
Study Group - “Buddhist Tenets”

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Please establish a virtuous motivation for listening to the teaching.

We have reached the tenets of the Svatantrika Madhyamika, and we stopped last time at the fifth point, which is object possessors.

7.5 Method of Asserting Object Possessors

Here mental consciousness is given as an example for person. Bhavaviveka asserted that mental consciousness is an example for person. The reason he gave is that wherever there is a person there is a mental consciousness, and whenever we look for the person we find a mental consciousness. Also, mental consciousness is that which goes from life to life, and therefore I (Bhavaviveka) am labelling the mental consciousness as person.

Here a collection of six consciousnesses is posited, not a collection of eight consciousnesses as earlier. The explanation is similar to what we had before: a collection of six consciousnesses, six uncommon sense powers and six kinds of objects. If we know this type of division, then it will benefit us regardless which tenet we are studying.

There is a twofold division into valid cognisers and awarenesses which are non-valid cognisers. Since there is the twofold division of awareness, first please tell me what is the definition of awareness?

That which is clear and knowing.

That was very good. Thank you very much. How many types of awareness do we have?

Seven

So if there are seven, please posit them.

Direct, inferential, wrong mind, subsequent, correct assumption...

If you want to posit seven divisions of mind, then they are direct valid cogniser, inferential valid cogniser, subsequent cogniser, correct assumption, doubt, awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained, and wrong awarenesses. You could have made it easier if you had just posited the two-fold division into valid cognisers and awarenesses that are non-valid cognisers. But of course if you unwind them, then you get those seven.

Having posited a two-fold division into valid cognisers and awarenesses that are non-valid cognisers, then within valid cognisers you have the two-fold division into direct valid cognisers and inferential valid cognisers. Awarenesses which are non-valid cognisers have a five-fold division into those we mentioned before.

7.5.1 Valid Cognisers

The definition of awareness went very well, so what is the definition of valid cogniser?

A knower which is newly incontrovertible.

What is the purpose of mentioning ‘new’? What does it abandon?

It eliminates mistaking it for subsequent.

And the purpose of ‘incontrovertible’?

To eliminate confusing it with assumption.

Why is ‘knower’ mentioned?

To eliminate the idea that a physical sense power is a valid cogniser.

Which tenet asserts that subsequent cognisers can be valid cognisers?

(Inaudible) and Madhyamika Prasangika.

Who asserts that physical sense powers can be valid cognisers?

The Vaibashikas.

Who asserts that correct assumptions can be valid cognisers?

I don't know

How many divisions are there of valid cognisers?

Two.

Please posit them.

(Inaudible)

7.5.1.1 Direct Valid Perception

If it is a direct perception is there pervasion that it has to be a direct valid cogniser?

No.

Give an example for something which is a direct perception, but not a valid cogniser? The first moment of the direct perception apprehending form is a valid cogniser, and the second moment of the direct perception apprehending form is a subsequent cogniser, not a valid cogniser. So you can posit the second moment.

What is the definition of a direct valid cogniser?

Unmistaken non-conceptual knower which is free from conception. (wrong)

Like the unmistaken knower which is free from conception. Which tenet posits that as the definition for direct valid cogniser?

Sautrantika

First of all the Sautrantikas assert that all direct perceptions have to be non-mistaken, so of course direct valid cognisers also have to be non-mistaken. The Mind Only, and the Svatantrika Madhyamika following the Mind Only point of view, assert that sense consciousnesses are mistaken with regard to their object. That is because the outer form appears as being of a different substance from the consciousness itself. Even though there is this mistaken appearance of outer existence, the consciousness can still realise its object of form and so forth.

Is this definition that you gave of a non-mistaken knower being free from conception, the definition of direct valid cogniser?

The Sautrantika assert it

How many divisions does direct valid cogniser have?

Four.

Posit them.

Sense direct valid cogniser, mental direct valid cogniser, self-knowing direct valid cogniser and yogic direct valid cogniser.

Within Svatantrika Madhyamika we have one school which posits a self-knower, and one school which does not posit a self-knower. Which school is which?

The Svatantrika-Cittamatrin school posits a self-knower, and the Sutra school doesn't.

That was correct. Very good. Also, if you go to other tenets the Prasangikas don't assert self-knowers, and neither do

the Vaibashikas assert self-knowers.

Mistaken and Non Mistaken

Of the two Autonomist schools, the Yogacara Autonomists assert four types of direct perception, which are sense direct perception, mental direct perception, self-knower and yogic direct perception. They say that self-knowing direct perception and yogic direct perception are pervaded by being non-mistaken consciousnesses, while the other two (sense direct and mental direct) have mistaken as well as non-mistaken consciousnesses.

We said that sense direct perception and mental direct perception each have two parts, mistaken and non-mistaken. An example for **mistaken sense direct perception** is the eye consciousness apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being. An example for **non-mistaken sense direct perception** is the eye consciousness apprehending form in the continuum of a buddha.

Sense Direct Perception

The sense direct perception apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being is mistaken, because it is mistaken to form appearing as outer existence, but it is not mistaken with regard to form. The sense direct perception in the continuum of an ordinary being realises form, and is not mistaken with regard to form. It is mistaken towards the appearance of form as outer existence. There is no pervasion that the sense direct perception in the continuum of an ordinary being is mistaken with regard to form, just because it is mistaken with regard to the appearance of form as outer existence.

This school of tenets asserts, as do the lower tenets, that even though awareness is a valid cogniser towards that object, it is non-mistaken with regard to that object. Here the eye consciousness apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being is non-mistaken with regard to form. It is a valid cogniser with regard to form, and therefore non-mistaken with regard to form. However it is mistaken with regard to the appearance of form as outer existence. This school asserts that there is a pervasion that if the consciousness is mistaken with regard to an object, it can never be a valid cogniser with regard to that object.

One difference between the Sutrist Autonomist school and the Yogacara Autonomist school is that the Yogacara Autonomists assert forms and so forth are of the same substance as its valid cogniser. So they don't assert outer existence. While the Sutrist Autonomist school asserts the opposite. They assert that form and so forth are established as outer existence and not of one substance with their valid cogniser.

Mental Direct Perception

Mental direct perception has two parts: those which are mistaken and those which are non-mistaken. **Mistaken mental direct perceptions** include the mental direct perception apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being. The reason why they are mistaken is because they have the appearance of form as outer existence. Then there are various examples of **non-mistaken mental direct perceptions** such as the clairvoyance knowing the minds of others, or the variety of mental consciousnesses in the continuum of an Arya being who realises emptiness, yogic direct perceivers and so forth.

Here is a two-fold question for you. One: if it is a yogic direct perception is there a pervasion that it is a yogic valid cogniser? Two: if it is a self-knowing direct perception is there a pervasion that it is a self-knowing valid cogniser?

Here you can apply the same rule as before. You can posit the second moment of the self-knower, and you can posit the second moment of a yogic direct perception.

With regard to omniscient mind, every moment of omniscient mind is a valid cogniser. Even the second, third, fourth and so forth moments of omniscient mind are all valid cognisers. There is no omniscient mind which is a subsequent cogniser. The reason for this is because each instant of omniscient mind realises its objects through its own power. The realisation of each instant of omniscient mind is not induced through the realisation of the previous moments of omniscient mind.

Yogic Direct Perception

With regard to yogic direct perception there are valid cognisers and subsequent yogic direct perceptions. The first moment of yogic direct perception is a yogic direct valid cogniser. It realises the object newly and freshly, but then the second and third moments of the yogic direct perception are the same as the first moment, in that they are incontrovertible towards the object. So from the point of view of realisation of the object there is no difference between the first and the second moment, but the realisation of the second moment of the yogic direct perception comes about through the realisation of the first moment. Because of that, it becomes what is called a knower which realises the realised. It realises its object through the force of the realisation of the previous moment, and because of that it becomes a knower which realises the realised, or a subsequent cogniser.

The text says 'The Sautrantika, Mind Only and Autonomist all assert that direct perceptions are pervaded by being consciousnesses free from conception. They also assert that if it is a subsequent cogniser there is a pervasion that it is never a valid cogniser. If it is a consciousness which is mistaken with regard to its determined object, there is a pervasion that it is a wrong consciousness. If the consciousness is mistaken with regard to a particular phenomenon, there is a pervasion that that consciousness is never a valid cogniser with regard to that phenomenon. If it is an inferential cogniser, there is a pervasion that it is never a valid cogniser with regard to its appearing object.'

If it is a consciousness which is mistaken with regard to its determined object there is a pervasion that it is a wrong consciousness, then this is in accordance with what we have already explained. Also, when we talked about the definition of the object of negation, it mentioned an awareness which is not contradicted.

We said there is a two-fold division into conceptual valid cogniser, which is non-mistaken with regard to its self-characterised determined object, and a non-conceptual valid cogniser which is non-mistaken with regard to its self-characterised appearing object. So there are two kinds of awarenesses, and both of them are non-mistaken with regard to their determined object, or object of engagement. Because of that, both of those awarenesses are awarenesses which are not contradicted. If it were the opposite, and these two types of awarenesses were mistaken with regard to their object of engagement or the determined object, then they would be wrong consciousnesses.

Inherent Existence

So what does the Autonomist school posit as the meaning of inherent existence?

Something that exists without being merely posited through appearing to a unfallacious awareness.

That's all?

Your answer is actually the meaning of **true existence**. What you posited was part of the meaning of the subtle object of negation of true existence. We said the other day that the meaning of *true existence is existing out of its uncommon mode of abiding and not through appearing to a non-contradicted awareness*.

Here, when we talk about not existing through the force of appearing to an awareness that is not contradicted, we are talking about two kinds of awareness, conceptual and non-conceptual awarenesses. Conceptual awareness is non-mistaken with regard to the appearance which is a self-characterised meaning, and non-conceptual awareness is non-mistaken with regard to the appearance of a self-characterised meaning. These two kinds of awarenesses are awarenesses which are not contradicted. If something exists without appearing to such an awareness, and it appears as if it exists out of its own uncommon mode of abiding, then it appears as truly existent. That was the meaning of the subtle object of negation of true existence.

The meaning of *inherent existence is whether or not the imputed meaning can be found at the time of analysis*. The Autonomist school asserts that everything is inherently existent because at the time of analysis the imputed meaning can always be found.

Inherent existence, existence from its own side and natural existence are synonymous. All phenomena exist in that mode.

At the point of the Mind Only school true existence and inherent existence are synonymous, and natural existence and existence from its own side are synonymous. Not everything which exists, exists inherently or truly. The meaning of inherent existence according to the Mind Only School is *not being labelled by conception, and existing out of its uncommon mode of abiding*. So according to the Mind Only not everything exists inherently or truly.

This debate between the Autonomist Madhyamika and the Prasangika Madhyamika as to whether or not the imputed meaning at the time of analysis can be found turns on the basis of imputation.

When the Autonomist Madhyamika say that the imputed meaning can be found at the time of analysis they refer to the object, the basis of imputation, or the basis of labelling. They say that the basis of imputation exists from its own side. Why does it exist from its own side? Because at the time of analysis the basis of imputation can be found.

The Prasangika say that at the time of analysis the basis of imputation cannot be found, and therefore the basis of imputation does not exist from its own side. Therefore nothing exists from its own side.

What are the four Buddhist tenets? What is the difference between a Buddhist and a Buddhist tenet holder?

A Buddhist hasn't analysed tenets, and doesn't posit or expound them, whereas a tenet holder has done so.

What makes a Buddhist, who is not a Buddhist tenet holder, a Buddhist?

Because he takes refuge in the Three Jewels from the depth of his heart.

What do we mean when we say Buddhist Dharma? It is the practices of generosity, morality and so forth which are held by refuge. They are Buddhist Dharma in my opinion. So the practices of generosity, morality and so forth which are held by refuge is Buddhist Dharma.

The three higher trainings are also Buddhist Dharma. Here there is a difference between what we call the three trainings, and the three higher trainings. There is the training of morality, concentration and wisdom, and the higher training of morality, concentration and wisdom. What differentiates the training of morality from the higher training of morality is that the higher training of morality is the keeping of the vows of individual liberation on the basis of refuge. So the practice of keeping the vows of individual liberation on the basis of refuge, or held by refuge, makes the practice of morality the higher training of morality. If it is held by refuge then it becomes a higher training.

When we talk about the baskets of teachings which explain the inner psychological states it is also good to know what they refer to? Those kinds of teachings are the teachings that explain the antidote to self-grasping. The teachings which explain the antidote to self-grasping are called the basket of teaching belonging to the inner science.

Within Buddhist Dharma there is realised Dharma and scriptural Dharma. Realised Dharma refers to our various practices such as morality, generosity and so forth, which are held by refuge. Scriptural Dharma refers for example, to the words which one can recite, also on the basis of the motivation of refuge. So refuge is very important. It is sort of a defining or dividing border between Buddhist and non-Buddhist practice.

It is as it is explained in this one verse, 'Not creating any non-virtue and perfecting all the virtues. This is the teaching of the Buddha.' If you want to define a Buddhist tenet-holder you could say a *Buddhist tenet holder is somebody who accepts the four seals of Buddhism*. We can also give the definition of a Buddhist tenet holder as one *who accepts as his final refuge the Three Jewels, and doesn't assert any other refuge*. So to define a Buddhist tenet holder we can either give this definition, or say that it is somebody who accepts the four seals of Buddhism.

Even though I have already discussed it earlier, what do we mean when we talk about a tenet? A tenet actually refers to a mental state of decision. For example when we meditate on the first seal of Buddhism, everything compounded is impermanent, we think about it with the help of quotations, and we analyse it with the help of various reasons. Through that process some kind of meaning will appear in our mind that everything compounded is impermanent. It will become more and more clear to our mind that indeed everything that is compounded has to be impermanent. We will reach a point where we can definitely make the decision that definitely everything that is compounded has to be impermanent. When one has made this inner decision, and holds that viewpoint that everything that is compounded is impermanent, then one has formed a Buddhist tenet. One holds that tenet, and one will propound that tenet to others. It is one's conviction that everything which is compounded is impermanent.

The same applies also to the other seals of Buddhism. The second seal, for example, is that all contaminated phenomena are suffering. Once one becomes a proponent of that tenet, then one will propound or explain that tenet to others with the help of quotations and reasons.

Probably we can stop at this point.

Next week I think you have discussion group and afterwards the examination. It is very good to have a discussion group. I am very happy with the discussion group, and also with the results of the last examination,

which went very well.

When you have the discussion group it is very important that you adopt a wide point of view. Don't have a narrow point of view and get upset if you don't understand something. Or have a narrow view, and then get angry because there is some unresolved issue. Don't be like that.

The Buddha taught the various viewpoints, and the various tenets and so forth, for a particular purpose, which was to guide the disciples at that time and place.

At certain times the Buddha would explain that a self of a person exists in order to lead people to an understanding of the law of cause and effect. On the basis of saying that, he could say that a self of a person experiences future suffering and happy results, depending upon which karma he creates now.

There are various differences between the different viewpoints. The Sautrantika school refutes certain viewpoints of the Vaibashika, the Mind Only refutes viewpoints of the Sautrantika and so forth. However all those different viewpoints were actually taught for the benefit of different disciples. The Buddha always taught according to the ability and disposition of his disciples. So having this great variety of teachings actually shows the great kindness of the Buddha.

When we see this great variety of the teachings we should remember the great kindness of the Buddha. He was so kind in teaching all of his disciples according to their individual needs and capacities.

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