This interpretation entails seeing an illustration, such as the ear, as an object taken as an object of use of an ‘I’ or ‘mine’.

So, a view of the transitory collection apprehending ‘mine’ in the first interpretation would be where the ear, for example, is qualified as being ‘mine’ and that mine-ness is conceived as truly existent. A view of the transitory collection apprehending ‘mine’ in the second interpretation would be where the ‘I’ or ‘mine’ which is a self or persons makes use of articles, such as an ear, and that person who is the owner of the ear is seen to be truly existent. However, in either of these, the observed object is not the ear but rather, on the basis of the ear, the ear

can be qualified as ‘mine’ and observed as truly existent, or the ear can be taken as an object of use of an ‘I’ or ‘mine’ that owns it and that owner, the my, can be seen as truly existent. So in both cases there is another step in between – the ear is not the observed object itself. Lama Tsongkhapa says that if it were then it follows that there would be a view of the transitory collection that is also a view of the self of phenomena and hence they would not be mutually exclusive (as they actually are). With regard to a phenomenon such as an ear, the ear itself can be seen to truly exist and that would be a conception of a self of phenomena. But if we qualify the ear as ‘mine’ and then see that mine-ness to truly exist, it would be a conception of a self of persons. In summary, the ‘mine’ in our tradition is an ‘I’ or self but in an active sense of the ‘I’ being an owner of objects within our continuum.

The ignorance within the twelve links

On p.23, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna’s *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness*, saying that the conception of a self of phenomena in turn gives rise to a conception of a self of persons and this ignorance is the source of the twelve links of dependent origination. The order of realization is generally realizing the selflessness of persons and then that of phenomena while the order of conception is first conceiving of a self of phenomena and then a self of persons. Since ignorance is the basis of the twelve links, from this view of the two selves we go on to develop afflictions and so forth.

Recall that this sixth chapter is being presented in the context of the bodhisattva moving from the fifth ground to the sixth ground, wherein the bodhisattva realizes emptiness in terms of dependent arising. In the *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*, Lama Tsongkhapa says, “When [the two realizations exist] simultaneously without alternation and when, from only seeing dependent arising as infallible, definite knowledge destroys the mode of apprehension [of the conception of inherent existence], then the analysis of the view [of emptiness] is complete.” Because phenomena are dependent arising, they are empty of being independent – dependent arisings are *exactly* that which are empty of independent existence.

The three modes of conception

Lama Tsongkhapa says that in order to overcome the conception of a self, it is necessary to refute the referent object of this conception of true existence that is the ignorance which is the first of the twelve links. It is not sufficient to “merely withdraw the mind”. By this he means that it is not sufficient to withdraw the mind from objects so that there is an absence of seeing phenomena to truly exist – in fact, there are many such instances when phenomena are not seen to truly exist. This is because there are three modes of conception: (1) conceiving objects to truly exist (ignorance), (2) conceiving objects to not truly exist (wisdom), and (3) conceiving objects neither to truly exist or not truly exist (a neutral state). That neutral state is not sufficient to overcome the root of cyclic existence. We have to refute the referent object as it is being conceived of by ignorance. “An object that exists without being merely imputed by conception” is what is being conceived of as true by our ignorance. The wisdom understanding the emptiness of that way of existing is essential to gain freedom from cyclic existence.

May 10 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2 Establishing the meaning of the scriptures through reasoning

Grasping or adhering to the self of phenomena and the self of persons are the chief means by which sentient beings perpetuate the suffering of cyclic existence. The two main bases for realizing selflessness are observing the ‘I’ and the aggregates in our own continuum. The conception of self is refuted in terms of those two bases. The selflessness of phenomena is settled by three types of reasoning: freedom from production by the four extremes, refutation of production from the four alternatives, and the refutations of causes, effects and so forth. The main reasoning that Chandrakirti uses for selflessness of persons is the sevenfold reasoning, which will be presented after selflessness of phenomena. The main reasoning used to settle both selflessnesses is that of dependent arising.

3B1C-2B3E-2A Establishing the selflessness of phenomena through reasoning

3B1C-2B3E-2A1 Refuting production from the four extremes with regard to both truths

Chandrakirti takes up selflessness of phenomena first and begins with the reasoning of refuting production by way of the four extremes. This entire sixth chapter is presented in terms of how the bodhisattva moves from the

fifth to the sixth ground and as we covered earlier, this is done by realizing the ten samenesses, which are statements negating inherent existence from different points of view. In *Fundamental Wisdom* Nagarjuna makes use of the sameness of non-production of all phenomena since he felt that, of the ten samenesses, this was the easiest to realize and the other nine could be realized from it.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1A Positing the thesis regarding non-inherent production

The following discussion follows from the first verse of Nagarjuna's text: "Not from self, not from other, not from both, not causelessly; production from anything anywhere does not exist ever." From this we can discern the four theses of possibilities of modes of production. These four cover all possible modes of inherent production – inherent production from self, from other, from both, and neither (or causelessly). The possibilities of inherent production are only these four so if you are able to refute all four, then you have assuredly refuted inherent production in general. So there are four theses that we will try to establish: (1) things are not produced from self, (2) things are not produced from other, (3) things are not produced from both self and other, and (4) things are not produced causelessly. Chandrakirti will go through the various reasons why these four theses are correct.

Negative and positive phenomena

All four of these theses are said to be "non-affirming negatives". One way of dividing phenomena is into two types: positive phenomena and negative phenomena. Positive phenomena are realized without explicitly eliminating an object of negation, for example, a pen can be realized without eliminating explicitly any phenomena. Negative phenomena are realized by explicitly negating or eliminating another phenomena to understand it, for example, the absence of pen. In order to understand the absence of pen, for example, we must explicitly mentally or verbally eliminate an object of negation, the presence of a pen. A pen is a positive phenomenon while a lack of a pen is a negative phenomenon since it is realized by way of a thought that operates through explicitly eliminating an object of negation. Another example is a mountain-less plain, which is understood by realizing the elimination of mountains on the plain.

Explicit and implicit elimination

"Explicitly" is a necessary component though since we have talked about how the lower schools (specifically Sautrantika) say that all objects are realized in an eliminative way but that elimination is done only *implicitly*. A pen, for example, would be realized by eliminating *implicitly* everything that is not pen (pot, table, and so forth). A thing is able to maintain its identity by not being other things and "that which holds its own entity" is exactly how a phenomenon is defined. So even the perception of positive phenomena involves some type of elimination but not *explicit* elimination. Only those phenomena that are conceptually realized through a process of *explicit* elimination are what are classified as negative phenomena. A buddha, however, does not realize negative phenomena by that means, but rather directly.

The difference between implicit and explicit elimination can be further shown as follows. A thought consciousness that *explicitly* realizes the presence of a pen, for example, also *implicitly* realizes the lack of the absence of a pen. It implicitly eliminates the lack of a pen but this implicit elimination does not make pen a negative phenomenon. On the other hand, an absence of pen can only be cognized if the mind *explicitly* eliminates pen, the object of negation. So the absence of a pen is a negative phenomenon.

It is interesting to note that, just because a word has a negative particle in it, it is not necessarily a negative phenomenon (nor are all words without a negative particle necessarily positive phenomena). For example, in Tibetan the word for impermanent (*mi rtag pa*) has a negative particle and yet it is not a negative phenomenon (although there are some who disagree with this). On the other hand, the Tibetan for dharmata or thusness (*chos nyid*) has no negative particle, and yet it is a negative phenomenon.

Affirming and non-affirming negative phenomena

All four of these theses are an *explicit* elimination of inherent production, so "non-inherent production" is a negative phenomenon. A negative is that which is realized by a thought consciousness through eliminating an object of negation, here inherent existence. There are two types of negative phenomena: affirming and non-affirming. Affirming negative phenomena are those that in addition to eliminating an object of negation, also suggest either a positive phenomenon or another affirming negative phenomenon. An affirming negative

suggests something else in its place, and can be exemplified by a mountain-less plain, which explicitly eliminates mountains but implicitly affirms a plain. The classic example of an affirming negative is the phrase “the fat Devadatta does not eat during the day.” If he’s fat the suggested phenomenon is that he must eat at night. In the other type, non-affirming negative phenomena, although there is an elimination of an object of negation, nothing is affirmed in its place (although another non-affirming negative could be suggested). For example, if I say that I don’t have any money to go the movies, it can affirm that I don’t have five dollars, I don’t have ten dollars, and so forth (these all also being other non-affirming negatives), but nothing is affirmed other than that absence of money. In refuting production from the four extremes, we are realizing non-inherent production by negating inherent production in four different ways, and thereby suggesting that non-inherent production itself does not exist (which is another non-affirming negative).

The four extremes entail all possibilities

These four extremes are said to cover all possibilities. We can initially say that production is either caused or not caused and that would include all possibilities, but within the first, that it is caused, we can see that there are three more possibilities: production is either from the same entity (self), from a different entity (other), or from composite of self and other. So in that way the four extremes are exhaustive of the possibilities. Conviction with regard to this is very important since if there is to be any force on our mind then, since we are innately holding to inherent production, the refutation of these four will only have an impact if they are exhaustive of the possibilities of inherent production. If we refute these four, we must be sure we have negated inherent production entirely.

It might seem that only the second (production from other) would be necessary since it’s the only one that appears to be possible. However, there are other systems of tenets that assert the other three possibilities so they are appropriate to be refuted. Prasangika-Madhyamika refutes them by entering into the systems of others and, through generating consequences, shows the internal contradictions of their tenets. In general though, in order to gain the complete conviction of no inherent production existing at all, all four extremes must be examined in depth.

Production from the four extremes as related to systems of tenets

The first, production from self, is the assertion of the Samkhya, who say that an effect or result exists in a non-apparent way within the cause. A sprout exists in the seed, in the same entity of the seed although it is not manifest at the time of the seed. The second, production from other, is held in the tenets of those who hold that a sprout is produced from a seed that is established by way of its own character (or that is an inherently existent other). All the lower Buddhist schools from Svatantrika downward to Vaibhashika would hold this to be so. The third, production from both, is the assertion that there is production from both a self (of the same entity as the result) and other (of a different entity than the result). The Nirgrantha (or Jaina) sect would hold that production from both is feasible. This can be exemplified with a porcelain cup, which is produced from clay, the same entity as it, and the potter, which is a different entity from the cup. The fourth is causeless production, meaning production from neither an entity that is same or different, and this is held by the Charvakas. They assert the roundness of peas, the sharpness of a thorn, and the color of a peacock’s feathers as examples of how production arises from neither an entity that is the same or different (i.e. neither from self or other).

May 11 (Thursday)

Importance of identification of the object of negation

As we go through these four extremes, remember that a negative phenomenon, in order to ascertain it, must be done by way of eliminating an object of negation. For example to realize the absence of a pot on the table, one must negate the existence of a pot on the table. Therefore we must know what the existence of a pot on the table would look like, just as we must know what inherent existence looks like in order to eliminate it. By refuting the object of negation, we can then realize non-inherent existence.

In the first of the four, refuting production from self, by doing that, we do not establish production from other. As we have been hearing in Geshe-la’s current teachings, Bhavaviveka claims that Buddhapalita did just that by refuting production from self, but Chandrakirti refutes that. Production from other is not established by refuting

production from self due to the fact that, as we mentioned earlier, the refutation of all four extremes are non-affirming negatives not suggesting another phenomenon in its place.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B Indicating the proof established by that reason

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1 Refuting production from self

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A Refuting [production from self] by the reasonings in the composed commentary

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1 Refuting the system of tenet holders who assert the realization of thusness

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1A Refuting production from causes that are the same entity as itself

The means of production are limited to the four as we discussed yesterday but over and above that, as we mentioned, each of the four reflect actual systems of tenets. The first was asserted by the Samkhya so it may be helpful to have some idea of what the Samkhya tenets are so we will have a presentation on it next Friday.

Samkhya view of a partless nature

There is some information on the Samkhyas in *Cutting Through Appearances* (pp.158-165) as well as in *Meditation on Emptiness* (pp.321-327). According to their view, underlying all things is a single fundamental nature and all phenomena that we perceive are simply displays of this all-pervasive unitary nature or general principal. In their view everything arises out of this unitary essence, like a wave never transcending the nature of the ocean, even though it arises out of it. This idea is not all that foreign in some regard to some aspects of Buddhist thinking, for example how all appearances arise out of emptiness or that emptiness pervades all reality. Jeffrey Hopkins talks about this in a passage from *Emptiness Yoga*:

If you were doing Samkhya meditation, you would sit down and dissolve the world, going through the process of the evolution and dissolution of the world, out and into the Nature. At the point of total dissolution, there is no appearance of conventional phenomena at all, just what is called 'Self', that is, pure consciousness. Similarly, in the Consequentialist system when you are meditating on and cognizing emptiness directly, the mind is utterly fused with emptiness with no other appearance at all. (p.164)

Samkhya view of liberation

In their thinking desire is the operative principle and once one overcomes that through realizing the nature of the appearances that cause desire, one is liberated in their view. Other systems, especially among the Hindu beliefs, do assert *moksha*, or liberation, so it is not that there is no goal in Samkhya practice. As an aside, as teachers of the Dharma, often students will ask if all world religions have the same goal or objective, suggesting, for example, that Christianity and Buddhism have the same goal. One way to answer this is to say that it's not that all religions have the same goal but that each have their own goal that can be achieved through the practices of each respective religion. Through practicing Christianity, one attains the goal of Christianity, and through practicing Buddhism, one attains the goal of Buddhism, but they are not the same goal since the cause which produce them are different.

Samkhya view of manifestation

The Samkhyas hold that if a thing does not exist at the time of its cause then it could not arise. This means, in other words, that things exist in a non-manifest or non-apparent state at the time of their cause, otherwise they could not arise. In a sense the Samkhyas don't even assert production, but rather manifestation, which is the process of a non-manifest or non-apparent thing becoming manifest or apparent. This manifestation of what is not apparent is the production of a result, i.e. causality. All things are produced from a cause that is the same entity as themselves.

To exemplify a result that exists non-manifestly at the time of its cause, we can say that a non-apparent sprout (the result) exists as the same entity of the seed (its cause) at the time of the seed. When they say that the a sprout exists at the time of its cause, a seed, they are not saying that an actual sprout is "hidden" physically in the seed. There is a big physical difference between a sprout and a seed so that is not their meaning. It does not seem that the Samkhyas mean that there is only a *potential* for the sprout at the time of the seed but exactly what is a non-apparent or non-manifest sprout isn't that clear. Trying to see the Samkhya view through the eyes of Buddhist terminology can be a complicated undertaking. In regard to this, Jeffrey Hopkins in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.162) says, "It may seem unfair to the Samkhya position to criticize it by juggling the terminology." Yet, we must try to understand their view if our reasonings are to be effective.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1A-1 The consequence of being purposeless if produced from causes that are the same entity

How the nature of the seed and the sprout are the same

The Samkhyas are saying that the cause of the barley sprout is the barley seed, as well as other minor secondary causes such as water, manure, and so forth, but the nature of all of them, the cause, the result, and the other factors, are all one. They hold that these are all one nature because in their view, they all *must* have one nature in order to bring forth a single effect, a common result. The sprout exists at the time of the seed because it abides in the nature of its cause. At the time of the seed, the sprout exists in a non-manifest state.

How the seed and the sprout are different

When they assert production from self, they are agreeing that there is a difference between a sprout and a seed in that a sprout is produced from a seed, but yet they still assert them as the same nature. When we speak of a pen's first moment giving rise to its second moment and so forth we could think of it as the pen giving rise to itself but this is not what the Samkhya are saying – the sprout does not give rise to the sprout. The sprout arises from a seed that is the same entity as itself. What exists in a non-manifest manner becomes manifest and there is a change of the state or display is different when a seed becomes a sprout.

Different collections of causes for different results

In the Samkhya view, there are particular qualities or collections of various causes that are necessary to produce certain effects. For example, in order to grow corn, one collection of causes is necessary, or to build a house, another collection is needed, so each collection of causes are unique to each result. There must be a binding relationship between cause and effect, for example an apple seed producing an apple tree, otherwise anything could produce anything. So Samkhya are saying that there is consistency in what is manifested but that fact is because a result exists in a non-manifest manner at the time of its cause. Cause and result are not one, they are different but they are the same entity. The seed state and the sprout state, i.e. the cause state and the result state, are one entity but they are different. In their view, the result must already be there in a non-manifest manner or it could never manifest.

Buddhist view of production

In Buddhism, when we speak of a result being produced, it means that it now “holds its own entity”. So, at the time of the cause, the result does not exist since it has not been produced, it has not attained its own entity. In the Samkhya view, the sprout has already attained its own entity at the time of the seed, because the entity of the seed is the entity of the sprout. The term “entity” in Samkhya does have a slightly different meaning than in Buddhism though. In Buddhism, the term *ngo bo* (which can be translated as entity, essence, or nature) means that which is a phenomenon's defining characteristics so it may be somewhat dangerous to use Buddhist meanings of terms in analyzing the view of a belief system like Samkhya.

The first consequence

From the Buddhist point of view, since at the time of the seed the sprout has already attained its own entity, then the following consequence results:

A sprout [as the subject],

[It follows that] its production is purposeless.

Because it has already attained its own entity.

In Buddhism this is what we mean by production, a thing coming to attain its own entity and so there is an assumption that this is what the Samkhyas are saying when they make their assertions.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1A-2 It contradicts reasoning if produced from the same entity

Samkhya response to first consequence

The Samkhyas would answer that it is not purposeless because what is non-manifested must be made manifest. So from their view there is still a purpose for a sprout to be produced although it already exists in a non-apparent matter at the time of the seed.

The second consequence

Prasangika says that, if that is the case, then, although it is purposeful, there would be no end to its production. The consequence here is:

A sprout [as the subject],

[It follows that] its production is endless.

Because though it has already attained its entity, it is purposeful for it to be produced again.

In Buddhist views, once an object has attained its own entity it is no longer produced. But in the Samkhya view there is still production in spite of the fact that the result has already attained its entity. From the Buddhist point of view, the Samkhyas are saying that even though it is already “produced”, it would be necessary for it to be “produced” again. In Buddhism, once something has attained its own entity, its production ceases, but in Samkhya, existence is not sufficient for production to not continue, because they hold that production is still purposeful, even if the result already exists (although in a non-manifest manner). So it is still sensible or purposeful for it to be produced again according to their logic, which would mean that it would then be produced endlessly.

The third consequence

To relate these two consequences to the refutation of production from self, Prasangika would then say that:

A sprout [as the subject],

[It follows that] its production is purposeless and endless

Because it is produced from self.

May 12 (Friday)

Main points from today’s questions for Geshe-la

- ← In the analogy of the magician’s illusion, the magician is analogous to someone who has realized emptiness through only a meaning generality. Geshe-la said that there is a distinction between the conception of true existence arising and the adherence to that as true in that true existence can be rejected even though there is still the ignorance that is the conception of true existence in one’s continuum.
- ← Regarding ultimate and conventional analysis in Svatantrika, Geshe-la said that conventional analysis is seeing if something exists by way of its own character or is impermanent and so forth, while ultimate is seeing if something exists truly. Generally it is said that any analysis other than looking for an object’s final or ultimate mode of being can be said to be conventional analysis.
- ← When asked what elements of the analogy would change if Prasangika put forth a similar analogy as the magician’s illusion, Geshe-la gave a reference to another magical illusion involving a young woman (in Nagarjuna’s *Refutation of Objections*, stanza 27) but didn’t directly address this request. The essential element in the Prasangika view is that phenomena are merely imputed so any analogy would have to involve that aspect.

Summary of refutation of production from self

As we saw yesterday, when Prasangika gives the first consequence, saying that production from self is purposeless because the sprout has attained its own entity, Samkhya replied that there is purpose in production because the non-manifest still requires production to become manifest or apparent. Prasangika responds with a second consequence, that if it is purposeful for that which already exists to still be produced, then that sprout would be produced endlessly. Prasangika could also assert a different consequence, that the sprout would *never* be produced because the production of the seed would be endless so there would never be the opportunity for it to produce a sprout.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1A-3 Refuting the response that dispels these faults

Samkhya response to second consequence

The response from the Samkhya point of view to the above is set forth. They would say that the nature of both the seed and the sprout are in fact a partless one, but, even though that is so, due to various conditions and factors, the seed disintegrates and the sprout is produced. In their view, this is what is meant by the sprout being a transformation of a seed in that there is the destruction of the seed from the production of the apparent sprout. The apparent sprout does not exist at the time of the seed but the non-apparent sprout does. Once the sprout is manifested there is no need for any further production of a sprout. So Samkhya is asserting that, not only is production purposeful but it also has an end since there is no need for further production.

Prasangika refutation

Prasangika says that it follows that a sprout would not cause a seed to disintegrate, contrary to what Samkhya holds, because that which is the same nature cannot destroy itself. Because the sprout and the seed are the same nature, having the same properties in all ways, the sprout cannot assist in the destruction of the seed. This would be similar to a sprout destroying a sprout.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B Refuting that the two, cause and result, are one entity

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B-1 Since it follows that the shape and so forth of the two, the seed and the sprout, would not be different, refuting [that the two, cause and result, are one entity]

From the Madhyamika point of view, the Samkhyas are saying that the sprout and the seed are one entity so this assertion must be refuted. If they were one, then a cause must have the same entity as a result, therefore the cause and result must be identical in all ways. The color, shape and so forth of the sprout and the seed must then be the same. Yet this is not the case – everyone can see that a sprout and a seed are not identical. This refutation requires that we qualify the cause and result as begin established as such by way of their own characteristics.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B-2 Refuting the response that rejects these faults

Samkhya makes a response that says that the nature of the two are one but their “occasions” are different (Note: the term “occasion” may read better here as “state” but “occasion” does have a shade of meaning that may be more useful). The occasion or state of the seed is abandoned when the occasion or state of the sprout is attained. Madhyamika rejects that response by simply saying that this is senseless, since if that were so, the nature of the seed and the nature of the sprout cannot be the same since the property of the state of the sprout remains when the property of the state of the seed is gone. So, Prasangika says that it is contradictory to say that they are the same nature and yet hold that the seed must change its nature to become a sprout.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 15 (Monday)

Note: For today's discussion, you may also refer to the handout called "Some notes on the production from self", dated May, 2000.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B Refuting that the two, cause and result, are one entity

We have been examining the refutation of production from self and are now about to discuss the refutation that cause and effect are one entity. From the Madhyamika point of view, the Samkhyas are saying that the seed, the cause, and the sprout, the result, are one entity so this assertion must be refuted.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B-1 Since it follows that the shape and so forth of the two, the seed and the sprout, would not be different, refuting [that the two, cause and result, are one entity]

Chandrakirti says that, if the seed and the sprout were one entity, then a cause must have the same entity as a result, therefore the cause and result must be identical in all ways. The color, shape, and so forth, of the sprout and the color, shape, and so forth, of the seed must then be the same. Yet this is not the case – everyone can see that a sprout and a seed are not identical. This is point #1 on the handout, in the section called "Refuting that a seed and a sprout are one entity".

Regarding phenomena being the same entity

If two phenomena are the same entity, does it logically follow that they are identical in all respects? There are many examples of things that are the same entity but not identical in all ways (such as the table and the shape of the table). If you qualify it as *inherently* one entity then such phenomena, if they existed, would have to be identical in all ways. When Jeffrey Hopkins talks about this in *Emptiness Yoga* (pp.168-169), he in fact does qualify it as "inherently one entity". Although Geshe-la didn't make that qualification in his current teachings, when asked about it recently, he agreed that you would have to affix "established by way of its own character" to this or it doesn't make sense. In all of this section on production from self, there is no qualification as inherent production from self because in Chandrakirti's view, there is not even conventional production from self but here the qualification of inherent is necessary.

Regarding "unrelatedness"

As an aside, when you are going through the four-point analysis meditation, it may be helpful to think of inherent existence as "unrelated" existence. If something inherently exists, then it exists unrelatedly or independently, in that it doesn't exist in relation to anything else. So unrelatedly or inherently different would be sharing no characteristics at all while unrelatedly or inherently the same entity would mean the same in all ways.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B-2 Refuting the response that rejects these faults

Samkhya makes a response that says that the nature of the two are one but their "occasions" are different (*Note:* the term "occasion" may read better here as "state" but "occasion" does have a shade of meaning that may be more useful). According to this, the occasion or state of the seed is abandoned when the occasion or state of the sprout is manifested. This isn't a very convincing refutation and Lama Tsongkhapa rejects it by simply saying that this is senseless. If what they are asserting were so, the nature of the seed and the nature of the sprout could not be the same entity since the property of the state of the sprout remains when the property of the state of the seed is gone. So, Prasangika says that it is contradictory to say that they are the same nature and yet hold that the seed must "change its nature" to become a sprout. These two views can be seen in point #2 on the handout.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A1B-3 Since it follows that both would be similarly apprehended and not apprehended on each of the two occasions, refuting [that the two, cause and result, are one entity]

Since the two, the seed and the sprout are one entity, then Lama Tsongkhapa says that there are the consequences that they each should be either apprehended or not apprehended simultaneously when the other is apprehended or not apprehended. So when on the occasion of the sprout, the seed is not apprehended, then it would follow that the sprout should also not be apprehended and this is clearly contradictory. Likewise, on the

occasion of a seed, the sprout should also be apprehendable by a sense consciousness since the two are the same entity. This is point #3 on the handout.

One way to look at this is that, when the eye consciousness sees and apprehends the table, the impermanence of the table is “apprehendable”, meaning that it *could* be apprehended. Alternately we could say that they simultaneously *appear*, just as, for example, the color of the book and the book appear at the same time since they are the same entity. For two phenomena to be one entity, they necessarily both appear to a sense consciousness apprehending one of them.

Differentiating four terms

“Apprehension” and “appearance” are among four terms that get used frequently in our studies and are sometimes difficult to differentiate. In terms of the mind, it can involve itself in an object in all four of these ways:

1. Appearance – This is the most basic possibility in that the object here merely appears to the mind. For example, everything that is of the same substantial entity of production and abidance with a table (its shape, color, impermanence, thing-ness, and so forth, of the table) appear when the table appears. An appearance may not be ascertained or apprehended. It seems that appearance is posited in terms of logical necessity consistent with certain models of perception such as that of direct perception being a collective engager. The appearance of a certain aspect of an object does not entail that it be experienced by the consciousness to which it appears.
2. Ascertainment – An ascertaining consciousness is able to induce a remembrance or recollection of that appearance so an ascertainment is “more than” more than an object merely appear. The object has in been is registered on the consciousness. Kentsur Yeshey Tupden says that the eye consciousness *ascertains* a person but cannot *apprehend* a person (not being color or shape) so it would seem that it could also ascertain a truly existent table and be recollected as appearing as such. When we say that a superior has no instances of inattentive perception then it’s possible this means that there is an *ascertainment* of all the aspects of appearances but there is not an *apprehension* of all of them.
3. Apprehension – Here the consciousness merely engages the object of observation or object of apprehension.
4. Realization – This is differentiated in that it entails the mind removing superimpositions and getting at the actual nature of phenomena, not just apprehending them.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1A2 Indicating [production from self] as non-existent even for the conventions of those whose minds have not been affected by tenets

This is point #4 on the handout. Prasangika says that this way of arising is only acquired through tenets since even the worldly do not assert that seed and the sprout are one entity. Conventionally, until the sprout is produced there is no sprout seen and then, when the sprout is produced, there is no seed present so they cannot be one entity.

In this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the Samkhya system asserts “thusness” but here that term may refer simply to a deeper reality of things and not specifically emptiness as Buddhism asserts it. For Samkhya “thusness” would mean that all phenomena arise out of a fundamental nature.

3B1C-2B3E-2A13 Summarized meaning of such refutations

As we mentioned above, production from self is being refuted not only for those who rely on such tenets but also for worldly renown. Lama Tsongkhapa says that Nagarjuna, in refuting production from self, made no qualification of “ultimately” due to the fact that such a mode of production exists neither ultimately or conventionally.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-1B Refuting [production from self] by the reasonings in *Fundamental Wisdom*

According to Nagarjuna’s *Fundamental Wisdom*, there is one more point (point #5 on the handout). If the cause and the result were the same entity, then the agent, action, and object would be indistinguishably one, and the producer and the produced would be one.

May 16 (Tuesday)

Note: For today's discussion, please refer to the handout called "Notes on 'Opposite of the Consequences'", dated May, 2000.

Opposite of the Consequences

As is customary at this point in monastic studies of Madhyamika, Geshe-la presented an extensive debate that is called the 'Opposite of the Consequences'. This particular debate is important because it began to delineate the divergent views of Svatantrika (represented by Bhavaviveka) and Prasangika (represented by Buddhapalita and Chandrakirti) are distinguished here. Besides the handout and the transcripts, there are extensive passages in Jeffrey Hopkins' *Meditation on Emptiness* on this as well (see pp.431-530).

1: Bhavaviveka's Criticism of Buddhapalita

Buddhapalita wrote a text that is a commentary on Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*, and in it, he refutes production from self as the Samkhyas would assert it. In that section, he makes numerous syllogisms, and Bhavaviveka, in his commentary on Nagarjuna's text, takes issue with Buddhapalita's commentary, asserting that there are three main faults.

1. Buddhapalita failed to provide a reason and an example capable of refuting production from self. Buddhapalita had set forth both a brief and an extensive statement to refute production from self and in Bhavaviveka's commentary, the brief is considered the more relevant one. Using that brief statement, Bhavaviveka sets out an autonomous syllogism based on it that assumes that Buddhapalita is asserting that production is purposeless and endless. Then Bhavaviveka assumes that Buddhapalita cannot possibly mean this since that is not the case. So he then reconstructs the syllogism to use the reason that production is purposeful and has an end, and then says that this new syllogism doesn't have the capacity to refute production from self. So in setting out this first fault, Bhavaviveka first misconstrues Buddhapalita's intent in the original consequence and then claims that the new syllogism he himself has constructed is incapable of refuting production from self.
2. Buddhapalita's consequences do not counter the mistaken reasoning of the Samkhyas because they fail to prove to the Samkhyas that there is no production from self. Bhavaviveka here suggests that the Samkhya, upon being given the reconstructed syllogism above, would question what production from self means. Accordingly, there are two possibilities of meaning that Samkhyas would propose. The first is whether Buddhapalita means production of an effect from an already manifested entity, such as production of a sprout from an already manifested sprout. If that is so, Samkhya would never say this. The second is whether Buddhapalita means production of a manifest sprout from a non-manifest sprout. If so, then that does not disprove production from self because Samkhya hold that to be so, as is seen in the syllogism that begins on the bottom of p.1 of the handout. Since Samkhya do assert that the non-manifest becomes manifest then production is meaningful and has an end according to them. If this were not so, then anything could be produced from anything according to the Samkhya.
3. A reconstruction of Buddhapalita's thesis contradicts Nagarjuna's tenet that the refutation of the four extremes of production is a non-affirming negation. Here the reason of Buddhapalita's original consequence is contested, saying that it is unacceptable because the reason must be applicable to the subject. In order for a syllogism to be correct, the reason must be the property of the subject and Bhavaviveka says that this is not the case in Buddhapalita's syllogism. Why? Because production is purposeful and has an end so it is not a property of the subject "things". So Bhavaviveka sets out a new syllogism that reconstructs what he thinks Buddhapalita meant. In doing so, he reverses the reason and the thesis in order to be correct, saying that things are produced from others because production is purposeful and has an end. If Bhavaviveka's intention is true, then Buddhapalita's original syllogism was an affirming negative. According to Bhavaviveka, in Buddhapalita's syllogism *explicitly* production from self is eliminated, but in addition, *implicitly* production from others is asserted. If so, then this is contrary to Nagarjuna's intention that the theses which refute the four extremes are all non-affirming negatives. By saying things are not produced from their own entities, Nagarjuna does not intend to establish that things are then produced from others and Bhavaviveka concludes that Buddhapalita's argument goes against Nagarjuna's intention because it does that.

It is interesting to look at Bhavaviveka's arguments since it seems that Bhavaviveka from the beginning is assuming that Buddhapalita is asserting autonomous syllogisms. Also it is interesting to note that the brief

statement is what Bhavaviveka is drawing the syllogism from and making his assertions from, but it lacks one element that the extensive statement has. What it lacks is the idea that it is not purposeful for a thing that has been produced to be produced *again*. Without this element, the reasoning in the syllogism isn't as effective. There is also some lack of clarity as to how Bhavaviveka establishes the "explicit thesis" in regard to the third fault, when he reverses both the predicate and the reason in his "reconstructed" syllogism. In Bhavaviveka's view, it appears that Buddhapalita is refuting production from self by using an affirming negative, and this contradicts Nagarjuna's intention. There is some evidence that Buddhapalita in his commentary was not only trying to refute inherent production but also assert conventional production and this may be why Bhavaviveka makes such an assertion.

2: Chandrakirti's Defense of Buddhapalita

Geshe-la said that there were two possible reasons why Buddhapalita did not defend himself against the criticism of Bhavaviveka. Possibly it was because he was of a lower social class than Bhavaviveka or it's even possible that Chandrakirti was a reincarnation of Buddhapalita.

1. The first fault rejected. Chandrakirti says that Buddhapalita's consequences *are* capable of causing a Samkhya to abandon their position because there are the two consequences that are established by Buddhapalita (see the handout, p.2). To the first consequence, the Samkhya could answer that there is no pervasion because the non-manifest must still become manifest. So then there is the second which says that, if production is purposeful, then it is endless since there is purpose for it to be produced again. A Samkhya would never hold that it is necessary for the manifest to be produced again. It's hard to ascertain how such refutations would be understood by an actual Samkhya since there are differences in terminology, as we have discussed earlier. The terms, "non-manifest" or "non-apparent" do not simply mean "potential" here; yet the Samkhya feel it is necessary to posit a non-manifest sprout in order for a manifest sprout to exist.
2. The second fault rejected. Chandrakirti defends Buddhapalita here by saying that in the course of constructing syllogisms from Buddhapalita's statements, Bhavaviveka has misread his intention. What Buddhapalita stated is that "things are not produced from their own entities because their production (again) would be just purposeless and because production would be endless." If we take this thesis then there are two consequences that can be asserted (the two consequences are shown on the bottom of p.2 and the top of p.3 of the handout). In this way, these consequences are sufficient to refute the Samkhya view that things are produced from self. Further Chandrakirti states that autonomous syllogisms are not to be asserted since the three elements of the syllogism and so forth are not inherently existent. Basically the main points here are that Bhavaviveka's reconstructions are a misinterpretation of Buddhapalita's meaning and that production from self has been adequately refuted for a Samkhya with the reasonings given. It is also to be noted that, in the process of rejecting this fault, Chandrakirti also demonstrates how Bhavaviveka has incurred the very faults that he accuses Buddhapalita of having committed. Chandrakirti says that Bhavaviveka's syllogisms themselves are incapable of generating the inferential understanding of the consequence in a Samkhya (for more on this, see *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp.476-477).

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3. The third fault rejected. Here Chandrakirti affirms that Buddhapalita does not contradict Nagarjuna's tenet that these refutations are all non-affirming negatives. To explain this, let's look at how a consequence works, as shown in the handout on p.3. For example, if a defender asserts that all Americans are necessarily not men, then a consequence follows from taking a position such as that. A challenger could propose the following consequence: "President Bill Clinton, as the subject, it follows that he is not an American because he is a man." This consequence is correct since the reason that supports ("because he is a man") is applicable to the subject and the pervasion is established *according to the thesis that the defender is asserting*. In the mind of the defender, this consequence should create some doubt because, knowing that President Clinton is an American and that he is a man, the fallacy of the thesis is evident. Now, if we reverse the reason and the predicate, and say that "President Clinton is not a man because he is an American", this statement is not true. The point is that though the above is a correct consequence when reconstructed as a syllogism it is not necessary for the challenger to assert the thesis.

So it doesn't necessarily hold that if you present a consequence that then you accept the reverse of that. Not all consequences require that you negate both the predicate and the thesis when you reverse them. In a correct consequence, you don't have to hold the position that your consequence is asserting. If you are forced to hold that the reverse is correct in terms of one's own position, sometimes that is so and sometimes it is not. Let's look at a case where that is so. If someone held the view that all phenomena exist from their own side, then you could present the consequence that "it follows that a sprout does not depend upon its seed because it exists from its own side." Both the predicate and the reason can be reversed here to state that "a sprout does not exist from its own side because it depends upon its seed," and that is an acceptable thesis.

Bhavaviveka reversed both the predicate and the reason, saying that production is purposeful and has an end and furthermore that "produced from self" would be reversed to "produced from other". However, Buddhapalita's saying that production is purposeless and endless does not imply that he accepts that production is purposeful and has an end since he was only trying to show the opponent the unwanted consequence of the belief of the Samkhyas. On p.492 of *Meditation on Emptiness*, the passage from Chandrakirti's *Clear Words* points out that Buddhapalita was not trying to set out the system of Prasangika by refuting Samkhya but only trying to show them the fallacy of holding to production from self. Prasangikas are noted for the use of consequences and they are often misinterpreted as not having a thesis or position of their own, but rather they only enter into and understand others' systems and show the faults of their position through showing the consequences of them. From one point of view, it might seem that a Prasangika doesn't have to have the right answer, but can simply work within another's tenets and lead that opponent to a correct position. It is true that the Prasangika makes an effort to dispel the positions of others by showing them to be internally inconsistent and this is in fact what Buddhapalita has done. Chandrakirti is trying to show that these consequences are forceful enough for a Samkhya to abandon their incorrect position. If not, they are unreasonable people. Because Prasangika proceeds in this way, it seems that they have no position on matters themselves but they are not trying to do away with any assertion whatsoever. This is nonsense since the purpose of Madhyamika dialectics is soteriological, i.e. to overcome suffering, and their dialectics are not just an intellectual diversion.

One final point on this section, the question can be raised as to how Bhavaviveka reverses "produced from self" and ends up with "produced from other". It seems that there is a manner of reversing the syllogism that is incorrect here. If Buddhapalita's consequence is "Things, their production again is purposeless and endless because of being produced from self", then, Bhavaviveka is saying that the implied reverse of this is "Things are produced from other because production is purposeful and has an end." It's possible that this is asserted because Bhavaviveka assumes that Buddhapalita intended to also show conventional production while he was refuting production from the four extremes (see p.461 of *Meditation on Emptiness*). Jeffrey Hopkins says that, according to Jamyang Shepa, Bhavaviveka was led by Buddhapalita's statements concerning the conventional nature of production to believe that he was holding that "production is delimited to either production from self or production from other" and hence, "a refutation of the former implies an affirmation of the latter." But it seems that there is not only these two possibilities as Bhavaviveka seems to hold and further, it's questionable how Bhavaviveka can legitimately impose this fault when he has had to interpret what Buddhapalita intended. But in this section Chandrakirti does not defend Buddhapalita by pointing out any of the above, only by saying that the opposite of the consequence is not being asserted. In Chandrakirti's view, Buddhapalita is consistent with the Prasangika view and was only refuting production from self and not affirming anything.

3: Chandrakirti's Criticism of Bhavaviveka

1. Concerning affixing the term "ultimately". In the course of refuting Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka sets out a syllogism using the eye sense as the subject (as shown at the bottom of p.3 of the handout). Chandrakirti finds error with Bhavaviveka's syllogism, saying that there was no need to affix the term "ultimately" to the predicate. Chandrakirti's reasoning is that, although there is acceptance of production from other conventionally, production from self is not accepted even conventionally so that qualification is not necessary. Further, Chandrakirti points out that there isn't even need for "ultimately" to be affixed from the side of the Samkhyas, since they have fallen from ultimate truth and conventional truth as well. The meaning of this is that there is no view of emptiness asserted in their tenets (so they have degenerated or fallen from ultimate truth) and they assert a permanent person (so they have degenerated or fallen from

conventional truth). In the Samkhya system the “fundamental nature” and person are both ultimate truths and the other twenty-three phenomena are conventional truths. Finally, Chandrakirti says that there is no need to affix ultimately even on the part of the world at large, since no one naturally asserts production from self conventionally – such a view only arises from mistaken tenets. In summary, there is no necessity to affix “ultimately”.

2. Concerning the use of autonomous syllogisms and commonly appearing subjects. Chandrakirti also criticizes Bhavaviveka’s insistence on the use of autonomous syllogisms. Bhavaviveka says that all the various elements of the syllogism must be commonly agreed upon by all parties. They cannot be qualified such that one party accepts the properties of an element and the other does not. For example, if there are different definitions for the same term, that term cannot be commonly used. For Bhavaviveka, the way that such elements of a syllogism are certified is that a valid cognition must certify them and such a valid cognizer must be non-mistaken in terms of the object’s establishment by way of its own character. This means that, for Svatantrika and all systems beneath them, any commonly appearing element of a syllogism would be certified by a consciousness ascertaining that element as existing by way of its own character since that is a non-mistaken consciousness. It seems that if you insist that such an element appear the same to all parties, then you can never debate with a Prasangika since any element that appears to be established from its own side would never be agreed upon in the Prasangika system. However, Jeffrey Hopkins suggests that it is only in regard to proving emptiness that arguments would not be able to have commonly appearing subjects with Prasangika (see p.513 of *Meditation on Emptiness*). One of the fundamental distinctions is that elements will never appear the same to a Prasangika and non-Prasangika. This may be why they favor consequences since there can be no common ground in such syllogisms when one’s opponent doesn’t hold things to not exist from their own side.

May 18 (Thursday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2 Refuting production from other

Having refuted production from self, Chandrakirti now proceeds to refute production from other, here meaning “other” qualified by being established by its own character and not production from “other” conventionally. All Buddhist schools posit production from other conventionally but only the Buddhist schools beneath Prasangika would assert production from an other that is established by its own character. In Prasangika, the other which is the cause of production is not inherently existent. One way to view a non-inherently existent other is to see it as independently or unrelatedly other, meaning that here we are refuting a cause that is unrelatedly other with respect to its result.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2A Expressing the previous positions

We begin by looking within the Buddhist tradition at the schools called Realists, or “proponents of things”, which are all the schools of Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, and Mind Only. They are called that since they all assert true existence. Since we are looking at refuting production from inherently existent causes and conditions that bring about inherently existent results, there is presented an enumeration of the various causes and conditions that these schools assert, many of which are accepted by Prasangika. We will discuss the six types of causes and the four types of conditions.

The six causes

The six causes are also defined in the middling section of *Collected Topics* so we will use those definitions in our discussion (please refer to the translation of *Presentation of the Middling Path of Reasoning of Collected Topics*, pp.5-7). In that context, please note that often these definitions are given in terms of a basis of illustration. The six causes are:

1. Acting cause – The acting cause of pot refers to a common locus that is substantially different from pot and also not acting to interfere in the production of pot. An example of what is *not* an acting cause is, for instance, ignorance, which would not be an acting cause for wisdom. An acting cause is phenomenon which “allows a space” for the product to take place. If it is an acting cause it is not necessarily an actual cause. This is so because even unconditioned space is an acting cause for a pot to be produced while being a permanent phenomenon so it cannot be a cause.
2. Simultaneously occurring cause – Simultaneously occurring cause refers to a common locus that is mutually and simultaneously substantially different and also not acting to interfere in their mutual

production. The examples given are the four simultaneously produced elements, or the form and the taste of brown sugar. Because these are simultaneously existing phenomena, they cannot be an actual cause of their effect because cause and result are serial. So this is only a nominal cause since the cause of pot, for example, cannot exist at the moment of pot. To look more closely at the definition, let's examine one of the examples. Why are the form and the taste of brown sugar simultaneously occurring causes? When we say they are "substantially different", does this mean that they are different substantial entities? To the eye consciousness apprehending the form of the brown sugar, does the taste of the sugar appear? Why is "mutually" used here since it might seem that being substantially different implies mutual difference? A pot can be said to be different from the horns of a rabbit but the horns of a rabbit are not different from a pot (because they are non-existent) so there are examples of *not mutually* different but yet different. What does "simultaneously" mean here? It seems that it means simply that they occur at the same time, unlike cause and result that are serial. It also seems to imply that they come into existence simultaneously.

3. Concomitant cause – A concomitant cause refers to a common locus of five concomitances of mutually similar aspects and also not acting to interfere in their mutual production. We've spoken of these five concomitances earlier in regard to the six primary consciousnesses and the accompanying or concomitant mental factors. There are certain similarities or concomitances that the accompanying mental factors and primary mind have. Let's enumerate them in regard to the example of an eye consciousness observing a pen. The first (similar base) is exemplified by the eye sense power. The second (similar observed object) is the pen. The third (similar aspect) is that they both have the aspect of pen or that they both arise in the image of a pen. The fourth (similar time) is that they arise, abide and cease simultaneously. The fifth (similar substance) is that their cognitive nature is the same, meaning that if the main mind observing the pen is virtuous the accompanying mental factors are all virtuous, if neutral they are all neutral, and so forth. This type of cause applies to the mind and mental factors and so, it too, is only a nominal cause and not an actual one.
4. Congruent cause – This cause was called "equal fortune" in our translation of the *Autocommentary*. Congruent cause is defined as that which acts to produce a later similar type similar to itself. An example is the first moment of pot giving rise to the second moment of pot. It seems that any thing that has a continuum has a congruent cause. How is this different from substantial cause, if at all? For a pot, the substantial cause is the clay, since it is the main producer of its own effect within its own substantial continuum. For Sautrantika, for example, the last moment of consciousness just prior to attaining nirvana without remainder would not be a congruent cause because it does not produce a result similar in type to itself. As an aside, substantial cause is a very important concept in helping others to understand the nature of rebirth. There are two important concepts involved in doing that: one is substantial cause and the other is cooperative condition. If you can first get people to differentiate between the body and the mind, then you can show how they are interrelated in that the body is a cooperative condition for the mind but the body cannot be the mind's substantial cause. This is so because, in Buddhist terms, a cause does not give rise to a result dissimilar in type to itself. This means that a mind can only arise from a cause that is similar to it, and the only thing that is similar in type to it is a mind of a previous life.
5. Ever-functioning cause – An ever-functioning cause is defined as that which is afflicted acting to produce a later possessor of affliction of the same level as itself which is its own effect. For example, the afflictions within the desire realm that causes a later similar type of affliction. It seems that this is a type of congruent cause, but it is unique in that it is an affliction.
6. Fruitional cause – A functional cause is that which is included in either non-virtue or contaminated virtue. An example is the action of taking life. A fruitional cause is necessarily not a congruent cause.

So the first three are only nominal causes while the last three are actual causes. When we speak of the result similar to the cause functionally in karma, the tendency to give, for example, is it the substantial cause for giving in the future? Or is it a congruent cause for such giving? Or is it fruitional? Obviously there is much room for discussion here.

The four conditions

Having discussed these six causes, the four conditions are set out:

1. **Observed object condition** – This term refers to all phenomena, the observed objects of the six consciousnesses. In *Collected Topics* the definition is given in respect to an example, saying that the observed object condition of a direct perceiver apprehending blue is that which acts mainly and directly to produce a direct perceiver apprehending blue having an aspect of blue. In that example, "blue" is the

observed object condition. Geshe-la said that it is likened to a staff or cane upon which an elderly person depends in order to stand. It is like that since for minds and mental factors to arise, they depend upon an observed object condition. If it is an observed object, is it pervaded by being an observed object condition? It seems that there is a possibility of an observed object that is not an observed object condition, for example, “all phenomena” is the observed object of the meditative equipoise of the Mahayana path of seeing but it is not the observed object condition. Also remember that the observed object is not necessarily observed. For example, when a wrong consciousness apprehends a snake on the basis of a striped, coiled rope, the observed object is the rope, while the objective aspect is snake and the subjective aspect is the conception of a snake. The rope is not observed and yet it is the observed object and the observed object condition. It does seem that an observed object must be an existent. Is this condition related only to direct perceivers? No, since there are yogic direct perceivers and so forth that do not have observed objects. As to whether this condition is necessary for conception, it seems that the arising of conception does not depend upon an observed object condition.

We will continue our discussion of the four conditions next Monday.

May 19 (Friday)

Presentation on Samkhya by MP Student Paolo Quaranta

The Vedic systems

The Samkhya which he has experience with is a theistic tradition but in its original form it is not theistic. In India there are two traditions of yoga, Tantric and Vedic. The most ancient texts written by sages are the *Vedas* that gave rise to the Hindu philosophy, which is more than a philosophy really, since it is a school of thought, a form of realization. There are six systems that arose from the *Vedas*: (1) Vedanta, (2) Samkhya, (3) Nyaya, (4) Vaisheshika, (5) Uttara and Poorna Mimamsa, and (6) Charvaka.

The five major questions

These are the main six schools of thought have developed following five major questions, which relate to the five vessels. The first question concerns what is the composition of the body and how it works. The second question concerns what is *prana* and what is the relation between *prana* and the physical body. The third question is what is the reason that is behind this manifestation of *prana* and what is the relation between it and the mind and so forth. The fourth is what is *atma* and how can you have an experience of the *atma*. The fifth concerns how you can reach *mukti*, the transcendent state of liberation and freedom. The six philosophies tie into these five questions and are related to the five *kosha*, or vessels containing the body.

Main topics of the Samkhya sutras

Samkhya is considered the oldest of them. Everything in the Samkhya system was formulated by Kapila, who was the first sage who transferred this thought in terms of a sutra. Many scholars consider that Samkhya influenced greatly Shakyamuni Buddha. The main topics involved are the theory of causation, the concept of *prakrti* (the unconscious principle), and the concept of *purusha* (the conscious principle), although other subjects such as the evolution of the world, the concept of *mukti* (liberation) and the important theory of the sources of valid knowledge. Non-theistic Samkhya is said to be a dualistic philosophy in that everything starts from a dualistic approach into the two fundamental principles (*prakrti* and *purusha*).

The Samkhya theory of causation

All Indian philosophies base their explanations of the manifestation of the universe on either of two main positions: *satkaryavada* and *asatkaryavada*. The first is an assertion that the cause and the effect exist together in that the effect exists in its cause before its production or manifestation. The second position holds that the effect doesn't exist in its cause prior to manifestation. The Samkhyas accept the first position. Further, there are even within those who hold the *satkaryavada* position different assertions concerning how the effect exists with the cause. Some, such as the Advaita Vedantins, saying that the cause exists together with the effect but it is apparent. Others, among them the Samkhyas, do not hold that the effect is apparent at the time of the cause.

Five arguments for their premise on causation

There are five basic arguments that the effect exists in its material cause before it is produced. (1) The effect exists in its material cause before its production because no one can produce an effect from a material cause in which that effect does not exist. (2) Because there is an invariable relationship between cause and effect, a material cause can produce only that effect with which it is causally related. (3) There is a fixed rule for the production or manifestation of things, in that a certain thing can be produced only by a certain other thing; it cannot be produced from just anything or anywhere. (4) An effect exists in its cause in an unmanifested form before it is produced. (5) If the effect does not exist in the cause, then that which was non-existent would be coming into existence out of nothing.

The duality of *prakrti* and *purusha*

The refutation concerning the sprout and the seed that we have heard about in Geshe-la's teachings exhibits the primary reason for the difference between Samkhya and Buddhism in general. The Samkhya system states that the entire world, including the body, mind and senses, is dependent upon, limited by, and produced by the combination of certain effects. According to Samkhya, material atoms cannot produce the subtler aspects of nature, such as mind, intellect and ego. Therefore, one must seek elsewhere for that cause from which gross objects and their subtler aspects are derived. For example, when a seed develops into a tree, whatever latent quality the seed contains will be found in the tree. The ultimate cause of the world must also be a latent principle of potential, and it must be uncaused, eternal and all-pervading. This first main cause is called *prakrti*, the unmanifested self, the primordial nature, also called the unconscious principle. "Production from self" is in that very meaning, since it is really production from *prakrti*, which literally means "exceptional ability". It is the root, supreme cause and is also called *mahaparakrti* in some texts. It is causeless, actionless and produces effects but is not to be comprehended as merely the atomic substance of matter nor as a conscious principle behind the material substance.

The other aspect of reality, *purusha*, is the manifest aspect. Each body contains a self, but the self is different from the body, senses, mind, and intellect. It is a conscious spirit, at once both the subject of knowledge and the object of knowledge. *Purusha* is not merely a substance with the attribute of consciousness, but it is rather pure consciousness itself – a self-illuminated, unchanging, uncaused, all-pervading, eternal reality. Whatever is produced or is subject to change, death, and decay belongs to *prakrti* or its evolutes, not the self. It is ignorance to think of the self as body, senses, mind, or intellect, and it is through such ignorance that *purusha* confuses itself with the objects of the world. Then it becomes caught up in the ever-flowing stream of changes and feels itself to be subject to pain and pleasure.

The three *gunas*

Prakrti is characterized by the three *gunas* (literally "ropes"). They are qualities or attributes of *prakrti* but they are not to be taken merely as surface aspects of material nature, but rather as the intrinsic nature of *prakrti*. The balanced combination of the three *gunas* [*sattva* (lightness), *rajas* (movement), and *tamas* (darkness or heaviness)] is *prakrti*. The imbalance of the three generates the 23 attributes or realities. In a state of imbalance, *rajas* is the center, and it starts to vibrate and from that, the *sattva* or *tamas* are increased or decreased. The law of "Shiva Dancing" symbolizes the movement of this. Through the interaction of the first two realities (*prakrti* and *purusha*), the energy becomes more and more dense and so forth. The first manifestation of these is *mahattva*, the great one, also called the great mind or the universal mind. Sometimes this is called the intellect but that is an ordinary intellect and that is not what this is. The second is *ahamkara*, meaning "I am that" and this is the "I-ness" or "I-principle". From *ahamkara*, come the other 21 realities. The first two belong to the real but not manifest. Both consciousness and nature are non-manifest. So, if it is manifest it does not have the nature of *prakrti*. The 23 are not of the same entity as *prakrti* but are a result or manifestation of it.

Questions and answers

Q: What do you think of the Buddhist refutation of the Samkhya view? Are the Buddhists presenting the Samkhya position fairly and are they refuting them logically?

A: It seems that they are refuting them logically based on refuting the idea that cause and effect existing simultaneously.

Q: What in your opinion has been refuted?

A: The cause and effect principal in Samkhya is refuted by their logic. Samkhya definitely does say that cause and effect exist simultaneously.

Q: If their view is refuted well, why does the Samkhya view still exist?

A: While Buddhism was arising, Samkhya was declining but then the Vedanta revitalized Hindu philosophy. Now Samkhya isn't really studied much anymore.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 22 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2A Expressing the previous positions (Continued)

Since production from other entails results established by way of their own character produced by causes established by way of their own character, there is an enumeration of the various types of causes and conditions that the proponents of true existence assert. Regarding the six causes that we looked at last week, there is an example that might be considered. Each of the three legs of a tripod relies on the others in order to remain upright. If we call the three legs A, B & C, then we can say that leg B & C assist A in standing upright. Likewise, B is being assisted in standing up by A & C. Yet it is asserted that the cause doesn't exist at the time of a result, so how can the other two legs exist as a cause of the third leg standing up at the time of the third leg standing up? (see the Tuesday class transcript below for more on this).

The four conditions

Last week we began our discussion of the four conditions:

1. **Observed object condition** (continued) – As we saw last week, if it is an observed object, it is not pervaded by being an observed object condition. What is the observed object condition of the Mahayana uninterrupted path of seeing? It does not have an observed object condition although it does have an observed object. A yogic direct perceiver does not have an observed object condition.
2. **Immediate condition** – The immediate condition is generally applied to consciousnesses but it can also extend to things that are not consciousnesses. In that context it is a cause which has just ceased in the production of its result. In regard to consciousness, the immediate condition is defined in *Collected Topics* in relation to the immediate condition of a direct perceiver apprehending blue. There it is defined as a cognizer that acts mainly and directly to produce the mere clear and knowing experience of a direct perceiver apprehending blue. In general, we often simply say that the immediate condition for a specific moment of consciousness is the previous moment of consciousness.
3. **Empowering condition** – In the Tibetan term for this (*bdag rkyen*), the same descriptor (*bdag*) is used as when we spoke of one of the four types of results of karma, the “environmental” result (*bdag po'i 'bras bu*), but here the idea is more in regard to “empowering”. Empowering condition is defined in *Collected Topics* in relation to that of a direct perceiver apprehending blue. There it is defined as that which acts mainly and directly to produce independently a direct perceiver apprehending blue. In regard to a consciousness, this is said to be the sense powers, for example, the eye sense power empowers the eye consciousness with respect to colors and shapes. The sense powers empower in regard to the type of phenomena that each particular consciousness can apprehend. In Geshe-la's teachings he indicated that the empowering condition is equivalent to the acting cause. Within this there are two types of conditions, the uncommon and the common. Usually we talk about the uncommon in regard to consciousness (such as the eye sense power mentioned earlier, which empowers the eye consciousness uniquely to particular phenomena), but there are also common conditions. Here common empowering conditions would include acting causes but it's not clear if all acting causes would be included in this.
4. **Causal condition** – This is synonymous with condition in general and refers to anything that is a cause or condition. More specifically it is said to be any of the six causes except the acting cause. Last week we said that three of the six causes were not actual causes but that was in regard to a specific effect. In general if it is a causal condition, it is pervaded by being a cause. However, if it is an acting cause it is not pervaded by being a cause – for example, unconditioned space can be an acting cause for your eyes to see an object across a room.

It's unclear whether Prasangika would use these terms in the same way but it doesn't seem that they would hold any of these to be significantly different than what's been presented above.

Regarding the quote from *Treasury of Knowledge*

On p.9, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* in regard to the phenomena that are produced by four, three and two conditions. Those produced by four conditions: minds and mental factors are dependent on all four of the above conditions. Those produced by three conditions: the two meditative absorptions (the absorption of cessation and the absorption without discrimination) arise from the empowering, immediate and causal conditions. According to the Abhidharma presentation, both of these are non-associated compositional factors and not consciousnesses so they don't have an observed object condition. In our *Ornament* studies, the absorption without discrimination was defined as: an absorption without mind posited on the body aggregate in which gross feelings and discriminations from the third concentration downwards have been stopped; it is the

causal absorption for a rebirth in the form realm and is included in the fourth concentration. Those produced by two conditions: forms and non-associated compositional factors are produced by only causal and empowering conditions since they don't have an observed object condition nor an immediate condition.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B Refuting those systems

We have looked at the realists' systems that assert causes and conditions as inherently existent and now Chandrakirti will proceed to refute them.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1 Refuting the position asserting production from other in general

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A The actual refutation of production from other

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1 Refuting production from other in general

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1A Refuting [production from other] by means of absurd consequences

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1A1 The actual absurd consequences

The refutation of production from other hinges on Chandrakirti's root text (verse 6.14) at the bottom of p.9 of *Illumination*. It says basically that, if depending upon others, another were to arise, then darkness would arise even from the tongue of a flame and everything could be produced from everything. "Other" there means unrelatedly other, i.e. an other that is established by way of its own character. There are absurd consequences that follow from this assertion and these are what Chandrakirti is putting forth in this verse.

The last line of verse 6.14 will be retranslated in the final version of the transcript since the meaning is not that clear (for alternate translations of this see p.303 of *A Dose of Emptiness* or p.175 of *Emptiness Yoga*). The meaning is clearer in Jeffrey Hopkins' translation, which gives the reason as "because even all non-producers would equally have otherness". Basically this means that, if simply the fact of being other could produce a result, then even non-producers would produce a result because they too are other. If cause and effect are inherently other, then anything, even non-causes, could act as a cause to that effect since just being inherently other would be sufficient to act as the cause for any effect.

Regarding "unrelatedly other"

In such a view, there is no binding criteria between the cause and the result since they exist unrelatedly. It is important to look at how we actually do view things so we can relate these teachings to our own experience. If cause and effect existed the way they appear, then they would be unrelatedly other. It's hard to get a handle on this idea but we can take the example of boiling water in an electric water jug. When you turn on the water jug, although we can all see that the water and the jug are interrelated in the action of the boiling, that is not how they appear. Causes and results appear as if the existence of one does not depend upon the existence of other. Another example is a book, which arises due to the paper, ink, cover, binding, and so forth. The book is one thing and the causes which brought it into existence appear as other. To our ignorance, the book is not dependent upon those conditions because it appears established by way of its own character. Even as we sit here in the gompa, the cushion and the floor appear to be unrelatedly other. Or, when you eat an orange, there is a particular flavor, but you would not expect that flavor if you ate an orange seed. It seems that the taste of the orange doesn't rely upon the orange seed – it seems that the taste of the orange comes completely from the side of the orange, as if it doesn't rely upon anything beyond it.

"Other" refers to causes and if those causes existed from their own side, then the result that arises would exist from its own side and then there are the two, cause and result that are both unrelatedly other. Therefore within that view, there is no criteria specifying that this cause will give rise to this result. Everything could be equally produced from anything – anything could produce anything, and anything could be the result of anything. In such case, darkness could arise from light. What is supposed to clear away darkness, such as the tongues of flame, would bring about darkness. Further, as Chandrakirti says, "Also from all, all would be produced." This means that all phenomena are equal in being other, if they are all established by way of their own character.

The two absurd consequences

From this idea of production from an inherently existent other, there are two absurd consequences:

- 1) Object of knowledge (as the subject),
It follows that from a flame darkness arises,
Because a cause which is established by way of its own character produces a result which is established by way of its own character.
- 2) Object of knowledge (as the subject),
It follows that everything is produced by causes and non-causes, i.e. anything,

Because a cause which is established by way of its own character produces a result which is established by way of its own character.

Although they both have the same reason, the first consequence is from the point of view of cause and the second is from the point of view of result.

May 23 (Tuesday)

Meaning of production from other

We are examining the absurd consequences that follow from production from other, one of the four extreme positions. It may be helpful to establish exactly what we mean by production from other: production of a result from a cause that is inherently existent other, i.e. an inherently different object. Inherently existent also means established by way of its own character. In Tibetan, production from other is *gshan skye*.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1A2 Critical analysis of those [absurd consequences]

Lama Tsongkhapa next discusses two misinterpretations of these consequences by “some Tibetans”. These Tibetans do agree that these are correct consequences but the reasons why they accept them are wrong.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1A2A The reason for entering into the absurd consequences regarding production from other Chandrakirti has presented an absurd consequence with regard to production from other and there are two possible interpretations that are wrong. The reason “because it is other” is taken by both of these groups to be *merely* other, rather than *inherently existent* other. Even in Prasangika cause and effect are merely other but they are not inherently existent other. You cannot fling an absurd consequence without qualifying “other” as inherently existent. Simply saying “other” without such qualification does not assert anything that will refute inherently existent production. So in both of these incorrect reasonings, they are each trying to interpret how Chandrakirti arrives at these absurd consequences that follow from accepting production from *mere* other.

The first case of incorrect reasoning

When interpreting the absurd consequences of Chandrakirti, Lama Tsongkhapa says that this first group of Tibetans are asserting that if cause and effect were mere other, then cause and effect must be simultaneous. According to them, cause and effect are necessarily sequential and so the reasoning behind the absurd consequence here is that, if cause and effect were merely other, then they would be simultaneous and that is not acceptable (because they are serial). These Tibetans are saying that being merely other would necessitate cause and effect as being simultaneous and then viewing that as absurd because cause and effect are in fact serial and not simultaneous. But Lama Tsongkhapa says that this is not the intention of Chandrakirti. Cause and effect *are* merely other, but their being that doesn’t necessitate them having to occur simultaneously.

Regarding these Tibetans, the example they are using is Chandrakirti’s consequence that “darkness arises from a flame”. How are they arriving at their interpretation of his reasoning? It’s possible that they are considering this to be a mode of “dependor” and “depended-upon”, or what are called the roles of mutual reliance. When there is a dependor and a depended-upon, those things can be mutually reliant without being cause and effect. For example, on Monday, when we spoke about the three legs of the tripod, we can say that in that case, there is mutual reliance between each of the legs but there is not necessarily a causal relationship. If you take them as causes and effects then you could say that they are simultaneous. Similarly, if you take darkness (the dependor) as dependent upon light (the depended-upon), and vice-versa, then you could make this type of conclusion. Since cause and effect do not occur simultaneously then this is how they reason that there is an absurd consequence.

The second case of incorrect reasoning

Other Tibetans assert another possible explanation, and their reasoning is as follows. They begin by saying that logically, we can establish that “the existence of smoke entails the existence of fire”, and “if it is product it is pervaded by being impermanent”, and these assertions can be accepted unmistakably in all places at all times. They continue, saying that on the basis of an isolated case, for example, “in a kitchen there is fire because there is smoke”, we can see that the generality of “the existence of smoke entails the existence of fire” is established. Based on this, the disputants argue, we can establish the pervasion with this generality for all such similar instances in all places at all times.

In the last sentence of the second to last paragraph on p. 10 of our provisory translation of *Illumination*, there is a term (*dpung ’phul*) that generated much discussion in class, and originally this was translated as “defense in

opposition.” Jose Ignacio Cabezon in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.304) translates this term as “induction”. In reasoning, there are the two processes of deduction and induction. Induction is deriving general conclusions from specific premise and deduction is deriving a specific conclusion from a general premise. The classic example of deduction is “all men are mortal, Socrates is a man, therefore Socrates is mortal.”

In this case of incorrect reasoning, however, the disputants are using induction. From Chandrakirti’s statement “it follows that darkness arises from fire because it is other”, the disputants induce that whenever the reason “because it is other” similarly occurs, there would be the same absurd consequence. The disputants are therefore taking this specific case and applying it as a general premise, so that, in these Tibetans’ interpretation, any two things which are equally other are therefore equally cause and effect. But Lama Tsongkhapa says that logic cannot follow since we cannot say “it follows that a sprout arises from a seed” is an absurd consequence of the reason “because it is other”, since a sprout *does* arise from a seed. Specifically he says that, for example, we cannot understand “the existence of smoke entails the existence of fire” on the basis of an individual case of smoke from a fire in a kitchen. As Geshe-la pointed out, there is no fire in the mouth of a smoker, although there is smoke, so the induced generality cannot in turn be applied in every specific case. So the disputants are misinterpreting the consequence based on seeing other as mere other and then mistakenly inducing the meaning, i.e. forcing a generality onto specific cases that do not necessarily conform to it. Chandrakirti’s absurd consequence only follows from holding that production from *inherently existent* other exists.

Regarding the assertions of production by the four extremes

Any of the assertions of production by any of the four extremes is necessarily an assertion of inherent existence so we are not refuting conventional production from other by means of the four extremes. When we speak of conventional production, then there is an assertion of conditionality, where cause and effect are dependent, but that is not what is meant in this refutation of the extreme of production from other. When we talk about production from other, it is necessarily from an *inherently existent* other. In demonstrating these various absurd consequences we must affix the qualification of “inherently existent”.

Regarding former and later moments in a continuum

There follows a discussion about being former and later moments within the same continuum, which indicates that if these moments were established by way of their own character then there could be no such continuum. A continuum entails some series of things of a related similar type. If the various elements existed independent of each other then no such continuum could exist.

Meaning of “established by way of its own character”

If something is established by way of its own character, then it exists independently. If that were the case, then cause and effect would be independently different, and therefore causes would resemble non-causes. If effects existed independent of causes then non-causes would resemble causes in that they would be equally able to produce a particular effect. There would be no difference in the way they are related to that effect. This means that if one cause produces a particular effect, then all things that are results which are not that particular effect are able to be produced by that cause because they are unrelatedly other. For example, if a seed produces a sprout, then everything which is not that sprout is able to be produced by the seed because they are unrelatedly other. In other words, if an independently existent seed can produce a sprout, it can produce anything. Likewise, if a particular effect arose from a particular cause, then that effect could arise from any cause. If such independent existence did exist, then there would be no binding criteria for a particular cause and a particular effect to be related to each other since their otherness would preclude that.

May 24 (Wednesday)

Acceptance of the opposite of the consequences of production from other

Previously when we negated production from self, Prasangika gave two consequences: that repeated production is purposeless and that repeated production is endless. At that time, we said that the opposite of those consequences (i.e. that production is purposeful and has an end), would not be accepted by Prasangikas themselves. Now, the same question arises, does Prasangika accept the opposite of these consequences of production from other? The answer is that they would. The opposite of the consequences would be:

Object of knowledge (as the subject),

There is no production from other,

Because darkness does not arise from fire and everything does not arise from everything.

How to derive the opposite of a consequence

How do you arrive at the opposite of a consequence? The opposite of a consequence is derived in the following way. The reverse of a consequence (1) retains the subject as stated, (2) reverses the reason and the predicate, and (3) negates them both. So, if we take the original syllogism (Object of knowledge, it follows that darkness arises from a flame, because it is produced from other), the opposite of that consequence is: Object of knowledge, there is no production from other, because darkness does not arise from a flame. It is not necessary that one hold the thesis of the opposite of a consequence, as we saw when we looked at production from self. There we started with the original syllogism: A sprout, it follows that its repeated production is purposeless, because it is produced from self. The opposite of it would be: A sprout, it is not produced from self, because its repeated production is not purposeless. The reason there is not acceptable since repeated production never has a purpose. An example of a consequence that would have an acceptable opposite is: A sprout, it follows that it does not depend on a seed, because it exists from its own side. The opposite of that consequence is: A sprout, it does not exist from its own side, because it depends upon a seed.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1B Refuting the response that dispels the faults

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1B1 The response that dispels the faults

Now, since Prasangika has found faults with asserting production from other (i.e. an inherently existent cause producing an inherently existent effect), the response to those assertions follows. Inherent existence means unrelatedly other, and Chandrakirti has given the consequences that it follows that darkness arises from a flame and everything arises from everything. Those are the faults to propounding production from inherently existent other and now others who accept inherent existence will attempt to dispel those faults.

Two qualifications that dispel the consequences

In the eyes of the propounders of production from other, there are two definite qualifications that keep the consequences from occurring. First, even though cause and effect are inherently other, it is not the general otherness but the specific otherness that produces a particular effect. The correlation between cause and effect does exist between these inherently existent causes and inherently existent effects. That which is produced by a particular cause is what is called a result and what has the ability to produce a particular result is called a cause. The consequence of everything arising from everything simply does not follow since not just anything can produce a particular result. The second qualification they are putting forth is that the producer and the produced must be in the same continuum, therefore a barley seed does not produce a rice sprout. Here they must be speaking of the substantial cause as being in the same continuum as the result since not all causes are in the same continuum as the result. They also emphasize that, even in the same continuum, the latter never produces the former, only the former produces the latter.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-1B2 Refuting that response

Prasangika refutes that response to their consequences. It is important to look at all these various counter-arguments and refutations as an analytic meditation to see if you can ascertain what the object of negation would look like based upon what they are indicating. The propounders of production from other are saying that, because of the above two qualifications, there is a definite relationship or certainty to cause and effect. But from Prasangika's point of view, this statement is totally inconsistent with their holding to inherent existence. Prasangika answers then that asserting the certainty of cause and effect does not dispel everything being produced from everything. In fact, once something is an inherently existent other, then it has no relationship to others since it exists from its own side, unrelatedly to any other. This is similar regarding our conception of an inherently existent 'I', namely that when we think of the 'I', it's as if we draw a big black line around it, isolating and separating it from everything else. This is one way to look at how we are conceiving of inherent existence.

The four features of unrelatedness

From the Prasangika point of view, it follows that a rice seed is equal to a barley seed in terms of it being unrelatedly other to a rice sprout. There is no difference in terms of their unrelatedness since the rice seed and the barley seed both equally possess the four features. Chandrakirti sets these out in his root text as: (1) they are not asserted to be producers of the rice sprout, (2) they do not possess the ability or potential to produce the rice sprout, (3) they are not included in the same continuum as the rice sprout, and (4) they are not of a similar type as the rice sprout. Even though we use different names for a rice seed and a barley seed, they are exactly the same in terms of not being producers of the rice sprout. Our natural tendency is to think quite differently but once we hold them as inherently existent, these two different seeds must actually be the same in terms of these four features. The lower schools are holding to the special relationship but when they hold to inherent existence then they can only be asserting their equal otherness, and not their special relationship.

If something were inherently existent then it would always exist from beginningless time as it is and would never change. In fact a consciousness couldn't even perceive an inherently existent object because it would exist unrelatedly. An object always exists in relation to a subject, a consciousness, so there is always a relational situation. An inherently existent object cannot exist relationally to anything, so it cannot be an object to a subject. Buddhism is mind-oriented in that all existents must be established by a mind. If it exists, it must be established by a consciousness.

May 25 (Thursday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-2 Refuting production from other in particular

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-2A Refuting production from other in regard to former and later cause and result

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-2A1 Actual meaning [of refuting production from other in regard to former and later cause and result]

The example of two persons existing simultaneously

In this section, Prasangika begins by citing the example of Maitreya and Upagupta, two persons who exist simultaneously and can be seen as other relative to each other. In terms of Maitreya, Upagupta is other, and in terms of Upagupta, Maitreya is other. A relative otherness in this example depends upon another person, something other than itself. But here, when we talk about production from other, we are referring to an otherness that is not a relative otherness but rather an absolute one. The example of the two people is only a case of *mere* other; it is the way things actually exist conventionally. That which is being refuted by Prasangika is an unrelated other.

Applying the meaning to the example of the seed and sprout

To bring this into the example of the seed and the sprout, we can say in general that the cause does not exist at the time of the effect. This was a key component of refuting production from self. Here, according to the lower schools, the seed and the sprout exist by way of their own character, and that is the way that they are other. Inherent otherness does not exist in relationship with other. If the seed and the sprout exist as unrelatedly other then they must exist simultaneously, because an inherently existent phenomenon has always existed, will always exist and has an unchanging nature that is not affected by anything outside of it and that doesn't affect anything outside of it. These are all the hypothetical ways that an inherently existent other would exist if it existed. They may seem irrational but that is how everything in the world appears to us.

If a sprout is inherently existent then it will always exist as it is at that time, and the same would follow for the seed; therefore it would follow that they must exist simultaneously. An inherently existent seed and an inherently existent sprout are inherently existent other. If the seed is other with respect to that sprout at the time of the seed, then the sprout must exist at the time of the seed. Otherwise, how could it be different or other from the sprout? If we hold that the sprout does not exist at the time of the seed, then the seed and the sprout must be one, since if it is not different from the sprout, it cannot exist at all. Therefore there is no production from a seed that is an inherently existent other because the sprout does not exist at the time of the seed.

Prasangika is not refuting cause and result as mere other

On the bottom of p.13, Lama Tsongkhapa states that cause and result being different entities is not being refuted here. So the above argument is not to be taken as a refutation of production from mere other. All along in this series of refutations, Prasangika has been qualifying production from other as production from an inherently existent other. Svatantrika would similarly refute production from other ultimately and accept production from other conventionally. However, their "conventionally" includes an inherently existent cause producing an inherently existent result and Prasangika would not accept such a view of conventional existence.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-2A2 Dispelling disputes regarding the refutation

We've been asserting that the seed and the sprout do not exist simultaneously, whereas they would if they were inherently existent. Svatantrika objects saying that the seed and the sprout exist simultaneously in a particular manner.

Svatantrika's use of the analogy of the scale

To object to Prasangika, Svatantrika uses the analogy of a balance scale, taken from the *Exalted Rice Seedling Sutra*. In that sutra, it is said that the rising of one pan on the balance occurs simultaneously with the falling of the other, and, in the same way, the ceasing of the producer, the seed, and the producing of the produced, the sprout, occur simultaneously. This is the manner in which they are saying that the seed and the sprout exist simultaneously.

Prasangika responds to that analogy

Chandrakirti responds by saying that this analogy doesn't hold true as Svatantrika is asserting it. Prasangika agrees that in the example there is simultaneous movement of the pans but this is not analogous with the sprout and the seed. At the time of the seed, the sprout is *approaching* production but does not yet exist. At the time of the seed ceasing or withering away, the seed still exists. While the seed exists, the sprout does not yet exist. Once the sprout exists, the seed has ceased and no longer exists. In terms of the balance pans, both of them exist simultaneously but a seed and a sprout have no such simultaneous existence.

Svatantrika raises another doubt

Svatantrika raises a doubt towards this response, saying that, okay, we can accept that the seed and the sprout don't exist simultaneously but the *actions* of the seed and the sprout *do* exist simultaneously. At the time of the seed, the action of cessation (i.e. the process of deterioration) is occurring while the action of growth (or production) of the sprout is occurring at the same time. The action of the cessation of the seed and the action of production of the sprout are being held to exist simultaneously from Svatantrika's point of view.

Prasangika responds to that doubt

Prasangika says that, since the Svatantrika disputants do not assert actions to be different from their agents, then, without the agent of the action, the sprout, existing, how could the action, the production of the sprout, exist? In the context of refuting inherent existence, these two actions cannot occur simultaneously because seed and sprout do not occur simultaneously. At the time of the action of the ceasing of the seed, the seed *does* exist because it is a present phenomenon at that time. Prasangika says that the action of approaching of production of the sprout does occur at the same time as the seed, but the production of the sprout *does not* exist since the sprout doesn't exist because it is a future phenomenon at that time. So, according to the Svatantrika position, the production of the sprout could not exist at the time of the seed, because the agent or "doer" of that action, the sprout, would not exist at that time.

Regarding the term "agent", the sprout is the one that grows, the doer of the action of growing or producing, so in that way it can be seen as the "agent" of the process of growth. The agent of the action and the action itself are, respectively, the support and the supported. The action of giving a pen (the supported) is dependent on the giver (the support). If these were inherently existent, they would always be support and supported. If the action of production of the sprout is the supported and the sprout is the support, then, if the supported existed at the time of the seed, the support (i.e. the sprout), should also exist at the time of the seed, but it does not.

Svatantrika raises another objection

Then Svatantrika objects by citing once again the example of the scale in the *Exalted Rice Seedling Sutra*. They say that, in the very instant of the seed being ceased, is there not the production of the sprout? So the rising and falling of the pans are analogous to the producing and ceasing of the sprout and seed.

Prasangika responds to the objection

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Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 29 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-2B Refuting production in regard to simultaneous cause and result

In the last section we were refuting production from other in regard to former and later cause and result, saying that since cause and result don't exist simultaneously, then they are not inherently existent. Now we look to the objection concerning an assertion of cause and result being simultaneous. This objection is raised specifically by the Vaibhashika school, saying that an eye sense power and its various accompanying mental factors and so forth are the cause of the eye consciousness, and they exist simultaneous with that eye consciousness so therefore they are inherently existent other. The logical refutation from Prasangika is that if the eye consciousness exists at the time of its causes, then its production again is purposeless. And if they respond that it does not exist at the time of its causes, then that has already been refuted when we refuted production from other in regard to former and later cause and result.

The Vaibhashika school asserts that the eye sense power is also a knower (so it would know simultaneously with the eye consciousness) but Prasangika doesn't agree with this. *Cutting Through Appearances* (p.199) explains this position, saying that Vaibhashikas "assert that even a physical eye sense power which is the base [of an eye consciousness] perceives form, for they say that if a consciousness alone were the seer, then one would see forms that are obstructed by walls and so forth." The eye sense power (or faculty) is considered to be internal matter while eye consciousness is not, so the idea is that, because the support of the eye consciousness is form, the seer also incorporates form and so is limited by that form.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1A-3 Through analyzing the four possibilities regarding results, production from other is refuted

Four possibilities of hypothetical results

If we analyze production from other, there are four possibilities regarding results. In other words, there are four hypothetical types of results that would be other than its cause. A cause must produce either (1) an inherently existent effect, (2) a non-existent effect, (3) an effect that is both existent and non-existent, or (4) an effect that is neither existent nor non-existent. It is interesting to note that only the first of these four possibilities is qualified as "inherently". It would seem unnecessary to qualify non-existent with "inherently" but there can be some question as to why the third and fourth specify existent without qualifying it as "inherently". If these four possibilities are part of the argument of production from an inherently existent other, it would seem that the defender would accept that inherent existence is equal to mere existence. However, in the fourth possibility, perhaps if it was stated as neither "inherently" existent nor non-existent, then this leaves out merely existent. Merely existent for Prasangika would refer to all phenomena, which are neither inherently existent nor non-existent. So perhaps these are stated such to exhaust all possibilities of any type of result that might occur.

The first of these is an inherently existent effect, and, as we saw in the previous refutations, if a cause and its effect were inherently existent, they would necessarily always exist. Svatantrika wouldn't accept that but Prasangika would necessarily assert it as a consequence. Why? First, because if a sprout is inherently existent, it has always existed, so there is no need for it to be produced again. Secondly, because the sprout exists from its own side, what need does it have of a producer? Therefore, there is no inherently existent result.

As far as the second possibility, if there is a non-existent result, there is no function or need for a producer to produce a non-existent result since such a result is like the horns of a donkey, as the commentary indicates. Regarding these first two possibilities, Chandrakirti quotes from Aryadeva's *Four Hundred*, saying that there is no need to decorate the pillars of a house if they are inherently existent or non-existent. The idea here is that if they are inherently existent, then the pillars exist from their own side, and there would be no way to decorate them, while if they are non-existent, there is nothing to decorate.

6Since there cannot be a result that is the first or the second, then the third result cannot exist. There cannot be a result that is both since anything that could possibly be both would be refuted as above. However, there is nothing that is both of these, just as there is nothing being both impermanent and permanent, and so forth. Such a type of result is ruled out by logic.

Finally, there cannot be a result that is the fourth possibility, free from both existent and non-existent (i.e. neither). The logic here is that there is nothing that a producer could do with respect to that which is neither existent nor non-existent.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B Dispelling harm from the world regarding the refutation

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1 Dispelling harm from the world through asserting production from other due to it being renowned in the world

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1A Disputes that are harmed by the world

We are now heading towards an extensive discussion of the two truths, and this comes about in an interesting way. Lama Tsongkhapa says that the lower schools might now say that all the arguments propounded to assert production from other, just like dry firewood sprinkled with butter, have been burned away by Prasangika's fire of reasoning. But now there is an argument from them in which they say that there is no necessity for reasonings to support production from other since it is a manifest phenomenon that can be realized directly by worldly beings. And, if Prasangika denies that it exists, then they have gone against the perceptions of the world. In a way, the lower schools are taking recourse to what seems to be common sense.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B Indicating the response which is not harmed by the world

Prasangika responds, saying that if you say that the reasoning refuting production from other is harmed by the perceptions of the world, then obviously you lack an understanding of the natures of the phenomena that are perceived by the perceptions of the world. Prasangika says that the lower schools don't realize which phenomena are damaged by the perceptions of the world and which phenomena are not damaged by them. In order to understand those distinctions, you must understand the two truths, and so Chandrakirti directs his text into a discussion of them. This presentation of the two truths is essential since we must be able to distinguish between what we can rely upon in reality and what we cannot.

Regarding the phrase "frivolous talk which is the harmer of the world" towards the bottom of p.17, it may not be worded to give across the correct meaning. "Frivolous talk" refers to the ordinary conventions or opinions of the world. The meaning of "harmer of the world" is perhaps closer to "worldly harm". The lower schools are saying you can rely upon the worldly consciousness and thus deny the refutation of production from other. So in that way, "harmers" are those which are able to cause such damage, so it is more that the refutation of production from other is harmed by the world. Certain objects are harmed by the perspective of the world while others are not, and that is the way that we distinguish the two truths.

May 30 (Tuesday)

As we began to discuss yesterday, the lower schools are now resorting to common sense, saying that production from other is a manifest phenomenon and so all the reasonings from Prasangika are pointless in the face of worldly convention. Direct perception is the method for validating manifest phenomena; to validate hidden phenomena it is necessary to rely upon inference and reasoning. This argument from the lower schools implies to Prasangika that these opponents do not understand the meaning of the two truths. We can in fact rely upon worldly consciousness to validate some types of phenomena but not all of them, so we must differentiate between these two types of phenomena.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1 General presentation of the two truths

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1A Stating that phenomena have two entities each by means of the division into the two truths

7The two natures

Chandrakirti says that all things have two entities or natures (in our studies, the terms entity, nature, and essence are all synonymous generally). These two natures are an ultimate nature and a conventional nature and they can be posited with respect to all phenomena, both permanent and impermanent. The ultimate nature is non-deceptive, it is said to be “true.” It is found by perfect perception. This is a valid cognition analyzing for the final nature of phenomena, the way that things exist, or their mode of subsistence, i.e. their emptiness. All other types of analysis are conventional analyses, that is they are analyzing with regard to other natures besides the final nature. The conventional nature is not true; it is false, deceptive, and is found by false perception.

How the two natures are differentiated

When it says that phenomena have two natures, it doesn’t mean that one phenomenon is being seen as two different natures by two different types of people. For example a pen is not seen as emptiness by a superior and as a pen by ordinary beings. Rather, every phenomenon has two aspects: its final nature (emptiness), and its conventional nature. The first is found mainly by meditative equipoise analyzing for the ultimate and the other is found by conventional analysis analyzing the conventional. Those two aspects are found by two different analytical consciousnesses. A table itself and all of its parts are the conventional nature of the table while the lack of inherent existence of the table is its ultimate nature. This way of looking at phenomena is applied to every phenomena, even emptiness itself.

The criteria for “truth”

When we said earlier that the ultimate nature, i.e. emptiness, is true, what is the criteria we are using for “truth”? The criteria to determine a truth is whether or not a phenomenon exists the way it appears. If we analyze for a phenomenon’s final mode of abidance and it exists the way it appears then it is non-deceptive, a truth. If it does not, then it is deceptive, a falsity. So if we take impermanence, for example, does it exist the way that it appears? No, since it appears to be inherently existent.

Someone might propose alternate definitions for these, saying that a phenomenon which is true for a superior’s meditative equipoise is a truth and a phenomenon which is not true for an arya’s meditative equipoise is a falsity. Although these definitions might also work in distinguishing truth and falsities, in this context, truth is indicated by whether an object exists the way it appears, i.e. its mode of abidance. A table appears to exist inherently but it does not exist this way. In general this is the criteria for truth in this context.

Emptiness existing the way it appears

In a superior’s meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness, there is no appearance of inherent existence, so emptiness exists the way it appears, as non-inherently existent. Emptiness is the only phenomenon that exists the way that it appears in the perspective of sentient beings – with all other phenomena there is disagreement between the way they exist and the way they appear. This aspect of truth appears to a valid cognizer analyzing the final mode, while the aspect of falsity appears to a valid cognizers analyzing conventionalities – all phenomena other than emptiness. An analytic exalted wisdom can analyze either the modes or varieties but here it is a special exalted wisdom that is analyzing for the final mode and not the varieties. “Modes” refers to the ultimate nature of all phenomena, and “varieties” are the conventional natures in which manifold phenomena appear. Emptiness is not diverse while conventionalities are. The entity found by that valid cognition searching for the final mode of abidance is the ultimate entity, but even that ultimate entity does not ultimately exist.

The two misinterpretations of the ultimate nature

Geshe-la mentioned the two Tibetan scholars who propounded two different wrong views concerning the ultimate nature and these are also spoken of in Guy Newland’s *The Two Truths* (see pp.26-28, 43-44, and 89-90). These misinterpretations were due to a failure to distinguish between whether a phenomenon ultimately exists and whether a phenomenon is an ultimate truth. One of these scholars, Ngok Loden Sherab, came to believe that emptiness was not an object of knowledge while the other, Charpa Chogyi Sengge, held that emptiness ultimately exists. Let’s examine how they might have come to hold such views.

It seems that both of these scholars made the mistake of confusing what is established by an ultimate consciousness and what is established for an ultimate consciousness. When a meditative equipoise on emptiness analyzes the ultimate mode of abidance of an object, it only finds emptiness, the lack of any inherent existence of that object. This particular emptiness is established for that ultimate consciousness, but it is not established by that ultimate consciousness since no object of knowledge can withstand analysis from a consciousness searching for its final mode of being (because all phenomena are empty). When the imputed object is searched for it never found. If it were it would necessarily be truly existent.

Previously when we talked about an ultimate consciousness, we said it was a reasoning consciousness of hearing, thinking or meditating that was searching for the ultimate mode of existence. If we search for the ultimate mode of a table, we can analyze if the table is its own final mode of reality, or if there is some other way of existing. We find that the table is empty of the type of existence that we believe it to be; we find it to be not inherently existent. We never find the nature – nothing is its own final nature so nothing can bear ultimate analysis. This means that if you do find it, then it is established by it. Loden Sherab and Chogyi Sengge mistakenly believe that since emptiness is found, it must be established by it, instead of established for it. Emptiness is established for a mind searching for the ultimate but not by it.

From this mistake, Loden Sherab asserts that the ultimate truth of emptiness could not be an object of knowledge. He holds that the unfindability of an object upon ultimate analysis is merely called emptiness. Emptiness as such is not an object of knowledge but just a way of describing unfindability upon ultimate analysis. On the other hand, Chogyi Sengge thinks that emptiness is established by that consciousness and therefore is able to bear ultimate analysis and is therefore truly existent. Therefore Loden Sherab is deprecating emptiness while Chogyi Sengge is reifying it.

Emptiness is the final mode of abidance – the ontological status of all phenomena. It itself does not ultimately exist – if it did it would have to bear reasoned analysis, and it cannot. Geshe-la used the word “found”, meaning that it is known or realized by the mind analyzing for the ultimate, but even emptiness itself does not ultimately exist because it also is not found by the ultimate analysis of it. This will become more apparent as we proceed.

Definitions of the two truths in the four Buddhist schools

Each of the four schools defines the two truths differently (see the handout called “Two Truths”, dated May, 2000). It is interesting to note that there are two parts to the Prasangika definitions for both conventional and ultimate truths (the two parts are separated by the conjunction “and”). Prasangika adds the second part to each of these for their use in debate. The significance of the second part is allow for a buddha's mode or realizing all phenomena. “All-knowing” is etymologized as simultaneously knowing the modes and varieties so a buddha's realizer of conventionalities also realizes the ultimate (and vice-versa). Without that second part of the definition, there would be a case where the two truths could not be distinguished because they would both be found by a single valid cognizer – a buddha's omniscient mind.

To discuss this further, there are two types of omniscient consciousness, one realizing varieties (conventional truths) and one realizing modes (ultimate truths). But any moment of a buddha's consciousness is omniscient, so that mind realizing varieties is also realizing emptiness, but it does not become a valid cognizer realizing varieties with respect to emptiness, only with respect to varieties. So all this means is that, with the second part of the definition, even a buddha's consciousness can then be cited as a valid cognizer with regard to conventional truths to the exclusion of ultimate truths, (or ultimate truths to the exclusion of conventional truths).

The “finders” of the two truths

In the bottom paragraph on p.18 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the objects seen by the childish are conventional while objects seen by superiors are ultimate. However, Lama Tsongkhapa says that this is not say that ultimate truths are not found by “common beings”, which here means specifically those who

possess the view of the Middle Way. Superiors here can be taken to mean those who have found the view of the Middle Way. In this context there are two distinct categories of non-superior beings: “common beings” as described above, and “ordinary beings”, which are those with no view of the Middle Way in their continua. The main finders or realizers of conventionalities are ordinary beings. Conventional objects such as books and so forth are found by ordinary beings.

But when we say that ordinary beings find conventional truths that does not mean they realize them *as* conventional truths. In order to realize a book as a conventional truth, one must have found the view of the Middle Way previously. Although they find them, they do not realize them as conventional truths, i.e. as falsities, since in order to realize them as falsities you must have refuted inherent existence in regard to them. You need to realize their conventional existence as a concealer of the truth, meaning that a book is only true from the perspective of ignorance. Realizing the ultimate truth is the method from which arises the realization of conventional truth. It is necessary to rely on conventional truths as a substrata but then having realized ultimate truth, one can then realize the *subtle* conventional truths, i.e. their dependent arising, phenomena as merely existing by way of imputation. Without realizing emptiness, it is possible to misunderstand the nature of dependent arising and assume it too is inherently existent. So what is meant here is to realize falsities *as* falsities, so it is necessary to refute the appearance of truth and realize its falsity before one can know the subtle conventional truths.

May 31 (Wednesday)

Presentation on the Chart “Mere Action of Production of Sprout and Mere Action of Cessation of Seed” by MP Student Emily Hsu

This chart was assembled to help clarify the process of the nominal or mere actions of production of a sprout and cessation of a seed. Geshe-la was consulted in regard to what the various terms mean. The main points for understanding this chart are:

- ← There is a continuum from the seed to the sprout – it is labeled as a seed for the first portion of that and sprout as the other portion. The first moment of the production of the sprout is simultaneous with the first moment of the cessation of the seed.
- ← Just prior to the production of the sprout, Geshe-la said that those last few moments are the approaching of production of the sprout. He also said the production of the sprout is of a few moments’ duration as well. The approaching exists only at the time of the seed while the production exists only at the time of the sprout – the sum of these two are the action of production of the sprout.
- ← The “scale” that measures “one moment” applies to the larger circle. In that circle we are talking about those moments when a seed turns into a sprout and not the entire process of the seed changing until it becomes a sprout.
- ← The action of production of the sprout starts concurrent with the approaching of production of the sprout and ends at the same time as well.
- ← The approaching of cessation of the seed is of the same duration as the approaching of production of the sprout, so in a sense these are just two ways of looking at the same process – one in relation to the cause, the seed, and the other in relation to the result, the sprout.
- ← The action of cessation of the seed happens simultaneous with the action of production of sprout. They both end when the sprout is completely produced.
- ← The sprout being produced is concurrent with the entire life of the sprout; it covers the entire length of time beginning once the sprout attains its entity and lasting until the sprout no longer exists. According to Prasangika, there is production, abiding and ceasing in every moment of the sprout so this is why the sprout is considered to be produced from when it first comes into existence until the moment it ceases.
- ← The cessation of the seed is the state of cessation of the seed, which is also equivalent to the disintegratedness of the seed. Disintegration is the process that occurs in every moment, along with production and abidance, but disintegratedness is a separate phenomenon that is the state of having disintegrated after having been produced. Disintegratedness is produced – it is the effect of disintegration – so, according to Prasangika, it is a functioning thing. We will learn more on this later in our studies.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1B Indicating other presentations of the two truths

In this section, Lama Tsongkhapa cites various texts that provide other presentations of the two truths. There are differing opinions as to what is the basis for the two truths. Someone might say that the basis is truth, and that truth is divided into the two. But there are falsities in the two truths so that cannot be the meaning. Instead the basis is objects of knowledge, in that the two truths can be posited on all objects of knowledge.

The two truths as a dichotomy

The two truths are said to be a dichotomy, meaning that for any particular instance, upon the elimination of it being one of the two, if the other is not affirmed for that instance, then that instance does not exist. This means that all objects of knowledge must be included within the two categories or else it is not a dichotomy. So this is not entirely the same as two contradictory phenomena, such as form and consciousness, because they are not a dichotomy, since there are existents that are neither of those two. Further, as a dichotomy, there is nothing that is both truths. So, if it is an existent, it must be either a conventional truth or an ultimate truth. Geshe-la proposed a subject for debate: if we take “pot and emptiness of the pot” as the subject, then first we ask, is it an existent? Admittedly pot and emptiness of pot is a strange subject, but as a single subject, it is an existent. So, since it is an existent, then which of the two truths is it? Geshe-la did not give the answer to this but it seems that it is a conventional truth since it is an existent and does not appear to a superior’s meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness. This is only my idea.

Passages on the two truths from Shantideva’s texts quoted

First Lama Tsongkhapa cites the *Meeting of the Father and Son Sutra*, which is quoted in Shantideva’s *Compendium of Trainings*. He points out that the Buddha became omniscient through thoroughly comprehending both truths simultaneously. Lama Tsongkhapa also makes reference while discussing this quote to the passage that comes up later (at the top of p.20), a quote that enumerates the two truths taken from Shantideva’s *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*. In it Shantideva says that “the ultimate is not an object of an awareness.” Reading this literally might cause someone to assume that emptiness is not an existent, and so, since Shantideva is one of the main authorities in Prasangika, this is an important controversy to dispel.

If emptiness is not an object of awareness, then it does not exist. If it does not exist, then there is only one truth. This conclusion that we come to is what we saw yesterday with the scholar Loden Sherab. However, what Shantideva meant by “awareness” is a concealer awareness, i.e. the ignorance that is the conception of true existence, since immediately after the quote above, his text continues, saying “awareness is said to be conventional”. The ultimate *is* an object of knowledge but it is not known by ignorance. For a phenomenon to exist it must have an entity – the definition of phenomenon is that which is able to maintain its own entity. Entity is kind of like a phenomenon’s identity in that it is what is minimally needed in order for an object to be identified. Even emptiness has its entity so it is a phenomenon, an object of knowledge, but, as such, it is not known by ignorance.

Conventional truth and ultimate truth as the same entity

Conventional truth and ultimate truth must be either the same entity or different entities. For example, if table and the emptiness of table were different entities or natures, then the emptiness of inherent existence would not be the final nature of the table, so the table would not be empty of inherent existence, and this is an absurd consequence. The two natures are posited in terms of a single basis. Two phenomena being the same entity means that they are different but they do not appear separately to a direct cognition. Another example is impermanence and product, which are the same entity in that, if you eliminate the impermanence of a basis, you have eliminated the product-ness of that basis as well. This is what is meant in the *Heart Sutra* when it says that emptiness is form and form is emptiness – both are posited on the same basis and they do not appear separately to a direct cognizer.

When we say that all these various aspects of a phenomenon “appear” to a direct cognition, this is in the sense of a logical necessity in that given a particular model on how perception takes place we have to say that when the eye consciousness apprehends the table, then the impermanence of the table, productness, shape of the table and so forth must also “appear” but this is not to say that they are in any way experienced by that

eye consciousness. Direct perceivers are collective engagers in that all these various aspects appear to them but saying that they “appear” only has meaning in terms of logical necessity and not actual experience. On the other hand, when we talk about the experience of direct realization of emptiness there is said to be a vanishing of dualistic appearance, meaning that there is an experience of some sort regarding the appearance.

Conventional truth and ultimate truth as different isolates

To refine what we are saying regarding the two truths, we can state that they are the same entity but different isolates. Conceptually, we can isolate out certain characteristics or aspects of an object and disregard others. An eye consciousness cannot do that but when we think about a table, we can think about the shape of the table separately from the color of the table and so forth. Conception is an eliminative engager in that it is able to isolate or focus on one factor to bring to mind, and disregard or exclude other aspects. For example we can think of Geshe-la on different occasions as being the Masters Program Geshe, as being a Tibetan lama, as being a Buddhist monk, and so forth, and we can think about him in any one of those ways without bringing to mind the others. But in fact all of them are one entity in that they are all aspects or characteristics of Geshe-la. So, although conventional truth and ultimate truth are one entity, we can think about them being separate, distinct isolates. In general an aspect is a feature or characteristic, while an isolate means that a particular aspect or feature has been abstracted or isolated by a conceptual consciousness.

Same entity and same substance

While discussing the idea of same entity, Geshe-la also mentioned the difference between saying two phenomena are the same entity and saying they are the same substance. For impermanent phenomena, you can say that two phenomena being the same substance is equal to saying they are the same entity. However, since permanent phenomena do not have any substance, you would not be able to equate the two there – it is only possible for permanent phenomena to be the same entity but not the same substance.

Passage on the two truths from Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment* quoted

On p.19, there is a quote from Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*, which sets out that there are the two truths. In it, Nagarjuna says that the two truths being the same entity “are like product and impermanence.” If on one basis, you establish product, you necessarily establish impermanence, and if you eliminate product, you necessarily eliminate impermanence. Similarly, if you eliminate ultimate truth with respect to a particular basis, you necessarily eliminate conventional truth as well. However, the two truths are contradictory, so one phenomenon is not both a conventional truth and an ultimate truth. When speak of conventional truth, we mean a truth for a concealer, the concealer being ignorance, but when we speak of ultimate truth, we mean a truth for a superior’s meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness, so there can not be something that is true for both of these consciousnesses.

June 1 (Thursday)

Looking at true existence as a “hallucination”

Sometimes it almost seems that true existence becomes a thing; it almost takes on a life of its own, so it’s useful to think about what it means to be empty of true existence and the fact that the two truths are one entity. We can think of true existence as the product of a hallucination, the imagined way of existing caused by an ignorance that has a crazy way of looking at things. A truly existent table, for example, is a hallucination, in that it is empty of the way that we think it exists, and that lack of existing that way is its emptiness. And where else would that emptiness be except with the table? We are imagining objects to exist in a particular manner and it doesn’t exist separately from the objects upon which we are hallucinating, so we cannot actually separate them out although conceptually we can. That which is empty of that way of existence are conventionalities themselves – and those conventionalities themselves are exactly that which is empty of true existence.

This morning in Geshe-la’s teachings, we were looking at the relationship between our ignorance and the arising of the afflictions of attachment, hatred and so forth. This is the key to seeing what difference emptiness can make in terms of our suffering. Our hallucination is a deep way of misunderstanding and it sets

off a chain reaction based upon that hallucination. The deliciousness of a piece of cake can be seen to be truly existent and then on top of that conception, we develop an attachment for the cake, and that is the way that we eventually create our own suffering. We, as worldly beings, are not able to recognize this process of hallucination that is going on and therefore, through our hatred and attachment, we are led into various types of behavior based upon that hallucinatory way of relating to objects. By undermining the ignorance that is the basis, we can undermine the entire process of our suffering.

The four faults of the two truths being one & the four faults of the two truths being different entities

We've been discussing the two truths, and the basis of them is objects of knowledge, not truths or appearances as might be suggested. The two truths can be posited in terms of every object of knowledge. Conventionalities are empty of true existence and the basis of emptiness are conventionalities. Geshe-la mentioned that there are two sets of four faults, one set of four faults would follow if the two truths were one (meaning the same, i.e. one isolate), and the other set would follow if the two truths were different entities. We studied these faults in our *Ornament* studies so we won't explore them extensively here. One fault if the two truths were one is that the emptiness of a pot would be a direct object of apprehension of an ordinary being. One of the faults if they were different entities is that then emptiness would not be the reality, or final mode of abidance, of a pot. In that fault the pot would be its own final mode of existence because the emptiness of pot is a different entity from it. For more on these two sets of faults, see *The Two Truths*, pp.63-70 and *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.413.

Regarding the use of the term “entity”

We said earlier that the “two entities” of conventional truth and ultimate truth can be posited on every object, such as a pen, but yet we also said that the pen and the emptiness of the pen are the “same entity but different isolates”. The term entity, although exactly the same in the Tibetan, has different meanings in the context of each of these assertions. Any phenomenon holds its own entity so both conventional truth, the pen, and ultimate truth, the emptiness of the pen, can hold their own entity – in that way they are “two entities”. Yet there is a relationship of the conventional truth and the ultimate truth of any particular base, such as a pen, necessarily being considered the “same entity”, since if the conventional truth of the pen does not exist, the ultimate truth of the pen does not either. So although everything has its own entity, the entities can be common.

Examining the etymologies of the terms for each of the two truths

Ultimate truth is mainly realized by the meditative equipoise of a superior. Conventional truth is mainly realized by the valid cognizer of an ordinary being. In the quote that we looked at yesterday from *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*, Shantideva was saying the ultimate truth is not an object of a dualistic consciousness; it is not an object of a concealer awareness, i.e. a conception of true existence. By looking at the etymology of each of the two terms we can understand this distinction more clearly. Jedzunba gives the etymology in *General Meaning* so, for this discussion we will use p.3 of the handout called “Definitions, Divisions and Etymologies of Each of the Two Truths”, dated May, 2000.

Examining the etymology of ultimate truth

Jedzunba says that the term for ultimate truth is *don dam bden pa* and the Tibetan literally means an object (*don*) that is supreme (*dam*) and a truth (*bden pa*). It is an object because, as we said above, it is found by a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise. It is supreme because it is the supreme mode of being for all phenomena. Here we can make a distinction in the etymology in that Svatantrika says “supreme” (*dam*) refers to the subject, a mind directly realizing emptiness, while Prasangika says that it refers to the object. It is truth because it is non-deceptive in that its mode of appearance and mode of abidance are concordant. In summary, *don dam bden pa* is a “supreme object truth” in the sense of that etymology.

Examining the etymology of conventional truth

With regard to conventional truth, Jedzunba says that the etymology of *kun rdzob bden pa* can be given in two ways, one from the perspective of the object and the other from the perspective of the subject. The term *kun rdzob bden pa* can be translated either as conventional truth or as a truth for a concealer, and this can be a

bit problematic in our studies. The term *kun rdzob* itself can be taken as a (1) concealer, meaning an obstruder, (2) convention, or (3) mutual dependence. In that case one Tibetan word is functioning in three different ways.

From the perspective of the object, a pot can be called a “truth for a concealer” since it is a truth in the perspective of a concealer. The concealer is confusion, more specifically the ignorance that is the conception of true existence. In the perspective of that ignorance, a pot exists the way it appears, so in that context, it is a truth, but it is a truth only for a concealer. From this etymology, it might seem that the measure of a conventional truth then is whatever is true for that concealer and, since true existence does appear as true to that ignorance, it would follow that true existence is a conventional truth. However, that is a case of fitting the etymology but not the definition. If it exists in general it is established by a valid cognition but if it exists for a particular awareness, it is not necessarily an existent. We can understand a table as a truth in that it is a truth for a concealer but not all truths for a concealer are conventional truths, for example, a truly existent table. Here we are talking about an etymology for conventional truth and not a definition – simply “being a truth for a concealer” is not a definition since only existents can be conventional truths.

From the perspective of the subject the etymology is that the conception of true existence is called a “concealer-truth” because it is a concealing awareness, it is an obstruder to directly seeing the meaning of the mode of abiding. With regard to the literal etymology of the words in the term, *kun rdzob bden pa*, all (*kun*) means a variety, conceal (*rdzob*) means falsity and truth (*bden pa*) specifically refers to truth in perspective of the conception of true existence.

Descriptions of the characteristics of the two truths

On p.20 of *Illumination*, there is a second quote from the *Meeting of the Father and Son Sutra*, this one providing a description of characteristics of each of the two truths. The conventional are said to be “objects of the world” while whatever is ultimate is said to be “inexpressible”, meaning that it cannot be expressed in language exactly how it is. As for the rest of the description of the ultimate (“it is not that which is to be known, it is not that which is to be completely known,...”), Geshe-la said that those phrases refer to the different types of beings who have different types of obstructions to understanding it.

The divisions of objects of knowledge into two truths (1) in the scriptures

There are scriptural sources that state that there are only two truths and that they are an all-inclusive dichotomy. An ultimate truth is that object of knowledge found by a superior’s exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise and a conventional truth is that found by a concealer awareness. If it is an object of knowledge, i.e. an existent, it is found by one of these two consciousnesses and so there is no third truth.

The divisions of objects of knowledge into two truths (2) by reasoning

In this second section of this topic, the reasonings why the two truths are established as such are presented. Phenomena are either falsities, in that their mode of abidance and mode of appearance do not agree, or they are truths, in that their mode of abidance and their mode of appearance are in agreement. The main finder of emptiness is a superior’s exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise so in the face of that wisdom, emptiness does exist the way it appears.

It might be helpful to look more closely at the definitions of the two truths here (see p.1 of the handout translating *General Meaning* mentioned above). The definition of that being a conventional truth is: an object found by a valid cognizer of conventionalities with regard to which that [valid cognizer of conventionalities] becomes a valid cognizer of conventionalities. As we mentioned earlier, the second part of the definition (beginning from “with regard to” onward) makes the definition work for an omniscient mind of a buddha. When we speak of the definition of conventional truth, then a table is clearly seen as an object found by a valid cognizer of conventionalities. A conventionality is any object other than emptiness.

The definition of that which is an ultimate truth is: an object found by a consciousness of [an ultimate] type analyzing the final [nature of phenomena] and with regard to which that consciousness of [an ultimate] type

analyzing the final [nature of phenomena] becomes a consciousness of [an ultimate] type analyzing the final [nature of phenomena]. In this definition, *rigs shes* has been translated as “ultimate type”, and this was the term we translated as “reasoning consciousness” earlier in our *Middle Way* studies. Geshe-la did not find the previous English translation to be adequate since “reasoning consciousness” usually connotes a conceptual consciousness and there are both direct and inferential consciousnesses implied in the term *rigs shes*. So unless we find another alternative, “consciousness [of an ultimate] type” will be used in the interim for the English translation of this term.

Regarding the terms contradictory, directly contradictory and abiding in mutual abandonment

So all phenomena are either deceptive or non-deceptive in that they either have non-concordant modes of appearance and abidance or concordant modes of appearance and abidance, respectively. Falsity and truth are directly contradictory, and they also abide in mutual abandonment,. *Abiding in mutual abandonment* is equivalent to *contradictory* meaning that there is nothing which is a common locus between the two phenomena, such as form and consciousness, and additionally that if you negate one then you necessarily affirm the other. *Directly contradictory* means that one must realize that if an instance is not one it necessarily is the other i.e. they are a dichotomy. To illustrate this further, the two phenomena, permanent and functioning thing, are contradictory, do abide in mutual abandonment but are not directly contradictory. This is because if you realize an object is not permanent, you do not necessarily realize it as a functioning thing, and if you realize an object is not a functioning thing, you do not necessarily realize it as permanent. So the two truths are directly contradictory and in mutual abandonment in that they encompass all objects of knowledge and if you refute one, you necessarily affirm the other.

June 2 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1C Explaining the divisions of the conventional in relation to the world

According to Prasangika, if it is a conventional truth, it is necessarily unreal so there is no division into real and unreal conventionalities. Conventional truths are necessarily falsities in that they do not exist the way they appear – in that way they are unreal. However, because in terms of the world there are distinctions of what is real and what is unreal with regard to conventionalities, Prasangika does set out a division into those categories but those divisions are only in the perspective of the world. By “world” we mean valid consciousnesses in the continuum of those who have not realized emptiness. In this section then, we will be looking at “conventional truths in the perspective of the world”.

Divisions of conventional truth in relation to the world

Conventional truth in the perspective of the world is divided into:

1. Real (or correct) conventionalities – in general, those that are unpolluted by superficial causes of error.
2. Unreal (or wrong) conventionalities – in general, those that are polluted by superficial causes of error.

So the basis for distinguishing between these two is, in general, being made by whether they are unpolluted or polluted by superficial causes of error but there are exceptions as noted in *General Meaning*. The superficial causes of error are divided into impairments to the physical sense power and impairments to the mental sense power. And impairments to physical sense power can be divided into either inner or outer. The divisions of these conventionalities are all being posited in terms of being free of superficial causes of error and not the deeper causes of error such as the latencies of the conception of true existence.

Real conventionalities are further divided into:

1. *Correct subject*: A consciousness that a valid cognition of the world cannot realize as a wrong consciousness. There are two examples to show the shades of meaning behind this: (1) an eye consciousness apprehending a white snow mountain – because this is a correct or right consciousness there is no valid cognition that can realize them as wrong; and (2) the acquired and innate conceptions of true existence of a white snow mountain – although it’s a wrong consciousness, an ordinary being cannot realize it as wrong.

2. *Real object*: An object that the world cannot realize doesn't exist the way it appears. There are two examples here as well: (1) a white snow mountain – this doesn't exist the way it appears but a person who hasn't realized the emptiness of the white snow mountain cannot realize that.

Unreal conventionalities are further divided into:

1. *Wrong subject*: A consciousness that the world can realize as a wrong consciousness. An example is an eye consciousness apprehending a yellow snow mountain – to someone with jaundice this might be the appearance but to an ordinary worldly being, the snow mountain appears as white. Also, the innate conception of the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent.
2. *Unreal object*: An object that the world can realize it does not exist the way it appears. Examples are the reflection of a face, mirage of water, etc.

Reviewing definitions of real and unreal conventionalities

Jedzumba's definitions of the above terms are found on p.2 of the handout mentioned earlier. When you first read the definition for conventionality that is a correct (real) subject, it sounds as if it says that all the subjects must be wrong consciousnesses. However, as we saw above, there are many instances where it is a correct consciousness, and so that is why those cannot be realized by a valid cognition as being wrong. In regard to the definition for conventionality that is an wrong (unreal) subject, even ordinary beings would be able to identify these as wrong due to the superficial causes of error.

Regarding conventionality that is a real object, can an ordinary person realize that a pot doesn't exist the way it appears? Unless someone has "experienced a realization of emptiness". What qualifies as this? It would seem that even an inferential cognition of emptiness would allow one to refute true existence with respect to the pot, and that can occur prior to entering the path.

As we discussed earlier, one meaning of the term *kun rdzob* is convention or conventionality. It seems that in that context, it includes all phenomena other than emptiness. But is emptiness also a conventionality? Guy Newland in *The Two Truths* (p.82) says it is not. "Conventionalities" refer to terms and consciousnesses along with their objects. The term "pot", the consciousness realizing pot, and the pot itself, all three are conventionalities.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

Note: There were no review classes on *Middle Way* held on Monday, June 5, as well as from Thursday, June 8 through Friday, June 16.

June 6 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1C Explaining the divisions of the conventional in relation to the world (continued)

We've been examining the two truths in the context of the lower schools' assertion that, regardless of the various reasonings that Prasangika has put forth refuting production from other, worldly convention holds it to be true. In setting out the two truths, Prasangika is making a distinction as to what can and cannot be validly established by worldly consciousnesses. In this section, we are looking more specifically at conventional truths, which, although they are all "unreal" in that they are falsities can be divided into real and unreal conventionalities in the perspective of worldly consciousness. Whether the object is an actual horse or an illusory horse, neither is truly existent though they both appear to be so, so in that way there is no distinction between them in that they are both false. Yet, within the worldly perspective, there are some conventionalities, such as an actual horse, that are correct to a worldly consciousness, and some, such as an illusory horse, that aren't. This is the basis for dividing conventional truths into real and unreal conventionalities so in this section we are trying to distinguish what is real and unreal for ordinary people who have not experienced a realization of emptiness.

We began looking at these divisions last week and in order to facilitate our understanding, let's continue by using the accompanying handout, "Division of Conventional Truth According to Prasangika", dated May, 2000. Please note that we will be using the terms "*correct* subject" and "*wrong* subject" in our discussions of the real and unreal conventionalities in regard to subjects, as those terms are different from the ones used in the handout of Jedzumba's discussion of these divisions from *General Meaning*. "Real" and "unreal" consciousnesses (or subjects) seemed to be a strange way to word these so we are calling them "correct" and "wrong" instead.

Regarding superficial causes of error

The main division into real and unreal is *generally* characterized by the absence or presence of superficial causes of error respectively, and those causes of error are divided into impairments to the physical sense power and the mental sense power. Those objects that cause impairment to the physical sense power are divided into inner and outer. On the chart, inner causes are exemplified by cataracts, jaundice, and so forth, and outer are exemplified by reflections, echoes, mirages, and so forth. These are all superficial causes of error; the deep causes of error are the conception of true existence, and their seeds and latencies. Superficial means circumstantial and not innate, in that such an error is only a temporary impairment and there is a misperception induced by that cause. Impairment to the mental sense power is exemplified by wrong tenets, facsimiles of reasons, sleep, and so forth.

Examining the two examples for a correct subject

The first example for a correct subject is an eye consciousness apprehending a white conch shell – it cannot be realized as a wrong consciousness because it is correct. The second example is an innate conception apprehending a white conch shell as truly existent, and this is both a mistaken consciousness and a wrong consciousness. For the first example, the appearing object is a truly existent white conch shell while the object of engagement is a white conch shell. Although it is a mistaken consciousness due to the appearance of true existence, with regard to the white conch shell, its principal object, it is correct so it is not a wrong consciousness. For the second example, the appearing object is a meaning generality of a truly existent white conch shell while the object of engagement is a truly existent white conch shell. In this way, it is both mistaken and wrong, but a worldly consciousness cannot realize it as such.

Distinguishing between a mistaken consciousness and a wrong consciousnesses

The distinction between a mistaken and a wrong consciousness is that a mistaken consciousness is a consciousness that is incorrect with regard to its appearing object while a wrong consciousness is incorrect with regard to its object of engagement. All conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken but they are not necessarily wrong. In fact, Prasangika holds that, due to the appearance of true existence, *all* consciousnesses of sentient

beings, with the exception of a superior's meditative equipoise on emptiness, are mistaken since all objects appear to truly exist and they do not. The second example of a correct subject is a wrong consciousness because it is apprehending a non-existent object, a truly existent white conch shell. For this wrong consciousness, a non-existent is clearly appearing as the object of engagement and is being apprehended to exist. The object of engagement is equivalent to the referent object in conceptual cognition. A consciousness can be mistaken with regard to the mode of abiding of an object and yet not be wrong, so such mistaken consciousnesses can still be valid and reliable sources of information. So, this innate conception apprehending a white conch shell is an ignorance and as such is a wrong consciousness, but this does not mean that all conceptions are wrong consciousnesses.

The sense consciousnesses do not *apprehend* true existence but yet true existence still *appears* to it so in that way they are mistaken. To apprehend here means to take it as the object of engagement. An eye consciousness does not grasp at true existence; it only apprehends colors and shapes. Regarding the appearance of true existence, it is not coming from the side of the object but rather from the latencies of the conception of true existence, meaning that this appearance resides in the perceptual process itself. Nonetheless, although consciousnesses to which true existence appears are mistaken, they can be valid. Prasangika has a somewhat different way of defining the first syllable of *pramana*, the Sanskrit word for valid cognition. The *pra* is taken to mean “first” or “new” by the lower schools while it is taken as “main” in Prasangika. So, with regard to that main object, cognitions can indeed be valid.

In conclusion, the above (the innate conception of true existence apprehending a white conch shell) is an ignorance and is incorrect with regard to its object of engagement. It is considered to be a correct subject though because it is a consciousness that a worldly consciousness cannot realize to be a wrong consciousness.

Conventionalities must be existents

So one might think that, because this is a correct subject, why wouldn't that truly existent white conch shell be considered a real object? This is a case where a correct subject doesn't have a real object, because a truly existent white conch shell is *not* an object since it is a non-existent. According to Jedzumba, if it is a conventionality it must exist. A wrong consciousness is still an existent so it can be a correct subject but a truly existent white conch shell is a non-existent object so it cannot be a real object.

The meaning of “worldly consciousness”

At the bottom of the chart, there is a working definition of a worldly consciousness, saying that this term refers to valid cognizers existing in the continuum of a person who has not experienced a realization of emptiness. Earlier we discussed the level of realization that this entails and it seems that an inferential realization of emptiness would constitute such an experience.

Three criteria for existing in conventional terms

Simply being renowned in the world is not sufficient for something to exist in conventional terms. In Prasangika there are three criteria necessary: (1) being renowned in the world, meaning to conventional consciousnesses, (2) not being undermined by a conventional valid cognizer, and (3) not being invalidated by a valid cognizer analyzing the ultimate. Guy Newland explains these criteria further in *The Two Truths* (pp.83-86). In the context of this, Prasangika does assert that emptiness “exists in conventional terms” but yet it is not a conventionality. In Prasangika all phenomena other than emptiness are falsities, and those are what are called mere conventionalities.

Regarding exceptions to “pollution by superficial causes of error”

One of the criteria that is being generally used to determine unreal and real conventionalities is whether they are polluted or not by superficial causes of error. But there are exceptions to this and these are found on p.2 of the handout containing translations from Jedzumba's *General Meaning*. Roughly speaking we can say that consciousnesses not polluted by superficial causes of error are correct subjects. However, in the second example of a correct subject discussed above, we could have also indicated the *acquired* conception of true existence, and not just the innate. One may question why this is so, since there would appear to be a superficial cause of error, which is the learning of mistaken tenets. However, this example meets the definition because a worldly consciousness cannot realize that the acquired conception of true existence is a wrong consciousness. So even

though an acquired conception of true existence *is* acquired through studying false tenets, which is considered a superficial cause of error, since it is not realized as a wrong consciousness it is classified as a correct subject. So if it is polluted by superficial cause of error, that doesn't necessarily make something an unreal conventionality. In regard to an unreal conventionality that does not have a superficial cause of error, there is an example that we will simply mention for now. Jedzunba cites the innate conception of a substantially existent self-sufficient person as a wrong subject, even though it is not polluted by superficial error because it is innate.

Question regarding the reliance upon “worldly consciousness”

Please note that in the published transcripts of Geshe-la's teachings, there will be numerous corrections to this section of the *Illumination* translation. A qualm is raised at the bottom of p.22. In the context of what is real and unreal with regard to the world, the basic factor was the presence or absence of superficial causes of error. For example, the study of Samkhya tenets concerning the fundamental nature would be a cause for the development of a wrong subject. The question is raised as to how a worldly consciousness can realize that as being a wrong consciousness? Couldn't this “worldly consciousness” also have studied such tenets?

The reply is that impairment to a mental consciousness is not taken as innate mistaken conceptions, only acquired. It is true that most people would not be able to harm the Samkhya assertion that the fundamental nature exists, but a person who had studied correct tenets would be able to see that as incorrect. So “worldly consciousness” doesn't mean someone who hasn't studied tenets at all but rather only someone who hasn't had an experience of realizing emptiness. Most of our consciousnesses have nothing to do with tenets so this qualification is not to refute most worldly conceptions.

June 7 (Wednesday)

Additions to the chart, “Division of Conventional Truth According to Prasangika”: Under “correct subject”, in the second example of an innate conception apprehending a white conch shell as truly existent, add “acquired”, as we discussed in yesterday's review class. Also, under “wrong subject”, please add a third example, “the acquired and innate conception of the person being a self-sufficient substantially existent self”.

Regarding the addition of the acquired conception of true existence to the examples of correct subjects, how can that not be a superficial cause of error? A real conventionality is generally unpolluted by a superficial cause of error so it would seem that the acquired conception of true existence would be a superficial cause of error. However, the conception of true existence, whether innate or acquired, would qualify as a correct subject due to it meeting that definition. The acquired conception of true existence has been developed through wrong tenets but a worldly consciousness cannot realize it to be wrong; it cannot be discredited.

Other examples to clarify divisions of conventional truth into real and unreal

In order to clarify these divisions, let's look at several examples to determine where they would be classified.

- (1) *An eye consciousness apprehending the mere reflection of a face in the mirror:* Is the consciousness that apprehends it as a reflection a correct or a wrong subject? It is a correct subject since it is a factually concordant consciousness. Can an eye consciousness know a reflection as a reflection? It seems that it can be “trained” to know or realize such objects, as is discussed in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (p.18). There, Lati Rinpoche says that “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.” So an eye consciousness does not necessarily apprehend the appearance of a reflection of a face in the mirror *as a face*. It is important to remember that these superficial causes of errors are only potential causes of error.
- (2) *A mere reflection of a face in the mirror:* If we consider the example of a reflection itself, it would seem that it is a real object.
- (3) *Innate conception of self-sufficient self:* This is a wrong subject. Why this is being considered wrong is that the criteria that determines correct or wrong subjects is someone who has not experienced a realization of emptiness.
- (4) *Emptiness of inherent existence:* This is an ultimate truth so it is not a conventionality, therefore it is none of these. If it is a conventionality, it is necessarily a conventional truth. The definitions that Jedzunba gives in *General Meaning* are more precise, and there he indicates these categories as conventionalities, so he is excluding from them both emptiness and non-existents.

- (5) *Emptiness of self-sufficient self*: This example is an existent, a conventional truth and an object so is it real or unreal? It seems that it is real.

Question regarding objects and subjects polluted by ignorance

Another qualm is raised on the top of p.23. Since Lama Tsongkhapa says that Prasangika does not assert any conventionalities as real but only does so from the perspective of worldly consciousness, then why aren't the subjects and objects that are polluted by ignorance considered to unreal conventionalities? Isn't ignorance a cause of error so why don't we make all those consciousnesses that are polluted by ignorance into wrong subjects and all phenomena polluted by ignorance into unreal objects? Lama Tsongkhapa answers that a valid cognizer of conventionalities cannot realize that the conception of true existence is not a wrong consciousness and so such cannot be considered as "unreal" in terms of the world.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1D Indicating that the referent object of that mistaken with respect to the referent object does not exist even conventionally

Up until now, Chandrakirti has been explaining the divisions of conventionalities in terms of worldly consciousnesses but we can also talk about real and unreal in regard to non-Buddhist tenet systems. Ancient Indian non-Buddhist systems can be divided into either five or eleven and Geshe-la gave the five divisions in class.

Distinguishing between conventionalities and non-existents

In this section, Chandrakirti is making a point with regard to conventionalities and non-existents. If we impute a face to a reflection of a face, that imputed face does not exist so it is neither a real nor an unreal conventionality. Likewise the Samkhya holding to a fundamental nature is a case of a wrong consciousness, since they are imputing what is not real. In order to exist, it must be established by a valid cognition; only a valid cognition posits phenomena as existent. A horse that is being posited on the basis of an illusory horse is a non-existent since the consciousness doing that is a wrong consciousness.

Distinguishing between subtle and gross mistaken consciousnesses

In Prasangika, all consciousnesses aside from the direct realization of emptiness are mistaken but nonetheless they can be valid. They can still posit existent phenomena. When we talk about what is a mistaken consciousness, we must differentiate between gross and subtle mistaken consciousnesses. Mistaken consciousness in general is said to be a consciousness that is mistaken with regard to its appearing object, meaning that what appears doesn't exist that way. There can be degrees of disagreement between the way it appears and exists. For example, the eye consciousness apprehending blue is mistaken with regard to the blue since the blue appears truly existent but that is a subtle mistake. Similarly, an eye consciousness apprehending an illusory horse is a valid consciousness in that it can posit the existence of an illusory horse. Even though it is mistaken due to the subtle mode of existence of the illusory horse, it is not mistaken with regard to the gross mode of existence of the illusory horse. The illusory horse appears truly existent but doesn't exist the way it appears so that is only a subtle mistake. If someone apprehended the illusory horse *as a horse* then that is a gross mistake. An illusory horse exists but it is not a horse – to apprehend it as a horse is mistaken in a coarse respect as to the appearing object.

So with regard to that illusory horse there can be two different perceptions. Although both are mistaken, the subtle one is not a wrong consciousness but the gross is a wrong consciousness. The gross cannot posit the actual existence of a horse but the subtle can posit the existence of an illusory horse. So phenomena are *like* an illusion but they are not an illusion, and this is an important distinction to make. "To be an illusion" means that such a phenomenon doesn't appear as it exists on a gross level but here we are saying phenomena are "like an illusion", meaning the illusory horse appears as an illusory horse but, as well, as a truly existent illusory horse. If something is like an illusion it does not exist as it appears at a subtle level meaning that it appears as truly existent. All phenomena are illusion-like in that they don't exist the way they appear but consciousnesses that perceive those phenomena are only mistaken at a subtle level. In the context of these illusion-like appearances, causes do bring about results. We must distinguish between being mistaken at a subtle level and being mistaken at a gross level. An illusory horse simply cannot function as a horse.

In summary, with regard to these wrong conceptions, their referent objects do not exist even conventionally. The object of a conception of a fundamental nature does not exist even conventionally. Objects of valid conventional consciousnesses do exist conventionally even though those consciousnesses are mistaken.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B1D Applying that to the meaning of this context

The proponents of true existence were asserting that the direct perception of ordinary beings refuted the Prasangika refutation of production from other so we've been investigating what types of consciousnesses of worldly beings can validate objects and which cannot. For example, one could say that farmers can see that if you plant wheat seeds, you get wheat plants, therefore there is production from other. Is that farmer's perception a valid consciousness to posit production from other? Such an argument is based upon an assumption that worldly consciousnesses are completely unmistaken, not just in terms of subtle and gross but in all ways. This farmer's consciousness holding to production from other cannot be completely unmistaken and therefore cannot serve as a validating criteria in establishing production from other.

The need to rely upon consciousnesses that are free from all causes of error

As we mentioned earlier, there are different degrees of error with respect to worldly consciousnesses, subtle and gross. It is certain that we cannot rely upon consciousnesses that are polluted with superficial causes of error. For example, we cannot take the vision of someone with cataracts as a valid consciousness for determining the presence or absence of falling hairs. Rather we must use a consciousness that is not polluted by cataracts and such, and that consciousness can determine the nature of things. Certain standards must be used to make judgments in the world as to what exists and what doesn't. We cannot use consciousnesses that are polluted by superficial causes of error. If we are going to refute production from other, can we use that farmer's consciousness? If not, which consciousness can we use? Prasangika says that that farmer's consciousness is not valid because with regard to inherent existence, it is polluted by subtle causes of error and therefore is not seeing production correctly. Instead we must rely upon a superior's meditative equipoise, since it is free even from these subtle causes of error. If production from other were established, it would be established by such a consciousness but it is not. We must rely on consciousnesses that are completely unmistaken, and a superior's meditative equipoise on emptiness is such a consciousness.

In summary, in response to the argument from the proponents of true existence that they can use worldly direct perception and not reasoning, Prasangika replies that those consciousnesses are not a standard to establish reality because their minds are polluted by subtle causes of error. Rather we must base the reality of phenomena only on a consciousness that is free from those errors. Further, we must use the Madhyamika view of emptiness as the criteria since those who realize that emptiness, *do* refute production from other and so forth. So there are some areas where worldly consciousnesses can be relied upon (i.e. establishing the conventional mode of existence of phenomena), and some where worldly consciousnesses cannot be relied upon (i.e. establishing the ultimate mode of abidance of phenomena).

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

Note: There were no review classes on *Middle Way* held on Monday, June 19 and Tuesday, June 20.

June 21 (Wednesday)

Let's briefly review the context of our current discussion. We've been examining the two truths in the light of the assertion that worldly perception validates the existence of production from other so all the reasonings Prasangika has put forth are irrelevant. Prasangika has replied that there are some phenomena that worldly convention can validate and some that it cannot, and from this followed an extensive presentation of the two truths in which we are now engaged. In regard to the two truths, it comes down to whom you are going to rely upon to establish each of these as factual, i.e. as truths. For example, the perception of someone who sees falling hairs due to the impairment of cataracts must be judged against the valid perception of those that do not have that impairment and do not see falling hairs. In this context, we discussed how there are both coarse and subtle impairments, and that, to determine the nature of things, we certainly cannot rely upon a consciousness with any coarse impairments. Since even the subtle impairment that is the conception of true existence is not present in a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise on emptiness, then that consciousness can be used as a standard to determine ultimate truth, the actual nature of things.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3 Explanation of the individual entities of the two truths

Chandrakirti now sets forth a further explanation of the individual entities of the two truths, beginning with conventional truth.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A Explanation of the conventional truth

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A-1 Truths and non-truths in the perspective of a concealer

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A-1A Actual meaning

In the presentation of the two truths, we've been examining what are truths and what is falsities, but there are things that can be posited as true for various consciousnesses although they are not truths in general. In this first section we are looking at what are truths in the perspective of the conception of true existence. Conventional truths are said to be "truths for a concealer", with the concealer referring to the confusion that is the conception of true existence.

The confusion that is the conception of true existence

The term *gti mug* is translated as confusion but can also be called ignorance or bewilderment. The distinction between confusion and ignorance is that within ignorance, there is also non-afflicted ignorance, but confusion is always an afflicted. It obscures the nature of phenomena and is discordant to knowledge, specifically to the exalted wisdom that realizes the mode of abidance of phenomena. For example, a pot is a "truth for a concealer" because it is a truth in the perspective of the conception of true existence. Does the conception of true existence apprehend a pot? Does a pot appear to the conception of true existence? The appearing object of the conception of a truly existent pot is the meaning generality of a truly existent pot. In general, truth means something existing the way it appears, so in the perspective of a concealer, the conception of true existence, a truly existent pot does exist the way it appears since it also appears as truly existent.

The three persons and mere conventionalities

Although the pot is true for a concealer, what about those without a concealer? There are three persons who are identified as those who qualify as such, hearer foe destroyers, solitary realizer foe destroyers and bodhisattvas on the pure grounds. All three of these have abandoned the conception of true existence along with its seeds so for them, although there is still the appearance of true existence, there

is not the adherence to that appearance as true. So is the pot a truth in the perspective of the concealer of an eighth ground bodhisattva? The pot is not a truth, because, since that bodhisattva does not have a concealer, the pot would be seen as a falsity, as a *mere* conventionality. Geshe-la said that the function of “mere” in that term is to eliminate true existence, meaning that for such a bodhisattva, the pot is not a truly existent conventionality, rather it is a mere one. To these three persons, the pot is a mere conventionality, meaning they see it as like an illusion. For them the pot is conventionally existent, merely imputed by conceptuality.

The *Descent into Lanka Sutra* quote concerning this concealer

Geshe-la gave two divisions of phenomena (on p.10 of the transcripts for 29 May-2 June): one, such as reflections, echoes and so forth, which are realized to not be true and the other, such as blue and so forth, which are not realized to not be true. Ordinary beings do not realize a pen, for example, to not be true. What prevents them from realizing it as true is ignorance, the concealer that obstructs us from apprehending the actual way that things exist and realizing that phenomena are ultimately without inherent existence. In the quote from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* (also on p.10 of the transcripts), it says, “Whatever is mistaken regarding non-inherent existence is asserted to be a *concealer of the perfect*.” The “perfect” refers to reality, i.e. the mode of abidance of phenomena, or emptiness. For an ignorant consciousness, the pen is true and that ignorance is a concealer of the reality of the pen; that which is stopping us from seeing the way that the pen exists is ignorance. Due to this ignorance, phenomena appear to truly exist and ignorance perceives that appearance to be true. Ignorance obstructs us from seeing that appearance as false. It is the concealer of reality, the conception of true existence, which keeps us from seeing the ultimate nature of things.

For the three persons who lack such a concealer, although phenomena appear as inherently existent, they are mere conventionalities. In their perspective they are not truths since they are falsities; yet we still can say that they’re conventional truths to them since they are realized as “truths for a concealer”, meaning truths only in the perspective of ignorance. Lama Tsongkhapa says that in the sutra quote when it says, “The production of things is a conventionality”, there *kun rdzob* definitely means conventionality and not concealer. In other words, it isn’t saying that production is posited by a concealer, since that which is posited by a concealer is non-existent. In general, conventionality means consciousnesses and their objects, as well as expressive terms and the objects to which they refer. In other words, conventionality roughly refers to the phenomena that people who have not realized emptiness (i.e. “the world”) experience, know and think about, as well as what they talk about and the words they use to talk about them. Thus, emptiness is not a conventionality. Conventionality is mutually inclusive with conventional truth. However, emptiness is a *mere* conventionality. Mere conventionality and conventionally existent are mutually inclusive. All phenomena are conventionally existent; none are ultimately existent.

June 22 (Thursday)

Regarding the first meaning of *kun rdzob*

As we’ve discussed previously, the term *kun rdzob* can have three meanings: concealer, interdependence and convention. The first meaning of this term can be seen in the quote from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, in the last two lines which say, “Whatever is mistaken regarding non-inherent existence is asserted to be a concealer of the perfect.” You could also say “a concealer of reality,” meaning the reality of suchness, the perfect mode of abidance of phenomena. The word “suchness” generally has the connotation of the way things actually are, i.e. emptiness, but that is not necessarily so. In this morning’s teachings, “suchness” was used in the context of the falling hairs seen by those with cataracts, and there it simply refers to the reality of the absence of falling hairs, which is “the way things actually are” in that context. Here in this sutra quote though, the reality or suchness is

referring to the way things actually exist, i.e. as non-inherently existent. Due to the force of latencies all phenomena appear as truly existent and in the perspective of this concealer they exist as they appear – in that way they are truths. That is why pots and so forth are said to be “truths for a concealer” (or conventional truths). They are not truths in general, but only for that wrong awareness.

The different levels of mistaking reality

In explaining the last two lines of this sutra quote, Lama Tsongkhapa goes into the various levels of mistakes that occur. Ordinary beings can realize certain phenomena as falsities, meaning that they can realize that those phenomena do not exist the way that they appear. For example, a reflection of a face in the mirror – although it appears to be a face, ordinary beings can realize that it is not a face. But this is not the way that we are speaking of falsity here, rather we are looking at a deeper cause of error – the appearance of objects as truly existent while in fact they are empty of that way of existing. It is not contradictory for an ordinary being to see a reflection of a face as a falsity and yet hold it to be true from the point of view of the concealer, the conception of true existence. These are simply different levels of mistaking the appearance and the emptiness of that appearance. A concealer is an obstrucater in that it obstructs the discernment of the actual nature of things.

Two ways that ignorance acts in our cognitive process

For example if someone has jaundice, which can make the eyes yellow so that the vision is affected similarly, then a piece of white paper will appear yellow to their eye consciousness. That ignorance conceals the suchness or reality of that piece of paper as white since it causes it to appear as yellow. In regard to the conception of true existence, ignorance acts in a twofold way – first as an obstrucater to seeing the way things actually are and secondly, it causes us to hold the appearances to be true. The first refers to the way that ignorance obstructs us from seeing that those objects do not inherently exist at all, that their nature is other than that false appearance. The second is referring to the function of ignorance as a factor in our assenting to that appearance of true existence and holding that to be true.

Regarding the second and third meanings of the term *kun rdzob*

As we said earlier, Lama Tsongkhapa says that *kun rdzob* in the first line of the sutra quote refers to the production of things existing conventionally. One way of talking about this is that things exist as dependent-arising and this is seen in both the second and third meanings of the term *kun rdzob*. The production of things exists in the sense of existing interdependently and conventionally. But to exist and to conventionally exist (or to exist in conventional terms) are mutually inclusive so why is this notion introduced? It seems that what is meant when we say “to exist conventionally” is that phenomena exist in the context of not analyzing for the final mode of abidance of those objects

***The Two Truths* on “existence” and “existence in conventional terms”**

Guy Newland discusses this in *The Two Truths* (pp.83-84), saying, “‘Existing in conventional terms’ means that something is known to the world (that is, it is found by a valid cognizer), and is not discredited by other valid cognition, conventional or ultimate.” He goes on to list the three criteria for something to exist in conventional terms that we discussed previously. The third, that it cannot be invalidated by a reasoning consciousness analyzing for the ultimate, is necessary to invalidate an inherently existent pot and so forth, since such would not be invalidated by the first two criteria. Since, as we mentioned above, “existence in conventional terms” is mutually inclusive with “existence”, it might seem that the first of these three criteria (being well known or renown to the world) would be unnecessary since the other criteria (not being invalidated by conventional valid cognition nor by ultimate analysis) would suffice. In *The Two Truths* (pp.85-86), Guy Newland offers one explanation of this, saying, “Although they are mutually inclusive, their meanings are reached by different conceptual routes and thus bring a different flavor to the mind.” So there is no difference in these two phenomena in terms of what is included in them, but the way of thinking about them is different.

“Existence” simply refers to the fact that something is established by a valid cognition. However, to discern the meaning of “existence in conventional terms”, one begins with everything that is known to the world, and then eliminates that which is not established by either of the two types of valid cognizers, first conventional and then ultimate. So the meaning behind the use of these three criteria is that those phenomena that meet those criteria do in fact exist to the world.

Distinguishing between the three meanings of *kun rdzob*

It is important to distinguish between these three meanings of *kun rdzob*, as Lama Tsongkhapa has done in this section, since that term can have the meaning of something being a truth for a concealer, existing as a dependent arising, and existing conventionally for a valid cognizer. The third sense of something being conventionally existent does not necessarily have the connotation of the first, being a truth for a concealer, although all phenomena except emptiness are truths for a concealer. It is also important to note that there is a difference between a phenomenon existing as a dependent arising and it being realized as a dependent arising, so in the second meaning of this term, it is not implied that all conventional truths are necessarily *realized* as being dependent-arisings.

Another use of the term “concealer”

In the middle of p.25 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa comments on Chandrakirti’s *Autocommentary*, which says that a reflection is said to *not* be a truth for a concealer. Here the “concealer” refers more generally to the consciousness to which that reflection is appearing as a face and, in that context, a reflection is not a truth for that concealer, since it is not a real face. So to say that a reflection is a falsity for a valid worldly consciousness does not mean that they are not “truths for a concealer”, when “concealer” means the conception of true existence. A reflection of a face is a conventional truth although it is seen as false in the perspective of the consciousness that has the appearance of that reflection as a real face. Similarly, a mirage that appears as water is a deceptive object. In the perspective of worldly consciousness, the mirage as water is not a truth for a concealer in that it is not really water, but yet to say that a mirage is not a truth for a concealer does not mean that it is not a conventional truth, since a mirage is still a truth in the perspective of the concealer that conceives it to be established by way of its own character. If it was not a conventional truth, that would contradict the assertion that although phenomena do not inherently exist they still do conventionally exist. It is important to distinguish between this concealer as presented here and the concealer that is the conception of true existence that we discussed earlier.

Showing that those who assert such do not understand three points

Continuing with this section, Lama Tsongkhapa next sets out why it is wrong to say that unreal conventionalities are mere conventionalities but yet are not conventional truths. If someone were to say this, it means that they are not understanding three points: (1) that the two truths are definite in number, (2) what truths and falsities are with respect to worldly beings, and (3) what the truths and falsities are as posited by the Middle Wayers. The first misunderstanding follows because, if unreal conventionalities are not conventional truths, then one would be forced to say that they are ultimate truths because the two truths are a dichotomy, and that is not feasible. As far as the second and third points, there is a difference between what are posited as truths and falsities for worldly beings and what are posited as such by those who propound the Middle Way. For worldly beings, the criteria is simply whether the consciousness is impaired by superficial causes of error, but for those who follow the Middle Way it is whether the consciousness is impaired by subtle causes of error, i.e. the conception of true existence.

The obscuring ignorance that is the first of the twelve links

Lama Tsongkhapa next examines a passage from Chandrakirti’s *Autocommentary* which says that “the nature does not appear to all those who have ignorance.” He indicates that this comment is referring

specifically to emptiness not appearing to “consciousnesses polluted by ignorance.” As we’ve discussed before, all consciousnesses of sentient beings except for a superior’s exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise on emptiness are mistaken in that they are polluted by the latencies of the conception of true existence and so are obscured from realizing suchness. This obscuring ignorance is the first of the twelve links of dependent arising. Ignorance is a mental factor in the discordant class that opposes the wisdom realizing the mode of abidance of phenomena.

Ignorance establishes conventional truths as “true”; valid cognizers establish them as “existent”

Conventional truths are posited by valid cognizers but whatever is posited by ignorance is non-existent. As we’ve discussed earlier, the term *kun rdzob* in general means conventionality, and this is different from the usage of *kun rdzob* to mean concealer. In the context of that differentiation, Lama Tsongkhapa, on p.25 of *Illumination* explains that conventional truths are posited as true from the point of view of that ignorance, but they are not posited *by* the conception of true existence. To the ignorance that is the conception of true existence, a truly existent pot appears and, in the perspective of that ignorance, the existence of a truly existent pot is posited. But being posited as existent by a wrong consciousness is not a valid means for establishing existence. Only a valid cognition can establish existents and for a valid cognizer, a truly existent pot does not exist. In general pots and so forth are falsities because they don’t exist the way they appear – that is the measure of being a truth. But they are held to be truths in the perspective of a concealer, the conception of true existence.

The perspective of the three persons

Lama Tsongkhapa next discusses the three persons who have abandoned the concealer, the conception of true existence. In their perspective, all conventionalities are falsities and not truths. Conventionalities are said to be like an illusion, which is a composite of both an appearance of an object and the knowledge that the object does not exist the way it appears. For these three persons, pots and so forth are *mere* conventionalities,

June 23 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la’s answers to questions in class today

- ← In regard to ignorance and the afflictions such as attachment being concomitant but not having the same aspect, Geshe-la said that perhaps there is the similarity of aspect. In the five similarities between a main mind and its mental factors, the object-aspect is what is referred to in the similarity of aspect. There are both subject-aspects and object-aspects and the first is the mode of apprehension – it is a consciousness. The object-aspect is the object of the mode of apprehension. For example in attachment apprehending a beautiful body, the object-aspect is a truly existent exaggeratedly beautiful body. The subject-aspect is a desiring consciousness. With the conception of true existence apprehending a table, the truly existent table is the object-aspect while the subject-aspect is the consciousness apprehending a truly existent table. In that first example, Geshe-la said that “a truly existent beautiful form” could be the object-aspect for both ignorance and attachment. When Geshe Tenphel was asked a similar question in the classes on *Awareness and Knowers*, he seemed to respond that ignorance is the cause of attachment so those mental factors are serial and not simultaneous. It is true that ignorance is the cause of attachment and so forth but it would seem that one could have both ignorance and attachment present at the same time.
- ← In regard to Hinayana foe destroyers who would still have an appearance of true existence, Geshe-la said that they also *apprehend* the appearance of true existence, although they do not apprehend true existence itself (since they no longer have the conception of true existence). For example, the appearance of an illusory horse can be accepted to exist while the illusory horse as a real horse is

not accepted. True existence does not exist so foe destroyers do not apprehend it and yet, there is no contradiction that true existence still appears to them.

- ← Geshe-la also said that, as far as superiors who have not abandoned the conception of true existence, although the *person* does not grasp at true existence, the *awareness* could still have the conception of true existence. This is so because, for the bodhisattva, there can be manifest conceptions of true existence through the seventh ground. The conception of “the acceptability of the thought that phenomena inherently existing” is what has been repudiated by such a superior and yet, nonetheless, the ignorance that is the conception of true existence still manifests. Is this repudiation simultaneous with the conception of true existence arising or is it sequential? It’s hard to say without knowing what the object is that is being held to truly exist. Exactly how this works in the mind at that moment according to teachings from *Awareness and Knowers* is difficult to discern. It seems well before the path of seeing the bodhisattva would no longer hold as acceptable the thought that things truly exist – at that point it is almost as if the acquired conception of true existence has been repudiated but technically it is not abandoned until the path of seeing. Although a bodhisattva on the path of preparation, for example, will not accept this thought in his mind, it would seem that once the path of seeing is attained and the acquired conceptions of true existence are abandoned, there would be a difference in the disbelief in such conceptions. But yet the conception of true existence can still arise until the bodhisattva attains the eighth ground.
- ← In response to a question concerning the fact that impermanence appears but is not apprehended by the eye consciousness, Geshe-la said that the person could apprehend a pot as impermanent even though the eye consciousness does not. It seems this is similar to saying, for example, that the eye consciousness does not apprehend a person because a person is not color or shape. And yet it acts as a basis for apprehending a person. So one is then able to say that you “see” that person and this is simply a convention in the world.

Buddhas and the appearance of true existence

Geshe-la addressed the appearance of true existence in regard to both superiors who have not abandoned ignorance and foe destroyers, but what about buddhas? Because they have abandoned the knowledge obstructions, buddhas lack the appearance of true existence, and yet the appearance of true existence that appears to sentient beings appears to buddhas. A buddha can see the table with and without the appearance of true existence simultaneously; however, to see the table with the appearance of true existence is *not* due to latencies in the buddha’s mind. Rather it is due to the fact that whatever exists necessarily appears to a buddha’s mind directly and simultaneously.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

June 26 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A-1A Actual meaning (continued)

To recap our current discussion on the entity of conventional truth, Chandrakirti says that those who hold that reflections and other unreal conventionalities are not truths for a concealer are referring to a coarse concealer and not the subtle one that is the conception of true existence. Related to this, someone asserts that unreal conventionalities are mere conventionalities but not conventional truths. It seems that the one making the various assertions in this section is Jaya-ananda, who is the author of the only extant Indian commentary on the *Supplement*. As we discussed last week, Lama Tsongkhapa explains three points that are obviously not understood by someone holding that assertion.

Following this was a discussion of a statement from Chandrakirti, saying that “the nature does not appear to all those who have ignorance.” In Prasangika, the obscuring ignorance is the conception of both a self of persons and a self of phenomena, and Lama Tsongkhapa says that this ignorance is the first of the twelve links of dependent arising. Ignorance is the discordant class of realizing suchness, the mode of abidance of phenomena. Lama Tsongkhapa then points out that it is important to understand that truths for a concealer are posited from the point of view of ignorance but they are not posited *by* ignorance. Ignorance is a wrong consciousness and so it cannot posit existence – only valid cognizers can posit existence. A table is a truth for a concealer but it is not posited *by* a concealer. The only thing that is true for a concealer is true existence and that does not exist.

Importance of distinguishing between “concealer” and “conventionality”

Related to this, towards the bottom of p.25 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa talks about the need to distinguish between *kun rdzob* as concealer and *kun rdzob* as conventionality. As we’ve discussed, these are two of the meanings behind the etymology of *kun rdzob*: (1) “concealer”, meaning ignorance or the conception of true existence, and (2) “conventionalities”, meaning the terms and consciousnesses, as well as their referents and objects, that are what are known as worldly conventions. Conventionalities are mutually inclusive with conventional truths and include everything other than emptiness and non-existents.

Query concerning the three persons

A question is raised on bottom of p.25 of *Illumination*. As we’ve discussed, although all conventional truths are falsities, from the point of view of the conception of true existence they are true. In the light of this, someone asks if conventional truths also exist as non-truths in the perspective of the concealers of some persons. From this there follows a discussion of the three persons that we’ve mentioned earlier, hearer foe destroyers, solitary realizer foe destroyers, and bodhisattvas on the pure grounds. From their point of view, what are these conventionalities – are they truths for a concealer? Since they do not have a concealer it would seem that they are not, so what are they? If we say that conventional truths are only truths for a concealer, what would they be for someone without that concealer? For the three persons, they are falsities and not truths. They are still “truths for a concealer” but, moreover, they are said to be *mere* conventionalities.

Concerning the meaning of “mere”

The word “mere” is meant to eliminate some quality, and, in *The Two Truths* (pp.189-190), Guy Newland indicates that Lama Tsongkhapa in *Ocean of Reasoning* said that mere eliminates “true”, meaning that it eliminates them from being true to that consciousness. However, Geshe-la said that the word “mere” eliminates them as existing truly, and Guy Newland further explains that these two meanings can be equated in this case. In his words, “Thus, to see a phenomenon as a mere conventionality is to recognize that it exists only conventionally, and does not truly exist or ultimately exist.” So these three persons look at conventional truths as mere conventionalities and this means that they are not seen as existing truly. We can also say that they are merely imputed by conceputality, or that they are conventionally existent. “Mere conventionality” then would include all phenomena, not just conventional truth but emptiness as well, since all phenomena only conventionally exist.

The meaning of “mere conventionality” according to Jamyang Shepa

“Conventionality” does not entail refuting an object as a truth but “mere conventionality” eliminates the possibility of true existence. On p.188 of *The Two Truths*, Guy Newland says that, according to Jamyang Shepa, “mere conventionality” means that phenomena are only conventionally existent (meaning they are not truly existent) from their perspective. From the perspective of the three persons, they would never conceive of them as truly existent so therefore they see them as mere conventionalities. Anything that conventionally exists is a mere conventionality – emptiness of true existence included. So here we aren’t talking only about worldly consciousnesses, so in that sense, mere conventionality is a more comprehensive classification.

The two qualities of realizing phenomena as mere conventionalities

For these three persons, phenomena are mere conventionalities and, even though they lack the concealer of ignorance, pots and so forth can be identified by these three persons as “truths for a concealer”. The *Autocommentary* points out that these phenomena are not true in their perspective because of the two qualities these persons possess. For these persons, (1) phenomena are realized to be like reflections, illusions, and so forth, and (2) the conceptions of adhering these to be true have been abandoned. So for them conventionalities are falsities; for all other sentient beings, they are conventional truths, and they are true due to conceiving them as true.

Although emptiness only exists conventionally, it is a truth

All conventionalities are falsities in that they do not exist the way they appear and are thus said to be conventional truths – only ultimate truth is true. The establishment of a phenomenon such as a pot as a conventional truth also establishes it as a falsity. ???If the means for establishing a phenomenon as a falsity is that the object is not established as true, then emptiness would be a falsity since those three persons do not even establish emptiness as true. To them, even ultimate truth is not seen as true since it too only exists conventionally but yet emptiness is not a falsity, it is a truth.

In concluding this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says that pots and so forth are not truths from their own side but truths only to a particular awareness, that being the conception of true existence. Only from that perspective is pot a truth; it is not a truth from the point of view of the object itself.

Etymologies of conventional truth and ultimate truth

On p.17 of the Week 17 transcript, as well as on p.3 of the handout on the two truths from Jedzunba’s *General Meaning*, the etymologies of conventional truth and ultimate truth are given. We already reviewed these in review class so we won’t review them again. One point to note is that Geshe-la earlier gave the etymology of “supreme” (*dam pa*) in “supreme object truth” from the point of view of the subject being supreme, and this is what is often spoke of in Svatantrika presentations on the etymology. In Prasangika, it is usually given from the point of view of the object being supreme, as Jedzunba presents in *General Meaning*.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A-1B Explanation of the uncommon presentation of the afflictions

Regarding the conceptions of a self of persons and phenomena

In Prasangika, the conception of a self of persons and a self of phenomena are posited from the point of view of the observed objects. For the conception of a self of persons, the observed objects are persons, and for the conception of a self of phenomena, all phenomena other than persons are the observed objects. In Svatantrika, these two conceptions are posited from point of view of the mode of apprehension. There the conception of a self of persons is the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person and that of phenomena is the conception of all phenomena as truly existent. Chittamatra would also hold that the basis of distinction is the mode of apprehension. Vaibhashika and Sautrantika do not refute a self of phenomena, only a self of persons.

Also, as we will discuss further in this section, in Prasangika the conception of true existence (of both persons and phenomena) is an afflictive obstruction. In Svatantrika and Chittamatra, only the conception of a self of phenomena is a knowledge obstruction.

Ignorance – mind or mental factor?

Geshe-la brought out one area of debate regarding the nature of ignorance in regard to mind and mental factors. He proposed that when the conception of true existence is posited as ignorance by Prasangika, it cannot be

either a main mind or a mental factor. Why? Because it has both parts. It has a main mind of ignorance and it also has the mental factor of ignorance so you cannot say it is either of them.

Regarding “the unproduced phenomenon”

On p.27 of our translation of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa mentions Chandrakirti’s commentary on Aryadeva’s *Four Hundred*, which says that the ignorance that is abandoned by the hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers is an afflictive obstruction. Chandrakirti also indicates that this ignorance is also abandoned by the bodhisattvas on the pure grounds, who are said to “have attained forbearance with respect to *the unproduced phenomenon*.” In Daniel Cozort’s *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way* (p.464), he translates this term as “the doctrine of non-production” and says, “According to Jambel Shenpen, the doctrine of non-production is the doctrine that nothing is inherently produced or inherently not produced. One needs forbearance with respect to this doctrine because it is frightening.” He continues by saying that those who have directly seen emptiness are able to bear it. Daniel Cozort also mentions that, according to Kensur Yeshey Tupden, it does refer to emptiness but could also refer to the fact that, for those who have attained liberation, the afflictive obstructions are not produced again. That second interpretation is concordant with Geshe-la’s explanation of this term (on p.19 of transcripts for Week 17).

The meaning of “ignorance”

Lama Tsongkhapa says that what is meant by ignorance is not simply not knowing, but moreover, that which is antithetical, or the discordant class, to knowing. This ignorance superimposes true existence on phenomena and this is directly contradictory to the wisdom that eliminates the conception of true existence. In Geshe-la’s commentary there is a quote from Vasubandhu’s *Treasury of Knowledge* which says that an enemy is not just someone who is not your friend, but rather it is the opposite of a friend. What is being known by wisdom is how phenomena actually exist and this ignorance is directly contradictory to that. So, in refuting on the basis of a single object, for example a pen, that the pen does not truly exist, one comes to refute the ignorance that holds the pen to truly exist.

The types of ignorance

Ignorance superimposes a mode of existence that phenomena do not have and in Prasangika, this ignorance is afflictive ignorance. In terms of the types of superimposing consciousnesses, there are the two types: the conception of a self of persons and the conception of a self of phenomena. These are both conceptions of true existence but as we mentioned earlier, the difference is in their observed objects. The conception of a self of persons has two types: that conceiving an ‘I’ to exist by way of its own character and that conceiving a ‘mine’ to exist by way of its own character. Further, if the person being observed is in one’s own continuum, then the conception of a self of persons is said to also be a view of the transitory collection. If the person observed is in someone else’s continuum, then it is a conception of self of persons but not a view of the transitory collection.

The view of the transitory collection in Prasangika and the other Buddhist schools

In Prasangika, the view of the transitory collection is an afflictive ignorance that observes the person within one’s own continuum and conceives that as an inherently existent ‘I’ or ‘mine’. According to the other Buddhist schools, from Svatantrika on down, the view of the transitory collection is a view of the person as self-sufficient and substantially existent. In those schools the view of the transitory collection is of two types: that viewing an ‘I’ which is the one who controls, and that viewing a ‘mine’ which is under the control of that ‘I’.

Geshe-la said that, in regard to the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, there are both acquired and innate types. Lama Tsongkhapa says that there is no innate conception of a person being of a dissimilar, different nature than the aggregates. Geshe-la said that this refers to the conception of the ‘I’ as a utilizer and the aggregates to be the object of its use, or the conception of the ‘I’ as the carrier and the aggregates as the load carried. Such a conception does not exist in the minds of those who have not been affected by tenets.

The five afflicted views

Within the six root afflictions, the sixth is afflicted view and there are five views within this. Two of them have both the acquired and innate types: the view of the transitory collection and the view holding to an extreme. The

remaining three views have only the acquired types because they arise from reasoning and tenets. The five afflicted views are:

1. The view of the transitory collection – We have discussed this one extensively earlier in our *Middle Way* studies. The observed object of this view is not the aggregates as it might seem but rather is the mere ‘I’ (“mere” eliminates the ‘I’ as inherently existent).
2. The view holding to an extreme – According to Jeffrey Hopkins, this view “observes the self as apprehended by the view of the transitory collection and conceives it to be permanent in the sense of unchanging, or annihilated in the sense of not transmigrating to another lifetime” (*Meditation on Emptiness*, p.260). Since it “observes the self as apprehended by the view of the transitory collection”, it would seem that it observes an inherently existent person, since that is what is apprehended by the view of the transitory collection. The observed object is generally said to exist but this view doesn’t seem to have an existent observed object, since the self apprehended by the view of the transitory collection does not exist. What is the difference between viewing an ‘I’ as inherently existent or viewing it as permanent? It would seem that a view of an inherently existent ‘I’ would possibly entail the attribute of seeing it as permanent. However, in the view of the ‘I’ as permanent, the ‘I’ is specifically being seen as unchanging.
3. The view holding bad conduct to be supreme
4. The view holding a bad view as supreme
5. Wrong view

For more on these five afflicted views, please refer to Jeffrey Hopkins’ *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp.258-261.

June 27 (Tuesday)

Regarding the conceptions of inherent existence as afflictive obstructions and conceptions of a self

On p.27 of *Illumination*, someone asks how the conceptions of inherently existent persons and phenomena can be established to be afflictive obstructions and the two conceptions of a self. This is a unique tenet of Prasangika and is in direct contrast to Svatantrika tenets, which assert that the conceptions of true existence are knowledge obstructions and not afflictive obstructions. Further, if Prasangika were to assert that a conception of a self of persons is a conception of an inherently existent self of persons, Svatantrika would reply that “the reason is not established”. Why? Because Svatantrika holds the self of persons to inherently exist. Prasangika would refute this saying that the self of persons is not inherently existent because when it is searched for among its imputed bases, it is not found. To this Svatantrika would also reply that “the reason is not established”, since they hold that the illustrative mental consciousness is found as the person in that school.

In addition to this, Svatantrika would also ask Prasangika things such as, “When your parents search for you, don’t they find you?” If they do not, then this is contradictory to what is held in the world. Prasangika refutes this by saying that this is not the same way of searching here – the type of searching when you search for the ‘I’ is different. If you are simply asked to go find someone who is in another room, it is completely possible to find them. A non-analytical consciousness (meaning a mind that does not analyze the ultimate) is satisfied with the mere appearance of that person. But if you are asked to find if that person exists as the basis of imputation, or among the parts of the basis of imputation, and so forth, you cannot find that person. An analytical consciousness that is discerning the ultimate mode of abidance of a person finds that the person does not exist in the way that they appear.

The reasoning used in Lama Tsongkhapa’s reply

In his reply to the above question, Lama Tsongkhapa sets out the reasoning that establishes that the two conceptions of self, of persons and phenomena, are afflictive obstructions. The reasoning behind these assertions of Prasangika are also set out in Daniel Cozort’s *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way* (pp.463-465). Initially, by using the reasonings refuting inherent existence, you can establish as well that the conceptions of true existence are therefore mistaken with respect to their referent objects. If you can refute inherent existence for someone who holds Svatantrika tenets, then they should easily see that the conceptions that conceive persons and phenomena as truly existent are the conceptions of a self. When that is established, it is also established that those conceptions of a self are the discordant class to the wisdom realizing selflessness. This chain of reasoning next establishes that therefore, the conceptions of true existence are established as ignorance. Further, as long as that ignorance is not extinguished, the view of the transitory collection is not extinguished,

therefore that ignorance must be established as an afflictive ignorance. And so, if those two conceptions are established as afflictive ignorance, it follows that they must be afflictive obstructions.

The order of generation of the two conceptions and the order of realization of the two selflessnesses

We've said in the past that the order of generation of the two conceptions of a self is first the conception of a self of phenomena and then the conception of a self of persons. In regard to realization, however, it is said that the order is to realize the lack of a self of persons initially and then the selflessness of phenomena. Earlier we examined a quote from Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* (Stanza 35) that said that as long as one holds the aggregates to truly exist, one has not repudiated the view of an inherently existent 'I' and so will continue to create action and take rebirth. From this we can conclude that both conceptions are the conception of a self, the ignorance that is the first of the twelve links of dependent arising.

Ignorance is the root of all afflictions

The root of the afflictions is the conception of true existence – it is the basis for all the other afflictions. Lama Tsongkhapa discusses how the afflictions such as attachment and hatred depend upon the basis of ignorance, just like a tree depends upon its roots. Aryadeva's *Four Hundred* says that confusion is likened to the body sense power. The body sense power pervades the body and so the other sense powers reside within the context of the body sense power. If the body sense power is destroyed, the others are necessarily destroyed as well. Similarly, confusion is similar to the body sense power in that hatred, attachment and so forth are nested in confusion. The individual afflictions can be removed separately but since the root is still there, eventually they will occur again. However, if you remove the basis of ignorance then they will cease and never recur.

How confusion and the afflictions function

Confusion is an obscuration with regard to the way things exist and moreover, it superimposes an existence upon them that is not true. Due to confusion, we perceive the object along with its features as existing from their own side. To the afflictions of hatred and attachment, the unattractiveness or attractiveness of objects seem to be coming from their own side, as if they are inherent in the objects themselves. Talking about the afflictions can seem more relevant when we speak about instances in our everyday life, such as the desirability of a person's body, or the undesirability of an enemy's harm. Attachment and hatred take the attractiveness and unattractiveness which are seen as inherently existent and then, through improper mental attention, they exaggerate those qualities. In a way, the internal logic of our ignorance is really quite reasonable. If objects did in fact exist the way they appear and if those qualities were there inherently, then attachment and hatred would make sense. If they were there inherently, then it would be perfectly logical for one to acquire as many desirable objects as possible and avoid as many undesirable ones. However, the very premise is mistaken in that these objects do not exist the way we think they do since they are not inherently existent.

The necessity of removing the root, ignorance

So the conception of true existence is the basis of all the afflictions, just as the roots of the tree are the support for all its branches, leaves, and so forth. And, just like a tree, you could keep pruning the branches off but they will continue to grow back unless you uproot the tree. This is not to say that we should not "trim back the branches" since it can be advantageous to use remedial antidotes to the manifest afflictions so that one can work with one's mind more easily. However, if we actually remove the basic misperception upon which all those afflictions arise, we will remove the afflictions forever. Then we can exist in any type of situation and the afflictions will never arise. Problematic situations will never disturb the peace that is attained in the mind once ignorance is gone.

Ignorance and the afflictions as concomitant

At one point in his teachings (see transcript for Week 17, p.23), Geshe-la said that ignorance and the afflictive emotions are concomitant, which is consistent with what Lama Tsongkhapa says in *Illumination* (p.28). However, later (see p.25 of that transcript), Geshe-la suggested that perhaps this is not so. As we've discussed before, when we say that a main mind and its mental factors are concomitant, we are referring to the five similarities that they share. The similarity of aspect refers to the object-aspect, and Geshe-la proposed that they don't have that similarity since the object-aspect of ignorance is true existence while the object-aspect for attachment is pleasantness or for hatred, unpleasantness. When asked about this in last Friday's class, Geshe-la said that perhaps you could say that both ignorance and attachment, for example, have the same object-aspect of

truly existent beauty (or pleasantness). Ignorance conceives of an object to truly exist, but attachment doesn't take that truly existent object as its object of engagement. Instead it seems that they both take an observed object (which exists) and then share the same referent object, or object-aspect, truly existent beauty (which doesn't exist). From this, it would follow that both ignorance and attachment have object-aspects (or objects of the mode of apprehension) that are non-existents. However, for the ignorance and attachment arising concomitant in a single continuum, the observed object is the same for both and is necessarily an existent, as Lama Tsongkhapa points out on p.28 of *Illumination*.

Attractiveness too exists, but not inherently

It can be said that for the mind with attachment, the attractiveness or beauty appears to exist from its own side. Although attractiveness, beauty, pleasantness and so forth do exist, they do not exist inherently in the objects that are seen as attractive, beautiful, pleasant and so on. If we look at worldly experience, there is evidence that attractiveness and so forth do not exist from their own side in that our conditioning and perception of things as attractive is seen to change from culture to culture. Some physical manifestations of attractiveness, such as specific physical features of bodies, are not seen as beautiful in other cultures. There is an interdependent relation between the observer of attractiveness and the attractiveness itself – and that too is dependent upon imputation.

June 28 (Wednesday)

In this section on the afflictions, we're examining the unique tenets that exist in Prasangika regarding the afflictive obstructions. In this context, the main assertion of Prasangika is that the conception of true existence is an afflictive obstruction, and not a knowledge obstruction as Svatantrika tenets contend.

Rough definitions of hatred and attachment

In a passage on p.28 of *Illumination*, there are rough definitions of hatred and attachment given by Lama Tsongkhapa. Attachment is that which is induced by improper mental attention, which exaggerates the attractiveness of an object and wishes to continue to have contact with that object. Hatred is that which is induced by improper mental attention, which exaggerates the unattractiveness of an object and wishes to turn away or be separated from contact with that object. Geshe-la gave his own rough definitions of attachment and hatred (see transcripts for Week 17, p.24). Attachment is that which has the aspect of attractiveness of a contaminated object. Hatred is that which has the aspect of unattractiveness of a contaminated object.

The object-aspect, or object of the mode of apprehension, could be said to be truly existent exaggerated attractiveness for attachment and truly existent exaggerated unattractiveness. When we say object-aspect, we mean what characteristic or feature of the object the consciousness is focusing upon. As we discussed yesterday, there are the features of being attractive or being unattractive that are existents, just the same as there are phenomena such as a pot or a table that exist.

Are hatred and attachment wrong consciousnesses?

In commenting on this passage, Geshe-la asks whether these are wrong consciousnesses? He says that if you say hatred and attachment are not wrong consciousnesses, then certain consequences follow. One consequence would be that the object of the mode of apprehension of attachment and hatred would exist while the object of the mode of apprehension of ignorance would not. However, this is contradictory to what we said yesterday regarding ignorance and its concomitant afflictions sharing similarity of object-aspect. It seems though that all afflictive emotions are wrong consciousnesses; their referent objects (which are their object-aspects and objects of the mode of apprehension) do not exist. Merely observing a beautiful object is not enough for attachment to arise; you must exaggerate its attractiveness for attachment to arise. All beautiful objects appear as inherently existent and on that basis, one can exaggerate the attractiveness that is observed.

The process seems to be that first one conceives of the beauty or attractiveness as inherently existent and then exaggerates it to induce attachment. For example, in the case of attachment to a beautiful body, the observed object would be an attractive or beautiful body and the object of the mode of apprehension would be a truly existent exaggeratedly beautiful body. It would also seem that there is necessarily a moment of ignorance that proceeds the first moment of attachment so that moment of ignorance is not concomitant with attachment. At

that moment, an existent phenomenon appears to truly exist and ignorance imputes true existence onto it (or we could say ignorance “grasps at it as true”, “adheres to it as true”, “apprehends it as true”, and so on). However, the ignorance that is the conception of true existence would still be present in the following moments when the attachment is manifest, and that is when there is concomitance between ignorance and attachment.

Regarding afflictive emotions induced by the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self

In the next section Lama Tsongkhapa talks about the fact that the hatred and attachment that are induced by the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self are not the attachment and hatred being posited here. When we talk about attachment and hatred here we are talking about that induced by a conception of true existence. In Prasangika attachment and hatred are induced by, or based upon, the confusion that is the conception of true existence, the belief that phenomena exist by their own character.

Dependent arising as the antidote to the ignorance that pervades the afflictive emotions

Lama Tsongkhapa then comments further regarding the quote we saw earlier from Aryadeva’s *Four Hundred*, which says that just as the body sense power is pervasive so the other sense powers are based upon it, likewise all the afflictions engage their objects associated with ignorance. Without abandoning ignorance, there is no way to abandon the afflictive emotions entirely. All the afflictions cease upon the destruction of ignorance and therefore it is important to value the precepts on dependent-arising. Just this morning in teachings, Geshe-la reiterated that dependent-arising is the king of reasonings since it is the main antidote to this ignorance. There are remedial antidotes to the afflictions, such as meditating on repulsiveness for attachment, on love for hatred, and so forth. For the ignorance that is the conception of a self, the final antidote is developing the wisdom from meditation on the reasoning of dependent-arising.

Destroying any abode for the poisonous snake of the afflictions

On p.28 of *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes from Nagarjuna’s *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, which says that wherever there exists an opportunity or possibility for the conception of true existence to arise then the poisonous snake of the afflictions will seize that opportunity. The term “abode” in these passages seems to be referring to a truly existent object, the referent object of the conception of true existence, which is seized by the snake-like afflictions. In the mind that hasn’t realized emptiness, because the conception of true existence is present, there is a suitable abode for the snake-like afflictions. Lama Tsongkhapa quotes a later passage from that work which says that if you don’t create an abode for the conceptions of true existence, then the poisonous afflictions do not arise. So these two passages are saying that (1) if you don’t abandon ignorance, you cannot abandon the afflictive emotions; on the other hand, (2) if you do abandon ignorance, no matter what forms and so forth you observe, the afflictions will never arise.

There were schools of thought in India that held that the best way to avoid afflictions was to withdraw the consciousness through developing the concentrations, absorptions and so forth, but at best that is only a remedial solution and not a cessation to the afflictions. With the wisdom that overcomes ignorance, one need not withdraw from the world. In most Indian traditions, liberation consists of a cessation of the appearances of the world. It necessitated a withdrawal from conventional appearances. Even in early Buddhist thought, there was the idea of a nirvana without remainder, a cessation of all conventionalities. However, the development of the Mahayana propounded attaining buddhahood, where one can engage in the world while simultaneously being free of the afflictions, and this can only be done by completely abandoning ignorance. In order to avoid the arising of the afflictions, temporarily it may be necessary to cut down on the stimuli that induce their manifesting. But once you eliminate ignorance, there is no situation where the afflictions will arise for that person.

Afflictions generated towards agreeable, disagreeable and neutral objects

Lama Tsongkhapa then quotes “the later commentary” that indicates how the afflictions arise as long as the conception of true existence is present. In commenting on this, Geshe-la said that if we find the object of observation as inherently agreeable, we will develop attachment towards it, and if the object is seen as inherently disagreeable then we will develop hatred. What if one develops “anger” towards one’s afflictions? In such a case it wouldn’t seem that there would be improper mental attention since that “anger” is being directed towards the elimination of afflictions.

Regarding neutral objects, Lama Tsongkhapa next discusses a passage from Shantideva's *Engaging in the Bodhisattva's Deeds*. Generally we say that if the object is observed as agreeable, then attachment develops and if observed as disagreeable, there is hatred, but Shantideva says that even for those objects that are neither agreeable nor disagreeable, we go on to develop confusion or ignorance towards those neutral objects. Confusion here means one is in a state of bewilderment since one doesn't know how to classify the object but there is also the meaning of indifference, meaning that one has no specific feeling towards it. Geshe-la said that this concept is similar to the stranger in the equanimity meditation on the three persons (friend, enemy and stranger). In summary, we aren't always under the influence of ignorance but when it is manifest in our continuum, we will generate attachment, hatred or confusion in regard to the object.

The path of meditating on the sixteen attributes of the four noble truths

Shantideva's quote further says that a path that does not realize emptiness ("a mind separated from emptiness") does not cease the afflictions. This comment is specifically to refute the *Abhidharma* assertions of liberation through a path that cultivates the sixteen attributes of the four noble truths. The conception of true existence will definitely induce craving, and anything other than the wisdom realizing emptiness will only be a remedial measure at best. There can be a temporary stopping but since the basis, which is a conception of true existence, has not been abandoned, the afflictions will most assuredly arise again. Geshe-la supplemented this passage by quoting from *General Meaning*, which provides further commentary from Jedzumba.

Lama Tsongkhapa's commentary after this passage mentions the two *Knowledges*, which refer to Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge* and Asanga's *Compendium of Knowledge*, which set out within the context of their presentation, the means of overcoming the afflictions through the realization of the sixteen attributes of the four noble truths. As we have seen in our *Middle Way* studies, those presentations are interpretive since that path is not sufficient to overcome the afflictions because it does not destroy the conception of true existence.

The nine-fold division of the conceptions of a self of phenomena

In the last paragraph of this section (p.29 of *Illumination*), Lama Tsongkhapa addresses the division of "the conceptions that apprehend phenomena" (as well as "the conceptions that apprehend apprehendeds and apprehenders to be different substances") into nine levels of objects of abandonment of the path of meditation. He indicates that this way of dividing them is to be interpreted since it is only for those who are temporarily unable to realize both the coarse and subtle selflessnesses of phenomena. Geshe-la made a curious comment in regard to this section, saying that such a division of these conceptions into nine levels is made only from the point of view of the Hinayana path; from the point of view of the Mahayana path, no such division is made. This seems unusual since in Svatantrika, there was a presentation of these nine in regard to the bodhisattva path. It does seem that Lama Tsongkhapa's commentary is refuting the Svatantrika view but it's not clear how these nine levels of conception are made from the point of view of the Hinayana path. (Geshe-la addressed this concern to some degree in the Friday class – see comments below)

In the Prasangika presentation, the conception of true existence and its seeds are afflictive obstructions and not knowledge obstructions. In terms of the nine-fold division, if we were to make such a division of Prasangika, the first six levels are abandoned over the first six grounds and the last three on the seventh ground. So the afflictive obstructions are necessarily abandoned before the knowledge obstructions in Prasangika, and this occurs on the eighth ground.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A-2 The way in which mere conventionalities appear and do not appear to the three persons

The meaning of "the three persons" in this context

Earlier we looked at "the three persons", meaning those who have abandoned ignorance and its seeds but here there is another set of "three persons": (1) The first group are sentient beings who have not had a realization of emptiness (i.e. non-superiors), (2) The second set are the three persons we discussed before – hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers as well as bodhisattvas on the pure grounds, (3) The third group are non-sentient beings or buddhas, those who have abandoned all obstructions. For the first group there is both the appearance of true existence and an adherence to that appearance. In the second group there is the appearance of true existence but not the adherence. When referring to the second group, in the *Autocommentary* (p.62), Chandrakirti says that

true existence “appears to the aryas who have a sphere together with appearance” and this is referring to those aryas in subsequent attainment. The term “sphere” refers to the range of objects in which the mind involves itself and that sphere, in this case, is associated with the appearance of true existence. When these aryas possess “a sphere without appearance”, i.e. in meditative equipoise, true existence does not appear. For the third group, buddhas, there is neither the appearance nor the conception of true existence.

Regarding non-afflictive ignorance

Geshe-la says that, according to what Lama Tsongkhapa says on p.29 of *Illumination* (Chandrakirti says the same in *Autocommentary*), it appears that the second group (the three persons we discussed earlier) have “unafflicted ignorance which has the characteristic of a knowledge obstruction,” meaning a *non-afflictive ignorance*. Is there non-afflictive ignorance, and if there is, what is it? Since ignorance is a consciousness, is non-afflictive ignorance also a consciousness? In *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way* (pp.467-468), Daniel Cozort says that Jamyang Shepa asserts that the nature of the knowledge obstructions is having a factor of non-afflictive ignorance, which he believes is a type of consciousness. In his opinion and those who followed him, “there must be consciousnesses, not merely non-associated compositional factors that are obstructions to omniscience.” Usually we talk about these latencies being a non-associated compositional factor which give rise to deceptive appearances, and here Jamyang Shepa is saying that there must be a consciousness that is included in the obstructions to omniscience.

Earlier we looked at the definitions of the obstructions (see handout “From Jedzunba’s *General Meaning*”, dated Feb.21, 2000) and in the definition for a manifest knowledge obstruction, it talks about it “being a factor of mistaken dualistic appearance”. Daniel Cozort suggests that perhaps Jamyang Shepa is thinking that if it is mistaken, this term can only apply to a consciousness and not an object since objects are not mistaken. However, aside from propounding a “factor of mistaken dualistic appearance”, there is nowhere else that Lama Tsongkhapa even suggests that there is a factor of consciousness in the knowledge obstructions. According to Jedzunba, there is no knowledge obstruction that is a consciousness; rather they are only non-associated compositional factors. Consistent with this view, Daniel Cozort cites Kensur Yeshey Tupden who says that this ignorance is not a consciousness but is simply named that.

June 29 (Thursday)

Non-afflictive ignorance in Vaibhashika

Due to the knowledge obstructions, all phenomena appear to truly exist to the minds of sentient beings except for the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise on emptiness. Yesterday we were discussing Chandrakirti’s comment regarding “unafflicted ignorance that has the characteristic of a knowledge obstruction”, and there are different interpretations of what this non-afflictive ignorance is. Our tradition says this is only labeled ignorance since it is not actually consciousness. There is a class of non-afflictive ignorance posited by the Vaibhashikas and there are four types of them (these are listed in the transcript of Week 18, p.3). According to that school, in order to overcome these four types of non-afflictive ignorance and attain all-knowingness, Shakyamuni Buddha collected merit over three countless great eons on the bodhisattva path.

Regarding “appearances that are polluted by ignorance and its latencies”

On p. 29 of *Illumination*, there is another curious passage. Later in the same sentence containing the comment on “unafflicted ignorance”, Lama Tsongkhapa says that superiors in subsequent attainment “have objects that are together with appearances that are polluted by ignorance and its latencies”. It seems unusual to say these appearances are polluted by ignorance in particular since this passage appears to be referring to the three persons who have abandoned the conception of true existence, so they no longer have ignorance. (Geshe-la discussed the meaning of this passage in the class of Friday, June 30 – see below for additional comments on this).

The nature of the knowledge obstructions

In Lama Tsongkhapa’s text someone asks, then what are the knowledge obstructions in our system? The knowledge obstructions are that which prevents the simultaneous direct realization of the two truths. Mainly these are the latencies of ignorance as well as the latencies of attachment and the other afflictions. How do the knowledge obstruction manifest? According to the definition of a manifest knowledge obstruction, they

manifest as a factor of mistaken dualistic appearance, meaning the appearance of true existence. This factor prevents the simultaneous and direct realization of both the emptiness of true existence of all phenomena, and all conventionalities. Sentient beings cannot realize both the modes, ultimate truths, and the varieties, conventional truths, directly and simultaneously as long as the knowledge obstructions and their resultant appearance of true existence is there. (Geshe-la discussed the meaning of “factor” in this definition in the class of Friday, June 30 – see below for additional comments on this).

As we’ve discussed, there are two types of knowledge obstructions, manifest and seed. With regard to the manifest knowledge obstruction, it is basically a factor of mistaken dualistic appearance, and the seed is the latency that is the cause of the mistaken dualistic appearance. So the appearances that are the result of the latencies are also considered knowledge obstructions. All of the awarenesses of sentient beings except direct realizations of emptiness are polluted by the appearance of true existence. The awarenesses themselves are affected in that even our eye consciousness apprehending a book, for example, is affected by the appearance of a truly existent book. It’s similar to looking at the world through green sunglasses and everything appears green because of that. Our entire cognitive process is polluted with the knowledge obstructions.

Regarding the latencies of attachment and other afflictions

Later on p.29 of *Illumination*, there is mention of the Hinayana foe destroyers who have abandoned all the afflictive obstructions but nonetheless, due to the latencies of attachment and so forth that are knowledge obstructions, they manifest negative actions of body and speech. Such foe destroyers are seen to jump around like monkeys and make derogatory comments towards others. These manifestations of the latencies of the afflictions, which are the knowledge obstructions, establish that there is another level of obstructions that have not been abandoned by such foe destroyers.

According to what Lama Tsongkhapa says, these latencies of attachment and so forth seem to be the cause of both the manifestations of negative actions of body and speech as well as “factors of mistaken dualistic appearance”. However that seems to be contradictory to a portion of the definition that Jedzunba gave for a seed of a knowledge obstruction. Jedzunba says that a seed of a knowledge obstruction “arises through the depositing of an uncommon imprint from the conception of true existence which is its cause and is the substantial cause for mistaken dualistic appearance which is its result.” This definition suggests that only the conceptions of true existence (and not other afflictions) can deposit “an uncommon imprint” from which a seed of a knowledge obstruction arises. (Geshe-la also discussed this issue in the class of Friday, June 30 – see below for additional comments on this).

Two types of latencies

In order to further distinguish the nature of the knowledge obstructions, Lama Tsongkhapa says there are two types of latencies, (1) the latencies that are seeds of the afflictions, and (2) the latencies that are not seeds of the afflictions. The word “latency” applies to both of these but only the second type are considered as knowledge obstructions. Latencies are like “tracks” laid down in the mind that cause the mind to process information or apprehend things in that habitual pattern, along those same “tracks”.

The latencies that are seeds of the afflictions refer to the potency that is able to give rise to a later similar type of affliction. Given the proper condition they will give rise to an affliction similar to the type that gave rise to the latency. The latencies that are not seeds of the afflictions refer to those that lack the ability to produce a similar type of affliction. For example, the three persons have abandoned the afflictions exhaustively but they still have the latencies that are not seeds of the afflictions since the afflictions cannot arise again. The awareness of the three persons is still polluted with the appearance of true existence because of these latencies. These are knowledge obstructions.

Alternating of appearance existing and not existing in subsequent attainment and meditative equipoise

Lama Tsongkhapa indicates that foe destroyers and pure ground bodhisattvas have the appearance of true existence in subsequent attainment but it is not present in meditative equipoise. However, to buddhas there is no such alternation of the appearance existing and not existing. Sentient beings cannot have the explicit and direct realization of the two truths simultaneously. We cannot have the direct realization of conventionalities in a dualistic fashion and emptiness in a non-dualistic manner. What this means is that our minds have certain

limitations. What exactly is the reason why this is so? It seems that since all phenomena appear as truly existent outside of meditative equipoise, it is impossible to maintain a realization of the lack of that appearance at the same time. For a buddha the knowledge obstructions have been removed and so that factor that disallows simultaneous and direct realization of the two truths is no longer present.

The appearance of conventionalities and the appearance of true existence

In commenting on the last part of this section, Geshe-la talked about the fact that, because the mind is operating in regard to conventionalities outside of meditative equipoise, phenomena appear as truly existent (see transcript of Week 18, p.5). Due to the fact that the superior's awareness has been polluted by the latencies, all phenomena appear as truly existent in subsequent attainment. However, those latencies do not operate in meditative equipoise on emptiness because conventionalities do not appear. It is important to not see true existence as something coming from "out there" but rather as a part of the cognitive process. Chandrakirti says that buddhas operate in regard to all objects without "the flow of mind and mental factors" and Lama Tsongkhapa says this means that there is no conceptuality in the continuum of a buddha. Since a buddha knows all phenomena directly, it would seem that this means simply that there is no meaning generality for the buddha's consciousness. But it does raise some interesting concerns, for example, what is the nature of non-conceptual compassion?

June 30 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

- ← Regarding attachment and hatred being wrong consciousnesses, Geshe-la confirmed that they are wrong consciousnesses although he doesn't recall seeing a text that specifically says that. This is consistent with what we concluded earlier this week.
- ← Concerning the division of the conception of true existence into nine levels, Geshe-la said that it's possible that when the transcripts say that it's not a presentation "in terms of" the Hinayana path, that may not be quite correct. However, he didn't elaborate on this.
- ← Geshe-la was also asked about passages on p.30 of *Illumination*, regarding the term "conceptions of appearances" that is used both in the context of the three persons having an appearance of true existence in subsequent attainment as well as in commenting on a buddha having no conceptuality. It's not clear what the response was on this one.
- ← Regarding the phrase "appearance polluted by ignorance and the latencies" on p.29 of *Illumination*, we asked Geshe-la what the significance is of indicating pollution by ignorance since this was referring to the appearance of true existence to the three persons who have already abandoned ignorance. Geshe-la seemed to say that Lama Tsongkhapa was emphasizing ignorance as the cause of the appearance, even though ignorance itself is no longer present in the minds of the three persons.
- ← When asked about the meaning of "factor" in the definition of manifest knowledge obstructions, Geshe-la said that it means a "part" of the mistaken dualistic appearance. Further, he said that it's added in this definition similar to the way "abiding in a class" is used in other definitions, in that it allows for exceptions to the definition to be acceptable. He indicated that, if "factor" wasn't there, then an eye consciousness of a learner superior, for example, could be that definition but not the definiendum.
- ← Geshe-la also confirmed that the latencies of attachment and so forth are not only a knowledge obstruction that cause negative actions of body and speech but also acts to cause mistaken dualistic appearance, just as the latencies of the conception of true existence do.
- ← Regarding the earliest point at which one could view phenomena as "mere conventionalities", it seems that as soon as you have a realization of emptiness (meaning at least an inferential realization of emptiness), you could have a realization of phenomena as mere conventionalities. This would mean that it could occur even prior to entering the path.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3A-3 The way in which [things] are ultimate and conventional relative to ordinary beings and superiors

Ultimates for ordinary beings are mere conventionalities for the three persons

Chandrakirti says that in the perspective of ordinary people, pots and so forth are ultimate, they are seen as ultimately existent or truly existent. Ordinary beings here is equivalent to the childish, those who have no

understanding of emptiness. For the three persons who have abandoned ignorance, in their perspective pots and so forth are mere conventionalities since, although appearing to truly exist, they are not adhered to as truly existent but, on the contrary, are seen as falsities. This is the way all conventional phenomena appear to these three persons, since pots and so forth have been negated as being true although they have not been negated as being truths for a concealer. The referent object for ordinary beings who conceive of pots and so forth to truly exist is not a conventionality in the perspective of these three persons because it is a non-existent.

A pot, for example, is a dependent-arising and the reality of a pot is taken as the ultimate for the three persons. The reality of the pot is its emptiness of true existence. With regard to ordinary persons, the pot's existing truly or ultimately is taken as the ultimate. So we cannot take a single base and say it is an ultimate for superior beings and a conventionality for ordinary beings. In the perspective of an ordinary person, a book ultimately exists (i.e. it exists inherently, is established by way of its own character, and so forth) but in the perspective of a superior being, it is deceptive.

Further on this, Lama Tsongkhapa mentions the fact that if an object is realized as a conventional truth in the perspective of a particular awareness, then with respect to that awareness that object cannot be a truth. If a pot is realized as a conventional truth by an awareness, then in the perspective of that awareness the pot has become a falsity. If a single base is a conventional truth for an awareness, then that base cannot be a truth for that awareness. Also, it has been stated previously that unreal objects such as reflections and so forth are seen as falsities by worldly beings in that a reflection of a face appears to be a face but is not, therefore, perhaps we could posit unreal objects as conventionalities in the perspective of worldly persons.

The unvarying nature is the ultimate for a buddha

In the final part of this section, Lama Tsongkhapa comments on another passage from Chandrakirti's *Autocommentary* that examines the ultimate in the perspective of a buddha. For a buddha, the ultimate – emptiness – is the unvarying nature, meaning that which does not have alternating appearances. Such alternating appearances, with the nature at times being an object with the appearance of inherent existence, and then the nature at other times being an object without the appearance of inherent existence, do not exist for a buddha's awareness. This is the reality seen in meditative equipoise, it is the supreme object and is therefore said to be true. It is true because it is non-deceptive in that it exists the way it appears. For a buddha, there is dualistic appearance but not the appearance of true existence. We will examine this in the next section but basically there are three levels of dualistic appearance: the appearance of true existence, the appearance of conventionalities, and the appearance of subject and object as separate. So it is possible for a buddha to have dualistic appearance but not have the appearance of true existence.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

July 3 (Monday)

Having looked at the explanation of the individual entity of conventional truth, we now proceed to an explanation of ultimate truth.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3B Explanation of the ultimate truth

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3B-1 Explanation of the meaning of the words of the root verse

Chandrakirti's text says that the ultimate truth is inexpressible and not an object of knowledge. We must discern what is meant by this description. "Inexpressible" means that ultimate truth cannot be expressed just as it is by words. It is "not an object of knowledge" means that it also cannot be known just as it is by a conventional awareness induced by those words. There is a difference between talking about or describing a particular object and actually experiencing it, although the description at times may come close. As Geshe-la pointed out, for someone who has not tasted molasses, you can tell them it is sweet, but it is nearly impossible to describe what "sweet" is like for someone who hasn't experienced it.

The analogy of the falling hairs

Similarly, someone with cataracts who sees falling hairs will continue to perceive them and try to remove them from cups, plates, and so forth. Someone else who doesn't have such impairment upon observing this person trying to sweep away non-existent hairs, can tell that person that no such falling hairs exist. The person with cataracts, although they would still have the appearance of falling hairs may be able to alter their behavior somewhat if they accept the non-existence of the falling hairs. So someone who doesn't have impairments can have an effect upon those who do. A common being who realizes emptiness through a meaning generality does not understand it the same direct, bare way that a superior does but nonetheless does realize it conceptually. In the same way, the experience of not seeing the existence of falling hairs is still quite different from not seeing them at all although eventually the person with cataracts may be able to understand that they do not exist.

Two points from the analogy

From this discussion of the analogy of the falling hairs, Lama Tsongkhapa makes two main points (p.31 of *Illumination*). First, that it is not the case that ultimate truth cannot be expressed by scriptures and words that express the meaning of it. Secondly, neither is it the case that it cannot be realized by an awareness based upon such words.

The suchness of the falling hairs

Commenting on the root verse (6.29), Lama Tsongkhapa says "the suchness of the falling hairs that are seen by those with cataracts is what is seen by those without cataracts; it is not what is seen by those with cataracts." Earlier we said that ultimate truth cannot be expressed or realized by ordinary beings "just as it is", and this is expressed here by the term "suchness". As applied to the analogy of the cataracts, the suchness of the situation is the absence of falling hairs – that is the reality seen by persons with no cataracts. For those with cataracts there is a deceptive appearance. The suchness of that, the absence of falling hairs, is only seen by a person without cataracts.

The meaning of the analogy

Lama Tsongkhapa explains the meaning of the analogy in two parts. (1) Those who do not see suchness due to a polluted awareness: This refers to those whose minds are polluted by ignorance. They observe the conventional, deceptive entities of the aggregates and so forth, and do not see the reality of them, just like those with cataracts who see falling hairs. The aggregates and so forth appear to truly exist and are observed by the minds of those with ignorance. The falling hairs are analogous to the truly existent aggregates and so forth. (2) Those observed by means of not seeing the aggregates and so forth: This refers to those who see the suchness or reality of the aggregates and so forth, and specifically, this refers to buddhas, who are free of the knowledge obstructions. They see the reality of the aggregates by *not seeing* the aggregates. The aggregates are seen for what they really are, just as the absence of falling hairs is seen by those without cataracts, so they see the absence of the deceptive aggregates and so forth. The nature of the aggregates as seen by buddhas is like the absence of falling hairs as seen by someone whose eyes are without cataracts. For the person with cataracts the truth is falling

hairs, while the absence of falling hairs is truth or ultimate for someone without cataracts. Similarly, a buddha sees the ultimate while ordinary beings see the conventional.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B3B-2 Dispelling disputes about [the meaning of the words of the root verse]

An objection is raised based on the following logic. If a buddha sees the reality of the aggregates in a manner of not seeing, just as one without cataracts does not see falling hairs, so the buddhas would not see the aggregates themselves. This follows since they do not have the appearance of the aggregates and so forth as ultimate, just as the falling hairs appear only to those with cataracts. So, if that is so, then those appearances do not exist, since if they do not exist for a buddha, they do not exist at all. If a buddha sees the ultimate by not seeing the conventional, then it follows that a buddha does not see conventional truths at all; therefore they do not exist.

If the analogy of the falling hairs is taken to that level then such a consequence would follow. We have to say that a buddha sees conventional truths since, besides being omniscient, the purpose of a buddha is to enact the welfare of sentient beings so it is essential to say this. The person without cataracts doesn't see falling hairs but this doesn't mean that a buddha doesn't see the aggregates and so forth that are seen by an ordinary being. This objection is simply a case of talking an analogy too far, so Lama Tsongkhapa proceeds to explain how a buddha's mind knows both ultimate truths and conventional truths directly and simultaneously.

The way in which a buddha's exalted wisdom knows ultimate truths

A buddha sees the reality of conventionalities such as pots and so forth in a manner of not seeing deceptive appearance. When the deceptive appearance is absent with respect to a pot, the reality of the pot is seen. When we say that a buddha sees the ultimate by way of not seeing the appearance of conventionalities, what is the meaning of this? Does it mean that "not seeing the appearance of conventionalities" is the means to realize emptiness? Not finding a truly existent pen would be the realization of emptiness of the pen so it would seem to follow somewhat.

However, in *The Two Truths* (p.196), Guy Newland suggests that this is not a correct interpretation of this statement. He says, "Therefore, when it is said that one sees emptiness by way of not seeing conventionalities, Ge-luk-bas understand this only as a description of the manner in which the ultimate truth is directly realized; they do *not* take it as the prescribed method used to attain that direct realization." So not seeing conventionalities is not the method but rather the manner in which ultimate truth is realized.

The way in which a buddha's exalted wisdom knows conventional truths

A buddha knows all phenomena directly, so there is no realization of objects implicitly, therefore all objects of knowledge must appear to the mind of a buddha. So, how do conventionalities appear to a buddha? The factor of mistaken dualistic appearance is what causes sentient beings to see conventionalities as truly existent. If we once again use the analogy of the falling hairs, the appearance of falling hairs exists for and is seen by the person with cataracts. A buddha cannot know those falling hairs by the force of his own cataracts since he doesn't have cataracts – the only way he can know the falling hairs is from the perspective of someone with cataracts and a buddha can only know that by clairvoyance. This means that a buddha cannot know truths for a concealer through her own concealer because ignorance is no longer present. A buddha can only realize conventionalities by way of the appearance of such conventionalities to minds polluted by ignorance.

The Two Truths on impure and pure conventionalities

Although Lama Tsongkhapa does not speak of this in *Illumination*, in *The Two Truths* (pp.198-199), Guy Newland discusses this topic by dividing conventionalities into impure and pure. He says that the first "are impure phenomena that arise under the influence of ignorance or its latencies," so these arise through the force of sentient beings' karma and afflictions. Impure conventionalities "appear to a buddha only from the viewpoint of their appearing to persons who have pollution by ignorance." Pure conventionalities are those "that are free from pollution by the latencies of ignorance," such as the major signs and minor marks of a buddha. Guy Newland says these also appear to minds affected by ignorance but moreover, are also known by a buddha's exalted wisdom "as spontaneous effects of a buddha's eons of practice as a bodhisattva." There is more regarding qualms about impure and pure conventionalities in *The Two Truths*, pp.211-213.

Qualms regarding appearances of conventionalities to a buddha

In regard to the way that a buddha knows conventionalities, there are many interesting points of discussion. Later in our *Middle Way* studies, we will examine how a glass of liquid can appear to different beings as different substances (as pus and blood to a hungry ghost, as water to a human, as nectar to a god). The glass of liquid appearing to a hungry ghost as pus and blood appears directly to a buddha but only through the appearance of the liquid as pus and blood to the hungry ghost. The pus and blood do appear as truly existent to the hungry ghost but to a buddha, the pus and blood do not appear that way. Guy Newland suggests that “there must be a factor within a buddha’s omniscience that is able to see tables, etc. as stripped of the appearance of inherent existence.”

But why doesn’t a buddha have the ability to see the cup of fluid as pus and blood from the side of the fluid itself? If the liquid also appears to a human as water and to a god as nectar, it follows that the fluid does not exist separately as pus and blood. The pus and blood only exist in the perspective of a hungry ghost, the water only exists in the perspective of a human, and so on. But are there objects that only exist for a buddha? If so, can a buddha know those objects through the force of the appearance of the object itself and not through its appearance to others? Guy Newland (p.212) indicates that “those that are pure they see as their own appearances,” but this is one area that is hard to reconcile. (Geshe-la commented on this in the Friday, July 7 class).

However, it is not that there are limitations on what a buddha can know, rather this is simply the way conventionalities exist. From our teachings, it seems that the only way that a buddha can know an imputed phenomenon is by knowing it through the minds of the beings who impute it. If we take, for example, a one hundred-dollar bill, we can see that the printed piece of paper that we call a one hundred-dollar bill exists as a hundred-dollar bill in the minds of those who value and impute it as such. To someone who doesn’t impute that value, it can be seen as any number of things. So the only way to know it as a one hundred-dollar bill is to know it through the minds of those who impute that phenomenon on that basis of designation.

July 4 (Tuesday)

To summarize our recent discussion, having removed the latencies of mistaken dualistic appearance, buddhas are able to have direct and simultaneous realization of the two truths. For them, subsequent attainment and meditative equipoise are one entity in the manner of never arising again from meditative equipoise.

A buddha’s two modes of perception

Towards the bottom of p.32 of *Illumination*, there is a quote that indicates that a single moment of an exalted knower of all aspects knows all phenomena. As we said earlier, for a buddha, although his exalted wisdom is one entity, there are two modes of perception, one realizing emptiness in a non-dualistic fashion, and the other realizing conventionalities in a dualistic fashion. Guy Newland (p.192) says that “every instant, all of a buddha’s consciousnesses non-conceptually realize all emptinesses by way of a vanishing of dualistic appearance and simultaneously non-conceptually realize all concealer-truths by way of an association with dualistic appearance.”

Query concerning the manner in which a buddha realizes ultimate truths

In *Illumination* on p.33, someone raises a question concerning the manner in which a buddha realizes ultimate truth. We said earlier that it is realized in the same way that someone realizes the reality of the absence of falling hairs by not seeing falling hairs, in that the buddha realizes ultimate truth by not seeing conventionalities. It seems that if a buddha sees ultimate truth in the manner of not seeing conventionalities, then a buddha does not see conventionalities. This questioner is assuming that the very non-existence of the aggregates in the perspective of an exalted wisdom is the final mode of being of conventionalities. Lama Tsongkhapa replies that not seeing is explained as the highest seeing – the highest object truth is seen in a manner of not seeing conventionalities. An explanation of what Lama Tsongkhapa means by this response follows.

“Seeing and non-seeing are not posited in regard to a single basis.”

Lama Tsongkhapa says, “Since, as was explained before, not seeing elaborations is posited as ‘seeing free from elaborations,’ seeing and non-seeing are not posited in regard to a single basis.” As we said earlier, the non-

seeing of conventionalities, such as a pot, is the seeing of the ultimate. Geshe-la says that “seeing and non-seeing are not posited in regard to a single basis” means that seeing is posited in regard to modes and non-seeing is posited in regard to varieties. To show how they are not posited in regard to a single basis, if we take a pot, for example, can we say that seeing the pot is not seeing, meaning the highest seeing? No – if you saw the pot as a conventionality then you would see that as its highest truth, meaning that both ultimate and conventional would be the same isolate. So we can only say this in terms of two bases, that seeing the emptiness of the pot is not seeing the pot.

Seeing the ultimate is like seeing space

There are two verses from the *Compendium on the Mahayana* by Asanga. The first verse points out that by not seeing the aggregates and so forth, one sees phenomena, here meaning the suchness of the aggregates. The second verse explains the analogy of the way that space is seen, in that by not seeing obstructive objects, space is seen. Likewise, suchness is seen in a manner of not seeing conventionalities. Lama Tsongkhapa says that the last line of that quote (“Such seeing cannot be described by other analogies”) does not mean that the manner of seeing blue would be a similar analogy, meaning that it is not seen in the manner of seeing a positive phenomenon. It seems that this is referring to the fact that space is often seen as blue and the point then is that seeing space through seeing that blue is not the way that we are talking about how space is seen in this analogy.

The first two passages from the *Exalted Engaging in the Two Truths Sutra*

There follow passages from the *Exalted Engaging in the Two Truths Sutra* that were also quoted by Chandrakirti in the *Autocommentary*. In terms of the first, Lama Tsongkhapa says that, in the perspective of a seer of ultimate truth, ultimate truth is not seen in the way that the aggregates are not seen. If ultimate truth was an object comparable to the aggregates and seen in the same manner, it would be a dualistic elaboration, a conventionality. Perhaps this is simply reiterating the fact that ultimate truth is not a conventional truth. The second passage indicates that the varieties of phenomena do not appear, nor do the subject and object (agent and object, speaker and speech, and so forth) appear in the perspective of the exalted wisdom realizing the ultimate directly.

The third passage from the *Exalted Engaging in the Two Truths Sutra*

Concerning the third sutra passage, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the ultimate is not an object of a dualistic exalted wisdom. In a conceptual realization of emptiness, one necessarily observes it in a dualistic manner, meaning with a separation of subject and object. However, in the direct realization of emptiness, there is a vanishing of dualistic appearance. To such a non-dualistic awareness, subject and object do not appear distinct, but rather they become undifferentiable, like water poured into water. The main point here is that ultimate truth is not a dualistic object of a buddha’s omniscient consciousness. For more on this, Guy Newland discusses dualistic appearance in *The Two Truths* (p.107-109). In explaining this section, Geshe-la spoke about the three levels of dualistic appearance that were touched on in review class last week (the appearance of conventionalities, the appearance of true existence, and the appearance of subject and object). When we studied the three practices of ordinary beings in the first part of the *Supplement*, one of them was a non-dualistic wisdom but recall that non-dualistic there was different from these, in that it referred to a wisdom free from the two extremes.

Relating the discussion of ultimate truth to the refutation of production from other

In summation, this whole section is in the context of whether the world is able to harm the previous Prasangika refutation of production from other. In terms of analyzing the suchness of production from other, only superiors are authorities in this regard. The world cannot harm the refutation of production from other that is established by the exalted wisdom of superiors, an ultimate analysis of the way things exist.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

September 27 (Wednesday)

Background of current discussion

We are in the sixth chapter of Chandrakirti's *Supplement to the Middle Way*, which discusses the perfection of wisdom that is attained by the bodhisattva realizing the ten samenesses. In *Fundamental Wisdom*, Nagarjuna chose to analyze the sameness of phenomena in not being inherently produced, by way of analyzing the four extremes. Chandrakirti, in analyzing the selflessness of phenomena, also uses refutation by the four extremes, which examines the causes of production (as opposed to refutation by the four alternatives, which examines the results of production).

The first extreme is the refutation of production from self, and Chandrakirti did this by setting out the two consequences, that production would be purposeless and that production would be endless. The second extreme is the refutation of production from other, which Chandrakirti refuted by the consequences that darkness arises from a flame and that everything is produced from everything. In that context, a barley seed, for example, would equally be a producer of a rice sprout just as a rice seed is, since the barley seed and the rice seed are equally inherently existent other.

Having refuted production from other, the opponents countered with the argument that the seers of the world *do* observe production from other, so we next studied the Prasangika reasoning which refuted that assertion. To that statement, Prasangika replied with a discussion of the two truths, in which it was put forth that the seers of the world are not valid with respect to suchness. Prasangika does accept the conventions of the world but there are areas where the world is not valid, specifically with regard to suchness.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B4 Indicating that which invalidates the harm by the world to the refutation [of production from other]

As we said above, earlier in the text, Prasangika refuted production from other for the Proponents of True Existence (note that this includes Svatantrika since true existence here means inherent existence). In response to the original claim that worldly beings can harm the production of other, Prasangika says that the scope of suchness is beyond their competence; only superiors are valid with respect to suchness.

Renowned to the world vs. renowned to ordinary worldly beings

In verse 6.30, Chandrakirti says “the foolish as valid is also unreasonable,” meaning that worldly beings as valid is not even feasible. What does it mean here to be a worldly being, or to say something is renowned to the world? In *Illumination*, Lama Tsongkhapa defines the foolish as “normal worldly beings”, with normal meaning “ordinary”, and this is a point of fine distinction that is made in Gelukba studies. This is set out by Daniel Cozort in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way* (p.179), where he indicates that the term “ordinary” in the phrase “renown to an ordinary worldly awareness” “precludes anything not obvious to an ordinary person.” So the qualification of “ordinary” would exclude such conventional phenomena as the bodhisattva paths and stages, the absorption of cessation, and so forth, since they are phenomena that are not within the scope of knowledge an ordinary being. On the other hand, “well known to the world” refers to everything that is established for conventional awareness and, as such, is inclusive of all conventional truths. This means that all conventional knowledge is “well known to the world,” so the only phenomenon that is excluded is emptiness, ultimate truth.

Demonstrating the need for superiors to validate suchness

Chandrakirti goes on to say that, if ordinary worldly beings were valid with respect to suchness, what need would there be of superiors? What valid cognition establishes production from other? If you say that it exists for ordinary worldly beings, then ordinary beings have realized suchness since beginningless time and that they have already abandoned ignorance; therefore there would be no need for a superior's path to realize it. So ordinary worldly beings do not have a valid cognition of production from other or they would realize suchness or truth and a superior's path would be deemed unnecessary.

September 28 (Thursday)

Yesterday we made the distinction between a worldly being and an ordinary worldly being. There is much debate on this very subject. A worldly being can include even a yogi, someone with great insight. An ordinary worldly being is one who has not studied tenets. Their knowledge is of the more obvious things, such as the fact that a tree arises from a seed that is planted.

According to Jedzunba, what is renowned to the world is what is known by a conventional valid cognizer. What ordinary people think and talk about, the words and concepts that they use, are what are included in this category. So production from other would not seem to be such a topic. Also, as we discussed yesterday, if ordinary worldly beings were correct in regard to suchness, reality, then they would already realize the truth. Having realized truth, they would have already removed their ignorance and so a superior's path would be meaningless.

Lama Tsongkhapa says that when Chandrakirti states that "in all aspects the world is not valid," this means that the world is not valid in respect to suchness, emptiness. Therefore the world cannot harm Prasangika's refutation of production from other, since that is set out in the scope of the reality of how things exist. Only superiors are competent to judge whether things are produced from other or not.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-1B5 Indicating the way of harming that is harm by the world

If ordinary beings cannot harm this refutation, what can the world harm? What are they valid for? What can they invalidate? Geshe-la says that the world is capable of harming anything that goes beyond what is renowned to the world. To illustrate this, an example is put forth, where someone says that a substance of his was stolen, the other person says "What substance?" The man replies that a pot is the substance, and the other's reply is that a pot is not a substance, just as a dream pot is not a substance. This person is trying to refute that a substance was stolen by saying that a pot is not a substance. This type of argument the world can invalidate, because a pot as a substance is established by a valid cognizer so the world can refute it. However, objects such as emptiness of inherent existence are beyond the scope or purview of the world.

Lama Tsongkhapa elaborates on this with other examples, one concerning someone saying that "I am not the owner of the pot and Devadatta is not the robber." In general, to say that there is no owner of a pot and so forth, can be true in one sense but these are not conventionally correct since they are outside of the conventions of the world. In worldly conventions, if someone steals a pot from another who owns it, he will go to jail. There are the conventions of the world that we have to abide by but there are some objects of knowledge that worldly beings are simply not competent to validate.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1B-2 Dispelling harm from the world through production from other not existing even in the conventions of the world

Here we are speaking about the conventions of the world, that is, what people talk about and think about. Ordinary people simply do not talk and think about production from other. Through two examples, Chandrakirti (6.32) demonstrates that Prasangika's refutation of production from other is not harmed from the world because this notion or idea doesn't even exist for the world. Ordinary beings do not think in terms of other or same in regard to one continuum, as is seen when they say, "I planted a tree," in spite of knowing that it was really a seed they planted. Although they would agree that the tree grows from a seed, they do not naturally think that the tree is other than the seed. It's true that someone must even have learned the terms "tree" and "seed" initially too, but training in terminology is mere philosophical study and not the same type of learning.

Regarding innate ignorance

Concerning innate consciousnesses, Jeffrey Hopkins says in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.179) that innate ignorance "apprehends cause, effect, and production as established by way of their own character." "However," he continues, "it does not apprehend effects to be *others that are established by way of their own character*." Further, he says that "We conceive cause and effect to be inherently existent or findable, but we do not innately, naturally enter into investigation of whether they are one or other."

Do non-analytic consciousnesses think of cause and effect as other? Geshe-la seems to say no, that they do not think of cause and effect as unrelatedly other. If they did, upon planting a seed, they would not say, "I planted that tree." Similarly, when someone hurts their hand, they say, "I am hurt," in spite of the fact that the hand is

not “I” but is only a limb of the body. The lower schools are trying to argue that the world is able to overturn the Prasangika refutation of production from other but, if the world did believe in production from other, they would not say “I am hurt” when they have hurt their hand since they are unrelatedly other. The convention of unrelatedly other does not exist in the world. Worldly beings cannot invalidate the Prasangika refutation of production from other.

Recap of the refutation of the Svatantrika position on production from other

Svatantrika would say that production from other ultimately does not exist but conventionally, it does exist. How do they distinguish between those two in that school? Production from other conventionally for Svatantrika means the production that is established without analyzing for true existence. In Svatantrika, although ultimate analysis establishes that there is no true existence, there is inherent existence, meaning that there is something from the side of the object that indicates what it is, even though it’s dependent upon the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness to posit it. According to Svatantrika, an object’s entity is determined from the object’s side but that entity must be certified by a mind. A concise explanation of this Svatantrika position can be found in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.89).

Earlier, Prasangika refuted production from other from an ultimate view, with the consequences we saw earlier. Now, the opponents have said that production from other is known in the world, meaning that it is obvious to ordinary people, and Prasangika is refuting production from others conventionally. Svatantrika says that production from other is obvious to ordinary people because the sprout appears to exist inherently other than the seed. In other words, production from other is obvious to ordinary people so no reasonings are needed to establish it. Prasangika now has put forth that ordinary people simply do not have that convention, they do not think in that way, so how can they have a valid cognizer with respect to it?

September 29 (Friday)

Concerning one of the questions asked to Geshe-la in class today

One question asked today concerned what would be the fault in saying that the latencies are deposited on consciousness rather than saying the mere I, since the mere I is dependent upon imputation by the consciousness. One consequence is that Prasangika would then be holding the same view as the lower schools. To examine this further, if one searched for the latencies among the aggregates, what would be the fault of finding them there? It’s not clear. The chief objection to saying that the latencies are deposited on consciousness rather than the mere I seems to come from the fact that the lower schools are holding the latencies to be inherently existent.

The mere I is not a different entity from the aggregates in the same way that an army is not different from the entity of the soldiers imputed to be an army. The imputed phenomenon and the basis of imputation are always the same entity. For reference, in His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s *The Meaning of Life* (p.22 & p.48), there are some references to disintegratedness and how it is posited on the mere I. We have a tendency to want to solidify things and make them into “concrete” objects and Prasangika does not hold to such a process in describing reality. Prasangika says there is no need for a basis upon which to posit the latencies, but if you insist upon doing so, then it is the mere I. All Buddhist systems must account for the fruition of action into a resulting experience. According to Prasangika, the continuum of dependently-related I’s are what connects the committing of the action with the experience of the result. What occurs between the action and the result is the continuity of the I that carries that disintegratedness.

What do we mean by latency? A latency is a potency or ability, meaning something that is able to bring about some type of result. For example, when you have a rock at the top of a hill, we can speak of both kinetic energy and potential energy. If the rock started to roll down the hill, the potential energy would be transformed into kinetic energy but even as it sits at the top of the hill, there is a potential energy residing there, because of all the various factors of the rock (it’s mass, position, and so forth).

The meaning of production from other

To jump ahead for a moment, on p.30 of the Week 20 transcript, Geshe-la says that in terms of what it means to be produced from other, we are not speaking of mere production from other but rather the production of an

inherently existent result from an inherently existent cause. Svatantrika says there is such production from other since it is well known in the world and the conventions of the world have great force. However, if production from other exists to the conventions of the world, then there would be a problem with the Prasangika refutation of production from other ultimately; so Prasangika must go on to refute production from other even at a conventional level. As we've seen, Prasangika does this by showing that production from other is not renowned even to ordinary worldly beings.

Conventions refer to those ways of thinking and speaking by the world. Jeffrey Hopkins says in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.179) that Prasangika does "assert conventional production; cause and effect are still other, but not analytically findable others."

Another reason for refuting conventional production from other

Someone may say, having refuted production from other ultimately, why do we need to refute it conventionally? On p.22 of the week 20 transcript, Lama Tsongkhapa says that there is also the excellent quality of eliminating the views of permanence and annihilation through refuting it conventionally. We will discuss this more in the next section.

How dependent arising refutes the four extremes

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Chandrakirti's *Clear Words*, where a question is brought up about why the Buddha says that karmic formations arise from ignorance if there is no production in any of the four ways. Chandrakirti answers that the Buddha's saying karmic formations arise from ignorance is not discussed in the context of the reasoning analyzing suchness but rather one analyzing conventionalities. In that context, the mode of abidance is not being analyzed but rather the Bhagavan is putting forth the mere existence or entity of karmic formations arising from ignorance – given certain conditions, certain effects will arise. Prasangika employs the notion of dependent arising to explain the way that conventionalities arise. At the most profound level all phenomena are merely imputed by words and concepts.

In fact, production from the four extremes is impossible in the context of dependent production. This is discussed further by Jeffrey Hopkins in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.184), where he quotes Lama Tsongkhapa, who says, "Therefore, that by the very necessity of accepting that a sprout is produced in dependence on a seed, one is able to refute these four [extreme types of production] is a distinguishing feature of the reasoning of dependent-arising, the king of reasoning." Everything comes down to the reasoning of dependent arising, which makes production by way of the four extremes impossible.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1C Indicating the excellent qualities of such a refutation

We have refuted production from other on an ultimate and a conventional level. Now there follows a description of some of the excellent qualities that result from this, as well as clarification of some of the misunderstandings.

Avoidance of the two extremes

Chief among the excellent qualities is the avoidance of the two extremes of permanence and annihilation. By means of having refuted production from other we have established dependent arising, which allows one to be free from the two extremes.

The extreme of permanence

The extreme of permanence is different from the conception of permanence. Further, one must also distinguish the view of eternalism from the extreme of permanence. Falling into the extreme of permanence depends upon one holding to the conception of true existence. According to the extreme of permanence, things exist inherently, they are fixed or frozen and whatever properties they hold now will be held through all time. This extreme is countered by the reasoning that, if the seed and sprout inherently existed then they would be unrelated, whereby when the sprout is produced, the seed would not have disintegrated. The seed would still exist at the time of sprout.

The extreme of annihilation

Given that one holds the view of inherent existence, if someone were to refute that inherent existence, one would then think that nothing exists at all, and that is falling to the extreme of annihilation. Within the extreme of annihilation, when the seed ceases, the continuity of the seed is severed; i.e. the seed is annihilated in the sense of having no further continuity. This extreme is countered in the fact that that the continuity of the seed transforms into the entity of the sprout, so we don't say the seed is annihilated in the context of that continuity.

Relating the refutation of production from other to avoidance of the two extremes

How does the refutation of production from other assist in avoiding these two extremes? Production from other is production of an effect from a cause that is unrelatedly other. Upon the disintegration of a seed the continuity of the seed is severed because the sprout has no relation to the seed. That would be the extreme of annihilation. Alternatively, if the seed inherently existed it would exist at the time of the sprout. The existence of the sprout would not depend on the seed. That would be the extreme of permanence.

Examples of unrelatedness

To get a sense of unrelatedness, Lama Tsongkhapa describes this notion of unrelatedly other by making use of two examples. One is the idea that, if all the oxen died off, then the existence of a species of cow (called *bamen*) does not contribute to the non-dying off of the species of oxen. They are unrelatedly other. The second example is that the existence of sentient beings does not contribute to the non-severance of continuing to circle in cyclic existence by superiors.

To bring the analogy to a seed and sprout, if they are seen as unrelatedly other, this contradicts that the seed and the sprout are cause and effect. If they are not inherently existent other then there is no contradiction to them being cause and effect. Although the seed doesn't exist at the time of the sprout, this doesn't mean that the seed is annihilated. The seed's continuity is maintained in the entity of a sprout..

Distinguishing the continuity of the seed from the “continuity of its type”

Lama Tsongkhapa says that, by understanding that the sprout is the continuity of the seed then one avoids the extreme of annihilation. The seed is not completely non-existent since there is something that continues on. Lama Tsongkhapa explains this further, saying that the continuity of the seed is not interrupted although “the continuity of its type” has been interrupted. What this means is that the seed, in terms of it being a seed, has stopped. Yet the continuity of the seed remains in that there is a sprout. The seed has disintegrated but the continuity does go on in the sprout. The distinction between the continuity of the seed and the continuity of its type is that the continuity of the seed refers to it, for example, being a barley seed that produces a barley sprout which continues on. However, at the time of the barley sprout, the continuity of its type of the barley seed is finished. To summarize, the continuity of its type means its being a seed, and it is severed upon its disintegration; its continuity is not severed since it continues as a sprout. The continuity of the seed continues upon the disintegration of the seed transforming into the entity of the sprout thereby avoiding the extreme of annihilation. But, the continuity of the seed's type in the sense of its being a seed ceases upon the disintegration of the seed and therefore the seed does not exist at the time of the sprout thereby avoiding the extreme of permanence.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

October 2 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1C Indicating the excellent qualities of such a refutation (continued)

Recap of last week's discussion

Last week we began looking at the Prasangika reply to the Svatantrika claim that the world cannot harm the refutation of production from other. If it could, then the world would have realized suchness since beginningless time, have abandoned ignorance, and thus there would be no need for a superior's path. Establishing production from other is outside of the competency of the world since suchness is outside of their scope. So the question followed, then with regard to what phenomena is the world competent? There are indeed areas of competency, such as whether a pen exists or not, that the world can validate; however, suchness is simply outside of the scope of worldly validation. We also examined the way that ordinary worldly beings do not assert production from other, which can be seen in the way that people say, "I planted that tree" rather than "I planted the cause of that tree." Following that discussion, someone asked why the Buddha set out that karmic formations arise from ignorance if production from the four extremes doesn't exist, and the reply is that the teaching on karmic formations is simply setting out conventionalities. Conventionalities are not asserted in terms of production from the four extremes but rather arise due to dependent relation.

The avoidance of the two extremes

Now we are examining the excellent qualities of this refutation, beginning with the fact that, by means of this refutation, Prasangika is able to avoid falling to the two extremes. When a seed produces a sprout the seed disintegrates. Positing that it disintegrates avoids the extreme of permanence, since it no longer exists at the time of the sprout. Prasangika argues that the seed would exist at the time of the sprout if it were inherently existent. The fact is that the continuity of the seed has not been utterly annihilated since it transforms into the entity of the sprout, and thus the extreme of annihilation is avoided.

If you posit inherent existence, how is it that you fall to the two extremes? You can say that permanence results from holding to inherent existence in that one believes that if the seed is inherently existent then it is always existent. Annihilation could be said to result from holding that if the seed lacks inherent existence, then it doesn't exist at all because one holds that inherent existence is equal to existence.

Prasangika's middle way between the two extremes

In the case of the seed and the sprout, there is both something that continues and something that has stopped. At the time of the sprout, if the seed inherently existed, it would exist at the time of the sprout – that would be the extreme of permanence. On the other hand, if one holds that the seed produces the sprout and that the seed becomes utterly non-existent at that time, one thinks that the continuity of the seed has stopped – that would be the extreme of annihilation. So for Prasangika, there must be a middle way between these two that reconciles the two extremes. Svatantrika would not agree with Prasangika's middle way since they contend that if there wasn't some objective reality, then anything could be anything. Although Prasangika holds that if something inherently existed it would be permanent, fixed and unchanging, Svatantrika would probably not agree with that assertion. Svatantrika would still hold that an inherently existent cause gives rise to an inherently existent effect.

Regarding unrelatedness

We began to speak last week about the notion of unrelatedness and examined the examples given in the text. Another example is that a pot does not contribute to the continuity of a pillar. On the other hand, relatedness can be seen in the example of the seed and sprout, in that there is a continuity of the seed that transforms into the sprout; the two are related and so cannot be inherently existent.

As Lama Tsongkhapa explains, the seed and the sprout do not exist as just one, therefore since the seed has disintegrated at the time of the sprout, the seed itself does not transfer into the sprout. Because the seed is not one with the sprout, at the time of the sprout, "that the seed is not destroyed is refuted." Lama

Tsongkhapa is saying that it is incorrect to think that the seed and the sprout are one entity; they are not the same entity since they are cause and effect. When we say that the seed becomes a sprout we mean that the continuity of the seed transforms into a sprout, not that the seed itself transfers into the sprout.

Freedom from the two extremes as related to dependent arising

Lama Tsongkhapa refutes that the seed is inherently other than the sprout. If it were, it would exist at the time of the sprout, and that would be the extreme of permanence. On the other hand, seeing that they are not the same entity refutes the extreme of annihilation since at the time of the sprout, the seed has disintegrated, and the continuity of the seed transforms into the sprout. When the seed is seen as being free from the two extremes, it is seen as clarifying the reasoning of dependent arising. The seed is free from the extreme of permanence because it is dependent.

Regarding the meanings of “permanence” and “annihilation”

What is the difference in the word *permanence* in the extreme of permanence as opposed to the use of permanence in regard to permanent phenomena? The second refers to phenomena that do not change moment by moment. The first is implied by holding to inherent existence, meaning that one holds phenomena to be unfixed, unchanging, eternal.

The seed is free from the extreme of annihilation because it is not completely non-existent at the time of its result, the sprout. The interpretation of *annihilation* here is in the sense of meaning that the seed's continuity is severed at the time of the sprout, but there is also the idea that it could never exist.

Fundamental Wisdom on dependent arising and the two extremes

Lama Tsongkhapa ends this section by quoting Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*. This passage basically means that whatever arises dependent upon something (1) is not its own final mode of being, meaning it is not inherently existent and so doesn't bring itself into existence, and (2) is also not other than its cause, meaning it cannot be inherently other. Therefore it is neither permanent nor annihilated. If something doesn't bring itself into existence we avoid the extreme of permanence; if it is not inherently other, then we avoid the extreme of annihilation.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1D Indicating that there is never inherent production

Svatantrika asserts that ultimately things are not inherently existent, yet conventionally they are inherently existent, otherwise they would not exist at all. For them, things such as production from other inherently exist. In this section, Prasangika will be flinging three consequences to that Svatantrika point of view: (1) that a superior's meditative equipoise would bring about the destruction of things, (2) that conventional truths would be findable under ultimate analysis, and (3) that ultimate production would be irrefutable.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1D-1 Refuting the assertion of establishment by way of its own character

The consequence put forth here is that, if a pot were inherently existent, then a superior's meditative equipoise would destroy that pot. The wisdom that realizes emptiness negates inherent existence, so, if things existed inherently (and since existence equals inherent existence according to Svatantrika), then existence would be negated as well. According to Prasangika's consequence, if you negate inherent existence then you would be negating existence as well and so a superior's meditative equipoise would destroy things such as pots and so forth.

Svatantrika's differentiation between true existence and inherent existence

Having set that out, Svatantrika could reply that in their system, they distinguish between true existence and inherent existence. Although things are inherently existent, they are not necessarily observed by a superior's meditative equipoise, a direct seer of suchness. But for Prasangika, both inherent existence and true existence are hallucinated hypothetical ways of thinking; neither of them exists. But does Prasangika present the position of Svatantrika fairly? Svatantrika would not hold that a superior's meditative equipoise would negate existence in the way that Prasangika is putting forth. How effective is this consequence for a Svatantrika?

October 3 (Tuesday)

More on dependent arising

The complete Tibetan term for dependent arising or dependent relation is *rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba* (sometimes shortened to *rten 'brel* or *rten 'byung*). One thing we didn't mention earlier when discussing dependent arising in the context of refuting the two extremes is that Geshe-la taught that each of the two components of this term eliminates one of the two extremes. The idea of "dependent" eliminates the extreme of permanence in that even at the subtlest level, all phenomena are dependent upon mere imputation. If it is dependent it cannot be inherently existent so the extreme of permanence is eliminated. Geshe-la said that the second part of the term, "relation" eliminates the extreme of annihilation in that all phenomena do exist "in relation to an other", so they are not completely non-existent. Geshe-la said the reasoning of dependent arising is called the king of reasonings since it is able to eliminate the two extremes simultaneously.

Regarding the first consequence

To resume our discussion from yesterday, according to Svatantrika, phenomena although not ultimately existent are inherently existent, and there are three consequences which Prasangika throws to counter that view. The first we began to discuss yesterday, namely that a superior's meditative equipoise would cause the destruction of things since if inherent existence is refuted by that mind, then existence would also be negated. The other side of this argument will be seen in the second consequence, namely that, if the conventional existence of a pen were equated with inherent existence then inherent existence should be findable under ultimate analysis by a superior's meditative equipoise. However, it is not found; rather inherent existence is negated, so the consequence here is that conventional existents would be destroyed by that superior's meditative equipoise.

In regard to this consequence, there might be objections from Svatantrika since they are not positing inherent existence as the final or ultimate mode of existence, only its conventional mode of existence. If Prasangika were to posit that "a pen as the subject, it is destroyed by a superior's meditative equipoise because it is inherently existent," Svatantrika would say no pervasion. Prasangika might counter saying, "it follows there is pervasion since a superior's meditative equipoise negates inherent existence." Although Svatantrika might reply with "reason not established", they should accept the reason since earlier in this chapter, we already established the reasoning to refute inherent existence.

"Phenomena are not made empty by emptiness, phenomena themselves are empty..."

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes the above from the *Pile of Jewels Sutra*. The absence of hallucinated modes of existing are a phenomenon's lack of inherent existence, meaning that this lack of a way of existing is the same entity as the object itself. In other words, that lack of a way of existing cannot be distinguished as an entity separate from the phenomenon itself. The emptiness of inherent existence of the pen is the same entity as the pen itself.

Concerning "emptiness of self" and "emptiness of other"

When we speak in this way, it is talking about emptiness of self, but there is also the idea of an emptiness of other. The type of emptiness that is asserted by Prasangika is emptiness of self or own emptiness, but that term could be misinterpreted as a pen being empty of pen. What we mean by emptiness of self is an emptiness is a phenomenon's own lack of inherent existence. Also, as Geshe-la indicated, we could say that "phenomena are empty of their own entity," meaning that phenomena are empty of being established by way of their own character (or by way of their own entity). However, self-emptiness does not mean that a table is empty of being a table, otherwise there would be no table.

Emptiness of other means that phenomena are empty of a phenomenon that is a different entity themselves, as is seen in the example of a monastery being empty of monks. The Samkhyas espouse other-emptiness but there are also some Buddhist schools that hold to a doctrine of other-emptiness, for example the Jonangbas, a heretical sect of Buddhism that held an alternate doctrine of emptiness. The Jonangbas would posit emptiness of other by saying that ultimate truth is empty of being conventional truth and conventional truth is empty of being ultimate truth. Prasangika does not set forth emptiness of

other but, as we described above, emptiness of self, meaning that that which a phenomenon is empty of is the same entity as the phenomenon itself. There is an absence of a specific quality of the object that is not different entity than the object.

So, as the quote from the *Pile of Jewels Sutra* says, we are not making phenomena empty, that is we are not superimposing a way of existing onto objects that they don't have. Rather, all phenomena are empty by their very nature. We are not making objects empty by our reasoning or by merely identifying emptiness, as if emptiness was something that wasn't there before. Things by their very nature are qualified by an emptiness of inherent existence.

Misinterpretations of emptiness of self

There are two possible misinterpretations: (1) emptiness of self means, for example, pot being empty of pot, and (2) other-emptiness means an object and its emptiness of true existence are different entities. Both of these are incorrect. Regarding the first, as we explained above, a pot cannot be empty of pot or pot would not exist. As to the second, a pot being empty of true existence is not an other-emptiness, as we set out earlier.

Regarding the term “mode of existence”

We said earlier that “phenomena are empty of their own entity,” and this means that phenomena are empty of a *mode of existence*, namely that of being established by way of their own character. What is the meaning of “mode of existence”? Is dependent arising a mode of existence? Yes, but it is not a final mode of existence. We are speaking of ontology, not *what* a phenomenon is but rather, *how* it is, how it maintains its existence. So when we say that dependent arising is not a final mode of existence, what are we saying? Why can we not say that dependent arising is a final mode of existence? It would be good to contemplate this point.

Two reasons why alternate modes of emptiness are not self-emptiness

As we said earlier, emptiness of self is an emptiness of inherent existence that is the same entity as the phenomenon itself. A pot is not empty of being a pot. Emptiness of other is an emptiness of inherent existence that that is a different entity from the phenomenon. This was seen earlier in the sixth chapter (as well as in our studies of *Ornament*), when we examined the fact that the two truths are not different entities. Emptiness of own entity means that phenomena are empty of being established by way of their own character, their own entity; any other interpretation is not emptiness of own entity. Lama Tsongkhapa gives two reasons for this. First, when a valid cognizer has established an emptiness of own entity of a particular object, meaning that the object is realized as empty of being established by way of its own character, as long as that realization is maintained, the object cannot be conceived as being established by way of its own character. Secondly, if we consider emptiness in terms of either of the two misinterpretations above, then if one were to hold that conception (even though they cannot be established by a valid cognizer) and have it not degenerate, the conception of the object as inherently existent could still arise. In other words, those ways of thinking do not assume an opposite mode of apprehension to ignorance conceiving of inherent existence.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1D-1B Refuting [the assertion of establishment by way of its own character] due to it following that truth in conventional terms would withstand analysis by reasoning

The second consequence is that, if things were to inherently exist, then they would be able to bear ultimate analysis. If they existed inherently, then they would be found by a consciousness analyzing for the ultimate.

Analytical consciousnesses

We can speak of various types of consciousnesses and among them is an analytical consciousness, here meaning specifically one analyzing for the ultimate, even though there are consciousnesses that analyze conventionally. When we talk about a consciousness analyzing for the ultimate, it is analyzing for the mode of being of an object, not just the object's existence. What does it mean to be analyzed by such a consciousness, what does it mean to be able to bear or withstand analysis? When that reasoning or analytical consciousness analyzes an object, is the identified object for which we are searching able to be

found. This means that when we analyze a pot, can the identified object, an inherently existent pot, be found within the basis of imputation or separate from it. Do you find what you are searching for or its non-existence.

In this consequence, Prasangika is addressing Svatantrika, saying that, since they assert that a pot exists by way of its own character, then when a reasoning consciousness analyzes for the ultimate, it should find that inherently existent pot. So, as Svatantrika contends, if the pot inherently exists, then one should find that inherently existent pot under ultimate analysis. Would Svatantrika agree to this? Jeffrey Hopkins has said that at times Prasangika may seem to be presenting the opponents' point of view "unfairly" but yet there is validity to Prasangika's reasoning here nonetheless. The Prasangika presentation of nothing inherently existing is counter-intuitive, in that we have a natural sense of things existing from their own side and the Prasangika position opposes that view. Svatantrika on the other hand is trying to take a philosophical position that is more in line with how we presently experience the world, but Prasangika holds that our intuitive way of experiencing the world is wrong. It is only through applying analysis and reasoning that we realize that phenomena do not exist that way.

An objection from Svatantrika

Svatantrika is saying that they agree that production from other doesn't exist ultimately but if it didn't exist conventionally, then things would not exist at all. There would be only one truth, since, if production from other is not accepted conventionally, then there is only ultimate truth. Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Chandrakirti's *Autocommentary*, which quotes a sutra that says that ultimately there are not two truths since the ultimate truth is only one. "Truth" is that which is non-deceptive and only ultimate truth is non-deceptive so in a sense there is only one truth and this is why the Buddha did say that there is only one truth, but the meaning of this is different than what Svatantrika is saying. For a seer of suchness there is only one truth. Conventional truths do not exist in the perspective of a superior's meditative equipoise because only non-deceptive phenomena appear to a superior's meditative equipoise.

Two types of object of negation

Geshe-la mentions two types of object of negation: (1) objects established by way of their own character, and (2) a conventional truth existing in the perspective of an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise. In this section, what is being negated is the second, conventional truths appearing to an exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise and in that way there is only one truth. Prasangika says that if phenomena were established by way of their own character, then they would be true. What does this mean? Although phenomena appear as truly existent, they do not exist that way and if they did, they would be true, thus phenomena would be non-deceptive. In that case there would be no conventional truth, since there would be no deceptive substratum; there would be no conventional truths and therefore there would be only one truth.

The two truths as not feasible in the lower schools

Further, Prasangika would say that all the lower schools, in holding to establishment by way of their own character, are in fact holding to only one truth, since if ultimate truth is established, then conventional truth is lost, and if conventional truth is established, then ultimate truth is denied. If a pen were to exist the way it appears, then it would be non-deceptive, a truth, and in that way, conventional truths are lost. If a pen exists inherently, then there is no emptiness of inherent existence, and so ultimate truth is lost. So the lower schools cannot posit the two truths (as they are posited by Prasangika) simultaneously.

October 4 (Wednesday)

Regarding the second consequence

Svatantrika holds that phenomena inherently exist; if they actually did then, when a consciousness of an ultimate type analyzes them, it should find such inherently existent phenomena. Generally when we talk about analytical consciousnesses we are talking about a consciousness analyzing the ultimate. There are analytical consciousnesses that analyze the conventional, such as impermanence and so forth, but here we are talking about those that analyze inherent existence. If something is able to bear or withstand

analysis, it means that, upon being investigated, the reasoning consciousness analyzing for inherent existence will find it. That would mean that the object has its own final reality, that it exists from its own side, and so forth. Since Svatantrika asserts that phenomena *do* exist from their own side, upon searching for the imputed object, it should be found within the basis of imputation. We will examine this idea in more detail later.

Reviewing how the two truths are lost in the lower schools

Yesterday we examined the objection raised by Svatantrika, saying that they agree that there is no production from other ultimately but, if there were no production from other conventionally, then conventional truth would not exist and so there would be only one truth. In a sense there is only one truth since from the point of view of a superior's meditative equipoise, there is only ultimate truth; all other phenomena are deceptive. We also spoke about how the lower schools, in positing the two truths, cannot posit them simultaneously. Prasangika holds that all phenomena are falsities but if they existed the way they appear then they would be true and not false. The argument hinges on ultimate truth being non-deceptive so that is how the logic works here. On the other hand, if one posits conventional truths as inherently existent, then the ultimate truth is lost. How? By positing that phenomena are established by way of their own character, or inherently existent, then there is no ultimate truth, since there is no emptiness of inherent existence.

Is nirvana inherently existent?

In *Illumination*, someone proposes a question concerning a previous sutra quotation taken from the *Autocommentary*. The questioner, says that, because nirvana alone is truth (according to the quote), isn't it established by way of its own character? Lama Tsongkhapa responds by saying that, yes, nirvana is a truth, but it is not a truth that exists inherently. Nirvana is non-deceptive in that the way it appears as lacking inherent existence is how it actually exists to the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise. Technically speaking, nirvana is a true cessation, the reality of the mind that has stopped the afflictions by way of an antidote. That reality is an emptiness and so it is an ultimate truth. To the subject that takes ultimate truth as its object, i.e. the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise, that object exists as it appears. On the other hand, there are those subjects that take as objects the varieties, such as form and so forth and those objects are deceptive. Form and so forth appear to exist by way of their own character but they do not exist that way.

In responding to this question, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, which says that compounded phenomena act to deceive the childish since they appear to be established by way of their own character but they are not. Therefore all the varieties are deceptive in that they are non-truths; the way they exist and the way they appear are non-concordant. Nirvana appears to a meditative equipoise the way it exists therefore it is non-deceptive, it is true.

Distinguishing between nirvana and the existence of nirvana

Lama Tsongkhapa says that there is a distinction between the existence of nirvana and nirvana. Nirvana existing as an ultimate truth is posited in the perspective of a concealer, that is a conventional awareness, but nirvana itself is not asserted as a truth by a conventional awareness. In other words, nirvana is not asserted as a truth by a conventional awareness but its existence is. Nirvana itself is an ultimate truth but the existence of nirvana as an ultimate truth is a conventionality. Similarly we could say that existence of emptiness is not an ultimate truth but emptiness is an ultimate truth. This point seems to be put forth by Lama Tsongkhapa to clarify a passage saying that "nirvana is a truth conventionally" in a commentary on Nagarjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, perhaps the commentary by Chandrakirti, but the exact source is unidentified.

Prasangika's acceptance of conventionalities

Correction to Week 20 transcript, page 3: The text of Lama Tsongkhapa's *Illumination* on the top of this page might be better translated as the following: "This being the case, conventional truth is the means for accessing the ultimate truth. The system of the world employs conventions without analyzing production from self and other. Similarly, so do the Madhyamikas accept them."

Essentially this passage concerns the fact that the world makes various designations such as seed, sprout and so forth, without any investigation. Such are to be accepted as they are and are, in fact, the means for accessing the ultimate. Prasangika accepts the existence of conventionalities; they accept these designations. Sprouts being produced from seeds is a conventionality and that conventionality is accepted without any investigation. On the basis of understanding conventional truths – seeds, sprouts, production, other, and so forth – we can then enter into an investigation as to whether the sprout is produced from a seed which is inherently other. We cannot access the ultimate truth without conventional truths. So conventional truth is the means for accessing the ultimate truth.

Quote from Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*

Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* is quoted, which says that conventions, meaning the objects of expressive sounds and of the conceptions that follow them, are needed by the world. Without depending on the conventions of the world, nirvana is not attained. This is similar to the words given by Manjushri to Lama Tsongkhapa that influenced his thinking to a great extent – "Value the conventional."

Regarding ultimate analysis

So we are not to investigate or critically examine conventional phenomena such as a pen; ultimately nothing is produced but according to the conventions of the world, they do exist. If we investigate, we find they are essence-less. In general, we say that phenomena are posited by a non-investigative, non-analytic awareness; they do not exist for an investigative, analytic mind. By investigation and analysis, we are talking about ultimate analysis.

Lama Tsongkhapa explains that analysis here is analysis for suchness, how things exist. If we were analyzing production to ascertain whether there is production from other, for example, that would be analysis of suchness. In Prasangika, no phenomenon is able to bear ultimate analysis; if it did, its existence would not depend on factors other than itself. It would be ultimately existent. Does this assertion mean that a pot is invalidated by a consciousness analyzing for the ultimate? No, only the inherent existence of the pot is harmed. Conventional truths are not the area of competency for ultimate valid cognizers, similar to suchness not being within the competency of conventional valid cognizers. Ultimate analysis cannot undermine conventional truths. Worldly beings are not reliable for establishing suchness but they are reliable for establishing conventional phenomena.

Analysis for the ultimate in Prasangika and Svatantrika

According to Prasangika, when the imagined object (or imputed object) is searched for within the basis of imputation, that being either the basis itself or its parts, it is not found, nor is it found separate from that basis. What *is* found is the non-existence of that imagined object. One does not find nothing but rather one finds the non-existence of that way of existing. Svatantrika wouldn't hold to that. In that system, if one searches for the imputed object within the basis of imputation, they contend that you will find it, since there is something in the basis of imputation that is equivalent to the object imputed. In Prasangika, what are you looking for in ultimate analysis? An inherently existent object is the object of negation. They are not looking for a pot. In Svatantrika, what are they looking for in ultimate analysis? The object of negation is identified differently so therefore, in Svatantrika, they are analyzing whether the pot exists by way of its own mode of subsistence without being posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.

October 5 (Thursday)

We were speaking yesterday of the fact that the things of the world are not a proper subject for ultimate analysis but should be simply taken as they are. Phenomena are posited by a non-analytic non-investigative valid awareness. In *Illumination* there are three quotations that emphasize the need to accept and make use of conventions, the objects of the ideas and expressions that people make use of in ordinary lives, for example, that sprouts arise from seeds. If we were to analyze it ultimately, we would not find either sprout or seed, so they should be simply taken as they are. Conventionalities are not to be analyzed because you will not find them. Since they are not harmed by the world, they should be accepted as they are.

Quote from Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Verses*

Yesterday we touched on one of the three quotes, the one from Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*. The first quote, that from Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Verses*, is perhaps better translated in C.W. Huntington's *The Emptiness of Emptiness* (p.235): "Just as a foreigner cannot be made to understand through any language other [than his own], so the world cannot be made to understand without the use of a conventional language." The idea of this quote is that barbarians cannot be understood through a language different from their own. Similarly, we must enter into the community of discourse in order to communicate with the world.

In commenting on this and the other two quotations, Lama Tsongkhapa says that analysis here is analysis of suchness. If we use analysis to determine if there is production from other, then such are suitable objects for ultimate analysis. Any other objects are generally not suitable for ultimate analysis. So no phenomenon is able to bear ultimate analysis – if it could, it would be its own final mode of existence, it would be self-instituting and not be dependent.

Identifying the object of negation

There is a curious sentence in the transcripts for Week 20 on the bottom of p.4, saying "For example, when an imputed object, such as a sprout, is sought it is not found; this non-finding is the meaning of emptiness." This quote from the transcript implies that one is searching for the imputed object, the sprout, in the basis of imputation, and that not finding the sprout there is finding emptiness. Shouldn't this object of negation be qualified as an *inherently existent* sprout, and not just sprout? For example, if you take a book, you cannot find the book in the pages, the binding, the printing and so forth, but is that not finding the book finding emptiness? If you say that you are finding a lack of the book in the basis of designation, then it seems that you are. But if you say that you are simply looking for a book and do not find the book, it doesn't seem that you are saying the same thing as not finding an inherently existent book. In Prasangka analysis, the imagined object is an inherently existent object and so merely searching for the object and not finding it doesn't seem to be the same thing as finding emptiness.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche said once that a meditation where one mentally takes apart a pen to see that the pen is not there (in its parts or the collection of its parts or separate from its parts) is not a valid meditation on emptiness. One must try to identify the object of negation – an inherently existent pen – and then look for that. It's as if you must first form a "Wanted" poster that you can then use to determine if you can find that object of negation in the basis of designation. If you examine closely the way the pen appears and clearly see its appearance as inherently existent, upon analysis you should find that it doesn't exist in the way it appears. At the end you should find an absence of that inherently existent object. Similarly, an 'I' is a conventionality and if we critically examine the aggregates for the 'I' that appears to inherently exist, we will not find it. Anyway, there is much debate on this very topic as can be seen in Guy Newland's *The Two Truths* (pp.263-265).

Svatantrika's analysis of suchness

Lama Tsongkhapa says that, in Svatantrika, there are two ways that an analysis becomes an analysis for suchness: analyzing whether (1) the object is posited as existing by the force of appearing to a consciousness, or (2) the object is not posited by the force of appearing to a consciousness but is established by way of its own mode of subsistence. Is the first of these two the way of proceeding through a Svatantrika analysis of true existence? The object of negation in Svatantrika is an object that is posited as existing without the force of appearing to a consciousness.

The reasoning of freedom from being truly existent one and being truly existent many in Svatantrika

To do this, the main reasoning they use is the reasoning of freedom from being a truly existent one and from being truly existent many. How does that reasoning arrive at negating the object of negation? How do we use it to find the non-existence of an independent phenomenon? Does the pen exist independently or not independently? The method of reasoning was that, to begin with, if the sprout is truly existent, it necessarily is either a truly existent one or a truly existent many. From there, we first analyzed if it was a

truly existent one and came to the conclusion it cannot be because it has parts. Then we said that the sprout is not a truly existent many because there is no truly existent one so there cannot be truly existent many. From all this we can then conclude that the sprout is not truly existent. In this reasoning, what is the significance of it having parts as a refutation of the Svatantrika measure of true existence? Think about it.

“Two different demarcations of the analysis of suchness”

After positing the Svatantrika analysis of suchness, Lama Tsongkhapa says that “due to the significance of the identification of the object of negation being different, there are also two different demarcations of the analysis of suchness.” As we described above, since Prasangika and Svatantrika identify the object of negation differently, the analysis of suchness in each of the Madhyamika schools is set out differently. The identified object of negation – inherent existence – of Prasangika is more subtle than that of Svatantrika – true existence – thus, the demarcation of the analysis is different.

The uninvestigated and the investigated

In regard to the analysis of suchness, Lama Tsongkhapa uses the example of Devadatta, who is assumed to have come to a house but, upon investigation, it is found that there is no one in the house. From this example one might think that thereby you could assume that whatever is uninvestigated is not valid but the investigated is valid. If someone held that as a position about how to approach reality, then that is not consistent with Madhyamika thinking. The unanalyzed is established by a valid cognition; what exists in terms of the world is not to be analyzed. However, this doesn't deny that there is a difference between a pen and the horns of a rabbit in that one is able to perform a function and the other is not. For more discussion on this idea, Kensur Yeshey Tupden discusses it some on pp. 106-107 in *Path to the Middle*. Just because we accept uncritically a pen does not mean somehow that it is or is not observed by an eye consciousness in the same way as the horns on a rabbit's head.

Quote from the *Extensive Sport Sutra*

In the *Autocommentary*, Chandrakirti quotes from the *Extensive Sport Sutra*, in which an analogy is given concerning a lute that can be constructed to give rise to sounds. But when we search for that sound or analyze where it comes from, it cannot be found since it is essence-less. Things are like space in that way. The entities or objects of the world that exist in conventional terms are to be accepted and not analyzed. If they inherently existed as Svatantrika proposes, then upon analysis we could find them. However, in fact, we do not find them.

October 6 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

- ← Geshe-la said that, concerning what is renowned in the world in terms of ordinary beings refers to what ordinary beings talk about and think about, and what is renowned in the world does not necessarily exist. Production from other would be renown to those who hold Svatantrika tenets but it doesn't seem that the production of the sprout from the seed as production from other is renowned in the world.
- ← Regarding how imputation occurs in beings who do not use labels, such as animals and infants, Geshe-la said that all beings do use a meaning generality (which can also be thought of as a model, symbol, or representation) in any conceptual thought to understand objects. First there is a basis of designation that appears to a consciousness and this is followed by labeling, the process of imputation by the conceptual consciousness. What does the word “posit” mean in Svatantrika and Prasangika? For reference, Jeffrey Hopkins discusses the way phenomena are posited through the force of conceptuality in Prasangika in *Emptiness Yoga* (pp. 90-91).

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1D-1C Refuting [the assertion of establishment by way of its own character] due to it following that ultimate production would not be refuted

So far we've discussed the first two consequences, the second being that, if things inherently existed, they would be found upon ultimate analysis, therefore the object is findable and would “bear analysis.” But things cannot bear analysis because they are not inherently existent. Ultimate analysis only looks for

inherent existence or the lack of inherent existence, and things are not the proper object of that analysis and should be taken as they are.

The third consequence is that the ultimate refutation of production from other would not be refuted. Prasangika previously showed that production from other did not exist ultimately but if one were to hold that it existed conventionally, then it would have not been refuted to exist ultimately. Essentially we are saying that if the reasoning analyzing suchness does not refute production from other conventionally, then it cannot refute production from other ultimately either. The very refutation of production from other existing ultimately also refutes it existing conventionally. That is, if production from other doesn't exist ultimately, it doesn't exist at all. Adding the words "in conventional terms" makes no actual difference to the refutation.

An objection raised

Someone says that there must be some substantial nature to production since the conventional are the cause of both liberation and bondage. The reply from Prasangika is that the causes of freedom and bondage don't ultimately exist and yet they do exist conventionally. Further Chandrakirti responds with asking by what valid cognizer is production from other exists observed? To exist conventionally means to be posited by a valid cognizer. If something exists, it exists conventionally, so they are mutually inclusive. So Chandrakirti is asking, what is the valid cognizer that knows that?

Regarding the non-existence of a "substantial nature"

Lama Tsongkhapa continues discussing this objection, saying that production by "substantial natures" is equivalent to production from other, meaning production by way of its own character. "Substantial nature" means existing by way of its own character. Whenever this is applied to production from other, we mean production existing by way of its own character, and this qualification must be affixed – mere production from other is not an appropriate object for analysis. We can speak of ultimate and conventional analysis; if something is refuted by ultimate analysis, it necessarily does not exist. If something is refuted by conventional analysis, it also necessarily does not exist. So whenever something is refuted by a valid cognizer, it necessarily does not exist, either conventionally or ultimately. Once it is negated by a valid cognizer, it simply doesn't exist at all. A conventional valid cognizer is only competent with regard to conventionalities though, just as an ultimate valid cognizer is only competent with regard to the ultimate, emptiness. Through ultimate analysis we have refuted production from other so we have established the non-existence of "production that is of a substantial nature," both ultimately and conventionally.

Inherent production means unrelated production

For Prasangika, ultimate existence and existence by way of its own character are equivalent. For Svatantrika, there is no ultimate production but yet things exist by way of their own character. Svatantrika is trying to incorporate what we intuitively sense regarding objects – if there wasn't anything coming from the side of the object, it doesn't seem quite right. But, according to Prasangika, inherent production implies unrelated production, the production of a result from an unrelated cause. Therefore, in Prasangika if a sprout ultimately exists, it is produced ultimately, and this assertion was refuted earlier. So, if you, the Svatantrikas, assert that conventionally things are inherently produced, then you cannot refute ultimately that things do not ultimately exist. When Prasangika says that inherent production implies unrelated production, is that true? When unrelated production was set out earlier in the refutation of production from other, it was drawn from what inherent production would entail, as was seen in the four features of unrelatedness so it seems fair to equate inherent production with unrelated production.

October 9 (Monday)

Negation of inherent existence ultimately entails negation of inherent existence conventionally

The third consequence basically concerns the fact that, if reasoning analyzing suchness negates the existence of inherent existence ultimately, then it is negated conventionally as well. Previously we spoke about how the various reasons that refute inherent existence ultimately refute it conventionally. If

something is negated as an existent, there is no valid cognition that observes it; if it is negated ultimately, it is negated conventionally as well. It really does not matter if we speak about it “in conventional terms” as Svatantrika proposes, since it’s already been negated by a valid cognizer of the ultimate.

As we have seen so often in Madhyamika sutra and treatises, “other” is to be qualified as an other existing by way of its own character. Recall the six types of existence that we discussed earlier in our *Middle Way* studies. Three of them, true existence, ultimate existence, and independent existence, are all refuted by Svatantrika, but they accept the other three, objective existence (existence from its own side), inherent existence, and natural existence (existence by way of its own character). However, Prasangika says all six are equivalent and none of them exist. Therefore, according to Prasangika, you cannot refute production from other ultimately while still asserting production from an other that exists by way of its own character conventionally.

Inherent existence would be suchness in Svatantrika

Svatantrika however would hold that a refutation of inherent existence refutes existence so here Prasangika is flinging the consequence that form is not a conventionality because it is suchness. This follows because Svatantrika asserts inherent existence conventionally while refuting true existence ultimately. In Prasangika’s point of view, if all phenomena exist by way of their own character then they should be findable under ultimate analysis. If the imputed object is inherently existent, then when it is searched for in the basis of imputation in either the parts or the collection of the parts, it will be found. In Svatantrika, although all phenomena are imputed, they still exist from their own side so they should be found when the basis of imputation is searched. If an object inherently exists then something equivalent to the imputed object should be found.

For Prasangika the object found by ultimate analysis is the final reality, the suchness, of that object. If we analyze a pen according to the Prasangika analysis of suchness and actually find the pen then it ultimately exists. Based on that, Prasangika would say that the pen, as the subject, is not a conventionality because it exists as its own final reality. And if it is its own final reality it therefore is suchness. From the point of view of Prasangika, ultimate analysis is only investigating whether or not something inherently exists. Everything apart from that analysis is outside the scope of ultimate analysis. In Svatantrika a pen exists by way of its own character so in their system, it can be found in conventional analysis. When Svatantrika performs ultimate analysis, the object of negation that they use is different in that they are searching for their measure of ultimate existence or independent existence (i.e. the object existing without appearing to the mind) and refuting that.

Quote from Nagarjuna’s *Fundamental Wisdom*

In *Illumination* Lama Tsongkhapa quotes briefly from the opening stanza of *Fundamental Wisdom*, where Nagarjuna says, “Not from self, not from other” and so forth. There is one interpretation that this statement is a refutation of production from other as being an imputational factor, that is, subject and object existing as different substances. However, the Prasangika position is that in *Fundamental Wisdom*, Nagarjuna is commenting on the three perfection of wisdom sutras, saying that they are definitive in meaning and not interpretable. Therefore Nagarjuna’s treatises are also to be taken as definitive. In Geshe-la’s commentary, it says in a number of places that they are to be taken “literally”. In our *Ornament* studies we discussed what makes a sutra definitive or interpretive and, according to Prasangika. When the main subject explicitly presented is emptiness the scripture is definitive; all other presentations are interpretive. Yet even definitive sutras, such as the *Heart Sutra*, are not always taken literally, such as the passage saying, “no eyes, no ears, no noses, no tongues” and so forth. Basically what Nagarjuna is saying in that quote is that there is no production from an other or self that are established by way of their own character, and that is the definitive meaning and not to be interpreted.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

October 10 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1D-2 Dispelling arguments regarding the refutation [of establishment by way of its own character]

Prasangika has refuted the position of the proponents of true existence concerning production from other both ultimately and conventionally. Now that the three consequences of asserting production from other conventionally have been flung at Svatantrika, Svatantrika will respond to them.

Objection from Svatantrika concerning the refutation of inherent existence conventionally

Svatantrika objects to the refutation of existence by way its own character in terms of Prasangika having denied inherent existence both ultimately and conventionally. For Svatantrika, if something does not inherently exist, it does not exist at all. If it doesn't exist by way of its own character conventionally, it doesn't exist. So then a book and the horns of a rabbit would both have equal status in that they are either both observed or both not observed by a valid consciousness. So how does Prasangika explain this?

Response from Prasangika involving the analogy of a reflection

In response, Prasangika presents an interesting analogy in terms of a reflection. Prasangika is trying to establish that although things are falsities, it doesn't mean they don't exist. This idea is similar to a reflection that appears to be a face but is not. In the same way, all conventionalities are falsities in that they do not exist the way that they appear. We must question the appearances – although things appear to exist one way, they do not exist that way and thus they are falsities. Falsities, just like reflections, although being empty of the way they appear, are still able to function.

Falsities renown to the world

When we spoke of the two truths, we spoke about falsities, such as a mirage, reflections, and so forth, which occur due to the various types of superficial impairment to the sense powers. These are falsities that are renown to the world because ordinary people who have not studied tenets are able to understand that they are empty of existing the way they appear. A mirage appears to be water but is not; a reflection of a face appears to be a face but is not, and so on. Though they are falsities, still, a mirage and a reflection exist.

An eye consciousness is produced by a reflection if a face, for example, and this reflection is an external form sphere. It acts as the observed object condition for the eye consciousness observing it. An eye consciousness mistakes the appearance of a reflection of a face to be a face as a face and in that way it is mistaken. A dream consciousness is also mistaken in that the appearance of dream objects are taken to be the actual objects themselves. A reflection, a mirage, and so on, are falsities in regard to the world but there are other, deeper, ways of positing falsities. To an eye consciousness with no impairment to the sense faculties, phenomena are falsities in that they appear to be established by way of their own character but are not. Even though a reflection of a face being a face is impossible, it still appears that way. Similarly, although it is impossible that phenomena inherently exist, they still appear that way, and, furthermore, they both exist. The fact of their being falsities doesn't entail that their existence is negated.

Extending the analogy

Lama Tsongkhapa extends the analogy as follows. The reflection of a face as a face is not posited as an external object. Why? Because it doesn't exist. But the reflection of a face itself is posited as an external object. Inherently existent form is not posited as an external object because it too does not exist. The book existing by way of its own character is not posited as an external object because it doesn't exist. The book that appears to inherently exist *is* posited as an external object; that book exists. Just as a reflection appearing to be a face exists, likewise form that appears to inherently exist does exist.

Question concerning the use of a reflection as a falsity

This notion of falsities in terms of worldly renown is understood by the learned and one need not understand emptiness to understand those falsities. A question is raised, saying that you, Lama Tsongkhapa, said that reflections as falsities are renown in the world, but they are not falsities posited by the Madhyamika. How can

they use reflections as an example of falsities when they are not posited as that? How can you use a reflection of a face in the mirror as presented by Madhyamika since there it is not presented as a falsity? The answer is that the reflection is an analogue, meaning that the reflection of a face is not a falsity in terms of the view of Madhyamika but it is an analogy of falsity in that view. In Prasangika in general all phenomena except emptiness are falsities because they do not exist the way they appear. But in this context we are talking about falsities renowned in the world, such as a reflection of a face appearing to be a face although not actually being one. The reflection is the analogy although it is not an example of falsity in Madhyamika.

The appearance of inherent existence and the appearance of mere existence

Lama Tsongkhapa continues, saying that the appearance of a face in a mirror is in no way an actual face. Even though all of the parts appear to be parts of a face, there is no part of that reflection of a face that is an actual face. None of the individual parts are at all parts of a face; rather they are all empty of being so. For example, when the color blue appears to us, Lama Tsongkhapa says that it seems that there are two factors that appear. The appearance of inherent existence (“the blue that appears as inherently existent”) and the appearance of conventional existence (“the blue that does not appear as inherently existent”) appear inseparably as if fused together. There are both the appearance of the conventional existence of the object and the appearance of the inherent existence of the object but the eye consciousness is not able to distinguish between those two appearances. All the parts of the color blue are empty of existing the way they appear, just as when we spoke of all the parts of the reflection of the face being empty of existing as parts of an actual face. Yet it’s not contradictory to say that blue is produced from causes and conditions. The color blue, with regard to all of its parts, is empty of existing the way it appears but nonetheless the color blue arises dependent upon causes and conditions. It seems as if we have to train in this since we cannot distinguish between the factor of inherent existence that is appearing and what is the factor of conventional existence.

Jeffrey Hopkins talks about this in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.189), saying, “For the Gelukba system, ignorance falsely certifies the portion of the perception that is the appearance of inherent existence, but there is also a portion of correct appearance that is certified by conventional valid cognition. The appearance of objects is partly right and partly wrong, but it is not that the underside is wrong and the topside is correct. Everything throughout the appearance is colored by falsity.” This means that all and every part of the blue is empty of the way of appearing even though there is a part that is conventionally existent.

Distinguishing these two appearances

The blue that appears as inherently existent and the blue that does not appear inherently existent (which we could call “blue appearing to be blue” or simply “blue as blue”) are both appearing to the eye consciousness. From this description, it seems as if not all the parts of blue appear to inherently exist so then are there two appearances? The reflection of a face as a face is to be negated but the reflection of a face is not to be negated. That factor of being a reflection is correct; the factor of being a face is false so we must distinguish between those two factors. Likewise with regard to blue, it appears as truly existent and that is to be negated; however, the appearance of blue as blue is not to be negated. You can have a valid cognition with regard to the color blue but not with regard to it being inherently existent. In our studies of *Awareness and Knowers*, we defined a valid cognizer in Prasangika as an incontrovertible knower with respect to its main object. The eye consciousness apprehending blue is a valid cognition because it is incontrovertible with respect to the color blue as blue; nonetheless it is mistaken with regard to the factor of blue appearing to exist inherently.

Distinguishing between inherent existence and mere existence

In coming to the Prasangika view, we must distinguish between inherent existence and mere existence. When Prasangika uses “mere” generally it eliminates inherent existence. If we don’t make the distinction between these two, we will fall into the two extremes, just as the proponents of true existence do. By equating inherent existence with existence, this involves a superimposition of permanence. By equating non-inherent existence with non-existence, we fall into the extreme of annihilation.

The two types of existence and the two types of non-existence

In summary we must avoid the two extremes by making a distinction between the two types of existences and the two types of non-existences. In the transcript for Week 20, on p.18, these are enumerated but don’t seem to be correct as stated. The two types of existence are inherently existent and conventionally existent. Holding to

the first of these leads to the extreme of permanence as we've discussed before, while asserting the second is the Prasangika Middle Way. The two types of non-existence are inherently non-existent and conventionally non-existent. If one asserts the first then one holds that, upon disintegrating, things become completely non-existent, and thus one is lead to the extreme of annihilation. The second encompasses how things actually do cease to exist although their continuity goes on, such as a sprout being the continuity of a seed.

Another way of looking at the two types of existence and two types of non-existence

Kensur Yeshey Tupden discusses the two types of existence and non-existence in *Path to the Middle* (pp.69-70), and he has an interesting way of explaining them. In terms of a conventional valid cognizer, the first (inherent existence, or existence from its own side) does not exist at all so it is to be refuted. The second, conventional existence, is to be accepted. In regard to the two types of non-existence, there are non-existence by way of its own character (or from its own side), which is to be accepted, and non-existence conventionally, which is to be denied. In regard to these two, Kensur Yeshey Tupden presents each of them in relation to the direct realization of emptiness on the basis of a table. First there is the realization of the non-existence of the table to exist from its own side or as established by way of its own character. Secondly, in the face of that ultimate consciousness, "the table which appears to exist from its own side vanishes," so we can say that there is the non-existence of the conventionally existent table. "However," as Kensur Yeshey Tupden points out, "this mind does not realize the non-existence of the [conventionally existent] table. It realizes the nonexistence of [a table] which exists from its own side." The non-existence of an inherently existent table occurs (meaning that it is realized) but the non-existence of the table conventionally does not occur (meaning that it is not realized).

October 11 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E Indicating the excellent qualities of refuting inherent production also with respect to the two truths

We are now going to look at the excellent qualities of having refuted inherent existence both ultimately and conventionally. There are two qualities enumerated, the first of which is the quality of easily abandoning the two extremes.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-1 The excellent quality of easily abandoning the views of permanence and annihilation

We can easily abandon the extremes of permanence and annihilation by refuting inherent existence. For example, a reflection of a face appears to be a face but is not, and yet it does exist. Similarly, all phenomena appear to exist inherently but do not, and yet they exist. Because they do not inherently exist we avoid the extreme of permanence and because they do exist we avoid the extreme of annihilation. It is said that those who are able to refute ultimate existence and yet assert conventional existence are as rare as a star in the middle of the day. It is important to realize the subtlety of the Prasangika view. Compared to our gross way of dealing with phenomena, upon refuting inherent existence it is *almost* as if they do not exist but yet they do.

Fundamental Wisdom on eternalism and nihilism

If something inherently existed then it eternally remains what it is at present and that is the view of eternalism. If something were to have existed before and then absurdly not exist at all now, that is the view of nihilism. Nagarjuna comments on these two views in stanza 15.11 of *Fundamental Wisdom*. Jay Garfield, in *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*, comments on this stanza, saying the following:

To say that if something exists, it does so in virtue of having an essence and hence cannot change or pass out of existence would entail the absurd position that everything is eternal. To say of something that it existed in this strong sense – with an essence – in the past, but does not do so now, is absurd. For if something to exist is for it to do so inherently, and if it is not now existent, it could never have been. So since everything we observe is impermanent, if the only existence that there could be were inherent existence, nothing could exist at all. That would be nihilism. (p.224)

So if we hold the position of inherent existence, then if something ceased to exist it would never have existed at all. Garfield speaks of impermanent phenomena but, since most permanent phenomena also go out of existence, they are not eternal so one would hold that they too are annihilated.

There is a second quote from *Fundamental Wisdom* (stanza 21.14) and Garfield comments on this one as follows:

If one thinks that any existent entity must exist inherently, then one is forced simultaneously to embrace the extremes of nihilism and reification. One must reify because any existent must be treated as inherently existent and hence permanent. But upon observing the impermanence of phenomena, one will be driven to nihilism since their impermanence would entail their lack of inherent existence and hence their complete non-existence. (p.271)

Garfield uses the term “reification” instead of permanence and for some, that can have more meaning, in that it infers the idea of making something concrete and solid when it does not have those qualities at all.

Extending the lack of inherent existence to the two truths

In verse 6.38cd, Chandrakirti extends this lack of inherent existence to both of the two truths. If there were an inherently existent phenomenon, it would necessarily be either an impermanent or permanent phenomenon. If it is an inherently existent permanent phenomenon, then one falls into the extreme of permanence. If it is an inherently existent impermanent phenomenon, then one falls into the extreme of annihilation when the object ceases to exist. Inherent existence implies that there is a complete absence of anything existing in relation to that object. Since what is inherently existent cannot disintegrate, if a phenomenon does disintegrate then it cannot be inherently existent. For the lower schools, if it is not inherently existent, then it does not exist at all.

The feasibility of agents and actions, causes and results

Within the Prasangika view, agents and actions, and causes and results are still able to perform their various functions. Although agents and actions are not inherently existent, by understanding that fact, we avoid falling into the extreme of annihilation. By understanding that agents and actions are feasible to function and exist, and that they are constantly changing, we avoid the extreme of permanence. Products from their own side do not exist even conventionally.

The refutation of inherent existence conventionally and the realization of “the very subtle selflessness”

Earlier, in discrediting the possibility of production from other, we said that the world does not even speak in those terms of other. Jeffrey Hopkins in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.648), quotes from Chandrakirti’s *Clear Words*, which says, “The world does not employ analysis such as ‘from self’ or ‘from [naturally existent] others’ and so forth. The world understands only this, ‘An effect arises from a cause.’” The world does not employ analysis such as from self and from other. Production from other is not renown in the world so the fact of its non-existence even conventionally facilitates the realization of what Lama Tsongkhapa calls “the very subtle selflessness.” Prasangika used various types of reasoning to refute production from other ultimately but then, due to objections from Svatantrika and the lower schools, saying that it is renown to the world, it became necessary to deny its existence conventionally. Prasangika showed that it was not renown in the world, and that the world does not analyze but simply say, “This arises from that.” This is possibly what Lama Tsongkhapa is getting at when he refers to the “very subtle selflessness”, the view of selflessness that refutes production from other even conventionally. Theoretically, if you refute it ultimately you’ve refuted it conventionally but Lama Tsongkhapa has gone on to refute it conventionally because he sees it as a means to avoid falling into the two extremes. Geshe-la commented that the Svatantrika so not assert that ultimately phenomena are established from their own side but that they are conventionally. As long as this position is held one will not realize very subtle selflessness. Geshe-la was asked to clarify the meaning of “the very subtle selflessness” in the class of Friday, October 13.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2 The excellent quality of the relationship of actions and results being completely appropriate

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A Indicating that with regard to not asserting establishment by way of its own character, it is not necessary to assert a basis-of-all and so forth

We are now moving into a new section where we will be examining the ramifications of accepting inherent existence, and one of these is in terms of refuting how the lower schools set out how karmic latencies are carried. It is not necessary to assert such a carrier, such as the mind-basis-of-all, according to Prasangika.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A1 Explaining the passage that makes a connection

We begin this section by setting out the connection to what has preceded it. Lama Tsongkhapa makes the connection by saying that, since we refuted inherent existence earlier, and by means of that we abandoned the two extremes, along with this we must somehow allow for a relation between cause and effect. In general it is said that dependent arising is the slogan for Buddhism since all Buddhist systems accept causality and karma. Actions, or karma, acting as causes is a subset of the doctrine of dependent arising and all Buddhist schools accept such a type of causality. So the question that each school must answer is how an action is connected with its experiential result, since that result can occur long after the action ceases. As we will see, there are various ways of explaining how the action is not wasted or dissipated so that it will result in some type of later experience. So in this section we will be answering how Prasangika connects some past action of killing, for example, with the result of suffering that is experienced from it without positing a mind-basis-of-all and so forth.

The eight difficult points

In *Illumination*, in the context of Prasangika's refutation of inherent existence, Lama Tsongkhapa compiles a list of the "eight difficult points" drawn from a larger list of the uncommon tenets of Prasangika. These eight are part of a list of twenty-one unique tenets listed by Daniel Cozort in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (pp.59-60). As Cozort explains (p.61), "Indeed, since the basic viewpoint of the Prasangika School – that there is no inherent existence, even conventionally – is unique, it could be said that every assertion that qualified in that way by a Prasangika is a unique tenet." In a sense, the very assertion of the absence of inherent existence entails the need for Prasangika to build a structure that is able to explain the workings of reality and the means of achieving buddhahood, so there follows the necessity of asserting other tenets to uphold that basic tenet. All the other tenets hinge on whether one accepts inherent existence or not. So all eight of the difficult points are in some way tied into this assertion of absence of inherent existence.

Geshe-la explained that, of the eight difficult points, there are three in regard to what Prasangika is refuting while the remaining five are set out in regard to what Prasangika is asserting. Geshe-la spoke about these to some extent in his commentary so let's review them briefly.

1: Not asserting a mind-basis-of-all which is a different entity from the six collections

The first concerns denying a mind-basis-of-all, and this as well as other Chittamatra tenets come mainly from Asanga's *Compendium of the Mahayana*. There are six basic consciousnesses that all Buddhist schools assert (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mental) but the Chittamatra True Aspectarians assert two additional consciousnesses, the seventh being the mind-basis-of-all while the eighth is called afflicted mentality. As we will see in this section, it seems as if one of the places Prasangika is coming from is that there is no need to assert a hypothetical site for the depositing of latencies since they don't inherently exist. It's only because the lower schools hold them to inherently exist that they have to posit such a basis.

2: Not asserting self-cognizers

A self-cognizer, or self-knower, was defined in our studies of *Awareness and Knowers* as "that which has the aspect of an apprehender." That definition is from the Sautrantika school but the True Aspectarian Chittamatrins also posit a self-cognizer. There, the idea is that, for example, if the eye consciousness sees a pen, since those two—pen and the eye consciousness apprehending it—arise simultaneously from a latency on the mind-basis-of-all, then a consciousness that can validate that is needed. So there is a need for a "certifying consciousness," the self-cognizer. Chittamatra says that the subject and object arise simultaneously so you must posit a consciousness that is able to posit that occurrence. In Sautrantika, the self-cognizer is a direct perceiver, and it knows itself, so this is one way that Prasangika refutes it, saying that light cannot illuminate itself, a knife cannot cut itself, and so forth. Geshe-la says that this non-assertion is made in terms of refuting inherent existence but it's not exactly clear how it ties into this tenet since not all schools that posit inherent existence posit a self-cognizer.

3: Not asserting that the view of suchness is generated in the continuum of a defendant by an autonomous syllogism

This third tenet was examined in the context of the refutation of production from self, when we looked at autonomous syllogisms. Here it is obvious how inherent existence ties into this tenet, as Prasangika refutes that

an inherently existent thesis can be realized in dependence on an inherently existent sign with the three modes complete.

4: In asserting consciousnesses, it is also necessary to assert external objects

We are exploring this tenet in Geshe-la's current commentary. Basically we can say that, since consciousness does not exist inherently, it is necessary to assert the existence of external objects which are the cause of the consciousness apprehending them.

5: Hearers and solitary realizers have the realization of things as non-inherently existent

This fifth tenet was explored earlier in our *Middle Way* studies, namely that hearers and solitary realizers have the realization of phenomena as not being inherently existent. Recall that Lama Tsongkhapa said that to have a fully qualified realization of the selflessness of persons, it is necessary to have a fully qualified realization of the selflessness of phenomena. The object of negation for both the realization of the selflessness of persons and phenomena are the same – inherent existence. The difference between those two realizations is only the object that is being qualified as absent of inherent existence. As we discussed before though, the order of realization is that one generally realizes the selflessness of persons and then of phenomena, and yet it is also said that one must forsake a belief in the aggregates as truly existent before one can realize the selflessness of persons.

6: The conception of a self of phenomena is posited as an affliction

We've also already examined this sixth tenet. In distinguishing between the Svatantrika and Prasangika positions regarding the conception of a self of phenomena, Prasangika asserts that it is an afflictive obstruction while Svatantrika says it's a knowledge obstruction. For Prasangika, one cannot achieve liberation without abandoning the conception of an inherently existent self of phenomena. Since it is the main object to be abandoned to achieve liberation, it is an afflictive obstruction. Since hearers and solitary realizers do achieve liberation, then they must realize the selflessness of phenomena and abandon the conception of a self of phenomena. Therefore it must be an afflictive obstruction.

7: Disintegratedness is a functioning thing, and 8: for that reason, there is an uncommon way of positing the three times

These two are discussed next in the next few sections of the *Supplement* and *Illumination*.

Two ways of delineating the coarse and subtle levels of afflictive obstructions

Before moving on to the next section, Lama Tsongkhapa further discusses the afflictive obstructions, specifically saying that there are two levels of the afflictions, coarse and subtle. There are two ways of positing each of these two levels. Coarse afflictions can first be discussed as those that are induced by the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. So in that way, there is a level of afflictions that are induced by that conception conceiving the person to be a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, and those are what are called coarse. The second way of positing the coarse afflictions is simply where they refer to the way the afflictions are set out in the two *Knowledges*, the two Abhidharma texts of Vasubandhu and Asanga.

In regard to the subtle afflictions, they can be explained first as being the subtle conception of a self of persons or phenomena, meaning those afflictions induced by the conception of persons or phenomena as inherently existent. Or you can simply say this refers to the afflictions as posited by Prasangika. It is a position of Prasangika that you cannot be liberated by relying upon a path based solely on the presentation of the four noble truths in the *Knowledges* since one can only abandon coarse afflictions that way. In contrast to the Svatantrika presentation of the path, the afflictive obstructions and knowledge obstructions are abandoned simultaneously over the path of seeing and path of meditation so that one attains buddhahood and foe destroyer at the same time. In Prasangika, one abandons the afflictive obstructions over the first through the seventh grounds and then abandons the knowledge obstructions beginning with the eighth ground.

Question concerning afflicted and non-afflicted conception of a self of phenomena

A question is raised concerning the nature of the conceptions of a self of phenomena. In the question, there is a "fallen" bodhisattva, one who attained the Mahayana path of accumulation, has settled the view of suchness according Prasangika, and who degenerates to the Hinayana path. This bodhisattva has only achieved the small level of the Mahayana path of accumulation, where the mind generation can still degenerate due to

discouragement and so forth. As was seen in our *Ornament* studies, once one reaches the middling level of the Mahayana path of accumulation, it is no longer possible for the mind generation to degenerate. So with this bodhisattva, there is a falling to the Hinayana vehicle and the questioner is saying that this practitioner will then abandon the acquired afflictive obstructions on the path of seeing and the innate afflictive obstructions on the path of meditation. So this leads to the question, is this person abandoning an afflicted level of the conception of self while the bodhisattva who remains on the Mahayana path would be abandoning a non-afflicted level of the conception of self of phenomena since they achieve very different goals by means of their meditation on emptiness.

Since Svatantrika holds that the conception of a self of phenomena is a knowledge obstruction, the question revolves around the supposition that this fallen bodhisattva will use the meditation abandoning the self of phenomena and only achieve liberation, while a bodhisattva will use the same meditation on the Mahayana path and achieve buddhahood. So are there two different levels of the selflessness of phenomena that are realized, an afflicted level by means of which you remove the afflictive obstructions and a non-afflicted level by which you remove the knowledge obstructions?

The three objects of abandonment of the three persons in Yogachara-Svatantrika

In the context of this question, Geshe-la points out the fact that in the Yogachara-Svatantrika system, there are three main abandonments by three different practitioners. The conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self is the main object of abandonment of hearers, and by means of abandoning it they achieve a hearer's liberation. For a solitary realizer, the conception of subject and object being substantially different is the main object of abandonment, and by abandoning it they achieve a solitary realizer's liberation. The main object abandoned by a bodhisattva is the conception of true existence and this is a knowledge obstruction, and by its abandonment, the bodhisattva achieves buddhahood.

Response to the question

Lama Tsongkhapa responds, saying that, from a Svatantrika point of view, the Hinayana practitioner that is a fallen bodhisattva with a realization of the selflessness of phenomena is only able to temporarily abandon the manifest knowledge obstructions. He is unable to abandon the seeds of the knowledge obstructions because he doesn't have the accumulation of merit that the bodhisattva is collecting. However, according to our system, as asserted by Chandrakirti, a conception of a self of phenomena is an afflictive obstruction and not a knowledge obstruction. Therefore it is not necessary to accumulate the infinite collection of merit in order to abandon that conception and its seeds. But, in order to remove the knowledge obstructions that are the latencies of mistaken dualistic appearance and attain buddhahood, one must have such a collection of merit. Thus, the difference of attainment of two is not in terms of the emptiness realized but is due to the accompanying method, that is, the infinite collection of merit accumulated by the bodhisattva.

October 12 (Thursday)

A primary characteristic of Prasangika is refuting inherent existence so there are ramifications upon other areas as a consequence of this assertion. For example, there is no need for a location for the depositing of the latencies such as the mind-basis-of-all posited by Chittamatra. Yesterday we discussed the connection between this assertion and the eight difficult points so today we begin with the meaning of the root verse.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A2 Explaining the meaning of the root verse

All the Buddhist schools assert a doctrine of karma, where the actions of body, speech and mind bring about consequent results in the future, and, since there are future lives, we must account for the gap between when the actions occur and when the result is experienced. There are numerous theories for how this happens as set out in the various Buddhist schools. A question is raised to Prasangika, asking, since inherent existence is not accepted, how can you explain the relationship between an action and its results if you do not assert a mind-basis-of-all and so forth? Lama Tsongkhapa responds saying that all the Buddhist schools accept the definiteness of the relation between actions and results, with virtuous actions bringing happiness and non-virtuous bringing suffering, and this occurs no matter how much time occurs between the action and its result. If an action were to remain until it produced its result, it would have to be a permanent phenomenon, and then, being permanent, it could not bring about a result or bring about a continual result. On the other hand, if upon

the ceasing of the action, there was annihilation with no continuity of anything going forward, then there would be no result. So how can we account for bridging that gap between an action and its result?

The various ways of connecting actions and their results in other Buddhist systems

Lama Tsongkhapa lists various mechanisms or doctrines as set out by the various schools as ways to connect actions and their results:

1. **Mind-basis-of-all** – As we mentioned earlier, the True Aspectarian Chittamatrins assert eight consciousnesses, the normal six plus the mind-basis-of-all and the afflicted mentality. For them, the mind-basis-of-all is neutral or unspecified, comes from beginningless time, and is the storehouse for depositing the latencies.
2. **Non-wastage** – There is also a non-associated compositional factor (meaning an impermanent phenomenon that is neither matter nor consciousness) that is called “non-wastage” and this is posited by the Nyeopa Vaibhashika. Geshe-la defined non-wastage as “a potential that does not allow a property to be wasted,” and it is said to be like the receipt of a debt contract.
3. **Acquisition of the two actions** – Another subdivision of the Vaibhashikas say there is another non-associated compositional factor called acquisition of the two actions (meaning virtuous and non-virtuous actions). Geshe-la defined it as “the substance which brings about the possession of the phenomena to be acquired in the person who acquires it.”
4. **Continuum of consciousness** – This is perhaps the most common, saying that the continuum of mental consciousness itself is stained with the latencies of the actions. This is said to be the teaching of Sautrantika, False Aspectarian Chittamatra, and Svatantrika where they say that a karmic seed is planted on the mental continuum.

Since all schools below Prasangika assert inherent existence, in connecting an action (Tibetan *las*) and its result, these schools have to find some independently identifiable site for the latencies of an action to be deposited. This is because inherent existence implies that if we search for the object within its basis of imputation, we will find it. The implication of not asserting inherent existence is that we don’t have to find an object in its basis of imputation. Those who hold a basis for the latencies are in a sense solidifying them.

The Prasangika assertion concerning disintegratedness

Chittamatra, here specifically meaning the True Aspectarians, says that the mind-basis-of-all is the location for depositing these latencies. The latency itself can also be called karma. Upon ceasing an action, there is what is called *disintegratedness*, and in the lower schools, that disintegratedness is a permanent phenomenon. For Prasangika, because an action does not inherently cease, there is a continuity in terms of the disintegratedness of the action. Inherent existence entails discreet moments unrelated to each other so the notion of inherent existence disqualifies any continuity. In Prasangika inherent existence implies independent existence so when one asserts non-inherent existence, then things cannot exist without dependence upon causes, parts, and so forth. So there is the possibility of continuity in Prasangika, in that there is something that moves on subsequent to the disintegration of the action. In Prasangika, disintegratedness is a functional thing because it is caused and is able to produce a result. As a functioning thing, disintegratedness can then continue on until the time it brings about the fruition of the action in its result. So according to Prasangika there is no need to posit an independent basis for these latencies.

The mere I and the continuity of disintegratedness

The very continuity of the action itself allows for a functioning thing to result from that action so we don’t need to hypothesize some special place for depositing it. The mere I is sufficient as an owner of the actions so there is no need for a specific site for holding these latencies. The continuum of disintegratedness over time is posited on the mere I. His Holiness the Dalai Lama discusses this idea in *The Meaning of Life* (pp.47-50). Basically he says that, at the time of committing the action, there is a being present and then there is another being present at the time of experiencing the result. There is a continuum of dependently-related merely imputed I’s who join those two beings, and that continuum is a sufficient basis upon which to posit the latencies. As His Holiness says, “In this way there is a connection between the action and oneself, and this is what connects forward to the future effect of that action, no matter how much time passes.”

First we innately think of the I within our continuum as being ourselves. We think “I did this” and “I did that”, and in all those various actions there is an agent of the actions which is oneself. In fact, the present I didn’t do any of those actions but from the viewpoint of a continuum of I’s, it is correct to say that “I did that” and so on. We can isolate or identify specific I’s within a continuum but still we can rightly say that “I did” a previous action. Since they are in the same continuum of merely imputed I’s, that justifies our being able to say that there is a connection between them. So there is a continuum of the I that is an accumulator of the karma. Then, upon the activation of the proper conditions, the results of that karma will be experienced and, as His Holiness says, “there is no one else for whom it can fructify but oneself.”

Trying to not solidify these ideas

It’s important to not try to solidify these ideas, and to do that, we might use the model we used earlier concerning potential energy, such as what is seen in a rock positioned at the top of a hill. We can talk about it having the potentiality to roll down the hill based upon the factors of its weight, mass, position, gravity and so forth. However, when you search for that potential, you cannot find it in the rock itself since if you put the rock at the bottom of the hill, it no longer has that potential. One way to look at it is that it’s in the system. You can’t look for it in any particular part but yet it occurs. As a consequence of the mere I and so forth not existing inherently, we cannot find these things when we look for them. In a sense, just as with the rock, we can say that “the I as a system” is the carrier of these disintegrated actions and so there is no “thing” where they are placed.

In summary, all four of these assertions such as the mind-basis-of-all, are posited in the context of asserting inherent existence. Since they do not assert inherent existence, Prasangika can posit the disintegratedness of an action as a functioning thing and say that it is the means for the resultant experience arising from a previous action. The other schools cannot use it as a mechanism since in their view, it is a permanent phenomenon, which is a consequence of holding inherent existence.

Actions themselves do not exist inherently

If an action existed inherently, we could never initiate an action, so it would be without a beginning. Further, if it inherently existed, then if it ever did begin, it would never cease. Actions do not produce themselves, they arise dependently. Therefore they do not inherently exist nor do they inherently cease. The consequence of inherent cessation is the extreme of annihilation, since something then does not exist in relation to something that continues. The action would have been annihilated so there is no result from it. So all four of these assertions are said to be unjustifiable.

The analogy of a human lifespan

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes a sutra passage in which the analogy of a human lifespan of one hundred years is used. The idea here is that if that lifespan were inherently existent then it would never be used up. Or if we lived one year of that lifespan it would be annihilated since it no longer exists as one hundred years. If it inherently existed all one hundred years would have to exist right now and never be used up. Conventionally we do understand that a one-hundred-year lifespan is extinguished. We can understand intellectually that such a life span no longer exists after one year has gone by and that only ninety-nine years are remaining. But if it existed inherently, it would have ceased entirely, so in that way we can see that actions do not exist nor cease inherently.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A3 Explaining the meaning that comes from that

Now in regard to the above, Lama Tsongkhapa will explore two things, the ramifications of asserting non-inherent cessation of actions, and how Prasangika posits a basis for the latencies.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A3A Non-inherent cessation, the way of proceeding in the reasons for not asserting a mind-basis-of-all

Someone objects saying that, since Prasangika does not assert a mind-basis-of-all and what has been stated before is not sufficient to explain the connection between actions and their results, then how does Prasangika explain that? Prasangika asserts that there is no need for an independently identifiable basis for the latencies since they are deposited or infused on the mere I itself. Moreover they posit disintegratedness as a functioning thing that produces a result, and this is because there are no inherently existent latencies. These ideas will be discussed further here.

Systems that assert inherent existence

First, Lama Tsongkhapa explores systems that assert things to be inherently existent, primarily the Chittamatra system. Often dying and the state of death are used to explain the difference between disintegration and disintegratedness. There was a thing before and due to disintegration (or dying) there is a non-existence of the thing, its disintegratedness (or the state of death). Both Chittamatra and Svatantrika say that disintegratedness is a permanent phenomenon and is uncaused; therefore it is incapable of producing an effect.

October 13 (Friday)

Correction to the Week 20 transcript, page 29: In the Friday questions, the transcript says that “ordinary beings absorbed in meditative equipoise on emptiness do not have the appearance of true existence.” It seems from Geshe-la’s class yesterday (October 12) that this is not true. As long as it is an ordinary being, then there is the appearance of true existence.

Reviewing Geshe-la’s answers to questions in class today

- ← Regarding the passage we discussed earlier this week on “the very subtle selflessness,” Geshe-la said that one could have refuted inherent existence ultimately but still have doubts as to its existence conventionally and, as long as one has doubts, one cannot realize the very subtle selflessness.
- ← From Geshe-la’s teaching, it seems that the latency of an action and the disintegratedness of an action are not the same thing, but their distinction is unclear. It is the disintegratedness that connects the action with its future result. So this is an open question.

Synonyms for disintegration and disintegratedness

As we discussed yesterday, one of the hypothetical necessities of positing inherently existent latencies is that we need a location for them to reside, such as a mind-basis-of-all. If we can show that there is no need for a location, then there is no need for a mind-basis-of-all and so forth. According to Prasangika, the mechanism that allows for the connection between an action and its results is disintegratedness. To get a better idea of what disintegration and disintegratedness are and how they are distinguished, we can set out some possible synonyms for them as follows:

Disintegration	Disintegratedness
Cessation	Ceased-ness
Dying	Death (deadness), state of death
Extinction/Exhaustion	Extinguishment
Not enduring another moment	Not having endured another moment
Consumption	Consumed-ness

These can be seen both as cause (first column) and effect (second column) but they can also be seen as one continuum. The first column encompassing the second. In the lower schools, the non-existence of a seed at the time of a sprout is the disintegratedness of that seed. In their view, disintegratedness is a non-affirming negative and a permanent phenomenon. They see death, for example, as the non-existence of life. In Chittamatra then, this disintegratedness is a permanent phenomenon and so it cannot be used to posit the connection between the action and its result. However, in Prasangika, disintegratedness can be included in the continuum of disintegration. The dying of the person is the cause of death and death can be seen as part of dying. Death is the destruction of life as opposed to its mere nonexistence.

Prasangika does not assert inherent existence

Unlike the lower schools, in Prasangika inherent existence is not accepted, therefore they do not find the imputed object in its basis of imputation. Whatever the imputed object, it is imputed on a base, and it is not found within its basis of imputation nor separate from its basis of imputation. For example, a hand is imputed upon a thumb, four fingers and so on, and none of them are the hand, nor is the collection of them the hand, nor is the hand a phenomenon that is found separate from them. So in Prasangika there is nothing that illustrates the imputed phenomenon within its basis of imputation, unlike what Svatantrika and the lower schools posit.

Other examples to establish disintegratedness

When we speak about the disintegratedness of the lamp, its cause is the consumption of the oil and the wick. It's important to understand the concept of disintegratedness since perhaps it will strengthen our belief in rebirth and aid in understanding non-inherent existence. To use an easier example, if there was an exhaustion of food such as what happens in Ethiopia, there is a famine. The absence or non-existence of food upon its exhaustion has a result, a famine. The absence of rain in Pomaia causes a drought; due to the lack of water and the rivers drying up, crops will wither and die. The absence or non-existence of some factor upon its destruction does have a concrete result, and that is similar to how disintegratedness is established.

Disintegratedness is not merely non-existence

Disintegratedness can be described as a thing's non-existence upon its disintegration but this is an affirming negative, not a mere non-existence which is a non-affirming negative. A seed's disintegratedness serves to eliminate the seed not having disintegrated, and it implies that a disintegration occurred on the basis of a seed. It is an affirming negative because it implies the activity of a seed, i.e. the dying or disintegrating of the seed. It is not just the elimination of the seed or the non-existence of it.

Lama Tsongkhapa says that disintegratedness is not an illustration of the functioning thing that has been destroyed, nor is it an illustration of a functioning thing that is similar in type to it. If we return to the oil lamp, the oil is slowly being consumed, and that consumption is the cause of the disintegratedness of the lamp. The lamp will die once the causes for it are incomplete. Using this example, the disintegratedness of the lamp is caused by the exhaustion of the oil. It is neither an illustration of the wick and oil that have been consumed nor is it a functioning thing that is similar in type to the oil and wick. But it is a functioning thing because it depends upon the oil and wick being consumed. So because it has a cause, it is a functioning thing but then what is the result of the disintegratedness of the lamp? Since it is a functioning thing, it itself must be a cause and have a result. We might posit the possible results of the light going out, the stopping of heat, darkness arising, and so forth. It may be worthwhile examining these to see if they really are caused by the disintegratedness of the lamp.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

October 16 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A3A Non-inherent cessation, the way of proceeding in the reasons for not asserting a mind-basis-of-all (continued)

As we discussed last week, Prasangika does not need to assert a mind-basis-of-all as a site to place the latencies or ceased actions. Instead Prasangika holds that no separately identifiable basis is needed because they are not inherently existent phenomena. We can place the ceased actions on the mere I itself.

The analogy of Upagupta

At the end of last week, we were examining “the latter system,” meaning the Prasangika view. In that section, Lama Tsongkhapa makes reference to Upagupta being imputed on the basis of the five aggregates. There is nothing that is within the basis of imputation – the collection of the five aggregates – or that is different from them that can be found that is an illustration of Upagupta. Lama Tsongkhapa follows this by saying that, “Similarly, although disintegratedness is neither an illustration of (i) the functioning thing that has been destroyed nor (ii) a functioning thing that is a similar type to it, it is a functioning thing because it is produced in dependence on the functioning thing that is destroyed.”

Here Lama Tsongkhapa is trying to establish that disintegratedness does not illustrate the action that has been ceased nor is it similar in type to the action that has been ceased. So, what is the reason for using the analogy of Upagupta for demonstrating what disintegratedness is? How does this relate to saying that, although you cannot find Upagupta among or apart from his aggregates, that doesn’t mean that Upagupta doesn’t exist? There is the idea that, just as with Upagupta, there is nothing to point to that is disintegratedness, but yet disintegratedness does exist. However, it’s not saying that you will not find it but rather that these various things are not disintegratedness.

Establishing disintegratedness in both scripture and reasoning

As we discussed last week, disintegratedness is described as a thing’s non-existence upon its disintegration. In *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.182), Daniel Cozort describes disintegratedness as a “state of having disintegrated after being produced.” As we mentioned earlier, in the lower schools it is a non-affirming negation but in Prasangika it is an affirming negation. So when we speak of a seed’s disintegratedness, there is both the elimination of the existence of the seed as well as the assertion of the disintegration of the seed. So it suggests or affirms the activity of the seed withering away and this occurs on the basis of the seed. How can a functioning thing be a negation? The usual example given for a functioning thing that is an affirming negative is a mountain-less plain.

(1) Scriptural authority

Here we are mainly speaking of the disintegratedness of actions but the analogy of death, or the state of deadness, will be used. In the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, the Buddha says, “Due to the condition of birth there is aging and death.” So this quote indicates that death is not the mere absence of life but is life’s destruction. Death is a state that is produced in dependence upon creation, so in that way it is caused by birth. Since there’s a state of deadness arising in dependence upon birth, then it itself is caused and hence a produced phenomenon, and so it is able to act as a cause of a further effect. The specific cause of death is the exhaustion of the causes of life but in a general way, death is caused by birth.

The two activities of death

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes again from the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, which says that death performs two activities in that (1) it functions to destroy compounded phenomena, and (2) it causes the non-severance of the continuum of unknowing or ignorance. Regarding the first, death is the cause of the disintegration of a sentient being. The state of death is the incompleteness of the causes for the continuation of life. The compounded phenomenon referred to here is the sentient being and so death causes the disintegration of the sentient being. Regarding the second, perhaps it is related to another idea that Lama Zopa Rinpoche mentioned while giving a teaching on Yamantaka, the deity who overcomes the Lord of Death both in an interpretive and a definitive way, in that you are able to overcome ignorance and actual death. A yogi has two main obstacles – ignorance

and death. Death stops a yogi from completing his practice so in order to overcome ignorance through his practice, he has to overcome death. In a similar way, death interrupts the severance of ignorance, so in that way it is supportive condition for ignorance. It is the cause for *the non-severance of the continuum* of ignorance. By acting as a condition for the non-severance of the continuum of ignorance, death can be seen to produce ignorance, but it means it is a necessary cooperative condition for ignorance.

Quote from Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*

In *Fundamental Wisdom* (25.13d), Nagarjuna says, "Things and non-things are compounded phenomena." "Things" here are actions and "non-things" refers to the disintegratedness of actions, and both of these are compounded phenomena. Part of what Lama Tsongkhapa is getting at is that an action is an action but the disintegratedness of an action (or a disintegrated action) is not an action.

(2) Reasoning

Although it's difficult to conceptualize, momentary disintegration is parallel to a disintegratedness of a continuum as a whole. Another concept that is difficult to fathom is that production, endurance and disintegration occur simultaneously. The arising (or production), the abiding (or endurance), and the disintegrating of a functioning thing occur simultaneously. It seems feasible that these can be posited when holding to a lack of inherent existence in Prasangika; yet all the lower schools except Vaibhashika hold that these occur simultaneously. The cause for the production of a phenomenon is the cause for its disintegration because they occur in the same moment. So it can be difficult to talk about these three, to imagine what it means to have all three activities occurring at the same time.

October 17 (Tuesday)

More regarding the difference between latencies of action and disintegratedness of action

Last Friday, we discussed that there is a difference between the latencies of actions and the disintegratedness of an action. While speaking with him recently, Geshe-la said that the latency of an action exists at the time of the action while the disintegratedness of an action does not exist until after the action has ceased. His Holiness the Dalai Lama refers to something similar to this in a footnote on p.22 of *The Meaning of Life*, saying, "An action infuses, or deposits a predisposing potency in the mind when it is about to cease. Both the action and the predisposition that it deposits in the mind are called karma." The disintegratedness cannot exist at the time of the action but the latency of the action can since the latencies are accumulated at the time of the action. In the next moment upon the ceasing of the action, there is the disintegratedness of the action. It seems that to call these "latencies" is simply a nominal or terminological use of the word, in that it is merely a way of talking about them since the lower schools can then relate to this concept. His Holiness also says (p.22), "In this way, right after an action, there is a state of destructedness or cessation of that action, which, it could be said, turns into the entity of a predisposition infused in consciousness."

Are latencies only spoken of in terms of sentient beings, such as the latencies of actions or the latencies that are knowledge obstructions? Karma is said to be a subdivision of overall of dependent arising, so there is natural dependent arising that exists independent of the karma of sentient beings. For example, we can say that the fact that, when a tree has grown and eventually dies and one of its branches falls, that is due to this "natural law" of dependent arising. However, if you happen to be under that branch when it falls, then that's the law of karma.

More regarding arising, abiding and disintegrating in the same moment

In *Cutting Through Appearances* (p.195), in the context of discussing the tenets of Vaibhashika (the Great Exposition School), there is a passage that gives an explanation of how things are arising, abiding and disintegrating at the same time in the other Buddhist systems:

All other systems hold that production itself is a cause or sufficient condition for disintegration; disintegration begins *with*, and not after, the very first moment of production. In all systems except the Great Exposition School, that which is produced is that which abides and that which disintegrates. This is because production is understood to be the arising of a new entity due to certain causes; abiding is the continued existence of that type of entity; disintegration is its quality of not lasting a

second moment; and aging is the factor of its being a different entity from the entity of the previous moment. In this way, the four can occur simultaneously.

(1) Scriptural authority (continued)

Yesterday we began our discussion of the two ways that Lama Tsongkhapa proves that disintegratedness is a functioning thing. First we examined the scriptural authority that demonstrates how disintegratedness links the actions to their results. The sutra passage says that birth produces aging and death. Death is a disintegratedness in terms of sentient beings and therefore it is a functioning thing. It has a cause and it will bring a result. Death is said to have two types of activities: destroying the compounded, meaning the sentient being, and causing the non-severance of the continuity of ignorance. Another way of looking at this second activity of death might be seen in the light of having an illness that precludes your studying. By not being well, you therefore do not study and so you are not able to learn a subject. In that way, your “not-well-ness” is a cause for you to continue your ignorance of that subject, similar to the way that death is a cause for continued ignorance.

(2) Reasoning (continued)

We also discussed the proof of disintegratedness in terms of reasoning yesterday, and we said there is the analogy of a continuum. Pot’s disintegratedness is an affirming negative and not a non-affirming negative, it implies not only the elimination of a pot but there is the activity of disintegration on the basis of pot. In the reasoning section, only the term “disintegration” is used and not “disintegratedness,” so one might wonder which of those we are discussing here. However, the disintegratedness of the first moment at the time of the second moment is the disintegration of the first moment at the second moment.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2A3B Although not asserting a mind-basis-of-all, positing a basis for the latencies We’ve examined non-inherent cessation in the light of why Prasangika does not need to assert a mind-basis-of-all as Chittamatra does. Having established that there is the disintegratedness of actions, Prasangika will go on to posit their position regarding the basis for latencies.

Question concerning what Prasangika holds to be the basis of depositing the latencies

Someone raises a question, saying that, since the mind-basis-of-all is not suitable as a basis for the depositing of latencies, then upon what are these latencies deposited? Prasangika has established disintegratedness as the mechanism for the connection between actions and results so now there is the question of what is the basis for those latencies of actions to be deposited. In Chittamatra, the mind-basis-of-all is the I that is found upon searching for an I, so in that respect it is the basis for depositing latencies. In Prasangika, the I is also the basis for depositing the latencies, but the difference is that this is the *mere* I, meaning that it is not found when searched for, that is, it is not inherently existent. So both schools posit the latencies on the I but the difference is in what they say the I is.

The continuum of the mere I

We have an innate conception thinking I, and the I is the object of that conception. That conventionally existent I is the basis for depositing those latencies. There is an innate thought of an I that comes with us from past lives and goes on to future lives, and the I that is its object is the mere I. The various I’s which this thought observes are the mere I over lifetimes, so this mere I exists over lifetimes. We are not saying that the I of this life and previous or subsequent lives are the same I, but rather that they are instances of the generality I. If we take the example of instances of a pot in Italy, a pot in Australia, a pot in India, and so forth, then we can say that all these pots are instances of the generality pot. These various I’s are also all instances of the same continuity of I’s. Other I’s outside of your continuum are not perceived of as I so this refers only to the I that extends throughout our own continuum of lifetimes. There are particular instances of that generality I and they are commonly I. This reasoning alone is sufficient to establish the existence of an I over lifetimes. The I of this life will cease to be but there is an I that will exist in the next life, within the same continuum as the present I.

So, since Prasangika doesn’t posit a mind-basis-of-all, upon what are they infused? The mere I is the basis, with “mere” eliminating inherent existence, that is, when it is sought it will not be found. In the lower schools, upon

searching for an I, you will find it, but in Prasangika that is not the case. In Chittamatra it is an inherently existent mind-basis-of-all that is the I.

Question concerning “the continuum of mind is the basis of the latencies”

Another question is raised, saying that, if that’s the case, then why does Chandrakirti say in his *Autocommentary* that “the continuum of mind is the basis of the latencies?” The response is that, because the mere I is imputed in dependence upon the continuum of mind, it is called the continuum of mind. When the term “continuum of mind” is used here, it encompasses more than just the continuum of the mental consciousness.

The mode of the latencies of ignorance

Having discussed the latencies of actions, we next move to a discussion of the latencies in terms of the afflictions. A foe destroyer has abandoned the afflictions, such as ignorance, hatred, and attachment, but has not abandoned the latencies of those afflictions and those are knowledge obstructions in Prasangika. In this context, Geshe-la discusses the difference between seeds and latencies. For example, a seed of an afflictive emotion is a potency of an afflictive emotion that will give rise to an affliction of a similar in type. A seed is necessarily a latency but a latency is not necessarily a seed. That which is a latency but not a seed is the factor of mistaken dualistic appearance that is a knowledge obstruction. Therefore, the seed of anger gives rise to another instance of anger but a latency of anger that is not a seed would give rise to mistaken dualistic appearance.

In his commentary, Geshe-la uses the notion of likening a non-seed latency to the residual odor left in a pot after sesame oil is removed, or to the residual stain on cloth after oil is removed. The mere I is the basis for infusing the latencies of actions but also is the basis for infusing the latencies of the afflictions.

Status of latencies to be abandoned on the path of meditation during the uninterrupted path of seeing

An objector begins by saying that on the uninterrupted path of seeing, when there is an exalted wisdom that is the direct antidote to the acquired conceptions of inherent existence, at that time the objects of abandonment of the uninterrupted path of seeing do not exist. However, that antidote of the uninterrupted path of seeing is *not* an antidote to the seeds of the innate conception of true existence, which are objects of abandonment of the path of meditation. Yet it is said that those objects of abandonment of the path of meditation do exist at that time. Moreover, that path consciousness is an uncontaminated consciousness, meaning that the exalted wisdom is not polluted by the ignorance that is the conception of true existence or its latencies. It is not possible to posit a sense consciousness, form or an uncontaminated mental consciousness as a suitable basis for the dormant latencies at that time, so where can they reside?

So, the objection concerns how the latencies of the conception of true existence that are the objects of abandonment of the path of meditation can be deposited on that uncontaminated mind of the path of seeing. The objector here is saying that the superior has not abandoned the seeds of the innate conception of true existence and, since the mental consciousness is uncontaminated and both the sense consciousnesses and form cannot be the receptacle, where can they be deposited? The inference from this objection is that Prasangika doesn’t have a suitable basis for the latencies.

Prasangika explains that there is no problem with this assertion. At the time of the uninterrupted path of seeing, the mere I is the basis for those dormant latencies, not the mental consciousness itself. According to Prasangika, at that point, they must be posited as residing on the mere I, and there is no other suitable basis. In this regard the mental consciousness is the occasional basis while the mere I is the consistent basis for the depositing of latencies.

October 18 (Wednesday)

Supramundane minds in the formless realm

Examining a passage from the *Autocommentary*, Lama Tsongkhapa next discusses what occurs when supramundane, uncontaminated minds become manifest in the first three levels of the formless realm. Basically this involves the fact that there are various minds in various realms and Prasangika makes the assertion that the mind is not the being, unlike what is held in the lower schools where some type of mind is the illustration of the

being. In those systems, the mind or mental consciousness is the illustration of the being and they do not have a way of positing an uncontaminated mind of a superior in the formless realms. So they conclude that if a being has an uncontaminated mind then, when in these specific realms of the formless realm, he would not be a mundane being, a migrator. For Prasangika, this is possible since the mind is not the being, so there can still be a migrator, a being within cyclic existence who take rebirth here and there, and yet they can have an uncontaminated mind. Perhaps this will be made clearer when we study it in *Abhidharmakosha*.

Correction to the Week 21 transcript, page 11: It's possible that a better translation of the beginning of the first sentence in the passage from *Illumination* on the bottom of this page would be as follows: "When the uncommon way of positing a person in this system is understood..." So the fact that the *person* is a migrator and not the mind in Prasangika makes it possible for various types of mental consciousnesses to exist while the being continues to be a migrator. Also at the end of this sentence, the term "turned back" could also be translated as undermined, reversed, or invalidated.

Rebirth as the appropriation of the aggregates

A sentient being (equivalent to the mere I) is said to be the appropriator of the aggregates. What does it mean to appropriate the aggregates or to take rebirth? In the continuum of each being there are always at least four aggregates so the appropriator, which is the mere I imputed to the aggregates, is basically appropriating a new form aggregate, when being reborn in either the desire or form realms. The appropriator of the aggregates is the mere I, so "the imputed" is the appropriator of "the basis of imputation." The aggregates are that which is taken and the mere I is the taker.

Final comments on the refutation of a mind-basis-of-all

In regard to the mind-basis-of-all, Lama Tsongkhapa says that Chittamatra is positing their arguments for its existence in terms of both those who have not entered a path and those who are learners. Geshe-la comments on this, saying that for both Chittamatra and Prasangika, the basis for depositing the latencies is neutral or unspecified. Geshe-la also mentions that there are eight reasons set forth by Chittamatra supporting a mind-basis-of-all, and in this section, we've refuted the first of these by saying that it is not necessary to assert a mind-basis-of-all since the mere I is sufficient to connect actions with their results.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2B Indicating an example of a result arising from an action that has ceased

In this section, Prasangika presents the simile of a dream, which is intended to show how a ceased action is capable of generating a result.

Simile of a dream woman

In the dream, there's a man dreaming of having a relationship with a beautiful woman, and upon awakening and recalling the woman, he develops passionate longing for her. She is a non-existent woman though so there is no way for the man to consummate this relationship and he thereby experiences frustration and suffering. Geshe-la says this is similar to the childish ordinary beings, meaning worldly beings who have not heard teachings on emptiness. They see forms as inherently existent and grasp onto their attractive or unattractive qualities; then they go on to develop afflictions and perform actions due to those afflictions. After those actions have ceased, the latencies from them are planted, and when we search for those actions, we do not find them, and yet the consequences of these ceased actions are still seen in a result. If we see something beautiful, we see it as inherently existent, and we desire to have that object in order to experience the pleasure we want from that object. Then the action ceases and, even though it is not inherently existent, an effect will still be produced. In the analogy, even though the dream woman has ceased, still the dreamer experiences the result of that ceased dream woman. Likewise, we experience the result of the ceased actions, even though they do not inherently exist.

This analogy concerns a person who is awake remembering a dream woman, and that dream woman is likened to the ceased action that does exist but is unfindable. The similarities to the dream woman are that these ceased actions are still able to produce a result, just as the dream woman, through the man's memory and attachment, can create the resultant desire in the awakened state. Likewise, although actions have ceased they are still able to produce a result. In commenting on this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says that an action ceases conventionally since it does not exist inherently.

Projecting karma at the time of death

There are many ways to classify karma and one classification is projecting karma, that which propels into another rebirth. Having once taken that rebirth, there is still a life to be lived, and that is completing karma, where one's health, beauty, and so forth are determined. Completing karma "fills out the story" of the particular rebirth that is propelled by projecting karma. Throughout this and prior lives life we have planted various latencies and so, as we approach our death, when the causes which support the continuation of this life are diminishing, craving and grasping arise (the eighth and ninth links). Those afflictions activate a particular latency in that they act as a necessary condition. A new rebirth is the new appropriation of physical aggregates due to the force of afflictions and karma and that is what constitutes migration. Due to the activation of craving and grasping that cause one of the latencies to be activated, a projecting karma arises at the moment of our death and that determines the specific physical form that our rebirth will take.

In the light of this, we don't often realize how much of our world view is dependent on our human form, which allows for human thinking. For example, if you try to imagine what being a frog is like, you can only experience what it's like to be a human trying to imagine being a frog. The only being that truly knows how it is to be a frog is a frog. There is a bond between our mental consciousness and the life force of this life and it begins to weaken as we near our death and then, at death it finally breaks, as if we have lost our anchor and the boat is now set adrift. What will give our mind a direction is that projecting karma that ripens at the end our life. That directionality guides the new type of rebirth we will take. In a sense, at that point we are like a leaf blown in the wind, and, if the wind blows in one direction, we will take rebirth as a dog, for example, and will have the way of knowing of a dog and so forth. From one moment to the next, the bridging of the gap is this control of what the mind is being directed towards as it will determine the physical aggregate that we will assume. From one moment to the next there is no discreet unit of mind that transfers from this life to the next, but rather it is a continuum of mind that is newly associated with a new form aggregate. There is no discreet thing, such as a unit of consciousness that goes from life to life. The final consciousness of this life ceases and the first moment of the next rebirth rises. This is all possible since none of these factors inherently exist.

"The final consciousness is empty of final consciousness"

All these various factors we've been discussing are empty of inherent existence, and that is what is being referred to in the last sutra passage in this section when it says that "the final consciousness is empty of final consciousness." Likewise, death-transference, actions, initial consciousnesses and birth are all empty of inherent existence.

In summary, the meaning of the analogy is that the ceased dream woman can bring a result, just as disintegratedness can bring about a result. Further, since even in the dream the woman is only illusory, it's also possible that this analogy also encapsulates the idea of phenomena appearing as truly existent but not being so. At the time of awakening the dream woman has ceased and, although having ceased, she is still capable of producing the afflictions, frustration, and suffering in the man who dreamt of her. Moreover, she appears to exist in the dream and does not, while phenomena in the waking state appear to inherently exist and do not. Something that has ceased can produce an effect, even to the point of directing our rebirth. If any of these factors were inherently existent, then none of those activities could take place.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2C Dispelling arguments with respect to presenting in this way

To establish the context of this topic, we are in the last part of a discussion on the excellent quality of the relationship between actions and results being appropriate even though they do not inherently exist. First we looked at the fact that we don't need a mind-basis-of-all, then we examined an analogy that demonstrates how ceased actions produce an effect, so now we encounter the third part of this discussion, dispelling arguments with respect to that presentation, and there are two divisions to this.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2C1 Dispelling the argument that [actions] would endlessly yield a fruitional [result] Prasangika is establishing that within the context of non-inherent existence, they are able to assert that actions producing effects are feasible. In fact, without this context of non-inherent existence, an action producing a result is completely unfeasible. A continuity is only possible because actions do not inherently exist. The disintegratedness of an action is the means for past actions to bring future results. There is no possibility of a

continuum if there are inherently existent moments, since that entails unrelatedness, with discrete units that would bear no relation to each other. If they inherently existed they would exist exactly that way and, in that case, there would be only annihilation and not any continuity. Within the context of asserting non-inherent existence, it is not necessary to posit a basis such as the mind-basis-of-all for such latencies since the ceased action itself can produce the result.

First argument: That actions would endlessly yield a fruitional result

The lower schools say that if actions are not inherently existent, are not inherently produced and do not inherently cease, and yet you say they still ripen to produce a fruitional result, then an action would continually ripen and thus give rise to unending results.

Analogy of the falling hairs

Prasangika objects saying that the effects of actions are definite so the process of them ripening cannot be endless. As Daniel Cozort explains in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (pp.435-436) there are really two parts to this defense. The first is the actual refutation that the fruition of results would occur endlessly and the second is that, even though disintegratedness is not inherently existent, the effects of actions occur in an appropriate way, meaning that there is certainty in the results of actions.

Chandrakirti uses the analogy of falling hairs that appear to a person with cataracts. Such falling hairs do not exist, just as the horns of a donkey equally do not exist. But yet, for someone with cataracts, those falling hairs do appear to them but the horns of a donkey do not. So even though they are equally non-existent, there is a correlation in what type of non-existent appears given a particular condition. Due to the condition of cataracts, a person sees falling hairs; however they do not see two moons, the horns of a donkey, and so forth. There is a correlation in that, among the various possible non-existences, only falling hairs appear to a person with cataracts. Further, although this idea is not in the text, once someone has the cataracts removed, those falling hairs cease to appear. Likewise, although yet to ripen actions do not inherently exist and already ripened actions equally do not inherently exist, in meeting with any particular given condition the first will ripen while the second will not. That is to say, once an actions has ripened it will not ripen again.

Secondly, with this analogy Prasangika also says that there is the definiteness of result in that happiness arises from virtuous actions and suffering from non-virtuous action. Though both virtuous and non-virtuous actions are equally non-inherently existent still there is a definite correlation between the nature of the action and its result. Just as someone with cataracts will have the resultant experience of seeing falling hairs, but will not have the experience of seeing other non-existents.

October 19 (Thursday)

The results of virtuous and non-virtuous actions

When we are talking about the non-inherent existence of phenomena, it means that they do not have an intrinsic identity. For the lower schools however, if phenomena did not have such an identity, then there is no way to distinguish them. They would argue for example that virtuous and non-virtuous actions could not be distinguished. But in fact, there is certainty between the action and the result even though there is no intrinsic characteristic.

In our studies of *Ornament*, we defined virtue is that which is specified and abides in a class of positive fruition. Non-virtue was defined similarly with the difference that it abides in a class of negative fruition. When those definitions say “abides in a class,” the reason for saying that concerns the fact that the results of karma can be altered through subsequent actions, such as purifying non-virtuous karma or destroying virtuous karma through anger and so forth. In those cases the negative or positive results would not be experienced but those actions still “abide in a class” that causes those fruitional results.

So we can only know the type of action by what type of result it produces. Because it can produce the positive fruition of happiness, it is virtue; because it can produce the negative fruition of suffering, it is non-virtue. It is

only a convention in regard to what type of result it gives. We cannot say that by its very nature it is virtuous but nonetheless there is this relationship between the action and its result. The Buddha noticed a relationship between his experiences and the causes that produced them. Through his observation, he was able to trace them back to various causes. There is nothing inherent or absolute about all this, rather it is only based on how things are observed to work in the world. So the lower schools are seeking an inherent mark that will distinguish virtue and non-virtue and so forth. Because they cannot find it in the Prasangika presentation, they then assume that actions are not definite in their result. But in fact, actions aren't inherently virtuous or non-virtuous and yet they are certain in regard to the type of result they bring.

The presentation of actions and results is not to be analyzed

Having presented this idea though, Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to admonish that it is important to not analyze or investigate karma too critically. Basically this is referring to the fact that the subtle workings of the law of actions and results are not to be overly analyzed. The subtle workings of the law of cause and effect, meaning that this specific result has a specific cause in one's past, is an extremely hidden phenomenon. Among the three types of phenomena, manifest (or obvious), slightly hidden, and extremely hidden, the subtle workings of karma are the third of these. So in that case, with regard to the subtle workings of karma we must make use of the scriptures and rely upon inference through the power of belief and cannot rely on inference through the power of the fact.

Meditation on karma

Although the subtle workings of karma are not to be analyzed, this does not mean that we should not reflect on karma or actions. In *lam rim* we speak of the four general features or aspects of actions: (1) the results of actions are definite, (2) the results of actions increase, (3) the results of uncreated actions are not experienced, and (4) actions done are not wasted or dissipated. The traditional presentation to develop conviction in karma is fundamental, so belief in it is essential, and that is belief is strengthened through meditation. So it is necessary to meditate on and contemplate karma, even at the level of seeing that happiness arises from virtue and suffering arising from non-virtue. It is important to speak a bit about this connection so that we realize that what we do affects what we experience. This idea is something that people can put into practice immediately after being taught about it in that we can begin to adjust our actions of body, speech and mind based on that information.

But in terms of critical analysis, it's possible that one can think about karma in the wrong ways, perhaps by thinking that since actions do not inherently exist, then I can do whatever I wish. So one must be careful how to approach this subject. Lama Tsongkhapa says that when we study karma, it is necessary to gain a conviction in it. It should in some way strengthen our conviction and not undermine it. Moreover, as Geshe-la says, an understanding of emptiness will assist your understanding of karma. In that way one can realize that it is because phenomena are empty that karma works.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2C2 Dispelling the argument that this would contradict the scriptures that teach the existence of a mind-basis-of-all

Since Prasangika has dispelled the argument that non-inherently existent actions would endlessly yield results, we now look at the argument that this argument would contradict the scriptures that teach a mind-basis-of-all. The reason we went into the discussion of the latencies of actions and so forth was to show that the mind-basis-of-all held by Chittamatra is unnecessary since there is another mechanism to explain how the results of actions are produced. Now, we have to confront the fact that there are scriptures that teach a "mind-basis-of-all" so Prasangika must address that.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2C2A Actual meaning of the words that dispel contradiction with the scriptures [that teach the existence of a mind-basis-of-all]

A question is raised from the lower schools citing various sutras that apparently contradict the Prasangika position on the mind-basis-of-all. In the light of Prasangika's position in stating that a mind-basis-of-all is unnecessary since we have a mechanism which precludes that, Prasangika seems to be in direct contradiction with the scriptures that say a mind-basis-of-all exists.

Buddha's skill in means in teaching to various disciples

The response is that the Buddha taught according to the capacity and tendencies of particular trainees. The fact that he did that is not to be taken as a sign that he didn't know what he was talking about. Instead it means the opposite since, in fact, the more that one understands a subject, the more ways one should be able to explain it to others (one teacher once said that if you can't explain it to your mother then you don't understand it well enough!). Other philosophical systems have only one position on a particular subject but in Buddhism, there are many ways of approaching a subject. All these varying teachings simply demonstrate the Buddha's skill in means. A buddha is able to ascertain the exact teachings that individuals require to be taken further on their path and that capacity of a buddha is a mark of her skill in means.

So how do we create a consistent way of viewing the contradictory statements made in various sutras? How are we to look at these and make sense of them? Hermeneutics, the branch of knowledge dealing with theories of interpretation, is becoming popular in Buddhist studies today. So here we are specifically looking at reconciling that the Buddha said that a mind-basis-of-all exists and yet, according to his final thought, it doesn't. This teaching on the mind-basis-of-all as a repository for latencies was intended for trainees of dull faculties who were not a suitable vessel to be taught the emptiness of inherent existence. For those people, he taught inherent existence, that latencies inherently exist, and that there is an inherently existent place for those inherently existent latencies to be stored. So the teachings on the mind-basis-of-all were given in the context of needing to teach inherent existence. Further, it can be said that for a particular disciple, the mind-basis-of-all was taught because they were not ready for the teachings on emptiness of inherent existence. As we explained earlier, what the Buddha really meant by basis-of-all is emptiness since it is the basis of all phenomena and it is to be well minded. All phenomena are characterized by emptiness and they all arise out of emptiness.

What would be the fault if the Buddha taught that both the mind-basis-of-all and the latencies didn't inherently exist? What would be the fault to say that the latencies were posited only on the mental consciousness? Examining these things in the text are ways of overcoming our tendency to solidify and concretize these things. We often speak about the idea in *lam rim* of planting seeds in the field of our minds but that is a concrete way of explaining what is really happening.

Regarding the teaching of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self

We are talking about the way in which the Buddha skillfully fulfilled the needs of individual disciples, so the text says that he taught not only a mind-basis-of-all, but at times he also taught the existence of a substantially existent self. We saw this earlier in the sutra quote that said that the aggregates are the load, and the carrier is the person, and this implies that the carrier can appear without the burden of the aggregates appearing, so the person is substantially existent in that way. He taught a self-sufficient substantially existent self as opposed to an imputed self. So what is the bottom line that determines what is and is not a Buddhist doctrine? The four seals show what the bottom line is, and Geshe-la enumerated them in his commentary (p.6 of Week 22). The question may arise, since the Buddha did teach a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, then what does the third (all phenomena are empty and selfless) mean? Geshe-la said that in this context, "empty" means that they are empty of a permanent, partless, independent self.

The three factors in teaching that which requires interpretation

Lama Tsongkhapa says that for those trainees who are not ready to refute inherent existence, the Buddha also taught that the aggregates truly exist, specifically saying that the mind or consciousness progresses to high status. This was done in order to encourage those who cannot refute true existence to still cultivate a path, by infusing them with faith, ethics, and so forth, so that they could attain high status and eventually progress to liberation. There is an entire area of discerning what are definitive and interpretive teachings, which was explored by Lama Tsongkhapa in his *Essence of Eloquence*. Geshe-la mentions that there are three factors involved in examining teachings that are of interpretive meaning. First, we must take into consideration the basis of thought or intention (*dgongs gzhi*), meaning what was on the Buddha's mind, what was his final thought on this subject. The second factor, the purpose, refers to the need for the Buddha to explain the subject in a different way. There was an ulterior motive. The third factor, the harm to accepting it literally, refers to the fact that you cannot take something literally if there can be harm to it from reasoning and so forth.

The purpose in teaching a mind-basis-of-all

So, as we discussed above, the second factor was the purpose, so what is the purpose for these teachings? Here it says that the purpose for teaching a mind-basis-of-all that is a different consciousness from the other six was done in order to show those so inclined that phenomena do not exist externally, and that apprehendeds and apprehenders are empty of being different substances. Lama Tsongkhapa also says that, on the other hand, even those who do not assert a mind-basis-of-all, such as the Svatantrika Madhyamikas, are not able to posit the correct view of actions and results since they hold phenomena to inherently exist.

October 20 (Friday)

Summary of the three factors in teaching the mind-basis-of-all

In the last session, we were discussing the three factors in teaching the mind-basis-of-all, the first being the basis of thought or intention was emptiness. Regarding the second factor, the purpose, the Buddha taught a mind-basis-of-all purposefully for those who are inclined to accept that apprehendeds and apprehenders are empty of being different substances and who negate the existence of external objects. The third factor involves the harm to accepting it literally, and here the harm would follow because such positions can be damaged through reasoning establishing external phenomena to exist.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2C2B The manner of explaining and not explaining a mind-basis-of-all that is a different entity from the mental consciousness

Perhaps this section might be better understood as “The manner of *whether or not* a mind-basis-of-all that is a different entity from the mental consciousness *is explained*.” In the last section we were establishing the meaning of the various scriptural passages that referred to a mind-basis-of-all so now we are going to discern whether or not what was explained is that which the Chittamatrins are asserting.

Sutras and treatises that do and do not assert a mind-basis-of-all

There are a number of sutras such as the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought* that do assert a mind-basis-of-all but there are also many others that do not, such as the *Hundred Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*. Regarding the five treatises of Maitreya, there are three that were explained in relation to the Chittamatra view while the other two (the *Ornament* and the *Sublime Continuum*) that did not present a mind-basis-of-all. Even Asanga, the charioteer of the Mind Only school, explains Maitreya’s *Sublime Continuum* according to Prasangika Madhyamika tenets, although in his *Compendium on the Mahayana*, he did teach a mind-basis-of-all.

Question concerning Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*

A question is raised, this time concerning a statement in Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*, which seems to assert the existence of a mind-basis-of-all. This passage says that, just as iron moves towards a magnet and thus seems that a mind exists in the iron, so too does a mind-basis-of-all move from life to life and seems to truly exist but it doesn’t. So how is this to be interpreted? The reply is once again that here mind-basis-of-all was taught to those trainees who were not ready to be taught the profound emptiness.

Selflessness of phenomena in Chittamatra

In the response to this question, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the Chittamatra system refutes external objects and yet does not refute an inherently existent mind. In his commentary Geshe-la said, “Thus the teaching that there exists a mind-basis-of-all and that external objects do not exist is to enable specific trainees to cultivate the realization of the coarse selflessness of phenomena.” What is the “coarse selflessness of phenomena” in Chittamatra? According to Jeffrey Hopkins in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.301), there isn’t a coarse selflessness of phenomena in Chittamatra tenets. There are two ways of presenting the selflessness of phenomena in Chittamatra and both are said to be subtle. Jeffrey Hopkins describes these as (1) “non-existence of phenomena as naturally bases of names,” and (2) “non-existence of object and subject as different entities.”

The three natures in Chittamatra

Chittamatra asserts that three natures can be posited with respect to all phenomena: an imputational nature, an other-powered nature and a thoroughly established nature. Both other-powered and thoroughly established are said to be truly existent, but what does true existence mean here? Is the true existence that is accepted in Chittamatra the same as the true existence that is negated in Svatantrika?

According to Chittamatra, if something is merely imputed (imputational nature), it is a fabricated phenomenon, it exists only for thought, and therefore it doesn't truly exist. Other powered phenomena are truly existent because they arise from causes and conditions. All phenomena in Chittamatra are inherently existent since they are all ultimately findable. The measure of the object of negation in Chittamatra is (1) objects being of a different substance than the mind cognizing them, and (2) forms and so forth being the natural basis for their names.

The mind-basis-of-all is the migrator in Chittamatra

The person, who is identified as the mind-basis-of-all in Chittamatra, is not merely imputed but exists by way of its own character. That truly existent mind-basis-of-all is the migrator. Each Buddhist system must establish that there is some being that migrates: in Chittamatra it is the mind-basis-of-all, in Svatantrika, it is the sixth mental consciousness, and in Prasangika, it is the mere I. The person is the migrator who bears our karmic history, and goes on to future existence, and according to Chittamatra such a migrator must truly exist, meaning exist by way of its own character. In the response he gives to the question regarding what Nagarjuna is getting at in his *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*, Lama Tsongkhapa explains that the Chittamatrins hold that this migrator must be truly existent or else it would not be appropriate for it to migrate. In Nagarjuna's text, he says that just as iron moves when near a magnet, and appears to have a mind, so the mind-basis-of-all appears to truly exist but doesn't.

An objection asserting the non-existence of external phenomena

An objection is raised, saying that there are those who, although they do not assert a mind-basis-of-all that is established by way of its own character, they assert that the latencies for all the thoroughly afflicted and completely pure phenomena are deposited on that basis. In commenting on this Geshe-la mentions that there are two types of basis-of-all: the supporting, which is a consciousness, and the supported, which is the latencies. In our studies of *Ornament* we discussed the thoroughly afflicted and completely pure phenomena (these are set out on pp.201-212 of *Meditation on Emptiness*). The five aggregates, for example, are of the afflicted class while the six perfections are among the pure phenomena. So all the various phenomena can be classified into these two groups and the support of the latencies of those phenomena is the mind-basis-of-all.

Basically this objector is getting at establishing that there are no external phenomena. In response, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna's *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*, saying that knower and known arise in mutual reliance. Both subject and object are equally both conventionally existent and ultimately non-existent. Both do not exist in the context of ultimate analysis but they both equally conventionally exist. The Chittamatrins use ultimate analysis to refute external forms but fail to extend that same analysis to mind.

How to explain a "basis-of-all"

Nagarjuna does not assert a basis-of-all that is different from the six consciousnesses. Instead, "basis-of-all" means a mere mind, a clear and knowing consciousness. Two things follow from this. First, when basis-of-all is mentioned, it is referring to the sixth mental consciousness. Secondly, on the basis of that sixth mental consciousness, which does not inherently exist, all the various agents and actions are possible. In the Prasangika view, the mental consciousness goes on to take rebirth and it is the basis for the thoroughly afflicted and the completely pure phenomena.

Others who do not assert a mind-basis-of-all

Lama Tsongkhapa is looking at whether or not the mind-basis-of-all that is other than the sixth consciousness is explained in the scriptures, so he cites other sources, such as Bhavaviveka who refutes it, and Jnanagarbha who doesn't assert it. Even among those who hold Chittamatra tenets, there are the False Aspectarians who do not assert it. Kamalashila asserted the existence of external phenomena and did not assert a mind-basis-of-all. Lama Tsongkhapa also quotes Vasubandhu, who says that the basis for freedom from attachment (meaning attainment of the state of foe destroyer) is the mental consciousness. Shantarakshita who is the founder of Yogachara-Svatantrika does not assert it either. Lama Tsongkhapa concludes that although it is mentioned in Mahayana sutras and commentaries, upon analysis it is found to be nothing other than the sixth mental consciousness.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

October 23 (Monday)

Context of current discussion

We've been discussing the mind-basis-of-all in the scriptures, and have specifically looked at whether or not a mind-basis-of-all is explained in scripture. The conclusion that we came to is that the mind-basis-of-all that is explained in scripture is not to be taken as a consciousness other than the sixth mental consciousness. So the teaching of the mind-basis-of-all is interpretive, not definitive. In the next section we go on to talk about an example of how the Buddha gave another interpretive teaching, in order to establish the Buddha's similar intention behind teaching the existence of a mind-basis-of-all.

The Buddha did teach a mind-basis-of-all that is in actuality only the sixth mental consciousness, but he did so for the sake of a trainee who was not ready for the teaching of non-inherent existence, the profound emptiness. This entire discussion that we are engaged in is in the light of asserting actions and result even though there is no inherent existence. So for those particular trainees it was necessary to establish a basis for the latencies that are the mechanism for actions to give rise to their results. In Prasangika, the mere I is sufficient as a basis for them. If someone were to assert inherent existence, then the basis would have to be findable. In Chittamatra, the I, which can be found to be the mind-basis-of-all, is the carrier of the latencies. However, in Prasangika, the mere I is the basis, but when it is searched for, that mere I is not found.

What does it mean to be deposited on the mere I? The mere I is the object of the conception thinking I, that is, a non-analytic, non-investigative innate conception of I. For example, when one says "I am going to the store," that I is the mere I. We can talk about the mere I as the basis for depositing the latencies and that is sufficient since there is a continuum of mere I's but to analyze it further is probably not fruitful. To say that the mere I is the basis for these latencies is simply a way of talking about this.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B1E-2C2C Presenting an example taught from the point of view of the intention [in teaching the existence of a mind-basis-of-all]

We spoke last week about the three criteria involved in hermeneutics or interpretation – the basis of the thought, the purpose, and the harm in holding it to be literal. The basis of the Buddha's thought was that the basis-of-all is emptiness, and not a latency-bearing consciousness. This is because all phenomena are empty of inherent existence and that basis is to be well minded. The purpose was to teach to those who were not prepared for the teachings on the profound emptiness of inherent existence. The harm was that the positions holding to such a mind-basis-of-all could be negated through reasoning.

Similarly, the Buddha taught an inherently existent I and mine

Not everything that the Buddha taught was meant to be taken literally. Not only did he teach a mind-basis-of-all but, as is set out in Chandrakirti's root text (6.44), even though he was free of the view of the transitory collection thinking I and mine, he also taught the inherent existence of I and mine, all for the sake of communicating with the world. None of this was the basis of his thought although there was a need for him to teach it as a means to bring those disciples to the final view. Because all of these teachings can be harmed by reasoning, they are not the final thought of the Buddha, so they are interpretive and not definitive. To demonstrate this, there is a quote from the Purvashaila sect of Vaibhashika that sets out how the guides of the world teach in accordance with how worldly beings think. Since this is a Hinayana text which clearly teaches non-inherent existence of phenomena, Lama Tsongkhapa points out this can be taken as a scriptural authority that the hearer basket teaches the selflessness of phenomena.

Is the Chittamatra system subtler than Sautrantika?

In a side discussion last Friday we brought up the notion that, as we progress through the four Buddhist systems, we are ascending from one rung of the ladder up to the next by refuting the previous school's position as we develop a subtler view of reality. The idea was that each school's view becomes the object of negation for the school that follows it in the hierarchy. So is the Chittamatra view of reality subtler than the Sautrantika? It would seem so based on that idea. Both of them hold to the true existence of consciousness but external phenomena are asserted by Sautrantika and are not by Chittamatra. So in this light, how is Chittamatra's

refutation of external phenomena a progressive step towards the final view of Prasangika since Prasangika accept external phenomena?

The Chittamatra refutation of partless particles

Daniel Cozort in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (pp.125-6, 304-5) discusses this some. It is true that the object of negation in Chittamatra is much subtler than in Sautrantika, and that Prasangika will have to regress to Sautrantika tenets to accept external objects. However, as Cozort points out, Chittamatra does refute that the world of form and so forth is constructed of partless particles, thereby establishing through analysis that external objects cannot exist because they must be designated upon their parts. Something cannot have parts and exist externally in Chittamatra. So from the point of view of Prasangika, in refuting the existence of partless particles, Chittamatra is a step ahead of Sautrantika, which holds to their existence. But, from the point of view of Prasangika, in refuting external objects, Chittamatra has not gone far enough in their analysis since a similar type of analysis could be done on the mind itself. As Cozort points out, “In this case, the Chittamatrins have performed ultimate analysis and have properly concluded that the object under analysis cannot withstand it. Hence, Prasangika’s quarrel only with the Chittamatra failure to extend the analysis to other phenomena, such as consciousness (p.126).”

So Prasangika argues that, if you ultimately can’t find partless particles and then say that you cannot find external forms, why can’t you do that same analysis on the mind? Last week when we looked at one quote from Nagarjuna’s *Essay on the Mind of Enlightenment*, it was saying that through ultimate analysis, you find that either they both exist ultimately or they both do not exist ultimately. Or through conventional analysis you find that they both exist or do not exist conventionally. So there is a refutation of partless particles in Chittamatra even though there are faults in their refutation. According to Prasangika, Chittamatra cannot uphold either of the two truths since they refute what conventionally exists while they hold to what doesn’t ultimately exist (i.e. the mind).

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2 Refuting the Chittamatra system in particular

In the larger view, we are looking at the refutation of production from other. Within this context we now move to refuting systems that posit production from an inherently existent other. In this section we refute the Chittamatra specifically, in regard to three points of view: (1) refuting that consciousness inherently exists while external objects do not, (2) refuting a valid cognizer that proves other-powered phenomena inherently exist, and (3) indicating what the term “only” means in Mind Only.

How the three natures exist

In the second of these three, the term “other-powered phenomena” means all phenomena that arise from causes and conditions (i.e. all impermanent phenomena). In Chittamatra they are said to truly exist (and inherently exist) due in part to that fact, that they arise from their own causes and conditions. In Chittamatra, the terms “established by way of its own character” and “inherently existent” are distinguished as well. Inherent existence in Chittamatra means that when searched for, the searched for phenomenon is found. True existence is equal to being established by way of its own character. Of the three natures, other-powered and thoroughly established are truly existent while imputational factors are not truly existent but are inherently existent. All phenomena inherently exist in Chittamatra; otherwise no imputational factors would exist at all. There are two types of imputational factors, existent and non-existent.

October 24 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A Refuting an inherently existent consciousness that is without external [objects]

To start with, Prasangika will refute that there can be an inherently existent consciousness without existent external objects.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-1 Stating the other system

Chandrakirti (6.45-47) begins with a presentation of the Chittamatra system. Everything put forth here is explained from the Chittamatra point of view.

The three existences

The sixth ground bodhisattva brings the surpassing perfection of wisdom to fulfillment, and according to Chittamatra, at that point the bodhisattva realizes that the three existences are merely consciousness. This is not to say that form and so forth are “clear and knowing,” just as consciousness is, but rather that they are the merely the nature of mind. Geshe-la says that there are two explanations of the three existences: either the existences above, on and below the ground, or the existences in the desire, form and formless realms.

The meaning of “mere consciousness”

When it says the three existences are “mere consciousness,” it is important to understand what that means here, namely that no object exists without a subject, and no subject exists without an object. Apprehendeds and apprehenders are empty of being different entities. The bodhisattva of the sixth ground realizes the non-duality of these, meaning that objects are not external entities. What we dream about at night arises from latencies planted during the day so all the appearances of the dream do not go beyond the entity of the mind. Similarly, all the objects perceived in the waking state do not go beyond the entity of the mind in that they are not external to the mind, just as dream objects do not exist external to the mind. This is the suchness that the sixth ground bodhisattva realizes – that all minds and mental factors arise without depending on external forms and so forth. So the three existences are mere mind or mere consciousness.

How mistaken appearances arise

A question is raised, saying that if there are no external objects, then how is the mere mind produced possessing the aspects of external objects? In other words, where is this mistaken appearance coming from? The analogy to explain this is that, just like the waves on the ocean arise but do not exist as a separate entity from the ocean itself, meaning that they never attain an entity that is separate from the ocean, so do the appearance of various phenomena arise from latencies previously implanted on the mind. Sentient beings engage in various actions motivated by attachment, hatred and so forth, and upon their cessation, latencies are implanted on the mind-basis-of-all. From those latencies established from previously created actions, both the mind and the object of mind arise simultaneously.

Additionally, in regard to how these objects appear as external objects, there are latencies that give rise to a view of the self. Due to the influence of the view of the self, forms and so forth appear to exist external to the mind. They appear at a distance and cut off. Those latencies influence the mind, so that there is an appearance of being external to the mind, but that is a mistaken dualistic appearance. That mistaken dualistic appearance of forms and so forth as existing externally to the mind arises but, just as the waves are not a different nature as the ocean, forms and so forth do not exist that way. Further, from that aspect of external appearance that arises due to the activation of these latencies, various minds and mental factors, such as hatred and attachment, arise in turn. In conjunction with improper mental attention, they give rise to actions that cause us to redeposit latencies on the mind-basis-of-all.

Three types of latencies

Geshe-la mentions three types of latencies and these are also discussed in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.61-63): (1) a latency of actual expression (Cabezón calls this a “linguistic latent potentiality”), (2) a latency of a similar type (a “concordant latent potentiality” in Cabezón’s terminology), and (3) a latency of a view of the self. Geshe-la described the first, a latency of actual expression, as one which, upon activation, discriminates big and small, beautiful and ugly, and so forth. *A Dose of Emptiness* says that “Blue appears to the eye consciousness as the basis onto which the term *blue* is posited because of the imprints (*lag rjes*) of linguistic latent potentialities.” This is an interesting notion, somewhat similar to ideas put forth in Prasāṅgika, that due to a latency, we innately think of things in certain ways. We apply certain names, a table, for example, appearing as a basis for the name “table.” It’s possible that this is what this latency is doing is causing us to think of certain phenomena in a certain way. Recall that in Chittamatra there are two ways of establishing the selflessness of phenomena – emptiness of subject and object being different substances and the emptiness of a phenomenon being a naturally existent base for its name. If it were a naturally existent base for the name “table” then upon merely seeing it, the term “table” would come to mind. Using language we apply a name to a given object and this process arises due to this particular latency.

As for the second, a latency of similar type, Geshe-la says that this refers to the fact that an eye consciousness having seen the color blue, will plant a latency from which a future eye consciousness apprehending blue will

arise. What is interesting to consider is how any new latencies are introduced into this system if a previous consciousness of a similar type is required for a later experience of a phenomenon (Geshe-la addressed this issue in the class of Friday, October 27). *A Dose of Emptiness* says in regard to these that “a previous consciousness has the ability to give rise to a similar later consciousness.” Khedrup Je also says, “The appearance of blue to a later eye consciousness is [the result of] a latent imprint placed [in the foundation consciousness] by a previous eye consciousness to which the blue has appeared.”

The third, a latency of a view of a self, answers the question as to why phenomena appear to exist externally although they do not exist that way. The mistaken appearance is due to this latency, which influences the appearance of forms and so forth.

The mind-basis-of-all is likened to Ishvara

Lama Tsongkhapa says that, because all phenomena arise on the basis of the mind-basis-of-all, the mind-basis-of-all is likened to Ishvara, who is said to be the creator of all things. Therefore, for non-Buddhists who are accustomed to the concept of a creator, the mind-basis-of-all can be adopted with greater ease. However, there is an important distinction in that Ishvara is said to be permanent while the mind-basis-of-all is asserted as impermanent.

Question concerning affixing the qualification of the object of negation

Someone raises a question about the fact that there are numerous texts that mention the non-existence of external phenomena. On those occasions, at times the wording is qualified as external objects not existing as a different substance to the mind. At other times it is not mentioned, so are we to understand that this object of negation (that phenomena are not a different entity to the mind) should be affixed then? Lama Tsongkhapa says that whenever forms and so forth are spoken of in terms of existence, that existence is to be qualified by the object of negation, meaning forms and so forth are to be seen as not existing as substances external to the mind.

Asanga's *Compendium on the Mahayana* on the mind-basis-of-all as the appropriating consciousness

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes from Asanga's *Compendium on the Mahayana*, which raises a question, namely, why is the mind-basis-of-all called the appropriating consciousness? The mind-basis-of-all has various alternate names, such as the appropriating consciousness, fruitional consciousness, and so forth. This is because within the Chittamatra system, it is the migrator, the bearer or carrier of the latencies that are one's karmic history. It is said to be the migrator in that it assumes aggregates, takes a new body and leaves a body behind. The physical aggregates are the abode of the five physical sense powers. Upon the mind-basis-of-all leaving a body behind, it separates from the previous physical sense powers; upon assuming a new body, the person assume a new set of physical sense powers.

Common and uncommon latencies

Later in the same text, Asanga speaks about another way of classifying latencies: common and uncommon. The common are those which give rise to the shared appearance, such as our environment, i.e. that which is disconnected from feeling. The unique appearance of our individual form spheres arises from the uncommon latencies. For example, the shared environment that we have of all sitting in this room is due to common latencies, but the particular appearance of a table in this room to an individual is due to that person's uncommon latencies.

Name and form arise from the mind-basis-of-all

Lama Tsongkhapa mentions a commentary in which it is said that “name and form” arise from the mind-basis-of-all. “Name” is applied to the four latter aggregates and “form” is the first aggregate. Those five aggregates along with the various elements and evolutes, arise due to the condition of the mind-basis-of-all. Aside from the formless realm, all form in the form realm and desire realm are spoken of to arise from the latencies implanted in the mind-basis-of-all according to Chittamatra. Form includes all tastes, smells, sounds, and so forth, and they do not exist as external phenomena in Chittamatra. Although they talk about forms, they are all qualified as not being different substances from the apprehending consciousnesses.

“Proponents of objects of knowledge as inner”

Lama Tsongkhapa says that Chittamatrins are also known as “proponents of objects of knowledge as inner.” This name emphasizes that they do not establish forms and so forth as external, but rather that they arise due to the activation of inner latencies. The Mind Only School is called such because they assert that all phenomena are the entity of mere mind. On the surface, this idea could lead to some interesting questions, such as, then are all phenomena the entity of one’s own mind? Can we posit mental continuums that are separate entity from our own mind? How do we establish that I’m not the only person in the world? These are answered to some degree in *Cutting Through Appearances* (p.250), where it says that Mind Only “hold that forms are the same entity as the consciousness that perceives them...” Further, it says that “this school is, nevertheless, not solipsistic; it accepts that there are other beings who are different entities from oneself.” So this means that in Chittamatra, for something to exist it doesn’t have to exist for me. Whatever appearances I apprehend are the same substance as my mind, but I don’t apprehend *everything*.

Objection concerning the congruence of appearance and existence

An objection is raised, where someone begins by saying that the Chittamatrins are just arguing words when they say they do not accept external objects. Since forms and so forth *appear* to exist externally, they should be posited to *exist* externally. It seems that the response from Chittamatra is that the same would apply for Madhyamika, for whom form *appears* to be established by way of its own character, and yet they assert that form is *not* established by way of its own character. So Chittamatra is saying that with such an argument, Prasangika should also accept establishment by way of its own character on that basis.

This argument revolves around two points, one in regard to Chittamatra and one in regard to Prasangika, as to how they deal with two factors, the existence of external forms and whether they are established by way of their own character. Chittamatra says external phenomena do not exist but yet they exist by way of their own character while Prasangika says the opposite, that external phenomena do exist and do not exist by way of their own character. In this context, this objector is using the logic that external phenomena are to be accepted because that is the way that they appear. And it seems from what Lama Tsongkhapa says that this is not a valid way of refuting the position that external objects do not exist. Indeed, it’s a rather meaningless argument.

More regarding how the three natures exist

Yesterday in our discussion we mentioned the three natures that Chittamatra posits: other-powered, thoroughly established and imputational natures. We said that the first two are truly existent, ultimately existent and established by way of their own character. However, the third is not truly existent, ultimately existent, nor established by way of its own character, but it is inherently existent because all phenomena are inherently existent in Chittamatra. The imputational nature is “merely” imputed but “merely” here in Chittamatra probably eliminates only establishment by way of its own character, which is sometimes called natural existence. In Prasangika “merely” in “merely imputed” eliminates that a phenomenon is findable on analysis, i.e. it eliminates inherent existence. A table is unfindable upon searching its basis of imputation, because it is not inherently existent. In Svatantrika “mere” eliminates a phenomenon’s existence without being posited by the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness. Therefore, in Svatantrika, “mere” eliminates true existence.

The term “inherently existent” generally means findable upon analysis so here in Chittamatra, are all phenomena findable upon analysis since all phenomena are inherently existent? This idea seems to be inconsistent since an imputational factor is not established by way of its own character but is inherently existent, meaning that it is findable upon analysis. And yet Svatantrika holds that all phenomena are merely imputed and yet are findable upon analysis so perhaps it is not that inconsistent. Yet, unlike Chittamatra, Svatantrika does not distinguish between established by way of its own character and inherently existent. It seems that in Chittamatra, established by way of its own character means something else but it’s not so clear. It’s interesting how these various terms take on different meanings in the various schools.

October 25 (Wednesday)

We are discussing verses 6.45-6.47 of Chandrakirti’s root text, where the Chittamatra system is set out from a particular point of view. Based on this presentation, Prasangika will go on to refute the Chittamatra assertion of inherently existent consciousnesses that exist without an external objects such as external form and so forth.

“Other-powered” refers to the mind-basis-of-all

The mind-basis-of-all is said to be the depository of the latencies that give rise to both subject and object. Verse 6.47ab discusses the other-powered entity, and here one interpretation of what it specifically means is the mind-basis-of-all. At other times other-powered phenomena can simply refer to all products, which act as the basis for the imputational natures. And in this context, it is a particular imputed nature that doesn't exist, namely that of subject and object being different entities.

More regarding the three natures

In *A Dose of Emptiness* (pp.67-68), Khedrup Je explains the three natures in Chittamatra. He gives a definition of other-powered (*gzhan dbang*) natures (Cabezón calls these dependent entities) as “the bases on which imaginary entities are predicated or imputed.” Basically other-powered phenomena are those things that arise in dependence upon other causes and conditions. For example, other-powered phenomena are exemplified by an eye consciousness apprehending blue as well as by the color blue itself. Khedrup Je's definition of imputational (*kun btags*) nature (Cabezón calls these imaginary entities) is “the mere labels of the conceptual thoughts that chiefly take dependent entities as the bases of the labeling.” Imputational factors are exemplified by an eye consciousness apprehending blue and blue itself existing as different substantial entities. So the other powered act as a basis for the imputational factors. Or, in this context, as we said earlier, the mind-basis-of-all is the other powered phenomenon, since it is upon that that the latencies are implanted. Upon the activation of those latencies, the imputational factor of conceiving the object and subject to exist as substantially different entities arises. In that way the mind-basis-of-all acts as the basis for the conception that the subject and object are substantially different entities.

Khedrup Je defines thoroughly established (*yongs grub*) natures (called “the real” by Cabezón) as “the fact that dependent entities are empty of existing as they are imagined by the two forms of self-grasping.” They are exemplified by the emptiness of an eye consciousness apprehending blue and blue itself existing as different substances. So the realization of the non-existence of the imputational nature of subject and object as being different substantial entities (on the basis of the other-powered nature) is the realization of the thoroughly established nature. In C.W. Huntington's *Emptiness of Emptiness*, this is called the “perfectly accomplished.” In *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.389), Jeffrey Hopkins says, “The emptiness of subject and object as different entities is named ‘thoroughly established’ in direct contrast to ‘imaginary’ in order to show that this is the highest quality of an object and should be sought.”

The basis for the mistaken conceptions

The conception of a rope as a snake requires the basis of a rope for it to arise. Likewise, if externals do not exist, then what is the basis for mistakenly apprehending blue as an external phenomenon? Chittamatra says that the basis of that consciousness is the appearance of duality, and in turn the basis of that appearance is the mind-basis-of-all. On the basis of the appearance of a pen existing externally (or the appearance of the pen and the consciousness existing as different substantial entities) there arises the conception of a pen as existing externally. So in this way the mind-basis-of-all is the basis of both bondage and freedom. On the mind-basis-of-all there are both latencies of familiarities with virtue and non-virtue. Activation of the latencies of virtue brings about liberation and the activation of the latencies of non-virtue brings about bondage.

Regarding impure other-powered phenomena

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the basis of mistake “is necessarily asserted to be an impure other-powered phenomenon which is the dualistic appearance of apprehendeds and apprehenders as being different substances.” Khedrup Je divides other-powered into two divisions: pure other-powered, such as worldly wisdoms, and impure, such as the eighty indicative conceptions. Lama Tsongkhapa says in this context that the impure other-powered phenomena is the dualistic appearance of object and subject as being different substantial entities, and this is in agreement with what Chandrakirti seems to say in the *Autocommentary* (p.74). However, the basis of that appearance is the mind-basis-of-all so in that way it too is the basis of the mistake. The mind-basis-of-all is the final basis.

Lama Tsongkhapa also says that “the very basis of appearance is the cause of both the bondage to and freedom from the thoroughly afflicted and the completely pure.” As we discussed above, the latencies for both bondage and liberation are established on the mind-basis-of-all, which is the basis of the dualistic appearance. The basis

for the mistake is dualistic appearance but that appearance arises from the latencies on the mind-basis-of-all. So, the latencies on the mind-basis-of-all are the latencies of a view of the self and the dualistic appearance which arises from pollution by that view of a self is an impure other-powered phenomenon, the basis for the mistaken conceptions of subject and object as different substantial entities.

Ignorance holding a mistaken dualistic appearance to be true

For both Madhyamika and Chittamatra there is a conception, i.e. ignorance, that conceives a dualistic appearance to be true. In Chittamatra, it is the appearance of apprehended and apprehender as being different entities. The ignorance that is a conception of a self of phenomena conceives of that appearance to exist as it appears. There is an ignorance that is superimposing a non-existent imputational factor, specifically that they exist as different substantial entities. That imputational factor is a pure hallucination and is being superimposed on its observed object. Ignorance is holding that appearance to be true, that that is the way the observed object actually exists. When one is taught that there is an ignorance that superimposes a non-existent imputational factor, and that other-powered phenomena are empty of the imputational factor, then one realizes the thoroughly established nature, that in fact the object does not exist as it appears. The apprehender and the apprehended existing as different substantial entities simply does not exist. There is an emptiness of that way of existing.

The non-existent referent object of the conception of duality

The referent object of the conception of pot is pot and the referent object of that conception does exist. The referent object of the conception of a permanent pot is a permanent pot but that referent object does not exist. Likewise, the conception of duality (i.e. apprehended and apprehender as being different substantial entities) is just like the conception of a permanent pot in that its referent object also does not exist. Realizing that the referent or conceived object of ignorance does not exist is realizing emptiness in Chittamatra. Ignorance has the appearance of duality but a wisdom consciousness on the basis of the same object would refute that appearance as being true. Once you realize the non-existence of the referent object of ignorance you realize the emptiness of such a way of existing and that realization of emptiness becomes a path in Chittamatra. Without repudiating the referent object of ignorance (i.e. the object of negation) you will not realize emptiness. In Chittamatra, that type practice acts as an antidote to ignorance. How does overcoming that ignorance help one to overcome desire since desire is operational means of continual rebirth in cyclic existence? Being captivated by external pleasurable objects and feeling a deep sense of separation from them there arise a strong desire to incorporate them into one's being motivating various actions which serve to perpetuate cyclic existence. Towards external unpleasant objects there is a strong desire to not allow them to impinge on one's being and the ensuing actions to insure that is the case. Perhaps if you feel deeply that external objects, for better or worse, are not something separate from you, that there is really nothing to chase after nor is there anything that we can really run away from, that the good and bad are both already a part of one's own mind as Chittamatra propounds, then desires would diminish and finally cyclic existence would be brought to an end.

The object of negation in Chittamatra

Using the previous example of an eye consciousness apprehending blue and the color blue that arise simultaneously from the same latencies as a basis of illustration, these are other-powered phenomena, and they appear dualistically, i.e. as though existing as different substances, and this way of appearing is the imputational nature. In Chittamatra, ignorance conceives this dualistic manner of subject and object being different substances to be true. All Buddhist schools agree that without a knower, there is no known, but object and subject are not cause and effect in Chittamatra. In Prasangika, the eye consciousness apprehending pen and the pen cannot arise simultaneously because the pen is the observed object condition for the eye consciousness. As such, the pen necessarily exists in the moment that it acts as the observed object condition causing the eye consciousness. In Prasangika, the cause and effect are mutually dependent for their existence yet in the world we do speak about causes existing before the effect. For Prasangika on a particular base cause and effect are necessarily serial and not simultaneous.

In Chittamatra, on the basis of an other-powered phenomenon, ignorance conceives or superimposes a false way of existing, and that is the object of negation. The object of negation does not exist. When one realizes the basis (the other-powered phenomenon) to be empty of the object of negation (the imputational nature), then by that realization, emptiness (the thoroughly established nature) is posited on that same basis. The other-powered and thoroughly established natures are truly existent, and in Chittamatra we speak of true existence as equated with

being established by way of its own character. The existing in the manner of subject and object being different substances is an imputational nature, albeit a non-existent. The ignorance which is the conception of that imputational factor, however, is itself an other-powered phenomenon.

October 26 (Thursday)

We are setting out the Chittamatra system specifically so that we can then refute that there is an inherently existent consciousness without an external object. Yesterday we were discussing the three natures and how ignorance superimposes a dualistic manner of existing upon an other-powered nature. If we are to realize emptiness on that same basis, we must generate a wisdom consciousness realizing the emptiness of that way of existing, of blue and the eye consciousness apprehending blue to be different substantial entities. From the Chittamatra point of view, if we don't realize the non-existence of the imputational nature then meditation is not fruitful.

Regarding two statements made in different texts

Lama Tsongkhapa mentions two quotes, one from “the commentaries on the *Bodhisattva Grounds* and the *Discrimination of the Middle Way and the Extremes*,” while the other quote is from the *Sublime Continuum*. The first statements is that “whatever non-existent regarding any” refers to the duality of apprehendeds and apprehenders being different substantial entities not existing regarding any basis. Geshe-la says this quote is from Chittamatra point of view. The *Sublime Continuum* says that “whatever does not exist anywhere,” this is from the point of view of Prasangika, so it means that true existence does not exist anywhere.

The three characteristics of other-powered phenomena

Lama Tsongkhapa sets out three characteristics of other-powered phenomena, the first being that forms and so forth all arise from latencies on the mind-basis-of-all and are not external objects. One interesting idea here is that the body too is an other-powered nature and does not exist externally, so it too arises from latencies. The second characteristic is that they inherently exist, meaning they are findable upon searching for them. The third characteristic is that they have a nature of not being the object of all elaborations. They are not the direct objects of conceptual thought or expression. We cannot know other-powered phenomena directly by means of thought consciousness nor by means of terms induced by such thoughts.

So other-powered phenomena not being the objects of elaboration means that the phenomena themselves are the basis of naming or elaborating but are not themselves elaborations. That is they do not arise in dependence upon thought and terms. That is to say, other-powered phenomena are not merely imputed. To return to the definition for imputational nature in *A Dose of Emptiness*, they are “the mere labels of the conceptual thoughts that chiefly take dependent entities as the bases of the labeling.” This labeling is what we are calling elaboration, which here can mean elaborations of conceptual thought, which is also ignorance on occasion. Imputational natures, both existent and non-existent, do not arise in direct dependence on latencies but rather they arise through thinking or expressing through terms.

The three natures can be posited on all phenomena

There are both existent and non-existent imputational natures, and the non-existent imputational natures are of greater concern in regard to discerning emptiness. All permanent phenomena are existent imputational natures. The three natures can be posited on all phenomena, for example, a pen. The pen itself is the other-powered nature. Any concept or term concerning that pen, for example, the pen's being singular, its being different from pot, the isolate of pen, the label “pen”, and so forth, are all existent imputational natures based on pen, while the pen's existing as an external object (or existing as a different substantial entity from the consciousness apprehending the pen) is its non-existent imputational nature. Its thoroughly established nature is the emptiness of the pen existing as an external object.

Determining the existence of external objects

The crucial point in determining externality is whether the object arises simultaneously with the subject or whether they arise as cause (object) and effect (subject). In Chittamatra, a pot is not mind but it is the same substantial entity, meaning that both the pot and the mind knowing it arise from the same latency. For Chittamatra, form is not actually mind but yet it is not an external object. Sautrantika and Vaibhashika assert

that the external world is made up of indivisible particles and Chittamatra performs an analysis of that idea and determines that such particles do not exist. So to them, form does not consist of partless particles. Chittamatra does not hold that matter exists although they say that form does exist – but form does not exist external to the mind. From the Prasangika point of view, they have a limited analysis of external form in that, because they have been able to refute partless particles, they have mistakenly concluded that external form does not exist. They first reason that if it is external form, it must be made up of indivisible particles, and since those partless particles do not exist, external form doesn't exist, but yet they don't deny that form itself does exist.

The indicative conceptions

Having discussed these three characteristics, Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to say that the other-powered phenomena being spoken of here are the indicative conceptions, which are a category of afflictive emotions. There are eighty of them and they are listed in their entirety in *Death, Intermediate State, and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism* (pp.39-41). Consciousnesses are other-powered phenomena too, but in this specific context other-powered phenomena refers to these indicative conceptions, and why that is so is not clear. Perhaps this is because they are the most important other-powered phenomena because of their influence on our lives.

The non-perfect and the perfect

The basis of misconceiving, meaning creating conceptual elaborations or imaginary imputational factors, are the other-powered phenomena. So Lama Tsongkhapa says that other-powered phenomena are said to not be perfect because they serve as the basis for the indicative conceptions. On the other hand, the thoroughly established nature is perfect because it is the final object for purification. On the basis of the thoroughly established phenomena we are able to purify these indicative conceptions and elaborations.

October 27 (Friday)

Revisiting applying the three natures to a pen

We discussed yesterday how the three natures can be applied to the pen, saying that the pen itself is an other-powered nature, while the imputational nature that is non-existent is pen existing as a different substance from the consciousness cognizing it. That non-existent imputational nature is in regard to ignorance. Concerning existent imputational natures with regard to pen, there are many but one of the important ones is the relationship between the word “pen” and the object pen, namely that a pen is the basis for affixing the name “pen”. That relationship is simply a product of conception and there is nothing inherent in the nature of the pen that determines it to be such a basis of affixing. There is no inherently established relationship between the name “pen” and the pen. There is a relationship between the pen and the name “pen” but it is not a naturally existent relationship. The pen is not a naturally existent affixing basis for applying the term “pen”. This will be gone into in the future.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2 Refuting that system

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A Extensively stating the refutation [of that system]

Having stated the position of the Chittamatra system, Prasangika now goes on to refute it. A summary of this entire section as well as Chandrakirti's refutation of other Chittamatra tenets can be found in the handout dated Oct. 2000 titled “The Prasangika School's Critique of Chittamatra,” which has been taken from Daniel Cozort's *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School*.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1 Refuting the examples of an inherently existent consciousness that does not have external objects

In this section Prasangika first asks the Chittamatrins to set out an example of an inherently existent consciousness that does not have an external object, and a refutation of that example will follow.

Thoughts on emptiness as a non-affirming negative

There seems to be a complementary relationship between an inherently existent consciousness and the lack of external objects. We can say this in two different ways: (1) that the pen and the eye consciousness apprehending it are not two different substances, or (2) that the pen does not exist as an external object. Even in Chittamatra, emptiness is a non-affirming negation, so when we say “the emptiness of the pen” what are we negating? The pen and the eye consciousness existing as different substantial entities is the object of negation. Does that

negative suggest that they are the *same* entity? It seems so, but would that make it an affirming negative? In that way it seems that there is something else suggested by this negation, and a non-affirming negative is a negative that doesn't suggest either a positive phenomenon or an affirming negative. Anyway it seems that there is some debate on this so it's just something to consider.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1A Refuting the example of a dream

So in the Chittamatra system the consciousness inherently exists and there are no external objects so Prasangika asks, what is an example of that? In verses 6.48-49, Chittamatra puts forth the example of a dream consciousness as an inherently existent consciousness without an external object. The waking and dreaming states are different because upon waking we realize that the objects in our dreams do not exist. But, according to Chittamatra, in our waking life, we don't realize the actual nature of the phenomena we experience. We are in a state similar to the dream state since those objects do not exist as they appear as well.

Two assertions by Chittamatra

The Chittamatra view that is being refuted here basically comes down to two assertions:

1. *External objects do not exist* – we usually think of “external” as external to our mind and body but even dream objects are “external” to that consciousness. Prasangika would agree that dream objects are external. In Prasangika, as we will see, dream objects are forms which are phenomena spheres (imaginary)

2. *Consciousness is inherently existent*

Each of these will in turn be refuted in the two following sections.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1A-1 The example of a dream does not establish an inherently existent consciousness

In the example given by Chittamatra, someone is dreaming while sleeping in a very small room and their dream is of a herd of elephants. Prasangika says we need to think about this example. Chittamatra replies, saying what do you need to analyze?

A consciousness established by way of its own character does not exist for Prasangika

Prasangika says that such an example of a dream consciousness that is established by way of its own character and has an aspect of a herd of crazed elephants simply does not exist in our system. That dream consciousness that is established by way of its own character is not produced. In other words, the Chittamatra example is not common to both systems. Prasangika says in spite of this, if consciousness *were* established by way of its own character then, just as the elephants do not exist, so, too, does the dream consciousness established by way of its own character not exist. From the point of view of Prasangika's analysis, either both the inherently existent dream consciousness and the herd of elephants must exist or they both must not exist.

How Chittamatra establishes the non-existence of external objects

The Chittamatrins assert that other-powered phenomena do not exist externally because other-powered phenomena inherently exist. If an object inherently exists it should be findable upon analysis. When you search for a hypothetical external inherently existent pen, you do not find it, and therefore it does not exist. In the two lower schools, forms and so forth are composed of partless particles and, since Chittamatra cannot find such a pen composed of those particles, they hold that although pens exist, externally existent pens do not exist. Therefore pens do not exist as different substantial entities from the consciousness apprehending it. In Chittamatra even space is not external to the mind since there is no phenomenon that exists external to the mind. We must accustom ourselves to what Chittamatra means by this idea of non-existence of external objects. The objects of consciousness are not the cause of the eye consciousness apprehending it. They appear to be cut off and at a distance, as if the pen causes us to generate an eye consciousness and in Chittamatra that is not so.

Just as in a dream, all the elephants and so forth that appear do not exist. Similarly, the objects that we experience in the waking state do not exist as they appear, so neither the objects of the dream state nor of the waking state are external to the mind. There are issues one can take up with the Chittamatra view, such as how separate mental continuums are substantially different from one's own mental continuum. Yet we have to keep coming back to the fact that both the object and subject arise from the same latency, and that is what is meant by not being substantially different entities.

Further examination of Prasangika's response

So in response to the example of a dream, Prasangika says that if you're going to analyze whether that herd of elephants exists as it appears, then you're going to have to analyze the dream consciousness similarly. Or you simply accept both without analysis to exist as they appear. Either the existence of both a herd of elephants and an inherently existent dream consciousness is to be accepted without analysis or upon analysis to be rejected. In this example, we are speaking of an object of knowledge, specifically a herd of elephants of a dream, and upon finding that it does not exist, then there could be no awareness, that is to say a dream consciousness, of a herd of elephants. If you find that an object of knowledge does not exist then there can be no awareness of that object of knowledge. Chittamatra holds that the dream consciousness is produced by way of its own nature, and does not arise from the dream object. So Chittamatra says that a dream consciousness does not arise in dependence upon the object but rather due to latencies. It arises simultaneously with the object, meaning that its existence does not depend upon the object. One way of looking at the Prasangika response then is that, given the fact that a dream consciousness *can* be deceived, that is it is a mistaken consciousness (and Chittamatra would agree with this), then if the dream object arose independent of the consciousness, it would not be deceptive. In other words, the dream consciousness, since it arises by way of its own nature, should not be mistaken if it doesn't depend upon a deceptive object.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

October 30 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1A-1 The example of a dream does not establish an inherently existent consciousness (continued)

We are in the middle of refuting an example of an inherently existent consciousness that does not have an existent external object. The Chittamatrins gave the example of a dream consciousness, saying that in a dream we perceive objects such as elephants to be real, but upon waking, we realize that they were not existent. Similarly in our waking state we are under the delusion that phenomena exist externally but, just as when we awake and realize those dream objects do not exist, there is an ultimate consciousness that knows that they do not exist in that way, that realizes that external objects do not exist. So the basic assertions of Chittamatra in this context are that external objects do not exist and that consciousness inherently exists.

Prasangika's response to the example of a dream

Prasangika shows that this dream example does not establish an inherently existent consciousness. Initially Prasangika doesn't even accept that this example is valid for them, saying that it is not a common example since Prasangika doesn't posit inherently existent consciousnesses. But over and above that, Prasangika goes on to examine the aspects of their example, saying that if you're going to carry out an analysis of the object, then you should similarly examine the subject. You must determine either that both subject, the dream consciousness, and object, the dream elephants, both exist as they appear, or that neither exists as they appear. In other words, the analysis must be applied equally.

"Just as objects of knowledge do not exist, likewise, awarenesses do not exist"

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes a later verse from Chandrakirti (6.71cd), that says, "Just as objects of knowledge do not exist, likewise, awarenesses do not exist." In the commentary in *Illumination* on that quote (p.77), Lama Tsongkhapa explains this by saying, "Just as objects of knowledge do not inherently exist, likewise, the awarenesses that have the aspects of those objects of knowledge are also not produced by way of their own nature."

Another view of the refutation of the dream example

In *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (pp.133-4) Daniel Cozort comments on the dream example, showing another way to look at this refutation. He says that in verses 6.51 and 6.52 (the next section we'll be discussing), "Chandrakirti points out that the Chittamatra School itself admits, in the dream example, that dream-images can deceive dreamers, making them think, for instance, that an elephant is charging toward them when it is not." Cozort says that according to Jang-gya Sheba, "the very fact that the dream consciousness can be deceived is an 'extremely powerful reasoning' demonstrating that consciousness does not truly exist, since it indicates that the mind is dependent on an object." In other words, if the dream consciousness inherently existed, then it would be non-deceptive, but it is not. Inherent existence has the sense of independently existent, in that the consciousness wouldn't depend upon the dream object. If that were the case, it should not be deceptive, but the fact that it is deceptive is proof that it is not inherently existent. That it exists in *relation* to its object. So Prasangika can argue that, if the consciousness does not depend upon that object then why should it be deceptive, as it actually is.

Here "existence" is qualified by the object of negation

Prasangika is not saying that objects do not exist in general. Lama Tsongkhapa says that here "existence" is to be qualified with the object of negation, i.e. inherent existence. Consciousness does not exist inherently but does exist conventionally. Another later quote from Chandrakirti supports this (6.88cd), saying that the Buddha asserted that consciousness arises from actions, so it does conventionally exist. The object of negation for Chittamatra is external existence while accepting inherent existence. Prasangika is exactly the opposite, in that they refute inherent existence and accept external existence.

So if you perform analysis, either both the object and subject exist, or they both do not exist. Do you have to qualify both the dream object and the dream consciousness to “inherently exist” here? Objects appear to exist externally and upon analysis Chittamatra finds that they do not exist that way. But Chittamatra doesn’t apply an analysis to consciousness to see if it exists inherently. In other words, they perform an ultimate analysis on objects but not on subjects.

Chittamatra’s response

Chittamatra responds by saying that they agree that the dream state is a mistaken consciousness in the sense that it apprehends a dream object as real. But it is a mistaken consciousness by way of its own entity, meaning that it is produced by its own nature. Otherwise, in their view it would not exist, and further there would be no remembrance of the dream. In order for there to be remembrance of the dream objects, the dream consciousness must be truly existent, it must arise by way of its own entity. What is behind this reasoning? Since we can remember something at the time of its non-existence, then that remembrance doesn’t depend upon the object. The apprehending consciousness is not dependent upon the object. Chittamatra says that the fact that we can remember our dream objects when we are awake proves that the dream consciousness is inherently existent.

Regarding the remembrance of a dream upon waking

Chittamatra holds that if there is the memory of the experience of the dream when we are awake, then the dream consciousness must be inherently existent. Prasangika responds that, likewise the dream object that appears to exist externally must also exist. Just as there is the memory of dreaming of an elephant and that dream consciousness truly exists, so too must the dreamed-of external elephants truly exist too. Why? Because you have a memory of the dream object also. When you’re awake you remember an object-possessor, a dreaming consciousness, and you think, when I was dreaming, I saw this and that. There is also memory of a dream object, the external elephants and so forth that were seen in the dream. So from this, you must assert either that the objects seen in a dream exist externally (i.e. exist as they appear) or a dream consciousness does not inherently exist. You cannot say that the dream consciousness inherently exists while the dream objects do not. That is the consequence of the Chittamatra position that remembrance of the dream upon awakening is the proof of the inherent existence of the dream consciousness.

Form that is a phenomenon sphere

In terms of the Prasangika presentation, the objects of a dream consciousness are classified as form that is a phenomenon sphere, which is defined as “the appearance of form that appears as form to a mental consciousness, this being the principal from among the two, mental consciousness and sense consciousness.” There are five types of them (see p.6 of Week 23 transcript), and among those five, the objects of a dream consciousness are imaginary forms. Jeffrey Hopkins also discusses these in *Meditation on Emptiness* (pp.232-5). This whole category of form that is a phenomenon sphere is not posited in the Sautrantika presentation of the categories of established bases in *Collected Topics*.

October 31 (Tuesday)

Summary of our discussion on the dream example so far

To summarize, Chittamatra asserts an inherently existent consciousness without an externally existent object. In verse 6.48, Prasangika asks Chittamatra for an example of that and Chittamatra replies by saying a dream. Prasangika objects saying that this example is not sufficient for both parties since an inherently existent consciousness is not produced. Verse 6.49 challenges the assertion by Chittamatra that the absence of a dream object upon awakening establishes that it does not exist and moreover, our remembrance of the dream shows that the dream consciousness must be truly existent. Prasangika replies that if you remember the dream consciousness upon awakening, then you must remember the dream object too so it must be established as externally existent. If they are both true then the dream object appearing externally is true as well, meaning that the dream object exists externally. In this consequence, Prasangika is not trying to

refute the true existence of dream objects but rather we are trying to assert the external existence of objects. Dream objects for Chittamatra are existent imputational factors so they are not truly existent in Chittamatra, they are imputedly existent.

The appearances of dream objects are imputed existents in Chittamatra

Yesterday we said that, among the five types of form that are a phenomenon sphere, dream objects are the fourth type, imaginary form. Geshe-la said that, according to Chittamatra the appearance of the objects of dreams are imputed existents. This leaves some questions, such as whether you could say the same about just dream objects, as opposed to the *appearance* of dream objects. What is the object of the dream consciousness in Chittamatra, the appearance of an elephant or a dream elephant? Is dream object synonymous with the appearance of a dream object?

How remembrance of a dream is explained in Prasangika

A question is raised concerning the nature of remembering a dream, asking how in Prasangika is the memory of subject and object within a dream explained? There are two recollections, one of the experience of the dream (“I saw this and that”) and the other of the experienced object within a dream. For example, when we see the reflection of a face in a mirror, although we are not seeing a face, we are seeing an object, a reflection. Likewise in a dream, we do not see real elephants in a dream even though we remember elephants. What we do experience are the appearances of elephants and we remember the elephants. So there are both the memory of seeing the elephants and the memory of the elephants seen in the dream.

The example of the hibernating bear

Lama Tsongkhapa makes an interesting statement, saying, “Distinguishing between the observed object and experience is, except for a few cases, not necessary in most such cases.” What is Lama Tsongkhapa getting at here? It seems that this refers to the fact that generally we don’t make a distinction between the dream object and our experience of the dream object. Geshe-la gave the example of the hibernating bear that is bitten by the rodent during the winter. Upon hearing the thunder in spring, the bear wakes up, remembers having been bitten and also remembers the poison having entered his system. There is the remembrance of the experience of having been bitten, and there is the observed object, which is the poison having entered into his system. At the time, the bear experienced the bite, but did not experience the poison so now there is a memory of both the bite and the poison. It’s not completely clear how this example works in this context since generally it’s discussed in the context of refuting self-cognizers. There is an alternate version of this example on p.169 of *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School*.

So Chittamatra was asked to give an example and they gave a dream consciousness. Prasangika established that it is not a proper example, that it does not establish an inherently existent consciousness.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1A-2 The example of a dream does not establish the non-existence of external objects when awake

Having shown that the example of a dream does not establish an inherently existent consciousness, now Chandrakirti in verses 6.50-6.53 will go on to show how the dream example also does not establish the non-existence of external objects.

How Chittamatra explains the example of a dream

Chittamatra begins by pointing out that within a dream, the sense consciousnesses do not operate. Dream consciousness arises in the context of sleep, which is the involuntary withdrawal of the five sense consciousnesses. Since they do not operate, whatever forms appear are not form spheres. So during sleep the triad of the form sphere, the eye sense sphere and eye sense consciousness do not exist in a dream but yet form does appear to the dream consciousness, which is a mental consciousness. Even though there does not exist external form for that mental consciousness, form can still function to induce attachment and so forth. Chittamatra says that, based on this example, in order for objects to function they do not need to be external to the consciousness. Chittamatra applies a parallel case, saying that when we’re asleep, the mere appearances of form function in our dreams, so likewise when awake, the mere appearances of forms and

so forth that do not exist externally still do function. Just as dream objects can function even though they are non-existent, similarly objects in the waking state function without existing externally.

Prasangika's response to the dream example

Prasangika answers, saying that for the moment, we'll set aside that previously we said that the dream example didn't establish an inherently existent consciousness, and we'll consider if it proves that there are no external objects. However, from the Prasangika point of view, the dream example doesn't do that either, because even though there are no form spheres in a dream, an inherently existent consciousness does not arise in a dream so here too the example is inadmissible.

Prasangika on the triad of a dream

In verse 6.51, Chandrakirti says that just as for Chittamatra external objects are not produced in a dream, likewise an inherently existent mental consciousness is not produced either. Just as when we're awake and there is the triad of the empowering condition, the observed object condition, and the consciousness arising from them likewise, in the seeing of form within a dream there is the a corresponding triad. When we're seeing an elephant in the waking state, there is the elephant itself, the eye sense power, and the eye consciousness arising from the two. Seeing an elephant in a dream is different from seeing an elephant in the waking state though, since the eye sense power and the form sphere do not exist in a dream, so likewise the eye consciousness does not arise in the dream due to their absence. But it appears that there is an eye sense consciousness in the dream looking through eyes at elephants. It is as if one is seeing with the eye consciousness but that is a falsity since it doesn't exist.

Regarding this triad that we just discussed in relation to the forms seen in a dream, as Chandrakirti says in the next line of the root text (verse 6.52a), the same can be extended to the remaining triads (those of the ear, nose, and so forth). Even though they appear to exist in a dream, they do not exist in a dream. But there is a triad that does exist in a dream – the appearance of dream objects that are imaginary forms, the mental sense power, and the dreaming mental consciousness. The example of a dream consciousness set forth by Chittamatra does not establish that there is no external form but it does establish that a dream consciousness does not exist as it appears. It appears to be a sense consciousness but is not. The fact that, in a dream it appears that we are seeing objects with our eye consciousness but that eye consciousness does not exist, makes this a falsity too.

November 1 (Wednesday)

Recap of current discussion

Chittamatra asserts that in the context of a dream, the sense consciousnesses are not operative since there are no form spheres nor an eye sense power, which are essential for an eye consciousness to be generated. Similar to the way that dream objects appear to exist but do not, so do objects in the waking state appear to exist externally but do not. Prasangika replies to this example, saying that, although the triad is absent in a dream, we do have the *sense* of an eye consciousness observing forms in a dream. Although they appear to exist in a dream, they are false. Similarly the remaining triads do not exist in a dream. Therefore the example of a dream consciousness does not establish that there is an inherently existent consciousness without external objects. Rather, as we will explore in the next section, this example of a dream shows that phenomena are not truly existent.

Lama Tsongkhapa's admonishment to those who misinterpret Chandrakirti

Lama Tsongkhapa continues his commentary on verse 6.52a, pointing out that there are those who misinterpret Chandrakirti as asserting that there are sense consciousnesses in a dream and then go on to refute him. Lama Tsongkhapa admonishes them, saying that in fact, Chandrakirti does not assert the existence of those in a dream so "they should be careful!"

Regarding Bhavaviveka's refutation

Chittamatra has set forth the example of a dream and there are no sense consciousnesses in the dream; the only operative consciousness is the mental consciousness. The Chittamatrins say that there are appearances of form and so forth but they do not externally exist, therefore external forms do not exist. In response to this example, Bhavaviveka, who was the charioteer of the Sautrantika-Svatantrika Madhyamika School, replies, saying that the example of a dream is not established because a dream consciousness has an external object, and that object is a form which is a phenomena sphere. Therefore a dream consciousness "does not exist at all without an object." In Sautrantika-Svatantrika, unlike the Yogachara-Svatantrika, external objects are asserted. So he is saying that consciousness does not exist without an *external* object. This is the way that Bhavaviveka is replying to the example of a dream.

For Chittamatra, a mental consciousness is able to function without an external object in a dream, just as all consciousnesses are able to function in the waking state without external objects. From the Prasangika point of view though, Bhavaviveka's response is criticized since it implies the inherent existence of the three, the triad of the dream object, the mental sense power and the mental consciousness. That triad does exist in a dream but if you rely on Bhavaviveka's reasoning, then those three *inherently* exist. Bhavaviveka is trying to refute the example not by negating inherent existence but rather by establishing the existence of external objects. So the whole point of Chandrakirti's refutation of the example of the dream becomes lost in Bhavaviveka's argument. In Prasangika there is no inherently existent triad in a dream but Bhavaviveka is accepting the existence of an inherently existent triad.

The meaning of Prasangika's refutation of the dream example

From the Prasangika point of view, the false meaning of the dream example is that external form does not exist while consciousness inherently exists. That is the meaning that Chittamatra is trying to establish with the dream example, and it is a false meaning. Bhavaviveka asserts that external forms do exist in a dream – form that is a phenomenon sphere. But that form that Bhavaviveka asserts to exist in a dream does not exist for Prasangika, because that form that is a phenomenon sphere is characterized by being inherently existent. Therefore, although Bhavaviveka's argument can refute the non-existence of external objects, it cannot refute the position that the consciousness inherently exists, and according to Prasangika, that is the correct meaning behind the refutation of the dream example.

Objects of consciousness are the same entity as mind in Chittamatra

In Chittamatra all the objects of a consciousness are of the same entity as the consciousness apprehending them. As we saw in the refutation of production from self, cause and effect have to be of different entities. In Chittamatra, all objects are in the entity of consciousness so they do not exist as cause and effect. One of the important reasons Dharmakirti uses to establish that phenomena are of the same entity as the mind is that the two – mind and its object – arise simultaneously and are concomitant.

Prasangika uses the dream example to show non-inherent existence

Chittamatra asserts that external spheres, such as form spheres, sound spheres, and so on, do not exist in a dream. They do not exist as different entities from the consciousness apprehending them, and Chittamatra uses an example of a dream to demonstrate this. In Prasangika, the dream example has another use, to show that in the dream, the triad is false; likewise the triad in the waking state is false. In Bhavaviveka's refutation of the example of the dream, he says that there is an existent form in a dream, so his argument renders ineffective the whole example of a dream that Prasangika would put forth. The dream eye consciousness in a dream appears to be an eye sense consciousness, the dream form appears to be actual form, and so forth, but they are not. And that is why the example of the dream is similar to the way that all phenomena appear to inherently exist but do not exist that way. There is no valid cognizer that could validate that dream consciousness as a sense consciousness since it is mental consciousness. And, just as the triad in a dream is false in appearing to exist, but not existing, similarly is the triad of the waking state false in appearing to inherently exist but not inherently existing.

November 2 (Thursday)

We were discussing how Prasangika makes use of this example of a dream with the intention to refute the inherent existence of a dream consciousness. In his refutation of Chittamatra, Bhavaviveka responded in such a manner as to only establish that there are external objects in a dream that are forms that are a phenomenon sphere, while holding to inherently existent consciousnesses. Prasangika's use of the dream example is rendered meaningless by Bhavaviveka's refutation since he is holding the dream triad to exist inherently.

The dream example establishes the falsity of phenomena for Prasangika

Bhavaviveka's response has the implication that the triad of a dream are established by way of their own character, and responding in such a way invalidates Prasangika's intention. As we've said, the intended meaning for Prasangika was that all three of the triad are not true, but in fact are false. Prasangika's intention is to set up a syllogism such as, for example, eye sense sphere, form sphere, and eye consciousness, do not truly exist, because they do not exist the way they appears, just like the triad of a dream. If, as Bhavaviveka implies, all of the appearances in a dream are inherently existent then the dream is not a concordant example for establishing falsity. Bhavaviveka renders the dream example meaningless.

If we take, for example, a dream consciousness apprehending the appearance of an elephant, in a dream we have a sense that there is an eye consciousness apprehending an elephant, meaning that that is the way these three components appear. But in fact, the dream consciousness is not an eye consciousness but rather a mental consciousness. The empowering condition is not an eye sense sphere but rather a mental sense sphere. The appearance of the dream elephant is not a visual form sphere but rather a form that is a phenomenon sphere. From this, one concludes that the triad of a dream is false. Similarly the triads of the waking state are also false. But is there anything in the dream example as used by Prasangika that not only proves that the triad in the dream are false but also shows that they are not inherently existent? If something is inherently existent, would it necessarily exist the way it appears? We will be exploring how Prasangika uses the dream example to refute inherent existence in the next section so perhaps this will be shown there (Geshe-la also addressed this in the Friday, November 3, class).

The Prasangika assertion regarding the appearance of dream objects

Lama Tsongkhapa concludes this section by answering a question concerning how Prasangika posits the appearance of dream objects. The Prasangika position is that, since sense consciousnesses do not exist in a dream, there are no form spheres and so forth, although there is an appearance of form in a dream to a mental consciousness. As we discussed previously, this appearance of dream objects is imaginary form, the fourth category of forms that are a phenomenon sphere. According to Chittamatra the appearance of a dream object is an imputational nature. One interesting thing to think about is that, if sense consciousnesses are not operative in a dream, why do we sometimes awake from a dream to the sound of an alarm clock? How do we hear the alarm clock if our ear sense consciousness is not operative?

Summary of the refutation of the non-existence of external objects

Chittamatrins assert that dream objects function just like waking objects; when awake those apparently external objects do not exist externally just like the dream objects do not exist externally in the dream state yet both are able to function, for example, generating desire or fear, and so forth. Prasangika asserts that the sense triads, although they appear to, do not exist in a dream; instead the dream triad consists of imaginary forms, the mental sense sphere, and the mental consciousness. For Prasangika, both the triad in a dream and that in the waking state do not inherently exist. Since this dream triad does not inherently exist, therefore this dream example cannot be used as an inherently existent consciousness without an external object. Just as the triads in a dream are established to be false, likewise the three in the waking state are false, in that they do not exist the way they appear either.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1A-3 The example of a dream establishes all things as false
In this section, Prasangika will use the example of a dream to establish phenomena as false.

“Just like dreams, likewise, also here when awake, things are false.”

This triad of visual form sphere, eye sense sphere, and eye consciousness (which arises from the other two), do not exist in a dream although they appear to exist. We have the sense that they do because of the appearance of them as existing but they don't, so the appearances are false and not true. They do not exist the way they appear to exist, and that makes them false. Similarly, one can apply this to the triads in the waking state as Chandrakirti says in verse 6.52bcd. Just as objects, sense powers, and consciousnesses do not exist as they appear in the course of sleep, so too do the objects, sense powers, and consciousnesses of the waking state do not exist as they appear.

Two sutra quotes that support the dream example

Lama Tsongkhapa also quotes the two sutra passages that Chandrakirti quoted in *Autocommentary*. The first says that phenomena do not exist the way they appear; they are like illusions and like dreams. Phenomena are not real in suchness, meaning that in terms of the way they exist in fact, they are not real. The second quote says that no inherently existent names, lives, and so forth, of sentient beings are found. They are like dreams, and also likened to a water bubble or a plantain tree. We described inherent existence as entailing that phenomena are findable upon analysis. Similarly when you pull apart a plantain tree, you find there is no core, that it is essence-less. This essence-less-ness is not accepted by Chittamatra since they would assert that all phenomena are findable upon analysis.

Waking from the sleep of ignorance

We are trying to establish the fact that all things are false, just as we established that the triad in the dream were false. In verse 6.53, Chandrakirti says that in the perspective of those who are not free from sleep, the dream triad exists. But upon awakening, this triad that existed in the perspective of a dream no longer exists for them. Likewise, for those who have not awoken from the sleep of ignorance, they hold the triad to exist as established by way of their own character. When one awakes from the sleep of ignorance, then one realizes that they do not exist.

One way of talking about “true” and “false” is in terms of “true” meaning that something exists the way it appears, and “false” meaning that it does not exist the way it appears. In this metaphor of ordinary sleep and the sleep of ignorance, we are applying this idea of true and false in two ways. First we say that the triad of the dream do not exist upon awakening so in that way, they are false. They appeared to exist but in the waking state they do not. Second, we similarly say that the triad that are established by way of their own character do not exist when we awake from the sleep of ignorance. When we find out that our ordinary cognitions were mistaken, we see those appearances of inherent existence as false.

A buddha's eradication of ignorance

A buddha is one who has completely awoken from the sleep of ignorance. We talk about the two perceptions of a buddha, one being a seer of modes and the other a seer of varieties. In the perspective of someone who is awake in that way, the triad do not exist in the perspective of a seer of modes but with regard to the seer of varieties, which sees conventional truths, the triad does exist. However, the appearance of those varieties is not due to the force of a buddha's own consciousness being polluted, but rather by the force of those appearing to sentient beings whose minds are polluted with ignorance and latencies. A buddha is able to see truths for a concealer but only as they appear to sentient beings.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A1B Refuting the example of seeing falling hair

Having exhausted the example of the dream, we now go on to the second example that Chittamatra posits for an inherently existent consciousness without an external object.

The example of seeing falling hair

Chittamatra now puts forth the example of someone with cataracts who, due to the physical impairment of the eye sense sphere, sees falling hairs. For them, since these falling hairs do not exist, this is an example of an inherently existent consciousness without an external object. Prasangika says this is also unjustifiable

(verse 6.54) since relative to an awareness of that person, both the consciousness seeing falling hairs and the falling hairs exist. But relative to someone with clear sight, someone without cataracts, both the consciousness and the falling hairs are false. The person with cataracts has an eye consciousness seeing falling hairs but those falling hairs have never been produced, nor has the consciousness seeing falling hairs been produced.

In verse 6.55, Chandrakirti goes on to say that, if an inherently existent awareness with the aspect of falling hairs is produced, then someone without cataracts, upon examining the place where the falling hairs appeared, should generate a similar awareness seeing them. If there is no dependence upon an external object to see them, then any consciousness should be able to see them. Inherently existent production would imply that there is no correlation between the object and the consciousness produced. We looked at this in our refutation of production from other. If product is produced from an inherently existent other, whatever is other is equally other so anything can be produced from anything. If the consciousness seeing falling hairs is inherently existent, it doesn't depend upon either its object or upon the empowering condition of cataracts, so there is no reason why it would not arise in those without cataracts. Essentially, both cases would be equivalent.

November 3 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

- * In regard to how Chittamatra would establish the existence of sentient beings that are different to one's continuum, it seems that merely observing them establishes them as such. But would Chittamatra posit sentient beings that exist "external" to oneself? It's hard to tell what the answer to that would be. When Geshe-la was asked about this earlier, he said that, although Chittamatra says that there is nothing that exists external to an apprehending consciousness, they do not assert that everything is apprehended by that consciousness. But then, if there are phenomena that exist and you do not apprehend them, then they are external to your mind? Perhaps we should ask additional questions on this topic.
- * Regarding disintegratedness and the latency of actions, it seems that they have different functions. Geshe-la said that the disintegratedness of either virtuous or non-virtuous actions brings about the respective fully ripened, or fruition, result of that action, but the latency of an action cannot do that since it is a neutral or unspecified phenomenon. It's unclear exactly what the function of a latency of an action is. The fruition result is only one of the four results, so, although it's only speculation, perhaps the latency of an action gives rise to the other types of results. But the fact that they're neutral or unspecified would seem to make it unable to act as a cause for those results either. Here too, a follow up question would be good.
- * Regarding the question a week ago that concerned what is the subject that imputes mind, Geshe-la said it was not necessary that the imputer of one's own mind be oneself. In *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.165), Daniel Cozort says that "consciousnesses are certified simply by operation," and you could apply this to the imputation of minds as well. This can be seen in what you would think if you found a clean room upon your return home, probably something like, "Someone must have cleaned my room." Based on the operation or function of cleaning having been done, we impute a "someone" who cleaned it. It is also said that all things, minds included, are posited by a buddha's exalted wisdom but, as Kensur Yeshey Tupden says in *Path to the Middle* (p.129), "one does not have to resort to this because it is not essential that such a consciousness be directly present [in order to fulfill the measure of being posited by a mind]."

Recap of the example of seeing falling hair

Yesterday we examined the second example of the person with cataracts seeing falling hair, which was also not suitable since a person with clear sight should be able to see the same falling hairs in the place where they appear to the person with cataracts. If that consciousness was inherently existent, and so does not depend on external objects, then any consciousness should see the same thing in that spot. Now we move on to the second of the three sections involved in the extensive refutation of Chittamatra.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2 Refuting the meaning that a consciousness that is empty of objects is produced from the potential of latencies

Within the Chittamatra system, one of the important assertions is that consciousness and the objects apprehended by that consciousness arise from latencies deposited on the mind basis-of-all. Those latencies, or potentials, give rise to both subject and object, so here Chittamatra will use this as the reason why the person with clear sight does not see falling hairs.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2A Refuting that a consciousness to which an object appears is produced and not produced from the ripening and non-ripening of latencies

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2A-1 Stating the other system

Prasangika has said that, if the production of an eye consciousness is not dependent on the object of knowledge, there's no reason why someone without cataracts would not also generate an eye consciousness apprehending falling hairs. To this, Chittamatra responds (verse 6.56abc) that that other person simply does not have the latencies to generate an eye consciousness apprehending those falling hairs. In Chittamatra, a specific consciousness arises not due to the presence or absence of an object of knowledge, but rather depending upon whether there is or is not the ripening of a potential on the mind-basis-of-all.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2A-2 Refuting that system

Chittamatra asserts that the appearance of falling hairs occurs due to the latencies, here being called "potentials", that are on the mind-basis-of-all. And so Prasangika will refute this position in three outlines, which cover the refutation of inherent potentials with regard to the present, past and future. In general, from the point of view of Prasangika, an inherently existent potential cannot produce anything, particularly not an inherently existent consciousness, since an inherently existent consciousness would have no cause and would rely on no conditions or causes outside of itself. So Prasangika asserts that there doesn't exist an inherently existent potential that produces such an inherently existent consciousness with respect to any of the three times.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2A-2A Refuting inherently existent potentials for present [entities]

The basic refutation of inherently existent potentials

In verse 6.56d, the basic refutation is stated, which is that since inherently existent potentials do not exist, the non-production or production of consciousness is not due to the non-ripening or ripening of these latencies or potentials.

The refutation of inherently existent potentials for present consciousnesses

So why don't they exist? In verse 6.57ab, Chandrakirti says that, if there exists a potential for a consciousness, that consciousness must be either a present, past or future consciousness, meaning a consciousness that is already produced or yet to be produced. If the potential were that of a present consciousness, then they would exist simultaneously. The text talks about two ways of expressing this present consciousness, the first as "consciousness *of* a potential" and the second, "consciousness *from* a potential." The first might actually be more meaningful as "consciousness *which is* a potential," which is another possible interpretation of the Tibetan. If worded that way, then it's obvious that those two are not suitable to be different since they are equal. "A consciousness which is a potential" would necessitate that they are not different and that they exist simultaneously. If they existed simultaneously then there is no distinction between cause and effect, meaning that a consciousness would not have a cause that is different from itself. At the time of the effect the cause would also exist. Regarding the second expression, "consciousness from a potential," if a produced consciousness of the present is being produced *from* a potential (rather than *which is* a potential), then it is not suitable for an already produced consciousness to arise from a cause that exists at the same time as it.

Another possible way to look at this refutation is that, regarding the potential with respect to a present mind, there are two possible ways they could exist with respect to each other – either they are the same or different entities. If they were different, since they are inherently different, they would have no relation to

each other, since they are completely unrelated. If they were the same entity, then there is the fault of simultaneous cause and effect and the same problem as we saw earlier in our examination of production from self. So both are impossible ways of existing.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

November 6 (Monday)

Context of current discussion

When asked to posit an example of an inherently existent consciousness without an external object, Chittamatra first gave the example of a dream consciousness, which Prasangika refuted. They then followed with the example of a person with cataracts seeing falling hairs. That second example was refuted by saying that if the consciousness seeing falling hairs does not arise depending upon an object of knowledge, then any consciousness should see those falling hairs in the same spot. Chittamatra responded saying that it is true that the person without cataracts doesn't develop a consciousness seeing the falling hairs, but that is due to them not having the latencies or potentials for such a consciousness to arise.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2A-2B Refuting inherently existent potentials for future [entities]

Last week we looked at the refutation of an inherently existent potential for a present consciousness, saying basically that the two, a potential and the already produced consciousness, must be either be different entities or the same entity. If the two were different entities then, since they are inherently existent, they are unrelated different and could not exist in a relation of cause and effect. If the two were the same entity, then there follows the same consequences that were incurred in production from self (such as that “even when a sprout is produced the seed would not be destroyed” and so forth). Now we go on to refute an inherently existent potential for future consciousnesses

The refutation of inherently existent potentials for future consciousnesses

Chandrakirti, in verse 6.57cd, says, “Without a qualification, that which is qualified does not exist.” A basis of qualification, such as a white table, necessarily depends upon it having qualities, attributes, or features. If a qualified basis doesn't have qualities, it doesn't exist since, if the characteristics do not exist, the possessor of those characteristics does not exist. If we use the example of the white table, if the white of the table doesn't exist, the white table doesn't exist. Applying this to our current discussion, the qualification is a future consciousness, and the basis being qualified, the basis that has that feature, is a potential. So the basic refutation here is, if a future mind does not exist, the potential for that does not exist.

Correction to the Week 24 transcript, page 2: In the *Illumination* commentary at the bottom of the page, the first sentence should read: “If there existed a potential for an unproduced consciousness, when ‘the potential of a consciousness’ is joined to it, the potential would be the basis of qualification and the consciousness would *be the qualification*.”

Prasangika's example of the son of a barren woman

Further, Prasangika uses the example of a son of a barren woman to show how this potential for a future consciousness does not exist. In that example, someone can ask, “Whom is this son the son of?” and we can say, “That son is the son of a barren woman.” But that son of a barren woman does not exist, so there is no one who possesses that quality. Applying this to the subject at hand, a future consciousness does not exist at present, so the potential does not possess the qualification of being a potential of a future consciousness since that quality does not exist at present. When we say “a potential of a consciousness,” it refers to a potential that has produced a consciousness. If being a potential of a consciousness could refer to being a potential of a future consciousness, there is no reason we couldn't say this is a potential of an as-yet-to-be-produced consciousness. So similarly we could say that there exists a son of a barren woman since there exists the unproduced son of a barren woman, so then it follows that a barren woman has the potential to produce a son. There exists the son of a barren woman because there exists the *unproduced* son of a barren woman; likewise there exists the potential of a future consciousness because there exists the potential of an as-yet-to-be-produced consciousness. To put this more simply, to say that there is a potential for a future consciousness is as absurd as saying that there is a potential for a son of a barren woman. There will never be a son of a barren woman so there will also never be an as-yet-to-be-produced consciousness.

Chittamatra's reply and Prasangika's response

Chittamatra replies that consciousness does arise from potentials, meaning that a consciousness that is yet to arise will arise from a potential. For example, in the world they say “Weave the bolt of cloth,” “Cook the

In the world you do not have to wait for the result to exist before you posit the cause. Would holding that

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boiled rice,” and “Universal kings enter a womb.” These worldly statements are all said in regard to future results, so we can say a potential for a future consciousness that will arise. Prasangika responds (verse 6.58b), saying “There does not exist the arising of that without a potential,” and here “that” refers to an inherently existent future consciousness. If an inherently existent future consciousness existed at any time, it would have to exist at present since, in fact, it would always exist. And if there ever were an occasion when it did not exist, then it would always be non-existent. Dependent arising is the main reasoning for refuting inherent existence because if something arises due to depending on others, then it doesn’t always exist but yet it does exist. On the other hand, if something exists inherently then it must exist now.

Negating inherently existent consciousnesses

Because inherently existent present and future consciousnesses do not exist, the potentials that produce those consciousnesses do not exist. Just as there does not exist a potential that gives rise to a son of a barren woman, likewise there is no potential that gives rise to an inherently existent future consciousness. Without a potential, an inherently existent consciousness does not arise. Essentially what is being said in terms of the meaning of inherent existence is that an inherently existent object would not depend on any factors other than itself. An inherently existent object would be independently existent, it would exist in isolation, so it could not depend upon a potential for its existence or for its production.

Applying these reasonings to our way of thinking

In terms of the practicality of these descriptions of what inherent existence would entail, it is important to examine how we are superimposing a false way of being on objects. We instinctively impose a mode of existence on objects that they do not actually possess. When we examine these descriptions of what inherent existence would be like, they seem to be irrational ways of looking at phenomena. But, irrational or not, this is actually how we think of things normally, that things do not depend on other factors, that they exist independently and so forth, and this is what we too must negate.

The consequence of other non-existents arising

Lama Tsongkhapa says that, when refuting inherently existent production of a sprout, Prasangika flings the absurd consequence that “If a sprout is produced even though it does not exist at the time of the seed, it follows that also the horns of a rabbit and so forth will be produced.” That consequence follows since the horns of a rabbit and other non-existents also do not exist at the time of the seed. Since an inherently existent sprout does not exist at the time of the seed (and Chittamatra would agree with this), then the horns of a rabbit will be produced since they equally do not exist at the time of the sprout. The horns of a rabbit and the sprout are equally non-existent, so if a sprout becomes existent then the horns of a rabbit would also become existent. If there was an inherently existent sprout, and somehow it did not exist at the time of the seed, then it would have to be non-existent at all times. But if someone goes on to say that somehow that sprout is produced in the future, then any non-existent, such as the horns of a rabbit, could arise in the future.

This consequence can be applied to the Chittamatra assertion of a potential for a consciousness that, although it does not exist now, will be produced in the future. If Chittamatra is holding that a potential will give rise to an inherently existent future consciousness, then at the time of the potential, that consciousness does not exist, so it would not exist at all times. If an inherently existent phenomenon had a moment when it did not exist, it would not exist at all times. If there were an occasion of the non-existence of an inherently existent thing, then it would be non-existent over the three times. The fact that phenomena come into and go out of existence is proof that they do not inherently exist.

Mutual dependence of cause and effect in Prasangika

If a consciousness arises from a potential, then that consciousness depends upon that potential for its existence. A unique assertion of Prasangika is that, not only does the consciousness depend on the potential for its existence, but also the potential for that consciousness depends upon that consciousness for its existence. A potential of a consciousness and a consciousness are mutually dependent. Prasangika uniquely asserts that not only is a result dependent upon its cause but a cause is dependent on its result. For example, if you had a packet of lettuce seeds, do you have to wait until the lettuce actually exists before those seeds can be called lettuce seeds? It doesn’t seem so since that would not be concordant with worldly convention. In the world you do not have to wait for the result to exist before you posit the cause. Would holding that

There follows a discussion on the meaning of part and continuum. A continuum is the “appropriator (or holder) of parts (or components)” over the three times, and it is uninterrupted, without any gaps, just as from birth to death there is a continuity of our aggregates. The parts of a continuum are called the “possessors of the continuum.” The continuum is the holder of the parts and the parts are the possessor of the continuum. Since the parts have a continuity and the continuity has parts, there is mutual reliance upon each other.

The consequence of how Chittamatra is positing parts and continuity

On the other hand, Chittamatra asserts that the former and later moments are mutually other, or mutually different, and that they’re an “established by way of their own character” otherness. If that were the case, then a later consciousness would arise from a potential that is inherently other. The potential ripens and gives rise to the consciousness so there is said to be a continuity, but if the components of that continuity were inherently other, then the result would arise from something that is inherently other within the same continuum. Chittamatra doesn’t see a problem with this but Prasangika says that because of this, the same consequence seen in the refutation of production from other would be incurred, that is, that everything arises from everything. That consequence follows because being inherently existent other is sufficient for a product to arise from both a cause and a non-cause, since both of those are inherently existent other. Everything that is both a cause and not a cause would be “other” so they would meet the criteria for being a cause for that product.

Chittamatra responds to that consequence

In spite of this consequence, Chittamatra responds (verse 6.60abc) by saying there is still no fault because the former and later moments of a continuum are inherently other but are within a single continuum, so it’s not as if anything can produce anything. Although the components are inherently existent, they exist within the same single continuum so there is no fault of everything arising from everything. Chittamatra holds that there is still definiteness as to what will arise from a particular continuum.

Prasangika denies the existence of a single continuum consisting of parts that are inherently other

To this Prasangika replies, that is not proven. Lama Tsongkhapa says that such a continuum is yet to be established, in fact there is no such type of continuum. Chittamatra asks why and Prasangika says that, although you say our consequence does not follow because these former and latter moments exist in the same continuum, that continuum does not exist “because they are not suitable as an occasion of a non-different continuum (verse 6.60d).” It is not possible for two inherently existent other phenomena to have the same continuum since they are completely unrelated. Is this fair to say? Does inherently existent other come to mean unrelatively other? As we saw in the refutation of production from other, Prasangika asserts that inherent existence entails independent or unrelated existence but a Chittamatrin would not hold that to be so. It is not possible for two inherently existent phenomena to have the same continuum since they are inherently unrelated. Being a continuum implies relatedness but inherent existence implies unrelatedness so the parts cannot be continuity possessors. Things that are unrelated are not organized into continuums. There’s no such thing as continuum of unrelated parts.

Distinctions between the refutation of a potential for a future consciousness and the refutation of a potential for a past consciousness

What is the distinction between this outline and the previous one since they do seem to make similar points? It does seem that in both of these outlines there is reliance upon the same reasoning for refuting an inherently existent potential and an inherently existent consciousness. There is a difference between these two though since this last one has to do with the continuity between the past consciousness which gives rise to a potential for a later consciousness, while the second has to do with a potential for a future (unproduced) consciousness. All three of these outlines revolve around similar ideas but there are different reasonings presented which illustrate how they do not exist in the three times, and there are many reasonings needed to realize these points.

The analogy of Maitreya and Upagupta

Chandrakirti in verse 6.61 returns to the analogy of Maitreya and Upagupta to demonstrate the implications of being different continuums. Just as the continuums of Maitreya and Upagupta are unrelated, they cannot

be included in the same continuum because of that unrelatedness. Likewise, inherently existent former and latter moments are not suitable to be included in the same continuum because they are unrelated as well.

Dispelling possible attempts to avoid these consequences

When the Chittamatrins try to avoid the fault flung at them by Prasangika regarding everything arising from everything, they cite that former and latter moments can exist within the same continuum, and that they bring about a specific result even though they are inherently existent. For example, they say that a rice seed produces a rice sprout, but not a barley sprout, because they are different continuums. We've seen this before in our refutation of production from other. The rice seed and rice sprout are in the same continuum but the barley sprout is not in the same continuum as the rice seed. Prasangika provisionally agrees, saying that if you mean that they are "mere other", then we accept that a rice sprout is produced from a mere other, a rice seed.

As we saw previously, although Prasangika doesn't accept "production from other" either ultimately or conventionally since it always means production from inherently existent other, they do accept "production from mere other." When we say that they assert "production from mere other," here "mere" negates inherently existent other so this is the context in which Prasangika provisionally agrees to their assertion of a rice sprout being produced from a rice seed that is mere other.

Summary of this refutation

So, as we just saw, in defending against Prasangika's consequences, Chittamatra puts forth their assertion that, although a rice seed is an inherently existent other than the rice sprout, it will only give rise to a rice sprout since that result is within the same continuum. So when other is taken to be mere other, as Prasangika does, then that is correct, since a rice seed is a mere other to a rice sprout. Further, a rice seed will only give rise to a rice sprout and not a barley sprout, but that only follows if you hold them to be mere other. However, for Chittamatra, other does not mean mere other but means inherently existent other, so they cannot be in the same continuum. Therefore, extending this logic to the issue at hand, an inherently existent potential with respect to a past consciousness does not exist. In this specific case, we are saying that an inherently existent potential with respect to a past consciousness *that deposited it* does not exist. In this threefold division, what is being refuted is an inherently existent potential giving rise to an inherently existent consciousness. So the latencies on the mind-basis-of-all are not feasible and there is no way that they can give rise to a consciousness.

November 8 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2B Once again refuting the way of stating the existence of consciousness without external objects

We stated the Chittamatra position earlier regarding an inherently existent consciousness without external objects. Further Chittamatra holds that those consciousnesses arise through the activation of latencies or potentials on the mind-basis-of-all. We just finished refuting the existence of inherently existent potentials for consciousnesses in the present, past and future. Now we move into a new section, where Chittamatra will try to assert the way that consciousnesses exist in their system.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2B-1 Stating the others' system

This section begins with Chittamatra restating their case for the existence of inherently existent consciousness without external objects. The root verses from Chandrakirti (6.62-6.64) are entirely from a Chittamatra point of view.

Assertion regarding the sense powers

When a previous eye consciousness ceases, there is a latency deposited on the mind-basis-of-all, and when that is activated it gives rise to a consciousness of a similar type in the future. These potentials that are being deposited from the ceasing of previous consciousnesses, such as an eye consciousness apprehending blue, act as a necessary condition for a later eye consciousness. When upon its activation that potential acts as the direct cause for an eye consciousness, that potential is called an eye sense power and is the uncommon

empowering condition of an eye consciousness. There is no eye sense power that is different from the consciousness, and this should similarly be applied to the remaining four sense powers. This potential that has the ability to give rise to a later eye consciousness is the empowering condition for a future eye consciousness.

Distinguishing between a latency of a consciousness and a sense power

Lama Tsongkhapa makes a distinction between a latency of a consciousness and an eye sense power as they are spoken of in this context. Geshe-la says that a latency of an eye sense consciousness is the causal condition for an eye consciousness, while, as we saw above, the eye sense power is the empowering condition. In this context, the eye sense power has the intended meaning of being the ripened latency that acts as a direct cause for an eye consciousness, which only occurs when you are awake. When we use the term “eye sense power” in this context, we mean that latency which acts as a direct cause for an eye consciousness, not a latency of a consciousness in general. So we can only be talking about eye sense powers when one is awake; since there is no eye consciousness during sleep there cannot be an eye sense power as meant in the present context.

The pervasion between eye sense power and latency for an eye consciousness

So the eye sense power here is a latency, specifically a latency that acts as a direct cause for the eye consciousness. And the latency for an eye consciousness is the causal condition, which can exist during sleep but at that time cannot be the empowering condition. It seems the pervasion is three possibilities between the latency for an eye consciousness and an eye sense power. That which is a latency for an eye consciousness but not an eye sense power, is a latency for an eye consciousness during sleep. Why? Because it cannot act as a direct cause for an eye consciousness at that time. If it is an eye sense power, it is pervaded by being a latency for an eye consciousness. So an eye sense power in Chittamatra would seem to always be referring to a latency and not the clear matter that Prasangika establishes them to be. In general, the latencies are said to be causal conditions and they are only an empowering condition at the point of their ripening. All the various consciousnesses arise due to ripening of latencies and it seems that the activated latency is termed a sense power. (More on this can be found in the section below “The Three Conditions in Chittamatra”)

Quote from Maitreya’s *Discrimination of the Middle Way*

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes from Maitreya’s *Discrimination of the Middle Way*, which says, “Consciousnesses to which appear objects, sentient beings, self, and cognition, are thoroughly produced without objects.” Here the consciousnesses to which appear objects, the sense powers (here referred to as “sentient beings”), the mind-basis-of-all (here referred to as “self”), and cognition, all exist without external objects. Why do “sentient beings” refer to the sense powers? It’s not clear. The mind-basis-of-all is a consciousness itself and not only a “storehouse” for the latencies so it too has observed objects, such as the objects of the five senses and the five sense powers. Objects of the mental consciousness are not observed objects of the mind-basis-of-all. One can ask, if the objects of the five senses are observed by the mind-basis-of-all, why are sense consciousnesses necessary in Chittamatra? Jeffrey Hopkins in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.384) says, “However, the senses themselves and all the objects that appear to them also appear to the mind-basis-of-all, but it does not notice or identify them, nor is it capable of either remembering or inducing another consciousness to take notice of them.”

How ordinary beings hold external objects to exist, the subtle self of phenomena to be refuted

The sense powers, meaning these latencies that are the direct causes for the arising of consciousness, are not a different entity from the mind, nor are the objects of the senses a different entity from the mind. In verse 6.63, Chandrakirti says that, just as the sense powers exist without the existence of external objects, so too do the sense objects exist without external objects. Due to the activation of potentials an appearance of the color blue, for example, arises, and that does not exist external to the mind, but ordinary beings perceive it to exist external to the mind. We misconceive these objects to be external to the mind.

Ordinary beings, not realizing that the five cognizers along with their respective objects arise from the ripening of seeds that have been laid down by previous consciousness, perceive them to exist external to the mind. That is the conception of a self of phenomena, and its referent object, forms and so forth existing

external to the mind, is the subtle object of negation in Chittamatra. An eye consciousness arises along with the color blue and we misconceive the color blue to exist external to the mind, meaning that it is a different substance from the consciousness perceiving it. That conception is the ignorance conceiving of a self of phenomena and the referent object of an externally existent blue is the object of negation, that which is to be refuted.

How consciousness arising without external objects is just as in a dream

In verse 6.64, the analogy of a dream is resurrected, saying that consciousness arising without an external object occurs in the way a dream consciousness arises without external form. In a dream, all of those appearances arise due to the activation of latencies, and there is an absence of external form. Just like that, in the waking state, “there exists mentality without the external.”

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2B-2 Refuting that system

As we’ve seen, there are two points that are essential in upholding the Chittamatra presentation – the non-existence of external objects and the inherent existence of consciousness. Now Prasangika will proceed to refute these.

The example of the blind person

Prasangika replies that Chittamatra’s assertions are not reasonable, so to show this, Chandrakirti (verse 6.65) introduces a counter-example, citing the case of a blind person. If Chittamatra says that a dream consciousness with the appearance of blue arises from the ripening of latencies without an eye sense power, then why don’t forms and so forth appear to a blind person when awake since he does not have eye sense powers either. For a blind person, there is no eye sense power either in the waking state or in a dream so those states should be alike in both lacking the appearance of visible forms. However, they are not alike, since forms and so forth do appear in their sleep but do not when they are awake. If the appearance of forms is due to the ripening of latencies, then why doesn’t a blind person have the appearance of forms and so forth when awake, just as those people who are not blind. In other words, if having a functioning sense power is not necessary to see forms, then why do forms appear to a person with sight in their sleep but blind people don’t have the appearance of forms when awake?

To restate this with the example of an appearance of blue, Chittamatra holds that blue appears due to the ripening of latencies. Since Chittamatra holds that the appearance of blue is not due to the eye sense power but rather to the ripening of latencies, it shouldn’t depend on whether someone has that sense power or not. For a blind person there should be no difference between the dream state and the waking state if that is so. So Prasangika counters by asking why blue doesn’t appear to a blind person when they’re awake (someone who is without an eye sense power) due to the ripening of latencies, just as blue *does* appear for those who are not blind in their dreams (when they too are without an eye sense power) due to the ripening of latencies. There should be no difference.

Chittamatra responds to Prasangika’s counter-example

Chittamatra answers that what causes the distinction between these two people is that the cause for the form not arising for a blind person when he is awake is due to the absence of the ripening of a latency. When both the person with sight and the blind person are awake, the appearance of form is due to either the respective presence or absence of the ripening of latencies, and not the eye sense power. In other words, it is due to the ripening or non-ripening of latencies. But in the case of the blind person when asleep, due to that condition of sleep, the latencies for the arising of the appearance of form are present. Those latencies are activated due to the condition of sleep, so without sleep they are not activated. Therefore, when they are awake the latencies for the arising of the appearance of form are absent. So blind people do not generate an eye consciousness apprehending the appearance of forms when awake, but do generate a mental consciousness apprehending the appearance of forms when they are asleep. Prasangika says that is not reasonable.

How Prasangika posits the arising of a consciousness apprehending an object

In Prasangika, does the consciousness apprehending form arise due to the activation of potentials? For Prasangika, does an eye consciousness apprehending pot arise from the activation of a potential? It doesn’t seem we can say that, since a consciousness arises due to the combination of an empowering condition (the sense power), an observed object condition, and an immediately preceding consciousness. Prasangika does

assert that there is the karma that causes one to see a pot *as* a pot, plus there is the collective karma that gives rise to the environment that includes pots and so forth, that we live in. But it doesn't seem that we can say it arises from the activation of a potential.

November 9 (Thursday)

Reviewing the example of the blind person

The important point within this refutation is that Chittamatra asserts the non-existence of external objects and the existence of an inherently existent consciousness. Chittamatra explained the arising of objects from the ripening of latencies and Prasangika put forth the example of a blind person without an eye sense power who doesn't have the appearance of form when awake but does when asleep during dreams. If the sole criteria is the ripening of a latency then why shouldn't that blind person have the appearance of form during the waking state? Chittamatra says that one of the factors that is necessary for the appearance to arise from the ripening of latencies is sleep, and that is absent in that case (when the blind person is awake).

The three conditions in Chittamatra

We discussed the three conditions, the empowering conditions and so on, in Chittamatra and there is a passage in Lati Rinpoche's *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (p.70-71) that discusses this topic quite extensively. He says that in the Chittamatra system, "not objects but latent predispositions are posited as the observed object condition for both sense and mental direct perceivers." In regard to the example of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, he says, "the Chittamatrins posit a predisposition which exists with the immediately preceding condition of that consciousness and causes it to be generated as having the aspect of blue." He says that the blue which is apprehended by that eye consciousness is "the *appearing* observed object condition." It is only called an observed object condition because, although it appears to the consciousness, it is not a cause of the consciousness (so it is not an actual observed object condition).

Lati Rinpoche also discusses the empowering condition in Chittamatra. Any cause of a consciousness is an empowering condition but here we are specifically talking about the uncommon empowering condition. For an eye sense consciousness, it is an eye sense power, and the sense powers are form for both Chittamatra and Sautrantika. However, in Sautrantika they are matter, but in Chittamatra they are latencies or potentials. Specifically, Chittamatra says "that it is a potency existing with the immediately preceding condition [a former moment of consciousness] and is a 'form' which produces a consciousness as having its own power, such as the eye consciousness having power with respect to colors and shapes." He also states that, although it is a point of debate, Chittamatra does posit fully qualified forms because "there is form, such as visible forms, sounds, odors, and so forth – but there is not matter since the definition of matter is that which is atomically established and in Chittamatra there are no externally existent atoms."

Prasangika's reply to Chittamatra's response

To return to the issue at hand, Chittamatra has said that a blind person being unable to generate an eye consciousness in the waking state is not due to the absence or presence of a functioning eye sense power but rather to the condition of sleep. As we said above, Prasangika sees this as unreasonable. Here (verse 6.66), Prasangika is trying to point out the inconsistencies in the Chittamatra point of view. They have asserted that the sixth (i.e. the mental) consciousness does not arise having the appearance of form for a blind man since there is no ripening of a potential for a mental consciousness to which that form appears; hence it is not produced. So Prasangika says that then there is no valid reason as to why it should also not arise in the dream state for that blind man either.

The Chittamatra system is "based on the object of negation"

Lama Tsongkhapa also adds a comment, saying, "Furthermore, this is a system which is based on the object of negation." The Chittamatra system is based upon the object of negation, here meaning inherent existence, and this is important in this argument since all of these assertions are posited in the context of asserting inherent existence. All of this discussion hinges on the presence or absence of an inherently existent consciousness, and such a hypothetical consciousness would not depend upon causes and conditions since it exists independently from its own side.

The support of the consciousness and the consciousness that is supported

A sense power is the support for consciousness, and the consciousness arising in dependence upon that is the supported. In the case of an eye consciousness, the sense power takes on the aspect of shape and color. So without the support of a functioning eye sense power there is no eye consciousness. Chittamatra says that for this blind person there is no functioning eye sense power, so it is unsuitable for there to arise an eye consciousness having the aspect of form in either the waking state or the dream state. For Prasangika, there is no functioning eye sense power in a dream due to the condition of sleep, but why is there no functioning eye sense power in a dream for Chittamatra? They hold that a sense power is that latency which upon ripening transforms into the mental consciousness that is a dream consciousness having the aspect of form. Lama Tsongkhapa comments on this, saying, “the consciousness supported on an eye sense power which is called ‘a potential’ that takes the aspect [of an object] is not a mental consciousness that arises from the transformation of a ripened potential for mental consciousness.” Why is that so? That potential is inherently existent so it cannot give rise to anything. Therefore, there is no consciousness that arises from it.

“Sleep is not the cause” for the ripening of latencies

Chandrakirti (verse 6.67ab) says, “Just as a lack of eyes is not the cause of that, likewise, also in a dream, sleep is not the cause.” There are no functioning sense powers (as they are asserted by Chittamatra) in either the waking state or in the dream state for this blind person. Why? Because such a sense power is an inherently existent sense power. Therefore the presence or absence of a functioning sense power is not a variable for the ripening of a latency. Nor, as Chandrakirti says, is sleep a necessary condition for the ripening of a latency. Simply put, an inherently existent dream consciousness does not depend upon latencies, and the appearing of the dream object also does not depend upon the consciousness, because they are inherently existent as well. Neither the dream objects (the appearances of form and so forth) nor the consciousnesses exist because they are inherently existent. If a consciousness arises dependent upon externals, then it cannot arise due to the ripening of latencies. The cause for these consciousnesses cannot be either sleep, latencies or objects, because they inherently exist.

The three in a dream are false

In verse 6.67cd, Chandrakirti says, “Because of that, also in a dream, things, the eye, and false object-possessors are asserted to be the cause of perception.” Lama Tsongkhapa discusses how the three in a dream are false. Just as in the example of a dream consciousness to which a herd of elephants appear, there is no actual visible form, no eye consciousness and no eye sense power. However, in the perspective of the dreamer, the mental consciousness operative in the dream is asserted to be a dream eye consciousness; its empowering condition, the mental sense power, is asserted to be a dream eye sense power; and its appearing observed object condition, an imaginary form, is held to be a dream eye sense form.

Revisiting how the dream example establishes emptiness of inherent existence in Prasangika

Generally we can accept the fact that when the three conditions aggregate, these act as the basis for consciousness, in this case for a dream consciousness. Earlier, when Chittamatra first presented the example of a dream, we discussed how Prasangika turns that example into one that establishes the lack of inherent existence. We examined how seeing that triad of conditions in a dream as false invalidates an inherently existent consciousness. A dream consciousness is deceptive and we speculated that it would seem that the very fact that it is a wrong consciousness would negate it being inherently existent. It seems that if a consciousness is wrong, it arises as such in relation to its object, so it cannot exist unrelatedly, and therefore it cannot inherently exist. In the entire refutation of the dream example, Prasangika did not argue about whether the dream object is a form that exists externally or not, but rather focused on showing that an inherently existent consciousness doesn’t exist. Why do they not rely upon establishing an existent external object in a dream by asserting the existence of form that is a phenomenon sphere? Recall that Lama Tsongkhapa said that Bhavaviveka’s refutation (which did just that) negated the intention of Prasangika’s refutation.

There is some support for this idea in *The Mirror of the Clarification of the Thought*, by Gyelwa Gedun Drub, the First Dalai Lama (p.37, as translated by Martin Wilson). In commenting on verse 6.67cd, he says, “In dreams also, that functional thing, the [dreamt] form, and [dream-] sight, are to be accepted as the cause [or base] of a false perceiving subject [or consciousness], for from false imprints, false consciousness is

born.” This commentary points out that these functioning things are the causes for a false perceiving subject, the dream consciousness.

“This debate is eliminated.”

Chandrakirti concludes this section by saying, “Since their giving such-and-such a reply is seen to accord with this and that thesis, this debate is eliminated.” Whatever thesis the Chittamatrins come up with, since it’s always asserted in the context of inherent existence, it cannot be proved so they should give up. Lama Tsongkhapa says, “At the time of waking, the three – objects, sense powers, and consciousnesses – are empty of inherent existence because they are observed; for example, like a dream.” A dream arises in dependence upon these three factors but in acting as conditions they do not inherently exist. Why does he say “like a dream”? Perhaps because they (the three at the time of waking), just like the three in a dream, do not exist as they appear, meaning they are not inherently existent.

Three syllogisms to argue the assertion of the three conditions as absent of inherent existence

Lama Tsongkhapa discusses three syllogisms that Chittamatra might put forth to argue this:

- (1) The consciousness of the waking state is empty of external objects because it is consciousness, like the consciousness of a dream;
- (2) Objects that are observed when awake are false because they are objects, like dream objects; and
- (3) If other-powered phenomena do not inherently exist, then the thoroughly afflicted and completely pure phenomena do not exist because the basis for phenomena do not exist, like a cloth made of turtle hairs.

Lama Tsongkhapa analyzes these three and says that the first two examples are not established. The first example is not established because for Prasangika, the dream consciousness does have an external object, a form that is a phenomenon sphere (specifically, imaginary form). For the second, the example is not established because dream objects are not false; they appear to be external and are external, since they are imaginary forms. In Prasangika, objects are not false in appearing as external (although they are false in appearing inherently existent). So the example is not established for both of those two but, with regard to the second, Geshe-la said that there is also no pervasion. This is so since, if it is an object, it is not pervaded by being a falsity. For example, ultimate truth is an object but is not a falsity.

In regard to the third syllogism, Lama Tsongkhapa says there is no pervasion, since they are equating existence with being established by way of its own character. In other words, if the basis does not inherently exist, then there is no pervasion that there exists no basis for the thoroughly afflicted and completely pure phenomena.

Regarding imputation in Prasangika

Yesterday in the context of our discussion of how objects are apprehended in Prasangika, a question came up as to how this works in regard to the process of imputation in conceptual thought. We touched on the idea that it seems that there is first the basis of imputation, then there is the imputing, so what exists in the first moment prior to the imputing. In terms of the example of making a mala or rosary, you have a quantity of beads and a string. As you know, it’s arbitrary how many beads make a mala, since, as Geshe-la said in class recently, there are malas with 21, 27, 36, or 108 beads. But as far as worldly renown is concerned, at some point in the process of stringing the beads together you will be holding what is known in the world as a mala, even though you may not even be thinking of it as such, that is, imputing it as such. When you think of that string of beads that you are holding as a “mala” only then will it be a mala for you as well. What you are looking at or holding is dependent upon the conventions of the world. There is no world beyond that. This is similar to a concept that Nelson Goodman, a Harvard University professor, has called “world-making,” where we simply build our world based upon previous versions built by those before us and within the community of discourse around. It’s as if we are born into a pre-existent world of complete meaning and we simply plug into that world through learning its particular rules for constructing a coherent reality, for world-making. Our world is a social construct.

November 10 (Friday)

Conclusion to the refutation of an inherently existent consciousness without external objects

Yesterday we finished the section that refuted the Chittamatra position one last time regarding the existence of an inherently existent consciousness without external objects. In that section, the refutation primarily involved using the counter-example of the blind man as a way of refuting inherently existent potentials for the arising of consciousnesses and so forth. From that example, Prasangika concludes that the arising or non-arising of a specific consciousness are not due to the ripening or non-ripening of latencies respectively. Nor are they due to the presence or absence of an eye sense power; nor are they due to one being free from or under the influence of the condition of sleep. So it comes down to the fact that a latency simply cannot transform into a consciousness because it is inherently existent. Whatever presentation the Chittamatrins put forth is in the context of inherently existent objects and so cannot be established. END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

November 10 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A2C Indicating that the refutation of the Chittamatra system is without harm from the scriptures

Having completed the refutation of an inherently existent consciousness without external objects, in this section we will establish that Prasangika's refutation of inherent existence does not contradict the teachings of the Buddha.

Quote from *Descent into Lanka Sutra*

In verse 6.68cd, Chandrakirti says that the buddhas never said things inherently exist. The source for this is a passage from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, which is set out in both the *Autocommentary* and *Illumination*. As we said before (Review Class Transcript #27, p.3), there are two interpretations as to the meaning of “the three existences,” and in the sutra it says that they are mere imputations. Can we call books and so forth mere imputations, labels or designations? Is that a misuse of the language or a misinterpretation of the concept? As Gen Lamrimpa suggests in *Realizing Emptiness* (pp.42-43), if mere conceptual designation is used “in the sense of being a figment of our imaginations” then that is not so, since there must be a coordination between the basis of imputation and the imputation. Then is the table an imputation? Yes. As Lama Zopa Rinpoche said in his recent teaching here on the object of negation, why the I exists is because there are the aggregates, the basis of imputation. Further, is it the same thing to say that a table is merely imputed and that a table is a mere imputation? Obviously there are lots of questions here to think about.

To return to the sutra verses, the first verse says that these various existences do not exist by way of their own entity or from their own side. However, there are logicians or scholars, meaning those who have not found the meaning of emptiness, who conceive of what is in fact merely imputed as existing by way of their own character. Since phenomena are merely imputed they do not exist by way of their own entity. When the second sutra verse says, “there is no nature,” Geshe-la said that this refers to form, which does not inherently exist. When it says there is “no cognition,” this refers to consciousness, which also does not exist inherently. It also says there are “no things,” and “things” here refers to things not existing by way of their own entity. The Tibetan term (*ngo po*) here translated as “things” is interpreted differently, such as in Vaibhashika tenets, where it is equated with “existents.” But it can also refer to “true existence” in some contexts. In regard to all these phenomena that have no inherent existence, they are nonetheless imputed as inherently existent by the corpse-like, childish logicians, those who are unable to analyze suchness. As Lama Tsongkhapa says in his commentary on these sutra verses, this scripture negates the assertion of inherently existent other-powered phenomena in the three existences.

Chittamatra's view of scripture as supporting the emptiness of “one being empty of one”

Chittamatra responds, saying that their position is not harmed, because, in their view, those scriptures teach an emptiness that is “one being empty of an other one.” This is the type of emptiness Chittamatra in fact is presenting, i.e. that the other-powered phenomena are empty of the imputational factor of existing as different substantial entities from the consciousness apprehending them. So they interpret this sutra to support and not negate their position.

Prasangika uses sutra to show that Chittamatra emptiness is “the lowest of all emptinesses”

Prasangika responds saying the Chittamatra view of emptiness is not the suitable as “perfect emptiness,” and they quote the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* to support that, which says that “the emptiness of one not existing as one is the lowest type of emptiness.” To show how this is so, Lama Tsongkhapa then quotes from the *Autocommentary*, which gives an example concerning the non-existence of an ox. This discussion of emptiness in this section seems similar to when we spoke of “emptiness of self” and “emptiness of other” earlier (see Review Class Transcript #24, p.3). Then we said that when we use the term “emptiness of self” in Prasangika, it refers to a phenomenon's own lack of existing inherently (Chittamatra would say that it refers to a phenomenon's lack of existing externally). So “emptiness of self” means that the basis itself is empty of the object of negation and on that basis itself we superimpose the object of negation. Emptiness of other however, is phenomena being empty of a phenomenon that is different from themselves.

The example of the non-existence of an ox

To examine the example more closely, Chandrakirti says, “Saying ‘An ox does not exist because it is empty of being a horse’ is not suitable.” He continues by giving what is a more suitable reason, but, as it is stated in our translation, it doesn’t seem to be correct. One possible correction would be to change the second reason to remove the bracketed words so it reads ‘Because it is existing by way of its own nature.’ Or, alternatively, one could leave that part of the text as is and change the thesis to ‘An ox does not [*inherently*] exist.’ Either way, the point of this is that the first reason given (‘because it is empty of being a horse’) is comparable to “one being empty of an other one,” in that the ox not being a horse is being used (incorrectly) to show that the ox does not exist. To clarify how this relates to the topic at hand, let’s examine Lama Tsongkhapa’s commentary.

The meaning of the example

The Buddha taught an emptiness which is a lack of inherent existence, saying that sentient beings conceive of forms and so forth to truly exist, and those very phenomena which are conceived of to truly exist are empty of that way of existing. For Prasangika this lack of true existence is comparable to the non-existence of an ox. If instead someone were to give the reason that other-powered phenomena, the apprehended and apprehenders, do not truly exist as different substances, it would be like giving “an ox does not exist as a horse” as the reason for the non-existence of an ox. The type of emptiness that Chandrakirti is asserting is being compared to giving an incorrect reason in the example of the non-existence of an ox. So how do the components of the incorrect reason in the example (*because of the ox not being a horse*) show that? *The ox* is the other-powered phenomena, and they are empty of being the imputational nature (of existing as a different substantial entity from the consciousness apprehending them), which is comparable to *not being the horse*. Lama Tsongkhapa seems to be saying that this example shows how there must be proper identification of the object of negation, in that one must establish the non-existence of the ox (the non-true existence of phenomena) for the correct reason. Prasangika is speaking here, saying that to use the object of negation as identified by Chittamatra does not refute what is to be refuted.

The bases for the object of negation and emptiness in Chittamatra and Madhyamika

Lama Tsongkhapa also says that in both Chittamatra and Madhyamika, there is no difference in the bases of the conception of a self of phenomena being the phenomena that appear as internal and external. However, there is a difference in terms of how those bases are taken and how they are conceived. In Chittamatra, there is a conception of the apprehendeds as being a different substantial entity from the apprehender that is apprehending them. On the basis of the appearances that are other-powered phenomena, Chittamatra goes on to refute that the apprehended and apprehender are different substances. This is how they negate the basis of negation, the object of negation. Madhyamika, on the other hand, says that what appears is conceived of to not be posited by awareness, to not be imputedly existent, but rather as inherently existent, truly existent, and so on. As an antidote to that conception of true existence on that basis of the appearance, we negate the superimposed factor, true existence, saying it does not exist on that basis, i.e. that that basis is not truly existent.

Two ways of negating

Geshe-la speaks about two modes of negating, one in terms of negating something being the object of negation and the other negating something existing as the object of negation. This is a subtle point that is important to distinguish since the negation in Prasangika is in terms of the mode of *being* the object of negation, not *existing as* the object of negation. Geshe-la demonstrates these, saying that for the first, something *being* the object of negation, you can say that ‘The table is not a pot.’ To exemplify the second, something *existing as* the object of negation, Geshe-la says you can say that ‘There is no pot on the table.’ To relate this to the negation of true existence, Geshe-la says, “When the object of negation is negated on a pot, the pot that is truly existent is negated, not the pot existing as truly existent.” So the correct way is establishing that the basis is empty of true existence, meaning one negates the basis that is truly existent.

November 13 (Monday)

Context of current discussion

In this section we are indicating that the Prasangika refutation of Chittamatra is not harmed by scripture. We started by examining two verses from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, but Chittamatra responded by saying that

there is no harm from those scriptures since they teach an emptiness that is one not existing as an other. For Chittamatra, one being empty of an other means that the other-powered phenomena are empty of the imputational factor, that apprehenders and apprehendeds are different substantial entities. Prasangika went on to quote again from that sutra to show that this is the lowest type of emptiness and is not to be asserted.

More regarding the example of the non-existence of an ox

Then Lama Tsongkhapa quoted from the *Autocommentary*, citing a passage which concerns refuting the proper object of negation, as shown by the example of the non-existence of an ox. For Prasangika, to say that things are empty of being different substances does not serve as a refutation of inherent existence. To say that “an ox does not exist as a horse” is a reason for the non-existence of an ox is similar to saying that “other-powered phenomena are empty of being different substantial entities from the consciousnesses apprehending them” is a reason for the non-inherent existence of phenomena. According to Prasangika, they are both incorrect reasons. For Prasangika, emptiness is a phenomenon’s lack of inherent existence. Sentient beings innately conceive of forms and so forth to inherently exist and those forms and so forth are empty of inherent existence. Both in Madhyamika and Chittamatra the bases of the conception conceiving of a self of phenomena are these internally and externally appearing phenomena. In Chittamatra, what is being conceived on the basis of those phenomena is that subject and object are different entities, while in Prasangika what is being conceived is inherent existence.

In regard to how inherent existence appears, in Madhyamika these appearances are conceived to be not posited by conceptuality and terms, to not imputedly exist but rather to substantially exist. An antidote to that conception on the basis of those phenomena must directly oppose that misconceived way of those phenomena existing. So we must identify exactly the superimposed factor, inherent existence, that isn’t really there. We must negate it by establishing that there is no true existence there on that basis.

Two points in regard to the Prasangika object of negation

Lama Tsongkhapa makes two points in regard to how the object of negation is negated. First, when a sentient being conceives of a basis as truly existent he does not perceive it to exist as a different object, the object of negation, but rather “they adhere to that basis as being the entity of the object of negation.” In other words, that basis is being conceived *to be* the object of negation, not that the object of negation is superimposed on top of the basis. That object of negation *is* the basis. When Lama Tsongkhapa says “adhere,” it means to conceive of a basis to truly exist. For example, a book is the basis of the object of negation and when it is conceived to truly exist, the basis is not conceived of as other than that, rather it is that the book itself is truly existent. Later Lama Tsongkhapa says that you should check to see if there is such an object of negation, and you will find that the object appears as the object of negation, rather than inherent existence being superimposed upon or different from the book. The second point is that emptiness here is taken to mean empty of the way it is being conceived of by ignorance, meaning the object is empty of the referent object of ignorance, a conception of a self of phenomena. Retranslated, the text setting out this second point reads, “because empty also necessarily indicates that (the object is) empty of existing the way that it is being adhered to.” (p.262.1)

Relating the object of negation to “emptiness of other”

Last Friday, regarding the first of those two points, we brought up the idea that this identification of the object of negation might be related to the concept of “emptiness of other.” In *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.415), there is a discussion concerning emptiness of other as it is held by the Jonangbas and Samkhyas. Jeffrey Hopkins says, “Theirs [the Jonangbas’] is a view of ‘emptiness of other’ – an ultimate truth is empty of being a truth-for-a-concealer and a truth-for-a-concealer is empty of being an ultimate truth. This is said to be similar to the Samkhya teaching that the root of cyclic existence is the confusion of the person and the nature and that liberation is gained by realizing that the person is not the manifesting nature and that the manifesting nature is not the person.” When the Jonangbas say that an ultimate truth is empty of being a conventional truth, and a conventional truth is empty of being an ultimate truth, then the object which is being negated is something other than the basis of that negation.

Lama Tsongkhapa describes the way that the object of negation actually occurs – we conceive the pen to truly exist and not that the truly existent pen is different from the pen itself. Geshe-la says that when the object of negation is negated on the basis of pot, the pot that is truly existent is negated, not the pot existing as truly

existent. So “the pot is truly existent” is the conception we must negate, not that “the pot exists as truly existent” (or “the pot has true existence”). One possible way to express this is that, when sentient beings adhere to a pot, they do not conceive that pot to exist as a different object, i.e. to *exist as* the inherently existent pot. Rather they adhere to that pot as *being* the entity of inherently existent pot itself. The key here though is that, in identifying the object of negation, one must cause harm to the mode of being of the pot that is false. After negating it, that which remains appearing to you should be a non-affirming negation, and not the pot itself.

More regarding the two types of negation

As we discussed last Friday, Geshe-la mentioned the two types of negatives, one in terms of being and the other in terms of existing. To exemplify these, in terms of being, we can say “the table is not a pot,” and in terms of existing we can say “the pot does not exist on the table.” In debate, there are statements used, such as “at night upon the ocean, there is no smoke because there is no fire.” If there were fire, which is suitable to be observed even at night, the existence of smoke could be inferred, but since fire is not observed, it can be inferred that there is no smoke which is not directly observable at night.

Emptiness is not the emptiness of not existing as another existent

Lama Tsongkhapa says that there are those who take the emptiness of true existence of the bases of present appearances, to be a nihilistic emptiness. They then set that emptiness aside, and establish another emptiness that is the bases of present appearance being empty of existing as a thing, rather than presenting them to be empty of the object of negation. For example, the Jonangbas take an existent and say it doesn’t exist with respect to another existent, and this is not consistent with what either Madhyamika or Chittamatra do, where the object of negation is a non-existent. For either Chittamatra or Prasangika, emptiness is not posited as a lack of existing as a particular thing. So, as Lama Tsongkhapa says, we must investigate whether or not our ignorance is conceiving of such an object of negation.

“Ultimately, the eye and sense power are not observed.”

Chandrakirti sets out further scriptural sources, specifically the *Meeting of the Father and Son Sutra*, which says that the sense powers and so forth do not ultimately exist. Lama Tsongkhapa talks about the two ways of affixing the object of negation in the sutra quote (“not existing ultimately” and “not existing by way of their own entity”), and in this context Geshe-la sets out the six qualifications of the object of negation in Prasangika. We’ve seen these earlier in our *Middle Way* studies and, as we said before, all six of these qualifications convey the same meaning in Prasangika.

Regarding the priority of the waking state over the dream state

Lama Tsongkhapa gives an additional sutra quote that talks about a dream, saying “If the objects that bring enjoyment in a dream are not obtained by him even in a dream, what need is there to mention [that he does not obtain them] when awake?” For Chittamatra, they equate a dream and the waking state in that they are equal in the ability to produce an effect, namely to evoke desire, hatred, and so forth. The dream and waking states are equal in their ability to function in this sense. They also say that all phenomena are equal in arising due to the activation of latencies so, if that is the case, then a dream man and a man in the waking state would have equal status since they both arise due to activation of latencies. However, if you dreamed that your house burned down but upon waking you found that your house was not actually burned, then non-Chittamatrins would conclude that the dream experience isn’t real, that the dream state is invalidated by the waking state. But if both the burned house and the house that is not burned are the products of the activation of latencies, how can you give precedence to one over the other? If they are produced by the same types of causes, why do we give priority to our waking state and not to the dream? Chittamatra would probably say that the condition of sleep is a factor that invalidates the dream state but the point here is why there is priority given to those of a waking state. Of course in the world at large, if you don’t give priority to the waking state, they put you away!

November 14 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2A3 Indicating that the two, refuting such and meditation on repulsiveness, are not contradictory

We’ve completed the section concerning how scripture does not negate the Prasangika refutation of the Chittamatra system, so now we begin a new section that is still within the overall context of refuting that system

extensively. Chittamatra has put forth a number of examples of an inherently existent consciousness without an external object, but now they will make one last try. This time the example concerns a yogi who, in dependence upon the instructions of a guru, meditates on repulsiveness to overcome great desire by seeing the entire area filled with skeletons. This too is being set out by Chittamatra as an example of an inherently existent consciousness without an external object and this too will be refuted by Prasangika.

Lati Rinpoche on whether this meditative stabilization is a wrong consciousness

Apparently there is some controversy over whether this meditative stabilization is a wrong consciousness or not and Lati Rinpoche discusses it extensively in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (pp.112-115). To summarize the main points of that discussion, within a Sautrantika context, “any consciousness that takes a clear appearance of a non-existent as its apprehended object is a wrong consciousness.” Such meditative stabilizations as this one on repulsiveness, according to Dharmakirti as well as some sutra sources, do have a clear appearance of a non-existent as their apprehended object and thus “have to be considered non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses.” However, Lati Rinpoche points out that in the context of Madhyamika studies, such a meditative stabilization is not a wrong consciousness but instead is an “unreal mental application” (in our transcripts this is usually translated as “wrong mental attention”). Part of the reasoning for saying that involves the fact that a buddha, who has abandoned all objects of abandonment, could not have these types of meditative stabilization in his continuum if they were wrong consciousnesses, but a buddha obviously does and “he is the best of meditators.” Further, they are also not wrong “because yogis engage in these meditations intentionally for a specific purpose and consequently they are not affected by any cause of error, either superficial or deep.” Based on those reasons, they cannot be taken as superimposing consciousnesses, so Madhyamika doesn’t take the passages from Dharmakirti and so forth literally.

Lati Rinpoche goes on to discuss a subject we saw in our *Ornament* studies, where we discussed the three types of mind generation in terms of motivation or intention. These are bodhicitta that is like a boatman, bodhicitta like a shepherd, and bodhicitta like a king. The first has the intention of taking all sentient beings to enlightenment together with oneself, the second has the intention of taking all sentient beings to enlightenment before oneself, and the last has the intention of attaining enlightenment oneself and then afterwards taking all sentient beings there. The first two would appear to be wrong consciousnesses since they are not possible. However, they are more powerful minds to develop in that the more you are willing to allow others to go first the quicker you will actually attain enlightenment. Regarding this, Lama Tsongkhapa says in *Golden Rosary*, “it is not a suitable topic for debate, because bodhisattvas have many impossible wishes.” Lati Rinpoche ends his discussion of this topic by saying that he agrees with that. He says, “Even though these are unreal mental applications, I do not feel that they are superimpositions or objects to be abandoned. On the contrary, they are to be cultivated.”

“All three as without production”

In verse 6.69, Chandrakirti gives the Prasangika reply to this example, saying that those yogis “also see all three as without production because it is indicated to be a wrong mental attention.” The three are the objects, the sense power, and the consciousness that arises in dependence upon those two (rather than the immediately preceding condition as we’ve said on other occasions), and they are not inherently existent and so are false. Such a consciousness is a wrong mental attention, because the skeletons do not actually exist, so to believe them as existent would be wrong.

The appearance of skeletons would be realized by non-yogis and yogis alike

Further, Prasangika says to Chittamatra that for you, since this meditative stabilization inherently exists, it is a true mind, therefore its object must be true too, i.e. that the ground is actually covered with skeletons. This is conveyed in verse 6.70, where they say that others, non-yogis, who direct their eyesight to that place would realize the skeletons as well. If the consciousness were inherently existent, the objects of that meditative stabilization would be like the objects of any eye consciousness. Just as the same objects are seen by all the people watching a theatrical performance, so too would the skeletons be seen by non-yogis and yogis alike. Since the appearance of skeletons is produced without depending upon the meditative stabilization (because that consciousness inherently exists), it should equally appear to someone who hasn’t cultivated that meditative stabilization. On the contrary the non-meditator does not observe the skeletons so it is false and therefore the consciousness is not inherently existent because it is deceived in regard to its object.

How is this meditative stabilization classified?

So, according to Lati Rinpoche, there is a purpose for this meditative stabilization, thus it is not a wrong consciousness, but it's not clear exactly which of the sevenfold classification of consciousnesses it is. In Prasangika a consciousness can be valid and yet mistaken, since all consciousnesses in sentient beings apart from meditative equipoise on emptiness are mistaken in regard to the appearance of inherent existence. According to Lati Rinpoche, it is a wrong mental attention ("unreal mental application") but not a wrong consciousness since it does not superimpose a non-existent. Geshe-la agrees with calling it a wrong mental attention but doesn't say anything further. For the Chittamatrins, this is an example of an inherently existent consciousness without an external object, but here this object appears very differently from how things exist. This consciousness is false because it is deceived in regard to it, but it is not wrong.

Appearances arise dependent upon other factors

What establishes that the consciousness is not inherently existent is that the skeletons do not appear to someone who has not cultivated the meditative stabilization. In other words, because the skeletons only appear to the meditator who has cultivated the meditative stabilization, it shows that the consciousness is dependent upon cultivating that meditative stabilization and so it is not inherently existent. Lama Tsongkhapa expands upon this notion of the way things appear and how appearances arise in dependence upon other factors. He points out that, just as this meditative stabilization that is developed from the instructions of a guru is the way that the appearance of skeletons occurs, likewise all that appears to our minds are dependent upon conditions, just like the appearance of falling hairs, which arises due to the condition of an eye sense power with cataracts. Likewise, as we will explore more extensively later, for a hungry ghost seeing a river of pus and blood is dependent in part upon the condition of their karma. There are numerous illustrations of this such as the illusion of the horse and the elephant that arise in dependence upon the stick and pebble, the mantra, the salve, and so on. In regard to a reflection there are the conditions of a mirror, light, a person's face, and so forth.

Appearances that are forms that are phenomena spheres

In regard to this, Lama Tsongkhapa mentions that these appearances that are the five forms that are phenomena spheres are not imputed by the tenets of the materialists, meaning anyone who propounds true existence. When one meditates on repulsiveness there is the appearance of the entire area covered by skeletons, and that appearance is a form that appears only to the mental consciousness, and not to sense consciousnesses. Therefore these are forms that are phenomena spheres, specifically imaginary forms from among the five types.

The main argument being put forth here by Prasangika is that if the consciousness is inherently existent it cannot depend upon or be related to something else. However, Chittamatra seems to have somehow reconciled that one can have an inherently existent consciousness that still is related to the arising of latencies and so forth.

November 15 (Wednesday)

Yesterday we looked at the fact that this wrong mental attention, where the yogi, with the instructions of a lama, develops a meditative stabilization with the appearance of the ground covered by skeletons. As we said, if it inherently existed, then non-yogis as well should see those skeletons.

The difference in the appearance of form spheres to different beings

We also indicated that this appearance of skeletons is imaginary form within the five forms that are phenomenon spheres. On the other hand, the appearance of falling hairs and a reflection of a face are both form spheres, meaning that they are objects of apprehension of the eye consciousness. Now we begin a discussion regarding another form sphere, the pus and blood seen by a hungry ghost. Because for different beings the same object appears differently for them, they are said by the Chittamatra to be not established, meaning they are not externally established. The fact that a flowing river can be seen by a hungry ghost as pus and blood, by a human as fresh water, and by a god as nectar, is made use of by Chittamatra to establish that there are no external phenomena. In their view, if there were external phenomena, then there should be the same appearance. From this difference of appearance to different beings, they conclude that things do not exist out there. Prasangika, however, concludes from this that they do not inherently exist, rather than that they don't externally exist. So Lama Tsongkhapa explains this topic, how various beings can have different appearances.

Objection concerning two “contradictory” valid cognitions

An objection is raised, saying that if a single basis of liquid, meaning that which is wet and fluid (the definition of the water element), can be established by one valid cognition to be pus and blood, and by another valid cognition to not be pus and blood, then that would be contradictory. One of the qualities of valid cognition is incontrovertibility. But here two valid cognizers seem to controvert or contradict each other. The objector is taking this to mean that valid cognition is unreliable. In response, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the intelligent response to a scripture is to ask how can there be two seeming contradictory valid cognitions with respect to the same base.

The example of the red hot iron ball

To demonstrate this, he gives an example of the way in which two valid cognitions can experience the same base in different manners. First he gives the example of a red hot iron ball, saying that there are two tactile (or tangible) parts: one part is that it is hot, and the other part is that it is not hot. There are those who, due to the condition of washing their hands with water blessed with mantras, have the experience of that base as not hot, in other words, they experience the tactile part that is not hot. However, those without the protection of the washing of the hands have the experience of that base as hot. They experience the tactile part that is hot. Geshe-la gives the example of salty tea, and this works as well, since some people may like salty tea while others like sweet tea. One way to think of karma is the way that our minds have been conditioned. For example if you had a piece of chocolate before drinking your tea then it might not seem as sweet. Conversely, if you had something salty before you drank your tea, it might seem too sweet. So your mind is conditioned by the previous experiences. But are these cognitions of tea valid cognizers? It would seem so but this is a good point to consider. Within the tea, there is a part that is experienced as too sweet by some, just right by others, and not sweet enough by others. It would seem then that they are all valid, especially since there is no reason to call into question the validity of this experience. It's not like the case of someone having taken drugs that influence their perception.

The example of the bowl of liquid

Lama Tsongkhapa then returns to the example of the flowing river that is seen as pus and blood by a hungry ghost. This example is enlarged upon and discussed quite extensively by Khedrup Je in *A Dose of Emptiness* (pp.334-345), where he considers a bowl of liquid that is being seen by three beings, a *preta* (or hungry ghost), a human, and a god. The main points of his discussion are as follows. A question is raised (p.335), saying with regard to one base, is there an eye consciousness that is a valid cognition with respect to seeing the liquid as pus and blood, another with respect to seeing it as clear water, and a third with respect to seeing it as nectar, all at the same time? Aren't they mutually exclusive since one base would be seen as water by one and not water by another? Khedrup Je basically says that this is someone who cannot discern the correct philosophical position of the Buddhists.

How all three eye consciousnesses are valid cognitions

He then (p.335) reconciles this seeming contradiction by saying first that, if we only took the eye consciousness of a human to be a valid cognition, this would be wrong, since we cannot give human cognition any priority over the eye consciousnesses of a hungry ghost or a god. He indicates that the consequence of only holding human cognition to be valid would be “that there could be no valid cognitions in the continua of any nonhuman beings.” Then he goes on to explain what the position of Prasangika is in regard to this situation. He says that Prasangika believes that the eye consciousnesses of all three beings are valid cognitions. He also says, “Nonetheless, we do not believe that the vessel filled with wet and fluid [substance] is the common basis of all three [substances]: clear water, pus and blood, and nectar, [that is, the liquid is not all three substances].” Rather, Prasangika holds that one part is pus and blood, one part is clear water, and one part is nectar.

How the parts of the fluid arise as pus and blood and so forth

Further, Khedrup Je says (p.336) that it is not the case that as soon as the vessel is filled with liquid then all three parts come into existence. Instead it is only when the hungry ghost approaches it that the previous moment of the wet and fluid substance acts as a substantial cause, along with the hungry ghost's karma acting as the environmental cause, for that one part of the fluid to arise as pus and blood. A similar assertion would be made in regard to when the god comes close to the fluid, except there the environmental cause of the god would cause

one part to arise as nectar. So it is not as if all of the liquid has these various parts but rather only in the circumstances described that the parts of them become pus and blood or nectar.

What the wet and fluid substance was before the three beings approached it

Next (p.336), someone asks what was this bowl filled with before these three beings came along? Khedrup Je answers that it depends on where the bowl of fluid comes from. He explains this, saying that if that vessel of wet and fluid substance was taken from a well in the human domain, it would originally be ordinary water, since it originally arose from an environment that came into existence due to the environmental cause of human beings' karma. If it was from pools of nectar that exist in some special god realms, then it would originally be nectar. So it depends upon the environment that wet and fluid substance came from, and within a given community of conventions, for example the human domain, that liquid is commonly known as water.

How the three substances exist when all three beings witness the bowl of fluid

In a later passage (p.339), Khedrup Je addresses whether all three substances exist in one place when all three beings are present. Khedrup Je cites the opinion of Lama Tsongkhapa, who believes that on the occasion that all three beings experience the bowl of liquid that we call water, there exist at one time many parts that arise as pus and blood, water and nectar in the bowl full of liquid. Khedrup Je goes to say that this doesn't mean that in the place occupied by the bowl full of the wet and fluid substance, there exists a bowl full of pus, a bowl full of nectar, and a bowl full of clear water. Why doesn't he accept that the whole container appears as pus and blood? He explains this later (p.345), saying it doesn't because then even a microbe living in that bowl who sees it as an abode would have to the entire bowls of liquid as an abode, much like a fish would have to see the entire ocean as it abode, which it can't. It only sees a portion of it as such. The hungry ghost only has a valid cognition with respect to it being pus and blood, not with regard to the container being completely filled with pus and blood, meaning that the hungry ghost does not have a valid cognition with regard to the quantity.

How this example relates to the root text

Khedrup Je (p.343) cites verse 6.71ab of Chandrakirti's *Supplement*, and says, "Both the root text and the commentary explain that both the eye consciousness of *pretas* who see pus and blood in the river, that is, the consciousness that possess the object, and the object itself, equally lack any inherent existence." He goes on to say that "just as there exists a consciousness, a possessor of objects, in a merely nominal way, as long as it is not being examined or analyzed, there also exist external objects." So for a hungry ghost, pus and blood are able to perform the function of pus and blood so they are to be accepted and not analyzed. This example demonstrates that phenomena do not truly exist, since if they did they would appear in all ways at all times the same. There is a substantial cause that, along with the environmental karma, causes a particular appearance to occur. Even within our domain or community, there are certain appearances that are reinforced.

The example of the rays of the sun and the moon

Lama Tsongkhapa next quotes from Nagarjuna's *Letter to a Friend*, which says, "For hungry ghosts, in springtime even the moon is hot; in winter even the sun is cold." This too is discussed in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.337), and Khedrup Je says that when the rays of the moon and the karma of the hungry ghost...a part of the rays of the moon that are experienced by the hungry ghost in the summer time are experienced as hot...similarly a part of the rays of the sun that are experienced by the hungry ghost in the winter time are experienced as cold.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2A-2B Brief conclusion of such a refutation

Chittamatra has presented their system and we have refuted it, so now that refutation is summarized.

Objects of knowledge and knowers exist in mutual reliance

In verse 6.71cd, Chandrakirti summarizes the previous refutation, saying that Prasangika asserts that both awarenesses and their external objects equally do not inherently exist, while equally existing conventionally. Without an object of knowledge there is no knower, and without a knower there is no object of knowledge. They are mutually reliant. But are they also cause and effect? Or, since they are mutually reliant, do they occur simultaneously? Although in the case of a specific consciousness, they are cause and effect, in this context they exist simultaneously because they are concomitant, meaning that if one exists, then the other exists. Without knowledge (knowing) there are no objects of knowledge, and without objects of knowledge there is no knowledge (knowing). Although Chittamatra obviously doesn't agree with how Prasangika posits both object

and subject as non-inherently existent, they would agree that there is no apprehended without an apprehender and no apprehender without an apprehended.

November 16 (Thursday)

Other examples and quotes from scripture that demonstrate the mutual reliance of object and knower

So neither the subject nor the object exist inherently, nonetheless they both do exist, and they exist in mutual reliance. Lama Tsongkhapa cites such phenomena as the appearance of falling hairs and the appearance of the illusory horse and elephant, and these are both form spheres, so it's not as if they don't exist. Since they exist then so does the consciousness knowing them. A passage from Nagarjuna's *Praise of the Supramundane* is cited, which says that knowers and objects of knowledge are established in terms of each other so they are mutually reliant and therefore cannot be inherently existent. Then a quote from *Samyuttanikaya* is given, which says that the Buddha taught that consciousnesses are like an illusion, in that they appear to inherently exist but do not, and that can also be extended to objects of knowledge.

Commentary in *Illumination* on the two truths

Towards the end of this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says, "Therefore the assertion of Arya [Nagarjuna] is that there is no distinction between one of the two truths and not the other existing with respect to the two." Geshe-la explained this in his recent teachings on verse 6.78, saying that the Chittamatrins deviate from both truths. They deviate from ultimate truth by holding other-powered phenomena to inherently exist, and by denying external phenomena, they deviate from conventional truths. They deviate from conventional truth in that they deny those external phenomena that act as causes for various forms, feelings, and so forth to arise.

Correction to the Week 26 transcript, page 4: In the third line of the paragraph of Geshe-la's commentary following the last quote from *Illumination* in this section, the sentence should read: "The Chittamatrins say that since external objects *do not* exist there is no need to mention that they do not inherently exist."

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B Refuting a valid cognizer that proves that other-powered phenomena inherently exist
Having finally completed the refutation of an inherently existent consciousness without an external object, we now move into the second section under the heading of refuting the Chittamatra system in particular.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1 Refuting self-cognizers, the proof of other-powered phenomena
This first part, the refutation of self-cognizers, will cover verses 6.72-6.77 in *Supplement*.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1A Through questioning the proof of other-powered phenomena, indicating that [self-cognizers] are inadmissible

In verse 6.72abc, Chandrakirti asks a question of Chittamatra, first restating what they assert, namely that apprehendeds and apprehenders are empty of duality and that the mind inherently exists. Further, they also agree with Prasangika that without subjects there are no objects, so then what is it that apprehends the other-powered phenomenon that is the inherently existent consciousness? What establishes the existence of that consciousness? All phenomena must be certified to exist and generally we say a valid cognizer certifies the existence of objects, so Prasangika wants to know in what manner Chittamatra can establish the existence of that inherently existent consciousness. As we will see, Chittamatra will put forth the self-cognizer as the consciousness that does this.

A consciousness cannot certify itself

Prasangika replies that it is not admissible that a consciousness certifies itself, that it establishes its own existence, and they use five similes to illustrate this, such as a sword being unable to cut itself. So Prasangika is telling Chittamatra that, if you are asserting such an inherently existent consciousness, then you cannot use that consciousness itself to certify itself; otherwise, the agent of the establishing and that which is being established would be the same. There must be something outside of itself that certifies its existence. A consciousness cannot establish itself by itself, so some other cognizer must establish its existence. For Prasangika, as Daniel Cozort says in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.165), a consciousness is established by its own operation or function, similar to the example of the clean room that we used earlier. If you left your room disheveled when you left it in the morning and came back in the evening to find a clean room, then you would

assert an agent who cleaned your room. Similarly, consciousnesses are certified by their operation, the mere apprehension of an object.

Inherent existence entails the need for certification of the consciousness

So, since Chittamatra has been asserting an inherently existent consciousness, Prasangika now asks them how the existence of that is established. Propounding inherent existence entails this difficulty since, for Chittamatra, a consciousness doesn't operate upon an object as it does in Prasangika, then one must ask how they certify that it exists since a consciousness cannot certify itself. According to Prasangika, it cannot do this; instead as is seen in the example of the clean room, since there is the activity of knowing an object, then there is the assertion of an agent of the activity that knows that object. So even in Prasangika a consciousness cannot certify itself, just as a fingertip cannot touch itself.

That which certifies or apprehends the consciousness must be the same entity as its object

Moreover, Lama Tsongkhapa says, in addressing Chittamatra, that which certifies a consciousness, for example an eye consciousness apprehending blue, cannot be a different entity from that consciousness itself, because before obtaining omniscience, any cognition must be the same entity as its object. If you said that it is a different entity as that, then you Chittamatra have gone against one of your basic tenets. But does this assertion mean that, for Chittamatra, when you are omniscient you can realize objects that are not the same entity as one's mind (for example others' minds)? It does bring up some questions as to how Chittamatra posits buddhahood. In brief the point here is that the eye consciousness apprehending blue cannot certify or establish or apprehend itself and that consciousness which does so must be the same entity as the eye consciousness itself.

The unsuitability of the consciousness existing without being apprehended

In verse 6.72d, Chandrakirti says, "It is not suitable to say 'It exists without being apprehended'." For Chittamatra to simply say that the eye consciousness exists without being apprehended by consciousness is unsuitable, so what is this apprehender? Chittamatra answers that it is a cognizer that is the same entity as it, i.e. a self-cognizer (*rang rig*).

Mind in Tibetan Buddhism on "other-knowers" and "self-knowers"

To gain some understanding of what self-cognizers are, let's examine Lati Rinpoche's discussion of them in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (pp.59-60). He says that there are two types of consciousness: (1) "Other-knowers," which he says are "directed outwards" and is described as "that which engages an object other than an internal consciousness," and (2) "Self-knowers," which he says are "directed inwards" and are described as "that which experiences an internal consciousness." For example, an eye consciousness apprehending blue is an other-knower since it is outwardly directed, while the consciousness apprehending that eye consciousness apprehending blue is a self-knower since it is inwardly directed.

Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School on which schools accept self-cognizers

In *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School*, Daniel Cozort discusses the refutation of "self-consciousness" (self-cognizers) by Prasangika extensively (pp.153-180). We are currently talking about them in the context of Chittamatra but there are other systems that hold to their existence. "Within the four principal Buddhist systems of tenets identified by Gelukba scholars, self-consciousness is accepted only by certain Sautrantikas, certain Chittamatrins, and the Yogachara-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas." Apparently there is some debate over whether the sub-schools of Sautrantika and Chittamatra asserted a self-cognizer, although when Geshe-la gave definitions of the propounders of the four schools of tenets, those definitions suggest that the propounders of Sautrantika and Chittamatra tenets necessarily accept a self-cognizer. Cozort indicates in a later passage that "Vaibhashikas, Sautrantika-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas, and Prasangikas do not accept self-consciousness." (p.154)

A self-cognizer is that which has the aspect of an apprehender

Geshe-la gave the short definition of a self-cognizer as "that which has the aspect of an apprehender." In terms of the two, apprehendeds and apprehenders, the self-cognizer takes on only the aspect of an apprehender. So how does it take on the aspect of an apprehender? How is a self-cognizer aware of another consciousness? As Daniel Cozort says (p.155), "A self-consciousness is said to be in a non-dualistic simultaneous relationship with

the apprehending consciousness, one in which there is no appearance of subject and object, for the two just seem to be fused.” When we use the term self-cognizer, we often have the notion that it’s cognizing itself, but rather it is cognizing another consciousness in a non-dual manner, they are one entity and there is no appearance of subject and object to the self-cognizer. The self-cognizer is certifying the existence of the eye consciousness by taking on the aspect of that consciousness.

An other cognizer is that which has the aspect of an apprehended

Geshe-la also gave the short definition of an other-cognizer as “that which has the aspect of an apprehended.” Lati Rinpoche in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (p.60) explains this and the definition of self-cognizer in regard to the eye consciousness apprehending blue as follows.

The blue which is the object of the eye consciousness apprehending blue is the apprehended, whereas the eye consciousness itself is the apprehender. Furthermore, the eye consciousness apprehending blue sees the aspect of blue and is thus called that which has the aspect of the apprehended. The consciousness which experiences that eye consciousness sees the apprehender itself and is thus called that which has the aspect of an apprehender.

The difference between introspection and self-cognition

One issue that Daniel Cozort addresses is an interesting one. He says (p.157), “Self-consciousness should not be confused with the mental factor called ‘introspection’ (*shes bzhin, samprajanya*), which also involves the apprehension of consciousness.” It’s true that introspection is also inwardly directed in a sense, but “introspection is not held to be in a non-dualistic, simultaneous relationship with the consciousness under observation, as is self-consciousness.” However, regarding the short definition of a self-cognizer given above, does introspection meet that definition? Daniel Cozort describes introspection as “a ‘corner’ of consciousness observing the main consciousness or the observation of a previous moment of consciousness.” What does the first part of that description mean? It doesn’t seem that that description of it being a “corner” of the mind is possible; rather the second part seems more consistent with our understanding of the function of introspection. For example, if the mental factor of introspection is in the retinue of a mental consciousness visualizing an object during meditation, then introspection is observing the consciousness to see if it is holding to its object, how tightly it’s holding, etc. As we’ve discussed previously, the mental factors can be concomitant with any of the other consciousnesses and they share five similarities with them, one of which is sameness of object of observation. This issue is an interesting one to explore.

Chittamatra asserts two types of appearances

So Chittamatra has said that which is apprehending or certifying that inherently existent eye consciousness is a self-cognizer, and in verse 6.73a, Prasangika replies that it is not established that it is experienced by that consciousness. So now the text goes on to explore the nature of the self-cognizer. It’s interesting that as a source for this discussion, Lama Tsongkhapa uses *Blaze of Reasoning* by Bhavaviveka, the founder of the Sautrantika-Svatantrika, who also do not assert a self-cognizer. Bhavaviveka says that Chittamatra says there are two types of appearances that occur: (1) the appearance of the consciousness itself, and (2) the appearance of an externally appearing object of that consciousness. For example, with an eye consciousness apprehending blue, that consciousness is an “other-experiencer,” a cognizer of an object other than consciousness, and what is appearing to it is a form sphere that appears as external. The self-cognizer experiencing the eye consciousness apprehending blue is a “self-experiencer,” a consciousness which is conscious of another consciousness, and it directly realizes the eye consciousness, and indirectly realizes the form sphere blue, the appearing object of that eye consciousness. This would apply similarly to a conceptual consciousness. So this is how the two types of appearances are distinguished.

Prasangika responds that there is an absence of dualistic appearance in self-cognition

The Madhyamika response is given to this assertion. The self-cognizer is an inwardly directed consciousness as opposed to an eye consciousness that is outwardly directed. Between these two consciousnesses, the self-cognizer and the consciousness it is apprehending, there is no appearance of duality, and in this context duality is specifically the absence of an appearance of subject and object. There is no sense of a self-cognizer that is a separate subject perceiving a consciousness that is an object. As we saw in our studies of the *Ornament*, there are three possible meanings of dualistic appearance: the appearance of the object and subject as distinct, the appearance of conventionalities, and the appearance of true existence (see *A Study of Svatantrika*, pp.195-6).

Prasangika is saying that only the first type of dualistic appearance is absent in self-cognition. Also, it should be noted that there is a difference in what Chittamatra is positing as the emptiness of non-duality of subject and object (as being different substantial entities) and this description of non-duality as the lack of appearance of object and subject as being separate.

Reviewing the definitions of self-cognizer and so forth

As mentioned earlier, Geshe-la gave several definitions in his commentary. For the longer definition of self-cognizer, “selects an apprehender” could also be translated as “isolates an apprehender.” We discussed the short definitions for self-cognizer and other cognizer earlier. Also, as we mentioned above, Geshe-la gave the definitions for propounders of the four schools of tenets, and from those definitions, propounders of Sautrantika and Chittamatra are asserted to accept self-cognizers. Vaibhashika are asserted to not accept self-cognizers while the definition for Madhyamika doesn’t even mention the self-cognizer in it.

November 17 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la’s answers to questions in class today

- * Regarding the question of whether Chittamatra posits the eye sense power as form or not, Geshe-la said that when Lati Rinpoche says that it is both “a potency” and a form, then it depends upon what the meaning of “a potency” is. If we say that a potency (*nus pa*) is that which performs an activity, then it could be a form. But if it’s considered a latency, then it cannot be a form since a latency is a non-associated compositional factor. Earlier we said that the eye sense power is an activated or ripened latency that acts as the direct cause for an eye consciousness. So, perhaps when it’s activated then it’s performing an activity, so at that point, it’s an eye sense power that is form, but this idea should be clarified with Geshe-la.
- * Regarding the question on self-emptiness and other-emptiness, Geshe-la said that selflessness in all four Buddhist schools could be roughly considered as self-emptiness, although from the Prasangika point of view, the selflessnesses as asserted by the lower schools are not even actual emptinesses. In the context of discussing other-emptiness (*gzhan stong*), Geshe-la mentioned a type of emptiness propounded in Dzogchen practice, and there is an extensive passage on this in His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s *The Gelug/Kagyu Tradition of Mahamudra* (pp.234-9). Geshe-la didn’t exactly answer the part of the question regarding whether self-emptiness refers to emptiness in terms of being, and other-emptiness refers to emptiness in terms of existing. There might be a correlation but we’d have to ask him this again for clarification.

To return to our discussion of the refutation of self-cognizers, yesterday we examined the root text where Chittamatra says that there is a consciousness that arises from a latency and doesn’t depend upon an object, and how is it apprehended as an existent. The way that it’s existence is established is a self-cognizer that is inwardly directed and is the same entity as the object it is apprehending non-dualistically.

The self-cognizer certifies the existence of a consciousness that is empty of the imputational factor

After examining some of the assertions on a self-cognizer, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes from Jnanagarbha’s *Two Truths* (a text that also refutes self-cognizers), which says that a consciousness that is empty of the imputational factor is certified by a self-cognizer. The imputational factor here is as we’ve seen before, the Chittamatra assertion that objects are not a different substantial entity than the consciousness apprehending them. So the existence of an eye consciousness that is not a different substance from the blue it apprehends is certified by a self-cognizer. All this revolves around the fact that, if we’re going to be able to establish the fact of the Chittamatrin emptiness (that apprehendeds and apprehenders are empty of existing as different substantial entities), we’re going to have to establish a self-cognizer. On the basis of the self-cognizer, we can go on to validate the existence of this inherently existent eye consciousness that exists without an external object.

Is the existence of a self-cognizer for Chittamatra established by scripture or by reasoning? It’s not clear if there are scriptures that propound a self-cognizer, so it would appear that they are only positing it through reasoning in Chittamatra. However, from the point of view of Prasangika, it cannot be established experientially nor is it logically necessary to posit it. It seems that Chittamatra establishes it from examining simply how one remember what one experiences, that is, how one remembers what one previously saw, and so forth. Within the

context of the Prasangika view though there is no need for an experiencer of the eye consciousness to validate such statements as “I saw blue.”

Dispelling possible misinterpretations of the refutation of the existence of a self-cognizer

In the final passage of this section in *Illumination*, Prasangika says that such a self-cognizer is not established and is not accepted by them. But Lama Tsongkhapa says that, by saying that, they are referring specifically to a non-dualistic self-cognizer (*rang rig*) that establishes the existence of an inherently existent consciousness. They are not saying that they are refuting the existence of an exalted wisdom of individual cognition (*so so rang rig gi ye shes*) which analyzes suchness. Nor are they refuting everyday conventions such as when people say things such as “I know myself.” So those possible misinterpretations are dispelled.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

November 17 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B Refuting the others' response that [self-cognizers] are admissible

We've questioned how Chittamatra establish the existence of an inherently existent consciousness and they've responded with the assertion of a self-cognizer, to which Prasangika has said it is not admissible. Now Chittamatra will show how they believe it is admissible.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B1 Stating the others' system

Chittamatra will begin by using the explanation of a self-cognizer as given by Sautrantika, specifically what they mean by a self-cognizer and why it necessarily exists.

How self-cognizers are explained by Sautrantika

There are two types of consciousness, one having the aspect of an apprehended, i.e. the object, and the other having the aspect of an apprehender, i.e. the subject or consciousness. A self-cognizer is a consciousness that takes the aspect of an apprehender. Moreover it is the same entity as that consciousness, and it engages that consciousness non-dualistically, meaning there is no distinction between subject and object, that there is no sense of the eye consciousness being here and the self-cognizer apprehending it being there. This self-cognizer is the same entity as the consciousness it is apprehending, so when a consciousness is produced, there is both the aspect of an apprehended and the aspect of an apprehender. For example, with the eye consciousness apprehending blue, the eye consciousness has the aspect of blue and the self-cognizer has the aspect of the eye consciousness.

Two similes for self-cognizers

Chittamatra uses two similes in terms of what it means to be a self-cognizer. The first is that when a fire is produced, it not only illuminates its object but it illuminates itself simultaneously. The second is that when the word "pot" is mentioned, we understand not only the word "pot" but we also understand the object referred to as pot. Moreover, when a consciousness is produced, it does not know its object and itself serially but rather know them simultaneously, and this necessitates the existence of a self-cognizer. There must be a component of that consciousness that is a self-cognizer. The eye consciousness and the self-cognizer are different consciousnesses but yet are the same entity. That they are different can be seen in that, for example, the eye consciousness seeing a blue snow mountain is a wrong consciousness, but the self-cognizer apprehending that eye consciousness is valid. According to Sautrantika, there are three types of self-cognizers: valid direct perceivers, subsequent cognizers and inattentive perceivers.

November 20 (Monday)

Context of current discussion

Chittamatra is asserting that a self-cognizer establishes the existence of the other-powered phenomenon that is an inherently existent consciousness. The self-cognizer, as being asserted by Chittamatra, is inadmissible for Prasangika, so we are now examining Prasangika's refutation of that assertion. First Chittamatra states their position to defend that a self-cognizer is admissible and then Prasangika will refute it.

Reviewing the Sautrantika view of self-cognizers

Chittamatra explains their position in terms of Sautrantika but within the Chittamatra point of view. There are two types of consciousnesses, one having the aspect of the apprehended, or the object, and the other having the aspect of the apprehender, the object-possessor. For an eye consciousness apprehending blue, the aspect of the apprehended is blue and the aspect of the apprehender is the eye consciousness apprehending blue. A self-cognizer is this second type, in that it takes on the aspect of the apprehender. It is the same entity as the consciousness and it engages its object in a non-dualistic fashion, meaning an absence of the appearance of subject and object as different, meaning that there is no distinction between the self-cognizer and the eye consciousness it is apprehending. There is no sense or appearance of separateness between these two consciousnesses.

Reviewing the two similes

As we discussed Friday, Chittamatra first uses the simile of a fire, which when produced, illuminates both the object and itself, and it doesn't do this serially but rather simultaneously. As seen in the second simile, this is also true of object-possessors such as the term "pot," that not only suggests itself, the term "pot," but also suggests the object pot. Likewise, when an eye consciousness is produced it does not know its object and itself serially, but knows its object and itself simultaneously. This necessitates the existence of a self-cognizer, since, if it did not exist, then there would be no experiencer of the consciousness. For example, there would be no experiencer of the eye consciousness apprehending blue, and then there would be no later subsequent memory that thinks "I saw blue." If you have a later memory of "I *saw* blue," then there must have been another cognizer experiencing that eye consciousness, otherwise how would you have the memory of that? Since you have a memory of both the object, blue, and the consciousness, the eye consciousness apprehending blue, there must be a self-cognizer. Here a memory is an object-possessor of what was experienced before. Without an experience of both blue and the eye consciousness apprehending blue, you would not have a memory of those two. The fact that there is a subsequent memory of the seeing of blue establishes that the eye consciousness apprehending blue was experienced earlier.

The syllogism Chittamatra is asserting

So in effect, the Chittamatrins are asserting the following syllogism:

An eye consciousness apprehending blue,
It has an experiencer,
Because there is a subsequent memory of it.

Simply put, there must have been an experiencer because we can remember the eye consciousness apprehending blue.

Two possible types of experiencers

In regard to the "experiencer" in the above syllogism, Chittamatra is saying there are two possible types of experiencers – either a self-experiencer or an other-experiencer. A self-experiencer of an eye consciousness is not accepted by Prasangika and, since Chittamatra is going to go on to show that an other-experiencer is not acceptable to them, then in that case, there would be no way of positing a subsequent memory. By other-experiencer we mean all consciousnesses other than a self-cognizer, and Prasangika would not accept this. Because there is a memory of the experience, in Chittamatra's point of view, self-cognizer is the best hypothetical explanation because it is the only possible option between the two types of experiencers.

The two faults of establishing an other-experiencer

So, according to Chittamatra, the experiencer must be either the same entity or a different entity than the consciousness it is apprehending. If they are different, then there is an other-experiencer, and they refute that other-experiencer by establishing two faults. There is first the fault of endless regression, and second there is the fault that the original object would never be perceived because the consciousness would always be preoccupied with its internal objects.

The fault of endless regression

Regarding the first fault, if an eye consciousness were experienced by a consciousness that is a different entity from itself, it cannot be done by an other-experiencer, because there is the fault of endless regression. If another consciousness perceives that consciousness, then there is a second consciousness, which then must be perceived by a third, and so on. There would be no end to the process of having to establish the experience of each preceding consciousness.

In establishing memory through positing an other-experiencer, why do we end up with an endless regression? In the example of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, there is first the object, blue, and the subject, an eye consciousness apprehending blue. So if there is an other-experiencer, then there is another consciousness that experiences that eye consciousness. The eye consciousness needs to be experienced because we have the subsequent memory of it. Then, since with an other-experiencer there is a consciousness that is different from the eye consciousness, we would have to establish the experience of that consciousness, and so on. So the first

fault is endless regression, that the consciousness that is an other-experiencer is experiencing the eye consciousness would need to be experienced by another, and that consciousness by another, and so on. On the other hand, a self-cognizer would experience itself, so this fault would not occur with a self-experiencer, since they do not need another consciousness to cognize them.

The fault of the original object not being perceived

The second fault follows from this, and it is that there is never a moment when the original object is perceived because the first moment of consciousness would immediately be followed by an endless series of subsequent consciousnesses. In the case of the eye consciousness apprehending blue, there would never be an apprehension of blue. Because there is an endless regression of consciousnesses experiencing their respective consciousnesses, the blue would never be actually perceived, since it couldn't be realized in the single moment that it is experienced by the initial consciousness. Each consciousness would necessitate a further experience of that consciousness endlessly and, in the context of that continuity of endless regression, each of them would be apprehending the immediately preceding consciousnesses and not the distant object apprehended by the initial consciousness, blue.

Regarding this second fault, Lama Tsongkhapa says that “this is not an indefinite pervasion.” To show that, he presents the fact that every subsequent consciousness would be taken up or preoccupied with the preceding consciousness as its immediate apprehending object and would not be able to engage the external object, blue, that is at a distance. Here “external” here means that the object appears to exist external.

November 21 (Tuesday)

Other sources regarding the first fault

We are in the middle of setting out the Chittamatra system in regard to self-cognizers, by way of the syllogism, “An eye consciousness apprehending blue, it has an experiencer, because there is a subsequent memory of it.” As we've already seen, there are two types of experiencers possible, other-experiencer and self-experiencer. And there are two faults to accepting an other-experiencer, the first of which is endless regression. There are two passages from other sources that might shed some light on this, the first being from Khedrup Je in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.347). He says, “Were it experienced by a consciousness that is something different from [the eye consciousness] itself, whether cotemporal with it or occurring after it, it would be necessary to accept yet another entity that experienced [that one experience], and so on ad infinitum.” The second passage is from Daniel Cozort's *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.379, footnote 39). In that footnote, he recalls what Kensur Yeshey Tupden had to say about self-cognizers as follows. “This person [the opponent who gives the consequences of the two faults] thinks that if one remembered an earlier consciousness apprehending blue, one would need yet another consciousness to apprehend that remembering consciousness while it apprehended the consciousness apprehending blue, and another to apprehend that consciousness, ad infinitum.” So if there is an other-experiencer, meaning a consciousness that is a different entity from the consciousness it is perceiving, then there is a need for another consciousness to experience that consciousness and so on. It seems that at least the initial self-cognizing consciousness could be cotemporal, meaning occurring at the same time, but the other consciousnesses that would result in an infinite regression would occur at later moments.

Other sources regarding the second fault

The second fault is that the object would not be perceived, and both of those sources also comment on it. In *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.347), Khedrup Je says, “If the latter moment of the eye consciousness apprehending the blue experiences the former, there would follow the absurdity that the latter moment could not transfer its attention to the blue [as it would be preoccupied with apprehending the eye consciousness, hence implying that we see everything for only one moment].” The latter consciousnesses would leave only one moment of perceiving blue, thereby blue would not be perceived. Regarding this second fault, *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.379, footnote 39) says, “Moreover it is thought that this remembering consciousness would not be able to distinguish blue because it would be full of its apprehension of the eye consciousness apprehending blue.” Kensur Yeshey Tupden says that this means that “if the consciousness were an other-experiencer, it and the eye consciousness apprehending blue would be different substantial entities, whereby they would not be simultaneous (and thus according to this opponent it would not be able to cognize

the eye consciousness apprehending blue, since according to Chittamatra, a mind and its object must be simultaneous).”

An objection regarding two similar types of consciousness

An objection is raised, where someone speaks of two consciousnesses, the first being “a later consciousness that is an apprehender of blue that perceives an earlier consciousness that is an apprehender of blue.” The second consciousness is “a consciousness that is an apprehender of blue that perceives blue.” This objector says these two can arise simultaneously. The response from Chittamatra is that, if that were the case, there would be two similar types of consciousnesses (specifically two eye consciousnesses) that are a different substance produced in the same continuum simultaneously. They would be simultaneously produced in a single continuum and since they are both eye consciousnesses, they are of a similar type; however, they have different substances, and you cannot have two consciousnesses of a similar type that are generated in the same continuum simultaneously. It seems that this objector doesn’t really have much of a point. Here Lama Tsongkhapa is saying that we cannot have two similar types of consciousness (here meaning two eye consciousnesses, but we could also say two ear consciousnesses, two mental consciousnesses, and so forth) which are different substances, meaning different entities, in the same continuum simultaneously.

Regarding what appears and what is realized by a self-cognizer

It is important to remember what appears and what is realized by a self-cognizer, and we can return to the previous section to clarify this (Week 26, p.8). A self-cognizer realizes directly the consciousness that is appearing to it and indirectly realizes the object of that consciousness, meaning that that object doesn’t appear but is realized. This idea can be seen in Sautrantika tenets, where the aggregates are directly realized but the selflessness of persons is indirectly realized since selflessness does not appear to that consciousness. For the self-cognizer of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, the eye consciousness itself appears and is directly realized, while blue, the object of that eye consciousness, does not appear to the self-cognizer, although it is realized indirectly. However, Geshe-la suggests that, for a self-cognizer of a conceptual consciousness, “It can also be said that there are two different appearances.” Both the conceptual consciousness itself and the appearing object of the conceptual consciousness, the meaning generality. Why that would be so isn’t clear (Geshe-la discussed this in the Friday, November 24 class – see below).

Regarding the simultaneity of different consciousnesses

Lama Tsongkhapa comments further on this, quoting from the *Autocommentary*, which says “Consciousnesses, like the piercing of a hundred utpala petals, arise serially but manifest as though operating simultaneously.” To discern the meaning of this, Lama Tsongkhapa begins by citing a passage from Jayananda, who discusses the example of the five consciousnesses appearing to operate simultaneously at a performance. Jayananda says that, due to the quickness of the manifesting of various consciousnesses, they appear to be simultaneous but they are not. Lama Tsongkhapa disagrees, saying that different types of consciousness do operate simultaneously.

The examination of this issue continues, saying that some Tibetans, when looking at a multicolored cloth, assert that the colors appear serially but Lama Tsongkhapa disagrees, indicating that they appear simultaneously. He says that they have misinterpreted the sutra statement, which actually says that multiple consciousnesses of the same type cannot be manifest simultaneously.

Using Dharmakirti’s *Pramanavarttika* as a source, Sautrantika and Chittamatra refute what that text presents, that is, the notion of the rapid succession of consciousnesses that gives the appearance of being simultaneous while actually being serial. In fact one can have a simultaneous apprehension of the many colors of a cloth. To return to the quote from the *Autocommentary*, Chandrakirti suggests the idea that the piercing of a hundred lotus petals appears to occur simultaneously but it is actually occurring serially. Lama Tsongkhapa says that this appears to be a corruption of the Sanskrit, since the tradition of these two schools is that these arise simultaneously and not serially.

Summary of the Chittamatra presentation of self-cognizers

Lama Tsongkhapa summarizes Chittamatra’s presentation of self-cognizers. First we asked them how an inherently existent consciousness is certified or established, and they said a self-cognizer certifies it. We said

that a self-cognizer is not admissible but they've set out how they establish the self-cognizer as that which establishes the other-powered phenomenon that is an inherently existent consciousness. They hold that because there is a subsequent remembrance, there is an experiencer, and that experiencer must be one of two types, an other-experiencer or a self-experiencer. Having shown that there are two faults to an other-experiencer, it must be a self-experiencer that experiences the consciousness, thereby allowing for the memory of that consciousness.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2 Refuting that system

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2A The actual refutation of the other system

So now we move into the Prasangika refutation of the Chittamatra view of self-cognizers.

The “non-established” does not prove the “non-established”

Chittamatra has been trying to prove the self-cognizer of an eye consciousness apprehending blue by using the reason that there is subsequent remembrance of the eye consciousness apprehending blue. For Chittamatra that remembrance is an inherently existent remembrance, and Prasangika would not accept that, so the reason is not established for them, as Chandrakirti says in verse 6.73bcd. This is just like the reason used in the syllogism, “Sound, as the subject, it is impermanent, because it is an object of eye consciousness.” The reason of sound being an object of eye consciousness is not established, and the reason of there being a subsequent remembrance of the eye consciousness is similar in not being established either, because it is an inherently existent remembrance.

No conventional relationship as cause and effect is established

Prasangika goes on to say that, even if you leave off the qualification of this memory as being inherently existent, still conventionally there is no established cause and effect relationship between the self-cognizer and this memory. Lama Tsongkhapa uses an analogy which shows that conventionally it is understood in the world that in establishing the existence of fire, one can use the reason “smoke.” In the world there is an established cause and effect relationship between smoke and fire, so the existence of smoke can be used as a reason in establishing the existence of fire. However, we cannot use the reason “subsequent remembrance” as the reason for the existence of a self-cognizer, because the causal relationship is not established in the world. Chittamatra must establish the causal relationship between those to be able to use that reason. So, even in conventional terms this is not a correct reason.

No pervasion between the existence of subsequent remembrance and the existence of a self-cognizer

Further, not only does there not exist a causal relationship between the predicate and the reason but moreover there is no pervasion. Why? Because, as we will see, Prasangika will show how subsequent remembrance can be accounted for without a self-cognizer. To support this idea, Chandrakirti says this is similar to the relationship of “water-crystals” to water, and “fire-crystals” to fire. “Water-crystals” and “fire-crystals” are explained by Jose Ignacio Cabezón in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.512, footnote 1072). He says, “According to oral commentary, apparently there is a notion in Tibet that certain kinds of glass, those having the power to magnify for example, are born from fire, whereas others, having a cooling effect on the eyes, are born from the crystallization of water into ice and eventually into rock crystal.” Whatever these are, if someone tries to establish the existence of water-crystals based upon the reason of water, it doesn't follow because there are many other sources of water other than water-crystals; the same can be said for fire-crystals and fire. The same applies to the syllogism where Chittamatra tries to establish the self-cognizer through subsequent remembrance, since Prasangika will show that there are other ways of that occurring.

The analogy of a lamp

So we've outlined the refutation to Chittamatra's syllogism, with Prasangika first saying the reason is not established, but moreover, there is no pervasion even allowing for the reason. Chittamatra responds that in their syllogism, an experiencer is inferred, but they did not say self-cognizer. But this argument doesn't do much since Prasangika says that Chittamatra went on to say this experiencer must be one of two types, other-experiencer and self-experiencer. With regard to this, Prasangika says that an experience does in fact exist, but it is neither of these two types that Chittamatra has outlined. They provide a meaning analogy, a lit lamp, that does not illuminate itself, but nonetheless it has luminosity. The nature of light is luminosity even though it doesn't illuminate itself by itself. Even though consciousness itself does not experience itself, it does have the

nature of mere experience. A consciousness' having the nature of mere experience is not excluded. Prasangika sets out this parallel example between a lamp and consciousness, saying first that a lamp is "self-luminous" and so requires no other source to illuminate it. Similarly, consciousness is that which is clear and knowing, so it can be said to be "self-knowing," but yet it does not know itself by itself. "Not knowing itself by itself" means not acting as its own agent. A lamp does not illuminate itself, since its nature is luminous. A consciousness does not act to know itself, since its very nature is clear and knowing.

Response to an objection regarding the analogy of a lamp

Someone objects, saying "a lamp itself illuminates itself," and Prasangika replies that then darkness obscures itself. If darkness acts to obscure, then just as a pot is obscured by darkness, darkness itself would be obscured by itself and therefore, darkness would not be seen. Because the lamp is not obscured by darkness it doesn't need to be illuminated. Similarly, because consciousness is clear and knowing, its very nature is experience, so it doesn't need to know itself to establish itself. To further support this idea, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes from Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*, verse 7.12. By the way, when we use the terminology of a consciousness "knowing itself" and a consciousness "knowing itself by itself," these two expressions mean pretty much the same thing, and neither are necessary according to the Prasangika view.

November 22 (Wednesday)

Chittamatra's self-cognizer and subsequent memory are established by way of their own character

After Chittamatra asserted that a lamp illuminates itself, Prasangika refuted it by showing the absurd consequence that darkness would obscure itself, so one could never see darkness since it is obscured by itself. Now, in verse 6.74, Chandrakirti takes recourse to one of the usual Prasangika criticisms of Chittamatra and the lower schools, saying that what they are positing is posited in the context of inherent existence. If we allow for such a self-cognizer, it could never give rise to a subsequent memory since both that self-cognizer and the subsequent memory inherently exist. A subsequent memory would be unrelated to the previous self-cognizer because they are established by way of their own character otherness.

The analogy of Maitreya and Upagupta yet again

The idea of unrelatedness of inherently existent phenomena is brought out again in the analogy of Maitreya and Upagupta. Since they are unrelated continuums, the blue that Maitreya knows is not known to Upagupta, so there could not arise a remembrance of the experience of blue in Upagupta, because it was experienced in the continuum of Maitreya. The continuums of Maitreya and Upagupta are distinct, unrelated, different continuums and inherently existent otherness implies a same sort of otherness. Although Chittamatra would agree that there would not be a memory in someone else's continuum, they still would hold that the self-cognizer and the subsequent memory are in a relation of cause and effect. Although we have already established that such a self-cognizer is not renown to the world, here we are further showing that these two could not be cause and effect since they are unrelatedly other. Further, unrelated moments cannot exist in a single continuum, since a continuum implies that its moments necessarily exist in relation with one another. The fact that these various mental components are inherently existent for Prasangika means that they could not exist in the same continuum.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2B In our own system, the way in which memory is produced in spite of self-cognizers not existing

How can Prasangika account for memory without recourse to a self-cognizer? In the next two sections we will look at how Prasangika establishes memory, first based on Chandrakirti's *Supplement* and then based on Shantideva's *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2B-1 The system explained in this very text

A Chittamatrin asks how memory is posited and Chandrakirti answers in verse 6.75.

Worldly conventions do not establish inherently existent other or same

In all our discussions we've been using the illustration of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, so we will use that here as well. In Prasangika the eye consciousness apprehending blue and its memory are mere other, or mere different, but not different or other by way of their own character. In this section of the text, we get more

of a feeling for what worldly convention really means. Sentient beings do not innately conceive of a substantial cause and its result as other by way of their own character. We saw this in our refutation of production from other by worldly convention, in the example of someone saying “I planted that tree,” since they don’t think of the seed and the tree as inherently other. Sentient beings do not innately conceive of an other or same that are established by way of their own character. This also came up in regard to the section concerned with how Prasangika connects an action with its result. There we discussed how, when we say “I went to town yesterday,” there is no distinction between the I of today and the I of yesterday, and Prasangika says that it is correct to speak in such a way.

Consciousness and subsequent memory are not innately held to be inherently existent other

Here, Chandrakirti says that ordinary beings do not innately conceive of an eye consciousness apprehending blue and the subsequent memory thinking I saw that blue as other that are established by way of their own character. They do not make a distinction between those two, nor do they make a distinction between the objects of each in terms of being different from or the same as each other. For example, when we hurt our hand, we say “I am hurt,” so we do not think of the I and the hand as separate or distinct, but yet it is not incorrect to say “I am hurt.” Similarly, the blue that was seen yesterday is not the same blue that is remembered today but yet it is not incorrect to say that. The object-possessor or I that is remembering is not innately being distinguished from the I who saw the blue. Similarly there is no innate distinction between the objects of those two consciousnesses, meaning that we do not innately think of them as different or as the same. When we spoke about actions and results, we said that you can say “I committed that action,” and it is acceptable to think of oneself as the owner of the action. But upon analysis, there is a difference between those two, but the point is that innately there is no difference or sameness distinguished between these two. There is much to think about here as when, for example, you recall seeing the color blue, you think “I saw this blue earlier,” ordinary people do not think of the two consciousnesses and the two objects as being either different or the same.

In the text it qualifies other as “established by way of its own character” but is this necessary in this discussion? As we will see in the following discussion, it doesn’t seem it is necessary since ordinary beings do not think that way. However, in summary, we can say that ordinary people do not innately conceive of the eye consciousness and the memory of that consciousness, as well as the object of the eye consciousness and the object of the memory, as being others that are established by way of their own character. This is so since they would not be cause and effect, they would be unrelated and different, they could not exist in the same continuum, and so on.

How worldly conventions posit a subsequent memory of a consciousness

A blue which was perceived by an earlier eye consciousness is later experienced by a consciousness which remembers it, and the thought arises, “I saw this blue earlier.” Prasangika says that is the way that worldly convention works. Simply by having seen it previously, then upon experiencing a consciousness remembering that blue, there is the conception of “I saw this blue previously.” The blue that is remembered is not being posited by analysis, in the way of searching for an imputed object. Rather it is a worldly convention that is a falsity, in that when it is searched for, it is not found. Why does Lama Tsongkhapa say this? This idea reinforces the notion that you’re not making a distinction between those two blues and if you were to analyze, you would find that there is a distinction, that the blue you saw earlier and the blue you remember later are two separate phenomena. So this reinforces the idea that we do not innately conceive of other in regard to these two objects. When Lama Tsongkhapa says “analyzing it by the means of seeking the imputed object,” it means that, if you do make such an analysis, you will not find them. So worldly conventions are correct as far as they go, but should not be analyzed further. This is just like the example of the hurt hand, in that the I and the hand are not equivalent but yet you can say “I am hurt”. To analyze it further is not necessary.

Regarding the two components of an experience and its subsequent memory

Chittamatra later brings up a point regarding the specific type of memory thinking “I saw this blue earlier.” If one were to reflect and think “I saw this blue earlier,” there would be two components to this memory: the object-possessor, the *I seeing* that, and the object, the *blue* that was seen. Chittamatra says that it’s clear that if there are two components, then the object-possessor must have also been experienced earlier. To this Prasangika replies that it’s true that memory arises dependent upon a previous experience but that experience is just the eye consciousness experiencing blue. The subsequent memory does rely on a mere experience, but not the experience of the eye consciousness experiencing itself. A memory thinking “I saw that blue earlier” is

generated by the force of two components: the earlier experience of blue, and a later remembering consciousness, and they engage in the same object, the single object blue. Is it strange that they engage the same object? It is unusual to think that they are the same but if they were different there would be absurd consequences. Memory sometimes seems to be a selective retrieval of data from a “data bank” and this would be consistent with them being the same object.

Lama Tsongkhapa says that although the systems of Sautrantika and Chittamatra assert that both the experience and the subsequent memory have the same object and are the same continuity, they cannot posit that, because those two consciousnesses cannot be cause and effect and cannot exist in a single continuum. He also says that if you examine your awareness, when your memory thinks “I saw this blue earlier,” that object is not qualified by either time or place, where and when we did that seeing of that blue. It’s the same object because that blue is not qualified by being the blue of the earlier time. This completes Chandrakirti’s system of how memory is explained.

November 23 (Thursday)

We are in the middle of a discussion of how Prasangika posits memory in spite of not positing a self-cognizer. To recap our previous discussion on this subject, such a memory consciousness is generated by the force of two factors: the earlier experience of the blue by the eye consciousness and a later remembering consciousness. It is not necessary in this process for the eye consciousness apprehending blue to have been experienced previously, since it is established through remembering the earlier experience of blue. The later remembering consciousness engages in the same object as the earlier consciousness. Ordinary beings do not make a distinction in terms of time and place, in that the blue remembered later is not distinguished from the blue experienced earlier. So, now that we’ve examined how Chandrakirti sets out how memory occurs, now in the next section, we will examine how it is explained in another text, specifically Shantideva’s *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds*.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2B-2 The system explained in other texts

Shantideva sets out another way of looking at memory and how it is not necessary to have experienced the eye consciousness earlier. Lama Tsongkhapa says there are two great systems explaining the production of memory without a self-cognizer. We’ve gone through the first, the system of Chandrakirti, and now there is the system presented by Shantideva. Prasangika is responding to the syllogism we looked at the other day, an eye consciousness apprehending blue, it has an experiencer, because there is a subsequent memory of it. Chittamatra says that that syllogism establishes the necessity of a self-experiencer and, therefore, of a self-cognizer, but Prasangika is saying that there is no pervasion, that the existence of a subsequent memory does not entail that the eye consciousness apprehending blue was experienced earlier. So how do we account for this within the context of Shantideva’s text?

Subsequent memory of both the object and the object-possessor

Prasangika responds saying that when an object, blue, is experienced by an awareness, there arises a memory of the object-possessor that saw that blue. This memory is a different consciousness than the eye consciousness that saw blue. A memory of the object-possessor is different from the object-possessor itself. By remembering blue, that memory of blue is able to elicit or induce a memory of the eye consciousness that was not previously experienced. From this idea, it almost seems that we have to question what memory is. This is not saying that the later consciousness is inferring the existence of the earlier eye consciousness, but rather that, by remembering the object blue, we are inducing a memory of the eye consciousness apprehending that blue. By re-engaging the same object we are eliciting a memory of the same subject, even though it was not previously experienced. When the memory of blue arises, it does not occur at the expense of losing the memory of the eye consciousness. Both are remembered together since they occur in an associated way, and that is why we have a memory of “I saw that blue previously.”

Why is memory not inference? It is not inference since it does not arise in dependence upon a sign, that is, a line of reasoning. It seems that Shantideva is saying that we can have a memory of the object-possessor without having experienced it, but it is not a logical sequence of inferring that due to the reason of remembering blue, we must have seen blue previously. That is not a memory. Rather we have a memory of a subject without having previously experienced that subject by virtue of our previous experience of the object. Also, as we will

see later, memory is a mental direct perceiver in Prasangika so it cannot be inference. But this is difficult to explain since, if we use the analogy mentioned earlier of our memory being like a data retrieval system, it doesn't seem that in the "data bank" there is the data of the subject that experienced an object, but yet we are able to remember it.

The analogy of the bear and the rat

To show how memory occurs due to the relationship of the object and the object-possessor, Shantideva uses the analogy of the bear bitten by a rat. During its hibernation, the bear is bitten by a rat, and there is some sort of poison which enters into the bear's body with the bite, but the poison of the bite is not experienced. Upon waking to thunder in spring, the bear has the memory thinking, "Previously when I was bitten, the poison entered my body," even though the poison was not experienced at that time though the bite was. The memory of having been bitten elicits a memory of the poison having entered his body.

The meaning of the various points of the analogy

This analogy is somewhat challenging since it is trying to show an object and an object-possessor but it uses two objects to do that. Lama Tsongkhapa explains the analogy in five points:

- (1) Being bitten is analogous to the object blue, so with an eye consciousness apprehending blue, the blue that is the object of that experience is analogous to being bitten.
- (2) The object-possessor is taken to be the poison entering the bear's body at the time of being bitten, so neither the eye consciousness apprehending blue nor the poison entering the body are experienced.
- (3) The third point is the bear does not experience that poison at the time of the bite, just as the object-possessor is not experienced at the time of seeing blue. Note that here "the poison entering the bear's body" serves to illustrate an object-possessor.
- (4) The memory of the bite is like the memory of the experience of the object, blue.
- (5) The fifth point is that, by the force of remembering the bite, the memory of the poison is elicited, just as by remembering blue, the eye consciousness apprehending blue is remembered.

So, from this analogy, you can conclude that one remembers not through the force of having experienced the subject but rather by the force of the memory of the object. By merely remembering the object, the subject, or object-possessor, is remembered. The bear by remembering the experienced object – being bitten – remembers the unexperienced object-possessor – the poison entering his body. The poison entering the bear's body is not an actual object-possessor and is here being used as an analogue not as an example.

Correction to the transcript (week 27), page 18: In the fourth point listed in this section of *Illumination*, there are two words that should be corrected: "The memory of the *bite* later on is like the memory of the *experience* of an object."

The refutation of self-cognizers conventionally

So Shantideva has refuted that there is an experiencer of the earlier object-possessor. There is a passage at the end of this section and it ends by seeming to say that Shantideva refutes self-cognizers conventionally. Lama Tsongkhapa is presenting the Gelukba view that there is no need for a self-cognizer conventionally, although it seems that there are Tibetan traditions that do posit a self-cognizer conventionally. By remembering the previously experienced object, the memory of the previous object-possessor is induced, without the need for a self-cognizer, and this is a refutation conventionally.

November 24 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

- * Geshe-la said that what appears to a self-cognizer of a conceptual consciousness can be different from what appears to a self-cognizer of a non-conceptual consciousness. On the basis of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, why doesn't the self-cognizer of that consciousness have an appearance of blue? Does that self-cognizer realize blue? Not directly, only indirectly or implicitly, since it only has the appearance of the eye consciousness apprehending blue itself, and not the appearance of blue. A self-cognizer is an inwardly directed consciousness. By apprehending directly the eye consciousness apprehending blue, blue is realized indirectly since that eye consciousness apprehending blue takes the aspect of blue. For Chittamatra we can say that the memory of "I saw blue earlier" is comprised of the memory of two

experiences: the experience of the object-possessor, an eye consciousness apprehending blue, and the experience of the object, blue. Further, it is not necessary for the object to appear for us to realize it. For example, we can see the non-existence of dog on this table. But for a self-cognizer apprehending a conception, it seems that both the conceptual consciousness and the appearing object of that conception appear. For a self-cognizer of a non-conceptual mind, only the apprehender appears and not the object. Perhaps this is because the appearing object of a conceptual mind, being a meaning generality, is an imputational factor, and since the self-cognizer is inwardly directed, it would appear. Imputational factors do not arise due to latencies in Chittamatra and so the appearing object of a conception is merely being imputed.

- * Regarding the question about the river that acts as the substantial cause for a preta seeing pus and blood, Geshe-la said that it is the water element. Also, water and the water element are different, in that when you have the water element, you necessarily have the other three physical elements. You can think of these four elements as principles, with water being the principal of cohesion, wind being the principal of animation or motility, fire being that of temperature or vibration at the atomic level, and earth being the principal of obstruction or resistance. All physical phenomena have some degree of these four elements, as well as the space element.
- * Regarding the nature of the self-cognizer of an eye consciousness, it is not the eye consciousness itself.
- * Regarding introspection, Geshe-la said that it was part of the wisdom mental factor, and that it would share the five similarities with the main mind. When he explained it in regard to meditation on oneself as a deity, Geshe-la said that both the main mind and the mental factor of introspection have the appearance of the aspect of the deity. However, one can also say that the mental factor of introspection is also observing the mind that has the appearance of the aspect of a deity. It seems that there's still a lack of clarity on how introspection works.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

November 27 (Monday)

Correction to the transcript, Week 25, p.11: When discussing this section of *Illumination* in the review class of Monday, November 13, there was some difficulty in discerning the meaning of the first passage on this page of the transcript. Another possible translation of that passage is as follows: “Therefore, taking the emptiness of true existence to be a nihilistic emptiness (nothingness) and setting it aside, then taking *a different appearance as the basis of emptiness, and rather than showing it to be empty of a form of negation, showing it to be empty of an existent thing*, is not the system of any Madhyamika or Chittamatrin.” It’s possible that Lama Tsongkhapa is directing this criticism towards the Jonangbas who assert an other-emptiness. As Jeffrey Hopkins points out in *Emptiness in the Mind Only School*, Lama Tsongkhapa spends a lot of time in *Essence of Eloquence* refuting the Jonangbas so perhaps that is so here in this section.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2C Dispelling arguments regarding such refutation

We’ve finished the section of refuting the Chittamatra system’s assertion of self-cognizers and have set out how subsequent memory without a self-cognizer is put forth in the texts of Chandrakirti and Shantideva. So now we go on to dispel arguments regarding that. There are two sections, one involving arguments regarding other direct valid cognizers and inferential cognizers, and the second involving arguments regarding other mental consciousnesses.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2C-1 Dispelling arguments regarding other direct valid cognizers and inferential cognizers

An objection is raised, where someone says that in our system (Chittamatra), an apprehender of blue is necessarily asserted to exist, and it is not sufficient to merely say that it exists, but it must be known to exist. Since an apprehender of blue is known to exist, then the self-cognizer must also exist, since it is only by means of a self-cognizer that we know that an apprehender of blue exists since an other-experiencer is not feasible. So how does Prasangika establish the existence of these apprehenders without an other-experiencer or self-experiencer?

Establishing the object establishes the object-possessor

Prasangika responds that this is a very difficult point. By remembering an object, the object-possessor is also remembered, just as we saw in the mechanisms of Chandrakirti and Shantideva, where no additional apprehender is necessary. Since the memory of “I saw blue earlier” is accomplished without an experience of the object-possessor, just the experience of the object is sufficient. Through establishing the blue, we establish the comprehender of blue. Therefore, establishing blue is enough to establish the apprehender of blue, so no self-cognizer is needed.

The meaning of ‘established’

So Prasangika says that the comprehender of blue is established in the same way that blue is established. What do we mean by ‘established?’ To establish a consciousness means to certify, approve, or validate that that consciousness exists. In other words, by establishing blue, you are able to develop an understanding that would overcome the assertion that blue does not exist. So we basically mean that we are establishing its existence. The comprehension of blue is established in the same way that blue is established. Blue is established by way of its appearing or dawning in an aspect similar to itself to an apprehender. That is the way that blue is established to exist, and otherwise, there would be no way for it to be established to exist.

This is similar to a mirror, where we can establish the existence of a face by way of the reason that there is a similar aspect of the face that appears in the mirror. If there wasn’t the existence of a face, there is no way that it could be appearing in the mirror. So the object is established by way of appearing in a similar aspect to itself to an apprehender, and the subject is likewise established. In the analogy of the mirror, the mirror is established by its activity of reflecting the appearance of the face. The existence of a mirror is established in the appearance of a reflection of a face, so the reflected face establishes the existence of a mirror. The object blue casts its appearance and the apprehender of blue takes on the aspect. By that very activity of taking on the aspect of blue, the apprehender of blue is established.

Two sources to refute the Chittamatra assertion of a self-cognizer

This is the mechanism by which Prasangika explains the establishing of the existence of apprehendeds and apprehenders. Chittamatra on the other hand, posits a self-cognizer as the means of establishing the existence of an apprehender. But Prasangika will show that a self-cognizer is not possible, and Lama Tsongkhapa refers to two sources that indicate that. Both of these sources are from the Sautrantika-Svatantrika system, the first being Bhavaviveka's *Heart of the Middle*, and the second, Jnanagarbha's *Two Truths*. These texts say that a consciousness that selects the aspect of an apprehender is not possible, meaning that a self-cognizer singling out the aspect of an apprehender is not possible. Therefore an apprehender of blue is not established by a self-cognizer experiencing that apprehender of blue. For Chittamatra it was essential to establish this as the means to certify the existence of an inherently existent consciousness and here these two sources say it is not established. The apprehender of blue is established by establishing blue, its object. By remembering an object, the object-possessor is also remembered. Remembering blue is sufficient to remember the apprehender of blue. So, according to Prasangika, it is not that there is memory by way of an experiencer of the apprehender of blue, specifically the self-cognizer of that apprehender.

The two valid cognizers of objects and the two objects of comprehension

In terms of consciousnesses and objects, there is an inter-relationship in that they are mutually reliant and are mutually established. Because there are two different types of objects, there are two different types of subjects, and this is brought out in the famous passage from Dharmakirti that Geshe-la quoted. The Buddhist system posits two different types of valid cognizers: valid direct cognizers and valid inferential cognizers. Thus in Buddhism, there are two valid ways that we can know an object, although there are other systems that posit only one, and some that posit more than two. Dharmakirti says there are two types of valid cognizers because there are two types of objects of comprehension. The two types of objects of comprehension are manifest and hidden. The meaning of a manifest phenomenon is an object that is initially realized by an ordinary person through direct perception. An object that is initially realized by an ordinary person through inference is a hidden phenomenon, such as subtle impermanence or emptiness.

The Sautrantika view of the two types of objects of comprehension

In Sautrantika, these two types of objects of comprehension are also interpreted in various other ways. Manifest phenomena can be interpreted as functioning things, ultimate truths, objects of direct cognition, and specifically-characterized phenomena, while hidden phenomena can be interpreted as non-functioning phenomena, conventional truths, objects of inferential cognition, and generally-characterized phenomena. Because they are definite as two, the types of comprehenders are definite as two. Why? Because these two types are posited to exist with respect to their taking on the aspect of the two types of objects of comprehension. Simply put, because there are two types of objects there are two types of object-possessors. As far as Prasangika's view of this twofold division, it is accepted although we'd have to redefine what is meant by manifest since, as we will see, if it's manifest, it doesn't have to be a functioning thing. But for now, we'll simply use what Dharmakirti is putting forth as the meaning of manifest and hidden.

Relating this discussion to the topic at hand

As to how the above fits into this section, the nature of the subject arises in dependence upon its object, so subjects are established in reliance upon their objects, as opposed to the Chittamatra system where that is not so. Because there are two types of objects, there are two types of subjects that are established. The basic question Chittamatra is bringing up is that there are no experiencers of blue, so how can Prasangika say that the apprehender of blue exists? So here we are setting out that by establishing the object, the subject is established and this is the groundwork for that.

How Prasangika's assertion regarding object-possessors differs from Sautrantika and Chittamatra

Lama Tsongkhapa says that, in Sautrantika and Chittamatra, an object of comprehension is established by way of the valid cognizer taking on a similar aspect of that object of comprehension. Prasangika would agree with this, saying that the blue is established by way of the valid cognizer taking on a similar aspect of that blue. However, they would differ in saying that nothing more is needed to establish the valid cognizer of blue. Through merely establishing the object of comprehension, the comprehender is established, so no self-cognizer is needed.

November 28 (Tuesday)

Valid cognizers are dependent upon causes and conditions

Valid cognizers are established merely by establishing their objects. On the other hand, if a valid cognizer were established by way of another consciousness, particularly by a self-cognizer as Chittamatra asserts, they would be established not by relying upon their object, and therefore they would be independent of causes and conditions. Within Prasangika the valid cognizer is established dependent upon its object, so it does not independently exist.

The valid cognizer of blue is “established by a sense direct valid cognizer”

Lama Tsongkhapa says that an apprehender of blue is not established by a self-cognizer; rather it is “established by a sense direct valid cognizer.” Why is this so? Because that sense direct valid cognizer establishes the existence of its object of comprehension. All valid cognizers are established by establishing their object of comprehension and that is the main point behind saying that the apprehender of blue is established by a sense direct valid cognizer. Chittamatra is saying that all objects of knowledge must be established and, without a self-cognizer, which Prasangika does not assert, and without an other-experiencer, which Chittamatra does not assert, how are we to posit a valid cognizer apprehending the apprehender of blue? Prasangika says that merely by establishing their objects, the comprehenders of those objects are established to exist.

So here Prasangika is saying that an apprehender of blue is established to exist by a sense direct valid cognizer, meaning that its existence is validated or established by a sense direct valid cognizer. Here we are looking at how we know that the apprehender of blue exists so, if we say there is an apprehender of blue, how do we establish that? By what valid cognizer is that apprehender of blue established? It is said to be established by a sense direct valid cognizer because there is a sense direct valid cognizer apprehending blue, and that establishment of blue establishes the apprehender of blue. We said earlier that a consciousness is certified by its operation or activity but how do we know that that activity exists? It would seem that it is known to exist simply by its knowing blue.

Another view on this subject

There is an interesting passage from Khedrup Je in *A Dose of Emptiness* (pp.353-4) that discusses this issue in a slightly different light. He says, “Likewise, even though the eye consciousness apprehending blue perceives the blue, the eye consciousness apprehending blue is not a valid cognition in regard to the *apprehension* of blue by the eye consciousness apprehending blue. Instead, it is the consciousness that remembers the apprehension of blue by the eye consciousness apprehending blue that is a valid cognition in regard to this [apprehension].” From this passage, it seems that Khedrup Je is saying that, in terms of what valid cognizer observes this apprehension of blue, it is a memory consciousness and not a direct sense valid cognizer. He also comments on the respective passage from *Illumination*, saying, “Even though [Tsongkhapa says this], he is not claiming that the apprehension of blue is a valid cognition in regard to the existence of the apprehension of blue.” Rather, as he explains, “the existence of the apprehension of blue is taught as being established *in dependence on* the direct perception which apprehends blue.” Anyway, this is something to consider in addition to what Geshe-la presented.

An object known establishes a knower

At the end of this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says “all valid cognizers whatsoever are established by establishing their objects of comprehension.” Does this accord with what we’ve discussed previously, that a consciousness is established by its function? The activity of knowing establishes the knower, so by blue being established, the apprehender of blue is established. This is similar to the example of the mirror, where the very fact that there is a face appearing in the mirror establishes the existence of the face that is appearing in the mirror, and the ability for it to appear establishes the mirror as well. The nature of consciousness is clear and knowing so knowing is the function of consciousness – if there is an object known, the function of knowing is established.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2C-2 Dispelling arguments that there are other mental consciousnesses

The second part of this section on dispelling arguments concerns the assertion that there are other mental consciousnesses besides valid cognizers that must be established to exist.

Background on the Sanskrit and Tibetan involved in this discussion

Much of the discussion in this section revolves around the concept of direct objects. The word for direct object in Sanskrit is *pratyaksha* and it literally means “obvious for the eye.” When this term was brought into Tibetan, there were two different terms used: *mngon sum*, which all the lower schools would define as a direct perceiver, a non-conceptual direct perceiver, and *mngon gyur*, meaning a manifest or obvious object. However, for Prasangika, there is a different meaning entirely as we will see. So for both of these Tibetan terms, only one Sanskrit term was originally used.

Regarding direct objects (*mngon sum*) in Prasangika

An objection is raised, where someone first says that, in the Prasangika system, reflections are form spheres, echoes are sound spheres, and so forth. Further, as quoted from *Clear Words*, two moons are not the direct object for those without cataracts but are the direct object for those with cataracts. What is being translated here as direct object is this term *mngon sum*, so another way of saying this would be a manifest or obvious object. The actual term *mngon sum* is applied to objects in Prasangika, while all the other schools apply it to consciousnesses. Form is a *mngon sum* and sound is a *mngon sum*, in that they are manifest objects. Consciousnesses are only imputedly called *mngon sum* but *mngon sum* is an actual name when applied to forms, sounds, tastes, smells and so forth in Prasangika.

Differentiating an actual name affixed to a phenomenon and an actual name of that phenomenon

This leads into a discussion of a related idea, concerning the difference between “an actual name affixed to a phenomenon” and “an actual name of the phenomenon.” What is the pervasion between these two? It seems it would be three possibilities. Geshe-la gave the example of the name ‘thing’ as applied to a table, saying that ‘thing’ is not the actual name of the table, because table does not come to mind when you say ‘thing’. But ‘thing’ is an actual name *that can be affixed to* the object table, because a table is a thing. The name ‘thing’ is not the actual name of the table, but the name ‘thing’ can be applied to the phenomenon table.

Regarding an actual name affixed to a phenomenon as an actual name

Geshe-la also discussed a third idea in this context which is “an actual name affixed to a phenomenon as an actual name.” He said that the actual name of a phenomenon is not pervaded by being affixed to that phenomenon as an actual name. Geshe-la gave the example of the name of our translator, Sherab. You can apply the name ‘Sherab’ to the translator but the translator is not Sherab, in that he is not wisdom (*shes rab* means “wisdom” in Tibetan). The name ‘Sherab’ is the actual name of the translator but it is not affixed to him *as an actual name* because he is not a consciousness, he is a person.

November 29 (Wednesday)

Context of current discussion

Yesterday we began a new section. Having refuting self-cognizers, Chittamatra asked Prasangika: how do you establish apprehenders? We completed the section regarding how to establish the existence of valid cognizers, and the main point is that all valid cognizers are established through establishing their respective object of comprehension. By the cognitive action of establishing the object, we establish the valid cognizer. Now we move on to establishing other types of cognizers.

The term ‘direct’ according to Prasangika differs from lower schools

As we mentioned yesterday, in the lower schools the Tibetan term *mngon sum* means direct and applies only to consciousnesses, specifically direct perceivers. In contrast, Prasangikas apply the term *mngon sum* – meaning direct or manifest – as an actual name when it is applied to objects such as tables, chairs, etc. It is an imputed name when it is applied to consciousnesses. In other words, it is not an actual name when it is applied to consciousnesses; it is only imputedly applied to consciousnesses (excepting for the unusual case where consciousness itself is taken as an object by another consciousness).

Here the term ‘direct’ applies to the object rather than the consciousness, as posited by the lower schools. The lower schools posit ‘direct’ in terms of direct perception, meaning that it knows the object directly rather than through the medium of a mental image, that is, conceptually. However, in Prasangika ‘direct’ is applied to the object and imputedly applied to a subject. A direct valid cognizer in Prasangika has a direct object in that it realizes its object without depending upon a sign. In other words, a direct perceiver is posited in terms of the object; its object is ‘direct’ or ‘manifest.’ The object directly appears to the subject without depending on a sign.

How consciousnesses that are not valid are established according to Prasangika

We have covered the establishment of the two types of valid cognizers – direct valid cognizers and inferential valid cognizers. All valid cognizers are established by establishing their object of comprehension. Recall that the definition of object of comprehension in *Collected Topics* is “object realized by a valid cognizer.” So what about wrong consciousnesses? How do you establish their existence? Here too, as we will see, the consciousness is established by establishing its object.

The term ‘object of comprehension’ is used in two possible contexts

Object of comprehension is a translation of two possible Tibetan terms:

1. *gzhal bya* – This term is mutually inclusive with existent, object of knowledge, etc. as stated in *Collected Topics*. Its definition is an object realized by a valid cognizer.
2. *gzhal yul* – This term is equivalent to object of engagement. It is the same as the referent object for conceptual consciousnesses.

Comprehend means to understand or know. In the present discussion when talking about object of comprehension, we are referring to *gzhal bya*, what is known or comprehended.

Establishing wrong sense consciousnesses in Prasangika

So now an objector begins by saying that Prasangika asserts that even reflections, echoes, and so forth are form spheres, sound spheres, and so forth. This objector brings up the case of someone with cataracts who sees one moon as two moons; in the case of someone without cataracts there is no appearance of two moons. So how is the eye consciousness of someone with cataracts, a wrong consciousness, established? For Prasangika, the appearance of two moons is a direct object. Here we are not talking about the two moons themselves, we are talking about the appearance of two moons. The appearance of two moons is a direct/manifest object for the eye consciousness of someone with cataracts. The appearance exists so this eye consciousness is valid with respect to that appearance. The way that an object is appearing to us is indisputable, that is, incontrovertible.

With respect to an eye consciousness apprehending a white snow mountain as blue, what is the object of comprehension of this consciousness? A blue snow mountain is not the object of comprehension because it doesn’t exist, and it would seem that an object of comprehension must exist. Every consciousness has an object of comprehension; if it did not have an object of comprehension, the consciousness could not be established. In conclusion, the eye consciousness apprehending one moon as two moons is established by establishing its object of comprehension, the appearance of two moons. It is a unique tenet of Prasangika that all consciousnesses are valid with respect to their appearance. However, this does not mean that all consciousnesses are valid in general.

Establishing wrong mental consciousnesses in Prasangika

The objector continues, saying what about a mental consciousness that is mistaken with respect to both its appearing object and its referent object? Chittamatra is saying to Prasangika that you cannot establish this mental consciousness because it does not have an object of comprehension. Lama Tsongkhapa begins by discussing how Prasangika asserts the divisions of consciousness. In Prasangika there are six types of consciousness as opposed to the eight posited by certain Chittamatrins. Within the six, there are only two types of valid cognitions:

1. Those based on physical sense power
2. Those based on mental sense power

Mental direct perceivers can be conceptual in Prasangika

Further, Prasangika accepts three types of direct valid cognizers:

1. sense direct perceivers
2. mental direct perceivers
3. yogic direct perceivers

Among the various types of mental direct perceivers, there are five types of mental direct perceivers induced by sense direct perceivers: mental direct perceivers apprehending forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects. A mental direct perceiver apprehending form arises at the end of the continuum of an eye consciousness apprehending form. It arises through the force of this eye consciousness apprehending form. This mental direct perceiver directly distinguishes or perceives its object, but it does not arise in the same manner as the sense direct perceiver. Is this mental direct perceiver conceptual or non-conceptual? It is a memory, so it is a conceptual consciousness. Here Prasangika is asserting an instance of mental direct perceiver that is conceptual, which is another unique tenet of Prasangika. It is a direct perceiver because it is a valid cognizer that does not arise from a sign. If it is a valid cognizer and it is not an inferential cognizer, it must be a direct cognizer. A direct mental perceiver must be a valid cognizer because its object must be a manifest/direct object.

Subsequent moments of an inferential cognition are direct valid cognizers in Prasangika

There are three types of inferential valid cognizers:

1. inferential cognizers through the power of fact
2. inferential cognizers through the power of renown
3. inferential cognizers through the power of belief

In Prasangika four inferential cognizers are sometimes posited, with the addition of an inferential cognizer through example. Within the presentation of only three, the inferential cognizer through example is included in the second, inferential cognizer through the power of renown.

For Prasangika, subsequent moments of inferential consciousnesses are posited as direct valid cognizers. According to *Cutting Through Appearances* (p. 312):

Once an inference has been produced, its subsequent moments are subsequent cognitions that the Consequentialist system alone accepts as a *pratyaksapramana*, a direct valid cognition. Since the subsequent moments of an inferential consciousness do not rely again on a reason in order to cognize the object, the second period is no longer inferential but direct. This is because it remembers the object already inferred without renewed reliance on a logical reason. Therefore, in the Consequentialist system, unlike the other systems, a direct perception can be conceptual.

December 1 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

*** Regarding self-cognizers having two appearing objects**

Earlier it was said that a self-cognizer realizes an apprehender directly and realizes the appearing object of that apprehender indirectly. Today, however, Geshe-la said that this self-cognizer does not realize the appearing object. He said he would check on this seeming contradiction.

*** Regarding emptiness in terms of being vs. emptiness in terms of existing**

Emptiness in terms of being is the lack of something existing in a certain way, whereas emptiness in terms of existing is emptiness of one thing existing upon another. We could say that emptiness of other is acceptable, although it is not acceptable *as an emptiness*. Chandrakirti talks about a similar idea later in the self-commentary in the context of the twenty emptinesses. Geshe-la did say that emptiness in terms of being was that of an object's own entity being empty of the object of negation. For example, people innately conceive a pen as indistinct from the object of negation, a truly existent pen.

*** Regarding the observed object of an eye consciousness observing falling hairs**

It seemed Geshe-la said that the observed object of this consciousness would be hairs, although this does not seem to be the final answer. Generally, we say that an observed object exists, as in the case of an eye consciousness seeing horns on a rabbit's head, which observes a rabbit's ears and mistakes them as horns.

✱ **Regarding the Chittamatra assertion that imputational factors are inherently existent but not established by way of their own character**

For Chittamatra, existing by way of its own character means existing by its own mode of existence without being merely imputed. Imputational factors are said to exist inherently but not to be established by way of their own character. When an object is searched for within its bases of imputation, it should be found. This is the meaning of inherent existence.

Additional information re: an apprehender of blue being established by a sense direct valid cognizer

Earlier this week, we discussed the passage in *Illumination* that indicates that an apprehender of blue is established by a sense direct valid cognizer. In *Unique Tenets*, p. 446, Jangya Rolpay Dorjay says:

This system's way of certifying direct valid cognition apprehending blue is: an eye consciousness apprehending blue perceives the realized [blue] and realizer [itself] as different by the force of the dawning of the blue aspect from outside to itself, and, due to its perceiving thus, the eye consciousness apprehending blue becomes [an instance of] valid cognition with respect to its own entity; therefore, [valid cognition] does not have to be established by self-consciousness as in other systems. This is asserted to be the meaning of Chandrakirti's *Clear Words*: "Mere realization of the aspects of the objects of comprehension establishes the entity of the valid cognition." Since this appears to be very difficult, one must know how to analyze it with fine intelligence.

This seems to be reiterating Chandrakirti's assertion that consciousness is established by establishing its object of comprehension. This consciousness is also a valid cognizer with respect to itself, and is thus established.

Direct perception in Prasangika

In the present discussion, we are looking at how Prasangika can establish memory without positing self-cognizers, and we are analyzing various mental consciousnesses in that context. The definition of a valid cognizer for Prasangika is "an incontrovertible knower." Any consciousness is incontrovertible with regard to its appearance, whether that is the appearance of two moons, etc. By establishing that appearance as its object of comprehension, the consciousness establishes itself. Although it is a wrong consciousness in general, it is valid with respect to that appearance. For the first moment of an inference realizing impermanence of sound, impermanence of sound is a hidden phenomenon; in the second moment, it is no longer hidden, because the realization does not depend on a sign. Therefore, that consciousness becomes a direct perception. Its being a direct cognizer has nothing to do with whether the valid cognizer is conceptual or non-conceptual; any incontrovertible knower with a manifest phenomenon as its object is a direct cognizer, and if it has a hidden object it is an inferential cognizer.

There is some question as to whether a direct perceiver is necessarily a direct valid cognizer. It would seem that the pervasion is three possibilities. If it is a direct valid cognizer it is necessarily a direct perceiver, whereas if it is a direct perceiver it is not necessarily a direct valid cognizer. This would be so since there are direct perceivers that are inattentive awareness (awarenesses to which objects appear but are not ascertained), but we should check this with Geshe-la.

Conceptual and non-conceptual mental direct perceivers in Prasangika

As we mentioned yesterday, there are five types of mental direct perceivers: mental direct perceivers apprehending form, and so on. Mental direct perceivers arise at the end of the continuum of sense direct perceivers. Lama Tsongkhapa brings out the difference between the assertions of mental direct perceiver in the lower schools and in Prasangika. Prasangika asserts both conceptual and mistaken mental direct perceivers, while in the lower schools mental direct perceivers would necessarily be non-conceptual and non-mistaken.

Issues regarding an example of a conceptual mental direct perceiver

In a passage that Geshe-la referred to from *General Meaning*, Jedzün Chogyi Gyeltshen gives an illustration of a conceptual mental direct perceiver as the mental factor of feeling in the retinue of a mental consciousness in the continuum of someone who has not realized coarse or subtle selflessness. Why does Jedzünba say this?

Geshe Tenphel mentioned this in his teachings on *Tenets* [June 8-11, 1999]. There are two types of consciousness, sense and mental, each with main minds and mental factors. If the main mind is a sense consciousness, then the mental factor of feeling observes forms, etc. If it is a mental consciousness, feeling observes pleasure, pain and equanimity. Does the mental factor of feeling in the mind of someone on the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing observe one of those three? What is the fault of having the feeling experiencing equanimity on the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing? Maybe you could say that there is a conventionality appearing, which cannot be the case with a direct realization of emptiness.

Two types of direct comprehension

To return to the text, next there is a discussion of the two types of direct comprehension: (1) the perception of forms, etc. by sense consciousness and (2) the perceiving of the internal, such as feelings of happiness, suffering and so forth, by experience. As we mentioned above, if the mental factor of feeling is in the retinue of a main mind such as an eye consciousness, its observed object is form, just as it is for that sense consciousness. But if it is in the retinue of a mental consciousness, its observed object is said to be one of the three, pleasure, pain or equanimity.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

December 4 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1B2C-2 Dispelling arguments that there are other mental consciousnesses (continued)

As we were discussing, Chittamatra has put forth the following argument to which Prasangika responds as indicated.

Chittamatra: If you do not assert self-cognizers then how do you establish object possessors?

Prasangika: Valid cognizers are established in dependence upon their establishing their objects of comprehension. In the example where there is the appearance of two moons, that appearance of two moons is a manifest phenomenon for a direct perceiver, the eye consciousness apprehending two moons. Every consciousness has an object of comprehension and is valid with regard to that object of comprehension. Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to examine how several different types of mental consciousness are established.

Establishing the mental consciousness that is the mental factor of feeling

The word “feeling” is used in three ways: as agent, activity and object. In the sense of feeling as agent it refers to the person who feels. In the sense of feeling as activity it refers to the activity, or experience, of feeling. In the sense of feeling as object it refers to what is actually felt. The mental factor feeling refers to the second sense in terms of activity or experience. The third sense is the object of comprehension, that is, pleasure, pain, or neutrality. We are mainly concerned here with feeling in terms of activity, the mental factor feeling. Feeling is one of the five omnipresent mental factors, which means that feeling accompanies every main mind. *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p.36, defines the mental factor of feeling as: “that factor which experiences an object as pleasurable, painful, or neutral.”

The feelings that arise in the retinue of mental consciousnesses have happiness, suffering and equanimity as their objects of comprehension. The feelings that arise in the retinue of sense consciousnesses have forms, sounds, and so forth as their objects of comprehension. How can feeling be associated with a sense consciousness? Feeling can be non-conceptual. In terms of sense consciousnesses *Unique Tenets*, p. 335, says, “the three [types of feelings of sense consciousnesses thoroughly distinguish forms, sounds and so forth [as pleasurable, painful, or neutral].” In the context of the mental factor feeling in the retinue of an eye consciousness the observed object is a form. Since this is what appears to the main object-possessor, an eye consciousness, this is what also appears to the mental factor feeling, which necessarily bears the five similarities (base, observed object, aspect, substance, and time).

When feeling is in the retinue of a mental consciousness is the observed object of the feeling a phenomenon sphere? For example, when you remember a delicious meal, is the object of feeling the food that was experienced by the taste consciousness? Every main mind has the mental factor of feeling in its retinue. Does feeling have the same observed object as the main mind? Is there a feeling quality associated with the observed object of the main mind? It would seem so since one of the five similarities presented in *Awareness and Knowers* is having the same object of observation.

In *Unique Tenets*, p. 331, footnote 2, it says: “sense consciousnesses directly know their objects whereas mental consciousnesses know their objects indirectly through the power of sense consciousnesses.” Lama Tsongkhapa talks about feeling as a conceptual direct mental perceiver. When feeling is directed inward that mental consciousness is a direct mental perception. *Unique Tenets*, p. 331, also says, “Because feeling is mental direct perception, conceptual mental direct perception exists.” How does Prasangika present mental direct perception? Unlike the lower schools, Prasangika asserts conceptual mental direct perception. *Unique Tenets*, p. 334, “a sense consciousness directly know an object such as a form, and through the power of that sense consciousness, the mental consciousness knows it, but it is said [that the mental consciousness] does not know it directly like a sense consciousness. It is also said that the mental consciousness that knows its object through the force of a sense consciousness is a memory consciousness.”

There are occasions when the mental factor feeling takes as its object pain, pleasure or neutrality. When it experiences these feelings doesn't that mental factor become a self-cognizer? This is not a self-cognizer because the object is not experienced non-dualistically. In this case there is a distinction that is made between the experiencer and that which is experienced. We do make a distinction between the object of experience and the experiencer, as when, for example, we say "I feel happy."

December 5 (Tuesday)

Continuation of discussion on the mental factor of feeling

A mental consciousness at end of a continuum of sense consciousness does not know its object by the force of the object itself as the sense consciousness does. Also, it is said to be a memory consciousness. The mental factor feeling can be in the retinue of a sense or mental consciousness. The objects of a sense consciousness are form, and so forth. This object is distinguished in terms of pleasure, pain, or neutral feeling. Mental consciousness can take an object of inner experience such as the inner experiences of pleasure, pain and neutrality. This leads to a qualm – is the inner experience of feeling the mental factor of feeling? For instance, remembering a day in the past when you had a delicious meal and had an inner experience of pleasure, is that feeling the mental factor? Is it a phenomenon sphere or form sphere? It would seem that it has to be a phenomenon sphere. A mental consciousness can take as its object the mental factor of feeling. Is that experience non-dualistic? *Unique Tenets*, p. 332, says, "the main meaning of feeling is the mental factor that is an object of experience."

Do mental factors like feeling operate on previous experience? When mental consciousness perceives happiness is the mental factor of feeling a self-cognizer? In dependence on the mental consciousness we say, "I feel happy," when we have a feeling of pleasure. Simply put, feeling can experience feeling, and yet, it is not a self-cognizer because the pleasure is not experienced non-dualistically. There is a sense of distinction between what is felt and the agent of the feeling. Even the worldly distinguish between what is felt and the agent of the feeling in statements such as "I feel happy," so it is not non-dualistic and therefore not a self-cognizer.

Establishing the mental consciousness apprehending skeletons

In the example of a consciousness that apprehends skeletons the appearance is a phenomena sphere and by virtue of the appearance dawning in the aspect of skeletons to a mental consciousness that consciousness is established. By the cognitive activity of taking that appearance as the object of comprehension the apprehender is established. By virtue of comprehending an object a subject is established. For Prasangika, the appearance of skeletons and the mental consciousness are different entities.

Regarding "the specifically characterized" and "the generally characterized"

Lama Tsongkhapa asks how the conceptual consciousnesses of the two selves are established. As Geshe-la says, "They are established because of being that which is directly observed." In the quote from *Clear Words*, Chandrakirti mentions "the specifically characterized" and "the generally characterized," and Geshe-la first discusses these in the context of the four close placements of mindfulness. With regard to a contaminated body we can establish the specific characteristics as that which is uncommon to the form aggregate (that it is suitable to be form, color, shape, etc.), which are its unshared qualities. General characteristics include the common attributes such as the four attributes of true suffering (impermanent, miserable, etc.). A second way that these can be taken is in accordance with the lower schools, where specifically characterized phenomena are asserted to be functioning things and generally characterized are permanent phenomena.

Regarding "the basis that characterizes" and "what is characterized"

In the context of a second quote from *Clear Words*, there is a discussion of the Sanskrit word *lakshya* and two possible translations: (1) an example or illustration, which is the basis that characterizes, and (2) what is characterized, the definiendum. In general, prior to realizing the definiendum, one first has to understand the definition through the use of an illustration. The definition is the nature of the object, so the definiendum is understood by the use of an example or illustration of its definition. For example, on the basis of table, one can realize the definition of the definiendum, functioning thing, as is shown in the following syllogism:

Table, as the subject,
It is functioning thing,
Because it is able to perform a function.

This syllogism correctly establishes table as a functioning thing in dependence upon the reason, which is the definition of functioning thing.

The predicate and reason can then be reversed to form another syllogism:

Table, as the subject,
It is able to perform a function,
Because it is a functioning thing.

In this second syllogism the reason is an incorrect sign because the three modes are not established. Upon establishing the first mode where the reason is understood to be applicable to the subject, the opponent would no longer have doubt about the thesis and would not go on to establish the forward and reverse pervasions.

The point here is that Chandrakirti is not saying that all specifically characterized and generally characterized phenomena are manifest phenomena and therefore there are no hidden phenomena. Nor are we talking in the context of an omniscience consciousness. Geshe-la says, “Therefore, it means that ‘that which is directly observed’ is not explained in terms of being directly observed by the omniscient.” We are not talking in terms of a Buddha’s omniscience here, to which all phenomena appear directly. When he says both the specifically characterized and the generally characterized are directly observed, he means that the appearances of them are directly observed.

The actual name “direct object” is applied to the object and only imputedly applied to the consciousness. The appearances of the individual phenomena are the direct objects of the consciousnesses that apprehend them. The appearances are manifest, or direct, objects for those consciousnesses and those consciousnesses are incontrovertible with respect to that appearance, and therefore valid. The eye consciousness seeing two moons is invalid with regard to two moons since two moons do not exist. The appearance of two moons is its object of comprehension and it is valid with respect to that appearance it is correct because the appearance of two moons does in fact exist and that is its object of comprehension. Therefore we can establish all consciousnesses with respect to their objects of comprehension. All consciousnesses take on the aspect of an appearance.

Establishing the mental consciousness which is a conception of a self

With regard to the consciousness apprehending the two selves, how is it posited? The conceptual consciousness, ignorance, conceives of, for example, a truly existent self of persons. For that consciousness the appearance of a truly existent self is a manifest phenomenon, directly appearing. It is established by ignorance as its object of comprehension. By virtue of that the consciousness, ignorance, itself is established. Though ignorance itself is established it is a wrong consciousness with respect to its referent object, a truly existent person, which does not exist. It does comprehend an object, realizing the appearance of a truly existent person.

December 6 (Wednesday)

Establishing valid cognizers

On page 11 of the week 28 transcript, Lama Tsongkhapa clarifies some of Prasangika’s unique tenets regarding the establishment of consciousness. In summary, he says that all consciousnesses are valid cognizers with regard to their appearance, although this does not mean that they are necessarily valid cognizers in general. Their appearance can be taken to be their object of comprehension. We can make this generalization about all consciousnesses in Prasangika. How are the conceptions of the two selves established? Although they are wrong consciousnesses, they are still consciousness, so this formula is also true for them, i.e. they are valid with respect to their appearances. They are incontrovertible with regard to that appearance because a truly existent self does appear. The consciousness is ignorance, i.e. it is mistaken with regard to its referent object, but the appearance exists. So although such a consciousness is not a valid cognizer in general, it is a valid cognizer with regard to its appearance.

We can have valid cognizers with regard to the two selflessnesses, but not with regard to the two selves, e.g. the inherently existent self. A consciousness cannot have a permanent form as an object of comprehension,

but can have an impermanent form as its object of comprehension. Valid cognizers with respect to their appearing object are direct valid cognizers with respect to manifest objects. Since all of these consciousnesses have the appearance of dualistic appearance, they are not self-cognizers.

The lack of dualistic appearance in meditative equipoise

Lama Tsongkhapa mentions the vanishing of dualistic appearance in regard to a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise and compares it to the presentation of self-cognizers. What is the nature of the vanishing of dualism for that meditative equipoise? How does this relate to the non-duality of a self-cognizer? In meditative equipoise, there is a vanishing of the three types of duality:

1. the appearance of object and subject as different
2. the appearance of conventionalities
3. the appearance of the object of negation

For this exalted wisdom, subject and object are experienced like water poured into water. This sounds like a self-cognizer, so how is it different? Lama Tsongkhapa answers that in the case of a self-cognizer, which is only imputed by tenets (i.e. it is just part of a theory that is necessary to establish an inherently existent consciousness), the non-duality of that self-cognizer is a consciousness that has the nature of clarity and knowing observing another consciousness that has that nature. Those two do not appear as different. If one were to focus upon that consciousness, one could not distinguish between cognizer and cognized – one would find only the factor of clarity and knowing. On the other hand, were the exalted wisdom of subsequent attainment to focus on the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise, it would distinguish the cognizing subject, meditative equipoise, and the object, emptiness. The two aspects appear differently. The mode of experience of that exalted wisdom is of non-duality, but when viewed from the outside, there is a distinction between subject and object.

Establishing the mental consciousness that is the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise

The exalted wisdom is established in the same way as other consciousnesses. It establishes emptiness, its object of comprehension, and by the force of that, it itself is established. This is not at all like a self-cognizer, which is inwardly directed and has the aspect of the apprehender.

Prasangika now turns back to refuting Chittamatra. They refer to verse 6.72, which asks, “What will know their existence?” Previously, Prasangika asked Chittamatra “what knows or apprehends the other-powered phenomenon, the consciousness?” The Chittamatra response was that it was established by a self-cognizer. Chittamatra then asked Prasangika, “How do you establish a consciousness?” The answer was that by establishing its object, a subject is established. The main point is that according to Chittamatra, whenever we focus on a self-cognizer and its object, they do not appear as different, whereas for Prasangika, with the vanishing of duality in meditative equipoise there is still the differentiation of subject and object, so there is no need for a self-cognizer.

Memory being posited in dependence on the eye consciousness and on the person is acceptable

Someone raises a qualm, saying that the I who remembers seeing blue is the person himself. This person and the eye consciousness are contradictory, that is, they are not equivalent. How does that memory remember the I that saw blue? One way of positing memory is that by remembering an object, the subject is remembered, and we think “I saw that blue.” There is a memory of blue and of the subject; but the I is not the eye consciousness that did the seeing of blue. Prasangika says that it is not inconsistent that in dependence on the eye consciousness seeing pen, we state “I saw the pen,” in agreement with the conventions of the world. Likewise, it is not inconsistent remember an I that saw blue in dependence remembering an eye consciousness that saw blue. We can remember the I that saw blue by remembering the eye consciousness that saw blue, that is, by remembering the seeing of blue .

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1C Indicating that self-cognizers are inadmissible also by other reasonings

Agent, action and object being one

This section concludes the refutation of self-cognizers. Before, Chittamatra said that a self-cognizer apprehends an other-powered phenomenon, consciousness. Here, there is the consequence that, if that were the case, then agent, action and the object of that action of cognition would be one. Lama Tsongkhapa

illustrates these three on the basis of cutting a piece of wood. The agent is the person who cuts the wood; the object is the wood, and the action is the cutting. Applying this to a self-cognizer, the agent is the self-cognizer, the action is the act of cognizing, and the object is cognized apprehender.

Rejecting partless particles and non-duality

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Jnanagarbha, a Svatantrika-Madhyamika who does not accept self-cognizers but does assert external objects. He also rejects partless particles, comparing them in that respect to the non-duality of subject and object, which also does not exist even conventionally. Since subject and object are not non-dual, they are dual, i.e. they are different entities. Jnanagarbha holds (along with Prasangikas) that partless particles do not exist, since all particles are said to have directional parts; that is, we can at least divide them into parts mentally.

A self-cognizer and its object do not appear as dual, even to a conception. If consciousness exists as asserted by Chittamatra, i.e. with two “poles” – the cognizer and the cognized – there is simply a unity in the nature of being clear and knowing. An absurd consequence to this would be that, since we cannot distinguish the three factors, agent, action, and object of action, then they are one. We cannot separate them conceptually or apprehend them as distinct.

In Western science, we talk about “basic building blocks” of the universe, although they are always finding subtler and subtler particles. Vaibhashikas and some Sautrantikas assert partless particles, i.e. particles that exist ultimately. These particles cannot be divisible, either physically or mentally; otherwise, they would not be ultimate truths. Jnanagarbha says self-cognizers and partless particles are the same in just being posited by tenets, that is, they do not exist. There is an objection, saying, “they appear, but are not ascertained,” which Lama Tsongkhapa refutes, saying it cannot even be proved that they appear. Then the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* is again quoted to restate that self-cognizers are not suitable, just like a sword cannot cut itself and so forth.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-1D Indicating that inherently existent other-powered phenomena are like the son of a barren woman

The son of a barren woman

Presently we are still in the section on refuting production from other. Other-powered phenomena are not produced by self or other, nor are they apprehended by a self-cognizer. Prasangika says that if these things, which are not apprehended by a valid cognizer, exist, then anything can exist, for example, the son of a barren woman. Gyelwa Gedun Drup’s commentary (quoting Chandrakirti) concludes that “you ought to assert similarly that a barren woman’s son exists with indescribable nature transcending all elaborations, an object of the wisdom-knowledge of the aryaas.” What does this mean? We have refuted this other-powered phenomenon as being inherently produced or the object of a valid cognizer, so possibly he is simply giving the Chittamatrins an absurd consequence, like saying “if you assert that, then you can say whatever you want.” There is no reason for any object not to exist.

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

January 16 (Tuesday)

Recap of current discussion

We need to develop wisdom through understanding emptiness. We establish emptiness through realizing the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena. In order to come to an understanding of selflessness of phenomena we have been analyzing production from the four extremes. In the first of the four extremes, we showed that production from self would be purposeless because it would involve the production again of something that has already achieved its own entity. Also, if repeated production were purposeful production would then be endless absurdly allowing no opportunity for the production of effects and so forth. We have also examined the refutation of the second extreme, production from other, here meaning an inherently existent other. We have examined some of the absurd consequences if there existed production from other, such as the implication that anything could arise from anything else, since all things that are inherently other are equal in being unrelatedly other.

Does the world have directly observe production from other? Chandrakirti replies that the world is not valid in all ways meaning that the world is not reliable with regard to the final nature of phenomena. He goes on to say that even the convention of production from other does not exist in the world, which is exemplified by such statements as “I planted this tree.” Therefore, even the worldly have no innate conception of inherently existing other. Svatantrika holds that there is production from other conventionally. This leads Prasangika to posit three absurd consequences: (i) it follows that a superior being’s meditative equipoise causes the destruction of things; (ii) it follows that conventional truths can withstand analysis; and (iii) it follows that production from other ultimately is irrefutable.

Prasangika explains that things appear to exist inherently and, even though they do not exist that way, they can still function. In this context we studied the two types of existence and two types of non-existence that we need to distinguish in order to avoid falling into the two extremes. We also examined how the various Buddhist schools have different positions on how past actions are connected to their future results karmic results and how latencies are stored. Prasangika posits disintegratedness as the means that connects actions and their results. Because actions do not inherently cease their causal continuity, the state of their having ceased or disintegratedness, is held to be a functioning thing capable of producing an effect. The lower schools each posit some basis that carries karmic latencies, such as non-wastage, acquisition, mind-basis-of-all and various ideas about how the continuum of the mental consciousness carries them.

After this we saw how Prasangika specifically refutes the view of Chittamattra, especially their position that consciousness inherently exists and external objects do not exist. These were then both refuted by Chittamattra.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-2 Indicating that the Chittamattra system has deviated from both truths

We are still in the section refuting the Chittamattra system. More specifically, we are currently refuting the existence of valid cognizers that establish other-powered phenomena as inherently existing

How Chittamattra deviates from the two truths

Chittamattra assert the inherent existence of other powered phenomena. In this way Chittamattra falls from the two truths. Prasangika refutes inherently existing other-powered phenomena. Other-powered phenomena arise due to causes and conditions, therefore they cannot exist inherently because something that is inherently existent is unrelated and independent of anything else. By asserting that other-powered phenomena ultimately exist Chittamattra deviates from ultimate truth – that phenomena are empty of inherent existence. Geshe-la also says that through asserting other-powered phenomena to be inherently existent, the presentation of conventional truth is destroyed. This is one way of falling from the two truths.

Another way that Geshe-la mentions is that by asserting that external objects do not exist, there are no conventional truths. Thus there is no basis for emptiness, and therefore no ultimate truth, since if you destroy conventional truths, you destroy ultimate truth. Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to say that one of the other

deficiencies of the Chittamatra system is their lack of wisdom in interpreting scripture, i.e. being able to tell which scriptures are definitive and which are interpretive. By being attached to mind alone and by disallowing external objects, Chittamatra destroys the conventionalities that are renowned to the world. Also, since consciousnesses arise in dependence upon conventionalities, if you destroy conventionalities then you have destroyed the causes for consciousnesses.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-3 Hence, it is suitable to be a follower only of Nagarjuna's system

Deviating from Nagarjuna's teachings we deviate from the two truths. Generally, we say that conventional truth is the method for realizing ultimate truth. Conventional truth in this case means the 108 phenomena, the fifty-three phenomena of the afflicted class and fifty-five phenomena of the thoroughly pure class (see *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 201). Understanding these is the method for realizing ultimate truth.

Regarding conventional truth and nominal truth

In this context the Tibetan term used is *tha snyad bden pa*, which is generally translated as “nominal truth”. Later it will be said that ultimate truth is the method for realizing conventional truth. In the former context, nominal truth refers to gross conventional truths. In the latter instance, when we speak of “conventional truth” we are referring to subtle conventional truths. Geshe-la says that realizing ultimate truths is the method for realizing subtle conventional truths, meaning the feasibility of causes giving rise to effects within the sphere of their emptiness. Non-truly existent causes give rise to non-truly existent effects. Conventionalities, which are falsities, can only function due to their emptiness.

The two truths

To attain liberation we need to realize the two truths – conventional truth and ultimate truth – and be able to distinguish between them. They are definitely two in number, in that there is no third truth. Within a presentation of the four noble truths, Svatantrika says that all four truths are conventional truths. Prasangika says that true cessations, the third truth, are ultimate truths and that the other three are conventional truths. It is noted that Panchen Sonam Drakpa disagrees with this but generally we will assume that true cessations are ultimate truths.

Conventional truth is defined as: an object found by a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities with respect to which a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities becomes a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities. Why do we add, “...with respect to which a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities becomes a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities”? This is added because of the special case of a Buddha's omniscient mind realizing varieties, which is a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities, but which also finds emptiness. The words are added in order to disallow emptiness fulfilling the definition of conventional truth.

In Garfield's *Fundamental Wisdom*, he says that “a ‘truth of worldly convention’ (*kun rdzob bden pa*) denotes a truth dependent upon tacit agreement, an everyday truth, a truth about things as they appear to accurate ordinary investigation, as judged by appropriate human standards.” (p.297) Regarding ultimate truth, he says, “The term ‘ultimate truth’ (*dam pa'i don gyi bden pa*) denotes the way things are independent of convention, or to put it another way, the way things turn out to be when we subject them to analysis with the intention of discovering the nature they have from their own side, as opposed to the characteristics we impute to them.” (p.297-8) A book is a conventional truth but is there anything there beyond the social construct? What is coming from its own side? Analyzing for the ultimate you find the absence of anything from coming from the side of the object. That is its ultimate truth.

January 17 (Wednesday)

The eight worldly concerns or dharmas and the four mistaken conceptions

If you follow Chittamatra masters you deviate from Nagarjuna's presentation. The scriptures teaching no external phenomena are taken literally Chittamatra. It is said about the Buddha, or any good teacher, that he teaches his students rather than the subject, and takes into account the students' particular dispositions. Buddha taught a diversity of teachings in order to reach as many people as possible. He taught conventional truth to a variety of migrators. Holding conventional truths as truly existent we become involved in the eight worldly concerns or dharmas (gain and loss, fame and infamy, praise and blame, happiness and suffering).

We should abandon *attachment* to worldly concerns or dharmas such as gain and loss. The worldly concerns or dharmas obstruct our practice of dharma. In relation to this, Lama Tsongkhapa also mentions the four mistaken conceptions: (i) conceiving the impermanent to be permanent; (ii) conceiving the suffering to be happiness; (iii) conceiving the impure to be pure; and (iv) conceiving the selfless to be a self. The proper way to meditate on true sufferings is presented in *Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 292-3.

The three doors of liberation

It is necessary to realize ultimate truth or you will not find peace. One cultivates the paths of insight, meditating on the three doors of liberation: wishlessness, signlessness, and emptiness. Wishlessness refers to the emptiness of phenomena from the point of view of not inherently producing effects (no inherently produced effect is to be wished for). Signlessness refers to the emptiness of phenomena from the point of view of not being inherently produced from causes. Emptiness refers to the emptiness of the entity of the phenomena itself. Ultimate truth is being presented in terms of the three doors.

For Chittamatra ultimate truth is of three types: (i) emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, (ii) apprehender and apprehended being empty of being different entities, and (iii) phenomena not being the natural basis for affixing their names. For Prasangika, ultimate truth means simply the emptiness of inherent existence. In order to realize ultimate truth one must rely on reasoning, concepts and language, that is, conventionalities. This is how ultimate truth is taught. We need to understand the aggregates before realizing that they are empty.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2B-4 Indicating that the two refutations of other-powered phenomena and worldly conventions are not similar

What do we mean by worldly conventionalities? We can say that they are the way that ordinary people talk and think and the object about which they talk and think. Chittamatra tries to claim that by denying the existence of inherently existent other-powered phenomena Prasangika denies the conventionalities of the world.

Prasangika denies inherent existence but upholds worldly conventions

Lama Tsongkhapa replies that Chittamatra is merely supporting the conception of true existence by asserting the true existence of other-powered phenomena. Supporting true existence is like assisting the thief who is stealing your merit. Buddha did sometimes teach inherently existent other-powered phenomena, such as the aggregates, but this was an interim teaching and not his final thought.

Prasangika refutes inherently existing other-powered phenomena saying that it is not feasible to admit inherently existing phenomena that arise in dependence on causes and conditions. Prasangika says that it is, in fact, *their* position that is in accordance with the worldly. Prasangika's view of the worldly includes both those who are untrained in philosophy (everyday people who use language without analyzing or investigating terms) and "the innate language-using mind of an *aryan* still in training." See *A Dose of Emptiness*, pp. 90-1. The worldly consists overwhelmingly of untrained persons. The worldly also includes superiors who have studied philosophy on the occasion when their minds are not directed towards emptiness.

How Prasangika discerns conventional and ultimate analysis

Chittamatra is trying to show that Prasangika refutes the conventionalities of the world. For Prasangika, unless otherwise proven wrong, the view of the world is to be accepted. Prasangika claims that it is beyond the competence of the worldly to posit the way things exist. Chittamatra's objection is that by refuting other-powered phenomena you refute the conventions of the world. They assert that superiors establish inherently existing other-powered phenomena. Prasangika says worldly conventionalities are determined by the worldly without investigation, not by a superior's ultimate analysis. With regard to a book, there are two hypothetical ways of positing it: one found by a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities and another found by a valid cognizer analyzing for the ultimate. Prasangika claims that a book is only found by a valid cognizer analyzing conventionalities. It is not found by a valid cognizer analyzing for the ultimate. Worldly conventionalities are concerned with *whether* the book exists or not, not *how* it exists. If the book existed by way of its own character it would be found by a superior's consciousness analyzing for the ultimate in

meditative equipoise, but it is not. Ultimate analysis concerns whether the book inherently exists. Such a book is not found.

Phenomena exist a mere imputations for Prasangika

Chittamatra then asks how things do exist for Prasangika. For Prasangika, phenomena exist because they are mere nominalities, not because they inherently exist. Phenomena exist conventionally, and they exist merely through conceptual imputation. Prasangika goes on to say that they do not posit conventionalities from the perspective of a foe destroyer without remainder, who has no appearance of conventionalities. The standard is in terms of the rest of the world. Madhyamikas on the path who are trying to overcome appearances of true existence are also not used as the standard. The sole determiner is that renowned in the world.

Regarding nirvana without remainder

In this context, Geshe-la briefly mentions that for True Aspectarian Chittamatrins, who assert three final vehicles, for a foe destroyer who has attained a nirvana without remainder all conventionalities cease. In this case “remainder” refers to the suffering aggregates. Nirvana without remainder means a severance of the continuum, which is not accepted by Prasangika. From our previous studies we know that for Prasangika “remainder” refers to the appearance of true existence.

Chittamatra should debate with the world

In verse 6.83 Chandrakirti summarily dismisses the Chittamatrins saying that it is Chittamatra who opposes the world and he sends them off to debate with them about whether externally existent books exist or not. He says, if you deny external objects you deny what the world asserts. Lama Tsongkhapa says that if you are defeated by the world you should join the Prasangika. There are three criteria for the existence of phenomena: (i) being renowned in the world; (ii) not being contradicted by a valid cognizer of conventionalities; and (iii) not being contradicted by a valid cognizer of the ultimate. There is an interesting discussion of how external objects stand up in *A Dose of Emptiness*, p. 506, footnote 1013.

January 18 (Thursday)

Chittamatra is attempting to say that, by refuting inherently existent other-powered phenomena, Prasangika is refuting what is renowned in the world, i.e. worldly conventions. Prasangika is demonstrating that these two are not similar. Yesterday we discussed the way in which Prasangika asserts conventionalities in relation to the world, meaning that they assert them in accordance with the way that the world asserts them. Prasangika does not posit conventionalities with respect to those beings for whom conventionalities do not exist, nor even for those who are seeking to overcome the appearance of true existence

The world does not invalidate the existence of external objects

One point being made here is that, since Prasangika is often termed those who propound in accordance with the world, those things that are asserted by the world, such as external objects, should be accepted and not denied as Chittamatra does if they are not invalidated by a conventional valid cognizer. If something is not invalidated, then whatever the world asserts should be accepted, and so the notion of external phenomena should not be denied.

Objection concerning directionally partless particles

Next an objection is raised regarding a subject we discussed earlier, namely the fact that Chittamatra arrived at the notion of the non-existence of external objects by their assertion that partless particles do not exist, an assertion that is contrary to what most Hinayana tenet schools hold. When analyzed, all particles are seen to have directional parts; even though they might not be able to be physically divided, they can still be mentally divided into parts. For Prasangika, who would agree with this, although all external phenomena are not composed of partless particles, external phenomena nonetheless do exist. For Prasangika, there are no partless particles and yet there are external objects, just as in the case of the mental continuum, where there are no partless moments of consciousness and yet there is a continuum of mind moments. However, for Chittamatra, refuting external partless particles is tantamount to refuting external objects in general.

Opinion regarding mistaken consciousnesses

Regarding this issue, Lama Tsongkhapa puts forth an opinion, which concerns someone who says, “if partless particles are repudiated, then the un mistaken sense consciousnesses to which they appear are also repudiated.” This person thinks that when partless external particles are refuted in Chittamatra, then any consciousness which has as its appearing object external particles is mistaken, and in that person’s view, a mistaken consciousness cannot posit the existence of an object, so therefore external objects are repudiated. There is a passage in *Unique Tenets of the Middle Way Consequence School* (p.127) that explains this section as well. In this context Geshe-la mentions that for Prasangika, a mistaken consciousness can posit the existence of an external object. All sense consciousnesses of non-buddhas are mistaken for Prasangika but they still can posit the existence of their objects. An eye consciousness apprehending a mirage can still posit the existence of a mirage, even though mistaken with respect to it being water.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C Indicating that the term ‘only’ of that called Mind-Only (Chittamatra) does not refute external objects

We begin another major section, this one with three divisions that explain the meaning of “only” in the context of asserting “mind only.”

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-1 Explaining the intention of teaching mind-only in the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-1A Proving, by means of the scripture of the *Ten Grounds*, that the term ‘only’ does not negate external objects

Having refuted the Chittamatra position with reasoning, now Chittamatra responds regarding scriptural authority, specifically the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*. Prasangika will show that on the part of Chittamatra, there is a misinterpretation or an incorrect literal reading of those scripture passages.

The *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* as interpreted by Chittamatra

Chittamatra says that just as you, Prasangika, fear going against worldly conventions, you should also fear going against scripture, specifically the passage from the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* that says “the three realms are only mind.” Chittamatra says that “only mind” here means that all the universe is in the nature of mind, and that assertion excludes the existence of external objects.

The *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* as explained by Prasangika

Prasangika responds saying this is not the intention of the sutra, and Chandrakirti provides its true meaning in verse 6.84ab, saying, “The Manifest, the bodhisattva who is approaching, realizes that the three existences are mere consciousness.” The sixth ground as we said earlier, has two names, the Manifest (*mngon du phyogs pa*) and the Approaching (*mngon du gyur pa*), and among these two usages, the preferred usage is the first. “Approaching” means that the bodhisattva is approaching the qualities of the Buddha, while “Manifest” means that the four noble truths and the twelve links of dependent origination have become manifest or obvious for his wisdom. The perfection of wisdom is developed in dependence upon the perfection of concentration developed on the fifth ground and Geshe-la discusses in this context that the bodhisattva also has the surpassing practice of the three higher trainings. The higher training in ethics is attained with the surpassing practice of ethics on the second ground; the higher training in concentration (here indicated as “mind”) is attained with the surpassing practice of patience on the third ground; and the higher training in wisdom is attained over fourth, fifth, and sixth grounds, when the bodhisattva gains (respectively) the wisdom skilled in the coarse and subtle aspects of (1) the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment, (2) the four noble truths, and (3) the twelve links of dependent arising.

Here it says that the bodhisattva on the sixth ground thinks that the three existences are only mind because he has become familiar with the twelve links of dependent arising. For him, the creator of the three realms is not a permanent self, Ishvara, or the general principle and so forth, but is only mind. “Only” in this sutra quotation has a much different meaning for Prasangika than that which Chittamatra explains. For Chittamatra “only” excludes external objects; for Prasangika, “only” refutes a creator other than mind.

Additional passage in the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* that supports this view

Lama Tsongkhapa uses another passage in that sutra itself to refute the Chittamatra interpretation, a passage that explains how the mind is the creator of the three realms. Specifically it says that the bodhisattva thinks, “Due to strong adherence to *an agent*, actions come into existence.” This bodhisattva is meditating on the twelve links in both the forward and reverse order, as well as in regard to both the afflicted and the thoroughly pure phenomena. Basically this exercise shows the relativity of things, particularly that even the mind itself is a dependent arising, in that it arises from karmic formations which, in turn, arises in dependence upon ignorance..

The four meditations on the twelve links of dependent arising

Geshe-la describes the four different ways of contemplating the twelve links. The first is the forward order of the thoroughly afflicted phenomena, where one examines how due to ignorance, karmic formations arise, and so forth. Does consciousness actually arise from karmic formations? Yes, in that here we are talking about a specific consciousness within these twelve links which has deposited upon it the latencies of past actions. The second is the reverse order of the thoroughly afflicted phenomena, where one examines how aging and death come about, which is through birth, and so forth. These first two meditations show how one enters into or perpetuates one’s existence in samsara. How does one get out of samsara? The third and the fourth meditations show the forward and reverse order of the completely pure phenomena, where the links are ceased. The third, when ignorance does not arise karmic formations do not arise, etc. and fourth, when birth ceases aging and death cease, etc.

So this bodhisattva has developed the wisdom with regard to the twelve links and so he thinks that the universe is only mind in that all things evolve out of mind. Lama Tsongkhapa shows how Asanga used this same passage to exclude external phenomena. Asanga uses this as a scriptural authority to say that all phenomena are in the nature of mind, in that they arise from the activation of latencies on the mind-basis-of-all. The Prasangika interpretation is that there is no creator of the universe other than mind while Chittamatra interprets it to mean that all phenomena are in the nature of only mind and so external phenomena do not exist.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-1B Proving that very meaning also by other sutras

Here Chandrakirti examines other scriptures which show that the only of “mind only” means that the mind alone is the creator of the universe.

The Descent into Lanka Sutra on “mind only”

First there is the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, which is mentioned in verse 6.85. There are various assertions as to what is the creator of the universe, such as the Samkhyas saying it is the general principle, the Vaisheshika saying the creator is Ishvara, and so forth. But according to that sutra, all those are not actual creators since “these creators I explain as only mind.” “Only” here excludes all those other possible creators. The mind alone is the creator of the universe in that the three realms are created by mind. In *lam rim* we often speak of everything as a product of karma. Geshe-la notes that this is correct but when we go one level deeper, since karma is created by mind, then mind is the creator of all things.

Regarding the “Forders”

The Buddha taught this sutra in order to destroy the wrong views of the Forders, as well as for those who are ready for the presentation of the profound view of the emptiness of inherent existence. Lama Tsongkhapa discusses the word Forder (*mu stegs pa*), which is Tirthika in Sanskrit. He says that this term would actually include some sects of Buddhism that propound that the person or the continuum is the creator of the universe, and so those “Forders” would be Buddhists by way of conduct but not by way of view. The four great seals of Buddhist view, which we’ve seen on previous occasions (see p.20, transcripts of week 29). The third, “all phenomena are empty and selfless,” can be defined as empty of a permanent, partless, independent self so that it includes the sub-school of Vaibhashika that propounds a substantially existent self of persons.

At the end of this section, Lama Tsongkhapa mentions the “White Concentration Abandoners.” Apparently these are Buddhists who assert substantially existent aggregates as the creator, and Lama Tsongkhapa indicates that they too are to be included in the Tirthikas.

***Precious Garland* on passing beyond the two extremes**

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes *Precious Garland*, wherein Nagarjuna is asking those who propound a substantially existent self, such as the Samkhyas and so forth, whether they propound having passed beyond the two extremes, existence and non-existence. Existence and non-existence refers to the extremes of permanence and annihilation.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

January 22 (Monday) Review of Exam 3

January 23 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-1C The term ‘only’ proves that the mind is foremost

Prasangika and Chittamatra interpretations of ‘mind only’

In this third section of the refutation of the Chittamatra system we are looking at the Buddha’s teaching on ‘mind only’. In the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* the Buddha said, “These three realms are mind only.” Prasangika interprets ‘mind only’ as teaching mind to be foremost, or principal, as the creator of the world. They do not take this statement by the Buddha as teaching that there are no external objects, which is Chittamatra’s interpretation. Prasangika interprets ‘only’ as excluding other creators such as Ishvara, the general principal, or any other permanent self as a creator. In support of this interpretation Prasangika looks to other sutras such as the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, which says that only mind is the creator of the world. ‘Only’ in this sutra is clearly not refuting external objects.

A concordant example of interpretation

In verse 6.87, Chandrakirti relates this interpretation to another instance in scripture, the case of the etymology of ‘buddha’. The Tibetan term for buddha, *sangs rgyas*, can be etymologized as *sangs*, ‘awakened’ (from the two obstructions) and *rgyas*, ‘developed’ (with regard to thusness, or emptiness). In sutra the partial phrase ‘developed with regard to thusness’, is used in referring to Buddha. In the same way ‘only mind’ in the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* is an abbreviation for ‘only mind is foremost’, or principal, as opposed to form as the creator of the world. For Prasangika, ‘only mind’ does not refute external objects as Chittamatra asserts.

Consciousness is shown as lacking inherent existence in the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*

In verse 6.88, Chandrakirti points out that the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* also teaches the twelve links, wherein it states that consciousness arises in dependence upon ignorance and karmic formations. Consciousness is therefore a dependent arising and so the world is not in the nature of inherently existent mind as Chittamatra asserts. Inherently existent things cannot be dependent-arising. Why would Asanga assert such things? Buddha did present mind established by way of its own character to certain students as an provisional teaching to help them give up attachment to form. This, however, was not the Buddha’s final intention. Consciousness arises due to specific conditions, like the seeing of falling hairs arises in dependence upon the condition of cataracts, or the yellow appearances that arise in dependence upon the condition of jaundice.

Lama Tsongkhapa says, “Therefore, having thus seen the passages taught in that very [*Sutra on the Ten Grounds*], who possessing a mind would conceive consciousness as substantially existent?” The response is that, in those cases where it is conceived as substantially existent, it is conceived as such by tenets that conceive the true existence of inner phenomena. Lama Tsongkhapa seems to be saying that someone would only hold consciousness as truly existent due to holding tenets and yet this doesn’t mean that there is no innate conception of true existence.

How the world is shown to be created principally by mind

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna’s *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, which says that the world (*jigs rten*) possesses ignorance. ‘Jigs’ can be translated as ‘transitory’ or ‘perish’. Here the perishable basis is the five aggregates produced in dependence upon actions and afflictions. The world is a fabrication of conception. The second link is projecting actions, or karmic formations. Due to ignorance there is the superimposition upon phenomena that they are established by way of their own character. It is said that a falsity becomes more obscure upon analyzing it, whereas a truth becomes clearer upon analyzing it. Properly performing the various analyses, establishment of an object by way of its own character is not found.

Mind creates both common and uncommon karma

How can Prasangika prove that the world is created by mind? The environment arises due to the common karma of sentient beings and the varieties of the individual sentient beings arise due to their own individual uncommon karma. Both Chittamatra and Prasangika accept the teachings on the twelve links of dependent arising and both accept that minds create actions or karma. Therefore only that which possesses a mind accumulates actions. Tables, for example, don't accumulate actions. Therefore amongst the two, mind and form, mind is foremost. The amassing of particles is only a secondary cause of the world. How Prasangika established this is first, we showed that 'only mind' excludes other creators. Then we went on to explain 'only mind' in positive terms, establishing mind as foremost in creating the world. Lama Tsongkhapa says that the main cause for migrating is the mind and its ignorance, which causes us to accumulate projecting actions. Mind is therefore foremost. For Prasangika external forms exist, just as minds exist, but form is not the creator, or foremost in creation. The world is composed of atoms but what causes them to assemble as they do is the mind. The wood and bricks of a building are important but they are secondary, the main cause being the collective karma of the beings that have created the karma to produce the building.

All phenomena are merely imputed in Prasangika

In Prasangika, we say that all phenomena are imputed by conception, meaning that they are designated by the conceptual mind. Lama Zopa Rinpoche also talked about this, that all phenomena are merely posited, or labeled, by conceptuality. What causes us to impute this way? Why do we impute pain? Of course this is due to our karma, our past conditioning. Our minds are impure and therefore the world we inhabit is impure. As we purify our minds the world we project becomes more pure. Does the mind create things that are not mind? What about the bases of phenomena? Is the base merely imputed? Is it form? These are very profound questions. Saying something is 'merely imputed' just excludes inherent existence in that things also depend on causes and conditions and on parts.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-2 Indicating that the two external objects and inner mind, are similar in existing and not existing

Chittamatra distinguishes between external objects and inner minds and says that they do not exist in the same fashion. External objects do not exist but inner consciousnesses inherently exist. Prasangika disagrees, saying that they must be alike in either existing or not existing. Chittamatra's assertions are inconsistent. For Prasangika in the perspective of the world forms and minds exist nominally, but neither exists ultimately in the perspective of a yogi realizing emptiness.

Two types of object of negation

In this context Geshe-la talks about two types of object of negation. The first type is seen in the case of a superior's wisdom of meditative equipoise that realizes the final mode of existence of objects, in which all dualistic appearances cease. Conventional phenomena such as external objects and internal minds do not appear to that consciousness. The second type of object of negation is the one that we normally refer to, inherent existence. In general, we can say that the object of negation does not exist.

Consciousness and forms are equal both ultimately and conventionally

Geshe-la goes on to talk about the etymology of *kun rdzob* as 'obscurer' or 'concealer' in the context of conventional truths. When we talk about conventional truths these are truths for a concealer, the concealer being ignorance. From the perspective of the world the aggregates are truths. However, they are not truths for a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise. Upon ultimate analysis the object sought was found not to exist then why not perform the same sort of analysis on the consciousness itself. Prasangika says that Chittamatra must be consistent. In this case neither consciousness nor external form would be found to inherently exist. On the other hand, a non-analytical consciousness finds both form and consciousness to exist. They are both renowned in the world, existing nominally. It is asserted that both external form and consciousness are similar in existing in the perspective of worldly renown and not existing in the perspective of a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise.

January 24 (Wednesday)

For Chittamatra, when one analyzes for external objects, they are not found. Seeking external objects, but not finding them, they determine that they don't exist, but they don't apply the same reasoning to the consciousness. Without analyzing we would find both external objects and internal consciousnesses. Neither an external object nor an internal consciousness exists ultimately but both exist conventionally.

Chittamatra refutes external form but not form

In verse 6.92ab, 'forms' must be qualified with 'external' in this context. For Chittamatra both form and consciousness arises in dependence on the activation of latencies, therefore objects are not external. We have already said that 'only mind' does not negate external objects for Prasangika but simply shows that mind is the foremost creator. Objects of knowledge are not being refuted by the term 'only'. For Chittamatra 'only' negates external objects but not form in general because if this were the case it would contradict Asanga's *Compendium of the Mahayana*, in which he says the basis-of-all apprehends the sense powers possessing form, therefore they do not refute form in general. Also, in this text he says that consciousness and name and form are like a tripod in mutually depending on one another. 'Form' refers to the form aggregate itself and 'name' to the other four mental aggregates.

How the Buddha taught the equal non-existence and existence of form and consciousness

Form is not a different entity from mind for Chittamatra, both arising in dependence upon the activation of the same latency. Consciousness inherently exists for Chittamatra. In verse 6.92cd, Chandrakirti says that in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras*, the Buddha taught that the five aggregates equally are empty of inherent existence. While in the *Abhidharma* the Buddha taught that the specific and general characteristics are applied to all five aggregates equally. Buddha made no distinction in applying the specific and general characteristics with regard to the five aggregates in this context. In this context he meant the characteristics that are shared by all five aggregates – being impermanent, suffering, empty and selfless. Buddha treated them equally in terms of their ontological status (how things exist). From this we can see that he that in both the *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtras* and *Abhidharma* he made no distinction in terms of the status of existence of the five aggregates.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3 Explaining the intention of teaching mind-only in the *Descent into Lanka Sūtra*

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3A Indicating that the teaching on only mind without external objects is an interpretable meaning [teaching]

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3A1 Indicating it to be an interpretable meaning [teaching by means of scriptures]

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3A1A Actual meaning

We move on now to a discussion of interpretive meaning versus definitive meaning scriptures. There are four main areas of contention in which Chittamatra interprets the Buddha as being definitive. We are going to show by reasoning and scripture that they are in fact interpretive meaning.

Prasangika asserts the sūtras teaching 'mind only' as interpretive

Chittamatra has a unique interpretation of the teaching in the *Sūtra on the Ten Grounds* where it says the three realms are 'only mind'. They take this teaching literally as a definitive meaning sūtra and claim that the Buddha is teaching that external forms do not exist. Prasangika says this scripture is not definitive but interpretive. A sūtra can refer to just a few words from a scripture or to an entire teaching given by a Buddha. Prasangika interprets the *Sūtra on the Ten Grounds* to be teaching that creators other than the mind are to be excluded and that mind is foremost in creating the world. Chittamatra continues their argument citing the *Descent into Lanka Sūtra* as also teaching that external objects do not exist. Prasangika says again that this sūtra is not definitive and is necessarily interpretive because it was intended for trainees who were attached to forms. Buddha intended this as a provisional teaching, much like his teaching yogis to view the ground covered with skeletons.

Interpretive and definitive meaning scriptures

How do you determine which scriptures are interpretive? Chandrakirti says that they are interpretive in relation to other teachings of the Buddha and based on reasoning. Buddha himself said that some of his

teachings were to be interpreted. Geshe-la mentioned two types of sutras, those sutras that explain what teachings are to be interpreted, and those sutras themselves that are to be interpreted. Geshe-la gives the definition of definitive and interpretive meaning sutras for Chittamatra and Prasangika.

The Chittamatra definitions are:

Interpretive meaning sutra: a sutra whose indicated meaning is not suitable to be accepted literally.

Definitive meaning sutra: a sutra whose indicated meaning is suitable to be accepted literally.

The definitions for Prasangika are:

Interpretive meaning sutra: a sutra that takes conventionalities as its main indicated subject matter.

Definitive meaning sutra: a sutra that takes the ultimate as its main indicated subject matter.

How are we to interpret the two schools different criteria for defining definitive meaning sutras? Chittamatra's definitive meaning sutras can be talking about ultimate meaning from their perspective but it is not 'the ultimate' for Prasangika.

The three attributes of an interpretive meaning sutra

Interpretive meaning sutras have three attributes: (i) a basis of intention; (ii) a purpose; and (iii) harm, or damage that they would suffer if they were to be taken literally. Regarding the **basis of intention**, the Buddha, in teaching the non-existence of external objects, meant there were no inherently existent external objects. Buddha's **purpose** was to benefit trainees, since he only taught due to the needs of sentient beings, for, example, in order to reduce attachment to form. Also, for the purpose of leading a trainee to the final view thought at present they are not ready for the most profound teachings. This is said to be one of the marks of a great teacher, that he teaches students (given their dispositions) rather than teaching subjects. There is **damage** to an interpretive meaning scripture if you take it literally because it could be harmed by reasoning, worldly renown, or by other scriptures.

Is the *Heart Sutra* definitive or interpretive (because it says there are no forms, etc.)? Saying 'no form' in this case needs to be qualified. There is discussion of this subject in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p. 423), and Jeffrey Hopkins says that the phrase 'no forms' was spoken by the Buddha but he did not teach it. The passage in the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* about 'only mind' is interpretive for Prasangika. This doesn't refute external objects for Prasangika but just as in the *Sutra on Ten Grounds* where a creator other than mind was refuted it is necessary to interpret this as being taught for a disciple that has strong attachment to forms.

Bhavaviveka's explanation of this passage

Lama Tsongkhapa says that master Bhavaviveka interprets the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, where it teaches 'mind only', to not mean that external objects are being refuted, but rather that "awarenesses seeing the aspectless" are refuted. Bhavaviveka says: "the likenesses of minds, bodies, enjoyments, and abodes, that is, their aspects, change like shadows." This is in keeping with those tenets that assert that when an object is seen it is seen by means of its aspect.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3A1B Indicating other such sutras as also being interpretable meaning [teachings]

In addition to the teachings regarding the non-existence of external objects, we will now proceed to look at three additional areas of contention with regard to whether a scripture is definitive or interpretive. These are the teachings regarding the three natures, those on a mind-basis-of-all and those sutras that teach that there are three final vehicles. Teachings regarding the refutation of external objects are to be interpreted, as are teachings of the other three topics.

The three turnings of the wheel of Dharma by the Buddha

The *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*, one of the main sutras followed by Chittamatra, sets out the distinction among the three natures, saying imputational factors do not exist by way of their own character and the other two natures do exist by way of their own character. This sutra is said to be part of the third turning of the wheel of Dharma by the Buddha. There are various ways of explaining the three Dharma wheels. Subject matter is one way. How the scriptures teach selflessness is another means of distinguishing the wheels. The first turning of the wheel teaches the selflessness of persons, but teaches that phenomena are truly existent. The second

turning of the wheel teaches the non-inherent existence of all phenomena. The third turning is the wheel of good discrimination and teaches that some phenomena exist by way of their own character and others don't. Chittamatra accepts the third wheel as definitive and the other two wheels as interpretive. Prasangika accepts the second turning of the wheel as definitive and that within the others there are both interpretive and definitive sutras. This topic is covered extensively in Lama Tsongkhapa's *Essence of Eloquence*.

January 25 (Thursday)

Not only is the teaching within the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* interpretable but also there are others that are interpretable in meaning. So what is the subject matter of these sutras that are to be interpreted? Lama Tsongkhapa mentions four different points taught in sutra that need to be interpreted as a means to clearly understand the distinctions between Chittamatra and Prasangika. The *Sutra Unraveling the Thought* is cited here as the specific source for all four of these. Chittamatra holds this sutra sets to be definitive and hence is to be taken literally, while Prasangika says that there are not definitive but rather require interpretation. In this section, these four points of contention will be examined, and Prasangika will show such sutras to be interpretive by both citing other scriptures as well as by reasoning. So initially we will look at the scriptural sources that demonstrate that these sutra sets are to be interpreted. You can read more on this in *Meditation on Emptiness*, in the "Interpretation of Scripture" chapter (pp.595-623), in which Jeffrey Hopkins discusses this topic extensively.

The four points of these sutra sets

The four points set forth in these sutra sets which require distinction to discriminate between the views of Chittamatra and Prasangika:

- (1) **the three natures**, here specifically referring to the teaching as to other-powered phenomena and thoroughly established being established by way of their own character, while imputational factors are not established by way of their own character;
- (2) **the refutation of external objects** (i.e. 'mind only');
- (3) the existence of **a mind-basis-of-all**; and
- (4) the explanation of there being **three final vehicles**.

Prasangika will show that these are not to be taken literally first by showing scriptures that indicate that.

Four sutra passages that discuss these four points

In *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*, the three natures are discriminated as to whether or not they are established by way of their own character. Also using the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought* as source, there is the presentation of a mind-basis-of-all that is a consciousness separate from the six operative consciousnesses. And also both the refutations of external objects as well as the presentation of there being three final vehicles are presented in that sutra. So all four are mentioned in *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*. Chandrakirti and Lama Tsongkhapa cite the various sutra passages that Chittamatra uses as scriptural authority in regard to these four points. They can be identified in Lama Tsongkhapa's text as follows:

- (1) Regarding **the three natures**: Transcript of week 30, p.23 ("Imputational factors do not exist...")
- (2) Regarding **the refutation of external objects**: Transcript of week 30, p.25 ("[Maitreya asked:] Bhagavan, are the reflections...")
- (3) Regarding **a mind-basis-of-all**: Transcript of week 30, p.23 ("The appropriating consciousness,...")
- (4) Regarding the explanation of **the three final vehicles**: Lama Tsongkhapa says that this topic is not explored by Chandrakirti in his *Autocommentary* but that the intention was that it can be understood from Nagarjuna's *Compendium of Sutra*. That text teaches that the three final vehicles are not to be accepted so neither Chandrakirti nor Lama Tsongkhapa explain this fourth point.

So the only time Chandrakirti relies upon Nagarjuna exclusively is with regard to the last point. In the other three he relies upon sutra. It is necessary that one clarify these four defining positions to discern between the views of Chittamatra and Prasangika. The Buddha did teach these but did not intend for them to be taken literally.

How teachings on the non-existence of external objects is determined to be interpretable in meaning. So we have seen the sutra sources for these four points and now we will examine the sutra passages that indicate that these are interpretable in meaning. Earlier we talked about the two types of sutras: those to be interpreted and those to be used in the process of interpreting them. For the time being, we will set aside the fourth one, the True Aspectarian Chittamatra teaching that there are three final vehicles, an assertion that is not held by Madhyamika which propounds only one final vehicle. We will start by looking at the second point, **the refutation of external objects** (i.e. ‘mind only’). As a scriptural source to show that this should be interpreted, Chandrakirti uses a passage from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, which explains how the mind-basis-of-all is taught to some disciples in exactly the same way that a doctor gives various medicines to patients who are ill. Chittamatra uses the teaching of ‘mind only’ to establish an inherently existent consciousness without external objects. This sutra passage is understood by Prasangika that the Buddha taught ‘mind only’ specifically for the Chittamatrins, just as a doctor prescribes a specific medicine for someone with a particular ailment. Prasangika says that this scripture should be used to understand that the ‘mind only’ which Chittamatra is holding to is not to be taken literally.

How the teachings on the existence of a mind-basis-of-all is determined to be interpretable in meaning

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the passages concerning the third point, the teaching on the existence of a mind-basis-of-all, are to be taken as interpretable meaning. He does this by citing passages from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* that set out a tathagata essence, which are also shown to be interpretable. Tathagata essence in this context refers to a permanent, stable essence that all beings possess, so by establishing that the teaching on such a tathagata essence is interpretable, the teachings on a mind-basis-of-all are also established to be interpretable. This is so since the tathagata essence is synonymous with a mind-basis-of-all with regard to the intended meaning, so if you establish one as interpretable meaning you establish the other as that as well. This will be explained more by Lama Tsongkhapa in the passages that follow. By tathagata essence here, the Buddha is talking about a permanent, stable enduring essence that is adorned with the thirty-two major and eighty minor marks, that is hidden within each being. This idea was explored some in the “nine similes” of buddha essence (or buddha nature, naturally abiding lineage, etc.) in *Ornament*. The difference between these two presentations though is that all beings *do* have a buddha essence that is the emptiness of the mind, but *do not* possess a tathagata essence that is permanent and so forth as described in that sutra.

The four reliances

Before continuing with his discussion of the third point, Lama Tsongkhapa sets out the context of how we will determine when a sutra is to be interpreted. In the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*, the Buddha said that he taught conforming to the minds of sentient beings, and those teachings are deceptive since they do not teach reality. Although the childish are pleased with such teachings, the superiors are not, since they want teachings on suchness. Lama Tsongkhapa says that this is like the way a deer grasps to a mirage as if it was an actual source of water, and then admonishes that “you should follow the meaning and not be enamored of the expression.” In this context Geshe-la spells out what are called the four reliances (see *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.425, for more on these). The fact that we can make a distinction between sutras of definitive and interpretable sutras is taught in the very sutras themselves. It is not some fabrication without scriptural support.

The four reliances are:

- (1) *rely on the doctrine, not on the person* – we can often put more faith in the teachings of a high lama, whose words seem more profound, but this says we should rely on only the doctrine they teach;
- (2) *rely on the meaning, not on the words* – this is what the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* says, to not be caught up in or enamored of the words and neglect the content;
- (3) *rely on the definitive meaning sutras, not on those of interpretable meaning*; and
- (4) *rely on wisdom, not on knowledge* (Geshe-la says to rely on “an unmistaken mental consciousness,” not on “a mistaken consciousness”).

In regard to the third of these, Jeffrey Hopkins says, “...one should take definitive sutras as most important and should recognize that those requiring interpretation are a means of realizing the definitive – emptiness.”

How both the teachings on a tathagata essence and a mind-basis-of-all are of interpretable meaning Lama Tsongkhapa quotes again the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* where Mahamati asks the Buddha what the difference is between the tathagata essence and the self that is taught by the Forders. In other words, if the tathagata essence is taken to exist as described (a permanent, stable, fully developed essence), it would seem to be the same as the self taught by those Forders. Lama Tsongkhapa explains this by saying that for this sutra passage, there are the three features:

- (1) **The basis of intention** is the selflessness of phenomena;
- (2) This teaching of a permanent self has **two purposes**. The first is to lead the childish to abandon fear of selflessness. This can be exemplified by the frequently told story of the monk listening to Lama Tsongkhapa's teaching on emptiness and grasping at his robes upon realizing selflessness and fearing his own non-existence. We think we can count on the thought "I'm here" but with a realization of emptiness, when one thinks that this doesn't exist as you think it is, there is a fear of the self not-existing since you are touching on the object of negation. There is some fear of thinking one is going out of existence upon that realization. Lama Tsongkhapa is sometimes criticized for being too subtle in that there is a conventional self that does exist. Similarly there is some comfort for some people in thinking of a permanent self such as is described as this tathagata essence. The second purpose is to gradually lead the Forders, or more generally non-Buddhists, to the realization of suchness. Christianity, for example, teaches the existence of a soul, similar to this concept of a permanent tathagata essence, and those who hold to such a type of self could be led to Buddhism by those teachings.
- (3) **The damage to taking it literally** is that then it would not be different from the Forders view of a self. The tathagata essence sutra therefore is interpretable in meaning because it has the three attributes, and, based on that, the passage on mind-basis-of-all can be similarly taken as being interpretable in meaning.

Affirming the two types of sutras

Lama Tsongkhapa next clarifies the two types of sutras mentioned earlier (those to be interpreted and those which are used to interpret them). He does this by citing two passages from *Descent into Lanka Sutra* which are being used to explain why the passages that Chittamatra is taking as literal are to be taken as interpretive. These passages are that second type of sutra, in that they are used in establishing that the interpretive sutras must indeed be interpreted. What are being clarified by those are the passages of interpretable meaning from the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*, upon which Chittamatra relies for their basic tenets. So what are being clarified are the two passages in *Sutra Unraveling the Thought* and what clarify them are the passages in *Descent into Lanka Sutra*.

Lama Tsongkhapa's refutation of Jayananda's *Explanatory Commentary*

Lama Tsongkhapa then criticizes Jayananda's explanation of the passage on dependent arising from the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, which sets out that the three realms are 'mind only' (see p.14 of week 29 transcript). Chittamatra has taken this passage to mean that everything is mind, there are no external objects. Jayananda says that this sutra is the refutation of a creator but in fact, Lama Tsongkhapa says it does not refute a creator, it rather refutes a creator other than mind. Moreover, Jayananda also says that this sutra passage was taught in order to understand that the 'only' in 'mind only' does not refute external objects. In other words, he is saying that the teaching of the non-existence of external objects is to be interpreted. Lama Tsongkhapa however says that the non-existence of external objects is not even taught in that passage, either as definitive meaning or of interpretive meaning.

January 26 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

- * Geshe-la was asked to clarify three of the three true/false questions from Exam 3. In regard to #12, Geshe-la said that it was indeed false, since an eye consciousness apprehending an inherently existent pot does not exist. However, he gave the reason "because an inherently existent pot does not exist" and it seems from our previous studies that that reason could be debated. As we saw in *Awareness and Knowers*, the eye consciousness apprehending the horns of a rabbit exists even though the horns of a rabbit do not exist. Regarding #46, Geshe-la agreed that this was true, saying that both the eye consciousness that apprehended blue and the subsequent memory of blue engage the same object. He also agreed that #50 was true, that manifest and hidden phenomena are mutually exclusive for Prasangika.

Hidden phenomena are phenomena that are initially realized in dependence upon a sign so, even though an object such as emptiness may become a manifest phenomenon for a particular person's consciousness, it still is a hidden phenomenon because it is initially realized by inference.

- * It seems that 'merely imputed' and 'mere imputation' are equivalent terms in Geshe-la's opinion, and that it's just a matter of linguistics. A question that may follow from this is what would Prasangika assert as being the same entity as the mind, but is not clear and knowing? There are many phenomena that qualify, such as a person, for example, which is the same entity as the mind that serves as part of the basis of imputation for the person but yet is not clear and knowing. Other phenomena that qualify are the emptiness of the mind, the impermanence of the mind, and so forth. In this context, it is important to distinguish between being one entity and being one substantial entity. One entity refers to two phenomena abiding together while one substantial entity means that they don't appear different to a direct perceiver. Anyway, to return to the question asked of Geshe-la, in the phrase 'mere imputation,' 'mere' doesn't mean 'only' but rather it excludes inherent existence. For example, in Chittamatra there is a person who is imputedly existent but that person is not merely imputed. Only imputational factors are merely imputed in that school. For Prasangika, 'mere' excludes inherent existence. This doesn't mean that imputation is the only cause for phenomena to exist, in that there are causes and conditions and so forth that also are causes for phenomena to arise. Imputation by itself is not sufficient for existence.
- * Regarding how Prasangika determines the sutras intended for Chittamatrins to be interpretable meaning sutras, Geshe-la said that they do not meet the criteria for being definitive in Prasangika because ultimate truth refers only to Prasangika's view of ultimate truth. It seems that when Prasangika is debating with Chittamatra, they are debating that the sutras that Chittamatra holds as definitive are interpretive for Prasangika because they cannot be taken literally due to scripture and reasoning. From the point of view of Chittamatra, if it cannot be taken literally, it must be interpreted so that is how Prasangika is approaching those sutra passages.
- * Regarding the latency of an action and disintegratedness of an action, there are still some questions after Geshe-la's explanation. He indicated that there is a function of a latency of an action but didn't expound on that for the moment.

Summary of this section in three points

Lama Tsongkhapa gives a summary of sorts regarding these passages being interpretable in meaning, and he does this in the following three points:

- (1) The passage from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* (p.1 of week 31 transcript) clarifies that the teaching of a **'mind only' which negates external objects** (p.16 of week 30 transcript) is of interpretable meaning. The term 'mind only' is shown as interpretive when explained to be similar to the way a doctor prescribes medicine to patients.
- (2) The passage from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* that establishes a permanent essence needs to be interpreted so a **mind-basis-of-all** taught in various scriptures, including the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*, needs to be interpreted as well. Someone asks how this works and the answer is that this permanent essence is taught using the term basis-of-all. To show his, Lama Tsongkhapa cites additional sutra quotes from the *Sutra on the Heavily Adorned* and the *Descent into Lanka Sutra*. Then he explains how these two are synonyms, in that the basis of intention in teaching a basis-of-all is emptiness and the basis of intention for teaching a tathagata essence is emptiness. Emptiness permeates the nature of all things so it is the same as basis-of-all. There is the distinction that tathagata essence refers specifically to the emptiness of the mind, but here it seems that tathagata essence is being equated to the basis-of-all. But nonetheless, the Buddha did teach the tathagata essence by the term basis-of-all; they have the same basis of intention, emptiness, even though they aren't literally synonymous. In *Meditation on Emptiness* (pp.616-7), there is a passage concerning this.
- (3) The last point concerns discriminating between **the three natures**. The clarifying passage is from the *Descent into Lanka Sutra* (one of the two mentioned earlier by Lama Tsongkhapa as being of the second type of sutra), and there is a following passage from that sutra well. This passage is used to clarify the passage from the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought* that says that other-powered phenomena and thoroughly established are established by way of their own character and imputational factors are not. This passage clarifies the three natures by indicating, "the characteristics of emptiness, unproduced, non-dual, and lacking inherent existence are inserted in the sutras of all the buddhas."

Masters Program: *Middle Way* Review Class with Jampa Gendun – January 22 – 26, 2001 (#35)

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

January 29 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3A2 Indicating it [to be an interpretable meaning teaching] by means of reasonings

We are in the section explaining that the scriptural statements regarding external objects being ‘only mind’ require interpretation. We have shown this by means of scripture and are currently looking at a second section that shows by reasoning that these statements are interpretive.

Establishing interpretive meaning sutras through reasoning

Just as the Buddha taught generosity first in order to lead trainees on towards emptiness, he also taught the non-existence of external objects. First he taught that they do not exist so that disciples could come to see that consciousnesses do not inherently exist. These teachings are directed to those who are strongly attached to forms. Over and above that it can lead them to realize the selflessness of inherently existent objects. What are the steps in this process? Giving up attachment to forms, we can realize that the world is created principally by mind. We can then come to understand that appearances are dependent on the mind. Then a similar analysis can be applied to the mind and one can realize that consciousness is similar to form in not existing as it appears, eventually refuting its inherent existence. It is probably true that most of us equate existence with inherent existence. Perhaps it is necessary to begin by saying things do not exist in order to loosen the mind’s attachment to inherent existence. When we say ‘external objects’ we are talking about objects that exist external to the mind, which means objects acting as causes of mind as opposed to existing as the same entity as the mind.

Moving from the Chittamatra view to the Prasangika view

We are trying to understand the nature of the shift from Chittamatra’s position of no external objects to Prasangika’s view of non-inherent existence. Is this a natural shift that occurs at the end of Chittamatra’s analysis? It is difficult to describe experientially. In this regard, the Chittamatra view denying external objects is considered a higher view than Sautrantika’s in progressing towards the final view. Remember earlier that we said that roughly seventy percent comes from the side of the mind for Chittamatra and thirty percent from the side of the object, whereas for Svatantrika we can say that fifty percent comes from the side of the mind and fifty percent from the side of the object. For Prasangika we said that one hundred percent comes from the side of the mind – mind is principal as the creator of the world.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-2B2C-3B Indicating the method for realizing the interpretable and definitive meaning so the sutras
By way of scripture and reasoning we have refuted Chittamatra’s position on types of definitive and interpretive scriptures. Any sutra whose meaning does not mainly explain emptiness requires interpretation. If the sutra doesn’t teach ultimate truth explicitly it is interpretive. If we take interpretive sutras and interpret them in terms of emptiness they can be used to lead students to emptiness gradually. The intention of the Buddha is always to lead students to the final view of emptiness.

Interpretive scriptures also lead students towards emptiness

Chandrakirti gives us two examples. First, in an example from the *Abhidharma* the Buddha teaches about the four elements (earth, air, water and fire). The elements themselves are not objects of the eye consciousness but the evolutes (such as colors and shapes) are built up from the four elements and are objects of the eye consciousness. Here the Buddha is not explicitly teaching emptiness but it can be used as a method for realizing emptiness. If the evolutes inherently existed then the elements and the sense spheres should be the same in being suitable to appear to the eye consciousness. If two things exist from their own side there should be no distinction in one existing for an eye consciousness and one not. Either they both exist for a consciousness or neither does since their existence is not established in relation to any consciousness. In a second example, there is a sutra passage that says, ‘the meaning of impermanence is the meaning of not existing.’ Again, this line from sutra does not teach emptiness but can become a method leading to the view of emptiness. The fact that things arise and disintegrate entails that they do not inherently exist.

Sources that identify definitive and interpretive meaning scriptures

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes the *King of Meditative Stabilizations Sutra* as one source indicating how to determine interpretive and definitive meaning sutras. Lama Tsongkhapa says that interpretive teachings that are not explicitly concerned with emptiness can also lead in an indirect way to the realization of ultimate truth. When you study emptiness you do not need to study the sutras widely because one view is sufficient to realize emptiness. When you realize the emptiness of one thing you realize the emptiness of all things. In terms of conduct one practice is not sufficient, in terms of view one teaching is sufficient. Geshe-la discusses the Chittamatra and Prasangika sources for determining which scriptures are definitive and which are interpretive. Chittamatra relies on the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*. Prasangika, following Nagarjuna, bases its understanding on the *Teachings of Akshayamati Sutra*. For further reading, see sections in *Meditation on Emptiness*, beginning on p.422 and p.598.

January 30 (Tuesday)

The three natures and the analogy of the snake

It is said that every teaching can be used in practice to realize emptiness. We now move on to a discussion of the three natures as Prasangika would interpret them. The three natures are taught in the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*, which for Prasangika is a sutra that requires interpretation. Lama Tsongkhapa uses the analogy of a snake being imputed on a rope seen in dim light to explain the three natures according to Prasangika. The components of the analogy are:

- * Rope – represents other-powered phenomena, the base;
- * Snake – represents a final nature;
- * Snake superimposed on a rope – represents a non-existent imputational factor, e.g. inherent existence;
- * Snake imputed on an actual snake – represents a thoroughly established nature, e.g. emptiness of inherent existence.

A snake is only imagined, or imputed, on the basis of a coiled rope. A snake is thoroughly established on the basis of an actual snake because an actual snake exists. It is not imagined to exist while, in fact, not existing. A snake does exist with respect to a snake – it is its actual nature, nothing is being superimposed upon it. This snake imputed on a snake represents seeing the lack of inherent existence, which is the actual way that things exist. ‘Thoroughly established’ refers to the final mode of being of an object. In the case of a snake being imputed on a rope a non-existent mode of being is being superimposed upon an other-powered phenomena. What is this non-existent final mode of being? The product’s being established from its own side as its own final mode of being is non-existent. When we impute inherent existence, which is not there, on an other-powered phenomenon that is the imputational factor on the base of an other-powered phenomenon.

The thoroughly established nature is established in the object itself. It is not being hallucinated. The snake as a snake is merely an analogy, with snake in this case representing the lack of inherent existence, which when seen is the final mode of being, the final nature. This is what is meant when Lama Tsongkhapa says snake is thoroughly established with regard to an actual snake. This corresponds to seeing things the way they actually are in terms of their final nature.

The final mode of being in Prasangika

Nagarjuna says, “Natures are not fabricated and do not exist in reliance upon other.” If a product is its own final nature it must be non-fabricated and not depend upon other. ‘Non-fabricated’ means not newly produced. ‘Not depending upon other’ means not depending upon causes and conditions. A product cannot be its own final nature because it is newly produced and depends upon causes and conditions (see also *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness* by Elizabeth Napper, p.130). However, we imagine phenomena to exist as their own final nature. We superimpose upon phenomena that they are established by way of their own character as their final nature. We perceive products with this superimposed final nature of inherent existence, which does not exist. The true unhallucinated mode of being of things is emptiness, which is seen by a Buddha’s seer of modes. Geshe-la explains Lama Tsongkhapa’s text, saying that when a Buddha observes the mode of being he does so without contacting conventionalities – there is no appearance of

conventionalities. A seer of modes is not obstructed by conventionalities. For it, only the final mode appears. Until one achieves omniscience one has to alternate between seeing conventionalities and seeing the final nature, or mode of existing.

Sources for the Chittamatra and Prasangika understanding of the three natures

Chittamatra's understanding of the three natures is based on the 'Questions of Paramarthasamudgata' chapter of the *Sutra Unraveling the Thought*. Prasangika, who holds that this scripture requires interpretation, uses the 'Questions of Maitreya' chapter from the *Twenty-Five Thousand Stanza Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* to explain the three natures. Here it explains that all phenomena exist according to the terminology and conventions of the world but do not exist ultimately. See also *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.618.

Svatantrika's understanding of the three natures

Svatantrika holds that other-powered phenomena and imputational factors are incomplete as a basis of excellent qualities. The thoroughly established alone are a thoroughly complete basis for excellent qualities. In the *Ornament* 'the incomplete' refers to other-powered phenomena and imputational factors.

Conclusion of reasoning refuting production from other

This concludes the refutation of production from other. As a short review, we are refuting production from the four extremes, which is the main topic of the sixth chapter. The original verse from Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* is:

*Not from self, not from other,
Not from both, not causelessly;
Production of any thing anywhere
Does not exist ever.*

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-3 Refuting production from both

We now proceed to refute the third extreme of production from both self and other.

Nirgranthas assert production from both self and other

This type of production is asserted by the Nirgranthas (or Jains). Given the example of a pot, they say that it is produced from the clay that is the same nature as itself, as well as by other conditions such as the potter, wheel, etc. that are other. Since they do not claim that a pot is produced only from self or only from other they assert that they avoid the faults that accrue individually with respect to production from self and production from other.

Nirgranthas subsume all objects of knowledge into nine categories (see *Cutting Through Appearances*, p.167). They can still be seen in India going naked around Sarnath, standing on one leg, and practicing other forms of extreme asceticism in order to purify their bad karma. They say that a person is produced from the nature of his life force, which is the same nature as his past life, constituting production from self. Being produced from other there are two possible ways that a person is produced: (i) he could have been a god, for example, in a previous life and then gone on to an 'other' state as a human in his present life, or (ii) being produced by his parents, he is produced from other.

Prasangika refutes the Nirgranthas based on the previous reasonings

Prasangika refutes production from both self and other using the same reasonings they have already used to refute production from self and production from other individually. Production from self is meaningless and endless. Production from other implies anything could be produced from anything else as has been explained.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1B-4 Refuting causeless production

We now examine the refutation of production from the fourth and final extreme, causeless production.

Charvakas assert causeless production

Causeless production is asserted by the Charvakas (or Hedonists). This position is reminiscent of western materialism and the empiricists who hold that only direct observation is reliable. They advocate the attempt to find satisfaction only with what is present in this life. They are called ‘Gone Afar’ because they have gone away from the right view. They are also called Nihilists because they do not believe in past and future lives. They do not believe in charity being the cause of wealth and other modes of causation asserted by Buddhists. They advocate no cause and effect in the moral sense. When you die you simply go out of existence. Many Westerners would probably agree with this type of philosophy.

They go on to talk about things like the sharpness of thorns being simply the nature of the thing. They assert that things like this are not caused, saying, for example, that nobody designed a peacock’s feather. Chandrakirti responds that if this were the case then everything could be produced from everything else because everything else is equal in not being a cause. Lama Tsongkhapa goes on saying that if seasons and labor were not the cause of the ripening of fruit then the ripening of fruit would go on at all times and there would be no reason to work the fields as such effort would yield no results and crops would come of themselves.

January 31 (Wednesday)

Refuting causeless production by way of reasoning

The representatives of the view of causeless production are the Charvakas, who assert that only what is directly perceived exists, meaning that they do not accept inferential cognition. In examining their view in more detail, it doesn’t seem that they reject cause and effect altogether. As we saw yesterday, Chandrakirti has put forth the consequence of holding to causeless production that everything would be produced from everything since everything is equally the cause of everything else. For example, the type of fruit, the color of feathers, etc. would not be coordinated with their causes. So this is Chandrakirti’s contradiction of causeless production by way of reasoning.

Refuting causeless production by way of perception

In terms of rejecting it by way of perception, Chandrakirti goes on to say that we can see all the hardships and efforts of beings who plant seeds and so forth, and all this is done in order to reap the crops from that work. If things were produced causelessly, then all those difficulties would be pointless. The fact that people do all that work shows that production is caused.

Other faults entailed in causeless production

Chandrakirti continues, pointing out other faults in verse 6.100, saying that if migrating beings were produced without causes, they would be unapprehendable, just like the fragrance and color of a sky flower. A sky flower is another one of the common examples used for a non-existent in Buddhist studies. So beings are unlike a sky flower in that they are indeed shown to exist and arise due to causes. They apprehend objects with their minds, just as one’s own mind having the aspect of blue is produced from blue. Also all the various objects of the world arise from their own respective causes.

Charvakas assert the arising of things from the four elements

Charvakas can be called materialists, in that they only believe in those phenomena that are directly perceived, so all the migrations and realms of reality, and the beings within those realms, arise in reliance upon the four elements. From this assertion we can gather that there is some notion of cause and effect even within Charvaka philosophy. For them, consciousness arises in dependence upon the four elements, implying that they are the substantial cause for the mind. Buddhists would never hold that mind or awareness could arise solely from the elements although physical matter is, in deed, a cooperative condition of mind. For the Charvakas though, mind has a capacity and these capacities come about through the way the four elements aggregate, just as beer is seen to possess the capacity to cause inebriation.

Beer, due to the way the elements are combined, can bring about inebriation and passing out. This potency that physical matter has is able to bring about a mental state, inebriation, and it arises solely from physical atoms. It has the capacity for an awareness to be produced and as a result of that, an awareness is able to be produced in that state. Mind is seen as equivalent to the brain in science, or at

least they would say that mind is a state that is arisen from the brain. They point to the fact that, for example, the brain can be stimulated to produce experiences and memories and damage to the brain causes damage to the mind. Likewise, the Charvakas say that inner and outer things of the world rely solely upon the aggregation of the elements. There are no past and future lives, no buddhahood, and nothing exists that cannot be seen or known directly. However, according to Jeffrey Hopkins, apparently there are some Charvakas who do accept past and future lives but in this context, Chandrakirti will be refuting those who don't (for more on the Charvakas and the refutation of their views, see *Meditation on Emptiness* pp.327-333).

Prasangika challenges the Charvakas regarding the nature of not seeing other lives. To establish the non-existence of past and future lives, the Charvakas quote a text by Lokachakshu, which says, "This body is a mere gathering together...what is gone will not return." Prasangika replies to this by asking how the Charvakas can be so certain that past and future lives do not exist. Charvaka says because they are not seen at present. Prasangika asks, what is the nature of this non-seeing, is it directly perceiving or not directly perceiving? They reply that this non-seeing is directly perceiving. So they are equating not seeing with direct perception, which or them is the only valid way of knowing. If this were the case then rabbit's horns would be the object of direct perception since they are not seen.

Regarding this, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said that not seeing other lives does not establish that they do not exist. No one has ever seen the non-existence of past and future lives, so at best one should simply keep an open mind as to their possible existence. Certainly there are advantages to accepting the existence of past and future lives. But it is also shown in the *Pramanavartika* by Dharmakirti that, since the existence of past and future lives is a hidden phenomenon, it should be realized by reasoning and he sets out numerous lines of reasoning in his text. An excellent summary of these reasonings can be found in *A Necklace of Good Fortune* by Geshe Lam Rim.

The consequence of directly perceiving non-existents

So if the Charvakas say that this non-seeing is directly perceiving, that those two are equivalent, then Prasangika has the consequence that even non-existents, such as the horns of a rabbit, would be directly perceived, since they are equally not seen. If past and future lives are not seen, and you are using a direct perceiver to see that, then that which is not being seen is being directly perceived. In other words, the means of not seeing is by direct perception, so the non-seeing is an object of direct perception. If a non-existent is not directly seen, it is directly perceived.

The passage from *Illumination* (see transcript of week 32, p.14) that explains this could be reworded as follows:

PRASANGIKA-MADHYAMIKAS: If the opposite of directly seeing is asserted to be direct perception, then even non-things would not be mutually exclusive with manifest phenomena. Therefore, for you, even non-things would be things because the opposite of directly seeing lives beyond is direct perception, the direct object of comprehension of which is a manifest phenomenon, like a thing.

So for the Charvakas, the direct perceiver in this case acts as a valid cognizer of the non-existence of past and future lives. Past and future lives are not seen and this "opposite of direct seeing" is asserted to be direct perceiving. Lama Tsongkhapa is equating the "opposite of direct seeing" to direct perceiving, so then, from the Charvaka response that a non-existent (past and future lives) is not seen and that non-seeing is done by direct perceiving, it follows that a non-existent (past and future lives) would be directly perceived. Therefore, any non-existent, such as the horns of a rabbit, would be directly perceived.

The consequence that non-existents would be manifest objects

Lama Tsongkhapa continues, saying that this non-existent which is not being seen – the non-seer of that is a direct perceiver. Even a non-existent therefore is directly perceived, therefore non-existence would be manifest, an object of comprehension for a direct perceiver. So even non-existences would be directly perceived and therefore would be manifest objects. As we saw earlier, manifest or direct is applied to the object for Prasangika. So here the consequence is that a non-existent would be a manifest object (because it would be a direct object of comprehension), and therefore it would be a

thing. Then, the consequences that follow from that would be that non-things would not exist (since they are all things), and if non-things don't exist, things don't exist. If things don't exist then any thesis built on the notion of the four elements and the non-existence of past and future lives would be lost.

The Charvaka responds that the non-existence of other lives is apprehended by an inferential cognizer

To summarize this argument so far, if a non-existent were the object of a direct perception, it would be a manifest object, a thing, so in that case non-things would not exist, and if non-things did not exist, then things would not exist. However, if the non-existence of future lives is *not* a manifest object and is *not* directly perceived, then its non-existence cannot be inferred from not directly perceiving it. So Prasangika asks the Charvakas how “a world beyond is inferred to not exist by means of that non-apprehension?” The Charvakas reply that it is apprehended by an inferential cognizer and, as we will see, Prasangika will show that this directly contradicts the Charvakas' own tenets.

February 1 (Thursday)

The reasoning in the Charvaka argument

Regarding what we discussed yesterday, one of the primary tenets of the Charvakas is that they accept only direct perception, and refute the existence of past and future lives and so forth. They replied to Prasangika that they know lives beyond do not exist since they are not seen. When they say that they do not see them, this is a way of knowing, so for them, this must be a direct perception since that is the only valid way of knowing. So if not seeing is equivalent to direct perception then any non-existent is an object of direct perception because it is likewise not seen, and this is absurd since a non-existent cannot be an object of direct perception. A non-existent is not the object of any valid cognition. Charvakas use the reason of not seeing to be the reason for non-existence and this is not acceptable for Prasangika. There are three types of valid reasons, and one is the correct reason of non-observation, but for that one must posit that the object is suitable for observation. If it is suitable to be seen and you do not see it then that can be used as a correct reason establishing its non-existence. For example, at a place where there is no pot, a pot is non-existent, because a pot is not observed by a valid cognition. If a pot existed at that place, since it is suitable to be cognized, its non-cognition establishes its non-existence at that place.

Recap of the argument

The first consequence we examined was that a non-existent would be just like a thing, because it is the direct object of a direct perceiver, i.e. a non-existent is a manifest object since it is the direct object of a direct perceiver. In which case non-things do not exist, since there are only manifest objects. In a Buddhist context, ‘non-things’ can be refer to either that which is not a thing (both existents and non-existents), or to only permanent phenomena (existents which are not things), but here it seems to be the first meaning. From this non-existence of non-things, it follows that things would not exist. The complement of non-things is things so if one does not exist, the other does not exist. If things do not exist, then the whole basis of what the Charvakas are basing their theory on, i.e. that everything arising from the four elements, would be lost. That the world is created out of the four elements would be refuted since the four elements do not exist.

Charvakas assert only direct perception

As we discussed at the end of class, Prasangika then asks a question: if the non-existence of other lives is not a manifest phenomenon, and therefore is not directly perceived, then how can you hold that the non-existence of other lives exists? In other words, how can a non-existent be inferred by not apprehending it? Charvaka replies that it is apprehended by inference, which is directly refuting another of their tenets. With regard to that, there are two ways that we can validly understand an object, direct and inferential valid cognition. It seems that Charvakas were holding only to the first, as is shown in the quotation from their text (“However many objects...” see transcript of week 32, p.15). So here Prasangika has forced the Charvakas into the position where they assert that the non-existence of other lives is apprehended by an inferential cognizer.

Faulting the Charvaka view

In verse 6.101, Chandrakirti says that if you, the Charvakas, have mental darkness with regard to the gross elements of this life, how can you realize subtle objects such as past and future lives? The Charvakas are

obscured with regard to the gross elements in that they hold them to truly exist, so how can they be expected to understand the subtle realization of past and future lives. Then in 6.102, Chandrakirti says that when the Charvakas deny the existence of other lives they are wrongly viewing objects of knowledge. Why is that so? Chandrakirti says that it is due to having a body that serves as a support of such views. So there is a syllogism being set out here by Chandrakirti to show the faults of the Charvaka views:

The Charvakas, when denying the existence of past and future lives (subject);
Are mistakenly viewing the nature of objects of knowledge (predicate);
Because they have a body which serves as a support of such views (reason);
For example, like the assertion that the elements truly exist (similar example).

So from this one can conclude that the non-existence of past and future lives is a wrong way of viewing objects of knowledge.

The meaning of having a ‘body’ which is the basis of such views

What does ‘body’ mean here? It seems that there are three possible ways to interpret this. Geshe-la mentions one in his commentary (see transcript of week 32, p.17). Certain views are supported by certain types of embodiment, Geshe-la says that the support is the physical body, meaning that the views are supported on it, abiding with it until the body disintegrates. The idea here is that by simply taking rebirth as a Charvaka, where one studies Charvaka texts and learns to hold their tenets, can act as a basis for such wrong views. Likewise, this would apply to their assertion of the four elements to truly exist. When the basis disintegrates, those views supported upon it die as well. All of those conceptions no longer have a suitable support. Geshe-la did say previously that the seeds of the acquired conceptions would carry into another life but still the idea here is that the body is the support for possessing that type of view.

A second way to look at this is in the light of the idea that, on the basis of a certain view, one goes on to have other views. Chandrakirti mentions that the body is equal to the trunk, so it can be a metaphor for the trunk of a tree from which other branches arise. A third way of explaining the meaning of ‘body’ in this context can be seen in the notes on this verse in Huntington’s *Emptiness of Emptiness* (p.251, note 129). He says that a materialist sees the present existence as the only reality and the body as an ultimately real entity. There is no mind other than the body, so when the body dies, the mind ceases along with the self. So on the basis of holding to that, one would deny past and future lives.

It seems that the idea here though is that Chandrakirti is saying that the body is a basis for such types of views, and the ‘body’ could be taken to be holding the elements to truly exist. Regarding the view of the non-existence of other lives, Dharmakirti said that, in order to explain the infinite compassion of a buddha, past and future lives must exist since it would require countless lifetimes to develop such compassion. For someone who held to the non-existence of other lives, such an accomplishment would have to be done in one lifetime which he sees as not possible.

Charvakas take exception to the example

To what has just been said, the Charvakas respond, saying that the example is not established. The similar example Chandrakirti gives is the conceiving the four elements to truly exist, and they are saying that this reason is not established as being pervasive with having mistaken objects of knowledge. For the Charvakas, the example is empty of the predicate, i.e. the predicate is ‘mistakenly viewing objects of the world,’ and since they are saying that the elements *do* truly exist, then there is no mistaken view. Prasangika responds saying they are not truly existent and to conceive them as such is indeed a mistaken view. Lama Tsongkhapa examines the working of the syllogism, saying that the example is established and that it is not empty of the predicate as the Charvakas contend.

The example are established and other views can be substituted for the subject

The Charvakas ask for proof that the elements do not truly exist and Chandrakirti says in 6.103 that this was already proved earlier in that the inherent existence of the four elements was already refuted in general. Through the general refutation of production from the four extremes, Prasangika has already refuted the inherent existence of the elements. Further, Lama Tsongkhapa says that not only do the Charvakas deny the existence of past and future lives (as we saw in verse 6.102), but they also deny the existence of the law of cause and effect as well as that complete buddhahood exists. So similarly, by working with the previous

syllogism, you can substitute other subjects depending upon the context. For example, this syllogism also follows:

The Charvakas, when refuting complete buddhahood,
Are mistakenly viewing objects of knowledge,
Because they have a body which serves as a support of such views,
For example, like the assertion that the elements truly exist.

Similar consequences do not hold for Prasangika

An objection comes from the Charvakas, saying that Prasangika has a similar problem, in that the Charvakas can do the same in substituting in the syllogism, thereby having similar consequences. Prasangika replies that it is not similar in that there is no example that we are mistakenly viewing objects of knowledge. On the contrary we can actually put this syllogism in a positive fashion, where the subject is put forward for a reverse of their syllogism, and the rest of it is given by Lama Tsongkhapa as follows:

The Prasangikas, when realizing that past and future lives exist,
View the nature of objects of knowledge, the ultimate object,
Because of possessing a body which serves as a support of such views,
For example, like when asserting the realization of selflessness.

How is the subject related to the predicate in that syllogism? If the self and the mind were just a physical state and the mind disappeared along with the body then there could be no future lives so perhaps upon seeing the elements as not inherently existent then there would be the realization of the existence of past and future lives. Lama Tsongkhapa also provides other subjects for such a “positive” syllogism, such as the Prasangika assertion of complete buddhahood.

Others’ systems have thus been refuted and Prasangika’s has been proven

In conclusion, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes verse 6.8ab, in which Chandrakirti stated the initial assertion regarding the refutation of production from the four extremes. By refuting these four, inherent production is refuted. There is no fifth possibility. Lama Tsongkhapa says, “Therefore one should not say ‘Others’ systems have been refuted, but our own system has not been proven.” He seems to be saying that by refuting others’ systems, we have established our own.

February 2 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la’s answers to questions in class today

- * Geshe-la said that the term ‘merely’ in merely imputed refutes that phenomena exist inherently, existing from their own side. In fact, Svatantrika would also say that phenomena are merely imputed, but there ‘merely’ eliminates only that phenomena are truly existent, not that they are inherently existent. In so doing, Svatantrika allows for something to come from the side of the object. Prasangika’s ‘merely’ eliminates anything coming from the side of the object. But isn’t the basis of imputation coming from the other side? Yes, but the basis of imputation is not the object imputed.
- * Regarding the appearance of inherent existence to a sense consciousness, Geshe-la said that it is merely imputed. Further, he also indicated that when we say imputed by conception, that doesn’t mean it must be imputed by the person observing it. However, this doesn’t mean that inherent existence appears for an individual person due to someone else imputing it but rather it appears due to the conception of inherent existence in the continuum of that individual.
- * In the context of that question, Geshe-la said that first the conception of a self of phenomena arises upon seeing a person’s form and then the conception of a self of persons arises upon being introduced to the person.
- * Regarding the question on eye consciousness being trained to realize a person as one’s father (reference to *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, p.18), it seems that it’s more like ‘recognize’ father than ‘realize’ father. Yet Geshe-la did say that in worldly convention we can say, “I saw my father,” and it is correct, even though the eye consciousness only apprehends color and shape.

3B1C-2B3E-2A1C The meaning established by refuting production from the four extremes

We've gone through the four possibilities of inherent production and so now we look at the consequences of that refutation.

Inherent production has unequivocally been refuted

A question is raised, saying that, if things are not produced in any of those four ways, then how are things produced? Lama Tsongkhapa says that if things were inherently produced, they would have to be produced in one of those four ways, there is no fifth conceivable possibility of inherent production. So, if those four are refuted, inherent production is refuted, as shown in verse 6.104ab. The way the syllogism can be set out is presented as follows: Things, as the subject, are free from inherent existence because they are not produced from self, other, both, and without causes. It's interesting though that Lama Tsongkhapa never answers the question though about how things are actually produced.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

February 2 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A2 Dispelling arguments regarding those refutations

Having completed the refutation of production from the four extremes, the text now addresses arguments that the Prasangika refutation is not valid.

3B1C-2B3E-2A2A Actual meaning

Someone asks, if things are not produced inherently, how can the unproduced, such as blue, be apprehended? Lama Tsongkhapa says that no one has ever correctly apprehended an inherently existent blue, but even the nature of blue that *does* exist is not seen, and this is due to the pollution of ignorance, here meaning the conception of true existence. Blue is not blue's final mode of existence or mode of being; it is not its final nature. Therefore, even though an eye consciousness does apprehend blue, it does not apprehend its nature. Due to the conception of true existence, the person is obscured from seeing that final mode of being of blue.

Two meanings for 'nature' in this context

Chandrakirti says that "the childish do not have perception of the nature of blue and so forth," and Geshe-la says that 'nature' in this context can refer to either (1) the ultimate nature, i.e. blue's lack of inherent existence, or (2) the subtle conventional nature, i.e. blue's being merely imputed by conception. Ultimate nature is as we've explained above. With regard to the conventional nature of things, we can talk about both the coarse and the subtle. For blue, the coarse conventional nature is simply its aspect of being the color blue, while with regard to the subtle, within the context of blue not existing inherently it existing in dependence upon being imputed. So in commenting on Chandrakirti's assertion that the childish are prevented from seeing the nature of blue and so forth, Geshe-la indicates initially that this nature refers only to the ultimate nature. However, later he says it could be either of those two meanings, so it seems that both meanings for nature are acceptable.

"The worldly have thick confusion like a mass of clouds"

Someone asks, so when blue appears, what is it that is seen to appear? Lama Tsongkhapa replies that it is *not* the nature of blue since what is seen is seen under the influence of ignorance. Seeing the object by the force of being polluted by ignorance, we are not able to see its nature. As Chandrakirti says in verse 6.104cd, sentient beings, the worldly, are obscured from seeing the nature due to the "thick confusion like a mass of clouds." The non-seeing of the actual nature of the object is the source of our grasping at the object to truly exist. So technically how long is one obscured in regard to the nature of objects? How long is one under the influence of ignorance and unable to see conventional nature? In an earlier passage in the text, it said that ignorance is the cause for objects to appear as inherently existent, and also that ignorance is the cause of the knowledge obstructions. So even though one has eliminated ignorance by the time one reaches the pure grounds, there is still the appearance of inherent existence on those grounds due to the influence of the knowledge obstructions that were caused by ignorance. So we might conclude that pollution from ignorance could last until Buddhahood and yet, it also could be that here we are talking about those beings who have not had either a direct realization or even just an inferential realization of emptiness, since it's not that clear.

February 5 (Monday)

Lower schools misapprehend the nature of things

In this section that we began discussing last week, we are dispelling arguments against our refutation coming from the lower schools. These schools hold that if things are not inherently produced then they are not produced at all. They ask Prasangika how they posit production. How can unproduced things such as the color blue be apprehended? All proponents of inherently existing things, from Svatantrika downward ask this. Prasangika responds by saying that an inherently existent nature is not correctly apprehended by anyone. There is no valid cognizer of an inherently existing blue and yet the color blue does have a nature that is not inherently existent. The final nature of blue cannot be seen by someone whose mind is polluted by ignorance. This final nature is obscured by the ignorance that conceives of true existence. What do we mean by the nature of blue? Geshe-la gives two possibilities: (i) the ultimate nature of blue, not inherently existing, or (ii) the subtle conventional nature, which is merely imputed by conceptuality. The blue that is empty of

inherent existence is merely imputed by conceptuality. Within the sphere of emptiness, causes give rise to results. Blue appears as ‘real’ to ordinary beings but this is not its final nature. Even though the eye consciousness apprehends blue, its final nature is not seen due to ignorance. Ignorance conceives of that blue as its own final nature.

‘Non-seeing’ in two contexts

Sentient beings are obscured from seeing the final nature of objects. Confusion and obscuration are roughly synonymous with ignorance. In this context we talk about the ‘non-seeing in the childish,’ that is the non-seeing of the nature of objects, which causes us to grasp at objects as inherently existent. Earlier in our studies it was said that non-seeing is the highest seeing. In that context ‘non-seeing’ referred to a superior’s wisdom of meditative equipoise, which lacks the appearance of inherent existence.

Mistaken seeing arises from not understanding dependent-arising

Why are things seen mistakenly? Just because something is seen doesn’t mean it exists. For instance, the falling hairs or two moons seen by someone with cataracts do not exist for those whose eye sense power is not impaired. Likewise, ordinary beings see the varieties (of conventionalities) with a consciousness that is impaired by confusion, or ignorance. We conceive of things to inherently exist. Just as cataracts obscure the eye, confusion obscures the mind. For the unwise, those who have not realized emptiness, karmic formations arise in dependence upon confusion, whereas the wise (who have realized emptiness) have eliminated the basis for the arising of karmic formations. The wise realize that things are empty and thereby remove the first of the twelve links of dependent-arising.

This discussion takes place in the context of a sixth grounder who has achieved a thorough understanding of the emptiness of the twelve links of dependent-arising. This bodhisattva realizes the lack of inherent existence of karmic formations and removes the ignorance that is the cause of these actions.

February 6 (Tuesday)

An objection concerning things existing ultimate and conventionally

The lower schools bring out an objection, as stated in verse 6.107, saying that things must be inherently existent because they exist. For them, this follows since phenomena such as forms, if they do not ultimately exist (“do not exist in suchness”), then they wouldn’t conventionally exist, meaning that they wouldn’t exist at all, just like the son of a barren woman. Since they do exist, they therefore must inherently exist. Geshe-la says this is the lower schools, but exactly who is putting forth such a view? For any of the lower schools, what is the relationship between ultimate existence and conventional existence? Are they mutually exclusive?

Here it says that “if things do not exist in suchness,” what does that mean? It seems that it refers to things not existing in the face of searching for them upon ultimate analysis. Then, if something ‘exists in suchness’ does it ultimately exist? It would seem so, since ultimate existence means to exist in reality. So then, if things do not exist ultimately would all of the lower schools necessarily hold them to not exist conventionally? It doesn’t seem so. For example, Svatantrika, just like Prasangika, holds that nothing exists ultimately and yet all phenomena, exist for them conventionally.

One way to interpret this passage so that it would refer to *all* the lower schools is to equate ‘ultimate existence’ here to inherent existence, as it is described for Prasangika. There is some additional commentary on this subject in Geshe-la’s teachings on verse 6.113 (p.12 of transcripts for week 33). So in a sense, conventional existence here could simply mean ‘existing in worldly convention.’ Regarding ultimate existence though, this objector is saying that if something doesn’t exist ultimately then it doesn’t exist conventionally, and concludes that things must inherently exist, so it would seem that to exist in suchness (or to exist ultimately) in this context means ‘existing inherently.’

Prasangika replies that such objectors should debate with those with cataracts first. Chandrakirti responds to this objection in verse 6.108, saying that if you’re going to call into question whether what appears exists then you should begin at the most superficial level. He says that they should ask

those with cataracts why they see falling hairs when those hairs do not exist, and yet they do not see the son of a barren woman. Anyone with cataracts would say that the reason they see falling hairs is that they have a condition that causes them to see such, and they do not see the son of a barren woman because there are no conditions under which a son of a barren woman can appear. So Chandrakirti is saying, once you understand that, due to the superficial impairment of cataracts, that which is not inherently produced but nonetheless appears to exist (i.e. falling hairs), does not exist at all, then you will come to see that the falling hairs do not exist, just like the son of a barren woman does not exist. Yet, as Geshe-la points out, there is a difference between falling hairs and the son of a barren woman because one does appear while the other does not.

Chandrakirti is telling those opponents that, having settled that with those with cataracts, then you can go and dispute with those who have the cataract of ignorance, the deep cause of error, for whom pots and so forth appear to inherently exist. Those pots and so forth are also not inherently produced, just like the son of a barren woman, and yet, just like the falling hairs, they appear. In other words, just as you would not posit the existence or non-existence of visual forms in dependence on someone with cataracts, likewise we do not base our knowledge of the existence or non-existence of inherently existent things on those beings whose minds are impaired by ignorance. Rather, as Lama Tsongkhapa says, we base our knowledge on those who have clear sight, i.e. the yogis who possess exalted wisdom. Some non-existents appear and some do not appear, and this occurs due to conditions, as we can see in the case of someone with cataracts. Likewise, as we see in the case of someone with the cataracts of ignorance, due to certain conditions there are some appearances but other objects do not appear, yet all are equally non-inherently existent, just like the son of a barren woman.

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes an unnamed sutra to support this claim (“The aggregates are devoid of nature...”). He says that non-inherent existence is not to be disputed with yogis, those superiors who have a direct realization of emptiness. They have realized that inherent existence does not exist ultimately or conventionally.

Examining why some non-existents appear and others do not

Further, in verse 6.109, Chandrakirti gives another piece of advice, providing a number of examples, such as the water of a mirage, the face in the reflection, and so forth. All these examples are unproduced, just like the son of a barren woman, and yet they appear to exist and we grasp at that appearance. However, the difference between those and a son of a barren woman, which does not appear and hence is not grasped at, is that there are causes and conditions for the appearance of the water of a mirage, the face of a reflection, and so on. In his commentary, Lama Tsongkhapa seems to be asking us to investigate why we make these distinctions between such appearances.

Restating the argument from the lower schools as a syllogism

As we’ve been discussing, the lower schools are arguing that forms and so forth, if they did not inherently exist, they would not exist at all like the son of a barren woman. It is because a son of a barren woman does not exist at all that it is not seen. Geshe-la says (p.2 of transcript of week 33) that the lower schools have in effect flung a consequence to Prasangika in the form of the following syllogism:

Forms and so forth,
They are not seen in the world,
Because they do not inherently exist,
Like the son of a barren woman.

What they are saying here is that, from their point of view, if it doesn’t exist inherently, it doesn’t exist conventionally, so it could not be seen in the world because it is non-existent, just as a son of a barren woman is not seen. For them inherent existence and existence are synonymous.

Chandrakirti replies to their syllogism

In verse 6.110, Chandrakirti replies to their argument, saying that they are similar in not being inherently existent, but forms and so forth *are* seen in the world, whereas a son of a barren woman *is not* seen in the world. Certain appearances do occur and others, such as a son of a barren woman, are not even seen. So the pervasion is not established in their consequence, i.e. that they are not seen in the world simply because they do not inherently exist. Just because something is not inherently existent, it is not definite that it is not seen in the world, just as a son of a barren woman is not seen. So technically the pervasion is indefinite, or

indeterminate, since there are some things that would not be seen and some that would. We could also say that both forms and a son of a barren woman are both imputed by conception and are alike in lacking inherent existence, but there is no valid basis of imputation for a son of a barren woman but there is for forms. The basis for this cannot be whether it is seen in the world or not.

Considering the above syllogism that is attributed to the lower schools, would the lower schools really say that things would not be seen if they didn't inherently exist? There are phenomena that are seen and do not exist for them either, such as the water of a mirage, which is seen by the world but even they would agree that it does not exist inherently. But then why did Prasangika go through all these different analogies of appearances?

Sutra indicates that forms and so forth, although not inherently existent, are apprehended objects. Lama Tsongkhapa follows with a sutra quote from the *Meeting of the Father and Son Sutra*, saying that what appears and is seen does not necessarily exist, just like several examples given (dreams, a city of smell-eaters, and so forth). In effect the Buddha is saying that we must begin to question our appearance of things as a prerequisite to understanding their emptiness. Prasangika says to the lower schools that the people in a dream and so forth should not be seen because they are not inherently existent, just like the son of a barren woman. So there is no pervasion that because things are not inherently existent, they are not seen. Prasangika asserts that, although they do not inherently exist, forms and so forth are apprehended objects, and so we are not similar to the lower schools in refuting inherent existence ultimately but asserting it conventionally. Nothing inherently exists either conventionally or ultimately, just like the son of a barren woman, but nonetheless forms, unlike the son of a barren woman, do exist in the conventions of the world.

February 7 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2A2B Presenting a summary of that

The lower schools have been trying to argue that if things did not exist inherently then they would not exist at all, like the son of a barren woman. Prasangika shows that this example is indefinite. Forms and so forth are like the son of a barren woman in that they do not inherently exist. Forms, however, unlike the son of a barren woman, do exist. Forms, unlike the son of a barren woman, do have a valid basis of imputation.

Like the son of a barren woman, inherent existence has no production in suchness or in the world

The lower schools ask Prasangika why they don't refute inherently produced forms ultimately and yet accept inherent production conventionally? Svatantrika accepts inherent production from other conventionally. For them, although inherently existent other does not exist ultimately, it does exist conventionally. Prasangika answers that just as the son of a barren woman is not produced in suchness or in the conventions of the world, likewise, all things are not produced inherently in suchness or in the conventions of the world. A pot that exists by way of its own entity doesn't exist in the perspective of a superior. In *The Emptiness of Emptiness*, Huntington uses the term 'everyday experience' for conventional existence. Inherently existent pots do exist in the perspective of ignorance, which apprehends them that way. There are three qualifications for an existent in Prasangika: (1) it must be renowned in the world; (2) it must not be damaged by a valid cognizer of conventionalities; and (3) it must not be damaged by a valid cognizer of the ultimate. This will come up again later in our studies.

No production by way of its own entity

Being without production by its own nature in suchness means lacking inherent production. To exist in suchness would be to exist ultimately, which means that a phenomenon would be found upon ultimate analysis. Nothing is found upon ultimate analysis. The fact that nothing is found by ultimate analysis means that emptiness is established by a superior's meditative equipoise. Recall that we've said that this 'non-seeing' is the highest seeing. In this context when we say that things are not produced we must qualify it with 'production by way of its own entity'. To conceive forms and so forth to be produced by way of their own entity is a mistaken awareness.

Phenomena are thoroughly pacified and unproduced from the start

Lama Tsongkhapa cites the *Cloud of Jewels Sutra*, which gives another flavor to the unproduced nature of phenomena. The fact that phenomena lack inherent production is not fabricated by a yogi's exalted wisdom, but rather phenomena are that way from the start. Phenomena are pacified means that their suchness, emptiness, is the object of a yogi's pacified exalted wisdom. This means that the non-inherent wisdom observed by this wisdom is not something it is fabricating. From the start means that phenomena are not inherently produced only as they occur for a yogi's exalted wisdom but even before this. From the first when they occur in the context of the conventions of the world. Phenomena are objects of a yogi's meditative equipoise because phenomena are inherently unproduced by way of their own entity. Also, phenomena are said to have passed beyond sorrow, that is, they are completely pure. They have passed beyond the object of negation, i.e. inherent existence. Sorrow, or suffering, arises from the conception of inherent existence. Phenomena have passed beyond inherent existence. Inherently existent production is always non-existent. At no time or place does it exist. Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche talked about this saying that if you had a forest and cut down the trees it would then be empty of trees. Before there were tree and later there may be trees. But inherent existence is not like the forest because it has never existed and will never exist.

Phenomena do exist conventionally

Because phenomena do not ultimately exist does not entail that they don't conventionally exist. Just because an object is not found under ultimate analysis doesn't mean it doesn't exist. Things exist as a given name, with nothing being behind that name. Phenomena cannot bear analysis but they still exist for ordinary beings and function in the ordinary world. Without analysis they operate well. Emptiness also exists conventionally. The lower schools argue with us using the example of a son of a barren woman but this argument is indeterminate because the son of a barren woman does not even exist for the world, therefore this example doesn't prove anything.

Ultimate truth and ultimate existence for the lower schools

Lama Tsongkhapa then goes on to examine the positions of some of the lower Buddhist schools regarding ultimate and conventional existence. For Prasangika ultimate existence is inherent existence. First he cites Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Knowledge*, which mainly sets forth the tenets of the Vaibhashikas. It seems that for the Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas one can generally say that ultimate existence and ultimate truth and conventional existence and conventional truth are equivalents. For Chittamatra one cannot say this because they posit other-powered phenomena as ultimately existing yet they are not ultimate truths because only the thoroughly established are ultimate truths. They say that other-powered phenomena ultimately exist because they are established by way of their own character. For Svatantrika and Prasangika nothing ultimately exists but there is ultimate truth. There is a nice chart outlining the types of existence accepted by each of the four schools in *Meditation on Emptiness* on p. 39 (see handout dated February, 2001 called "Modes of Existence"). All of the schools below Prasangika accept inherent existence conventionally and also posit the two truths as inherently existing.

The four elements and the four evolutes cannot be substantially existent

So the lower schools all posit inherent existence conventionally. They believe that there has to be something that substantially exists in order for there to be a valid basis for imputation. The Vaibhashikas hold that the four elements and the four evolutes are substantially existent. They say that otherwise the Prasangikas would have no basis upon which to impute. If something substantially exists its appearance doesn't depend on another phenomenon in order for it to appear. On the other hand, if something imputedly exists its appearance depends on another phenomenon in order for it to appear. The lower schools believe that you must start with a basis that is substantially existent. Prasangika refutes this saying that all phenomena are merely imputed and that there is no basis that is substantially existent. It's turtles all the way down. They give the examples of the parts of a house – bricks, floors, walls, ceiling – all of which imputedly exist and on which we, in turn, impute house, and the collection of trees on which we impute a forest. They also point out that even the lower schools assert that a cause must be of a similar type to its result. An imputedly existent effect cannot arise from a substantially existent cause.

February 8 (Thursday)

Though things don't exist ultimately, still they exist. Since Prasangika asserts that all things are merely imputed it appears to other schools that this implies an infinite regression. Prasangika refutes substantial existence altogether. They say that in dependence upon a basis that is merely imputed, you can posit imputedly existent phenomena, for example, the way that we impute forest upon a collection of trees that imputedly exist.

3B1C-2B3E-2A3 How to cease wrong conceptions that hold to an extreme by means of the very production that is dependent-arising

Things are produced by dependent-arising

In verse 6.114 Chandrakirti refutes three modes of production, which is another way of restating the refutation of production from the four extremes:

the production of things does not arise from their own entity without causes

things are not produced from Ishvara, time, particles, and so forth

things are not produced from self, other, or both.

This is another way of saying that things are not inherently produced. Within refuting production from the four extremes we allow for nominal production within the conventions of the world. Things are produced in the context of dependent-arising.

The Buddha taught dependent-arising in three ways

In *The Meaning of Life* (p.7) His Holiness the Dalai Lama gives a very nice commentary on dependent-arising, saying it was taught by the Buddha in three ways:

In the first rendition Buddha...indicates that the phenomena of cyclic existence arise not through the force of supervision by a permanent deity but through specific conditions... In the second phase... he indicates that an unproduced, permanent phenomenon such as the general nature propounded by the Samkhya system cannot perform the function of creating effects... [I]n the third phase, he indicates that the phenomena of cyclic existence are not produced from just any impermanent causes and conditions but rather from specific ones that have the potential to give rise to specific phenomena.

Nagarjuna taught just as the Buddha taught in terms of conditionality: if you don't want to experience a particular effect, then don't create the cause. If you do want an effect, you must create the cause. Buddha emphasized the teaching of dependent-arising. In any triad consisting of agent, what is acted upon, and action, those three exist in mutual dependence. We cannot separate the three. No cause can be established outside the context of dependent-arising.

Another presentation of three levels of dependent-arising

There's also the way of positing the three levels of dependent-arising that we've seen before: gross, subtle and very subtle. At a gross level, things are dependent upon their causes. At a subtler level, things are dependent upon parts. At the subtlest level, things are dependent upon mere conceptual designation. It is said that one has to realize emptiness before one can realize very subtle dependent-arising. Does one have to realize all three levels of dependent-arising in order to realize emptiness though? This is uncertain because of what we said regarding needing to realize emptiness before realizing subtle dependent-arising. Perhaps one needs to understand and become very familiar with the three levels, but not necessarily *realize* all three before realizing emptiness.

Dependent-arising removes mistaken views holding to extremes

Nagarjuna praised dependent-arising as the king of reasonings. Things are empty of inherent existence because of being dependent-arising. Emptiness and dependent-arising are like two sides of the same coin, teaching two perspectives on the same reality. The principal syllogism regarding dependent-arising is:

Things, as the subject,

Do not inherently exist,

Because they are dependent-arising.

Dependent-arising eliminates the hallucinated objects of other mistaken views. In addition to the refutation of production from the four extremes, Lama Tsongkhapa also mentions other objects of mistaken views that are eliminated through attaining the view of dependent-arising. These include:

the view of permanence which superimposes inherent existence
the view of annihilation which holds that phenomena don't exist if they don't inherently exist
the conception of permanence thinking what existed previously exists at present
the conception of the impermanence of inherently existent former and later moments
the conception of the two, things and non-things, as established by way of their own entity.

Dependent-arising cuts all the nets of these bad views. They are called 'nets' because one is caught in samsara by bad views. 'Dependence' eliminates the view of permanence, 'arising' refutes the extreme of annihilation. One of the main implications of dependent-arising is the idea of conditionality. Whatever arises in dependence does not arise by way of its own entity, which eliminates the wrong view of independent existence. Things do not have the nature of inherent production because that which is produced from conditions is not inherently produced (produced by way of its own entity). If we then come to realize that things do not inherently exist then conceptions of the extremes do not arise. As Chandrakirti says, "fire does not arise without fuel."

3B1C-2B3E-2A4 Identifying the result of reasoned analysis

We have been discussing conceptions holding to extremes, principally the extreme view that conceives of inherent existence. These mistaken views bind us to cyclic existence, perpetuating our existence in samsara. Superiors who abandon the conceptions of the extremes are liberated. It is necessary to develop a wisdom that holds the opposite of the mode of apprehension that conceives of inherent existence. To develop this wisdom one has to refute the referent object, the object of the mode of apprehension, of the conception of true existence. In this context we talk about steering the course of the middle way between the two extremes. We fall to these two extremes all the time because the correct view is very subtle and profound.

Regarding the 'objects' of the conception of inherent existence

Geshe-la discusses some of the objects that need to be understood in refuting inherent existence. The referent object of the conception of true existence, the object of the mode of apprehension of the conception of true existence, and the object of engagement of the conception of true existence are the same in all being the object of negation, i.e. inherent existence. The appearing object of the conception of true existence, however, is not the object of negation. It exists. Is the appearance of inherent existence the same as the meaning generality of inherent existence? What gives rise to the appearance of inherent existence? The conception of inherent existence gives rise to the appearance of inherent existence. Does inherent existence itself appear? Inherent existence does not exist – it is the object of negation. We can say that the appearance of inherent existence appears due to one's conceiving of inherent existence.

February 9 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la's answers to questions in class today

- * Regarding the presentation of the three natures in Prasangika, we asked Geshe-la for an example of an existent imputational factor in that school and Geshe-la said space was an example. Although he said that there is no standard definition for an existent imputational factor but he gave the definition as "that which is merely superimposed by the conception apprehending it." He also said that that definition wouldn't necessarily hold up in debate. Generally it is said in *Awareness and Knowers* that a superimposing consciousness is a wrong consciousness since it is superimposing a non-existent on an existent or an existent upon a non-existent but it seems that is not so here.
- * Regarding the difference between the appearance of inherent existence and the meaning generality of inherent existence, it seems that we didn't ask the question in the context of how it came up in class, so we probably need to rephrase this question and ask it again. The context we'd discussed this issue was that Geshe-la said that the appearing object of the conception of inherent existence was the appearance of inherent existence, and it seems we usually say that the appearing object of a conception is a meaning generality.
- * Regarding whether the appearance of inherent existence is permanent or impermanent, it seems that Geshe-la said that it is impermanent because, being a knowledge obstruction, it is a functioning thing.
- * Regarding 'the unwise' in verses 6.105 and 6.106, Geshe-la seemed to say that 'the wise' have already realized emptiness since they will no longer create the karma to be reborn in cyclic existence. 'The

unwise' then, are those who continue to circle in cyclic existence, apparently from not having had a direct realization of emptiness.

- * Regarding the definition of consciousness being “that which is clear and knowing,” and yet consciousness having more functions than just knowing, Geshe-la said that the definition does not encompass the entire range of functions that consciousness can perform.

Resurrecting a passage discussed earlier regarding the elements lacking ‘the nature’

Last week, in the context of refuting production from both, we discussed verse 6.101 (see p.15 of transcript for week 32). In that verse, what is the meaning of ‘the nature’ in the first line (“If those elements do not have the nature of that”)? When we discussed this in review class, we said that it was the nature of true existence but perhaps that is not so. Since Chandrakirti says that the Charvakas have “thick mental darkness” regarding extremely coarse objects, and the ignorance holding to inherent existence doesn’t seem to be an example of that, perhaps there is another meaning. So what is this nature “by which they become an object of your awareness,” the nature that the Charvakas hold with regard to the elements? Is it as we said, that the elements truly exist? Or is it that they have the potential to cause consciousness, since mental phenomena arise from the elements for them? When Prasangika refutes that nature, how is it that they establish that the elements lack this nature? Could it be that, since the elements cannot be directly perceived, for Charvakas they then would not exist? Or is it that the mind cannot arise from the elements, that a mental phenomenon can arise from the physical elements being of a different type? Perhaps we need to ask Geshe-la since it’s not clear from the commentary.

The conception of true existence and the conceptions holding to the two extremes

So we are looking at the results of having done the analysis to refute production from the four extremes. Yesterday we talked about how the conception of true existence is the main basis for the two conceptions holding to extremes (permanence and annihilation). To support this, Lama Tsongkhapa quotes the commentary on Aryadeva’s *Four Hundred Stanzas*, where it says that we are talking here about “the conception that superimposes the meaning of inherent existence,” which is not the reality of phenomena. Lama Tsongkhapa says that this refers to the conception of true existence and the conceptions holding to the two extremes.

Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to talk about what we mean by conceptions holding to an extreme, and he says there are many meanings to ‘extreme.’ One way of looking at extremes is classifying them into extremes in terms of object and extremes in terms of the object-possessor. Lama Tsongkhapa says first, that here if an object exists as it appears, it is not an object of an extreme, and secondly, if the apprehender is a proper mental attention, that is not a conceiver of an extreme. Therefore, what is an extreme here in this context is “an abode of the downfalls” because an apprehender that conceives either the extreme of permanence or the extreme of annihilation is a person who has fallen into an extreme.

What it means to fall into the two extremes

Geshe-la says that a person who has fallen into the extreme of permanence must accept that phenomena exist truly and “verbally assert” (or propound) that phenomena exist truly. In other words, merely having the conception of true existence does not constitute falling to the extreme of permanence. So those are the qualifications for a person to fall into the extreme of permanence. For a person to fall into the extreme of annihilation, upon the basis of analysis, one arrives at the conclusion that, because phenomena do not truly exist, they do not exist at all. Mentally accepting that and propounding that phenomena do not exist would also be entailed for that person to have fallen into that extreme.

The extremes of existence and non-existence

So as we said earlier, there are two types of extremes and also the two types based on objects and object-possessors. These two extremes are then divided into the extreme of non-existence and of existence. Generally, conceiving the extreme of non-existence is conceiving the non-existence of something that in fact exists. Conceiving the extreme of existence is conceiving the existence of something that in fact does not exist. Lama Tsongkhapa exemplifies these by the following (that doesn’t fit this general description). First he gives an example of the conception of the extreme of non-existence, namely to conceive emptiness to ultimately exist. By doing this one falls to the extreme of non-existence,

but how? In that case, someone is conceiving of emptiness itself to be ultimately existent. It seems from Lama Tsongkhapa's commentary that because of holding emptiness to truly exist, "one falls into the extreme of the non-existence of things."

Two types of the extreme of non-existence

After that general example, he goes on to divide the extreme of non-existence into two types: that which is a superimposition and that which is a deprecation. He indicates that an example of the first, a conception of an extreme of non-existence that is superimposition, is the one just given, the conception of emptiness to ultimately exist. In that case, ultimate existence is superimposed on emptiness. An example of the second, a conception of an extreme of non-existence that is a deprecation, is the conception of the non-existence of actions and their results. The object of the mode of apprehension of both of these conceptions does not exist. Geshe-la also says that the extreme of non-existence, the extreme of deprecation, and the extreme of annihilation are all synonymous.

The extreme of existence

Lama Tsongkhapa indicates that there are both the object that is the extreme of existence and the object-possessor that is the conception of that extreme. An example of the object-possessor is the conception that phenomena ultimately exist, and ultimately existent phenomena is an example of the object. Geshe-la indicates that the extreme of existence, the extreme of superimposition, and the extreme of permanence are synonymous. Further, Geshe-la also says that if you analyze this in greater depth, even deprecation is seen to necessarily be a superimposition.

Nagarjuna's intention in composing *Fundamental Wisdom*

In verse 6.118ab, Chandrakirti discusses the analysis of phenomena that Nagarjuna set out in his *Fundamental Wisdom* in terms of his attitude and why he composed the text. The analysis of the four modes of production set out by Nagarjuna was not done out of a liking for argument or wanting to outshine others, but only with the pure motivation to liberate sentient beings. A questioner sets out that Nagarjuna in *Fundamental Wisdom* showed how to investigate the views of the materialists, so it appears that was done only for the sake of argument. Lama Tsongkhapa comes to the defense, saying that that is not so, but yet, when things are described just as they are in reality, then the views of the opponents and all their erroneous explanations just sort of destroy themselves, in the same way that darkness is dispelled by light. Further, as Chandrakirti explains in verse 6.118cd, when an opponent's position is based on faulty reasoning, it is unable to withstand the reasoning of suchness, so there is no fault to the one who destroys it.

The purpose of the Dharma

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas*, which says that the Buddha did not teach the Dharma for the sake of argument but yet it does in fact burn away counter-arguments, just like how fire burns fuel. As Geshe-la says, this is like the fact that we do not light a fire for the sake of getting ashes but rather for cooking food, boiling water, and so on, so the faulty positions of others are similarly left in ruins by the force of the Dharma. If the Dharma were taught out of the desire to argue, then attachment to one's own views and aversion for the views of others, being just conceptions of attachment and hatred themselves, would inhibit one's liberation. As Chandrakirti indicates in verse 6.119, by setting aside attachment to one's views and aversion to the views of others, one is able to turn away from conceptions of anger and attachment and achieve liberation.

Several other passages are quoted which convey a similar message. One, verse 50 from Nagarjuna's *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*, is often put forward by critics of Prasangika to show that we don't have our own position but simply destroy others' positions. But as we have seen in our studies, that is simply not so. It is not that the Prasangika do not a their own position, it's just that they are not attached to it. Lama Tsongkhapa summarizes, saying that the cultivation or meditation of tenets while attached to one's own view and having aversion to others' views, creates only the cause for one to be bound tightly to cyclic existence. The advice given by the Buddha is that one should analyze without attachment to one's own view, and Geshe-la says this is advice meant for us to reduce our attachment, hatred, pride and so forth, and increase our compassion.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

February 12 (Monday)

Another way of falling to the extreme of non-existence

Geshe-la says that there are two types within the extreme of non-existence: (1) an extreme that is a deprecation, and (2) an extreme that is a superimposition. As an example of an extreme of non-existence that is a superimposition is, for example, the ultimate existence of the non-affirming negative that is the refutation of the object of negation. In other words, conceiving emptiness to ultimately exist is a view of the extreme of non-existence. It seems paradoxical to say that holding something to ultimately exist is falling to the extreme of non-existence. We tend to think of the extreme of non-existence as denying the existence of phenomena rather than holding them to exist, in this case ultimately. In general, we say that the extremes do not exist. However, we say that the conceptions holding to the extremes exist.

3B1C-2B3E-2B Establishing the selflessness of person through reasoning

3B1C-2B3E-2B1 Indicating that those desiring liberation should initially refute an inherently existent self

The source of the afflictions is the view of the transitory collection

The source of the afflictions and faults is the view of the transitory collection, which is identified as the root of cyclic existence. Afflictions are defined as: a mental factor that renders the mind unpeaceful and unsubdued. There are six primary and twenty secondary afflictions. By cutting the root of the view of the transitory collection these afflictions are pacified. Geshe-la lists some of the defects of cyclic existence – birth, aging, sickness, death, misery, and so forth. Birth is described as the repeated joining to the aggregates due to actions and afflictions. Having to undergo this uncontrollably is a drawback of birth. Aging is the continuous change of the fruitional aggregates. Sicknesses are physical and mental illnesses. Death is involuntarily giving up the body of this life. By contemplating these defects we come to recognize the disadvantages of cyclic existence and then become serious about seeking liberation. We need to use our intelligence to see the faults of the view of the transitory collection. Geshe-la gives the definition of the view of the transitory collection as: an afflicted wisdom (knowledge or intelligence) conceiving the self included in one's own continuum to be inherently existent or established by way of its own character. Just this is the origin of all the afflictions. Yogis develop the wish to abandon the view of the transitory collection seeing that the referent object of the view of the transitory collection, the inherently existent I, does not exist and is to be abandoned, or refuted. Upon investigation a yogi realizes that the observed object of the view of the transitory collection is the merely imputed self, or person. The view of the transitory collection conceives of this self as inherently existent.

Etymology of the term ‘transitory collection’ for Sautrantika and Prasangika

It is useful to look at the etymology of the term ‘transitory collection’ according to Prasangika and Sautrantika. According to the Sautrantika school, the view of the transitory collection is a mistaken view that observes one's own aggregates and holds them to be a self-sufficient, substantially existent I. They say that the observed object is the aggregates, the collection of which is called the ‘transitory collection’. They are transitory because they are impermanent and a collection because there are several of them. Prasangika says that ‘transitory collection’ refers to the aggregates and the mere I that is imputed upon them. The mere I is impermanent, and therefore transitory, and it is a collection because it consists of many parts. For Prasangika the observed object of the transitory collection is the mere I, which is imputed in dependence upon the aggregates. The view of the transitory collection conceives the observed mere I as inherently existent.

To abandon the view of the transitory collection one needs to realize the selflessness of persons

In order to abandon the afflictions you must abandon the view of the transitory collection. Therefore, it is necessary to realize the selflessness of persons. To do this, you must realize the observed object of the view of the transitory collection does not exist by way of its own character. The yogi initially investigates whether or not the self is established by way of its own character. He refutes this and thereby abandons the view of the transitory collection, abandoning all of the afflictions and faults of cyclic existence. Describing this process Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Shantideva's *Compendium of Training*: “When the emptiness of persons is thoroughly achieved in that way, because of that, all the afflictions will never arise since the root has been

cut.” Through pacifying the view of the transitory collection all the afflictions will be pacified. If you want to remove a tree completely it is necessary to cut the root, which is the view of the transitory collection, not just its branches, etc.

A method is needed to achieve liberation

Chandrakirti says that we have to realize the shortcomings of cyclic existence in order to develop the wish to be liberated. The root of cyclic existence is the view of the transitory collection, which needs to be abandoned. To achieve liberation one needs to find a method. Our method is to negate the referent object – the inherently existent I. This I has never existed. Initially one spends a long time familiarizing oneself with that object. Then we go about ascertaining selflessness through refuting the conceived object that is the inherently existent self. First one uses reasoning to negate it and then one familiarizes with selflessness through the threefold process of listening, reflecting and meditating, which eventually leads to a direct realization and finally liberation.

February 13 (Tuesday)

Self of person and self of phenomena are not differentiated in terms of the mode of apprehension

An objector cites Nagarjuna's *Precious Garland* where it says that the conception of truly existent aggregates, which is a self of phenomena, is the root of cyclic existence. The objector says that Chandrakirti is contradicting Nagarjuna by saying that the view of the transitory collection, which conceives of a truly existent self of persons, is the root of cyclic existence. Lama Tsongkhapa responds saying that there is no fault because the conception of a self of persons and the conception of a self of phenomena are differentiated in terms of their observed object (i.e. observing either a person or a phenomenon that is other than a person), but they are not differentiated in terms of their mode of apprehension. Prasangika asserts that the mode of apprehension is the same for both observed objects – conceiving of a self that inherently exists. The mode of apprehending is no different, whether observing a person or another phenomenon. They are both seen as inherently existent. A mode of apprehension is the manner in which the observed object is being apprehended. The object of the mode of apprehension is inherent existence.

To the contrary, the lower schools hold that the mode of apprehension differs for the conception of a self of persons and the conception of a self of phenomena. For instance, Svatantrika holds that the conception of a self of persons is the conception of persons or phenomena as being self-sufficient and substantially existent, while the conception of a self of phenomena is conceiving phenomena or persons as truly existent. Prasangika claims that there is no fault in positing that the conception of a self of persons is the root of cyclic existence because the mode of apprehension for persons and phenomena is not contradictory. Therefore Chandrakirti is not contradicting Nagarjuna as the objector claims.

Seeing the two conceptions of self as cause and effect

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the conception of a self of phenomena can be seen as the cause of the view of the transitory collection, which is a conception of a self of persons. For example, when we see someone for the first time we see his aggregates and conceive of them as inherently existing by way of their own character (a self of phenomena). Then, when that person is introduced to us as 'Maurizio', we conceive of an inherently existing Maurizio (a self of persons). However, we can say that these two types of ignorance are equal in being the root of cyclic existence because they have the same mode of apprehension.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2 How to refute the two – an inherently existent self and mine

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A Refuting an inherently existent self

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-1 Refuting a self that is a different entity from the aggregates, which is imputed by other schools

In this section we are again refuting an inherently existent self that is posited by other schools. We begin by considering a self that is imagined to be different from the aggregates by some non-Buddhist schools. Prasangika asserts that a yogi has to realize that the conventionally existent self is the object observed when we view the transitory collection. Other schools have fabricated different types of self that are not based among the aggregates. According to Prasangika there is no innate conception of a self of persons that is separate from the aggregates or the same as the aggregates, therefore any such conception arises only from the study of mistaken tenets.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-1A Stating their positions

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-1A1 Stating the Samkhya system

The self of the Samkhyas

We begin by looking at the position of the Samkhyas. Earlier we refuted the Samkhya position regarding production from self. Here we are focusing on their notion of a self. They assert that the self is a different entity from the aggregates. They assert that the self is a consciousness. Self, person, consciousness, mind are equivalent terms for Samkhyas. Geshe-la's commentary mentions five attributes of the self according to the Samkhyas: (1) it is consumer or enjoyer; (2) it is a permanent thing; (3) it is not a creator; (4) it lacks qualities; and (5) it lacks activities. They hold that the self is permanent and unitary. Prasangika refutes the existence of a permanent, partless, unitary self. Buddhism has a particular way of using the term 'permanent'. Perhaps it is not perfectly accurate to characterize other schools' use of the term 'permanent' using our own definition. When other systems use the term 'permanent' it often seems to connote more the idea of eternal. Buddhism's notion of permanence connotes more the idea of unchanging. On the other hand, we can object to other schools' positions on the basis of their asserting a self that is unproduced.

The Samkhya notion of liberation

Samkhyas assert that the self is both unproduced and not a producer. The fundamental nature produces things. They describe a process in which ordinary beings enter and engage in the world and finally attain liberation. First, a person generates a desire to enjoy and the fundamental nature unites with the person and manifests the desired object. Through receiving teachings the person eventually begins to realize that things only arise from the fundamental nature thereby the person's attachment of objects is lessened. They cultivate the concentrations and absorptions, thus attaining the clairvoyance of the divine eye. Using the divine eye they view the fundamental nature, upon which the fundamental nature becomes embarrassed and withdraws its transformations, leaving the person abiding alone. This is considered liberation. It seems that up through the Hinayana schools liberation is seen as a 'going out' with all conventional appearances ceasing. Samkhyas do posit that the world arises due to the ignorance misunderstanding how the world arises from the fundamental nature. The self's being empty of the fundamental nature is the major realization for which the Samkhyas strive. One distinguishes between the self and the fundamental nature and through the force of realizing this, the fundamental nature and the appearance of all conventionalities cease for the person.

February 14 (Wednesday)

It seems as if, within Buddhist schools as well as even in non-Buddhist schools, there is a concern with the nature of a self and the need to correctly identify it. In all the schools other than Prasangika, if an object exists then, when we search for it we must find it. So we are looking for a self and in this section, all the systems we are examining identify a self that is different from the aggregates. In general these schools assert some type of ignorance as well as some method of overcoming that ignorance and attaining liberation. For the Samkhyas, it involves the ignorance of the self being empty of the fundamental nature. When that is realized, the fundamental nature disappears and the self abides alone, and that state constitutes liberation.

How the Samkhyas classify which categories are creators and which are not creators

A question arises, asking which of the Samkhyas' twenty-five categories of reality are creators and which are not creators. The self is not a creator since it is permanent but the fundamental nature is a creator. When the three qualities are in equilibrium, then that constitutes the fundamental nature. These three qualities or *gunas*, are motility, lightness and darkness, and they are associated with certain afflictions and feelings, as described in Geshe-la's commentary. When they are in equilibrium, there are no transformations. When they are not in equilibrium, there arises the great one, or the intellect, which empowers the senses, whereby the person is able to know objects. Further, from the intellect also arise the three I-principles and the remaining categories arise from those I-principles. The three I-principles are each dominated by one of the three qualities described earlier.

From the motility I-principle, the five subtle objects (forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects) arise and then, from those five objects arise the elements (earth, water, fire, wind, and space). In Buddhism we would reverse this, saying that the evolutes arise from the elements. From the lightness I-principle arise the eleven faculties – the five action faculties, the five awareness faculties, and the mental (or intellectual) faculty. There is some debate in regard to the darkness I-principle. According to *Cutting Through Appearances* (p.164), the darkness I-principle “is said to be the motivator of the other two.” So we can classify these twenty-five categories into whether they are creators (or producers), created (produced), both or neither. The self is neither a producer nor produced. The fundamental nature is only a producer. The intellect, the I-principles, and the five subtle objects are both, and the remaining sixteen categories (the five faculties that arise from the motility I-principle and the eleven faculties which evolve from the lightness I-principle) are only produced.

The Samkhya view of a self

The main point behind this whole discussion though is their view of the self. Essential most here we are refuting a type of self that is a different entity from the aggregates, i.e. a self that is permanent, partless and independent. Here the main qualification to the self is that it is unproduced, and this is indicative of the self that is posited by the non-Buddhist schools. When we examined the four attributes of true sufferings in the past, we’ve had some discussion regarding how the third and fourth attributes (empty and selfless) are differentiated. Jeffrey Hopkins in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.293) clearly states that the third attribute of empty is intended to refute this idea of a permanent, partless, independent self that is a different entity from the aggregates. This idea of independence, which is not spelled out specifically here, is that the self stands alone, in that it does not depend on the aggregates for its existence. Emptiness as the third attribute of true sufferings refers to the fact that the aggregates are empty of being a permanent, partless and independent self that is a different entity, and the conception of such a self is an acquired conception of a self. Also recall that the third seal of the four Buddhist seals is that all phenomena are selfless, and Geshe-la said earlier that ‘selfless’ there encompasses the emptiness of a permanent, partless, independent self, since all Buddhist schools concur with that assertion.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-1A2 Stating the Vaisheshika system and so forth

Chandrakirti says there are only minor variations among the Forders in terms of their presentations of a self. For the Vaisheshika, the self has nine qualities, as listed on p.18 of the transcript for week 34. In dependence upon a teacher, the yogi comes to know the person as being separate from these nine qualities, meaning that the yogi comes to realize these nine qualities are not the self. According to the Vaisheshikas, as long as one identifies with these nine qualities, you will continue to create karma and cycle in samsara. Through various ascetic practices in which the practitioner burns up negative karma and doesn’t create any new karma, eventually the yogi attains liberation from cyclic existence (see *Cutting Through Appearances*, p.158). Lama Tsongkhapa also says that the Vedantists assert a single self that is fabricated similar to this view.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-1B Refuting that system

In verse 6.122, Chandrakirti says that such a self that is different from the aggregates is not asserted to exist even conventionally.

Refuting a self that is different entity from the aggregates as the observed object of the conception
of a self

Prasangika sets out a syllogism that refutes this type of self:

The self asserted by Forders,
Does not exist in that way (meaning ‘in reality’ or ‘in fact’),
Because it is free from production,
Like the son of a barren woman.

The self that is hallucinated by these schools is permanent and so forth and it does not exist in reality because it is not born, just like the son of a barren woman.

So for Prasangika, this self that is imputed by the Forders simply cannot serve as the observed object, that is, as the support of the view of the transitory collection. The innate conception that thinks ‘I’ arises on the basis of an observed object. For Prasangika, that observed object is the mere I that is

imputed on the basis of the aggregates – the conventionally existent I, which is a functioning thing. The self that is imputed by the Forders is not a functioning thing, in that it is permanent and unborn (meaning unproduced), and so it cannot serve as the observed object for the conception of I. But one can ask whether it cannot serve as that observed object because it simply does not exist or because it is permanent. In this syllogism it seems to be saying that the Forders’ self is excluded from being the observed object of the conception of I because the observed object of the conception of I must be a functioning thing.

Examining the pervasion of this syllogism

It doesn’t seem that there is pervasion in that syllogism, since if something is not produced, it’s not necessarily so that it does not exist in reality. However, Prasangika is saying that the self that the Forders say is unproduced, it cannot be a functioning thing, so it cannot be the observed object of the conception of a self. How do they come to that conclusion? How can we establish that a self must be a functioning thing? It’s possible they would say that the self has to be a living being, which is born, dies and so forth, so it must be produced. It’s also possible that this syllogism is not meant to refute the Forders’ views but only asserts that such a self is not feasible for those seeking the correct view of the selflessness of persons. According to Prasangika, the innate conception of I arises upon observing a functioning thing and, since the Forders’ self is not a functioning thing, it is unable to act as a basis for the conception of I, and so this type of self cannot be the observed object.

Lama Tsongkhapa says this self is not the observed object of the innate conception of I, from among the two the observed object and the object-aspect. The object-aspect of the conception of a self of persons is the referent object, or conceived object, of the conception of a self of persons. He indicates that it is not contradictory for the object-aspect to be unproduced since the referent object of the conception of a self does not exist, and so is “unproduced.” However, the point here is that this self couldn’t be the observed object since this fabricated self as asserted is not produced and the observed object of the conception of a self is a functioning thing.

Such a self does not exist either ultimately or conventionally

Lama Tsongkhapa says, “Therefore, stating ‘The self of this system is asserted to exist linguistically’ is to talk frivolously, without finely distinguishing the difficult points of this tenet [system].” So once one fully understands the Prasangika assertion regarding the observed object and aspect of the view of the transitory collection, then it would be frivolous to speak of such a self as propounded by the Forders as existing. Lama Tsongkhapa says that we should distinguish well the observed object and the aspect of the view of the transitory collection. We’ve already discussed the observed object for Prasangika but regarding the object-aspect (also the object of the mode of apprehension and the referent object) of the view of the transitory collection, it’s an inherently existent I.

He continues, saying that refuting this self to exist and that such a self is the observed object of the conception of I, is being done from the point of view of adding the qualification ‘ultimate’ to the object of negation. What does that mean? Geshe-la says it means that “a self that exists ultimately and an object of the conception of I that exists ultimately are to be refuted.” Lama Tsongkhapa goes on to say that, “the two should also be understood to be refuted even conventionally.” So it seems he is saying that both this self that is fabricated by the Forders and the self that is the observed object of the view of the transitory collection are not existent conventionally. Geshe-la also indicated that ‘the two’ here could also be the two types of self that are asserted by the Samkhyas and Vaisheshikas, saying that both of them do not exist even conventionally.

Lama Tsongkhapa then indicates that “At that time, ‘A self is not asserted to exist’ means that the self is not substantially existent.” This refers back to the root text (6.122b) and could mean that Prasangika does not assert that this self exists substantially since it does not exist either ultimately or conventionally. For Prasangika, substances exist but substantial existence does not. It’s also possible that this could be referring to the fact that the self that is being refuted here is not a substantially existent self but rather a self that is independent, partless, and permanent.

If such a self is refuted to exist, then the attributes of such a self are also non-existent

This self that has been presented by the Forders has been refuted by the reason of being unproduced, or free from production, just like the son of a barren woman. In verse 6.123, Chandrakirti says that such a self has definitely been refuted here through that reasoning but moreover, what has also been refuted are the attributes of such a self. Whatever qualities are attributed to such a self in the treatises of the Samkhyas and Vaisheshikas are also harmed by this refutation. Having established the fact that such a self is unproduced (as the Forders themselves assert), then all of the attributes or qualities attributed to that self do not exist as well. By what is renowned in their own scriptures, i.e. that the self is unproduced, is the means by which their view of a self is refuted. Through the very reason of it being unproduced and by way of the example of the son of a barren woman, the entity and the attributes of such a self are eliminated.

A self that is different from the aggregates does not exist

In verse 6.124ab, Chandrakirti says that a self that is a different entity from the aggregates does not exist because a self is not apprehended separately from the aggregates. In order for the self to appear, one or more of the aggregates must appear first. It is not like a pot and a woolen cloth, in that they are not the same entity, so a pot can appear without a woolen cloth appearing and vice-versa. If the aggregates and the self were different entities, they would be unrelated, just like a pot and a woolen cloth. Further, being unrelated, they would have neither of the two types of relationships, either causal or natural. If they are not related as cause and effect, and are not related in being the same entity, then they can have no relationship. However, as Geshe-la says, the self and the aggregates do have a relationship since they are one entity.

February 15 (Thursday)

Any conception of a self that holds the self to be the same as or different from the aggregates is an acquired conception of a self. We are now refuting the systems that hold to a self that is different from the aggregates.

Reviewing the syllogism refuting the view of the self as different from the aggregates

Yesterday we looked at the syllogism Prasangika put forth to refute the view of the self as different from the aggregates as held by the Forders. One of the predominant qualities that they put forth for such a self is that it is unproduced. The Samkhyas say it is not a creator or a transformation so we can assume they hold it to be unproduced, and it seems that the view of the Vaisheshika would be similarly qualified as a self that is unproduced. Prasangika says this self is similar to the son of a barren woman, which is also unproduced. Prasangika says that the observed object of the conception of a self must be a functioning thing but why is that so? It seems that the logic is that, if the ‘self’ is to have any meaning, it would have to be produced, since the self is that which is reborn, dies, creates actions and so forth (see also *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.177).

At the end of our discussion yesterday, we also talked about how, if two things are related they must be related in either a natural or causal relationship (but not both). According to the assertions of the Forders, the self and the aggregates are not one entity so they cannot have a natural relationship, and nor can they have a relationship of cause and effect.

Examining whether this self is being refuted ultimately or conventionally

In Geshe-la’s commentary (see transcript of week 34, p.27), it says that if the aggregates and the self were different entities, they would be unrelated. Is this only from the point of view of an ultimate analysis? It does seem that this is a consequence from the point of view of them being *inherently existent* others but it also seems that there is a conventional level at which this could be asserted as well. If the self and the aggregates were different entities, then when the body is sick, why do you say “I am sick.” At a conventional level it is obvious that there is a connection or relationship between the self and the aggregates. When we say “at a conventional level,” perhaps this simply means within our everyday experience. “At an ultimate level” would mean not being satisfied with the mere existence of something, but rather analyzing the way something exists. So here it seems that we can look at this by asking whether the self they describe exists at all, without needing to analyze the way it exists.

Here we are refuting this idea of a self that is different from the aggregates both ultimately and conventionally. The self asserted by the Forders even at a conventional level cannot be the observed object of

the conception of a self. The self they are asserting is a different entity from the aggregates so the faults Prasangika is putting forth would follow if such a self existed, even conventionally. Since a self that is different from the aggregates does not exist at all there is really no need to specify this as a refutation of an inherently existent self that is different from the aggregates. The systems of the Folders have fabricated a self that does not exist even conventionally. Recall that, for the Samkhyas, when liberation is achieved, the self remains alone, and so it is independent of the aggregates or any other compounded phenomenon.

Fundamental Wisdom says such a self is not feasible

Lama Tsongkhapa cites Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* (v.27.7), which says that a self that is a different entity from the appropriated aggregates is not feasible. If it were, then it would be suitable for it to be apprehended separately from the aggregates, but it is not apprehended that way. As we discussed earlier, they would be like a pot and a woolen cloth, where the apprehension of a pot can occur without the appearance of a woolen cloth, and the apprehension of the woolen cloth without the appearance of a pot. Instead, as we know from experience, we cannot apprehend the self without the appearance of the aggregates.

The consequence that the self would not share the characteristics of the aggregates

Lama Tsongkhapa cites another quote from *Fundamental Wisdom* (v.18.1cd) that says that if the self were other than the aggregates, the self would not share the characteristics of the aggregates. Geshe-la says that the characteristics include production, abidance, and disintegration (see also *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.684). So if the self were other than the aggregates, it would not have these characteristics in common with the aggregates, but as Geshe-la says, "it is usually said that the self has the three characteristics of compounded phenomena."

Chandrakirti reaffirms that this self is not the observed object of the conception of I

In verse 6.124cd, Chandrakirti says that a self that is a different entity from the aggregates is not the observed object of the beginningless conception of I because, even without observing that self, we still give rise to the conception of I and mine. Earlier in the beginning of this section, we said that the observed object of the conception of I is not a substantially existent, self-sufficient self but rather is the mere I. In this present context, what is being refuted as the observed object of the conception of a self is a self that is different from the aggregates, i.e. a permanent, unitary, independent self. Lama Tsongkhapa says, "Saying that 'It is not suitable even as the support for an awareness conceiving I' does not repeat the previous refutation because earlier a mere substantially existent self was refuted to be the observed object of the view of a self, whereas here [a self] observed to be a different entity from the aggregates is refuted." So Lama Tsongkhapa is saying that there is no redundancy in Chandrakirti specifying that assertion here.

An objection proposing that this view of a self is innate as well

An objection is raised by Lama Tsongkhapa, in which someone says that, even though people may not presently be holding that the self is permanent or unproduced, nonetheless through past familiarization, they have the view conceiving of such a self. As we've said earlier, these views are acquired views, not innate, but here the objector is saying that, due to habituation in past lives, we could hold the view of such a self from that. So for this person, such a self could be the object of a view of the transitory collection. Lama Tsongkhapa says that is not the case, since holding a self that is different from the aggregates to be the observed object of the conception of I exists only in the minds of those who have acquired tenets. He argues that even those who have not studied such tenets have a conception of I. In other words, we are talking about an innate conception of a self and the objector is talking about a view that only arises from studying tenets so they cannot be the same.

Even animals have the conception of I

As Chandrakirti says in verse 6.125, all sentient beings, even animals, conceive of a self, an I, but not as a self that is different from the aggregates. So this fabricated self is not the observed object of the view of the conception of a self, since those animals do not have the conception of such a self and yet they do have the ignorance that binds them in cyclic existence. These various Indian schools are saying that we circle in cyclic existence due to the misconception of a self and Buddhism would agree with them on that point – but they would not agree with the type of self that they are holding to be misconceived and the manner it is being misconceived. As we've discussed, if the term 'self' is to be meaningful, such an unproduced, permanent self

cannot be logically called a ‘self.’ What is the difference between the idea of a permanent self that is eternal and the notion that there is a continuum of mind that is eternal? The continuum of the mind is impermanent, changing from moment to moment, being produced, abiding and disintegrating, and such a permanent self does not have those characteristics.

February 16 (Friday)

Reviewing Geshe-la’s answers to questions in class today

- ✱ Regarding verse 6.107, we asked Geshe-la to clarify what it means to ‘exist in suchness’ and also who might be putting forth this argument. In his commentary, Lama Tsongkhapa takes ‘existing in suchness’ to mean ‘existing ultimately,’ and so one could conclude that the opponent is arguing that if things do not exist ultimately then they do not exist conventionally. According to Geshe-la, ‘in suchness’ here does mean ‘ultimately’ here, which then would also mean inherently or truly. The Tibetan for ‘existing as suchness’ is the same as ‘to exist in suchness,’ but perhaps the first wording is more meaningful. To exist in suchness in that context would mean to exist in the way things actually exist (or exist in reality). Then this objector is saying that, if things do not exist as their final nature, then they do not exist (conventionally). For them, a pot, for example, is its own final nature – it exists that way from its own side, it is not merely being imputed. But yet Geshe-la said the ultimate truth *does* exist in suchness but we would not say that emptiness exists as its own final nature so maybe that meaning isn’t completely correct. On the other hand, we might say that emptiness exists *as* suchness, in that emptiness is the final nature for Prasangika. Each school posits its own suchness, its own final nature, and for Prasangika it is emptiness. In summary though, it seems that, since for Prasangika ultimate existence is equated with inherent existence, then even though Lama Tsongkhapa says ‘ultimately,’ suchness here should be equated with ‘inherently.’
- ✱ Regarding the two extremes, existence and non-existence, we asked Geshe-la about why Lama Tsongkhapa cites ‘emptiness ultimately existing’ as an example of the extreme of non-existence. Geshe-la said that if emptiness truly exists, then it would not exist, even conventionally. Why is that so? It seems that it is because, in a sense, emptiness then contradicts itself since the mode of abidance of phenomena is their emptiness of true existence, and yet emptiness is being held to truly, or ultimately, exist. However, earlier we said that an extreme of non-existence was holding an existent to not exist and the extreme of existence was holding a non-existent to exist. Also, Lama Tsongkhapa says (p.31 of transcript for week 33), “If one conceives ‘the non-existence which is the negation of the object of negation perfectly exists,’ one falls into the extreme of the non-existence of things.” So it seems that the non-existence of things would also follow if emptiness is held to ultimately exist but how is not so clear.
- ✱ Regarding the factor of disbelieving and how it interacts with the conception of true existence, it seems that there can be a person who disbelieves in the referent object of the conception of true existence and still has the conception of true existence. However, the Tibetan word for ‘disbelieve’ (*yid ma ches*) that we used today in the question for Geshe-la was different than the word we used before (*sun ’byin*), which means more like ‘to reject,’ having a bit stronger connotation than just ‘to disbelieve.’ Geshe-la said however, that the referent object of that conception has been damaged or opposed by that factor of disbelief, and there it was *sun ’byin* that he was referring to. Geshe-la also said that the person can disbelieve but it’s not necessarily that the awareness disbelieves, since even superiors can develop afflictions.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2 Refuting the assertion that the aggregates themselves are the self, which is imputed by our own schools

Having refuted the assertion that the self is different from the aggregates, the first of the fivefold division of the reasoning refuting a self of persons. Now we move to the view of the aggregates as the self, which is held by the lower Buddhist schools. We are looking at the root of cyclic existence and trying to understand the view of the transitory collection in terms of how it is operating and what is its observed object. For the Forders, when they search among the aggregates, they do not find the self, so they fabricate a self that is different from the aggregates. Prasangika showed that such a type of self simply doesn’t exist, and so any conception of such a self is acquired and not innate. For the lower schools, from Svatantrika downward, although a self that is different from the aggregates is rejected, when the self is searched for on or within the five aggregates a self is found. Some hold that the five aggregates themselves, either collectively or

individually, are the self, with others holding only to consciousness to be the self, the mind-basis-of-all, etc. However, in some way they assert that the self is found among the aggregates, that the observed object of the view of the transitory collection is that self, and misconceiving that self is the root of cyclic existence. Do all the Buddhist schools aside from Prasangika then assert that the observed object of the view of the transitory collection is one or more aggregates? It seems so since whatever among the aggregates that they observe, it has the aspect of a self.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2A Indicating the harm in asserting the aggregates to be the self

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2A1 Actual meaning

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2A1B Stating the previous position

We begin our refutation of the aggregates being the self by looking at the assertions of the lower schools.

How the lower schools posit the aggregates as the self

In verse 126ab, Chandrakirti gives their position, that because there is no self that exists different from the aggregates, the observed object of the view of a self is just the aggregates. All the lower Buddhist schools posit that if an object is searched for, it is found. Since the observed object of the view of the transitory collection is not different from the aggregates, then it must be findable within the aggregates. As Chandrakirti says in verse 6.126cd, different schools hold different views of what is found to be the self. For example, among the Sammitiyas, a Vaibhashika sub-school, some find that the five aggregates are the self and some posit only the mind. Some say that the collection of all five aggregates is the self. The True Aspectarian Chittamatrins say that the mind-basis-of-all is the self, and so on.

Examining the sources for some of the views of the lower schools

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes a scriptural source that the Sammitiyas use to assert that the observed object of the view of a self is the five aggregates. For them, the view of the transitory collection has an aspect of an I or mine and has as its observed object the five aggregates. Lama Tsongkhapa also cites two passages from the *Collected Teachings*, which are used by other Sammitiyas to assert that the mind alone is the self. Those sutra quotes equate subduing the mind with subduing the self, so by using this scriptural citation, these particular Sammitiyas assert the mind to be the self.

Next the position of Bhavaviveka, who is the founder of the Sautrantika-Svatantrika Madhyamikas, is given. He asserts that the sixth mental consciousness is the self, saying that the term ‘self’ is imputed to the consciousness, so the person is imputedly existent. He cites the same passages quoted above from the *Collected Teachings* as scriptural authority that the mind and the self are equivalent. He also gives the reasoning that since the self and the mental consciousness are both the appropriators of the aggregates the mental consciousness is the self. So from this reasoning, he says that the self and mental consciousness are equivalent.

Examining the view of Bhavaviveka in greater detail

There is an interesting passage that elaborates on Bhavaviveka’s view in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.900). Jeffrey Hopkins says that, according to Bhavaviveka, “there are two types of selves, a temporary one such as a human merely designated to the aggregates and a continual one which is a subtle type of mental consciousness that has traveled ceaselessly in all types of lives...”

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

February 19 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2A1B Refuting that system

We now look at the consequences of identifying the self with the aggregates. The lower Buddhist schools assert that the self is findable amongst the aggregates variously as the aggregates themselves or the mental consciousness, etc. Prasangika asserts that the self is imputed in dependence upon the aggregates is not findable when searched for.

The absurd consequences of holding the self to be the aggregates – first: the self would be many

The first consequence states: if the self is the aggregates, then it would follow that the self would be multiple, as the aggregates are multiple. If two things are inherently existent equivalents there must be a one-to-one correspondence between them. All characteristics would be co-existent in the two. Therefore the self cannot be the aggregates because there is only one self while there are many aggregates. One does not have a sense that there is a multiplicity of selves. This is what Chandrakirti meant when he cited the scripture: “When the world is born, the person is born alone.” Only one person is born. Analyzing in reverse fashion, we can also say that since the self is one then if it were one with the aggregates then necessarily there would be only one aggregate. Also, if one were to posit the self to be identified with the mind, then the consequence would again follow that the self would be a multiplicity because there are six consciousnesses. Additionally, there would be many selves because there are many discreet moments of mental consciousness such as former and later. This is probably the best argument against schools such as Svatantrika that hold that the self is the subtle mental consciousness, which is one of the most difficult assertions to refute (see, *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.900).

The second consequence: the self would be substantially existent

Buddhists identify the root of cyclic existence to be the mistaken view of the transitory collection. The various Buddhist schools differ regarding what is the observed object of the transitory collection. Lower schools posit the aggregates as the observed object. Prasangika posits the mere ‘I’ as the observed object. All Buddhist schools (except perhaps the Vatsiputriya Vaibhashikas) refute a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. This is what is referred to by the attribute of ‘selflessness’ when we speak about the first noble truth – true sufferings. Yet the lower schools find the self amongst the aggregates, which constitutes substantial existence for Prasangika. To be substantially existent means that something can appear to a consciousness without depending on the appearance of other objects (see *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.303 for a discussion of substantial existence). For example, the Chittamatrins say that the lack of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self is their coarse emptiness. Yet they identify the person with the mind-basis-of-all. They say that the mind-basis-of-all is the illustration of the self. Prasangika says that this is holding to a substantially existent basis as the self. For Prasangika all things exist merely through imputation. They hold that the self cannot be identified with the aggregates.

February 20 (Tuesday)

Continuing with the second consequence

All of the lower schools hold that the self is found amongst the aggregates. Prasangika asserts that the self and the aggregates are one entity but the self is not one with the aggregates nor is any one of the aggregates. We are still looking at the second consequence that is flung at those holding the self to be findable amongst the aggregates. Since the aggregates are substantially existent, if one finds the self amongst the aggregates then it follows that the self is also substantially existent. This is necessarily so because of the one-to-one correspondence that holds between objects that are inherently the same. Because the aggregates substantially exist, the self that is found amongst the aggregates also substantially exists. The lower schools feel that if the bases of imputation were not substantially existent then phenomena would be groundless. Another problem encountered by those who hold the observed object of the view of the transitory collection to be the aggregates is that since the self is found amongst the aggregates and is substantially existent then the view of the transitory collection is not mistaken and it is not the root of cyclic existence. The view of the transitory collection then would be factually concordant with reality.

The third consequence – at the time of nirvana the self would be annihilated

If the aggregates were the self then upon attaining nirvana without remainder the self would cease to exist because the aggregates would cease to exist. In that case, the view of the transitory collection would be a view falling to the extreme of annihilation because one would conceive that the self ceases upon attaining nirvana without remainder. This would also entail the absurd consequence that the self would disintegrate in each moment because the aggregates are produced and disintegrate in each moment. Prior to attaining nirvana, just as the aggregates would be inherently produced and would inherently disintegrate in each moment, so too would the self.

Fourth consequence – one would not be able to remember former lives

Another consequence is that memory of past lives would be impossible because the self of the previous life that was inherently one with the aggregates would have ceased because those aggregates have ceased. One's former self would necessarily be unrelated to the present self since the former self has ceased. In fact, the aggregates specific to each life cease but the self continues so the aggregates cannot be the self.

Other consequences flung by Prasangika

A few more consequences are brought out in the text. One consequence is that the aggregates cannot appropriate themselves. The self is the appropriator of the aggregates and the appropriator and the appropriated cannot be one. If the self is found amongst the aggregates then the self could not be the agent that appropriates the aggregates. Since the agent would not exist, the self would not exist. Another consequence is that actions would be wasted because the self that creates karma would not experience the results of those actions because that self, which is the same as the aggregates, would have ceased. Also, one would experience the results of actions that were committed by other. This would contradict teachings on karma and would lead to absurd consequences such as saying that Maitreya who is inherently other than Upagupta experiences the results of Upagupta's actions. If the self of this life were inherently existent it would arise independently of the self of a former life. Also one could be forced into an absurd position holding that the self of a former life could be reborn without dying.

February 21 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2A2 Refuting the response that abandons faults

The lower schools respond to Prasangika's consequences

The lower schools respond to Prasangika's consequence that because the aggregates cease the self that is found amongst the aggregates would necessarily cease. They say that there is no fault in saying this because they posit a continuum of inherently existing selves. We have already refuted this position in our refutation of inherently existent production. The parts of a continuum necessarily exist in relation to one another and therefore cannot be inherently other. The lower schools posit inherently existing selves that are discrete, independent and unrelated, and therefore unsuitable to make up a continuum. This is analogous to the continua of Maitreya and Upagupta being unrelatedly other and not suitable to be contained in the same continuum.

It would be unsuitable for beings of different realms to exist in the same continuum

Prasangikas give another absurd example that would arise from holding inherently existing others to exist within the same continuum. When a god is reborn as a human these two beings must be either inherently the same or inherently different within the context of asserting inherent existence. If they are the same, then the god would necessarily be permanent and unproduced, and one would not be able to differentiate the human realm from the god realm. If the human and god were different then the continuum of the god would be severed upon the birth of the human. The two beings could not exist in the same continuum.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2B Indicating the proof that it is unreasonable to assert thus

Another proof that the aggregates are not the self regarding the fourteen unspecified views

The fourteen unspecified views are questions that the Buddha did not answer. All Buddhist schools accept this teaching. One question the Buddha did not answer was whether the world has an end or not. Geshe-la says in his commentary that the Buddha did not respond to this question because, had he responded, it would have reinforced the mistaken view of the questioners who posed the question on the basis of their holding to a self of persons. If ‘world’ were to refer to the aggregates, then, according to the lower schools, since they cease upon attaining nirvana without remainder the Buddha shouldn’t have remained silent, but should have asserted that the world has an end. Further, when someone asked the Buddha whether the Tathagata arises after dying he should have said a Tathagata does not exist after dying. Buddha clearly did not say this. In fact, when the Buddha was asked whether the world ceases, he did not specify. Geshe-la says that the person who asked whether the world has an end was assuming that the self is permanent, partless and independent, or self-sufficient, substantially existent. It is like the person who asks, “Have you stopped beating your wife?” To answer this question in either the affirmative or the negative would only continue to reinforce the questioner’s wrong assumption that you had been beating your wife. Chandrakirti uses this as proof to show that the Buddha did not teach the aggregates to be the self. The correct interpretation that ‘world’ refers not to the aggregates but to the “I”.

February 22 (Thursday)

Various explanations of why the fourteen views were unspecified

Yesterday we discussed the proof that it was unreasonable to assert that the aggregates are the self, and in it, Chandrakirti used the fourteen unspecified views to show that. Garfield in *Fundamental Wisdom* (p.197) says that there are three popular readings of the Buddha’s refusal to answer these fourteen questions. For the first he indicates that “this was an example of his great skill in teaching; any answer he would have given would have been misconstrued and would have adverse consequences for the student.” The second explanation of why the Buddha didn’t answer these questions is that “by refusing to answer, the Buddha was indicating that asking these questions does not conduce to successful practice of the Buddhist path and that one should focus one’s mind on more soteriologically efficacious issues.” As for the third explanation, Garfield says simply that the Buddha did not answer because “these questions are in fact metaphysically misguided,” meaning that they involve presuppositions so that answering renders the questions meaningless. Following Geshe-la’s explanation the Buddha remained silent when questioned since whatever answer he gave would have reinforced the questioner’s wrong view regarding the self.

Therefore, Chandrakirti is saying in this section that we infer from the Buddha’s silence that the aggregates are not the self. This is so because if the world, meaning the aggregates, were to have an end, he would have answered in the affirmative to that question. If, as the lower schools posit, the aggregates are the self and also upon attaining nirvana, the aggregates do not exist, then he would have said that the world (i.e. the aggregates) has an end.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2C Indicating other harms to propounding the aggregates to be the self

Having looked at the refutations of the aggregates to be a self, we now look at other faults to holding to that view.

The harm that the yogi would see the aggregates as non-existent

In verse 6.130ab, Chandrakirti says that for those schools then, when a yogi sees selflessness on the basis of true sufferings, meaning the aggregates, he goes on to think that all phenomena are selfless and thus phenomena would cease to exist. Therefore the aggregates cannot be the self. How is Prasangika interpreting this realization of the yogi such that things would not exist in the face of that realization? If the self is held to be the aggregates, and the yogi is realizing selflessness, that is, non-inherent existence, then the negation of the self is a negation of the aggregates.

Correction to the transcript of week 35, page 18: There is a slight rewording needed in the second sentence of the text from *Illumination* that comments on verse 6.130ab as follows: “At that time, they would definitely see the aggregates as non-existent, *because of seeing* the self as non-existent *since* the aggregates and the mind are the self.”

An objector replies that Prasangika would suffer the same consequence

An objection is directed towards Prasangika, saying that the same consequence could be established for Prasangika. The objector says that for those schools who do not assert the aggregates to be the self (i.e. Prasangika), when selflessness is directly seen the person who illustrates this self would be seen to not exist. When the lower schools state that the aggregates are the self, which means that the self is findable when sought. For them, when you search the basis upon which the self is imputed, one finds a self. When the self is seen not to exist, the aggregates and the mind would be seen to not exist as well according to the reasoning just set forth by Prasangika.

However, the Prasangikas do not have that problem because they do not posit an imputed object that can be found when it is sought. In other words, Prasangika holds to no such self, in that when a self is searched for, it is not found but yet it still exists. This is a unique assertion of Prasangika - existence that is merely posited by name, terms and conceptuality and unfindable when searched for. We don't posit an object to necessarily be found as the lower schools do so our presentation of a self is not harmed in the least since it is not based upon the self being findable

An objection from the Sammitiyas is raised

Another objection is raised, this time from the Sammitiyas, who say that there are two contexts in which the term 'self' can apply. First when we speak about karma and the results of actions, we apply the term 'self'. Secondly, when we speak of selflessness, we speak of the self as an inner agent, i.e. the self that is fabricated by the Forders. For them, when selflessness is realized, one sees the non-existence of an inner agent, not the non-existence of the aggregates. So in the context of selflessness, they are not negating the self that is applied to the aggregates in the context of speaking about karma. So they say there is no fault.

Prasangika replies that there cannot be two different uses of the term 'self'

Chandrakirti gives the Prasangika reply to this objection in verse 6.130cd. When the yogi is realizing the non-existence of this self that is an inner agent, Prasangika says it is not suitable to cite another use of the term 'self' in a different context. When that Sammitiya yogi negates a permanent self, the type of self posited by the Forders, he is negating a self that is a different entity than the aggregates so he is not negating the aggregates as the self. The Prasangika argument seems to say that although this yogi sees the non-existence of a permanent self that is different from the aggregates, he does not see the non-existence of the permanent aggregates. In other words, if there were a correspondence between the aggregates and the self, as all lower schools are holding, then one would superimpose permanence upon both the self and the aggregates equally. If the yogi sees the non-existence of a permanent self, then the yogi should also see the non-existence of permanent aggregates. Since he doesn't see the non-existence of permanent aggregates but does see the non-existence of a permanent self, then the self can appear without the aggregates appearing. Therefore the aggregates cannot be the self.

More related objections from the Sammitiyas

There follow two objections that seem to be merely to clarify the response to the previous argument. The second of these says that the self that is being refuted is in regard to an inner agent. The Sammitiyas are saying that that self cannot be an agent of actions and cannot be the creator of karma or the experiencer of results of karma because it doesn't exist. So for them there are two selves, the self that is refuted and the one that actually exists as the experiencer of karma. Prasangika says that the term 'self' should be consistently applied and the Sammitiyas are not doing that. When they say the yogi says all phenomena are selfless, that is in respect to a permanent, partless, independent self, and when the self is applied to the person experiencing karma, it is the conventionally existent self. How is this different from the way that Prasangika uses 'self' in two ways – one to mean the mere self that exists, the person and so forth, and the other to mean the self that is negated, the inherently existent self? Perhaps, the difference is that in Prasangika, the self that doesn't exist is based on the self that *does* exist whereas in the Sammitiyas' presentation, the self that is refuted is not posited in relation to the self that conventionally exists.

Other faults to the Sammitiyas' position

In verse 6.131, Chandrakirti brings out yet other faults to the position of the Sammitiyas. When a Sammitiya yogi directly realizes selflessness of persons, they do not realize suchness according to Prasangika. They only realize the emptiness of a permanent, partless, independent self. Therefore, when this yogi arises from meditative equipoise on that selflessness, he subsequently goes on to develop attachment and so forth. Without abandoning the conception of inherent existence, specifically the view of the transitory collection, one will not abandon attachment and aversion and not be free of cyclic existence.

By asserting that the aggregates are the self, the consequences for any of the lower schools is that what they are calling 'foe destroyers' would still generate afflictions. What Prasangika is saying is that, because you are holding the aggregates to be the self, you cannot negate inherent existence. So asserting the aggregates to be the self precludes realizing inherent existence, because one is still holding the self to be findable upon ultimate analysis since it is found to be the aggregates. So, since they do not realize the lack of inherent existence the 'foe destroyers' of the lower schools are not actual foe destroyers.

The metaphor of the cuckoo on the stamens of a flower

Lama Tsongkhapa exemplifies what is being discussed through the metaphor of the cuckoo on the stamens of the flower, saying, "by merely stating 'There is a cuckoo on the stamens of a flower,' without experiencing the sweetness of the stamens oneself, one does not observe their sweetness." Similarly, the abandonment of the conception of a permanent self by such yogis does not itself abandon attachment, since there will remain the conception of forms and so forth existing by way of their own entity. It's true that if one were to simply abandon generating the conception of an inner agent, it would stop you from thinking that you must get happiness or avoid suffering for that inner agent. So a portion of one's suffering would be removed but you would not have eliminated the root of suffering.

The afflictions and confusion operate together

Attachment and so forth operate in conjunction with confusion, which superimposes true existence on things, conceiving that things exist by their own entity or from their own side. When we look at attractive or unattractive objects, confusion sees those objects to exist from their own side and on that basis, one goes on to exaggerate that desirability or unattractiveness, which then goes on to motivate one's actions. A response to seeing objects that way is to act upon fulfilling desires with respect to those objects. Attachment and so forth act in tandem with confusion so merely abandoning the level of misconception posited by the lower schools will not act to sever the confusion that is the root of cyclic existence and the afflictions that arise in conjunction with that confusion.

February 23 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D Explaining the intention of teaching the aggregates to be the self

Yesterday we finished the refutation by means of reasoning of the aggregates as the self, which is held by the Buddhist lower schools. Now the lower schools are defending themselves by means of scripture.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D1 Explaining the meaning of teaching that all views of a self are a view of the aggregates alone

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D1A Indicating the intention of the scriptures to be from the negative position of eliminating the object of negation

The intention behind the Buddha teaching that the aggregates are the self

The lower schools say that the Buddha taught that the aggregates are the self, as put forth in verse 6.132a. Chandrakirti gives the Prasangika reply in 6.132bcd, that it is not the Buddha's intention in teaching this to teach that the aggregates are the self. Rather, his intention was to refute a self that is a different entity from the aggregates, the self that is imputed by the Forders. Such a type of self does not exist even conventionally. So in this passage the Buddha is saying that, when the self is observed, only the self which is the same entity as the aggregates is observed, but it is not the aggregates that are observed. The aggregates are not the self but neither are they a different entity from the self. The aggregates are the appropriated and the self is the appropriator. The conventionally existent I is imputed in dependence on the aggregates.

Other sutras teach that the aggregates are not the self

A question arises, asking how is it to be understood from that passage that it is refuting a self that is a different entity from the aggregates. The response is that it can be understood by what is stated in other sutras, specifically those scriptures which say that form is not the self, feelings are not the self, and so forth. To clarify this, Chandrakirti responds in verse 6.133, saying that each of the five aggregates were asserted by the Buddha to not be the self, so the previous sutra quote doesn't assert "the aggregates are the self," as the lower schools suggest. Moreover, there is another meaning to that sutra – that whoever views the self is viewing *just* the five appropriated aggregates. In other words, when one thinks 'self' in terms of viewing the five aggregates, one doesn't think 'self' in terms of viewing something that is other than the aggregates. In thinking 'self' we are only at that time viewing just the five aggregates, we are not observing something else. So the conception of a self does not arise upon observing something that is different from the aggregates, it only arises from observing the aggregates.

An objection saying that the aggregates are the observed object of the view of a self

An objection is put forth, saying that, although the sutra does refute a self that is different from the aggregates, the rest of what Prasangika is asserting contradicts other sutras, so that original sutra passage does not refute that this observed object is the aggregates. The objector agrees that the sutra passage does refute that the observed object in dependence upon which we conceive I or self is a different entity from the aggregates, but does not agree that it refutes that the aggregates themselves are the self. It seems that this objection could come from any of the lower schools, since they hold that the self is the aggregates. So Prasangika responds saying that this would contradict scriptures that say that the observed object of the conception of a self is not the aggregates but must be the self. Admittedly the aggregates are denied to be a self in those sutra passages, but where in sutra does the Buddha say specifically that the observed object of the view of the transitory collection must be an I or person? Lama Tsongkhapa gives one answer to that question in the following section.

The sutra that teaches the aggregates are the self in fact sets out the Prasangika view

So according to Prasangika, that original sutra passage is clarifying two points: (1) that a self, which is a different entity from the aggregates, is not the observed object of the view of a self, and (2) that the aggregates are not the observed object of that conception either. Moreover, Lama Tsongkhapa is also saying that it presents the uncommon assertion of Prasangika – that the self that is imputed in dependence on aggregates is the observed object of the view of the transitory collection. This can be taken to mean that the observed object is a self and it necessarily is a self that is imputed in dependence on the aggregates. Why? Because that passage refutes that this observed object is a different entity from the aggregates and that the aggregates themselves are the observed object. So from Lama Tsongkhapa's commentary this passage itself can be taken as putting forth that the mere I is the observed object. He explains that, in those sutras which teach that form and so forth are not the self, the self that is being refuted there is an inherently existent self, an inherently existent possessor of the aggregates. This is an interesting point – if we refute a self that is an inherently existent possessor of the aggregates, as a consequence we refute an inherently existent object that is possessed. When there is no inherently existent possessor of objects, we are free from attachment to form. When we say form is not the self, we mean that there is no inherently existent possessor of that form, and by asserting that, we will become free of attachment to form.

When we say 'possessor' here, in what way does one conceive of the self to be a possessor? Is it as the lower schools posit – a substantially existent, self-sufficient possessor? It doesn't seem that we're talking about such conceptions here but rather it must be a conception of an inherently existent possessor. It seems that conventionally there is notion that the self is the possessor of the aggregates, and although that is correct according to worldly conventions, it does not exist ultimately.

In conclusion, when we analyze the sutras, we can conclude that both that which is a different entity from the aggregates and the aggregates themselves are not the observed object of the view of the transitory collection. We can also conclude that the sutra that teaches that the aggregates are the self is actually the uncommon explanation of the self as asserted by Prasangika, that it is merely imputed by the force of conceptuality and names in dependence upon the aggregates, its basis of imputation.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D1B Even treated as being from the affirmative position, the aggregates are not indicated to be the self

So we've interpreted the earlier scriptural passage as indicating that the self is not a different entity from the aggregates and that the self is not the aggregates, so now we look at it from an affirmative point of view.

An assertion that the collection of the aggregates is the self

In verse 6.134ab, a proponent of some lower school says that the meaning of that passage *is* that the aggregates are the self, and when that is said, it specifically means that the *collection* of the aggregates are the self, not that the individual aggregates are the self. An analogy is presented to support this view – when we say the trees are the forest, we don't mean that each of the individual trees are a forest, only that the collection of the trees are the forest. Chandrakirti responds in 6.134cd, saying, "It is not a protector, neither is it a subduer nor a witness because it does not exist; thus it is not the mere collection."

Lama Tsongkhapa cites two sutra passages to support this. The first passage teaches that the self is the protector, witness, and so on. What does it mean to protect? One protects one's body and mind. To be a witness is to watch over one's body and mind. The second sutra passage teaches that by subduing the self, one is subduing one's mental continuum. The self comes to mean a controller, a supervisor, a protector, a witness, and a watcher, and the object of those activities are the five aggregates of the mind and body. The witness has to be separate from that which is being witnessed, the protector is separate from that which is protected, and so forth; otherwise the agent and the object of the activity would be the same. How could the self be a protector if it is the same as that which is protected, the aggregates?

The mere collection of the aggregates does not substantially exist

Haven't we generally said that a "controller" such as is described here is to be refuted? Here Chandrakirti is refuting specifically that a mere collection that is being put forth as the self cannot be a protector, a subduer and so on, and the reason that is so is because that collection is not substantially existent. Prasangika is saying to the lower schools that, within your own system, whatever you impute the self to, i.e. the illustrative base, must substantially exist, and a collection is imputedly existing according to you so that collection cannot be the self. So it cannot be a protector, a witness, and so forth. The lower schools say that when you search among the aggregates you find the person, and that illustration of the person substantially exists. Are the five aggregates substantially existent for the lower schools? Yes, since substantially existent here means that another phenomenon doesn't need to appear in order for that phenomenon to appear.

February 26 (Monday)

Revisiting the idea of a substantially existent self

We are looking again at the difficult point of substantial existence. Do the lower schools refute a self-sufficient, substantially existent self? They would all claim that they do. In order to interpret the lower schools' positions from the standpoint of Prasangika, it appears that we need to divide the term into its two components: self-sufficiency and substantial existence. In terms of self-sufficiency the lower schools hold that there is not a self-sufficient person that is like a controller of the aggregates. However, in terms of substantial existence, Prasangika would claim that the lower schools all posit a substantially existent person because when searched for the person is found among the aggregates. All of the lower schools hold that there must be a substantially existent basis among the aggregates upon which the self is imputed. There is an excellent discussion of this topic in *Meditation on Emptiness*, note 791, pp.897-903.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D1C Dispelling others' arguments regarding these

Proponents who hold the collection of parts to be the cart

Here we are considering a case where a lower school proponent holds that the collection of aggregates is the self. Prasangika finds fault with this, saying that the collection of aggregates cannot be the self. Using the analogy of a cart, which corresponds to the self, Chandrakirti says in verse 6.135ab that the parts of a cart heaped up together on the ground cannot be called a cart. The unassembled parts of a cart are not capable of functioning as a cart. Lama Tsongkhapa also says that the collection of the aggregates is not substantially existent and not suitable to act as a protector, subduer, and so forth. If the collection were the self then the

self would not be substantially existent, which is a consequence that the lower schools would not want to accept. A collection only exists through being imputed on the members of a collection.

The term self cannot be applied to the aggregates that are appropriated by the self

An objector says that the aggregates and the possessor of the aggregates are the same entity therefore the collection of aggregates is suitable to be a protector, subduer and so forth. Prasangika responds by saying that you cannot assign the term ‘self’ to the collection of aggregates sometimes, and then at other times to the possessor of the aggregates. The self cannot be both the protector and that which is protected. The subduer is named in dependence on the aggregates so we cannot assign the term ‘self’ to the object of the subduing, the aggregates. One cannot be an agent and the object of an action. The mere collection of the aggregates is not the self. A sentient being, or self, is spoken of conventionally in dependence on the aggregates. The Buddha did not teach that the collection of the aggregates is the self, but that the self is imputed in dependence upon the aggregates.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D2 Explaining, in dependence on other sutras, that the mere collection of the aggregates is not the self

The self and the aggregates are the same entity

The collection of aggregates is the basis on which the self is imputed and therefore it cannot be the self. However, we can say that the basis of imputation and that which is imputed in dependence on it are the same entity. We can understand this using an analogy. The color blue arises in dependence upon the elements. The color blue is composed of the eight particles. However, one cannot say that the eight particles are the color blue. All forms, such as pens, are made up of the eight types of particles but the eight particles are not a pen. In *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.547, there is a description of the Gelukba view: “[N]ominal existence is: the non-identification of the imputed object as its basis of imputation and yet the coordination of these two as determined by whether the object so designated can perform its functions.”

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D3 Refuting that the structure that is the shape of the mere collection of aggregates is the self
Here in verse 6.136, Chandrakirti refutes a related idea, that the shape of the collection of the aggregates is the self. We do have a tendency to think of things based on their shape. For instance, we recognize a house based on its shape. An objector says that the specific shape of the collection of the aggregates is the self and Prasangika easily refutes this. Only form has shape and therefore the physical body would have to be the self since the remaining four aggregates do not possess shape. Also, at the time of death the self would necessarily cease since the shape of the collection of the aggregates ceases since the shape of the aggregate of form ceases.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D4 Presenting other harm to asserting the mere collection of the aggregates to be the self

The appropriator and appropriated exist in mutual dependence

Once again, here we are talking about agents and things acted upon. Lama Tsongkhapa explains that the self is the appropriator of the aggregates and the aggregates are that which is appropriated. If the aggregates were the self, then the object of the action of appropriation would be one with the agent that appropriates, the self. This would be like saying that a potter and a pot are one. Nagarjuna gives some more examples: fire and fuel would be one, a weaver and cloth would be one, and so forth. All of these pairs exist in mutual dependence. If the lower schools find the self within the aggregates, then there is no agent to appropriate the aggregates and the self and the aggregates would not depend on one another. If there is no agent, then there is nothing acted upon. We often feel there is a thinker behind our thoughts that does not depend upon the act of thinking. However, if we think about dependent-arising we will realize that there is no such independent agent. A thinker arises in dependence upon thinking and vice versa.

February 27 (Tuesday)

Revisiting once again the idea of a substantially existent self

There’s one thing to discuss further regarding the sutra passages from the *Collected Teachings* that Lama Tsongkhapa cited in his refutation of the collection of the aggregates to be the self (see pp.30-31 of transcript

for week 35). In Geshe-la's previous commentary on *Madhyamakavatara* (p.638), he said that this passage refutes the lower schools that hold that the illustration of the person as substantially existent. Apparently there is some question as to whether the illustration of the person is substantially existent for the lower schools, and Geshe-la was asked this and he said yes, that is so. The lower schools accept a substantially existent person but do not accept a *self-sufficient*, substantially existent person. So what exactly is the difference between those two? We mentioned yesterday the presentation on the self that Jeffrey Hopkins gives in footnote 791 of *Meditation on Emptiness* (pp.897-903), and at the end of that passage he comments about the lower schools' view of a self:

Hence, even the self or person has a substantially existent phenomenon as its basis of designation, and since the person is findable under analysis, that substantially existent phenomenon must *be* the person. What they refute is that the person, in isolation, substantially exists.

This seems to indicate that the idea of self-sufficiency entails the person substantially existing in isolation from the aggregates, and that is what they are refuting. Within that footnote there are other interesting insights, particularly the paragraph beginning at the bottom of p.901 continuing through most of the following page.

How self-sufficiency is defined in Prasangika and the lower schools

Is there a difference in how Prasangika defines self-sufficiency compared to how the lower schools define it? From another passage in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.303-4), it seems that there is a difference:

Opposite to this [i.e. the Prasangika view that a person depends on his mental and physical aggregates], many mistaken systems teach that a person has a character separate from that of his aggregates; they view a person as like a herder or a lord and the mental and physical aggregates as his herd or subjects. For the non-Prasangika schools of Buddhist tenets, this view of a self-sufficient person exists innately in ordinary beings, but for Prasangika it is only a product of false teachings. The Prasangikas say that the innate sense of a self-sufficient person is the person's appearing to be like a head salesman and his aggregates appearing to be like salesmen. The head salesman, unlike the relationship between a shepherd and his flock, is not separate from the category 'salesman', but he is the boss of the other salesmen. Similarly, though a person is the nature of the aggregates, he appears to be the controller of them; the aggregates, like salesmen, appear to depend on the person who, like a head salesman, appears to not depend upon the aggregates.

So the lower schools' view of a self-sufficient self is seen as similar to the master, with the aggregates as the servant, while for Prasangika, a self-sufficient person is likened to the head salesman and the aggregates are like salesmen. 'Self-sufficient' means able to stand on its own and it seems there are varying shades of meaning to this idea. Also, see *Emptiness Yoga*, pp. 64-65.

The meaning of the 'illustrative self'

For the lower schools, the illustrative self is substantially existent but is the self substantially existent? What exactly does the illustrative self mean? It seems that the lower schools are negating the self-sufficient, substantially existent self but they still need a basis for the self that collects karma, goes from life to life, and so forth. When we speak of a being, the I, or the self, what illustrates it is what continues from life to life. For an animal, there are the aggregates that illustrate that particular rebirth as an animal but they do not illustrate the being as such. What is constant to our rebirths is what the illustration of the self is. So the lower schools seem to be accepting two selves as existents. First they accept the illustrative self, which refers to the basis of designation of the self, and is substantially existent. The other that they accept is the self that is imputedly existent. Would Prasangika posit an 'illustrative self'? It doesn't seem that they would posit an illustration of the person since that implies that the person is findable, but it is the mere "I" that is continuous throughout rebirths and serves as the basis for the various conceptions of the particular being..

To conclude this side discussion, it is also interesting to note that Geshe-la also says in his previous commentary (p.638), "If we do further analysis, according to the lower schools that take as an object of analysis, oneself is one's own protector and so forth, in this context, oneself is primarily referring to or

pointing to one's own mind." He concludes that the lower schools are in effect saying that, since the mind is substantially existent, oneself refers to the mind.

Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* on the appropriator and the appropriated

So to return to discussing the other harm in asserting the collection of the aggregates as the self, Lama Tsongkhapa explores a small discussion of Sanskrit grammar and then, to describe the relationship between the appropriated (the aggregates) and the appropriator (the self), Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* is quoted. That verse summarizes the points so far:

1. The self is not a different entity from the appropriated;
2. The appropriated are not the self;
3. The self depends upon apprehending the appropriated (meaning that in order for the self to appear, the aggregates must appear; or that the self is the same entity as the aggregates);
4. The self does exist.

In discussing the appropriated and appropriator those four points are set out and Lama Tsongkhapa also says, "Therefore, also an action does not exist without an agent." All three – agent, action, and object of the action – are dependent upon each other.

Various interpretations of a passage from the *Sutra of Ultimate Emptiness*

Next Lama Tsongkhapa quotes the *Sutra of Ultimate Emptiness*, which states, "the agent is not observed..." Although it's not indicated as such, it's likely that this is an objection from the lower schools, saying that the aggregates themselves are the appropriator since they are the self. In other words, they would hold that no outside agent is needed, and this passage is cited as scriptural proof. However, Prasangika says this passage is stating that an *inherently existent* agent is not observed. Even though such an agent is not observed, actions are still committed and come to ripen. Vasubandhu disagrees with this interpretation and instead interprets it according to the Chittamatra view. Lama Tsongkhapa says first that Prasangika holds that there is no agent that exists separate from the aggregates. When asserting the acted upon and action conventionally, it is also necessary to assert the existence of an agent. Conventionally, the objects acted upon do exist and the ripening of actions is also clearly seen, so therefore the person who acts upon them must also exist. However, no inherently existent agent exists. If it did, the appropriator and the appropriated wouldn't be interdependent since there would be an inherently existent agent. Therefore, an appropriator that is unfindable upon analysis is the best position to take. In summary, there is an appropriator although it doesn't inherently exist – when it is searched for upon, among, or separate from the aggregates, it is not found. For Prasangika, this appropriator would be the mere I.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2D5 The Subduer taught the self to be imputed in dependence on the six constituents and so forth. For context, we are now in the last part of examining why the Buddha taught the aggregates to be the self. We've examined the various faults to the collection of the aggregates being the self and now we look at how this view is refuted by sutra itself. 'Constituents' here means elements.

A self exists by mere imputation on the six elements and six spheres of contact

In verses 6.138 and 6.139, there is a reference to the *Sutra of the Meeting of Father and Son*, and Lama Tsongkhapa cites the relevant passages (see *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp.627-631 for a longer translation of the section of this sutra that includes those passages). Chandrakirti says there is the fault of saying the collection of the aggregates is the self because here in this sutra, the Buddha says that the six elements and the six spheres of contact are the basis of imputing the self but are not individually or collectively the self. The six elements and how they are exhibited internal to the person are as follows:

- (1) **earth** (the flesh, bone, organs and so forth of the body),
- (2) **water** (the flowing substances in the body, such as blood),
- (3) **fire** (warmth),
- (4) **wind** (energy, respiration),
- (5) **space** (the cavities, such as those in the nose, and so forth), and
- (6) **consciousness**.

These are the six elements upon which the self is imputed. Is the space element in the context of the body uncompounded or compounded space? It would seem to be compounded since it is the hollows and cavities of the body.

The six spheres or bases of contact are also mentioned. Geshe-la says they are the contact arising based upon the three – the sense power, the object and consciousness – aggregating, and since we have six types of consciousnesses, we have six bases of contact. Although Geshe-la didn't mention this, contact is itself the basis of feelings, and there are six types of feeling arising from these six types of contact (see *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp.239-240). Lama Tsongkhapa also says that this sutra taught that these are imputed to be the self "in dependence on closely apprehending phenomena...as the bases of imputation." 'Phenomena' here refers specifically to the mind and mental factors. We are concerned with identifying the observed object of the view of the transitory collection, and saying that the beginningless conception of I does not observe the six elements or six bases of contact but rather observes the I imputed in dependence upon them.

Another base of imputation – the eighteen mental activities

Another possible base is the eighteen mental activities or movements. For example, when the person sees visual form, the eye consciousness experiences attractive form, due to which pleasurable feelings arise and there is mental movement towards the object. So there are eighteen since there are the eye consciousness apprehending visual form with respect to the three types of feelings (happiness, suffering, and equanimity), the ear consciousness apprehending sound with respect to the three feelings, and so forth. These are called movements or activities because due to them, the consciousness moves to the object. The essential point is that whatever we call this basis of imputation, none of these are the observed object of the view of the transitory collection. The aggregates are not the observed object of the view of the transitory collection, nor is it something different from the aggregates

The 'mine' is also understood to not exist inherently

Lama Tsongkhapa says that the yogi, due to not observing an inherently existent I, similarly understands that the 'mine' also does not inherently exist. He indicates that the individual aggregates and their collection, as well as whatever is a different entity from the aggregates, are not the observed object of the view of a self. The observed object of the view of the transitory collection is the mere I, the I that is imputed in dependence on the aggregates. Those who desire liberation should posit it this way.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-2E Indicating others' systems as lacking relationship

In this final section of the discussion of the self as the aggregates, Chandrakirti gives a final assessment of the view of the lower schools, who posit in various ways that the aggregates or the mind are the observed object of the view of the transitory collection. They assert that the self exists and the aggregates or the mind are the self.

As long as the aggregates arise, the conception of a self will arise

According to Prasangika, the observed object is the mere I. Therefore, Prasangika would say that, for the lower schools, as long as the aggregates arise, the view of the transitory collection would arise, because one continues to hold to the referent object of the view of the transitory collection. What does that come to mean? Lama Tsongkhapa is saying that the lower schools, since they take the aggregates as the self, would not be able to abandon the conception of a self because they have not found the object of negation. From Prasangika's point of view, if the aggregates are the self, then it is findable when sought and inherently exists and, if the observed object of the view of the transitory collection is the aggregates, as long as one observes them, the innate conception of a self of persons will continually arise. Since the lower schools are only negating the self-sufficient, substantially existent self they are not negating the inherently existent self, so they haven't identified the object of negation properly, as is shown by their holding the aggregates to be the self.

The analogy of calming the snake-fearing person by asserting the absence of elephants

In verse 6.140, Chandrakirti speaks of a lower tenet holder (possibly a Sammitiya) who propounds selflessness as the emptiness of a permanent, partless, independent self. Here, to such a person who asserts that negating a permanent self is a realization of selflessness, Chandrakirti says their position is incapable of dispelling the conception of a self. Lama Tsongkhapa says that such a permanent person is not the object of negation or referent object, of the innate view of the self. The abandonment of such a self and the abandonment of the view of the transitory collection have absolutely no relationship. Chandrakirti shows this

in verse 6.141, where he uses an analogy of someone who fears a snake in the house, and the absurd idea that we could possibly relieve his fear by saying there is no elephant there. There is no way that one could relieve such a person's fear with that because, even if they were to relax from that person's statement, they would still be bitten by the snake that's in their house. Similarly, by only familiarizing oneself with refuting the idea of a permanent, partless, independent self, one would not be able to remove the view of the transitory collection that causes one's being in cyclic existence. Even if one's suffering is somewhat alleviated by cultivating that view, they will still be reborn, die, suffer, and so on.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 13 (Tuesday)

Self-sufficiency and some metaphors

For all Buddhist schools the self is identified with the aggregates in some way. In our previous discussions we were talking about the conception of self-sufficiency. *Emptiness Yoga*, on pages 64-5, talks about self-sufficiency and gives some good examples. When we conceive of a self-sufficient self, it seems that the self somehow comes before the mental and physical aggregates and exists as a controller of the aggregates. The apprehension of the aggregates seems to depend on the apprehension of the I while in fact, the apprehension of the I depends upon apprehending the aggregates. One can say that the I and the aggregates are apprehended as different, similar to the case of a head salesperson and the salespeople who work for him. The head salesperson orders the other salespeople about. He is not completely different than the other salespeople but he is a controller and, in this context, not dependent upon them. In the same way the I seems to be in control of the mind and body. Another analogy used is that of a lord and his subjects. The lord does not depend upon his subjects but is in control of them. However, Jamyang Shayba warns against an interpretation of this metaphor that takes the lord and his subjects to be different entities. In this way the metaphor is not as clear as that of the head salesperson because the head salesperson is still a salesperson whereas a lord is not a subject and a subject is not a lord, which can lead to misinterpreting the lord and subject to be different entities and then misapplying the metaphor to the self and aggregates. The self and the aggregates are the same entity.

Only a person is misconceived to be self-sufficient in this way. This is not true for phenomena. For Prasangka, this self-sufficient, substantially existent I is the coarse self of persons. In some of Hopkins' later translations he translates this concept as "substantially existent in the sense of being self sufficient". This translation may be more useful for us presently as we are not yet clear about the meaning of substantial existence. Substantial existence is a difficult concept that we will continue to explore, as it seems to mean many different things in different contexts.

A brief review of some of the consequences of finding the self within the aggregates

No self is apprehendable separate from the aggregates. No Buddhist school posits a self that is not related to the aggregates. If the aggregates were the self then there are absurd consequences that would arise. We have already covered these but in brief we can review some of them. If the aggregates were the self there would be many selves, as there are many aggregates. Also, if the self were identified with the mental continuum then because there are many former and later discreet moments of consciousness the self would also be many. Also, if inherently existent aggregates were the self there would be no memory of past lives because the aggregates cease at death, therefore, the self would also. In addition, actions would be wasted and one would experience the results of others' actions. Further, if the shape of the aggregates were the self then because the mind has no shape the self would only be able to be posited in terms of the form aggregate because only form has shape.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-3 Refuting the three remaining positions other than those two: support, supported, and so forth

The fourfold analysis and the fivefold reasoning

In *Lam Rim* there is a presentation of a fourfold analysis used to realize emptiness: 1) identifying the object of negation, 2) ascertaining the entailment (or pervasion), 3) refuting the object of negation as being one with the aggregates, and 4) refuting the object of negation as being different from the aggregates. We have already covered the last two points of that analysis in this outline of the fivefold reasoning, which follows Nagarjuna's presentation in *Fundamental Wisdom*. Now we will examine the three remaining points in Nagarjuna's fivefold reasoning. Later we will see how Chandrakirti added yet two more reasonings to create a sevenfold reasoning.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-3A Refuting the position of support, supported, and possession

The three remaining positions

We are considering the final three positions within the fivefold reasoning: the self is not the support of the aggregates, the aggregates are not the support of the self and the self does not possess the aggregates. Within Buddhist systems the self must be posited in relation to the aggregates. The final three reasons of the fivefold reasoning are permutations based on the first two reasonings. The first of these for instance, “the self is not an inherently existent support of the aggregates” refers to a self that is inherently different than the aggregates, since the support and supported would be inherently different in this case. To have this view it would have to be acquired through mistaken tenets because the innate view of the transitory collection does not conceive the self and the aggregates to be either one or different.

Some metaphors for the relationships of dependence between the aggregates and the self

Considering the two positions of dependence, Prasangika shows that the self does not inherently depend on the aggregates and the aggregates do not inherently depend upon the self. For the self and the aggregates to be different entities as support and supported they would be like a bowl and yogurt, which can be identified separately. If there is a relationship of dependence between two inherently existent things they must be different entities. In *Emptiness Yoga* on p.213 a couple of metaphors are given. If the self depended upon the aggregates it would be like a lion living in a forest. The lion’s living within the forest depends upon the forest but the lion stands apart from the forest. We sometimes recognize this feeling when we search for the object of negation. There seems to be something dwelling within us when we get angry, something like a marble within the flesh that is the I. Considering the other position, with the aggregates dependent upon the self, Hopkins uses the analogy of the aggregates being like the forest and the self being like snow that covers the forest and extends beyond it. Similarly, when we consider a hand it seems to extend beyond the parts and seems to hold the fingers and palm together. The parts appear to be dependent upon the hand. Similarly the self seems to be like the snow that blankets the forest of the aggregates. It seems that if the self weren’t holding the aggregates together they would fall apart.

The dependence between yogurt and bowl is different than that between the self and the aggregates

Two things like a bowl and yogurt can exist in dependence. As support and supported these two are not the same entity. It is different in the case of the self and the aggregates because they are, in fact, the same entity. We are refuting a self that is inherently dependent upon the aggregates, and aggregates that are inherently dependent upon the self. If the self and the aggregates existed as otherness in that way, then we could have these conceptualizations of inherently existent support and supported but since this is not the case these are just wrong views.

March 14 (Wednesday)

Another refutation of the two positions of dependence

Considering the two positions of dependence, Hopkins writes in *Emptiness Yoga*, p.273: “The two positions of dependence are variations only of the position that the self and the aggregates are inherently established as different and are, therefore, completely negated by the reasoning that refutes inherently established difference.”

Refuting a self that possesses the aggregates

The third position is that the self is not the inherently existent possessor of the aggregates. In terms of possession there are two different modes: as a different entity such as Devadatta possessing a cow, or as the same entity such as Devadatta possessing his body. In the first mode the self would have to be inherently other than the aggregates, and in the second mode the self would have to be inherently one with the aggregates. But since the self is neither inherently one with nor inherently different from the aggregates, there can be no relationship of inherent possession between the self and the aggregates. The self and the aggregates exist in dependence upon other phenomena and causes, so therefore they do not inherently exist. Conventionally, the self does possess the aggregates, but not inherently.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-3B Adding together the meaning of these refutations, then presenting them

The twenty acquired views of the transitory collection

We are refuting the three remaining positions – the two relationships of inherent dependence between the self and the aggregates, and the view of the self as the possessor of the aggregates. Now we are adding all of these positions together. Chandrakirti presents a summary in terms of four positions. For example, considering the aggregate of form: (1) form is inherently one with the self; (2) form is inherently possessed by the self; (3) form is the basis on which the self inherently depends; and (4) form is inherently dependent upon the self. By applying these four similarly to each of the other four aggregates, we can posit a total of twenty positions and therefore twenty acquired views of the transitory collection.

Five additional acquired views of the transitory collection

There is a fifth position presented in Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom* – that the self and the five aggregates are different entities. In this way, there is a presentation of twenty-five acquired views of the transitory collection. However, within a Buddhist framework it is not necessary to consider these five additional views because the view of the transitory collection necessarily involves the aggregates. The Buddha taught that the aggregates must be apprehended in order for the view of the transitory collection to arise. The mere I observed by the innate view of the transitory collection depends upon the appearance of the aggregates. These five additional views do not depend on the appearance of the aggregates, in the same way that the appearance of a cow does not depend upon the appearance of a horse. Nagarjuna's intention in including these five additional views was to refute the non-Buddhist Forders, which the Buddha had done elsewhere.

The twenty acquired views are compared to the high peaks on a mountain range

Chandrakirti likens these twenty acquired views of the transitory collection to the high peaks that stand out from a huge mountain range. The huge mountain range represents the innate view of the transitory collection, which is the foundation of the acquired views. These twenty "lofty peaks" are destroyed by the vajra of a superior's exalted wisdom directly realizing selflessness upon attaining the path of seeing, or at the time of becoming a stream enterer. These views are acquired through mistaken tenets and are merely imputed. In *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.177, Hopkins writes:

[B]ecause the innate false view of a real self does not conceive the person and the aggregates to be either one or different, all twenty false views of a self are only artificial. However, if the self existed as conceived by the innate view of a real self, it would be either one with the aggregates or a different entity from the aggregates. Therefore, the self as conceived by the innate misconception of inherent existence is analyzed in the same way as the self that is misconceived through artificial teachings.

The twenty acquired views are called views of the transitory collection because they observe the aggregates, and this highlights the fact that the innate view of the transitory collection arises only when one or more of the aggregates appears. In fact, these twenty are not actual views of the transitory collection since their observed object is the mere I but, rather, the aggregates.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-4 Refuting a substantially existent person that does not exist as oneness and as otherness

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-4A Stating the previous position

Sammitiyas hold the self to be indescribable

We are again refuting a position held by the Sammitiya Vaibhashikas. They hold that the self substantially exists in the sense of self-sufficiency. They reason that because the self is an agent, experiencer, and eventually attains liberation, it therefore must be self-sufficient. They say that this self is indescribable in relation to the aggregates in terms of whether it is the same entity or a different entity from the aggregates. It is not different because for the self to appear the aggregates must appear. It is not the same because it is not born and does not perish along with the aggregates.

March 15 (Thursday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-4B Refuting that system

Yesterday we began the refutation of a self-sufficient person that does not exist as oneness or otherness and we went through the first part of that section. There the Sammitiyas' view was presented – that the person exists substantially but yet is indescribable in relation to the aggregates in terms of being either the same or

different. For them, the yogi gains liberation merely by realizing that the person is not a permanent, partless, independent self. Now in this second part, we go on to refute their position.

The meaning of substantially existent, imputedly existent, and so forth

Before discussing this section, it may be helpful to share some of what Geshe-la indicated in a recent discussion regarding some of the terminology that we've been using. It seems as though these two sets of terms below are used differently by different schools, in different contexts, and even by different authors who have written on the subject. Geshe-la indicated the following regarding these four terms:

1. **Substantially existent** (*rdzas su yod pa*) – This can also be translated as 'existing as a substance'. Geshe-la said that for the lower schools, in general, 'substantially existent' is equal to a functioning thing, for example, a chariot.
2. **Imputedly existent** – Geshe-la didn't give an example of an imputedly existent phenomenon for the lower schools.
- A. **Substantial existent** – (*rdzas yod*) For substantial existent, Geshe-la gave the example of form, and also indicated that this refers to a phenomenon that in order to appear does not require another phenomenon to appear.
- B. **Imputed existent** – Here Geshe-la gave the examples of a chariot or a person, and it seems we would describe this in the same way we've seen before (i.e. that an imputed existent is a phenomenon that does require another phenomenon to appear in order for it to appear or be apprehended).

It seems that the above represent the general assumptions around these terms for the lower schools. For Prasangika, it's possible that the first and third would be the same in meaning, and there are no phenomena that are included in either of them since for Prasangika nothing substantially exists. It seems that also the second and the fourth would be equal, and all phenomena are included in them since for Prasangika all phenomena exist merely by imputation. This analysis of these terms does bring up concerns about how Prasangika has used the term 'substantially existent' in the past, specifically in the refutations of various positions of the lower schools so perhaps those should be revisited. But then again, since the above was probably given only as generalizations by Geshe-la, these may not apply in all contexts. In the following section, as we will see, it seems that "substantially existent" and "substantial existent" are being used interchangeably and are not differentiated as set out above.

The refutation of the Sammitiyas' assertion of a self that is indescribable

Chandrakirti says in verse 6.147 that since mind is not realized as indescribable as either one or other in regard to form, all existent things are similarly not indescribable. Prasangika here is trying to corner the Sammitiyas in regard to their calling the self 'indescribable,' or "inexpressible", saying that they are being inconsistent with other positions that they hold. Prasangika points out though that for them, the mind would also be substantially existent, and yet it is not seen as being inexpressible as the same or different from form (since they would assert that it can be expressed as different from form). Therefore the self that they are asserting as substantially existent is also not inexpressible with regard to being the same or different from the aggregates. What reason could the Sammitiyas possibly give for the difference between the mind and the self in that regard? Therefore the self should not be asserted to be inexpressible or indescribable.

The refutation of the Sammitiyas' assertion of a self that is not an imputed existent

Further in 6.148, Chandrakirti goes on to show that the self is an imputed existent, not substantially existent, once again by pointing out inconsistencies in their logic. For the Sammitiyas, a pot is an imputed existent and not a substantial existent, and they would say that it is indescribable with regard to its form or parts. Therefore according to their own assertions, the self should also be an imputed existent since it too is indescribable with regard to its parts, the aggregates.

So there are two points being made in the Prasangika refutation of the Sammitiyas assertion:

- (1) In verse 6.147, Chandrakirti is saying that, for the Sammitiyas, a mind is substantially existent and it is asserted as describable with respect to being different from form. So why should the Sammitiyas hold the self, which is also asserted as substantially existent by them, as being indescribable with respect to the aggregates?

- (2) In verse 6.148, Chandrakirti is saying that, for the Sammitiyas, a pot is an imputed existent, and is indescribable with regard to form, its parts. Therefore the self, too being indescribable with regard to its parts, should also be an imputed existent, and not existing as a substance, just like the pot.

Another inconsistency within the Sammitiyas' assertions

In verse 6.149, Chandrakirti says that consciousness for the Sammitiyas is a substantially existent thing. Further, they would agree that consciousness is one with its own nature and it is other than form. This characteristic of being one with itself and being different from other is a characteristic of all things, not just consciousness. So this self being asserted by the Sammitiyas cannot substantially exist because according to their own position, it is free from being one with itself and is also not asserted as being different from other. Since the Sammitiyas say that the self, being indescribable, is not one with its own nature nor is it different from the aggregates, Prasangika says such a self cannot substantially exist simply because it is free from these two characteristics of all things. But yet earlier, they said that a pot is also indescribable so does it also lack these two characteristics? It's difficult to discern the exact position of the Sammitiyas.

The meaning of 'substantially existent' in Vaibhashika

The Sammitiyas are a subschool of Vaibhashika and on p.183 of *Cutting Through Appearances*, there is a description of substantial existence in regard to the general Vaibhashika tenets. It says that for this school, substantially existent means "that when the object is either broken physically or mentally divided into parts, the awareness of that object is not canceled." For the Vaibhashikas, substantial existents are mutually inclusive with ultimate truths, while imputed existents are mutually inclusive with conventional truths. Perhaps we need to apply those meanings to this discussion, since it doesn't seem that we can strictly apply the meanings we've given above.

Another possible interpretation of 'substantially existent'

However, another suggestion is that maybe in this discussion, when the Sammitiyas say that the self is substantially existent, it actually means self-sufficient, substantially existent since the Sammitiyas do not refute such a self (they only refute a permanent, partless, independent self). Anne Klein, in *Knowledge and Liberation* (p. 243, note 25) points out something interesting concerning the phrase 'self-sufficient, substantially existent' and their Sanskrit equivalent:

More precisely, *dravya sat* is the Sanskrit equivalent of *rdzas yod* – substantially existent – in Tibetan. I have not found a Sanskrit equivalent for self-sufficient (*rang rkya ba*). However, in the Tibetan phrase *rang rkya grub pa rdzas yod*, 'substantially existent' and 'self-sufficient' are appositive; therefore it is not unsuitable to consider *dravya-sat* an equivalent for the entire phrase.

Appositives are equivalents themselves, as in the phrase "our teacher, Geshe Jampa Gyatso" for example. So Anne Klein is indicating that using one infers the meaning of both of them.

March 16 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5 Explaining the self posited as a mere dependent imputation along with an example

Having completed the fivefold analysis refuting an inherently existent self, we now go on to explain how the self is posited as a mere dependent imputation.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5A Indicating that the self, although not existing as the seven extremes, is imputed in dependence like a chariot

The self is unfindable when sought by way of either the fivefold or the sevenfold reasonings. If it did inherently exist, we should be able to find it by way of these analyses but in fact, it is not found when searched for in those analyses since nothing exists ultimately. Because the self as imputed by the lower schools is not found by means of the sevenfold analysis, it does not inherently exist.

Although the self does not inherently exist, it does imputedly exist

According to Prasangika the self is not observed as ultimate therefore it is not able to withstand ultimate analysis. In ultimate analysis we are looking at not whether something exists or not but how it exists. The self

does not ultimately exist but it does imputedly exist. If it imputedly exists, what does it depend upon? It depends upon the aggregates. We went through the process earlier of refuting production from the four extremes, and at that time we said that, although we've refuted production by any of those means, nonetheless production does exist conventionally. Similarly the self is refuted to exist inherently by these reasonings but still does exist as an imputation dependent on the aggregates. The composite of these two factors of being analytically unfindable on the one hand, and yet being validly established as objects by worldly convention on the other, is the middle way of Prasangika.

The sevenfold analysis shows how the self is a mere imputation

Here we will make use of the analogy of a chariot to show how the self is established by mere imputation and we will do this by means of a sevenfold analysis. We have already done this in regard to the fivefold reasoning but we will add the remaining two in the following section. All seven of these refutations are put forth by Chandrakirti in verse 6.151, with the last two being the ones that have yet to be set out – refuting that the mere collection of the parts is the chariot, and that the mere shape of the parts of the chariot is the chariot.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5B Extensively explaining the two remaining positions that were not explained before

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5B1 Actual meaning

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5B1A Refuting the assertion that the collection is the chariot

So first we examine refuting that the mere collection of the parts is the chariot.

The consequence that the dismantled heap of components would be the chariot

A lower school proponent says that the chariot is the mere collection of the parts or components of the chariot (not all of the lower schools would say that the mere collection of the aggregates is the self). First Chandrakirti sets out the consequence of this in verse 6.152, saying that if that were so, then if you dismantled the chariot and piled the parts in some area, then that mere collection of the pieces in that area would also be a chariot. The lower schools would obviously not want to accept such a consequence.

Other faults to the collection of the parts being the chariot

Further, although he already refuted that the self is an inherent appropriator of the aggregates earlier (in verse 6.137ab), nonetheless Chandrakirti in verse 6.152c puts forth an additional fault based on this same idea. Since a chariot does not exist when it is dismantled, there is no part-possessor (or 'whole'), therefore there are also no parts of the whole. If there is no appropriator, there cannot be the appropriated. An objection is raised, saying that when the parts of the chariot are dismantled, they are no longer 'parts of a chariot' because there is no chariot at the time when those parts are simply heaped up. In response, Prasangika says that this shows that the parts of the chariot are not inherently existent parts of the chariot since they would always be parts of a chariot if they were inherently existent.

Prasangika goes on to say that the collection of the parts is not the chariot because the collection of the parts is itself a part of the chariot. In other words, the collection of the parts cannot be a part-possessor since the collection of parts is itself a part of the chariot. Lama Tsongkhapa says that the collection of the parts is not the chariot because it is a component or part of the chariot. When we look at a chariot we find nothing but parts of the chariot, therefore the collection of the parts is a part of the chariot and, since the chariot cannot be its own parts, the collection of the parts also cannot be the chariot.

It might seem a bit strange that the last part of this section (verse 6.152d) says, "Therefore, the mere shape is also not suitable to be the chariot," when all along we've been discussing the mere collection and not the mere shape. Lama Tsongkhapa explains that the term 'also' in the root text means that the collection is included here even though it is not explicitly expressed. So it's possible to interpret this verse without any problems since, as Lama Tsongkhapa says, "the way in which it is included should be understood to be that 'The mere shape is also not suitable to be the chariot, the mere collection is also not suitable.'"

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5B1B Refuting the assertion that the mere shape is the chariot

If someone now argues that it is the shape of the parts that is the chariot, Chandrakirti responds asking whether this person means the shape of the individual parts of the chariot or the shape of the collection of the parts of the chariot. We will begin by examining if they mean the first one.

The refutation that the shape of the individual parts of a chariot is the chariot

If they say that the shape of the individual parts of a chariot is the chariot, is that the shape before assembly, or do the shapes upon being assembled transform into some other shape and that shape of the parts is the chariot? So we are looking at whether the shape is the shape of the parts before assembly or the shape of the parts after some sort of alteration after assembly. The consequence to the first is the shown in 6.153, saying that the individual shapes prior to assembly cannot be the chariot because prior to assembly there is no chariot. The chariot does not exist before it is assembled. If we consider the possibility that the shape of the individual parts after assembly are the chariot, then either the same shape remains or there is a new shape that has somehow emerged. If none of those parts have changed their shape during assembly, those same shapes would not be the chariot because if they weren't the chariot before assembly, neither are they the chariot now, since they are still the same shape. If we consider the shape of the individual parts upon being assembled when somehow new shapes have emerged, those shapes of the 'transformed' parts also cannot be the chariot, as shown in verse 6.154. Such a difference in the shape should be seen if it has occurred but it is not apprehended. For example, the shape of the wheel isn't altered upon being assembled so there are no new shapes after assembly. Therefore, from all this reasoning, the shape of the individual parts cannot be the chariot.

The refutation that the shape of the collection of the parts of a chariot is the chariot

Now, if they say that it is the second choice, that the shape of the collection of the parts is the chariot, this too is unsuitable as shown in verse 6.155ab. Chandrakirti says, "Because of that, since for you the collection does not exist at all, that shape is not of the collection of the components." As we discussed previously, for the lower schools, the basis of imputation must be a substantial existent but for them, the collection of the parts is the basis of imputation for the shape of the collection, and that collection of parts is, itself, an imputed existent. A collection of parts is imputed in dependence upon parts – the parts appear and then the collection of the parts is imputed upon that. So the collection of the parts cannot be the basis of imputation for the shape of the collection of the parts, therefore the shape of the collection of the parts cannot be the chariot. In other words, the shape of the collection has no basis of imputation since the lower schools say that the basis of imputation for an imputed existent must be a substantial existent. So when Chandrakirti says, "the collection does not exist at all," it means that it does not exist as a basis of imputation at all. A collection would be asserted by the lower schools to 'substantially exist' but as an imputed existent (i.e. it is not a 'substantial existent' as we defined it in yesterday's review class). Essentially what Chandrakirti is saying then is that if you say that the shape of the collection of the parts is the chariot, it cannot be because there is the fault of it lacking a basis of imputation. This is because the shape of the collection of the parts is imputed on the basis of the collection of the parts, and since that basis is also an imputed existent, it cannot act as the basis of imputation for the shape of the collection of the parts according to the lower schools.

Chandrakirti concludes this section with verse 6.155cd, saying that in dependence upon such a non-existent, how could the self be seen to be the shape. Therefore it is contradictory that the shape of the collection is imputed to the collection. Just as the color of a being is a feature that the person possesses, so too are the color and shape of a chariot features that the chariot possesses and, as we saw earlier, the possessor and the possessed cannot be one. If the shape of the collection were the chariot, then the possessor and the possessed would be one, but in fact they cannot be the same.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 19 (Monday)

Last week we set out the last two positions in the sevenfold analysis, that the collection of the parts is the chariot and that the shape of the parts is the chariot. Now we move into the completion of that section.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5B2 Changing that reasoning in regard to others

The shape of the collection of the parts cannot be a chariot

The shape of the collection of the parts of a chariot is imputed to a basis. For the lower schools the basis is necessarily a substantial existent. The collection of parts, even for the lower schools, is an imputed existent, therefore unsuitable to be a basis of designation. “Untrue” in the context of verse 6.156 is applied to the shape of the collection. George Dreyfus, in *Recognizing Reality*, describes the term “unreal” as it is used in the Vaibhashika interpretation of reality. Only phenomena that resist material destruction are ultimate. Seventy-five phenomena are asserted to resist physical destruction. The four elements and five sensibilia are included amongst these. On the other hand, a jar ceases to exist when it is broken. Water ceases to exist when reduced into its chemical components. Similarly, shape is unreal because it is an imputed existent. Chandrakirti says that the fact of phenomena being imputed on other phenomena that are merely imputed is the way that all things are produced.

How Prasangika posits “unreal”

For Prasangika “unreal” means non-inherent existence. Unreal causes produce unreal results. The discrepancy between appearance and reality is the reason for calling things “unreal.” An analogy is drawn with someone’s trying to eat the flesh of the shadow of a deer. Some Buddhist schools hold that the collection of the four elements and four evolute, or atomic substances, is the pot. Prasangika refutes this by asserting that nothing is inherently produced. A pot does not inherently exist as the possessor of the attribute of the shape of the pot. If a pot substantially existed then it would be findable upon analysis. Likewise, if it inherently existed we would be able to find it. A pot is imputed to the shape of the collection of the parts. Nothing within the basis of designation is the thing itself. For lower schools designation means that things are not separate from their basis of designation. They think you should be able to find that thing within the basis.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5C Dispelling others’ arguments in regard to explaining in that way

The sevenfold reasoning does not establish phenomena

An objector says that if, when one searches by means of the sevenfold analysis, a phenomenon is not found, then it does not exist, and this is unacceptable. For them, phenomena cannot not exist when searched for. The lack of inherent existence defies our normal intuition. We think that there must be something there that you can point to. If something exists then it should become more evident upon analysis. We think we should be able to establish something upon analysis. When not found by the sevenfold analysis, the lower schools feel that Prasangika is denying the existence of phenomena. Things are part of our everyday experience therefore they must exist when searched for. Prasangika responds that a chariot is not established by reasoning that searches for inherent existence, but is established by ordinary worldly consciousness without analysis (see *Emptiness Yoga*, pp.244-6). Chandrakirti says that phenomena are not established through the sevenfold analysis. Things are only established without investigation.

Nothing exists as its own reality

Hopkins usually translates “thusness” as “suchness” (meaning its own suchness). Wilson uses the term “reality.” Nothing exists as its own reality; if it did it would inherently exist. Prasangika, setting out the three natures, says the imputational factor is a purely imagined final nature being superimposed upon objects. Inherent existence is the hallucinated final nature imposed upon objects. If that were so then things would be their own final reality. The actual final reality is that it is empty of all these superimposed ways of existing. Not being found by analysis does not make things non-existent. Objects are analytically unfindable yet still exist. Prasangika posits existence from the point of view of not being analyzed, and this holds for the

existence of all phenomena including the existence of emptiness itself. Books and tables and so forth exist for a non-analytic consciousness – ordinary, everyday consciousnesses that are not turned towards emptiness. Seeds and sprouts are imputed dependent-arising, imputed in dependence upon their parts. A chariot depends on that which is non-chariot for its existence. It has no intrinsic identity.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-5D Indicating other objects that are nominal conventions as also being established

Prasangika's presentation accords with the world and lower schools' views destroy conventionalities

Objects exist through worldly renown, without investigation. A chariot is imputed in terms of what is taken for granted in the world as a chariot. We have conceptions of beauty based on cultural conditioning, or worldly convention. It is easy to see the emptiness of beauty. The concept of gravity is more difficult since it does not seem to depend on linguistic or cultural convention. If we think about gravity, it doesn't seem to depend upon the name "gravity." When we say things are merely imputed, we are not saying *why* things exist but rather *how* they exist. Gravity only exists by being imputed by conceptuality because we see it, understand it and then attach a label to it. As Chandrakirti says in verse 6.159abc, chariot could also be designated as a part-possessor, possessor of components, agent, and so forth and this is understood in the world. A chariot appropriates its parts. Some of the lower schools hold that the mere collection of the parts of the chariot is the possessor of the parts but this is not so. A collection of parts lying unassembled on the ground is not able to function as a chariot. And if you concede that this collection of unassembled parts is not a chariot then there is no chariot that possesses them. Prasangika says to the lower schools, if you deny the existence of a chariot that is merely imputed, it is you who destroy the conventions of the world. We, however, can still posit phenomena even though they are analytically unfindable.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-6 Indicating the excellent quality of positing in this way of easily abandoning the conceptions holding to an extreme

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-6A Actual meaning

Realizing the lack of inherent existence, one realizes subtle conventional nature

When an imputed object is analyzed it is unfindable. Let's take the example of a pen. Is the non-finding of pen a realization of emptiness? First we have to ask what we are analyzing for. When we do not find an inherently existent pen is this a realization of emptiness? The realization of the non-existence of inherent existence is a realization of emptiness. The imputed object is not found by the sevenfold analysis, therefore conventionalities do not exist for a consciousness analyzing for the ultimate. Things exist by worldly renown. We experience things in the face of ordinary non-analytical consciousness. This consciousness is satisfied with superficial appearances. How do yogis proceed and relate to conventionalities within their understanding of emptiness? Ordinary beings approach objects as though they were findable. We relate with things in a crazy manner like a drunk. Inherent existence is only imagined. Inherent existence does not exist because it is not found by a yogi's analysis. The yogi thereby easily engages suchness in a way in which conventionalities are not damaged. They still exist. This is a unique tenet of Prasangika. Worldly conventions do not exist when investigated but do exist by worldly renown. Lama Tsongkhapa said that this was barely known in Tibet. Understanding this correctly is said to be like walking on a razor's edge.

March 20 (Tuesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-6B Dispelling arguments regarding this

If a chariot is burned so too are its parts

An objector says a chariot does not inherently exist but the collection of its parts does. This is a very hypothetical position. Perhaps some lower schools could be backed into this position in holding onto substantial existence. We have already established that a chariot does not inherently exist. Since the chariot does not inherently exist, the possessor of the parts does not inherently exist. The chariot is the possessor of parts. If the possessor of parts doesn't inherently exist, then the parts do not inherently exist. The two are mutually dependent and cannot exist independent of one another. Parts do not exist by way of their own entity. As Chandrakirti says in verse 6.161cd, when a chariot is burned by fire so too are the parts of the chariot burned. Likewise, when the fire of wisdom burns the view of an inherently existent chariot, so too is the view of the parts as inherently existent destroyed. If the parts are dispersed there is no chariot. However,

you can still see the wheels, axles, and so forth. A wheel can still be understood as the wheel of a chariot. This is everyday experience. A part found in isolation often seems identifiable. However, this only occurs for someone who has previously seen the part possessor. They can still relate an isolated part to a previously seen part possessor.

[Aside: It is fundamental to Prasangika that all things are merely imputed by conceptuality and terms. Let's consider an example: if John is born on 13 February 1950 but not named until 20 February 1950 does John exist on 13 February? It would seem yes because the valid base existed on 13 February. Think about it.]

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-6C Connecting the conventions of a chariot and the self to the meaning of the example

The analogy of an external chariot is applied to the internal self

We can easily overcome the views of the extremes through the sevenfold analysis. We can easily understand how a chariot is merely imputed to its parts. We have used this external example and now we will relate it to the internal self. It is easier to begin by applying the analysis to an external example. However, we cannot say that it is easier to realize the emptiness of a chariot than to realize the emptiness of a person. Everything we have learned about the chariot is then applied to the person. A person is imputed upon the five aggregates. In this section we break down the parts of self into the aggregates, the elements (earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness) and the spheres (eye sense power through the mental sense power). These are analogous to the parts of a chariot. Just as the chariot is an appropriator of its parts, so the self is the appropriator of its parts. You can also say that the self is an agent of appropriation, like a chariot.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-6D Indicating other excellent qualities of asserting a self that is imputed in dependence

Characteristics of the merely imputed self do not exist inherently either

Once we understand that characterized phenomena do not inherently exist then we realize that their characteristics are not inherently existent either. First we can consider the characteristics of being stable or unstable. If the self does not inherently exist then it does not exist as either inherently stable or inherently unstable. Geshe-la mentions another context in which stable refers to the self and unstable to the aggregates. In that sense, the self is stable in continuing from life to life and eventually becoming a Buddha, while the aggregates are unstable in that they cease upon death.

Examining the consequences of inherently existent characteristics

If the self were inherently unstable, or discontinuous, then the former and later moments of a self would be discrete, isolated and unrelated. Also, the self would exist inherently and be findable within the aggregates, and the appropriator and appropriated would be one. If the self were inherently stable, in the sense of being permanent, then the self of the present life would be the self of one's previous life. This is not possible because the two are imputed on different aggregates – they have a different basis of designation. If the self were the aggregates then the self would inherently exist and would have inherently existent production and disintegration.

If a basis is inherently existent its characteristics must be inherently existent. For example, if you say that a pen that inherently exists disintegrates, it must inherently disintegrate. Inherently existent production would mean that an inherently existent result is produced from inherently existent causes. We see things as inherently existent. We then go on to show how this is absurd. The self is also not inherently existent permanent or impermanent, and is without inherently existent oneness or otherness. If the self were inherently different than the aggregates then it would not have the four characteristics of the aggregates (production, abidance, disintegration and impermanence). If Jampa were inherently different from his aggregates then the birth or death of Jampa's aggregates would not be the birth or death of Jampa.

March 21 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-2B2A-6E Identifying the self, which is the basis of bondage and freedom of the wise and the foolish

Now we proceed to identify the self that is the basis of bondage and liberation. In this section Prasangika is establishing the notion that the self is merely imputed. So someone asks, what is the self that is the basis for circling in cyclic existence?

Examining those who are bound in cyclic existence

Lama Tsongkhapa answers by saying it is those people who, when searching for the self by way of the sevenfold analysis,

- * Conclude that it cannot be permanent or impermanent (perhaps this is referring to the Sammitiyas who find the self to be indescribable in that it is not permanent or impermanent, but it's not clear);
- * Do not see that the self lacks inherent existence; and
- * Due to the conception of the transitory collection, adhere to the self to inherently exist.

There are both wise and foolish people circling in cyclic existence, and there are two broad erroneous positions that we can take in regard to the self. These are first, the positions of the Folders who posit a self that is a different entity than the aggregates, and second, that of the lower schools who posit that the aggregates, either individually or collectively, are the self. This is brought out by Chandrakirti in verse 6.164.

Examining those who are liberated from cyclic existence

So we've described those who are bound, but what about those who will attain liberation? Lama Tsongkhapa says they are those who assert that the self is neither different from nor the same as the aggregates, and who unerringly explain the meaning of the scriptures. They understand that the self who circles in cyclic existence is:

- * The self that is to be liberated;
- * The observed object in all migrators giving rise to the thought 'I' (in dependence on the observed object, there arises an innate conception thinking 'I' with regard to that); and
- * The self that is a controller that is associated with the mine, the possessions of that controller.

The self is established "through confusion"

In verse 6.164, Chandrakirti says that such a self is established "through confusion." What is the meaning of confusion? Although Geshe-la did not expound on this particular point, it doesn't seem that we're talking about what we ordinarily call 'ignorance' in this root verse. Existences are not validly established by a wrong consciousness so, since the self is validly established, confusion is not ignorance in this case. Rather it seems that what Chandrakirti has in mind is that this self is established in the perspective of an uninvestigated worldly renown. For the wise, this is what is circling in cyclic existence. The self does not inherently exist but is what is known as 'I' through worldly renown. If it's helpful, there's the idea that what we are calling a table, for example, we will use as a table until we get a real one. We can describe a table as something that has a flat surface, four legs, and so forth, and yet a "real" table doesn't exist. Rather, what we call table serves all those functions so we will call it a table. The self is only what we call it; it is only whatever characteristics we impute to it that makes it what it is. The thought 'I' rises innately with regard to it, so it is apprehended by a conventional valid cognizer without investigation. Lama Tsongkhapa says that, with regard to that I, the yogis do not hold the self to inherently exist, and by that, they come to understand that there is nothing inherently possessed by that, so there is no inherently existent basis of imputation of that self.

3B1C-2B3E-2B2B Refuting an inherently existent mine

So we've completed the refutation of an inherently existent self and now we move on to refute an inherently existent mine. We said the root of cyclic existence is the view of the transitory collection viewing I and mine to inherently exist. The question arises, having refuted the self as inherently existent, how does the mine not inherently exist? The answer given to this is spelled out by Jeffrey Hopkins in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.293-4), saying, "Once there is no I, there can no longer be any inherently existent mine." He explains how, once we've refuted such an I, we can extend the realization of that to realizing that there can no inherently existent possessor or owner of pants, shirts, skin, hair, and so forth.

The meaning of 'mine'

As we've said earlier though, when we use the term 'mine' we are referring not to those things possessed by a self but to the person who is a possessor. As Jeffrey Hopkins says, "Still, a conception of inherently existent mine is a conception of a self of persons because it refers to the conception of the inherently existent I that is

necessarily involved in understanding, or qualifying, this hand, for instance, as mine.” Recall that Geshe-la said that a conception of an inherently existent mine *is* a conception of a self of persons. Jeffrey Hopkins suggests the term ‘my’ may have more meaning since “it is a more active and extensive version of I.” So there is an I, or a self, and then there is the active aspect that makes the I into a possessor and that is ‘mine’ or ‘my’. ‘Mine’ is the person who takes things to be mine; it is the person actively owning things.

How the ‘mine’ is refuted as inherently existent

So in what way is that ‘mine’ not inherently existent? This is answered by Chandrakirti in verse 6.165, saying, “Because the acted upon having a non-existent agent is non-existent, the mine does not exist without the self.” So without an agent there is no acted upon, just as without a potter, there is no pot. If there is no inherently existent I who acts to possess things, then there is no inherently existent mine. Through familiarization with the lack of inherent existence of the I and mine, the yogi is liberated from cyclic existence. By realizing the I and mine are empty of inherent existence, forms and so forth are not observed to be inherently existent, and so the afflictions, such as attachment and so forth, are lessened and finally extinguished. Lama Tsongkhapa says that consequently the hearers and solitary realizers achieve liberation. However, although bodhisattvas have realized this lack of inherent existence, they continue to take rebirth by another force, the power of their compassion.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3 Indicating the analysis of a self and a chariot to be applicable also to other things

We now move to a section where Chandrakirti will apply the analysis of the self and of the chariot to other phenomena.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3A Its applicability to things such as pots, woolen blankets, and so forth

We made use of a chariot as a basis of analysis to examine the sevenfold analysis to determine if it exists in any of those ways, and this is an analogue that can be extended back to the self. But it can also be extended to other phenomena as well, as is shown by Chandrakirti in verse 6.166.

“The world argues with me but I do not argue with the world”

When the imputed objects with regard to pots, woolen blankets, and so forth, are sought in the seven ways, they are not found to exist. Although they are not found in the face of that analysis, nonetheless they do exist for non-analytic worldly renown. To support this, Chandrakirti quotes *Indicating the Three Vows*, in which the Buddha says that he does not dispute with the world even though the world disputes with him. In regard to that quote, Jeffrey Hopkins qualifies this statement somewhat in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.301-2). He says, “The world says, ‘This exists, that exists; this does not exist, that does not exist,’ – that is the extent to which Buddha accepts what the world accepts.” To elaborate upon this he continues, “Buddha does not at all accept the way in which the world feels or conceives these things to exist.” So in that sutra passage, the Buddha is not saying he accepts everything the world asserts but rather accepts what the world validly establishes.

Regarding what the world validly establishes

In *Dependent-Arising and Emptiness* (p.106-7), Elizabeth Napper comments on this concept in a similar way, saying that the Buddha accepts what is within the valid cognition of the world. She gives the three conditions that constitute the measure of something’s existing conventionally as we’ve also explored on previous occasions. In regard to the first condition, that it must be renowned to the world, she says that Lama Tsongkhapa takes ‘worldly renown’ to mean a conventional consciousness. Elizabeth Napper says that Lama Tsongkhapa describes a conventional consciousness as “a non-analytic consciousness in the sense that it ‘operates within the context of how things appear, or are renowned to it’ rather than being engaged in analysis of the final status of what appears.” It is how things are well-known but she also says that this does not mean only what is totally non-analytical or what is renowned to only illiterate or those educated persons who have not studied philosophical tenets. Rather, she indicates that all that conventional consciousness excludes “is that it be a consciousness analyzing the final mode of being.” As we’ve seen in the past something’s existing conventionally must also meet the second and third conditions, meaning that, in terms of what is certified to exist, it must not be damaged by a valid cognizer of either the conventional or of the ultimate. So in summary, there must be some kind of qualification made to this passage since the Buddha doesn’t necessarily agree with the majority of the world.

Fuel and fire and so forth exist in mutual reliance

Someone asks what criteria (or properties) do people use in imputing conventions? Chandrakirti replies in verse 6.167, saying that although the various pairs of objects (components and possessor of components, fuel and fire, and so forth) do not exist in the seven ways, they do exist in terms of worldly renown. In other words, none of those objects mentioned exist inherently, as is realized in the sevenfold analysis, but rather they exist in mutual dependence. For example, a component exists in mutual reliance to a possessor of components in that they rely one upon the other. The same holds true for qualities and the basis of qualities, fire and the fuel that is burned, and so forth. They all exist by worldly renown but not by analytic reasoning.

[Aside: All products are dependent-arising so their existence depends upon imputation. As we discussed yesterday in the example of John who received his name on February 20, seven days after he was born, we can agree that John exists on February 13, and that he too exists in dependence upon imputation. Does the existence of John depend upon being called 'John,' i.e. upon the name 'John'? Do all phenomena whatsoever exist in dependence upon imputation, meaning a name, label, conceptuality, and so forth?]

3B1C-2B3E-2B3B Its applicability to things that are causes and results

So now we've applied that reasoning used on chariots and self to other objects. Here we apply it to cause and results.

Cause and result also exist in mutual reliance

Using this tool of analysis to see if things inherently exist or not, we apply it to cause and result in this section. As we just saw, a possessor of components and components exist in mutual reliance or mutual dependence and so do not inherently exist. In verse 6.168abc, Chandrakirti says that causes and results also exist in mutual reliance. What we mean by a cause is a producer, or that which produces, and what we mean by a result is a product, or that which is produced. If nothing is produced there is no producer, if there is no producer, nothing is produced. So they exist in mutual reliance and so cannot inherently exist.

Examining the assertion of inherently existent causes and inherently existent results

An objection is raised saying that causes and results are established by way of their own entities. Prasangika then asks the objector which of those two comes first? Does cause precede result or does the result come before the cause? In Prasangika's viewpoint, results could not arise from causes, because for the lower schools their causes are inherently existent. Results could never depend upon inherently existent causes, while alternatively, arising in dependence negates inherent existence. So Prasangika asks, of the two, inherently existent cause and inherently existent result, which comes first? The cause coming first is not feasible because an inherently existent result would be already established at the time of the cause. If something were inherently existent, it would always exist as that, so even at the time of the cause, the result would necessarily already exist, so the result cannot come subsequent to the cause. Another way of looking at this is that a result only arises with the cessation of a cause; with the disintegration of the cause, the result arises. But since this cause is inherently existent, there is never a time when it ceases, so there is no occasion for the result to arise. The result coming first is also not feasible, because if the result came before the cause, it would be without a cause.

Analyzing meeting and not meeting

Now we pursue further analysis, as to whether the cause and the result meet or not. In the process of a cause giving rise to a result, do the two of them meet? The lower schools say that an inherently existent cause gives rise to an inherently existent result but Prasangika challenges them by asking whether they meet or not. If the lower schools are asserting an inherently existent cause and an inherently existent result, they must either meet or not meet – there is no third possibility.

In regard to meeting, there are two possibilities. Geshe-la mentioned the first in passing, which can be said to be like two people meeting shaking hands. The other type of meeting is the meeting of a river flowing into the ocean, where the water of the river merges into the ocean. In the first there is no mingling of identities while in the second there is. In the first type of meeting, the cause and result would exist simultaneously, and that is impossible. This idea came up in our studies of *Ornament* but perhaps we didn't recognize it as such then. When we studied the uninterrupted path of seeing, we said that it was like catching a thief and throwing

it out the door, while the path of release is like locking the door. But in the analogy, the person catching the thief and the thief exist at the same time, while in the case of the uninterrupted path of seeing, the obstructions that are abandoned do not exist at the time of generating the antidote. So while it's a valid analogy, it is suitable to analyze it in this manner.

In the second type of meeting, which is like a river merging into the ocean, if cause and result meet that way then the cause and result would mingle and thus become indistinguishable, just like the waters of the river and the ocean. If the produced and the producer were not different, what would produce what? In analyzing the relationship of cause and result in terms of meeting, we have found fault in the assertion that they meet.

In regard to inherently existent cause and inherently existent result not meeting, if that is so then the cause and result are inherently separate, inherently different, and thus are unrelated, so there would be no distinction between a cause and a non-cause for a specific result. Both non-causes and causes would be equal in regard to a particular type of result, since there is no inter-action between the cause and result. We can conclude from this analysis that cause and result cannot be inherently existent, because inherently existent causes neither meet nor not meet inherently existent results and such a meeting or not meeting should be findable upon analysis.

March 22 (Thursday)

Summary of previous discussion

Yesterday we began the section looking at how the reasoning of the self and the chariot is applicable to causes and results. We said that a cause is something that produces, and that which is produced is a result. In seeking to refute the inherent existence of causes and results, an objection was raised by the lower schools saying that causes and results do inherently exist, so we pursued an analysis as to whether cause and result meet or don't meet. In the case of meeting, there are two types: in the first, cause and result would exist simultaneously, while in the second type, which is the one described in the text as being like a river merging with the ocean, the cause would merge with the result and they would be indistinguishably one. In that case, what would produce what? This whole reasoning would seem to exhaust the possibility of an inherently existent cause and inherently existent effect meeting. What about if they don't meet? Then, as seen on previous occasions, cause and result would be unrelated, so a non-cause could produce a result equally. We are seeking to refute that a cause inherently exists and that a result inherently exists, and so if they do not exist through a findable meeting or not meeting, then they do not exist, because there is no third possibility.

Refuting that an inherently existent cause exists without producing a result

In verse 6.170ab, Chandrakirti explains that, if you were to say that an inherently existent cause exists even though it does not produce a result, then there are no inherently existent results. A cause is posited in terms of the criteria of producing a result. If it doesn't produce a result, it cannot be a cause. If an inherently existent cause does not produce a result, it is not a cause. Therefore it does not exist and therefore cause and result do not inherently exist.

Examining how Prasangika establishes causes and results

Now the lower schools, a proponent of true existence, ask Prasangika how they establish cause and effect to exist in their system. In verse 6.170cd, Chandrakirti implies that this opponent is asserting that the faults just set out also must apply to Prasangika since causes and results either meet or not meet for them as well. The opponent is asserting that causes and results inherently exist but through our analysis of meeting and not meeting, we've demonstrated that this is not established in fact since we should have found such causes and results to either meet or not meet. Lama Tsongkhapa says that the system of the lower schools is mistakenly imagined, and producer and production are posited by the conception of mere conventionalities. For Prasangika, cause and effect are like illusions in that they do not inherently exist, so the analytic tool of findable meeting and not meeting does not apply. Lama Tsongkhapa says conventionalities, though lacking inherent existence like the falling hairs observed by someone with cataracts, nonetheless exist by the force of worldly renown.

Because we do not assert inherent existence, we do not assert either an inherently existent cause or inherently existent result, and so we do not incur the faults that arise from applying this analytical tool of findable meeting and not meeting. The fact that causes give rise to results exists by worldly renown posited without investigation. Cause and effect exist but, because they do not inherently exist, we do not have such faults. If cause and result existed inherently, if they were findable under analysis, then in that context we can talk about whether the cause meets the result or not. Our presentation of conventionalities is not presented in terms of analysis but only in terms of conventions of non-analytic awareness. If as you say, cause and result are findable, then they must meet the criteria we have set out in that analysis, but if you say they are not findable, as we do, then such analysis is not applicable.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C Dispelling others' arguments regarding this

Now the lower schools reply to our refutation of their position that there are inherently existent causes that produce inherently existent results.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-1 The argument that there is a similar fault in refuting inherently existent causes and results

In the face of our criticism the lower schools are going to first reply that there is a similar fault accrued by Prasangika.

The assertion that Prasangika's refutation and the object of their refutation accrue the same faults
Prasangika refuted that cause and result inherently existed because of the faults incurred in the analysis of meeting and not meeting. The lower schools say that the same faults apply to Prasangika in the context of that very refutation itself by asking, doesn't that refutation refute the object of refutation by either meeting or not meeting? So, as shown in verse 6.171ab, they are applying the same analysis that Prasangika has given to them in the context of a refutation and the object of refutation. In the context of the present discussion, an object of refutation would be for example, "a cause inherently produces a result," while the refutation could be for example, "the two, cause and result, are mutually reliant." With that reason or refutation, the object of refutation is refuted. So the lower schools are asking whether the refutation refutes the object of refutation by either (1) meeting where, similar to what was examined earlier, that which is doing the refutation would become non-distinct from the object of refutation, or (2) not meeting, in which case there would be no difference between a refutation and a non-refutation. So with this, the lower schools are inferring to Prasangika that the criticism of their position doesn't hold up – that the refutation does not refute the object of refutation – so they can conclude that causes and results *are* inherently existent.

In verse 6.171cd, the lower schools are further criticizing Prasangika, saying that they are using only a facsimile of a refutation and so are not refuting their position. In a sense, they are saying to Prasangika that you say cause and result have to meet or not meet, but your refutation neither meets nor not meets our object of refutation. So your assertion that you are refuting our position is not so – the refutation only appears to refute our position but does not.

The assertion that the Prasangika consequence of not meeting is not accrued

They continue their criticism, as shown in verse 6.172. The lower schools are saying that Prasangika has flung the consequence that if a cause inherently produces a result, then if there was no meeting the two, cause and effect, would be unrelatedly different; therefore there would be no difference between that cause and a non-cause. Prasangika says there is the consequence that everything that is similar in not meeting would be able to be a cause, but the lower schools say that is not so. For Prasangika, if cause and result do not meet there is no difference between the two, since anything, even non-causes, could produce that result since they too are equally unrelated to that result. The lower schools say that is not so since a particular cause produces a particular result, even without meeting. They say this is similar to a magnet that attracts certain things, and not others. And, even though it doesn't contact or meet any of the objects, only some are attracted and others are not. Likewise, an eye sees certain forms but doesn't contact or meet with them, but it doesn't see everything that it doesn't meet. For the lower schools, not meeting is not a criterion for determining what the eye sees and doesn't see. Just because a cause doesn't meet a result is not a criteria for saying that that particular cause cannot be that particular result's producer. Likewise a cause only produces certain results that it doesn't meet, not all results that it doesn't meet. So for them, there is a connection or selective relationship between a particular cause and a particular result.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2 Indicating the response that there is no similar fault for us

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2A The correct way of refuting and establishing for our own position

The lower schools have been trying to say that Prasangika has similar faults so now Prasangika will respond to that assertion. This all revolves around the analysis of meeting and not meeting, and the lower schools have applied it to the refutation and the object of refutation. First we look at how proofs and refutations operate within Prasangika.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2A1 The way of asserting the refutation of others' positions in conventional terms

The fault previously mentioned does not accrue to those without the position of inherent existence. In verse 6.173, Chandrakirti says that the fault that the lower schools are now seeking to fling back at Prasangika (the fault that Prasangika directed at the presentation of cause and effect by the lower schools) only applies to those who hold the position of inherent existence. This analytic tool is only applicable in the context of holding inherent existence, and since we, Prasangika, do not hold that position, it cannot be applied to us. The consequence cannot be applied as to whether the refutation meets or does not meet the object of refutation because Prasangika does not hold either of them to exist inherently and, therefore, claim that there must be a findable upon analysis meeting or not meeting between them.

How Prasangika posits cause and effect as merely imputed

This section does get at what we mean by being merely imputed, giving a feeling of what that means for Prasangika. When we analyze cause and effect, we might see them like balance pans, where one goes out of existence while the other arises. If you analyze closely, it seems that there must be a point at which either they both exist, or one ceases as the other comes into existence, just like darkness ceasing upon turning on a light. If we take a different example, such as a person eliminating some books on a desk, the person and the books have to exist at the same time. With the case of light and darkness, it might seem to be the same, but they do not exist at the same time. As we discussed yesterday in the case of the uninterrupted path of seeing, there is the notion of it being similar to the thief being thrown out the door but it is not strictly like that since the antidote and the object of abandonment do not exist simultaneously. When we say conventionally that light eliminates darkness, we mean just that, even though they cannot be analyzed in terms of meeting and not meeting.

So Prasangika is saying that we don't hold to inherent existence so this analysis does not apply to us. For us, objects are like illusions, they are not inherently existent and, therefore, unfindable upon analysis, so this doesn't apply to our position. It only applies to a position that holds things to be findable. The way that the lower schools establish phenomena is in terms of analysis but that is not how Prasangika posits phenomena, since we posit only based on non-analytic worldly renown. We don't require an object to be found upon analysis for it to exist so this analysis of meeting or not meeting does not apply to our position. In fact, we assert that nothing is ever found in the face of such analysis.

Prasangika does not hold to inherently existent theses so the fault does not apply

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes Nagarjuna's *Refutation of Objections*, which says that if we held an inherently existent thesis then the fault would apply but, because we don't hold to an inherently existent thesis, the fault does not apply. We think in terms of 'thing-ness' and in that mental set, all these various criteria must be met. When we say a cause produces an effect Prasangika says that is simply how the world knows it – that seeds produce sprouts, and so forth. There is no thinking in terms of 'thing-ness' so none of those faults arise. The fault of meeting and not meeting that Prasangika directed at the lower schools is in the context of holding to inherently existent causes and results, thus, since the faults do not apply to us, our refutations do in fact refute your object of refutation. For you, the lower schools, causes and results inherently exist, but for us they're like illusions.

Examining the findability of attainments and realizations

There follows a sutra quotation from *Mother of the Conquerors*. One issue which is yet to be resolved is that Prasangika says that neither a conventionally existent object nor an ultimately existent object is findable upon analysis. In this sutra quote, the Buddha talks about this concept in terms of the various attainments, such as stream enterer, once returner, and so forth. When we analyze those attainments, we do not find them, and yet they exist and are attained. The attainment of stream enterer is attained in the world, as are the other attainments and realizations. Nothing is findable upon analysis, including these attainments and realizations, so nothing exists ultimately, yet phenomena do exist conventionally.

These attainments are attained but if we were to search for them, we would not find them. They exist by way of worldly renown without analyzing them. Likewise our refutation is not established ultimately, and therefore it is not established in terms of meeting or not meeting but yet exists as an imputed convention. One of the points to be drawn from this whole discussion is that for the lower schools, existence is established in terms of findability, what we are calling inherent existence. In the case of holding that position, they are vulnerable to the fault of meeting and not meeting. There would necessarily be a “findable-upon-analysis” meeting or not meeting and since we cannot find those either, their position of findability is undermined. For Prasangika, it doesn’t apply since they do not hold that position; instead they posit phenomena simply in accordance with worldly renown. This is similar to the example of the question “Do you still beat your wife?” that we discussed earlier in another context. That question is only applicable to someone if that person has a wife. If they don’t, it is not a matter of yes or no, the question just doesn’t apply.

The meaning of ‘meeting’

In this section we’ve been looking at the analysis of cause and result meeting or not meeting but we’ve seen the use of the term ‘meeting’ in another context previously. When we speak of the three levels of dependent-arising, the first, being dependent on causes and conditions, is often called ‘dependence through meeting.’ In that context, it seems that it refers the approaching to cessation of the cause and the approaching to production of the result meeting, or occurring at the same time. Geshe-la was asking if cause and effect meet or not, and it seems hard to answer. For further research on this, there is a discussion of meeting in the translation of Jamyang Shayba’s chapter on dependent-arising in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.659ff), as well as in *Emptiness Yoga* (pp.311-316).

March 23 (Friday)

Summary of previous discussion

Yesterday we began our examination of an additional refutation that Chandrakirti is supplementing, where the lack of inherent existence is applied in the context of cause and result. We questioned the lower schools who assert that an inherently existent cause produces and inherently existent result, and we used an analytic tool of meeting or not meeting. The lower schools tried to use that same analytic tool and turn it back on Prasangika, saying that the very refutation that Prasangika is asserting to refute the object of refutation (the lower schools’ position) is subject to the same consequence. Yesterday we showed how this analysis of meeting or not meeting only applies in the context of holding to inherent existence. Prasangika’s refutation does exist because it exists by way of the conventions of the world; nonetheless that refutation does not inherently exist. This is so because Prasangika doesn’t assert a refutation that is found upon analysis, just as they do not assert any phenomenon that can be found under analysis. There are only the faults that arise from analyzing meeting or not meeting when the position of inherent existence is held. In regard to meeting and not meeting, the non-findability of phenomena in that way is not a problem for Prasangika.

Regarding meeting and not meeting in conventional terms

In regard to meeting and not meeting conventionally, for Prasangika such phenomena are merely imputed. In *Emptiness Yoga* (pp.315-6), Jeffrey Hopkins says,

What meet? The effect and the cause do not meet because they do not exist simultaneously. However, the cause’s approaching cessation and the effect’s approaching production exist at the same time and, therefore, can meet. When the cause is about to cease, the cause exists, but when the effect is about to be produced, the effect does not exist; still, the two actions of approaching cessation and approaching

production exist at the same time. Conventionally, such is possible, but when you apply ultimate analysis, if something is approaching production, it must be there; otherwise, what is approaching? What this means is that, if you just planted a seed and you're watering it, saying "I'm growing flowers," it seems that you must be saying there is a flower there approaching production. In Jang-gya's text as translated in *Emptiness Yoga* (p.316), he says, "'Meeting' refers to the meeting of the actions of production of the effect and cessation of the cause; it is not that cause and effect meet." Since conventionally we also talk about causes and conditions meeting and so on, it seems there is a way that meeting is accepted conventionally by Prasangika.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2A2 The way of asserting the establishment of our own position

We've refuted the lower schools' reply that Prasangika's very refutation itself is unable to refute the object of refutation because the two neither meet nor not meet. Prasangika said that is not a problem for us since we don't assert inherent existence. So now we look at how Prasangika asserts that proofs are possible in the context of not accepting inherent existence.

Analyzing how proofs and refutations are established for Prasangika

The lower schools' response is not appropriate since Prasangika does not hold to inherent existence, so refutations can in fact refute objects of refutation. In terms of proofs or refutations, how are they acceptable? In verse 6.174, Chandrakirti uses analogies to show how things interact within the context of a lack of inherent existence. If we were to analyze the sun in the sky and the reflection of the sun in a pool of water, or a face and the reflection of that face in a mirror, we can ask whether there is meeting or not meeting and we would find in fact that neither is the case. Yet a reflection of a sun and the reflection of a face in a mirror exist, in dependence upon worldly conventions and in dependence upon a sun and a face, respectively.

Establishing that, although lacking inherent existence, proofs and refutations are still effective

In verse 6.175, Chandrakirti says that although a face in a mirror is untrue in that it is not a face, it is still effective in that it allows one to wash one's face and so on. It is able to perform a particular type of function. Likewise, reasons, such as dependent-arising, the sevenfold reasoning, and so forth, are also unreal in that they don't inherently exist. Although they don't inherently exist, such reasonings are effective in establishing the lack of inherent existence. So Prasangika is saying that although these reasonings themselves do not inherently exist, they are quite capable of refuting the object to be refuted, inherent existence, just like a reflection of a face, although untrue, still exists nominally and is effective. So proofs or reasons are untrue but they exist nominally and are effective.

Regarding the meaning of nominal existence

What does it mean to nominally exist? Jeffrey Hopkins talks about this in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.547), saying nominal existence is "the non-identification of the imputed object as its basis of imputation and yet the coordination of these two as determined by whether the object so designated can perform its functions." We can call something anything we want but it's only appropriate when there is a correspondence between what is being imputed and the basis of imputation in terms of it being able to perform that specific function. In this context of the Prasangika's basic position of the absence of inherent existence, phenomena are mere nominalities, meaning they are established in the perspective of mere nominal or conventional renown. They are established by a non-analytic innate awareness and not by analysis, so it is inappropriate to apply the analysis of meeting or not meeting. So this can be extended to all phenomena, such as cause and effect, where we can establish them as such by worldly renown, but we cannot apply the analysis of meeting or not meeting, because worldly renown is the only way they are established to exist. When we say something is imputedly existent, it means it is able to bear a certain type of analysis, and is unable to bear another type of analysis. The analysis it is not able to bear is that it is findable upon analysis, so anything based upon that type of thinking is inappropriate. Things exist as such because they are able to bear their given name, but if you look beneath the name the thing is not found.

Bhavaviveka's assertion concerning causes that produce and causes that clarify

Lama Tsongkhapa cites a passage by Bhavaviveka who, in attempting to uphold inherent existence, tries to make a distinction between causes that produce and causes that clarify. Causes that produce are such as a

seed causing a flower or a sprout. Causes that clarify are reasonings that clarify a thesis, that produce some understanding. Bhavaviveka applies this by saying that when we try to refute your position of the refutation and the object of refutation, we are not analyzing in terms of the cause that produces, rather it is in terms of a cause that clarifies. In other words, Bhavaviveka says that Nagarjuna is trying to refute only a particular type of cause. Prasangika says there is no difference between a cause that clarifies and a cause that produces since both are lacking inherent existence, so the analysis of meeting and not meeting applies equally to both.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2B Clearly explaining the reason that it is not similar to others' consequences

Neither the proof nor what is to be proven exist inherently

Prasangika continues to criticize the lower schools, saying here that if our refutations of inherent existence (by way of the sevenfold reasoning, dependent-arising, and so forth) inherently existed themselves, then the consequences of meeting and not meeting that the lower schools are putting forth would apply. Chandrakirti explains this in verse 6.176, saying that if the property of the reason (that which causes understanding of the object to be proved) and the entity of what is to be proved (that which is to be actually understood) existed inherently then the faults would apply. But since neither of them exists inherently, that is only to your despair. This reiterates that only when inherent existence is asserted do such faults apply; to continue to try to apply them to our position is pointless. If reasons or proofs and what is to be proven inherently existed then the reasoning of meeting or not meeting would be applicable. But neither the proof nor what is to be proven are inherently existent. So if you try to apply the fault of meeting or not meeting only arise from your impure position, and are not applicable to our position, which is pure.

The analogy of a person with cataracts

To elucidate on this, Lama Tsongkhapa gives the analogy of a person with cataracts, saying that refuting the positions about the falling hairs seen by such a person as to their being one, many, round, black, and so forth, would not have any bearing on someone who doesn't have cataracts. We, Prasangika, are like the person without cataracts, since we do not have the cataracts of ignorance, so there is no harm to our position through such analysis of meeting or not meeting. Prasangika doesn't have to find phenomena in order for phenomena to function so, as long as any faults being put forth involve findability, there is no fault to the Prasangika position. For the lower schools, if it doesn't inherently exist, that is, is not findable upon analysis, it doesn't exist. But for Prasangika, there are no such faults.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2C Others are unable to establish the contrary like we are able to establish the lack of inherent existence

In this section, we are bringing the arguments to a close and making some general statements.

Prasangika has established their position easily; the lower schools cannot do the same

There is the notion that the truth becomes more obvious upon analysis while falsity becomes more obscure. The position of the absence of inherent existence can be realized easily in dependence upon reasoning and analogies. But it is difficult to understand the positions of the lower schools in regard to asserting inherent existence. Inherent existence is not amenable to reasoning and so it cannot be supported by examples or analogies. This is brought out in verse 6.177abc. Prasangika has been using the analogies of dreams, illusions and so forth, and these examples are common with Svatantrika and the lower schools. By using these examples, people can be led to the correct view of non-inherent existence. But a Svatantrika cannot lead a Prasangika to their view with any reasonings that will hold up, because their reasonings are all held to be inherently existent and are not held in common.

Regarding concordant examples

Lama Tsongkhapa mentions "concordant examples" in his commentary and Geshe-la reviewed what we mean by concordant examples in the context of a syllogism. He used the syllogism, "sound, as the subject, is impermanent because of being a product, for example, like a pot." This is a correct use of a concordant example, a pot, since it is easier to understand the pervasion in terms of a pot than it is to understand it in terms of sound. So a concordant example assists in the understanding of the pervasion for that actual subject. Geshe-la says that Svatantrika cannot posit any correct concordant examples in establishing their position of inherent existence.

In the last line of this verse (6.177d), Chandrakirti asks the lower schools in a sense, who appointed you to inflict such harm on the world with the net of your erroneous conceptions? Instead of liberating sentient beings, you are entrapping the world in the net of your bad views.

3B1C-2B3E-2B3C-2D The way of making known additional refutations that are not explained here
In the title of this section, the “additional refutation” seems to be the analytical tool of meeting or not meeting, and here we are giving a summation of the overall section.

How the additional refutation should be understood

The main reasoning used in refuting a self of phenomena was refuting production from the four extremes, and to do that analysis we used produced phenomena such as a sprout and a seed. For a self of persons, we refuted a self that is findable by way of the sevenfold reasoning, and for that analysis we used a dependent imputation, specifically the person being imputed in dependence on the aggregates. Here this additional refutation of analyzing meeting or not meeting was done in terms of cause and result. The lower schools tried to turn that same reasoning back on ourselves, questioning whether the refutation and the object of refutation meet or do not meet, and we showed that was not applicable. So in verse 6.178ab, Chandrakirti says that they should give up their position. It is not that cause and effect do not have a relationship for Prasangika, rather Prasangika says the relationship between cause and result is not found when it is sought, it is merely posited according to the conventions of the world.

Prasangika are not “disputants who refute anything”

In the final part of this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says that Nagarjuna had the purpose of eliminating the conceptions of inherent existence solely with the desire to liberate ordinary beings from the bondage of cyclic existence. So how could he and the Prasangikas be like disputants refuting everything? Such a person would be someone who had fear of losing their own position which is unsound, and they are seeking to refute the others’ positions ultimately. There is no Prasangika 1) who does not posit our own position, the lack of inherent existence, nominally, and 2) who asserts the elimination of the other's position, inherent existence, ultimately.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

March 26 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-3 Explaining the divisions of the emptiness so established

3B1C-2B3E-3A Brief presentation of the divisions of emptiness

Persons and phenomena are both empty of inherent existence

We have finished the reasonings refuting inherently existing persons and phenomena. The two are not divided on the basis of their object of negation. This is why “ego” is not a good equivalent term for “self”, as it was sometimes used in older translations. You cannot talk about the ego of a table. The object of negation in refuting a self of persons or a self of phenomena is inherent existence. There is a long list of possible synonyms in *Meditation on Emptiness* on page 36. When we talk about the “self” in the context of selflessness we are talking about one of these hypothetical modes of existence. Divisions are made in terms of the basis, or substratum, of negation. When the substratum is persons we talk about the selflessness of persons and when the substratum is an existent other than persons we talk about the selflessness of phenomena.

Different reasonings are used for realizing the selflessness of persons and selflessness of phenomena. We use different reasonings to realize the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena. To determine the selflessness of persons we mainly use the sevenfold reasoning and for phenomena we mainly use the diamond slivers reasoning. The question is raised whether this is due to the selflessness of persons being coarser than the selflessness of phenomena as asserted by the lower schools. This question is answered in *Meditation on Emptiness*, pp.636-7: “No, the two selflessnesses are realized by way of separate reasonings, but the object of negation, inherent existence, is the same in each case; thus, one is not coarser or subtler than the other.” Though they do not differ in subtlety, the reasonings used to realize their selflessness is different. This is not true for lower school proponents who say that the selflessness of persons is coarser than the selflessness of phenomena. For Prasangika, the object of negation is the same for both selflessnesses but different reasonings are used to refute the object of negation. In the *lam rim* it says that for most people it is easier to realize the selflessness of persons. This is in terms of practice and experience since perhaps it is easier to identify the object of negation with regard to ourselves. Also, although Prasangika does assert that a self-sufficient person is a coarse self of persons, there is no coarse self of phenomena, so perhaps this is another reason. We can engage emptiness more readily with regard to the self’s relationship to the aggregates.

The purpose of the twofold division of emptiness

What is the purpose in presenting these two – the emptiness of persons and phenomena? A distinction is made in terms of whom these are meant for. Selflessness of persons is presented in order to completely liberate hearers and solitary realizers from cyclic existence. Both selflessnesses are presented in order to completely liberate bodhisattvas, through their attaining omniscience. Hearers and solitary realizers have a complete cultivation of selflessness of persons that acts as an antidote to the afflictive obstructions. They do not have a complete cultivation of selflessness of phenomena. The wisdom realizing selflessness of phenomena principally serves as an antidote to the knowledge obstructions. These different selflessnesses act as different main objects of practice for different trainees.

The basis of dividing emptiness is in terms of the bases of emptiness

When we use the term ‘self’ here we are talking about inherent existence. Selflessness refers to the lack of inherent existence, or emptiness. When emptiness is divided extensively we talk about sixteen divisions. An intermediate division presents four divisions and a condensed division presents two divisions. There is no distinction in the actual emptinesses themselves. The final nature of all phenomena is the same in being the emptiness of inherent existence. Some texts present an analogy with space. In a row of houses, each house can be distinguished by its having a different nature from the other houses in the row. However, the space inside each house is of the same nature but on the basis of the house enclosing that space we can talk about the space inside the house on the corner, next-store, etc. Still, the spaces themselves are indistinguishable. Similarly, we can divide emptiness in terms of the particular basis of emptiness, but not in terms of the nature of that emptiness. The emptiness of all phenomena is realized on the uninterrupted path of seeing. The sixteen

emptinesses and four emptinesses are called “the great vehicle” because emptiness is extensively explained in the Mahayana sutras, whereas only a brief explanation is given in the Hinayana sutras.

3B1C-2B3E-3B Extensive explanation of the meanings of the individual divisions

3B1C-2B3E-3B1 Extensive explanation of the division into sixteen emptinesses

3B1C-2B3E-3B1A Explanation of the four: the emptiness of the internal and so forth

The sixteen emptinesses are divided into four groups of four. The first group of four is called “the emptiness of the internal and so forth”.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1A-1 Explanation of the emptiness of the internal

3B1C-2B3E-3B1A-1A Actual meaning

1. The emptiness of the internal

The first division is the “emptiness of the internal”. “Internal” refers to the sense powers (eye sense power through mental power). The physical sense powers refer to the subtle matter, not the organs themselves. Sometimes these six are called the sense spheres or inner sense spheres. The emptiness of them is the emptiness of the internal. The nature of the eye sense power is the lack of inherent existence of the eye sense power. This is applied to the remaining five powers as well. These are called “internal” because they are connected with feeling. External phenomena are those not connected with feeling. The powers do not have a nature that is constant (permanent) or a nature that exists by its own entity. The sense powers do not inherently remain constantly and they do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the internal.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1A-1B Ancillary, a presentation of the way of asserting the nature

The final nature exists and has three attributes

The question is asked, does the final nature exist? Nagarjuna says the final nature is not suitable to arise from causes and conditions. However, he does assert ultimate truth and reality to exist. We can talk about reality, dharmata and emptiness as having the same meaning. It exists whether the Buddha taught it or not, according to Chandrakirti. If this reality did not exist then there would be no purpose in bodhisattvas striving through extreme hardship and maintaining pure conduct in order to realize it. Because reality exists, it is meaningful. It is not realized by the mistaken awarenesses of the childish. The final nature has three attributes: (i) being unfabricated; (ii) not relying on other; and (iii) not being realized other than by the exalted wisdom free from the cataracts of ignorance. The final nature is the emptiness of inherent existence. When ignorance is abandoned the consciousness remains, therefore ignorance is not within the very fabric of the mind. In *Praise of the Sphere of Qualities*, Nagarjuna says: “When a metal garment which has become stained with / Contaminations and is to be cleansed by fire / Is put in fire, its stains / Are burned but it is not.” Reality is the ultimate truth, the truth with the highest meaning and it can be realized. It is truth for the highest wisdom consciousness.

March 27 (Tuesday)

More on the final nature

What do we mean by nature? This is a complex subject matter. Here Chandrakirti is summarizing some of Nagarjuna’s assertions. For us, receiving these teachings today, we take them pretty much as given truths. At the time of Chandrakirti and Nagarjuna these issues were very contentious. There has been a great deal of synthesis since their time. All phenomena have a nature that we can call reality, which is the emptiness of inherent existence. Reality is inexpressible and not realized by elaborations. “Elaboration” refers to conceptual thought. We can talk about emptiness, but it is not expressible exactly as it is known by a direct perception. It is known by conceptual thought but not exactly how it is, the way it is known by direct perception. However, His Holiness the Dalai Lama says that it is not quite inexpressible. Conceptual thoughts about emptiness are not the same as the direct realization of emptiness. To return to our discussion of the eye sense power, can we say that the reality of the eye sense power and so forth does not exist? The eye sense power, like all objects, is not its own final nature and yet Prasangika does assert that the final nature of objects is their lack of inherent existence. This is not contradictory with an object’s existing conventionally.

Examining the three attributes of the final nature in more detail

Although in William Magee's *The Nature of Things* there is a slightly different presentation of the three attributes, we will use the three attributes listed in yesterday's class. The final nature, i.e. emptiness, has these three attributes. First, the final nature is unfabricated. The most likely meaning of unfabricated here is that the final nature is not newly created. Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche gave an example – when one chops down a forest and creates a field one cannot say that the nature of that field has been there from the beginning because it has been fabricated. Emptiness, however, is not fabricated; it is there from the beginning. It is not newly created. This is referred to later in verse 6.198. Even if Buddhas never existed emptiness would still exist. The Buddha did not create emptiness. Secondly, it does not rely upon other, that is, causes and conditions. Thirdly, it is only realized by the exalted wisdom that is free from ignorance. In *The Nature of Things*, William Magee presents the third attribute as “immutability,” meaning unchanging, that the final nature never changes. Some translators have used the term absolute truth for ultimate truth. This is not a good translation because absolute connotes not being dependent upon other. The final nature is pacified of the superimposition of inherent existence. These three attributes were attributed to the object of negation previously in other contexts.

Examining the meaning of “nature”

“Nature” refers to a mode of being – the way something exists, their final nature. When we speak of fire's nature as “hot and burning” this is fabricated. A fire didn't exist before and then it is produced in dependence upon causes and conditions. This is the conventional nature of fire. What is the conventional nature of emptiness? Perhaps we can say that it is dependent-arising. The eye and so forth are fabricated, relying on causes and conditions and so forth, therefore they are not their own final nature. If an object were its own final mode of being then the lack of that nature would not be apprehendable. If a pen were its own final nature then the sutra presentation that refutes that nature would refute the pen. “Its own final nature” in this context means inherent existence. Eyes being empty of the eyes means the eyes are empty of being their own final nature. It does not mean that the eye is free of being an object of an inner creator. Nor does it mean that they are empty of apprehender and apprehended being empty of being different substances.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1A-2 Explanation of the remaining three emptinesses

2. The emptiness of the external

“External” refers to forms that are not conjoined with a continuum of consciousness. These are the objects of the six senses – forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects and phenomena. They are sometimes called the external spheres. These external spheres do not inherently remain constantly and they do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the external.

3. The emptiness of the external and internal

“The external and internal” are the gross organs that are the supports of the sense powers. They are inner because they are conjoined with a continuum of consciousness, and because they are the basis of consciousness; and they are outer because they can be seen by the eye consciousness of others. The gross organs do not inherently remain constantly and they do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the external and internal.

4. The emptiness of emptiness

Here we talk about emptiness as the base and go on to realize that emptiness itself is empty of inherent existence. Buddha taught this to overcome the conception that emptiness truly exists, which has actually been held by some Tibetan scholars. Also, when we first realize emptiness we still have dualistic appearance during meditative equipoise on emptiness. On that occasion, emptiness appears mixed with the appearance of true existence, so therefore it is necessary to meditate on the emptiness of emptiness to remove the conception of the true existence of emptiness. Emptiness does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of emptiness.

March 28 (Wednesday)

3B1C-2B3E-3B1B Explanation of the four: the emptiness of the great and so forth

We now move to the second set of four divisions of emptiness.

5. Emptiness of the great

“Great” refers to the ten directions because they pervade the worlds of sentient beings and the environments without exception. The directions are immeasurable like the four immeasurables because, for instance, when one meditates on immeasurable love one meditates on all the sentient beings pervading the ten directions. The emptiness of the great was taught to overcome misconceptions of the directions as inherently existent, such as the Forder Vaisheshikas’ assertion of that the directions are a permanent substance. The ten directions do not inherently remain constantly and do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the great.

6. Emptiness of the ultimate

Ultimate (Tib. *don dam*) refers to ultimate nirvana. As Lama Tsongkhapa explains, *don* means object, purpose or meaning and *dam* means supreme, or highest. The highest object of attainment is nirvana so here *don dam* refers to nirvana. The emptiness of the mind that is free from the two obstructions is a truth body. This is the supreme goal of sentient beings. There are two divisions of the truth body: (i) the wisdom truth body, which is the omniscient mind of a Buddha; and (ii) the nature truth body, which is the emptiness of a buddha’s mind. The emptiness of the ultimate is the emptiness of inherent existence of nirvana. In Prasangika, nirvana is a true cessation, an ultimate truth, and an emptiness. There is some debate whether or not a true cessation such as nirvana is an emptiness, with Panchen Sonam Drakpa of Drepung Monastery holding that, though it is an ultimate truth, it is not an emptiness. For Svatantrika it is a conventional truth. Nirvana does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the ultimate.

7. Emptiness of the compounded

“Compounded” refers to the three realms – the desire, form and formless realms. They are called “compounded” or “produced” because they are produced from their own causes and conditions and are not produced by gods such as Ishvara. The emptiness of inherent existence of the three realms is the emptiness of the compounded. The three realms do not inherently remain constantly and do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the great.

8. Emptiness of the uncompounded

All impermanent phenomena have the three characteristics of production, abidance and disintegration. Those phenomena that lack these three are called the “uncompounded”. They do not inherently remain constantly and do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the uncompounded.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1C Explanation of the four: the emptiness of that passed beyond extremes and so forth

Now there is a presentation of the third set of four divisions of emptiness.

9. The emptiness of that passed beyond extremes

Whatever is free from the two extremes of existence (holding that things inherently exist) and non-existence (holding that if things do not inherently exist then they do not exist at all) is called “that passed beyond extremes”. One falls into an extreme by *holding* the position of one of the two extremes. Most of us have the extreme of existence but we do not necessarily fall into the extreme, which is done by holding or accepting it. Simply holding permanence is not an extreme of permanence because permanent phenomena do exist. And simply holding non-existence or annihilation is not an extreme of non-existence, for example, holding that the continuum of rebirths under the control of karma and afflicted emotions is severed upon attaining the state of a Foe Destroyer, is correct. All phenomena have passed beyond the extremes of inherently existing or not existing. Often we say the middle way is that which has passed beyond the extremes but some texts hold that it is not suitable to say that all objects are the middle way, only emptiness is the middle way. They say that it is not appropriate to refer to ordinary objects, such as pots, and chairs as the middle way; and that it would be quite wrong to refer to delusions and wrong views as the middle way. Whatever is free from the two extremes

does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of that passed beyond extremes

10. Emptiness of the beginningless and endless

Cyclic existence is without a beginning or an end until the afflictive obstructions are abandoned. The Buddha couldn't find a beginning or end; therefore they do not exist. A specific cyclic existence has no beginning point but does have an end point, but cyclic existence in general has no end point. Because there is no inherently existing coming from former lives or going to future lives, samsara is empty of inherent existence. The cyclic existence does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the beginningless and endless.

11. Emptiness of what is not to be discarded

What is not to be discarded is the Mahayana dharma. We should not give up the Mahayana dharma because this is the only means of attaining full enlightenment. Is the Hinayana dharma to be given up? In general, it should not be given up either. In relation to the Mahayana perhaps we can say that it should be given up in order to enter Mahayana in order to practice the Mahayana dharma. The Hinayana dharma is beneficial to sentient beings and leads the way in the direction of enlightenment. The Mahayana dharma does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of what is not to be discarded.

12. Emptiness of nature

Compounded phenomena have two natures – conventional and ultimate. The conventional nature of fire is hot and burning and its ultimate nature is emptiness. The final nature is not fabricated and is the primordial state of all phenomena. Here too, fabricated means something that is newly created that did not exist before. The final nature is the beginningless natural state of all phenomena. The final nature lacks inherent existence and this is referred to here as the emptiness of nature. The question arises, isn't this redundant with regard to emptiness of emptiness, which was previously presented? It is not contradictory because, as Lama Tsongkhapa says, the emptiness of emptiness was taught for the benefit of the yogi to overcome any misconception he might have that emptiness truly exists because it is established by an ultimate awareness. On the other hand, the emptiness of nature was taught to dispel the view that, because the final nature is intrinsic from the very beginning, perhaps it is truly existent. This unfabricated primordial nature does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of nature.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D Explanation of the four: the emptiness of all phenomena and so forth

We now examine the last set of four, the emptiness of all phenomena and so forth.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-1 Explaining the emptiness of all phenomena

13. Emptiness of all phenomena

Here the basis of emptiness is all phenomena. These include the eighteen constituents, the six contacts, the six types of feeling and so forth. There are phenomena possessing form, which means physical, and phenomena that do not possess form, non-physical, as well as compounded and uncompounded phenomena. There are many ways of categorizing phenomena. All of these phenomena do not inherently remain constantly and do not inherently disintegrate, therefore they lack inherent existence. Their lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of all phenomena.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2 Explaining the emptiness of its respective definition

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2A Brief presentation

14. Emptiness of its respective definition

This division of emptiness is divided into three sections: a brief presentation, an extensive explanation, and a summarized meaning. Each phenomenon has its own respective definition, or, more generally we could say character. The lack of inherent existence of these definitions of each phenomenon is the "emptiness of its respective definition". An example is the emptiness of "that which is suitable to be form" (which is the definition of form). This is the emptiness of the definition of form. Form is the first in a classification of 108

phenomena, which include fifty-three phenomena of the afflicted class and fifty-five phenomena of the pure class. In verse 6.201c, when Chandrakirti says “form and so forth,” “and so forth” refers to the remaining 107 phenomena. The a phenomenon’s respective character does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of its respect definition.

March 29 (Thursday)

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2B Extensive explanation

Yesterday we looked at the brief presentation of the emptiness of its respective definitions. Now, since Chandrakirti presents the definitions of a number of objects, we will work our way through an extensive variety of phenomena and their definitions. One way of presenting phenomena is in terms of the three, bases, paths, and results. We can describe these three respectively as what are the bases for our practice, what is the actual implementation of our practice, and what is the result of our practice. Chandrakirti is saying that all these factors that we are working with in our spiritual practice are all empty of inherent existence so the objective behind looking at all of these in detail is to not grasp at them as inherently existent.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2B1 The respective definitions of phenomena that are bases

We begin with looking at the respective definitions of phenomena that are included in the category of bases.

The definitions of the five aggregates

Chandrakirti begins by examining the definitions of the five aggregates, as shown in verses 6.202 and 6.203abc. All of these are contextual definitions and not actual definitions, so they are only given in the context of this presentation. They would not necessarily hold up in debate as the exact definition for their respective definiendum. The aggregate of form is defined as “suitable to be form.” By this we include anything that is suitable to appear to the sense consciousness, visual forms, sounds, smells, etc.

Chandrakirti defines the aggregate of feeling as having the nature of experience. Feeling is a mental factor that experiences pleasant, unpleasant and neutral objects. Generally we speak of feeling as the actual experience of pleasure and so forth but here it is being presented as an agent that experiences pleasure and so forth. Feeling is a consciousness that performs a particular function in terms of experiencing these three, pleasure, pain and neutrality. As described in *Awareness and Knowers*, it is dependent upon the mental factor of contact, which is sometimes called ‘sensation’ in a Theravada context, where they say that feeling arises from sensation. The aggregate of discrimination “apprehends signs,” which Geshe-la said means it apprehends blue, yellow, and so forth. It discriminates or makes distinctions. It is a mental factor that apprehends the uncommon features or signs of phenomena.

The fourth is the aggregate of compositional factors, and Chandrakirti says that these “strongly compose.” All the remaining mental factors (other than feeling and discrimination) are included in this category, as well as all other impermanent phenomena other than form and consciousness. In past translations, this was often called “volition,” because it also includes the karmic seeds. Here’s one thing to consider: when we analyze the five aggregates in Prasangika in terms of the person, do you or do you not find the person? You might say no but isn’t the person a functioning thing, a non-associated compositional factor? So wouldn’t it be included in the fourth of the five aggregates? This is true in general but in regard to the specific basis of designation of a person, the five aggregates refer to those within that person’s continuum.

The fifth aggregate is the aggregate of consciousness, which Chandrakirti defines as “what individually cognizes objects.” Consciousness refers to a primary mind that cognizes the gross aspect of phenomena, and it includes all six consciousnesses. The 51 mental factors, on the other hand, operate in relationship to the specific aspects of phenomena.

In general we can say that there can be either contaminated or uncontaminated aggregates. The aggregates of an ordinary person are contaminated while the aggregates of a buddha are uncontaminated. In verse 203c, the aggregates are defined as “suffering,” which means in that context, they are contaminated.

The definition of the elements

In verse 6.203d, the elements are “asserted as a poisonous snake.” They are likened to a poisonous snake because, just as a victim is held and tormented by a poisonous snake, so too are sentient beings held and subject to various forms of suffering within cyclic existence, which consists of the elements. Normally we call these the eighteen constituents, so we are not talking about the six elements here as we usually do. Also, in this context we are talking specifically about the contaminated constituents. The eighteen are the six outer spheres, six inner spheres, and six consciousnesses. All phenomena are included within them.

The definition of the spheres

Then in verse 6.204ab, Chandrakirti says, “The Buddha taught the spheres to be the very door of production.” These are the twelve entrances or spheres of production, which are said to be doorways through which our suffering arises, which means again that in this context we are talking about contaminated sources. The twelve spheres are the six outer spheres and the six inner spheres that are included within the eighteen constituents previously discussed.

The definition of dependent and related arising

In 6.204cd, Chandrakirti says, “Whatever is a dependent and related arising is defined as a coming together and meeting.” Geshe-la says that whatever is a dependent-arising has the definition of coming together of causes and conditions. However, there are both produced and unproduced dependent-arising though, so specifically this definition refers to the twelve links of dependent-arising, not dependent-arising in general. Also, as seen earlier, there are both uncontaminated and contaminated within this category, and once again, Chandrakirti is here speaking of the contaminated. As Geshe-la says, this and all the items defined in this section are to be understood as “those included in cyclic existence, the class of thoroughly afflicted phenomena.”

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2B2 The respective definitions of phenomena that are paths

Now we move to the respective definitions of phenomena that are included in paths. Paths are consciousness. We defined path in our *Ornament* studies as: a clear realization that is conjoined with uncontrived renunciation. In general there are said to be fifteen paths, the five paths of each of the three vehicles, hearers, solitary realizers, and bodhisattvas. It seems that we could further define a Mahayana path as: a clear realization conjoined with uncontrived mind of enlightenment.

Defining the six perfections

In verses 6.205 and 6.206, Chandrakirti looks at the definitions of the six perfections. Recall that the six perfections are mental attitudes, not actual activities. The perfection of generosity is defined by Chandrakirti as “to give away,” similar to what we saw earlier in our studies, where it was defined as the intention to give. The perfection of ethics is “to be without torment,” which Lama Tsongkhapa describes as the attainment of coolness (*shila*), meaning that through morality, one cools the burning heat of the fire of the delusions. The perfection of patience is “a lack of anger,” or, as Lama Tsongkhapa describes it, mental endurance or forbearance. As we saw earlier, the nature of patience is having an undisturbed mind in the face of difficult situations. Basically it means developing an ability to not become stressed. The definition of the perfection of effort is given by Chandrakirti as “to lack misdeeds,” or according to Lama Tsongkhapa, to delight in thoroughly upholding virtue. It is a joyous mind, and moreover, it’s towards a virtuous end. The perfection of concentration “has the characteristic of gathering,” which Lama Tsongkhapa says refers to “the mind abiding single pointedly on a virtuous observed object for the purpose of gathering all virtuous qualities.” So a cat waiting for a mouse to come out of a hole doesn’t have a perfection of concentration, even though it is single-pointedly abiding on an observed object. The definition of the perfection of wisdom is “a lack of attachment” because it is without an adherence or attachment to true existence. As presented here, this wisdom is specifically in regard to emptiness.

Prasangika and Svatantrika on the attainment of the perfections

There is a difference between Svatantrika and Prasangika regarding when a perfection is attained. Svatantrika holds that actual perfections are not attained until the resultant ground, they do not exist prior to buddhahood. Svatantrika does talk about the practice of the perfections before buddhahood but an actual perfection does not exist on the learner path. Contrary to this, for Prasangika, an actual perfection can exist prior to

buddhahood, while the bodhisattva is on the learning path. For Prasangika there are both mundane and supramundane perfections. The difference for these two types of perfection is whether or not there is attachment to inherent existence. So for Prasangika, if it is conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness then it is a supramundane perfection and if not, it is mundane.

The definition of the concentrations, absorptions, and immeasurables

In verse 6.207, the concentrations and absorptions as well as the immeasurables are defined. The general definition of these according to Chandrakirti is simply “having the characteristic of imperturbability.” Geshe-la said that imperturbability, or non-agitation, means to have a clear mind. Lama Tsongkhapa briefly mentions the four concentrations and the four formless absorptions, which were covered more extensively in our studies of the *Ornament*. Within the form realm, there are four concentrations (first through fourth) and within the formless realm, there are the four absorptions (infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and the peak of cyclic existence). The difference in the basis of achieving a concentration as opposed to achieving an absorption is that the concentrations abandon feelings and the absorptions abandon discrimination. In the desire realm, we are addicted to feelings, so we must examine these objects as to their grossness and abandon them through developing the concentrations. To do that, the yogi applies antidotes to specific flaws in one’s concentration that are closely associated with feeling, specifically gross mental bliss and happiness. Your mind becomes more selective as it develops the various levels of concentration. Then the yogi develops the formless absorptions in terms of the observed object, by examining the discrimination of the respective objects of each of the four. At the peak of cyclic existence, which is also called “without discrimination, not without discrimination,” the yogi is unable to remove the subtlest level of discrimination with a mundane path.

The four immeasurables are also mentioned, and these were defined in our *Ornament* studies as well. An actual immeasurable is attained in dependence upon the basis of an actual concentration. Immeasurable **love** is wishing all sentient beings to have happiness, while immeasurable **compassion** is wishing them to be free from suffering. Immeasurable **equanimity** in general is wishing sentient beings to abide in equanimity, free from attachment and hatred, holding some close and others distant. Immeasurable **joy** is wishing others to not be separated from happiness.

The definition of the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment

In verse 6.208ab, Chandrakirti mentions the thirty-seven harmonies with enlightenment, saying they are “that which brings about definite emergence,” meaning liberation. There are seven groups, as we’ve seen before: (1) the four close placements of mindfulness, (2) the four thorough abandonings, (3) the four legs of magical manifestation, (4) the five powers, (5) the five forces, (6) the seven branches of enlightenment, and (7) the eightfold path of superiors.

The definition of the three doors of liberation

Chandrakirti next looks at the definitions of the three doors of liberation: emptiness, signlessness, and wishlessness. All three doors are talking about emptiness, just from three different points of view. In verse 6.208cd, Chandrakirti defines emptiness as “complete isolation due to lacking the referent object.” Lama Tsongkhapa says it has the characteristic of complete isolation because of not being polluted by the stains of conceiving the referent object of the conception of true existence. The first door, emptiness, is posited in terms of the entity of the object. The second door, signlessness, is defined by Chandrakirti in verse 6.209a, as “pacification,” but in general it is said to be the lack of inherent existence in terms of causes. A sign means a cause, so signlessness means the lack of inherent existence of the cause. Lama Tsongkhapa says it has the characteristic of pacification from the point of view of not observing such inherently existent signs. The third, wishlessness, is the lack of inherent existence in terms of the result. Chandrakirti defines this in verse 6.209b as “lacking suffering and ignorance.” When one realizes the result, one is without suffering and ignorance, so one should not wish for a truly existent result. In summary, all three doors of liberation are the lack of inherent existence, but they are distinguished in terms of their objects. All three, the entity, the cause, and the result that which we are trying to achieve, are all lacking in inherent existence.

The definition of the complete liberations

The last subject in this section is the eight complete liberations. In verse 6.209cd, they are defined as “what brings about complete freedom.” Geshe-la said that there are three types of obstructions: afflictive obstructions, knowledge obstructions, and obstructions to absorption. These eight bring about complete freedom from the last of these three, the obstructions to absorption. We also examined this in our *Ornament* studies but briefly they are mental exercises that the yogi engages in to overcome those obstructions. The first three are called paths of manifestation and the last five are called paths that abide in happiness in this present life. They are not specific to the Buddhist path so these yogic practices could be developed by anyone.

March 30 (Friday)

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2B3 The respective definitions of phenomena that are results

Yesterday we looked at definitions in terms of bases and paths and now today we look at definitions in terms of results. In this section we are looking at a major portion of the 39 uncommon aspects that were discussed in *Ornament* as part of the 110 aspects of an exalted knower of all aspects. The differences are that the four, great compassion, great love, and so forth, are not included in that list of 39 and there are three aspects (aspect of thusness, self-arisen aspect, and aspect of buddha) that are in the list of 39 but not included here.

The definition of the ten powers

In verse 6.210ab, Chandrakirti mentions the first of the phenomena in this category, the ten powers, which are defined by him as being “the nature of very thorough settling.” Lama Tsongkhapa says that they are called ‘powers’ because of having the characteristic or nature of engaging objects without impediment, due to having settled objects. In other words, they are so called because they cannot be oppressed by their respective discordant class, or adversaries. These ten powers will be discussed in more detail later in the text, in the chapter on the resultant ground.

The definition of the four fearlessnesses

In verse 6.210cd, Chandrakirti defines the four fearlessnesses as “the entity of utter stability.” The Buddha is able to make four types of fearless proclamations, two in respect to himself and the other two in respect to others. The first two are in respect to himself and relate to the Buddha’s realizations and abandonments: first, “I am perfectly, unmistakably, and completely awakened with respect to all phenomena,” and second, “I have extinguished the contaminations together with their latencies.” The two in respect to others are: first, “I reveal phenomena that interfere with liberation and so forth,” meaning that he can state that attachment is an obstacle to liberation without anyone contradicting him, and second, “Through persevering in these paths and grounds, liberation can be achieved.” The Buddha is able to fearlessly proclaim these. They are said to be the entity of utter stability since they cannot be contradicted by anyone else and so are completely solid or stable.

The definition of the four individual correct knowledges

In verse 6.211ab, the four individual correct knowledges are defined as having the characteristic of not terminating, or not coming to an end. These four are the individual correct knowledge of phenomena, meanings, definitive words, and self-confidence (or self-assurance). These too we have seen previously in our studies of the *Ornament* and we will cover them again later when Chandrakirti presents the ninth ground.

The definitions of great love, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity

Chandrakirti defines great love and so forth in verses 6.211cd and 6.212. He defines great love as “that finely accomplishing the benefit of migrating beings,” and great compassion as “that which thoroughly protects those possessing suffering.” In general we say that love is the wish for sentient beings to be happy while compassion is wishing them to be free from suffering. In explaining these, Geshe-la said that there is compassion that protects and a compassion that wishes other sentient beings to be free from suffering. Geshe-la said that the first is the stronger of the two. The same could be said for love, that it has two aspects, wishing others to have happiness and actually engaging in activities to bring others happiness. With regard to great joy, it has the characteristic of extreme joyfulness. Great equanimity has the characteristic of being unmixed with attachment for some beings and anger for

others. In our usual practice of the four immeasurables, immeasurable equanimity usually refers to wishing others to have equanimity but here within the Buddha, it refers to oneself dwelling in perfect equanimity.

The definition of the eighteen unshared qualities of a buddha

Verse 6.213 mentions the eighteen unshared qualities of a buddha, saying they “have the respective characteristic of not being taken away.” Both Chandrakirti and Lama Tsongkhapa set these out in their commentaries but we’ve also seen them in our studies of the *Ornament*. What is the difference between being “uncommon” and “unshared”? In our previous studies, it was said that a bodhisattva superior could develop a similitude of the uncommon qualities but these unshared qualities only exist with respect to a buddha, meaning that they are not even slightly shared with lesser superiors. This is mentioned by Lama Tsongkhapa at the end of his listing of the eighteen as well.

The definition of the exalted wisdom of the knower of all aspects

The last of the results that are set out by Chandrakirti the exalted wisdom of the knower of all aspects, is defined in verse 6.214 as having “the characteristic of being direct,” which means directly knowing all objects of knowledge. It is synonymous with an omniscient mind and a wisdom truth body.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-2C Summarized meaning

In summary, these various bases, paths and results have been presented in terms of their definitions, and each of their respective definitions do not inherently exist. Chandrakirti presents this in verse 6.215, saying that there are both compounded phenomena and uncompounded phenomena, and the emptiness of whatever is the definition of those phenomena is the emptiness of its respective definition.

3B1C-2B3E-3B1D-3 Explaining the emptiness of the unobservable and the entity of non-things

15. The emptiness of the unobservable

The fifteenth division of emptiness is the emptiness of the unobservable. The basis of this emptiness is that which is unobservable, meaning the three times together. In terms of the present, it is said to not last even a moment, the past has disintegrated, and the future is yet to be produced. These three do not exist simultaneously so they cannot be observed together. Since the existence of these three at the same time is unobserved, therefore they are called “the unobservable.” What is an example of the past pot? A past pot is a pot that has been produced and has disintegrated. A present pot is a pot which has been produced but which has not yet disintegrated. A future pot is a pot that is yet to be produced due to a lack of complete conditions. The three times together does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the unobservable.

16. The emptiness of the entity of non-things

The sixteenth division of emptiness is the entity of non-things, which means that things do not have the emptiness of the assembled. What does this mean? Functioning things such as pots and so forth arise from the assembling of causes and conditions, so therefore they do not inherently exist. This lack of inherent existence of functioning things is being called here non-thing or non-entity. These non-things do not have an entity or nature of inherent existence. This entity does not inherently remain constantly and does not inherently disintegrate, therefore it lacks inherent existence. Its lack of inherent existence is the emptiness of the entity of non-things

The basis of the presentation of the sixteen divisions of emptiness

Having completed the presentation of the sixteen divisions of emptiness, Lama Tsongkhapa says that these are not presented in terms of different reasonings, but rather in dependence upon a sign that they are not inherently constantly remaining and not inherently disintegrating. For example, the internal sense powers do not inherently exist, because they do not inherently constantly remain and do not inherently disintegrate. Nor are these sixteen presented in general for the sake of one person. Why? Because once you have understood emptiness on the base of one phenomenon, by simply turning your mind to another base, you can realize the emptiness of that phenomenon as well without the necessity of further reasoning. So a particular person does not have to use reasoning to realize individually all sixteen of these – one person does not have to go through

the proofs of all sixteen for them to come to understand emptiness. On what basis are they presented? They are set out from the point of view of individuals who have varying strengths of adherence to true existence towards particular objects. Some have stronger adherence to internal objects, others to external, and so forth. So the sixteen are different in terms of the function that they perform. As Geshe-la says, we will have different levels of attachment for objects corresponding to the strength of our conceiving that object to truly exist. So because we have different levels of conceiving objects to truly exist dependent upon the specific objects themselves, these are set out to aid particular sentient beings in overcoming their conception of true existence in regard to specific bases.

From what points of view the sixteen divisions should be understood

When Lama Tsongkhapa says that these sixteen are set out from the point of view of a single person, does that contradict what we said earlier? It doesn't seem so, since, as Geshe-la explained, to a single person the sixteen bases of emptiness do not need to be proven as not inherently existent, because when a single person understands the emptiness of one of the bases, he can easily understand the emptiness of the others. So, in that way, they are all understood or realized from the point of view of a single person. Lama Tsongkhapa also says that they are presented from the point of view of an individual person with adherence to specific individual bases as inherently existent because one of the sixteen will be appropriate for a particular individual with that strong adherence. In Geshe-la's teachings on *Ornament*, these sixteen divisions were set out on the various grounds but Geshe-la didn't comment on that in his current teachings.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

April 2 (Monday)

3B1C-2B3E-3B2 Extensive explanation of the division into four emptinesses

1. Emptiness of things

“Things” refers to the five aggregates. All things are included within the five aggregates. Things are called “aggregates” because phenomena are aggregations of parts, which depend on causes and conditions. The lack of inherent existence of the aggregates is called “the emptiness of things”.

2. The emptiness of non-things

Non-things refers to uncompounded phenomena, including space, nirvana, emptiness and so forth. Uncompounded phenomena are not compounded or composed by causes and conditions and their lack of inherent existence is called the “emptiness of non-things”.

3. The emptiness of natures

“Natures” here refers to the final nature that is reality, or the *dharmata*. It has existed since beginningless time. This nature is not made by hearers and so forth. The lack of inherent existence of this final reality is the “emptiness of natures”.

4. Emptiness of thingness of other

“Thingness of other” could perhaps be better translated as “the entity of other”, “other entity” or “the entity that is different”. Here “other entity” refers to superior phenomena such as emptiness. These phenomena were not created by buddhas or bodhisattvas and have existed since beginningless time. The lack of inherent existence is thoroughly non-deceptive and therefore is superior to conventional phenomena. This entity is “other” in three ways: (i) it is seen as other in terms of being “supreme” or “suchness” (i.e. superior to conventional phenomena); (ii) it is “other” in that it is realized by a wisdom that is supramundane, not by mundane wisdom; and (iii) it is “beyond”, which is also called the “perfect end” in the sense of being on the far shore beyond cyclic existence. It is said to be superior to cyclic existence. The lack of inherent existence of these three are the “emptiness of other entity, or the entity of other”. The Sanskrit word that is being translated as “entity of other” is *para-bhava*, and *para* can mean supreme, other or beyond. This discussion of the Sanskrit comes from Gedun Drub’s text on page 74.

3B1C-2B4 Final summary in terms of expressing the qualities of the ground

These divisions of emptiness are in accordance with the *Perfection of Wisdom*. We are at the end of the sixth ground, also known as “Manifest” or “Approaching”, where the focus is on developing a surpassing perfection of wisdom. This is where one’s realization is brought to a surpassing level. A perfection of wisdom is attained on the first ground but it is not a surpassing perfection of wisdom until the sixth ground.

Uncommon qualities of the sixth ground bodhisattva

Now Chandrakirti describes the uncommon qualities that a sixth ground bodhisattva attains. On this ground the bodhisattva has a realization that the three realms of existence lack inherent existence. The clarity of this wisdom is compared to the clarity of seeing an olive resting on the palm of one’s hand. Literally, a myrobalan fruit is referred to, which is a medicinal plant that is similar in appearance to an olive. An olive, if it is wet, appears very clear and reflects light. The image is very sharp. This is how the bodhisattva sees emptiness. This bodhisattva realizes the subtle 12 linked of dependent arising and that the three realms and their inhabitants have been without inherent existence since beginningless time and thereby he enters into an absorption of cessation. We defined absorption of cessation previously as: an exalted wisdom directly realizing emptiness distinguished by abiding in a type free from attachment to the peak of existence and attained in dependence on the supramundane path that is its means of attainment and an actual absorption of the peak of existence. Lama Tsongkhapa says that this cessation is attained by the force of nominal truth, which seems to mean that conventionally he proceeds to cessation, enters into it, or another possible interpretation is that it is not attained through the power of true existence. Although the bodhisattva is absorbed in cessation in terms of thought, his actions are involved in cyclic existence through the force of his

compassion. Earlier when we studied the first ground, at that time it was said that a bodhisattva outshines hearers and solitary realizers by way of lineage (Mahayana mind generation). Now, the bodhisattva prepares to enter the seventh ground where he will outshine hearers and solitary realizers by way of intelligence. This refers to his uncommon ability to enter into and arise from absorption of cessation in the shortest moment of a complete action.

The sixth grounder is compared to a swan that needs two wings – representing the conventional and the ultimate – to fly. This is similar to the pictures of the merit field with the vast and profound lineages from Maitreya and Manjushri on either side of Shakyamuni Buddha. We need both method and wisdom. We need wise hearts and loving minds. In Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas* it is said that wisdom without compassion is bondage and that compassion without wisdom is bondage.

3B1C-2C Explaining the four grounds, the Gone Afar and so forth

3B1C-2C1 Explaining the seventh ground [Gone Afar]

On Gone Afar the bodhisattva attains the surpassing perfection of skillful means

On the seventh ground the perfection in skillful means is brought to a surpassing perfection. This is not called a perfection of wisdom, although it is subsumed in the perfection of wisdom. It is defined as a superior bodhisattva's path that has abandoned the small-middling innate afflictions as its principal object of abandonment, and that has achieved a surpassing practice of the perfection of skillful means from within the ten perfections. The perfection of skillful means is a mind conjoined with the mind of enlightenment that is skilled in the means of accomplishing the two purposes – attaining great enlightenment for oneself and leading all sentient beings to that state. It is termed "Gone Afar" because it is the final path where the bodhisattva possesses the conception of true existence and, therefore, afflictions in general.

Qualities attained on the seventh ground

One of the main qualities attained on this ground is the ability to enter into and arise from absorption of cessation in the shortest instant of a complete action. From the first direct realization of emptiness on the first ground up to this point bodhisattvas find it difficult to arise instantaneously from meditation. On the lower grounds a bodhisattva has a problem coming out of meditative equipoise because his mind is mixed with emptiness like water mixed with water. On the seventh ground, this difficulty has been overcome. It is in this way that his intelligence is said to outshine that of hearers and solitary realizers. This cessation is termed the perfect end. Although this bodhisattva can enter into it he will not actualize the perfect end because of his intention to attain complete buddhahood. The perfect end is only actualized at buddhahood. A buddha's wisdom body is a composite of both meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. This means that a Buddha can directly cognize all phenomena – emptinesses and conventionalities – all of the time.

April 3 (Tuesday)

The two sets of perfections of skillful means

There are twelve perfections of skillful means, which are presented in two sets, each containing six parts (listed in the translation of *Illumination* on page 173). The first set is related to being skilled in accomplishing all of the qualities of a buddha within oneself and the second is related to being skilled in ripening all other sentient beings. The fifth item of the first group says that a seventh ground bodhisattva doesn't take rebirth due to karma and afflictions. Normally this is said of eighth grounders. Perhaps this is because he doesn't create any projecting karma. However, as we learned earlier, no superior creates new projecting karma so this is an open question. [Correction to translation: *Illumination*, page 173, number 2 in the second set of six should read, "accomplish great roots of virtue by means of small *hardships*," rather than "collection".] As an aside, the previous incarnation of His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche once told Jampa that the easiest way to practice dharma is to rejoice when you see someone doing something good.

3B1C-2C2 **Explaining the eighth ground [Immovable]**

3B1C-2C2A Surpassing prayer on this ground and the way of arising from cessation

Characteristics of the eighth ground, Immovable

On the eighth ground a bodhisattva abandons the three levels of the small innate afflictive obstructions along with their seeds. He has overcome the foe of the afflictive emotions. He will achieve a sign of irreversibility if it has not already. There are said to be three times at which a bodhisattva can achieve a sign of irreversibility. The first, for a sharp faculty bodhisattva, is at the path of preparation; the second, for a middling faculty bodhisattva, is at path of seeing; and the third, for a dull faculty bodhisattva, is at the eighth ground. There is a difference between attaining irreversibility and achieving a sign of irreversibility. One example of a sign of irreversibility is not having microorganisms in your body. On the eighth ground all of the stains of self-cherishing have been abandoned. This ground is called “Immovable” because this bodhisattva cannot be moved from the achievement of buddhahood. Another interpretation says that it is “Immovable” because the mind is no longer moved by the conception of a self or the afflictions. Does a Hinayana arhat have self-cherishing? There are differing opinions with regard to this. Self-cherishing is not presented as an afflictive emotion or a wrong consciousness.

The accumulation of merit on the eighth ground

A seventh grounder seeks the eighth ground in order to increase his two collections. It is taught that we need to accumulate three great countless eons worth of merit: the first on the paths of accumulation, the second on the first through the seventh grounds, and the third on the eighth through tenth grounds. The seventh grounder strives to achieve the eighth ground, “[i]n order to attain higher and higher virtue surpassing the previous.” [8.1b]. There is a metaphor for the amount of effort it takes to attain the eighth ground. Through the first seven grounds, it is compared to transporting a ship across land to the ocean, which takes tremendous effort. Once the ship is in the ocean, representing the attainment of the eighth ground, it moves almost effortlessly. The eighth ground bodhisattva is almost spontaneously able to accomplish whatever he or she wishes. Only a Buddha possesses this completely spontaneous ability. On this ground a bodhisattva attains a surpassing perfection of prayer. The eighth grounder now goes on to purify the obstacles to his being able to achieve his prayers through attaining the buddha’s form body.

The eighth grounder is exhorted by the buddhas to complete the two collections

The bodhisattva on the eighth ground has abandoned all of the afflictive obstructions, attaining a nirvana. The buddhas send out light rays that penetrate the bodhisattva’s absorption, making him arise, telling him that he has attained much but that he has not attained the eighteen unshared qualities of the Buddha. The buddhas remind him of all the prayers he made, urging him to arise from his absorption in order to continue to cultivate his collections. These collections distinguish buddhas from hearers and solitary realizers. A buddha has more than just a realization of emptiness. He has complete collections of wisdom and merit.

3B1C-2C2B Indicating that all afflictions are extinguished

The eighth grounder achieves a nirvana

This bodhisattva, when he attains the path of release of the eighth ground, is released from all the afflictions along with their seeds, which will never arise again. This bodhisattva’s mind will remain completely undisturbed in peace. He has destroyed the causes of rebirth in cyclic existence. He is referred to as the Guru of the three levels, above, on, or below the ground. One interpretation of these three is that gods exist above the ground, humans on the ground and nagas below the ground. This bodhisattva must now go on to achieve buddhahood. The *Sutra on the Ten Grounds* says he or she thoroughly passes beyond sorrow at this time, that is, he or she achieves a nirvana, having severed the afflictions.

3B1C-2C2C Indicating that the ten controls are attained

The eighth grounder takes on a mental body

The eighth ground bodhisattva takes on a body in the nature of mind due to: (i) his uncontaminated actions (without the presence of afflictions), and (ii) a level of the latency of ignorance. The eighth ground bodhisattva uses this body to attain the ten controls. These ten controls are used to enact the welfare of sentient beings and to further cultivate the two collections of merit and wisdom. The bodhisattva also continues to meditate on emptiness.

April 4 (Wednesday)

The bodhisattva on the eighth ground has abandoned all the afflictions and their seeds and so he can no longer take rebirth in cyclic existence due to the force of afflictions and karma, but is still able to be embodied in a body in the nature of mind. The bodhisattva does this through uncontaminated actions, i.e. those not motivated by ignorance, as well as a level of the latency of ignorance, i.e. the knowledge obstructions. One thing that isn't clear though is exactly how this body of the nature of mind is attained, specifically is it attained through death and then taking rebirth as that embodiment, or is it some other process? Upon attaining the eighth ground, it would seem that the bodhisattva still has a contaminated body. On the pure grounds the bodhisattva still has to attain a considerable amount of merit and, as Geshe-la says, this body is taken to "complete the collection, that is, to enact the welfare of sentient beings." So it would seem that at some point the bodhisattva would attain this mental body upon death, when he leaves behind those contaminated aggregates, but perhaps we should ask Geshe-la to clarify.

The ten controls

As we mentioned yesterday, on this ground there is also the attainment of the ten controls. Geshe-la said that these should be considered in the future tense, i.e. that this bodhisattva *will* attain them, not that he has already attained them. The ten are:

1. Control over life span – Geshe-la said this means that the bodhisattva can live as long as he desires.
2. Control over the mind – The bodhisattva can abide in meditative stabilization on an object for as long as he likes.
3. Control over necessities – The bodhisattva no longer has to put effort into attaining necessities.
4. Control over actions – There is some room for interpretation here as to what actions means, karma or actual activities. Here Geshe-la said it means that the bodhisattva can intentionally ripen karma.
5. Control over rebirth – This is control over being reborn wherever he likes.
6. Control over prayer – Geshe-la said this means that he can show enlightenment wherever and whenever he likes.
7. Control over aspiration – This refers to the fact that, when the bodhisattva wishes to fill the worlds with buddhas, all the worlds appear filled with buddhas.
8. Control over magical emanations – The bodhisattva can manifest emanations in all the buddha lands.
9. Control over exalted wisdom – This arises due to showing the Tathagata's strengths, fearlessnesses, and so forth.
10. Control over the Dharma – The bodhisattva illuminates the door of the Dharma.

The presentation of these ten controls in both the *Autocommentary* and *Illumination* are made in terms of cause and effect but that leaves some questions in places. It seems that, through the attainment of the ten controls, the bodhisattva is then able to make use of the body that is in the nature of mind to enact the welfare of sentient beings.

3B1C-2C3 Explaining the ninth ground [Good Intelligence]

The uninterrupted path of the eighth ground abandons the large (or big) level of the knowledge obstructions and enters the ninth ground with the path of release. Here he attains a surpassing perfection of power. Although Geshe-la did not explain this, the ninth ground is called Good Intelligence because, as set out by Nagarjuna in *Precious Garland* stanza 457, one of the outstanding qualities attained on this ground is realization of the four individual correct knowledges. Chandrakirti mentions the attainment of these in the root text, verse 9.1ab.

The attainment of the thirteen powers

Not only are the four individual correct knowledges attained (which will be explained later) but there are thirteen powers attained on the ninth ground as well. Lama Tsongkhapa lists these and gives some commentary on them (please see the transcripts for commentary on these). The thirteen powers are:

1. Power of thought
2. Power of superior thought
3. Power of retention

4. Power of meditative stabilization
5. Power of perfect endowments
6. Power of control
7. Power of self-confidence
8. Power of prayer
9. Power of perfection
10. Power of great love
11. Power of great compassion
12. Power of reality
13. Power of the blessings of all the tathagatas

In the context of discussing the ninth power, the power of perfection, Geshe-la mentioned the bodhisattva not actualizing the perfect end, and that there are three conditions that the bodhisattva must meet before actualizing it:

1. Fully ripening all sentient beings
2. Fully completing all one's prayers
3. Fully purifying one's own buddha realm

In regard to the tenth and eleventh, Geshe-la said that if one is manifest the other is unmanifest (i.e. if great compassion is present, great love is unmanifest, and vice-versa).

The attainment of the four individual correct knowledges

The outstanding feature of this ground is the attainment of the four individual (or personal) correct knowledges, which are listed among the 39 uncommon aspects of the exalted knower of all aspects. Since these are uncommon, this bodhisattva is not attaining actual individual correct knowledges but only a similitude of them. The four are:

1. Individual correct knowledge of phenomena – The bodhisattva fully knows the individual characteristics of each and every phenomenon.
2. Individual correct knowledge of meanings – The bodhisattva knows the divisions of the aspects of all phenomena.
3. Individual correct knowledge of definitive words – The bodhisattva knows the individual presentations of phenomena without mixing. In this context, Geshe-la also discussed names, phrases and letters.
4. Individual correct knowledge of self-assurance – The bodhisattva knows without interruption the concordant causes of phenomena.
- 5.

3B1C-2C4 Explaining the tenth ground [Cloud of Dharma]

Upon attaining the uninterrupted path of the ninth ground, the bodhisattva develops a direct antidote to the middling level of the knowledge obstructions, the bodhisattva, and enters the tenth ground in the path of release.

The etymology of the Cloud of Dharma

This ground is called the Cloud of Dharma, which is explained at the end of Lama Tsongkhapa's commentary. He says, "Just as rainwater falls from rain clouds for the sake of increasing the crops of worldly beings, likewise, so too does a rain of holy Dharma manifestly fall...spontaneously from the conqueror's child, the tenth grounder, for the sake of increasing the crop of virtue of the migrating beings who are to be subdued." Expounding the Dharma is the primary way of benefiting sentient beings. Geshe-la said that, of the three, body, speech, and mind, it is speech that is said to be of greatest benefit since it is the means of liberating beings by the teaching of the Dharma.

The empowerment of exalted wisdom

According to the *Sutra on the Ten Grounds*, the bodhisattva receives the empowerment of great light from the buddhas. This occurs while he is abiding on a lotus, and the buddhas of the ten directions send forth great light rays from their hair treasure (or brow curl) which confer this empowerment upon the bodhisattva. As Geshe-la said, this is however a sutra presentation, since according to tantra, the bodhisattva must enter into the tantric path to achieve buddhahood. When he enters into the tantric path from the tenth ground he will

enter at the fourth stage, the meaning clear light, of the completion stage. Geshe-la says that perhaps that is what is meant here by the empowerment of great light from a tantra point of view.

The surpassing perfection of exalted wisdom

Here the bodhisattva attains the surpassing perfection of exalted wisdom. In Asanga's *Bodhisattva Grounds*, the perfection of exalted wisdom is differentiated from the perfection of wisdom. Asanga begins by saying that the perfection of exalted wisdom knows the presentation of all phenomena, i.e. the conventional natures of all phenomena, exactly as they are. He differentiates the two as follows. The perfection of wisdom primarily knows the ultimate nature of phenomena while the perfection of exalted wisdom knows the conventional nature of phenomena. Remember also that, as Geshe-la has explained before, the last four perfections (method, prayer, power and exalted wisdom) are included in the perfection of wisdom. This completes the tenth ultimate mind generation.

Regarding the ten perfections

In summarizing the ten grounds, Geshe-la said that the ten perfections are equally pervasive with one another, but this is as presented in the *Ornament*, meaning that it is from a Svatantrika point of view. But this isn't the case with generosity and ethics for example, since they are mutually exclusive. The perfection of generosity and the perfection of ethics on the other hand, are mutually inclusive. Generosity is a specific mental factor, perhaps non-miserliness in the sense of non-attachment, while the perfection of generosity doesn't seem to be a mental factor but rather is a main mind, and in Svatantrika, it is specifically within the continuum of a buddha.

Geshe-la also discussed how these chapters have been called ultimate mind generations, and he said that ultimate mind generation can be divided into ten, the ten grounds. In Svatantrika if it is a perfection, it exists only on the buddha ground, so according to their tenets, a bodhisattva can only attain a surpassing practice of that perfection. For Prasangika, there are both mundane and supramundane perfections over the course of the five Mahayana paths. There are surpassing perfections attained on each of the grounds and it seems the qualification is that the perfection has been purified of the discordant class. Geshe-la went through the ten perfections presenting them in terms of that idea. The first, generosity, is removed of the stain of miserliness. Ethics is removed of broken morality, even in a dream. Patience is removed of anger, while effort is removed of laziness. Concentration is removed of distraction, and wisdom is free of faulty wisdom (meaning wrong discrimination).

These last perfections were discussed by Geshe-la more in terms of the surpassing qualities attained. Method is surpassing upon attaining the twelve skills in means. Prayer is surpassing in fulfillment of particular prayers, such as the ten great prayers. Power is surpassing in the attainment of the ten powers, and as for the last, exalted wisdom, Geshe-la didn't say. One possibility in terms of being purified of the discordant class is that it is free of faulty wisdom with regard to the conventional, since the sixth, wisdom, seems to be presented in regard to faulty wisdom of the ultimate.

April 5 (Thursday)

3B1C-3 Presentation of the qualities of the ten grounds

Now that Chandrakirti has completed his presentation of the ten grounds, in this section he presents the sets of twelve qualities that are attained from the first ground onward. As the bodhisattva progresses through the grounds, the twelve qualities remain the same but, as we will see, they increase exponentially.

Regarding ultimate mind generation

The ten grounds correspond to ten divisions of ultimate mind generation, and Geshe-la gave its definition by Jedzumba in *Ocean of Sport* as follows: a Mahayana superior's main mental knower abiding in a type of realization that is a special wisdom where dualistic appearances with respect to the mode of abidance of complete enlightenment have vanished, and is either a conventional or ultimate mind generation. This means it is a primary consciousness of Mahayana superiors, which includes both bodhisattva and buddha superiors, which is conjoined with the direct realization of emptiness. Therefore it is not a mental factor such as the

mental factor of wisdom directly realizing emptiness but rather is conjoined with that (or under the influence of that). This doesn't mean that this main mind doesn't directly realize emptiness but just that this is a main mind and not a mental factor. Wisdom is a mind that discriminates uncommon signs. Moreover, this wisdom is a *special* wisdom, here meaning that this excludes a hearer or solitary realizer's wisdom. Special wisdom is conjoined with special method, i.e. Mahayana mind generation or bodhichitta. So when we talk about the ten grounds, they are the ten ultimate mind generations.

3B1C-3A Explaining the qualities of the first ground

On the first ground, the Very Joyful, the set of twelve qualities is given in terms of 100, for example, the first is that this bodhisattva sees a hundred buddhas in a brief instant. All twelve of these are set out in the transcript as well as in *Illumination*. Geshe-la gave some additional commentary on a few of these, which can also be found in the transcript.

3B1C-3B Explaining the qualities of the second through the seventh grounds

In the second through the seventh grounds the numbers of these sets of qualities increases. The first through the seventh are called the impure grounds, while the eighth through the tenth are the pure grounds. The general explanation in Prasangika as to why that is so is because there is the conception of inherent existence on the impure grounds while they are completely abandoned on the pure grounds since the afflictive obstructions are completely abandoned. As to how these sets of twelve qualities increase, on the second ground, for example, they are given in terms of 1,000. Exactly how the qualities increase on the other impure grounds is set out in detail in *Illumination*.

3B1C-3C Explaining the qualities of the three pure grounds

On the three pure grounds, the twelve sets of qualities are quantified differently than the way they were set out previously. On the pure grounds they are set out by the number of atoms found in various world systems and realms.

The qualities on the pure grounds

On the eighth ground, the sets of qualities are expressed by Chandrakirti in verse 11.6 as the number of "atoms in a hundred thousand thrice-thousand fold world systems." In explaining this, Geshe-la said that a world system, as presented by Vasubandhu in *Abhidharmakosha*, consists of nine components: the four continents, the sun, the moon, Mt. Meru, desire realm gods and Brahma realm. There are three classifications of world systems and in that verse, it is the third that is being referred to ("a great thousand," which is equal to a billion). In brief then, the atoms in world systems totaling one hundred thousand billion are the number related to the sets of qualities for the eighth ground bodhisattva.

For the ninth ground, the calculation is ten times the amount seen for the eighth ground, as Chandrakirti spells out in verse 11.7.

For the tenth ground, Geshe-la said that provisionally the number in the twelve sets equals the number of particles in buddha lands that lie outside of our ability to express. In addition, this bodhisattva is able to display in the pores of his skin, countless buddhas surrounded by inestimable bodhisattvas, as well as various beings of the various realms. On these three pure grounds the bodhisattva must accumulate merit amounting to one great countless eon so it seems that even on the tenth ground the bodhisattva is still doing that. All these powers and qualities are a means to benefit sentient beings.

3B2 The explanation of the resultant ground

Please note that there is a correction to *Illumination*, pp.181-2, in regard to the outlines within this section. There are five divisions of this first outline that were not enumerated in the translation (please see the class transcripts for the listing of these five). Also note that, with the additional level of outlines, the remaining outlines on those two pages will change as well.

3B2A The way of initially becoming a buddha

3B2A-1 Actual meaning

As of today, Geshe-la has covered Chandrakirti's *Autocommentary* on this section but has yet to comment on the related passage in *Illumination*, so we may revisit this section after Geshe-la has commented on that. In

order to attain the qualities of a buddha, this bodhisattva must strive to attain the next ground, i.e. the resultant or buddha ground. At the end of the tenth ground, the bodhisattva enters the uninterrupted path of the tenth ground, which is also called the vajra-like meditative stabilization at the end of the continuum of the sentient being. In the next moment, upon attaining the path of release, he simultaneously attains the omniscient state and all four bodies of a buddha.

The attainment of the enjoyment body

Geshe-la said that the enjoyment body is attained in the pure land of Akanishta, or Not Low. Geshe-la said that calling this an enjoyment body means that he only enjoys or partakes of the Mahayana Dharma. It seems that the bodhisattva attains enlightenment in this realm. In other words, the basis or support for the achieving enlightenment is the body of a being in Akanishta. Geshe-la referred to verse from *Ornament* in which it is said that at the same time that this bodhisattva attains enlightenment in Akanishta, his emanation within the desire realm also attains enlightenment. According to the Mahayana, Shakyamuni Buddha was enlightened eons before he displayed enlightenment at Bodhgaya, which was done only to show other beings how to attain that state.

The attainment of buddhahood

In verse 12.1, Chandrakirti says that, just like the moon in a cloudless sky is able to illuminate all forms, so too does this exalted wisdom illuminate all phenomena through dispelling the knowledge obstructions. At this point, all the excellent qualities are brought to maturation, these being the matchless and perfect qualities of a buddha. In one instant this buddha is able to understand the single taste of all phenomena. Even though each conventionality has its own entity, the entities of each of those individual conventionalities lack inherent existence and so are of a single taste in emptiness. In one instant, the buddha becomes omniscient and realizes all phenomena. We could say that the appearance of duality, meaning how phenomena appear to us as separate, independent entities, limits our ability to process information. We have to understand things serially, linearly, as isolated from one another. We cannot understand things as a gestalt, holistically, but must take things one by one. The way we process information, know, is totally transformed upon attaining buddhahood.

April 6 (Friday)

No review class was held.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 1 (Tuesday)

3B2A-2 Dispelling arguments

3B2A-2A Setting out the former position

We have been looking at the resultant ground of a buddha and the bodies of a buddha. A buddha has achieved omniscience. A buddha sees that all phenomena are the same in their suchness, or their lack of inherent existence, and so are said to be of one taste.

Lower schools say that Prasangika falls into nihilism

We are looking at verse 12.3, which is an objection to the Prasangika assertion concerning the lack of inherent existence. According to us, all phenomena have the final nature that is the lack of inherent existence. When this is comprehended by an exalted knower of a buddha, one knows all objects of knowledge. It is pretty amazing to think of knowing all the phenomena of the universe in one instant. The verse says, “When pacification is suchness, the intellect does not engage it.” Here pacification refers to the absence of the object of negation – the lack of inherent existence of tables, forms and so forth. The lower schools say that the mind that knows the lack of inherent existence knows nothing because for them existence is equated with inherent existence. They say that the lack of inherent existence is not an object, lacking an uncommon sign for a knower to discriminate, therefore there is no object to be apprehended. If there is no object of knowledge then there is no knower, and no one who knows anything. How can we then talk about someone who knows emptiness and is then able to teach it because there is no knower of such an entity? All schools assert suchness or emptiness, but the lower schools feel that Prasangika has fallen to the extreme of annihilation.

3B2A-2B Refuting that system

3B2A-2B1 Dispelling arguments that realizing suchness is unacceptable

Prasangika answers to the lower schools’ charge of nihilism

We are debating with the lower schools about the meaning of suchness. The lower schools are making three points: (i) there is no object (that is the lack of inherent existence) that is known; (ii) therefore there can be no knower; and (iii) therefore the emptiness that is the lack of inherent existence cannot be taught. Prasangika answers that emptiness that is the lack of inherent existence is an object of knowledge and it is said to be known through the appearance of an aspect. An object appears to a mind and the mind is generated in the aspect of that object. Geshe Georges Dreyfus discusses this topic in *Recognizing Reality*. This is what is called knowing, the mind taking on the likeness of an object. When the eye consciousness sees a book the mind is generated in the aspect of the book. Similarly, when seeing the color blue, blue is known through the mind being generated in its aspect. This is a rather difficult topic.

Lama Tsongkhapa uses the example of blue, but it is the same in the case of suchness. Knowing here means that the consciousness takes on the aspect of its object. The mind taking on the aspect of suchness is what we mean by knowing suchness. It is like water poured into water. In this context what we mean by non-dualistic is that there is no distinction made between the object and the object possessor. This process of knowing is not being fabricated. The process of the mind taking on the aspect occurs; it is not a hallucination. There is a process of knowing going on where the mind takes on the aspect of suchness. The object possessor does not inherently exist, yet this process occurs. Lama Tsongkhapa says that in the perspective of those propounding inherent existence an aspect of suchness does not arise. Here suchness refers to the lack of inherent production.

The omniscient mind knows both modes and varieties simultaneously

At the time of achieving omniscience all of the modes (ultimate truths) and varieties (conventional truths) are simultaneously realized. These two ways of operating on objects operate simultaneously. The subtlest obscurations that have previously prevented these operating simultaneously have been removed. Before, they had to alternate. We cannot directly know a pot and its emptiness simultaneously until buddhahood. The realization of one precludes the realization of the other prior to achieving omniscience. On the path of preparation one realizes emptiness through a meaning generality. Does this consciousness realize a conventionality? Guy Newland in *The Two Truths*, page 197, says:

Buddhas can know all conventionalities and at the same time know emptiness by way of not knowing conventionalities because they are able to use two different modes of cognition simultaneously. Each omniscient consciousness knows emptiness by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance and conventionalities, while simultaneously knowing all conventionalities in association with dualistic appearance.

An omniscient consciousness can operate in a dualistic and non-dualistic manner. Non-dualistic in this context means the non-appearance of inherent existence. Lama Tsongkhapa is saying that the dualism referred to here is the distinction between subject and object. A buddha is not mistaken with regard to dualistic appearance, although there is a dualistic appearance. A buddha is not mistaken because he does not have the appearance of true existence. A buddha enters into the uninterrupted path in the manner of not arising again but this does not preclude his realizing conventionalities. He attains the wisdom truth body, which is a composite in one entity of both meditative equipoise and subsequent attainment. They have different isolates in that one arises in dependence on conventional truth and the other in dependence on ultimate truth.

In *The Fundamental Potential for Enlightenment*, pp.114-5, Geshe Loden describes three inseparable factors at the time of attaining enlightenment:

The first is wisdom, and this refers to the wisdom directly perceiving the ultimate truth. It is said to be clear because it makes reality, or suchness, very clear and in this way is like the clear light of the sun.

The second is pristine awareness, and this refers to the simultaneous realization of all manner of conventional truths. It is said to be ‘illuminating’ because it illuminates the various aspects of all objects of knowledge like the illuminating rays of the sun. The third is release and this refers to the final path of release from the obstructions to omniscience, which is the attainment of buddhahood. It is said to be pure because it is totally and finally freed from the last vestige of the two obstructions.

This one exalted wisdom is a knower of modes and a knower of varieties in relation to conventional truths.

An objection concerning the definitions of the two truths

An objector says that there is a contradiction in the definitions of conventional truth and ultimate truth. All things possess two entities – an object of correct perception that is thusness and an object of false perception that is said to be conventional truth. The objector is saying that, since the Buddha has no mistaken perception, therefore he should not realize conventionalities. We have discussed this previously. The objector has a point in that these definitions apply to sentient beings, but not a buddha because this is an exceptional case. It is for this reason that we append a clause to our definition of conventional truth – “and with respect to which a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality becomes a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality” – allowing for the exceptional case of a buddha.

May 2 (Wednesday)

3B2A-2B2 Dispelling arguments that an exalted knower is unacceptable

3B2A-2B2A Actual meaning

We are examining an objection that says that there is no object to be known, so there is no object-possessor of that object, and so there also is no one who teaches suchness. We looked at the first part of this argument involving establishing that the object, suchness, is realized. Now the text dispels arguments with regard to the acceptability of an exalted knower.

Clarifying the meaning of the objection

This person not only does not accept that an object exists, but also denies that an object-possessor exists. Lama Tsongkhapa first tries to determine the meaning or point of the argument that is being presented. When the objector says that there is no object-possessor and so no one who teaches suchness, behind this there is a doubt. The doubt is that if the subject, the mind of the buddha, is mixed inseparably with the object, suchness, then there is no conceptualization, so there can be no motivation to teach, and hence there is no teacher.

The buddhas teach suchness even without motivation

Chandrakirti replies in verse 12.5, saying essentially that the buddhas, even without motivation and without the intention to teach, still do teach. The truth body is attained primarily in dependence upon the collection of

wisdom, while in dependence primarily upon the collection of merit, the form body is attained. In dependence upon the complete enjoyment body, which teaches to bodhisattva superior, the emanation bodies are manifested, which teach to other sentient beings as well. And there are also other emanations, such as the movement of trees, by way of which the buddhas teach to sentient beings, and all of this occurs without any motivation from the side of the buddhas. Even a tenth-ground bodhisattva must make some type of subtle effort to perform activities but a buddha doesn't need to do that. These teachings occur spontaneously and effortlessly.

3B2A-2B2B Actual presentation of the acceptability of [an exalted knower]

The metaphor of the potter's wheel

A buddha has no conceptual thought, no conceptual minds or mental factors, so here Chandrakirti discusses why these teachings arise, using the metaphor of a potter's wheel as shown in verse 12.6 and 12.7. The enlightened activities of a buddha are completely without any effort or forethought, similar to the inertia of a spinning potter's wheel. Having made the effort previously to give the wheel some momentum to spin, it continues to rotate without the potter needing to exert any additional force. Inertia is the tendency of a body that is at rest to remain so or, conversely, for a body that is in movement to continue moving unless acted upon by an external force. Over the course of the bodhisattva's career, the causes have been created to perform the enlightened activities of a buddha, and there finally arises at buddhahood a point when there is no more resistance. We speak frequently about the need for generating more merit, which we can see as some type of kinetic energy, just like a boulder rolling down a hill. The tendency for the boulder to change its course is no longer there, because the momentum has been built up already for it to move in its respective direction. Similarly, the momentum to perform the activities of a buddha has finally been attained so teachings arise spontaneously, just like a wish-granting tree and a wish-fulfilling gem.

The engagement in enlightened activities is "propelled by the virtue of beings and special prayers" As Chandrakirti says in verse 12.7, this all occurs "by the virtue of beings and special prayer," and this is similar to the effect of karmic relationship. Such a relationship can be seen in the example of a thief who robs a house having created the karma in the past to be able to do so, but in order for one's own house to be robbed, oneself must have also created the karma to be robbed. The robbery is a conjunction of the karma of the two individuals. Not just one of them. Here, when the conditions arise, namely the virtue of beings and the special prayers made by the buddhas when they were bodhisattvas, the enlightened activities of buddhas occur. The buddhas are always trying to direct our minds towards enlightenment but from our side we must develop the karmic affinity to obtain their help. His Holiness the Dalai Lama said once that it is as if the buddhas are sending out radio waves and our job is to make our antenna of faith longer so that we might receive their blessings and teachings. The way that the buddhas actually help us is through their teachings and these teachings do arise through the special prayers made by them but it also occurs through the force of the virtues accumulated by sentient beings from their side. Lama Tsongkhapa states the prayer that the buddhas make in *Illumination*.

Lama Tsongkhapa also mentions the metaphor of the wish-granting tree, which is an interesting one in that such a tree has no intention of growing fruit that is able to grant wishes for sentient beings. For the wishes of beings to be fulfilled, it really comes down to the ability of those beings to actually pick the fruit. The combination of the nature of the tree and the ability of those beings to pick its fruit are what makes it able to do what it does. It can be inspiring to think of this as the goal, to achieve the state of a buddha so that one can automatically and spontaneously benefit sentient beings even without a conceptual mind to motivate such activity.

3B2B Presenting the bodies and qualities

3B2B-1 Presentation of the bodies

It is said that all four bodies of a buddha are manifested at the same time. The tenth-ground bodhisattva enters into the uninterrupted path of meditation on emptiness in a manner of not arising again. All the remaining three levels of the small knowledge obstructions are abandoned and the bodies of a buddha are simultaneously attained.

3B2B-1A Truth body

We begin with a discussion of the truth body. Strictly speaking, the truth body is permanent since it is equivalent to the nature truth body. In our *Ornament* studies, there was a discussion of the eighth of the clear realizations, the resultant truth body, which included all four bodies of a buddha. As such, it couldn't actually be called a clear realization (since that phenomenon is not a consciousness), so instead we called those eight "categories". However, in this context, when it says truth body, it is taken to be the nature truth body.

The truth body is an emptiness, a true cessation

The truth body in this context is the emptiness of the mind pacified of all obstructions to omniscience, so it is a true cessation of the knowledge obstructions. In verse 12.8, Chandrakirti says that the truth body is "The pacification, through having burned without exception the dry firewood-like objects of knowledge," so the truth body of the conquerors is a pacification, a true cessation. When Chandrakirti says objects of knowledge he is referring to the objects of knowledge appearing dualistically, meaning appearing as inherently existent, and this has been eliminated. The truth body is the emptiness of an omniscient mind; as we saw in *Ornament*, the emptiness of the mind of a being that is still associated with stains is called lineage. When the stains are burned away, then this is called the truth body.

Two types of nature truth body as set out in *Meditation on Emptiness*

Chandrakirti says that that pacification which is the burning away of the objects of knowledge is unproduced and unceasing, so it is clear here that he is talking about the nature truth body. Jeffrey Hopkins in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.119) says, "A Nature Body is of two types, a naturally pure Nature Body which is the absence from beginningless time of inherent existence in the pure sphere of Buddhahood, and an adventitiously pure Nature Body which is the absence in the pure sphere of Buddhahood of the adventitious stains – the afflictive obstructions and the obstructions to omniscience – through the application of their antidotes." These two types are both emptinesses, for as Hopkins says,

Both aspects of the Nature Body are emptinesses, which are the absence of inherent existence of a Buddha's omniscient mind; the naturally pure Nature Body is an emptiness from the point of view that the mind is always naturally free of inherent existence. The adventitiously pure Nature Body is this emptiness from the point of view of its being a quality of a mind that has been cleansed of all contaminations. Thus, both Nature Bodies are emptinesses and ultimate truths. (p.119-120)

The state of the truth body is actualized by the complete enjoyment body

Lama Tsongkhapa quotes a verse from the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, which says that the buddhas view the reality of suchness, and that the guides, or the tathagatas, are the truth body. Further it states that reality is not the object of a conceptual consciousness, but rather must be known by a mind that is free of dualistic appearance. Lama Tsongkhapa says that when the non-conceptual exalted wisdom and suchness become engaged inseparably, all conceptual minds and mental factors cease. He also says that conventionally we say that this state is initially actualized or achieved by the complete enjoyment body. The way we talk about this is that the being is in Akanishta and upon attaining buddhahood there is a complete enjoyment body, which is said to achieve or actualize the truth body, even though these are said to be attained simultaneously. So roughly speaking we can talk about the form bodies as the being, and the omniscient mind of that being is the truth body (although here it seems that there is a different meaning of that term). An omniscient consciousness knows all objects of knowledge and so it pervades all objects of knowledge.

So conventionally it is said that the complete enjoyment body actualizes, attains the truth body. The wisdom truth body is inseparably mixed with emptiness and this brings about a state where all conceptuality has ceased. Geshe-la brought out the fact that this ceasing of minds and mental factors is in terms of conceptual minds and mental factors so it is not to be taken as the buddha having no wisdom or mind in general.

May 3 (Thursday)

3B2B-1B Complete enjoyment body

We now proceed to examine the complete enjoyment body.

Buddhahood Embodied on the form bodies of a buddha

In *Buddhahood Embodied*, John Makransky says the following about the form bodies of a buddha:

...Buddhahood is the outcome not only of practice of supramundane wisdom or gnosis but also of cultivation of compassion in skillful service to others. Just as the practice of wisdom issues at final enlightenment in *svabhavikakaya* [the nature truth body], the practice of skillful service naturally issues in the *svabhavikakaya*'s manifestation of forms for compassionate engagement in the world. In Mahayana sutras and treatises, these forms are referred to as *rupakaya* (embodiment of Buddhahood in form[s]). They include all manifestations of *sambhogikakaya* [complete enjoyment body] and *nairmanikakaya* [emanation body], thus constituting the aspect of non-abiding nirvana that operates within the conditioned worlds of sentient beings. *Rupakaya*, although the manifestation of the unconditioned *svabhavikakaya*, is subject to the conditions of the world insofar as it functions within the world. Hence, its diverse manifestations are encountered or recognized only by those who have created the appropriate karmic conditions to do so – bodhisattvas and other beings with sufficient spiritual merit. (p.86)

A buddha's nirvana is a non-abiding nirvana that, although it never arises from peace, continues to be involved in the conventional world with diverse emanations. The truth body is inaccessible to beings other than buddhas so in the world of conditioned beings, the *dharmakaya* finds expression in the various aspects that arise due to the force of compassion and prayers made in previous lives. There are two expressions of the form body, one is the complete enjoyment body and the other are the emanation bodies, and these exist in accordance with the minds of sentient beings. Here we will talk about the complete enjoyment body.

The definition and etymology of the complete enjoyment body

The definition of a complete enjoyment body is a final form body possessing the five certainties. Some of these five certainties are mentioned by Chandrakirti in verse 12.9. The etymology of the complete enjoyment body is that the retinue of bodhisattva superiors for a buddha is able to enjoy or partake of the Mahayana Dharma. The root text says this is the pacified body, meaning that all the conceptual minds and mental factors have ceased. Even though it lacks conceptuality, it is like a wish-granting gem that is able to grant wishes even though it is without the conceptual motivation to do that. This pacified body is also said to be "clear", meaning that it is clearly able to enact the welfare of others.

The five certainties of the complete enjoyment body

The principle cause for the form body is the accumulation of merit, and the complete enjoyment body has five certainties:

1. Certainty of body – It displays or is ornamented with the 32 signs and the 80 marks of a buddha. We looked at these and their causes in detail when we studied the *Ornament*.
2. Certainty of doctrine – It only teaches the Mahayana, not the Hinayana.
3. Certainty of place – It abides only in the highest pure land of Akanishta, where the bodhisattva attains enlightenment in the aspect of an enjoyment body.
4. Certainty of time – It abides until all sentient beings are liberated from cyclic existence.
5. Certainty of retinue – It only has a retinue of bodhisattva superiors.

Jeffrey Hopkins also describes some of these in *Meditation on Emptiness* (p.121).

Correction to translation of Illumination, p. 187: In the quote from Chandrakirti's Seventy Stanzas on Refuge, the eighth line should read "On the *ten* grounds", not "On the tenth ground".

3B2B-1C Explanation of the body of similar cause

Now we proceed to the body of similar cause, the emanation body. As Geshe-la explained, there are three types: a supreme emanation body, an incarnate emanation body (or emanation through birth), and an artisan emanation body. Among these three types of emanation body, Shakyamuni Buddha was a supreme emanation body. The qualities of the emanation body will be shown in three sections.

3B2B-1C1 The way of displaying all one's own activities in one body and one pore

Since the emanation body is manifested by the truth body and the complete enjoyment body, it is called the body similar to the cause. Geshe-la says though that what is intended here is the emanation body that arises from the complete enjoyment body, because the emanation body is a body of similar cause, the complete

enjoyment body. Due to the compassion and prior prayers, a buddha, although in single-pointed meditative equipoise on emptiness, is able to manifest emanations to be of benefit to others. The emanation body is manifested by the complete enjoyment body for the sake of subduing non-bodhisattva superior sentient beings.

The definition of an emanation body

The definition of an emanation body is a final form body that is distinguished by not possessing the five certainties. In discussing this, Geshe-la said that actually it lacks only four of the five certainties since it possesses the certainty of body. He said this is because it possesses the signs and marks but he clarified this in saying that it is only from the side of the buddha that all the signs and marks are complete. Due to the karma of sentient beings, most cannot see these signs and marks.

The way a buddha displays all one's own activities in one body and one pore

The reason we're discussing the emanation body is to express its inconceivable qualities and attributes of strength. In this section, Chandrakirti says that a buddha, in one form body and one hair pore, displays all the various things that happened in that buddha's previous lives. He displays all the details of those lives, the generosity and the various practices he made, the lands in which he lived, the beings that surrounded him, the number of their disciples and what they were like – all that this being had previously enacted is similarly displayed. These are indeed inconceivable qualities. There's not much commentary given by Geshe-la on these various aspects. In verse 12.13, Chandrakirti indicates that the same could be said for the five other perfections besides generosity. All the form bodies are made of the exalted wisdom of the buddha, not matter, as can be said for all the jewel ornaments and so forth that are in the buddha realms.

Regarding complete and incomplete bases of training

In one of the attributes listed, the practices are spoken of in terms of being a complete basis or an incomplete basis of training, and Geshe-la described what these terms mean. A complete basis means that one has the basis of taking the vows to refrain from the three negative actions of body and four of speech. An incomplete means only taking the vows of a layperson or of a novice monk or nun. Geshe-la said that those bases of training are not complete because they do not include all of the actions of body and speech.

3B2B-1C2 The way of displaying all others' activities in that place

The way a buddha displays all others' activities in one pore

In verses 12.14 and 12.15, Chandrakirti discusses how a buddha is able to not only display all their own previous activities and so forth but they can also show the activities of all the previous, present and future buddhas as well. In verse 12.16, Chandrakirti says further that the activities of all the hearers, solitary realizers and bodhisattvas of the three times, as well as all sentient beings in general, can likewise be displayed. Lama Tsongkhapa says why shouldn't the buddhas be able to do this when a mere illusionist or magician can make all sorts of displays. If magicians can show habitats and environments on their own bodies, why couldn't buddhas, who have cultivated merit over such a long time, display such things?

3B2B-1C3 Explaining the perfect mastery of wishes

We've described the bodies of a buddha so now we look at how, even though a buddha doesn't have conceptual thought, he still has mastery over wishes. A buddha has overcome all the various stains and by merely wishing, he can settle world systems into a single minute particle, or the reverse of that, for a single particle to pervade all the world systems. We are bound by our preconceptions of space and time and perhaps buddhas have transcended that limitation and so time and space no longer serve as a limitation for them. Lama Tsongkhapa says that verse 12.17 is from the point of view of place, while the next verse is from the point of view of time. In verse 12.18, Chandrakirti says that, although without conceptual thought, in each and every instant a buddha is able to display as many activities as there are particles in all the world systems until the end of cyclic existence.

May 4 (Friday)

3B2B-2 Presentation of the qualities of the powers

We are now looking at the qualities of a buddha. As we saw in *Ornament*, with regard to an exalted knower there are 173 aspects. Of those, there are 110 that are aspects of an exalted knower of all aspects: thirty-seven common to hearers and solitary realizers, thirty-four that are common with bodhisattvas, and thirty-nine that are uncommon to a buddha. Only a buddha has these thirty-nine in their complete form. Lower beings can have a similitude of some of them. Included in these thirty-nine are the ten powers. We use the term “powers” following Jeffrey Hopkins’ translations. There are some quibbles about the translation terms here, with “force” or “strength” sometimes being used in the place of power. The bodhisattva strives to achieve the buddha ground where he will attain the ten powers.

3B2B-2A Brief presentation of the ten powers

A brief presentation of the ten powers is made in verses 12.19 through 12.21. In the next section we will go over the ten powers in detail.

3B2B-2B Extensive explanation of [the ten powers]

3B2B-2B1 Explanation of the five powers: the exalted knowledge of sources and non-sources and so forth

The ten powers are divided into two groups of five. We are looking at the first group of five.

1. The power of exalted knowledge of sources and non-sources

Hopkins defines this in *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.208, as: “direct knowledge of cause and effect within cyclic existence, such as the arising of pleasure from virtues and of pain from non-virtues, and direct knowledge of causes and effects included with the class of pure phenomena, such as the paths and their fruits.” “Source” means a cause that brings about a particular result. Chandrakirti applies this to virtue and so forth. Virtue is the source of happiness and non-virtue is a non-source of happiness. A buddha knows which causes are conducive to which types of results. He is free from any impediment to understanding sources and non-sources and their results.

Chandrakirti quotes the *Sutra of the Questions of Arya King Dharanishvara* in commenting on each of the ten powers. Geshe-la discussed the passage for this first power in class. There are thirty-nine aspects uncommon to a buddha, but here in the sutra it mentions just thirty-two as the four individual correct knowledges and the three mental aspects have been left out. A buddha knows all of the results of actions in terms of body, speech and mind. These can be subsumed in the ten non-virtuous actions. These are sources of suffering and are non-sources of happiness. The abandonment of these would be a source of happiness. These are very practical for us when we are teaching because they can be immediately useful. For example, you might be able to speak to people and influence them to stop killing by getting them to give up hunting or fishing.

The sutra goes through a number of specific actions here; for example, miserliness is a non-source of resources and generosity is a source of resources. Faulty ethics is a non-source for rebirth in the upper realms. Lack of patience is a non-source for beauty. Laziness is a non-source for realizations. Distraction is a non-source for faultless meditation. Faulty wisdom is a non-source for the destruction of the imprints of the afflictions. The five actions of immediate retribution or heinous crimes – killing your father or mother, killing an arhat, drawing blood from a buddha, and creating a schism in the sangha – are non-sources for mental abiding. If your mind is subtle enough you can tell yourself whether an action is a non-virtue by the way it affects your mind. Observing true existence is a non-source of forbearance. There are three occasions of forbearance with regard to emptiness – at the path of preparation, at the path of seeing and at the eighth ground. Abiding in regret is a non-source for mental and physical pliancy. On the other hand, generosity is a source for resources. Effort is a source for realizations. Concentration is a source for faultless meditative stabilization. Wisdom is a source for destroying the imprints of the latencies.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 8 (Tuesday)

3B2B-2B Extensive explanation of [the ten powers]

3B2B-2B1 Explanation of the five powers: the exalted knowledge of sources and non-sources and so forth (CONTINUED)

We are currently going through the qualities of a buddha in terms of an extensive presentation of the ten powers, using primarily Chandrakirti's text and Geshe-la's commentary on it. Last week we looked at the first of the ten powers, the knowledge of sources and non-sources. A source is a cause of a specific type of result and a non-source is that which is not a cause for that result. For example, virtue is a source of happiness, whereas non-virtue is a non-source of happiness. In brief, sources and non-sources are the concordant and discordant classes leading to various results.

2. The power of exalted knowledge of the fruition of actions

This power refers to the ability of a buddha's awareness to encompass all the gross and subtle actions and effects of the three times, and know them directly and individually. In other words, a buddha knows the subtle workings of karma without impediment. In *Lam Rim* we talk about the four modes of karma:

1. karma is definite
2. karma increases
3. the result of actions not done are not experienced
4. actions done are not wasted.

In *Ornament*, we defined virtuous and non-virtuous actions and in those definitions, when it says, "actions which abide in a type..." this is because negative karmic actions can be purified while positive karmic actions can be destroyed by anger and so forth. There are three types of actions – black, white and extinguishing actions. We can eliminate contaminated actions through applying antidotes, which are extinguishing actions. Non-virtues can be removed with contaminated or uncontaminated antidotes. Geshe-la doesn't specify but perhaps when we talk about contaminated antidotes we are talking about things like the application of the four opponent powers or Vajrasattva practice without being conjoined with a direct realization of emptiness.

Results of karma

Both virtuous and non-virtuous actions have fruitional results. For example, Geshe-la commented that when we feel a cool breeze this is the result of a previous virtuous action. When we speak of the four various types of results from karma, taking the example of killing we have the following results:

1. fruitional result, e.g., rebirth in a hell realm
2. result similar to the cause functionally, e.g., the tendency to continue to kill
3. result similar to the cause experientially, e.g., a short life
4. environmental result, e.g., birth in a war-torn place.

Does an uncontaminated cause bring about a fruitional result? An uncontaminated cause would be, for instance, generosity conjoined with a direct realization of emptiness, and there is some controversy in regard to this. Prasangika says that an uncontaminated antidote would have the fruitional result of extinguishing a black action, while *Abhidharmakosha* says that a fruitional cause is necessarily a contaminated virtue or non-virtue.

Perfectly adopted karmas

Next, we look at the sutra quotation in Chandrakirti's text from the *Sutra of the Questions of Arya King Dharanishvara*. Geshe-la said that the term "perfectly adopted karma" includes both vows and non-vows. Vows, which are virtuous, are a source of happiness. Non-vows, which, like vows, involve being perfectly adopted by means of a ritual, are non-virtuous. An example of a non-vow would be something like taking an oath to kill upon joining the military. When our vows degenerate over time we can retake them and enhance them. We can also work on certain actions that we are not presently doing well, such as not getting angry, and we can work on improving them in the future.

3. The power of exalted knowledge of the varieties of dispositions

This is sometimes called the power of knowing the various desires. It can be described as a buddha's awareness that encompasses and knows directly the inferior, middling, and superior desires of all living beings of the three times. In essence this is a buddha's knowledge of the inclinations and interests of individual beings. Chandrakirti says "seeds of attachment" refers to special interests or dispositions. "Desires" refers to aspiring for something that someone wants. In the sutra quotation cited in the *Autocommentary*, p.178, it talks about someone "abiding in attachment who is interested in hatred." Someone could be abiding in virtue and be interested in non-virtue and the obverse. For example, a monk could be interested in stealing or lying. "Whatever persons of small application are interested in extensive attitude..." refers to someone who commits a small act with vast attitude, like feeding a bird with the mind of enlightenment. There is also the case of someone who performs a big action, like reading a dharma text, with only one's own welfare in mind. A tathagata knows who is interested in passing beyond the various realms and he goes on to teach to these beings accordingly.

4. The power of exalted knowledge of the varieties of constituents

This can be described as a buddha's awareness that knows directly all gross and subtle elements. The Tibetan term, *kham*s, can be translated as constituent, element, or realm. *Abhidharmakosha* defines constituent as a type, and there are countless divisions based on the gross and subtle elements. Generally we talk about the eighteen constituents – the six sense powers, objects and consciousnesses. In the text it mentions the emptiness of these three groups as being the emptiness of the internal, external, and both. Constituent can also refer to the elements (earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness). All beings are made up of these six elements. Geshe-la goes through the definitions of these six elements in the context of their being in the continuum of a sentient being. The space element is defined as a cavity, here referring to the cavities in the body such as those in the nose or mouth. The earth element is that which is hard and obstructive. The water element is defined as that which is wet and moistening. The fire element is that which is hot and burning. The wind element is that which is light and moving. The consciousness element is defined as that which thoroughly knows individual objects. There is a different listing of the six elements making up a human body according to tantra.

The desire realm is so-called because the beings of the desire realm make use of objects of desire. Within the desire realm there are six levels, such as the hells, the human realm and so forth, which can in turn be further subdivided, such as the cold hells, hot hells and so forth. Compounded constituents arise in dependence upon their respective causes and conditions. "Worldly abodes" refers to the transitory basis, which includes both the inhabitants and the environment. "Obstructive constituent" means that which obstructs, e.g., a table. There is also an extensive classification of sixty-two constituents that Geshe-la mentions briefly.

May 9 (Wednesday)

5. The power of exalted knowledge of superior and inferior faculties

This power refers to a buddha's awareness of all gross and subtle superior and inferior powers or faculties. "Faculties" is here a translation of the Tibetan, *dbang po*. We can talk about faculties as being superior or inferior. Faith and wisdom are superior faculties because they prevent delusions. On the other hand, Chandrakirti talks about the faculty of conceptualization (Tib. *kun tu rtog pa*), which George translates it as "illusory", as being an inferior faculty because it controls or empowers the afflictions. Next there is a presentation of the twenty-two faculties that are listed in the *Autocommentary*. The first fourteen are inferior faculties (causes of cyclic existence). The remaining eight are supreme faculties (causes of liberation and enlightenment). We can also make a division in terms of sharp, middling and dull faculties, with sharp faculties considered superior and middling and dull faculties considered inferior. It is sometimes said that all Mahayana practitioners are superior; and then they are further subdivided as sharp, middling and dull. Geshe-la mentioned that this is in terms of one's ability to quickly discriminate an object, how quickly one can realize an object, and how well. Some beings, due to past habituation, have a well-developed faculty, e.g., with regard to generosity, therefore the buddha would praise the practice of ethics and so forth to exhort this person to proceed to adopt the remaining perfections. Also, to those with a hearer's disposition the buddhas praise the solitary realizer's vehicle as superior and in this way gradually leads them to the great vehicle.

There are different dispositions, or faculties, such that certain teachings are more or less suitable to individual trainees. A buddha knows the abilities of all sentient beings and teaches them accordingly.

Through having a faculty to see, having an intention to see, and the commission of the action we engage the object and see the form. For example, considering the action of seeing a movie, first there must be the thought or intention wishing to see the movie. Due to that one goes to the cinema and directs one's eyes to the screen. There are also causes and conditions for seeing a film, such as the equipment and the employees of the cinema, as well as the causes for the production of the film such as the director and producer and so forth.

3B2B-2B2 Explaining the five powers: knowing the paths leading everywhere, and so forth

6. The power of exalted knowledge of paths that proceed everywhere

This sixth power is a buddha's awareness that knows directly all correct and incorrect paths. "Paths" means an inner path of action, not an external path. The buddhas know the paths that proceed to both the thoroughly afflicted and the completely pure. For example, an exalted knower conjoined with the uncontrived mind of definite emergence is a path because it leads to enlightenment. Some paths lead to the enlightenment of hearers and solitary realizers and bodhisattvas and others to various migrations in cyclic existence. What does it mean when we say a path of action? Geshe-la cited *Abhidharmakosha* where it says that the seven non-virtuous actions of body and speech are actions that are paths of actions. The latter three mental non-virtues are paths of actions but not actions. A path of action leads to a particular type of rebirth. In *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.276, it says that it "is called a *path* of action because it serves as a path to rebirth in a bad migration". In his teachings on *Ornament*, Geshe-la said that the first seven non-virtues are paths of actions since they are intention, e.g., the non-virtue of killing is the intention to kill. The latter three are not paths of action because they are not intention.

A classification of three types of actions

Chandrakirti cites sutra where it talks about actions classified in three types: (i) definite with respect to the perfect; (ii) not definite with respect to the perfect; and (iii) definite with respect to the perverse. "Definite with respect to the perfect" refers to some trainees who do not require extensive teachings of the Dharma and so forth. Here we are talking about pathways leading to realization. "Indefinite with respect to the perfect" refers to the case of a trainee for whom, upon meeting with a teacher, it is uncertain as to whether he will be led to liberation. "Definite with respect to the perverse" refers to a trainee who is presently or temporarily unsuitable to be taught. Therefore the buddha does not teach such individuals at this point.

Paths of the three poisons

We can also talk about paths with regard to the three poisons – attachment, hatred and confusion. A path of attachment can be produced from coming in contact with an attractive object, through habituation to thinking about an object in the past, and through dormant causes, or previous predispositions. A path of hatred can be produced from anger, from unfulfilled desire, and from past dormancies. A path of confusion can be produced from ignorance, from the view of the transitory collection, and from doubt. Confusion and ignorance are generally synonymous; however, Jamyang Shepa makes a distinction in the case of a knowledge obstruction that can be called a non-afflicted ignorance but is not confusion since it is not an affliction. In conclusion, we can say that there are paths that proceed to the afflicted and completely pure classes of phenomena.

7. The power of exalted knowledge of the thoroughly afflicted and completely pure

This power refers to a buddha's awareness that knows directly all mundane and supramundane concentrations. Different yogins attain a variety of meditative stabilizations and a buddha knows all of these without any hindrance. Geshe-la began by talking about the four concentrations, the formless absorptions and the eight complete liberations, which are listed by Geshe-la (see also *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.207, for a discussion of these eight). Calm abiding is meditative stabilization characterized by single-pointedness with regard to a virtuous object. The nine serial absorptions are a form of mental gymnastics for yogins. By absorption of cessation we mean a cessation of gross feelings and discriminations. These two mental factors of feeling and discrimination are singled out and included amongst the aggregates because of they are what mainly produce conceptions and afflictions. Feelings are said to be most problematic for lay people and

discrimination for ordained. The causes of the thoroughly afflicted are ignorance and improper mental attention. Due to improper mental attention, one superimposes an exaggerated attractiveness on an object and then, due to ignorance, attachment is generated. The cause of this is ignorance that sees the object as truly existent. Meditating on repulsiveness helps one to overcome this. Beauty and ugliness do exist as conventionalities in the world. The main cause of cyclic existence is said to be ignorance, which is abandoned through the realization of selflessness.

May 10 (Thursday)

Yesterday we began the discussion of the seventh of the ten powers. In the sutra section we discussed the cause of the thoroughly afflicted being an improper mental attention, which in conjunction with ignorance, causes one to generate the afflictions, such as attachment. Nonetheless, as we've discussed on many previous occasions, the root of cyclic existence is ignorance.

The meaning of dormancy

In discussing the causes and conditions of the thoroughly afflicted, the sutra quote says that afflictions arise from predispositions, or what Geshe-la calls the “dormant afflictions”. What does dormant mean? As you may recall from our *Ornament* studies, Jedzün Chogyi Gyeltshen accepts a non-manifest consciousness while Panchen Sonam Drakpa does not. This can be seen in terms of the six perfections, where we say that the intention to give, for example, is conjoined with mind generation. In that case, those two consciousnesses are *explicitly* conjoined because they are both manifest. However on the uninterrupted path of seeing, wisdom is manifest while mind generation is non-manifest, and that is an example of a dormant consciousness. A manifest consciousness determines its object while a non-manifest consciousness does not. Also in *Ornament*, we studied that mind generation has two aspirations, and there we said that this is a case of giving the name of the cause to that resultant consciousness. Recall that there is a causal aspiration of enacting others' welfare and there is also a concomitant aspiration of becoming enlightened. Technically mind generation is not an aspiration since it is actually a main mind and aspiration is only a mental factor. A dormant consciousness is a non-manifest consciousness. It is not a seed of a consciousness since a seed is not a consciousnesses but a potency able to generate a later consciousness. Perhaps, a dormant consciousness could be thought of as a subliminal or sub-consciousness.

The causes and conditions of the completely pure

The sutra passage says that the causes of the completely pure class are twofold, with the first being “terms concordant with other,” which Geshe-la explained as the fact that there is a correspondence between the term “pot” and the object that it refers to. The second cause for the completely pure is appropriate individual specific attention, which means that upon hearing a term, one reflects upon it in its proper meaning. The conditions for the completely pure class are skill in both calm abiding and special insight. So these have a lot to do with developing wisdom through the three activities of hearing, reflecting and meditating.

Also in the section discussing the completely pure class of phenomena, the sutra mentions the five branches of the first concentration. There are three divisions of these branches – antidotal, benefit, and basis – and they include respectively, investigation and analysis, joy and bliss, and meditative stabilization. We examined these five and the branches for the remaining concentrations that occur in the movement through the four concentrations in our *Ornament* studies. The sutra quote also talks about “risen from cessation” which Geshe-la said refers to the alternation of the absorption of cessation with the four concentrations and the four formless absorptions. The sutra passage also mentions the eight complete liberations, saying that they are absorbed in both the forward and reverse order. In commenting on the last part of the sutra quote, Geshe-la said that the Buddha's instructions or teachings can be summarized into two types: exhortations and subsequent teachings.

8. The power of exalted knowledge mindful of former states

This power is in terms of the past. This particular power is connected with remembrance of past lives. Buddhas know where every being has been reborn in past lives, including the particular place and circumstances of each rebirth, as well as the karmic causes that acted to bring about that rebirth. Chandrakirti

says in verse 12.29 that sentient beings are “abiding in cyclic existence as long as bewilderment has existed.” In commenting on this, Geshe-la said that so as long as there is confusion, there will be cyclic existence. Since we have had confusion throughout beginningless time we have taken rebirth in cyclic existence due to that confusion or ignorance.

A metaphor to explain the process of the twelve links of dependent-arising

In explaining this idea, Geshe-la used the metaphor of farming peas to demonstrate the twelve links. Ignorance is likened to the farmer, and the karmic formations are the pea seeds that are planted in the field of consciousness. The eighth link, craving, is similar to water and manure, while the ninth, grasping, is likened to warmth. It is due to the force of these that the seed becomes ready to give rise to a sprout, similar to the way that the tenth link of existence is actualized. The husk of the seed begins to peel off, exposing the developing sprout, which is like the fourth link, name and form, and as it develops as a vine, it is like the six sense spheres, the fifth link. The flowering of the vine is likened to the sixth link, that of contact, while the peas themselves developing are likened to the seventh, feeling. The last two links are seen in the production of the plant, which is like birth, and the growth and withering of the plant and its eventual being cut down are like aging and death. In explaining the destruction of cyclic existence by wisdom, Geshe-la also gives another analogy. He says that the wisdom realizing selflessness is able to remove cyclic existence and its causes, just as a fire in the forest destroys the grasses, trees, and all the growth in the forest entirely.

Regarding the fortunate and the unfortunate

Geshe-la also spoke about the fortunate and unfortunate, and how we often speak about these in relation to their merit. Geshe-la said that a fortunate being is one who has created merit in the past while an unfortunate being is one who has not. We can talk about people in that way, for example, saying that if you want to know what you’ve done in the past, look at your body; if you want to know what you will be in the future, look at your mind. If you want things to go well in the future, then you must create the merit for that. That is the way that you can be a fortunate person in the next life.

The observation of true existence is the cause of rebirth

In speaking about the extent of this eighth power, the sutra quote says the Tathagata knows that “After the mind having observation of something, the mind having observation of something [else] was produced.” Geshe-la said this refers to the mind observing true existence, and due to this one circles in cyclic existence. By freeing oneself from this and overcoming the conception of true existence, one ceases the beginningless process of being reborn in cyclic existence. The Tathagatas themselves remember the past rebirths of all sentient beings, and they go on to remind sentient beings of what they have done so that they can reverse their behavior.

In his brief commentary on this section, Lama Tsongkhapa says that the buddhas are mindful of three things: (1) a basis, namely the karmic cause for that rebirth, (2) the aspect of that rebirth, that is, the circumstances of that rebirth such as shape and color of the body, and (3) the place, which is the location of the rebirth.

9. The power of exalted knowledge of death and rebirth

In the eighth power we talked about this knowledge in terms of past lives while here the knowledge is spoken of in terms of the situation of one’s death in their present life, as well as where, when, and so forth we will be reborn in the future. In verse 12.30, Chandrakirti says that the buddhas know exactly where every sentient being will die, when they will die, where they will be reborn, the circumstances of that rebirth, and so forth. This is due to the fact that they possess the divine eye. Further, not only does a buddha know the rebirth of the sentient beings but also knows the evolution of the world systems. In this evolution there are four types of eons, as Geshe-la pointed out: the eon of formation, the eon of abidance, the eon of destruction, and an empty eon (Hopkins calls this an eon of “vacuity”).

10. The power of exalted knowledge of the extinction of contaminations

This power refers to the fact that for a buddha, the contaminations have been fully extinguished. The contaminations consist of that which causes us to fall into cyclic existence (ignorance, attachment and so forth of the three realms), along with the latencies of those afflictions. Geshe-la defined affliction as a mental

factor that renders the mind unpacified and unruly. Foe destroyers have abandoned all the afflictions but not the latencies of the afflictions. Chandrakirti mentions by way of analogy that the afflictions are like sesame oil that can be removed from a container, or flowers that are removed from a woolen cloth. We can remove those things but there still remains the trace of them that is left behind. In the past we said that, due to these latencies, foe destroyers engage in behaviors such as jumping around like monkeys, cursing others, and so forth, and we called these “negative reflex actions”. In a sense these behaviors are like symptoms of having the latencies, since the foe destroyers have in fact removed the afflictions. Geshe-la said that sentient beings have three types of latencies – latencies of actions or karma, latencies of afflictions, and latencies of faulty behavior, and perhaps these various types of behavior are the last category.

Examining the knowledge obstructions

The latencies of afflictions are of two types: those that are seeds, meaning that they are the potential from a previous affliction that can give rise to a subsequent affliction, and those that are not seeds, meaning that they do not give rise to subsequent afflictions. For Prasangika, the first of these, those that are seeds, are afflictive obstructions and the second are knowledge obstructions. Within the knowledge obstructions, there are both manifest and seeds. The definition for them (as well as for the other divisions of afflictive and knowledge obstructions) was presented earlier in our *Middle Way* studies (see handout of February 21, 2000). According to Jedzumba, the definition of a seed of a knowledge obstruction is: that abiding in a type of obstruction occurring in the continuum of a learner superior who has abandoned all conceptions of true existence without exception which arises through the depositing of an uncommon imprint by the conception of true existence which is its cause and is the substantial cause for mistaken dualistic appearance which is its result. From this definition, it seems that the latency of attachment, for example, is a knowledge obstruction but it doesn't give rise to dualistic appearance. Only the latencies of the conception of true existence cause mistaken dualistic appearance, at least according to Jedzumba's definition.

May 11 (Friday)

The Supplement on the knowledge obstructions

Each of the three vehicles has their own enlightenment and their own contaminations that they extinguish and for the bodhisattva, it is the knowledge obstructions, that which hinders the attainment of omniscience, the direct knowledge of all phenomena. Essentially here when we talk about the knowledge obstructions, we are referring to the latencies of the conception of true existence but also among the knowledge obstructions are the latencies of all the afflictions as well as what are called the negative reflex actions. In *A Dose of Emptiness*, p.249, there is another translation of an earlier section of the *Supplement* that explains this:

The latent potentialities of ignorance are what block one's cutting through to phenomena. The existence of the latent potentialities of the likes of attachment and so forth are also the cause of such things as engaging in [actions with] the body and speech. These latent potentialities of ignorance, of attachment and so on are also exclusively what prevent omniscience and buddhahood. There is nothing else [that does so].

***A Dose of Emptiness* on the knowledge obstructions**

Khedrup Je's commentary to that passage is as follows:

In this [citation], “the latent potentialities of ignorance” refers to the latent potentialities of the apprehension of true existence, and the words “block one's cutting through to phenomena” are teaching the definition of an obscuration to omniscience. The words “engaging in [actions with] the body and speech” refer to the negative reflex actions of body and speech, like “hopping around like a monkey” and “calling someone a stupid woman. The word “also” expresses that not only are the latent potentialities of attachment and so on that which blocks cutting through to phenomena, they are also the cause of the negative reflex actions of body and speech. Hence, it is demonstrating that those latent potentialities are the obscurations to omniscience.

So from this commentary, it seems that all of these factors prevent one from attaining omniscience.

“The main knowledge obstructions must be the latencies of mistaken dualistic appearance”

To return to the commentary, as we mentioned yesterday, there are two types of latencies of afflictions, those which are a seed giving rise to subsequent afflictions, and those which are knowledge obstructions and do not

give rise to afflictions. We also said that the latencies that are knowledge obstructions are of two types, those that are manifest, and those that are a seed. Lama Tsongkhapa in his rather extensive commentary on this tenth power says, “Since in this system the conception of a self of phenomena is asserted to be an affliction, the main knowledge obstructions must be the latencies of mistaken dualistic appearance.” Since latency here has both the connotation of residue but also that of being a cause that will bring about a future result, it’s hard to say which of these two meanings is appropriate in this context. Perhaps “latencies of mistaken dualistic appearance” here refers to the second, so these would be latencies which give rise to or act as a cause for mistaken dualistic appearance. This interpretation would be consistent with what is presented in *A Dose of Emptiness* (p.253), where Khedrup Je’s definition of the seed of a knowledge obstruction includes “being a latent potentiality that is the material cause [giving rise] to the error of dualistic appearance as its effect.” So it seems that Lama Tsongkhapa is saying that the main knowledge obstructions are the seeds that generate the mistaken dualistic appearances, which are themselves manifest knowledge obstructions.

The four great rivers

At the end of this section, Chandrakirti in the *Autocommentary* says that the buddhas remain single-pointedly in meditative equipoise on emptiness and remain indistinguishable from the truth body. Nonetheless, the buddhas are “the protectors of all protectorless migrators who have entered into the four great rivers.” These are also called the four great currents and Chandrakirti says they are called desire, becoming, view, and ignorance. As Geshe-la points out in his commentary, Lama Tsongkhapa refers to these four currents in his “Three Principal Aspects of the Path.” These four currents are presented here from the point of view of cause although they can be interpreted in terms of result too, as Pabongka Rinpoche points out in his commentary on Lama Tsongkhapa’s text:

From one viewpoint, while they are acting as causes, these four are the torrent of desire, the torrent of views, the torrent of the ripe force of deeds, and the torrent of ignorance. Later, when they serve as results, they are the four torrents of birth, and aging, and illness, and death. (from *The Principal Teachings of Buddhism*, p.96)

A buddha knows all phenomena of the three times

A buddha knows all phenomena so this tenth power, the removal of the obscuration to knowing all phenomena directly, and with direct perception there is the arising of all the aspects of all objects. So this means that the buddhas know all phenomena of the three times, past present and future. Geshe-la used the example of a buddha directly knowing the phenomena of the present time (which was 11:30 AM at that time), but also knows the phenomena at 9:00 AM or 10:00 AM earlier that day, as well as the phenomena at 1:00 PM later that day. So how does a buddha know at 11:30 AM what exists at 1:00 PM when it yet to come into existence? It is not easy to understand these things and yet accept that the future is not fixed or determined already.

3B2B-2C The way in which all the qualities cannot be expressed

The inability to express all the qualities of a buddha

So here, Chandrakirti is saying that all of these qualities, that the buddha is able to display all his activities in a single hair pore, that he has all the signs and exemplifications, that he possesses the ten powers, and so forth, cannot be expressed. Even if the buddhas themselves were able to enumerate them very quickly they would not be able to exhaust the list. In verse 12.32, Chandrakirti says that bodhisattvas would exhaust their own strength before completing the list, just like a bird that must return from its flight, not because of a lack of space but because it has exhausted its ability to fly. In verse 12.33, Chandrakirti modestly says that he only expounds these qualities because Arya Nagarjuna did so. Geshe-la mentioned the four types of qualities of a buddha – qualities of a buddha’s body, speech, mind and enlightened activities – and gave examples of each of them.

3B2B-2D Presenting the benefits of understanding the two qualities

Condensing the qualities into the two, the profound and the vast

However, although the qualities are infinite, Chandrakirti says in verse 12.34 that they can be condensed into the qualities of the profound and qualities of the vast. In commenting on this, Geshe-la referred to Maitreya’s

Sublime Continuum, which gives the eight qualities of a buddha-jewel, which can be condensed into the last two, the quality of one's own welfare and the quality of others' welfare. Those that fulfill one's own welfare are related to the profound, emptiness, i.e., the truth body, which is the emptiness of an omniscient mind, and the emptiness of the bases and paths. It is through these that the buddha's own welfare is achieved, so the three qualities that are related to the seventh quality, one's own welfare, are all given in terms of the truth body: (1) that it is not compounded, (2) that it spontaneously accomplishes all, and (3) that it is inexpressible. Those that fulfill others' welfare are the qualities of the vast, and are exemplified by the qualities of the eleven grounds, the powers, and so forth. The three qualities of (1) exalted knowledge, (2) mercy, and (3) ability fulfill others' welfare, the eighth quality of a buddha-jewel. By the way, when we talk about refuge in *lam rim*, often it is said that the buddhas also have the quality of equanimity; however that quality is not included by Maitreya in that text. To exemplify the last of those three qualities, that of ability, Geshe-la used the example of a mother who does not have arms, and so lacks the capacity to save her drowning child. This is an important factor to consider since, without ability, we are very much like the blind leading the blind.

Lama Tsongkhapa says that these two qualities are achieved by realizing the profound, emptiness and so forth, and by realizing the vast, the various qualities of the eleven grounds. Through understanding them well, one is able to bring about these two qualities. In other words, by realizing the profound we complete the collection of wisdom and by realizing the vast, we complete the collection of merit.

END

Review Class with Jampa Gendun

May 14 (Monday)

3B2B-2D Presenting the benefits of understanding the two qualities (CONTINUED)

Last week we nearly finished this section. In conclusion, we must complete the two collections of the profound and vast, wisdom and method. These two serve as the principal causes for the truth body and form body of a buddha respectively, which serve as the basis acting for our own and for others' welfare.

3B2C Indicating the emanation body

Lama Tsongkhapa explains that the emanation body "arises in whatever way is suitable for the aims of ordinary beings." A truth body fulfills one's own welfare and a form body fulfills others' welfare. A buddha, although having passed beyond, emanates bodies within the world such as artisans, creation, and supreme emanation bodies. In verse 12.35 though, it is the supreme emanation body that is being discussed. Such an emanation body appears for "others", and Geshe-la says that "others" refers in this context to humans and gods, the beings of the happy migrations.

The twelve deeds of a supreme emanation body

A supreme emanation body displays the twelve deeds:

- (i) descending from Tushita
- (ii) entering the mother's womb
- (iii) taking birth
- (iv) becoming skilled in the arts, e.g., martial arts
- (v) sporting with the retinue, abiding with his wife
- (vi) taking the roads of spiritual seeker, having renounced family life
- (vii) undergoing difficult ascetic practices (such practices are not the means to attain enlightenment)
- (viii) proceeding to the tree of purified growth, i.e. the bodhi tree
- (ix) overcoming all the demonic forces (we need obstacles to overcome in our practice)
- (x) manifesting the highest state of purified growth or enlightenment
- (xi) teaching the dharma
- (xii) demonstrating the final release into non-abiding nirvana (paranirvana).

Emanating for the sake of those "bound by many nooses of hope"

In the last stanza of verse 12.35 it talks about "all the world" that is "bound by the many nooses of hope." For us, hoping is problematic because we are generally hoping that things are going to get better all by themselves. In this respect, if we are only hoping, we are not serious about facing the present moment and trying to change our minds and, thereby, our lives. The only thing that really changes is what we are currently hoping for. To such beings who are bound by their wishes and craving, a buddha descends spontaneously as an emanation to lead them to nirvana. Therefore, a buddha's speech, turning the wheel of dharma, is the most important of the buddha deeds and is most important to ourselves in terms of his three qualities of body, speech, and mind. In terms of schools of tenets, the first wheel was turned for the Hinayana, the second for uncommon Mahayana (Svatantrika and Prasangika), and the third for the common Mahayana (Chittamatra).

3B2D Proving there is a single vehicle

The presentations of one and three final vehicles

There is only one final vehicle, although the Buddha taught three vehicles as skillful means for disciples with various dispositions. Some schools accept three vehicles. Hinayanists do assert a bodhisattva vehicle but hold that Shakyamuni is the only person who will travel on this vehicle in this eon. In *Meditation on Emptiness*, p.392, Hopkins talks about the lower schools' assertions:

The Vaibhashikas, Sautrantikas, and Chittamatrins who follow Asanga [i.e., True Aspectarians] accept that there are three [final] vehicles or, in other words, that there are some beings who never attain the highest achievement because, after completing their lower vehicle, they do not pass on to the higher. Specifically, it means that there are some sentient beings who never attain Buddhahood.

Vaibhashika and Sautrantika say that a foe destroyer who has abandoned the afflictive obstructions still has contaminated aggregates. There is still some residue of the contaminations. Then, when the foe destroyer is separated from these aggregates at the time of death the continuum of the being ceases. Prasangika replies that in such a case, there would be no attainer of nirvana. Chittamatrins following Asanga assert that hearers, upon attaining the state of foe destroyer, do not enter the Mahayana but upon death enter into a remainderless nirvana in a state of perpetual meditative absorption. Prasangika would say that a buddha breaks through this meditative absorption and awakens the disciple, imploring him to enter the Mahayana vehicle. The Buddha does present three vehicles, but the hearer and solitary realizer vehicles are temporary since all sentient beings are destined to become perfect buddhas. Thus the teachings on three final vehicles require interpretation and are not literal teachings.

The four types of ulterior intentions and the four types of intentions

In discussing this section, Geshe-la commented on four types of ulterior motives, or intentions. Buddha always tailored his teachings for the individual dispositions of trainees. Lama Yeshe used to say that the truths taught by the Buddha need to be checked out against our own experience in order that it become truth for us. The first ulterior motive is that regarding engaging. For example, Buddha taught that there is a real substantial person and what they carry is the aggregates. This was taught for non-Buddhists to get them to engage in Buddhist teachings. The second is an ulterior intention regarding characteristics or natures. For example, the teaching on other-powered phenomena and thoroughly established phenomena being established by way of their own character and imputational factors not being established by way of their own character was taught in order to guide Chittamatrins. The third ulterior intention concerns antidotes. Here Geshe-la told the story about the prince who gained the throne by throwing his father in prison, where he died. The prince was filled with remorse and in order to get through to him the Buddha told him, “Father and mother are to be killed.” This helped to bring the prince out of his depression, whereupon he began to look more closely at what the Buddha meant. He realized that the Buddha intended these words to be interpreted that one should kill the father-like afflictions and mother-like actions. Finally, the fourth ulterior motive is that regarding transformation, which Geshe-la didn’t go into beyond saying that “by means of false letters or words, a true meaning is conveyed”. Geshe-la also said there are four types of intention, which are listed in the transcripts (Week 43, p.27). One example of the intention of equality would be when the Buddha said that at one time he was born as Buddha Vibhashumi, which means that all buddhas are equal. So we can say that the Buddha did teach three final vehicles but that this had an intention and does not represent his final thought on the topic.

Establishing only one final vehicle by means of reasoning

A vehicle is something that carries a load. It is also a path – a certain type of consciousness. These paths can be explained in terms of the lesser or greater vehicle. That which can bear only the burden of one’s own welfare is the lesser vehicle. That which can bear the welfare of others is the great vehicle. The three vehicles were taught for those with different dispositions. That there is only one final vehicle is established by reasoning in verse 12.36. Lama Tsongkhapa sets out the three reasons Chandrakirti uses:

- (i) *Apart from the wisdom realizing emptiness, there is no direct antidote that can remove the stains of the two obstructions.* All beings must realize emptiness to attain either liberation or enlightenment. To remove both obstructions however, according to Prasangika the wisdom of the lower vehicles is insufficient because it is not connected with special method. Also, hearers and solitary realizers do not cultivate a complete meditation on the selflessness of phenomena.
- (ii) *Phenomena do not depend upon different types of emptiness because there are not different types of emptiness.* Only the bases of those emptinesses are different and those can be changed. Also, there is no inherent distinction between the dispositions of different people. There is no intrinsic nature of being a hearer, for example. The mind lacks any intrinsic qualities. The emptiness of the mind is the same for all persons.
- (iii) *There are not different wisdoms that realize emptiness.*

The time of the five degenerations

Why did Buddha teach three final vehicles? In verse 12.37 Chandrakirti answers that it is because we are living in the time of the five degenerations, or dregs (listed in Geshe-la’s Commentary, Week 43, p.29). The degenerations are like the sediment that is left at the bottom of a cup of tea and, like this, the present age

retains only residues of the qualities of the great golden age of the distant past. These degenerations hinder beings from entering the Mahayana. It is said that one year of practice is more valuable in these degenerate times because the conditions are not ideal for us. Buddha had to deal with various mentalities of sentient beings. In this context the metaphor of the ship's captain who emanates an island stopover for his merchant passengers to relax during an arduous journey en route to a jewel island is quoted from the *Sutra of the Exalted White Lotus of the Holy Dharma*. Buddha teaches sentient beings in a manner that makes the journey palatable so that those who may be disheartened by the thought of the longer journey will not turn back. In this way, the Hinayana teachings teach those beings to set their sights on some intermediate goal en route to the final goal of buddhahood.

May 15 (Tuesday)

The Buddha taught uniquely to those with different dispositions

According to Prasangika, all sentient beings will eventually enter the Mahayana and become complete buddhas. As we mentioned yesterday, the Buddha taught three vehicles and there are some schools, namely the two lower schools and True Aspectarian Chittamatrins, who assert that these three are all final vehicles. The True Aspectarians assert a Hinayana foe destroyer who takes a mental body and remains in absorption. However, Prasangika and the other schools say that eventually a buddha will cut through this absorption and exhort the trainee to move onward and enter the Mahayana path. The *Lotus Sutra* talks about the three final vehicles as being interpretable and then describes the Buddha standing outside of three burning houses, within which are three children who are unaware of their situation. Using three different carts, each designed specifically for each of the three children in the blazing houses, he is able to encourage them to come out and use them. The Buddha's genius is not in having one truth, but in having the ability to teach to so many different dispositions. Trainees of lower dispositions are obstructed by having obstacles such as self-cherishing. For this trainee the predominance of one's thinking is in terms of one's own welfare. Being too wrapped up in himself, such a person might not be ready for the Mahayana since his perspective is too narrow. It is difficult to have a mind that is expansive enough to take into account the vast amount of merit that needs to be collected over three countless great eons in order to complete the Mahayana path.

3B2E Explaining the time of manifest enlightenment and abiding

3B2E-1 Explaining in terms of the time of manifest enlightenment

In this section we are talking about the supreme emanation body with the signs and marks. As we mentioned earlier, typically this body displays the twelve deeds, such as being born and passing beyond sorrow. In verse 12.39 it says that the buddhas do indeed exhibit rebirth and paranirvana, but in fact they have manifested enlightenment for a great length of time, specifically for as many eons as there are particles in the buddha pure lands. Chandrakirti says that this is not to be openly declared because it can be disheartening for those with little merit. A buddha displays supreme emanation bodies simultaneously in billions of world systems and those with little merit find this unbelievable. So, in fact, Shakyamuni didn't initially achieve enlightenment at the time of sitting under the tree in Bodhgaya but was displaying that deed. Geshe-la says that the amount of emanation bodies is billions at any one time.

Refuting that there is a single truth body

At this point, Lama Tsongkhapa criticizes an assertion made by Jayananda that there is a single truth body. When we talk about the human body we can say there are six billion distinct humans on this planet right now. We do not say there is one human body. Similarly, countless individuals will attain a truth body, but there is not a single truth body. The idea of a single cosmic consciousness is a popular notion seen today in some other spiritual systems. Lama Tsongkhapa flings two consequences that follow from this assertion of single truth body. First, if buddhahood (the truth body) has already been attained by someone in the past, then no one subsequent to that would be able to achieve it since there is only one. Secondly, if buddhahood (the truth body) has been attained in the past by someone, then all subsequent persons attaining buddhahood would have already attained buddhahood at the same time as this other person previously did. It seems that we are talking about the nature truth body here, which is permanent, so it's possible that these assertions are being made by someone who accepts only three buddha bodies by excluding the wisdom truth body. Therefore, it cannot be added to in the manner of people joining into it as a single entity at different times.

To summarize, there are two consequences that follow from there being one truth body. If there is only one truth body, then all subsequent sentient beings would not be able to achieve it since it has already been achieved by someone else, or, on the other hand, beings would have already attained it since that one truth body already exists and, therefore, must have already been achieved.

3B2E-2 Explanation from the point of view of the time of remaining

“As long as space endures, and as long as sentient beings remain...”

Buddhas will remain as long as there are sentient beings who have not attained supreme peace and as long as space has not been thoroughly destroyed. A buddha does not abide in solitary peace but due to his love for his family he remains in cyclic existence. Such love of a buddha is far greater than that which a mother has for her only son who has eaten poison. Similar to a mother who does not think about herself when faced with her child's suffering, a buddha's compassion overcomes his attraction to solitary peace. Recall that the two causes of refuge are taught to be fear and faith. This means that we need to have constructive anxiety, along with the confidence that the objects of refuge can lead us out of cyclic existence. However, a bodhisattva goes for refuge out of great compassion and out of fear of falling into a solitary peace, being absorbed in his own welfare.

In verse 12.42, Chandrakirti says “Because the unskilled have awareness's that adhere to things and non-things, suffering is produced...” In other words, sentient beings are unskillful because they cling to true existence and because of this, they suffer all of the pains of cyclic existence. There are two types of ignorance: (i) ignorance regarding cause and effect, and (ii) ignorance regarding reality. Ignorance with regard to the reality that is suchness keeps us circling in cyclic existence. Those who understand cause and effect will create the causes for good rebirth. Those with ignorance in this regard will suffer in unhappy migrations.

Later in that verse, Chandrakirti says that, since the world becomes an object of the great compassion of the buddhas, “your minds, bhagavans, out of compassion turn away from peace, whereby you do not possess nirvana.” A buddha does abide in nirvana but not in one of solitary peace. A buddha does not abide in samsara (with suffering aggregates) but rather abides in the place of samsara, with the aim of helping sentient beings until cyclic existence is emptied of sentient beings. It is said that there will be an end to individual cyclic existences of sentient beings but not to cyclic existence in general.

May 16 (Wednesday)

3C The way in which the treatise was composed

We now begin the conclusion of the text. Chandrakirti discusses the way that the *Supplement* was composed, describing himself as a fully ordained monk who drew what he has presented from Nagarjuna's *Fundamental Wisdom*. Here Chandrakirti says that in addition to that text, he also used the Buddha's scriptures, meaning the definitive sutras (the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*) as well as the teachings he received from Nagarjuna, although historians say it is not clear that Chandrakirti and Nagarjuna coexisted.

Regarding the translation of the term 'jug pa

Geshe-la this morning mentioned the translation of the Tibetan term 'jug pa, which has various translations. Traditionally this text has been translated as “*Entering into*” or “*Entrance to*” the *Middle Way*, but Hopkins interprets 'jug pa as “*Supplement*” to the *Middle Way*, which Geshe-la said today is actually quite correct. This is so because Chandrakirti supplemented *Fundamental Wisdom*, which presents the profound, by adding material on the vast. However both translations of this term have their merit so perhaps this only indicates the insufficiency of a single English term to convey this dual meaning.

What either Sautrantika or Vaibhashika posit as conventional truth is not Prasangika's ultimate truth

In verse 13.2, Chandrakirti says that this text presents the uncommon tenet system that is particular to Prasangika. He says there are those scholars who assert that what either Vaibhashika or Sautrantika posit as ultimate truth is taken to be conventional truth by Prasangika. For Sautrantika, ultimate truth is that which is ultimately able to perform a function, while for Vaibhashika, ultimate truth is that which, if it is broken or

mentally separated into parts, the consciousness apprehending that object does not cease. Chandrakirti says that such assertions are not correct. Someone who believes such a position hasn't understood the reality or suchness presented by Prasangika. Further, not only are these not conventional truths for Prasangika, they are not even existents. As we saw earlier in our *Middle Way* studies, there are basically eight uncommon tenets and these are uncommon not just to the lower tenet systems but even to the other division of Madhyamika, the Svatantrikas. Specifically, Prasangika is asserting a unique position with regard to emptiness and those who have not understood this emptiness as Prasangika presents and as set out by Nagarjuna, have abandoned this supramundane dharma.

A further exploration of ultimate truth in Vaibhashika

To examine the Vaibhashika view of ultimate truth in more detail, form is an example of ultimate truth in Vaibhashika because if you physically or mentally separate form, you still apprehend form. There is a valid cognition of form that exists both before and after form is physically or mentally separated. If we take the example of feeling, similarly when it is mentally separated, the mind observing it is still observing feeling. Another common example is uncompounded space. However, although form, feeling and uncompounded space *do* exist for Prasangika, because they are not ultimately or inherently existent as Vaibhashika propounds, it is said here that they do not exist as conventional truth for Prasangika. As Geshe-la says, the ultimate truth as asserted by these two schools do not exist conventionally since they are not the objects of valid cognizers for Prasangika. It is said that some schools would hold that emptiness ultimately exists because when you analyze it, you do find emptiness, and this way of thinking is similar to what Vaibhashika is saying.

Moving away from solid ground into the vast ocean of Nagarjuna's wisdom

If you held to a position of Chittamatra and that was what Buddhism was for you, and someone came along and told you that things do not inherently exist, it would be quite difficult to fathom that. Someone who had integrated another position would actually be frightened by the mere words and so would distance himself or herself from it, and this is brought out in verse 13.3. These people are afraid of the vast ocean of Nagarjuna's wisdom. When someone says that nothing inherently exists, you have nothing to cling to. Someone on a riverbank represents a naïve realist; within that view they are standing on the solid ground of the shore. And being on that solid ground would be just fine – if you were able to achieve your goal within that view, but you cannot do that. However, with even just the Vaibhashika view, one begins to question the nature of the I, the self, and begins to step off the bank into the water of suchness, the way things actually are. After getting your feet wet, you go further in the views of the various Buddhist schools but eventually feel the need to hold onto the log of inherent existence, the last bit of wrong view that even a Svatantrika-Madhyamika would hold to. If we really understood the implication of the lack of inherent existence, we would probably feel great fear as Lama Zopa Rinpoche has said in prior teachings. Eventually though we must let go of the last log and trust that we will not sink since there is nothing to fear in the first place. Although that fear does exist, it is irrational.

The water of the *Supplement* opens the kumuda flower of Nagarjuna's text

So Nagarjuna's vast mind or intellect is unimaginable or unfathomable. Lama Zopa Rinpoche's mind too appears that way. As Rinpoche said in recent teachings, when we do our deity yoga practices, it makes no sense unless you do that practice with the deity as inseparable from your guru. We must try to fit our mind into where the minds of such Holy Beings are. But here in Chandrakirti's text, it speaks of beings who are frightened from such a vast mind and so develop fear of Nagarjuna's system. Chandrakirti likens his *Supplement* to water that cultivates a kumuda flower. Although the flower is unopened presently, through the water of the text, it unfolds as one is drawn nearer into the teachings of Nagarjuna, the *Fundamental Wisdom*. So through the *Supplement*, the minds of sentient beings become open to other possibilities, and thus Chandrakirti's hopes are completely fulfilled.

Question regarding masters who propounded tenets contrary to Prasangika

Someone asks, well what about the great masters of the past, such as Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Asanga, and so forth, who set out texts propounding Mind Only and other tenets. Were those masters frightened of this view as well? Did they understand emptiness as Prasangika presents it? Both Chandrakirti and Lama Tsongkhapa reserve their judgment. It is true that we can look at the texts of Asanga and others and we can interpret them

as expounding Chittamatra or Sautrantika positions. Even though we can do that, we don't really know their minds. If one were to criticize these great masters, one would only degenerate one's own realizations so it is best not to judge them.

Question regarding who realizes the profound emptiness

Another question arises, asking who is it that realizes this emptiness, the profound meaning? Even looking at our own studies here over the past 15 months or so, although maybe we haven't all realized emptiness, we certainly have developed a greater understanding. Even mundane paths of meditation can separate practitioners from the afflictions but if they don't have an affinity for the emptiness that is presented here, although they were to receive extensive teachings on it, they would not understand them. They simply wouldn't be able to comprehend them. So why this is relevant to ourselves is that, even though such practitioners can indeed have great accomplishments, they do not have the familiarization or latencies from receiving teachings on emptiness in previous lives. That familiarization is the cause for understanding emptiness so even though we may be ordinary people in terms of understanding or realization, we can rejoice in our efforts to familiarize ourselves with and understand this profound view. We can be confident that in the future we will be able to hear such teachings again and, since this familiarization is the cause for realizing emptiness, we will eventually do that. As Chandrakirti admonishes, we should not take delight in contrived or fabricated versions of reality but rather take great interest in the way that things actually exist, the way that Prasangika presents the suchness or reality of all phenomena.

In this section, it's not exactly clear what type of latencies or familiarization is required, since there are two possibilities: the aspiration to realize emptiness or the understanding of emptiness. The text seems to indicate the familiarity with the aspiration to realize emptiness but it doesn't seem that it would be possible to realize it in a present lifetime without both. It's not clear if the text is actually saying that it would only require the latencies for the aspiration to realize emptiness. Perhaps we need to better understand what Chandrakirti means by this aspiration.

3D Dedicating the virtue of having composed the treatise

Chandrakirti compares his mind to a blue-black sky of delusion, within which there appears a brilliant constellation of Nagarjuna's system. He also likens his mind to the poisonous snake of the afflictions, but upon the hood of that very snake is the jewel that is the Buddha's perfect teachings on emptiness. So Chandrakirti is saying that even though he is like this, he dedicates this text so that all beings in all worlds may quickly realize emptiness and progress quickly to the buddha ground.

4 The meaning of the conclusion

In summary, the *Supplement* has clarified both the vast, which are the ten causal grounds and the resultant ground, and the profound, which is emptiness. Chandrakirti is said to have extracted milk from the drawing of a cow in order that others might overcome their adherence to true existence. May our study of this profound text yield the milk of wisdom to nourish all sentient beings!

SARVA MANGALAM