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# **TENETS**

*PRESENTATION OF TENETS*

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# *PRESENTATION OF TENETS*

Composed by Venerable Manjushri, Chökyi Gyaltsen

**HOMAGE** to all who are holy and venerable  
existing inseparable in entity with Lama-protector Manjushri

To explain the presentation of tenets, there are three points: definition, divisions and the meaning of each division.

First, the definition of a proponent of Buddhist tenets is: a proponent of tenets who accepts the three jewels as ultimate objects of refuge and does not assert any (ultimate) objects of refuge other than these.

Second, there are four divisions: Vaibhasika (Great Exposition School or Particularists), Sautrantika (Sutra School), Cittamatra (Mind Only School) and Madhyamika (Middle Way School).

The first two are also known as the two schools that propound the meaning (that external objects are truly existent).

Third, the explanation of the Vaibhasika, Sautrantika, Cittamatra and Madhyamika systems.

## **VAIBHASIKA (Great Exposition or Particularist School)**

The first school is explained by way of seven points: definition, divisions, etymology, mode of asserting objects, mode of asserting object-possessors, mode of asserting selflessness, and presentation of grounds and paths.

### **1. Definition**

The definition of a Vaibhasika is: one who propounds Hinayana tenets, and asserts external objects to be truly existent but does not assert self-cognizers.

### **2. Divisions**

There are three divisions: Kashmiris, Aparantakas and Magadhas.

### **3. Etymology**

If someone asks why they are called Vaibhasikas, it is because they propound tenets following *The Great Detailed Explanation (Mahavibhasa)*, and also because they propound the three times as instances of substance.

### **4. Mode of asserting objects**

The definition of a thing is: that which is able to perform a function. Thing, existent and knowable object are mutually inclusive.

There are two divisions of things: permanent things and impermanent things. Non-compounded space, analytical cessations and non-analytical cessations are examples of permanent things. Product, created object and impermanent are examples of impermanent things.

Another way of dividing things is into conventional truths and ultimate truths.

The definition of a conventional truth is: a phenomenon which is such that, if it were broken or mentally separated into parts, the mind apprehending that object would cease. A vase and a woollen cloth are examples because if a vase is broken with a hammer, the mind apprehending it ceases, and if a woollen cloth is separated into its individual threads, the mind apprehending it ceases.

The definition of an ultimate truth is: a phenomenon which is such that, if it were broken or mentally separated into parts, the mind apprehending that object would not cease. Examples include directionally partless particles, temporally partless (moments of) consciousness and non-compounded (objects).

From the *Abhidharmakosha*: "A thing which, if broken or mentally separated into other (parts) is no longer understood by the mind such as a pot or water – is conventionally existent; (all) others are ultimately existent."

Then, the three times are asserted as substance because (the Vaibhasikas) assert that a pot exists even at the time of the past of a pot, and a pot exists even at the time of the future of a pot, (and a pot exists in the present).

## 5. Mode of asserting object-possessors (subjects)

(Some) assert the mere collection of the five aggregates as the illustration of the person, (some) assert the mental consciousness as the illustration of the person, and so on.

There are two kinds of mind: valid cognizers and non-valid cognizers.

There are two types of valid cognizers: valid direct perceivers and valid inferential cognizers.

There are three types of valid direct perceivers: sense direct perceivers, mental direct perceivers and yogic direct perceivers. Valid sense direct perceivers are not pervaded by consciousness because a visual sense power is (an instance of ) a valid direct perceiver.

There are two types of yogic direct perceivers: yogic direct perceivers that clearly realize selflessness of persons and yogic direct perceivers that clearly realize subtle impermanence. There are two types of the former: yogic direct perceivers that realize the emptiness of a permanent, partless, independent person, and yogic direct perceivers that realize the emptiness of a self-supporting or substantially existent person.

## 6. Mode of asserting selflessness

Subtle selflessness and subtle selflessness of persons are mutually inclusive. Selflessness of phenomena is not asserted because the Vaibhasikas assert that established base is pervaded by self of phenomena.

Among them, the Vasiputriyans assert a selflessness of persons that is an emptiness of being permanent, partless and independent. However, they do not assert a selflessness of persons that is an emptiness of being self-supporting or substantially existent because they assert a self-supporting, substantially existent self that is neither one entity with nor a different entity from the aggregates, neither permanent nor impermanent, but is inexpressible.

## 7. Presentation of grounds and paths

This is explained in two parts: objects of abandonment and actual presentation of grounds and paths.

### a. Objects of abandonment

They assert two types of obstacles: deluded and non-deluded obstacles. There is no designation for 'obstacles to omniscience.'

Deluded obstacles act chiefly as obstacles to the attainment of liberation and non-deluded obstacles act chiefly as obstacles to all-knowingness. Examples of the first are a conception grasping a self-supporting or substantially existent person, the three poisons together with their seeds, and so forth that arise due to that conception. Examples of the second are the (mental) tendencies of the conception grasping a self-supporting or substantially existent person and the lack of mental clarity that arises due to these tendencies.

*b. Actual presentation of grounds and paths*

Persons of the three vehicles have different ways of travelling the path.

Those of the hearer lineage combine the view realizing the emptiness of a self-supporting or substantially existent person with a small collection of merit and, after practising for three lifetimes or more, attain small enlightenment.

Those of the solitary realizer lineage combine the view realizing the emptiness of a self-supporting or substantially existent person with a middling collection of merit and, after practising for one hundred aeons or more, attain middling enlightenment.

Bodhisattvas combine the view realizing the emptiness of a self-supporting or substantially existent person with a great collection of merit and, after practising for at least three countless great aeons, attain great enlightenment.

There is also a difference in the way they collect the accumulation of merit.

Bodhisattvas, having collected merit for three countless great aeons on the great stage of the path of accumulation and below, attain (all paths from) the heat stage of the path of preparation through the path of no-more-learning on one seat.

Solitary realizers, having collected merit for one hundred great aeons on the great stage of the path of accumulation and below, attain (all paths from) the heat stage of the path of preparation through the path of no-more-learning on one seat.

Hearers collect merit on all four learning paths and (for some) it is necessary to train on the learning paths even up to fourteen lifetimes after attaining superior paths.

They assert that a buddha's form aggregate is not buddha because it is an object to be abandoned. This is because it is included in the same lifetime as the body of the previous bodhisattva on the path of preparation. There is a pervasion because the body of the bodhisattva on the path of preparation is the aggregate thrown by previous karma and delusion.

They do not accept a complete enjoyment body (sambhogakaya) and they assert that when the highest emanation body attains nirvana without remainder (of true suffering), the mental continuum ceases.

Although a buddha superior has abandoned all suffering and its origins without exception, it does not contradict that he still has true suffering in his continuum. This is because he has abandoned every single delusion that refers to true suffering, therefore is considered to have abandoned true suffering.

Hearers and solitary realizer foe destroyers, from the attainment of the state of foe destroyer until they die, are foe destroyers with remainder. After death, they are considered to have attained nirvana without remainder.

Although at the time of nirvana with remainder they abandon deluded obstacles without exception, they do not abandon non-deluded obstacles. Non-deluded obstacles are not destroyed by opponent powers at the time of attaining nirvana without remainder but they are not existent because at that time their basis, the mental continuum, ceases.

Proponents of realism (i.e. true existence), when distinguishing definitive and interpretive sutras, do so by means of whether they are acceptable according to their words. (Some among) the two (schools) that propound the meaning do not accept the Mahayana collection to be Buddha's word because most Vaibhasikas assert that sutras are pervaded by sutras of definitive meaning.

**SAUTRANTIKA (Sutra School)**

The second school is explained by way of definition, divisions, etymology, mode of asserting objects, mode of asserting object-possessors, mode of asserting selflessness, and presentation of grounds and paths.

**1. Definition**

The definition of a Sautrantika is: one who propounds Hinayana tenets, and accepts both self-cognizers and external objects.

Sautrantika and exemplifier are mutually inclusive.

**2. Divisions**

There are two divisions: Sautrantikas Following Scripture and Sautrantikas Following Reasoning. An example of the former is a Sautrantika who follows the *Abhidharmakosha*, and an example of the latter is a Sautrantika who follows the *Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition*.

**3. Etymology**

They are called Sautrantika because they propound tenets following the sutras of the Buddha, and they are called exemplifiers because they like to explain all phenomena by means of examples.

**4. Mode of asserting objects**

The definition of an existent is: that which is realized by valid cognition.

There are two divisions of existents: conventional truths and ultimate truths.

The definition of an ultimate truth is: a phenomenon that is able to perform a function ultimately. Ultimate truth, truly existent, thing, product, impermanent (phenomenon), compounded phenomenon, substance and specifically characterized phenomenon are mutually inclusive.

The definition of a conventional truth is: a phenomenon that is not able to perform a function ultimately. Conventional truth, falsely existent, permanent (phenomenon) and generally characterized phenomenon are mutually inclusive.

Again, existents have two divisions: negative phenomena and affirmative phenomena.

The definition of a negative phenomenon is: a phenomenon realized by means of eliminating its object of negation by the mind holding it.

The definition of an affirmative phenomenon is: a phenomenon realized by means of not eliminating its object of negation by the mind holding it.

There are two types of negatives: non-affirming negatives and affirming negatives. Examples of the former are: non-compounded space, true cessation and emptiness. Examples of the latter are: the reverse of a non-thing and the appearance of the reverse of a non-pot (i.e. the mental image of pot) to a conception apprehending it.

Again, existents have two divisions: single phenomena and different phenomena.

Single phenomena can be divided into false singles and true singles. Knowable objects (in general) and generally characterized phenomenon are examples of false singles. Thing and impermanent phenomenon are examples of true singles.

Different phenomena can be divided into false differentials and true differentials. The two – a pot's double reverse and a pillar's double reverse – is an example of a false differential. The two – a pot and a pillar – is an example of a true differential.

Past and future are both permanent. Present and thing are mutually inclusive.

## 5. Mode of asserting object-possessors

(Some) Sautrantikas assert the continuum of the aggregates as the illustration of the person, and (some) assert the mental consciousness as the illustration of the person. The first is asserted by the Sautrantikas following the *Abhidharmakosha* and the second by the Sautrantikas following the *Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition*.

The definition of mind is: that which is clear and cognizing. There are two types of mind: valid cognizers and non-valid cognizers.

### a. Valid cognizers

The definition of a valid cognizer is: an new incontrovertible cognizer.

It is necessary to mention all three – ‘new’, ‘incontrovertible’ and ‘cognizer’ – as the borders in the definition of a valid cognizer because ‘new’ eliminates a subsequent cognizer as a valid cognizer, ‘incontrovertible’ eliminates correct assumption as a valid cognizer and ‘cognizer’ eliminates a physical (sense) power as a valid cognizer.

Valid cognizers can be divided into two: valid direct perceivers and valid inferential cognizers.

The definition of a direct perceiver is: a cognizer that is non-mistaken and free of conceptually.

The definition of a valid direct perceiver is: an new, incontrovertible cognizer that is free from conceptually.

There are four types of valid direct perceivers: self-cognizing valid direct perceivers, sensory valid direct perceivers, mental valid direct perceivers and yogic valid direct perceivers.

The definition of a self-cognizing valid direct perceiver is: an new, incontrovertible cognizer that is free from conceptually, bears the aspect of an apprehender and only looks inward.

The definition of a sensory valid direct perceiver is: an new, incontrovertible cognizer that is free from conceptually and that arises in dependence upon a physical sense power as its uncommon empowering condition.

The definition of a mental valid direct perceiver is: a new and incontrovertible cognizer that is free from conceptually and that arises in dependence upon a mental power as its uncommon empowering condition.

The definition of a yogic valid direct perceiver is: a wisdom consciousness that clearly realizes subtle impermanence, or gross or subtle selflessness of persons, having depended upon a concentration that is the union of tranquil abiding and special insight as its uncommon empowering condition.

There are three types of yogic valid direct perceivers: a valid cognizer that clearly realizes subtle impermanence, a valid cognizer that clearly realizes gross selflessness of persons and a valid cognizer that clearly realizes subtle selflessness of persons.

The definition of a valid inferential cognizer is: an new and incontrovertible conceptual cognizer that arises in dependence upon a correct sign, its basis.

There are three divisions of valid inferential cognizers: inferential cognizer by the power of the fact, inferential cognizer through renown and inferential cognizer through belief.

An example of the first is an inferential cognizer that realizes sound to be impermanent by the reason that it is a product.

An example of the second is an inferential cognizer that realizes that ‘rabbit-bearer’ is suitable to be called by the term ‘moon’ by the reason that it is an object of conception.

An example of the third is an inferential cognizer that realizes the instruction – ‘from giving (arises) wealth; from practising morality (arises) happiness’ – is incontrovertible with respect to the meaning indicated by it by the reason that it is an instruction certified by a three-fold investigation.

Inference through renown is pervaded by inference by the power of the fact. Direct perceivers are not pervaded by valid direct perceivers and inferential cognizers are not pervaded by valid inferential cognizers because the second moment of a sense direct perceiver apprehending form and the second

moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound as impermanent are (instances) of subsequent cognizers.

From Dharmottara's *Commentary to (Dharmakīrti's) 'Ascertainment of Valid Cognition'*: "The new moments of both direct perceivers and inferential cognizers are valid cognizers. Later moments (of those cognizers) are invalid cognizers because (their objects) do not differ from the (objects) already established in those continuums."

#### *b. Non-valid cognizers*

The definition of a non-valid cognizer is: a cognizer that is not new and incontrovertible.

There are five divisions: subsequent cognizers, wrong consciousnesses, doubt, correct assumption and inattentive perception.

The definition of a subsequent cognizer is: a cognizer that realizes what has already been realized.

It has two divisions: conceptual subsequent cognizers and non-conceptual subsequent cognizers.

Examples of the first are a remembering consciousness remembering blue that is generated by being induced by a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue, and the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound as impermanent.

An example of the second is the second moment of a sense direct perceiver apprehending form.

The definition of a wrong consciousness is: a cognizer that engages (its object) incorrectly.

It has two divisions: conceptual wrong consciousnesses and non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses.

An example of the first is a conception apprehending that sound is permanent. Examples of the second are a (visual) sense consciousness to which one moon appears as two moons, and a (visual) sense consciousness to which a snow mountain appears blue.

The definition of a doubt is: a mental factor that, by its own power, hesitates with regard to two alternatives.

A mental consciousness and an accompanying feeling that have the (five) concomitances with doubt are not that which, by its own power, wavers with regard to two alternatives because they waver with regard to two alternatives by the power of doubt.

There are three divisions of doubt: doubt tending towards the factual, doubt not tending towards the factual and doubt that is equal to both sides.

An example of the first is a doubt that thinks 'maybe sound is impermanent.' An example of the second is a doubt that thinks 'maybe sound is permanent.' An example of the third is a doubt that thinks 'sound is either permanent or impermanent.'

The definition of a correct assumption is: a conceiving cognizer that accords with what is correct but is controvertible in conceiving its object.

It has five divisions: correct assumption without a reason, correct assumption with a contradictory reason, correct assumption with an indefinite reason, correct assumption with an inapplicable reason and correct assumption with a correct but unestablished reason.

A mind apprehending sound as impermanent based on the mere words 'sound is impermanent' is an example of a correct assumption without a reason because 'sound is impermanent' is only a statement that sound is impermanent, but a perfect reason for sound being impermanent is not stated.

A mind apprehending sound as impermanent by the sign of its being empty of the ability to perform a function is an example of a correct assumption with a contradictory reason because being empty of the ability to perform a function is contradictory with sound.

A mind apprehending sound as impermanent by the sign of its being a measurable object is an example of a correct assumption with an indefinite reason because being a measurable object is an indefinite reason to establish sound as impermanent.

A mind apprehending sound as impermanent by the sign of its being an object of apprehension of an eye consciousness is an example of a correct assumption with an inapplicable reason because being an



object of apprehension of an eye consciousness is an inapplicable reason to establish sound as impermanent.

A mind apprehending sound as impermanent by the sign, 'product,' in the continuum of a person who has not ascertained with valid cognition that sound is impermanent is an example of a correct assumption with a correct but unestablished reason because, although 'product' is a correct sign to establish sound as impermanent, that correct sign has not been established by that person.

The definition of an inattentive perception is: a non-mistaken cognizer to which an object appears clearly but which does not ascertain its object.

It has three divisions: sense direct perceivers, mental direct perceivers and self-cognizing direct perceivers that are (inattentive perceivers).

An example of the first is an audile consciousness apprehending sound at the time of being engrossed in beautiful visual forms.

Examples of the second are mental direct perceivers in the continuums of ordinary beings that apprehend the five objects – forms and so forth.

Examples of the third are self-cognizers in the continuums of ordinary beings that experience mental direct perceivers apprehending the five objects – forms and so forth.

Generally, there are three divisions of object-possessors: beings, speech and consciousnesses (*tshad.ma*). Object-possessing valid objects (*tshad.ma*) can be divided into three: valid persons, valid speech and valid consciousnesses.

An example of the first is said to be Shakyamuni Buddha; an example of the second is said to be the dharma wheel of the four truths; and examples of the third are a valid direct perceiver and a valid inferential cognizer.

## 6. Mode of asserting selflessness

The Sautrantikas assert a selflessness of persons that is the emptiness of a permanent, partless and independent person, and a subtle selflessness of persons that is the emptiness of a self-supporting or substantially existent person.

Like the Vaibhasikas, they do not assert a selflessness of phenomena.

## 7. Presentation of grounds and paths

When holders of the three lineages collect merit, they do so on all four learning paths; it is by reason of this that a buddha's form aggregate is asserted to be buddha.

Their presentation of obstacles, mode of travelling grounds and paths, and so forth, are like (the assertions of) the Vaibhasikas.

**CITTAMATRA (Mind Only School)**

The Cittamatrin system is explained by way of seven divisions, as before.

**1. Definition**

The definition of a Cittamatrin is: one who propounds Mahayana tenets, and does not assert external objects but asserts self-cognizers to be truly existent.

Cittamatrin, Vijnaptivadin (Aspectarian) and Yogacarin are mutually inclusive.

**2. Divisions**

There are two divisions: True Aspect Cittamatrins and False Aspect Cittamatrins.

The definition of a True Aspect Cittamatrin is: a Cittamatrin who asserts that the part (of the appearance) that appears as gross form to a form-apprehending direct perceiver in an ordinary being's continuum is not polluted by the propensities of ignorance.

The definition of a False Aspect Cittamatrin is: a Cittamatrin who asserts that the part (of the appearance) that appears as gross form to a form-apprehending direct perceiver in an ordinary being's continuum is polluted by the propensities of ignorance.

There are three types of True Aspectarians: proponents of an equal number of subjects and objects, half-eggists and non-pluralists. Each has his own manner of asserting. It is said that:

Proponents of an equal number of subjects and objects assert that when a visual consciousness apprehending the various colours on the wing of a butterfly apprehends the various colours, from the object's side an aspect of each different colour – blue, yellow, etc. – appears, and also from the subject's side a (consciousness) is produced that apprehends the aspect of each different colour – blue, yellow, etc. – accordingly.

The half-eggists assert that when (the various colours) are apprehended, from the object's side an aspect of each different colour – blue, yellow, etc. – appears, but from the subject's side a (consciousness) is produced that does not apprehend the aspect of each different colour – blue, yellow, etc. – accordingly.

And the non-pluralists assert that when (the various colours) are apprehended, from the object's side an aspect of each different colour – blue, yellow, etc. – does not appear but an aspect of the mere conglomeration appears; and from the subject's side a (consciousness) apprehending the aspect of each different colour – blue, yellow, etc. – is not produced, but a (consciousness) apprehending the mere conglomeration is produced.

There are two types of False Aspectarians: Tainted False Aspectarians and Untainted False Aspectarians.

**3. Etymology**

If someone asks why they are called 'Cittamatrins' – they are called 'Mind Only' because they assert that phenomena are merely in the nature of consciousness; and they are called 'Aspectarians' because they assert that all phenomena are merely in the nature of aspect-cognizers.

**4. Mode of asserting objects**

There are two divisions of knowable objects: ultimate truths and conventional truths.

The definition of an ultimate truth is: that which is realized by means of a valid direct perceiver that realizes it clearly without dualistic appearance.

Ultimate truth, reality, element of qualities and final condition are mutually inclusive.

There are two divisions of ultimate truths: subtle selflessness of phenomena and subtle selflessness of persons.

If subtle selflessnesses of phenomena are divided according to bases of emptiness, there are twenty emptinesses. When those are condensed there are eighteen; when those are condensed there are sixteen; when those are condensed there are four emptinesses, and so on.

Examples of subtle selflessness of phenomena are: an emptiness that is a form and its form-apprehending valid cognizer's emptiness of being other substances, and an emptiness that is a form's emptiness of existing by way of its own characteristics as a base for assigning the term 'form.'

An example of a subtle selflessness of persons is an emptiness that is a person's emptiness of being self-supporting or substantially existent.

The definition of a conventional truth is: that which is realized by means of a valid direct perceiver that realizes it clearly with dualistic appearance.

There are two divisions of conventional truths: other-powered phenomena and conventional truths that are included in imaginaries. The former is mutually inclusive with compounded phenomena and the latter is mutually inclusive with non-compounded phenomena other than ultimate truths.

They assert that all things are common bases of truly-existent and false; that all realities are common bases of truly-existent and true, and that all non-compounded phenomena other than emptinesses are common bases of falsely-existent and false.

Realities are pervaded by non-affirming negatives, and examples of other non-affirming negatives are (presented) in the same way as the Sautrantikas.

The five sense objects – form, etc. – arise from the substance of inner consciousness in dependence upon the propensities of common and uncommon actions placed on the mind basis of all, and they do not exist as external objects.

The True Aspectarians assert that the five sense objects – forms, etc. – are not external objects but do exist as gross objects.

The False Aspectarians assert that the five sense objects – form, etc. – are not gross objects because if they did exist as gross objects they would necessarily exist as external objects.

## 5. Mode of asserting object-possessors

The True Aspectarians assert a group of eight consciousnesses. A mind basis of all and an afflicted mind are added to the six consciousnesses asserted by other proponents of tenets, making a total of eight consciousnesses.

Examples of both mind basis of all and afflicted mind are: (a mind basis of all) is a first consciousness that is other than the group of six consciousnesses and does not depend on a power as its empowering condition; and (an afflicted mind) is a second consciousness that refers to its referent – the mind basis of all – and apprehends its aspect – a self-supporting or substantially existent I.

The True Aspectarians assert mind basis of all as the illustration of the person, the receptacle of the fruit of actions.

The False Aspectarians assert six consciousnesses and posit the mere mental consciousness as the illustration of the person, the receptacle of the fruit of actions.

The Cittamatrins assert two types of mind: valid and non-valid. There are two types of valid cognizers: valid direct perceivers and valid inferential cognizers.

There are four types of direct perceivers. Self-cognizing direct perceivers and yogic direct perceivers are pervaded by non-mistaken consciousness. Sense direct perceivers in ordinary beings' continuums are pervaded by mistaken consciousness. There are two types of mental direct perceivers in ordinary beings' continuums: mistaken consciousnesses and non-mistaken consciousnesses.

Direct perceivers are not pervaded by valid direct perceivers because, although there are form-apprehending mental direct perceivers in ordinary beings' continuums, there are no valid form-apprehending mental direct perceivers in ordinary beings' continuums.

An ordinary being's self-cognizer experiencing a form-apprehending mental direct perceiver and the second moment of a form-apprehending sense direct perceiver of an ordinary being are invalid cognizers.

There are four types of yogic direct perceivers: yogic direct perceivers that clearly realize subtle impermanence, gross selflessness of persons, subtle selflessness of persons and selflessness of phenomena.

Valid inferential cognizers are pervaded by conception, but if it is an inferential cognizer with respect to a phenomena, it is not necessarily a conception with respect to that phenomenon because, although an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent is an inferential cognizer with respect to sound's emptiness of permanence, it is not a conception with respect to that. This is because if it is a conception with respect to a phenomenon, it is pervaded by the aspect of that phenomenon appearing to it, and with regard to an inferential cognizer realizing sound as impermanent, the aspect of sound's emptiness of permanence does not appear. That (inferential cognizer) does not realize (sound's emptiness of permanence) explicitly; it realizes that implicitly (when) it realizes impermanent sound explicitly.

## 6. Mode of asserting selflessness

Their manner of positing examples of gross and subtle selflessness of persons is like (that of the systems of ) Svatantrika-Madhyamika and below.

An example of a selflessness of phenomena is an emptiness that is a form and its form-apprehending valid cognizer's emptiness of being other substances.

## 7. Presentation of grounds and paths

This has two divisions: objects of abandonment and actual presentation of grounds and paths.

### *a. Objects of abandonment*

Deluded obstacles include self-grasping of persons together with seeds, and the three poisons with their seeds that arise due to the power of self-grasping of persons. Obstacles to omniscience include grasping-as-true together with seeds, its propensities and all mistaken dualistic appearances that arise due to the power of grasping-as-true and its propensities.

### *b. Actual presentation of grounds and paths*

Holders of the hearer lineage combine the view realizing selflessness of persons with a small collection of merit, mainly for their own sake and, due to meditating for at least three lifetimes, attain their enlightenment.

Holders of the solitary realizer lineage combine the view realizing selflessness of persons with a middling collection of merit, mainly for their own sake and, due to meditating for at least one hundred aeons, attain their enlightenment.

Bodhisattvas combine the view realizing the emptiness of subject and object being of other substances with a great collection of merit, for the sake of others, and, due to meditating for at least three countless great aeons, attain their enlightenment.

True Aspectarians assert that when hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers attain nirvana without remainder, their mental continuums cease. They assert that it is impossible for a buddha superior's mental continuum to cease because bodhisattvas first attain enlightenment in Og-min in a Complete Enjoyment Body and that Complete Enjoyment Body does not cease in the continuum of the same aspect until samsara ends, but works for the welfare of others, through various emanations, according to the fortunes of disciples.

Furthermore, the True Aspectarians assert that the three vehicles are definite in their own lineages because it is asserted that sentient beings from beginningless time have three different lineages or natures, and therefore have three different aspirations, and therefore have three different ways of accomplishing and therefore they attain three different results.

The False Aspectarians do not assert that when hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers attain nirvana without remainder their mental continuums cease because, although they assert that at that time only the continuum of the mere mind that is included in true sufferings and true origins ceases, a mere cognizer goes to enlightenment; thus they assert the existence of one final vehicle.

**MADHYAMIKA (Middle Way School).**

The system of the proponents of non-entityness is explained by way of definition, divisions and the meaning of each division.

First, the definition of a proponent of non-entityness is: one who propounds Mahayana tenets and does not assert true existence, even nominally.

Second, there are two divisions: Svatantrika and Prasangika.

Third is the explanation of the Svatantrika and Prasangika systems.

**SVATANTRIKA-MADHYAMIKA (Autonomy Middle Way School)**

This is explained according to seven points: definition, divisions, etymology, mode of asserting objects, mode of asserting object-possessors, mode of asserting selflessness, and presentation of grounds and paths!.

**1. Definition**

The definition of a Svatantrika is: a Madhyamika who, by means of positing a reason that exists from its own side, does not accept true existence, even nominally.

A Svatantrika is mutually inclusive with a Madhyamika who propounds natural existence.

**2. Divisions**

There are two divisions: Sautrantika-Svatantrika-Madhyamika and Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamika.

The definition of the former is: a Madhyamika who propounds a presentation of nominal existence for the most part in accordance with Sautrantika tenets.

The definition of the latter is: a Madhyamika who propounds a presentation of nominal existence for the most part in accordance with Cittamatra tenets.

Some examples of Sautrantika-Svatantrika are Leg-den-je (Bhavaviveka) and Ye-she Nying-po; examples of Yogacara-Svatantrika are Shi-wa-tso (Shantirakshita), Sen-ge Sang-po (Haribhadra) and Kamalashila.

**3. Etymology**

The reason why Bhavaviveka is said to be a Svatantrika-Madhyamika is that he is a Madhyamika who asserts reasons that exist from their own side.

**4. Mode of asserting objects**

Existence by way of its own characteristic, existence from its own side and natural existence are mutually inclusive.

Non-compounded space, true cessations, past, future and subtle selflessness of persons are all non-affirming negatives as well as conventional truths.

Ultimate truth, reality and subtle selflessness of phenomena are mutually inclusive.

The Sautrantika-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas assert that the five sense objects – form, etc. – are of different entities from consciousness, and they are gross, external objects composed of partless particles.

The Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas assert that the five sense objects – form, etc., – are one entity with the consciousness apprehending them.

**5. Mode of asserting object-possessors**

The Svatantrika-Madhyamikas assert a group of six consciousnesses, and that the mental consciousness is the illustration of the person.

There are two types of mind: valid cognizers and non valid-cognizers.

There are two types of valid cognizers: valid direct perceivers and valid inferential cognizers.

The Sautrantika-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas do not assert self-cognizing direct perceivers. The Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas assert all four types of direct perceivers, and self-cognizing direct perceivers and yogic direct perceivers are pervaded by non-mistaken consciousness. The other two (types of direct perceivers) have (instances of) both mistaken and non-mistaken (consciousnesses).

Sautrantika, Cittamatra and Svatantrika all assert that direct perceivers are pervaded by non-conceptual consciousnesses; that subsequent cognizers are pervaded by non-valid cognizers; that consciousnesses mistaken with respect to their determined objects are pervaded by wrong consciousnesses; that if it is a mistaken consciousness with respect to a phenomenon, it is necessary a non-valid mind with respect to that phenomenon; that if it is an inferential cognizer it is necessarily a non-valid mind with respect to its appearing object; and so forth.

**6. Mode of asserting selflessness**

They assert a gross selflessness of persons that is a person's emptiness of being permanent, partless and independent; and a subtle selflessness of persons that is a person's emptiness of being self-supporting or substantially existent.

The Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas assert a gross selflessness of phenomena that is a form and its form-apprehending valid cognizer's emptiness of being other substances; and a subtle selflessness of phenomena that is all phenomena's emptiness of true existence.

The two (subtle) selflessnesses are differentiated according to their objects of negation and not according to their bases of emptiness. This is because the refutation of the object of negation – true existence, upon the base – person, is the subtle selflessness of phenomena; and the refutation of self-supporting, substantial existence upon the base – person, is the subtle selflessness of persons.

The two self-graspings are differentiated according to the manner of grasping and not according to their referent object. This is because referring to the base – person, and grasping it as truly-existent is self-grasping of phenomena; and referring to the base – person, and grasping it as self-supporting or substantially existent is self-grasping of persons.

**7. Presentation of grounds and paths**

The Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas posit the differences between the persons of the three vehicles to be that they have three different obstacles as main objects to be abandoned and three different views as main objects of meditation.

Holders of the hearer lineage take as their main objects of abandonment the conception grasping a self-supporting or substantially existent person together with its retinue and take the antidote to that, the view realizing the emptiness of a self-supporting or substantially existent person, as their main object of meditation, and from that they attain small enlightenment.

Holders of the solitary realizer lineage take as their main object of abandonment the conception grasping form and form-apprehending valid cognizers to be of other substances, and take as their main object of meditation the view realizing the emptiness of subject and object being of other substances, the antidote to that (conception), and from that they attain middling enlightenment.

Bodhisattvas take as their main object of abandonment grasping at true existence together with its propensities and take as their main object of meditation the view realizing the non-true existence of all phenomena, the antidote to that (grasping), and from that they attain great enlightenment.

According to the Sautrantika-Svatantrika-Madhyamikas, there is no difference between hearers and solitary realizers regarding their main objects of abandonment and main objects of meditation, because they are alike in taking deluded obstacles as their main objects of abandonment and they are alike also in taking selflessness of persons as their main object of meditation.

However, there is a reason why the two have different fruit, inferior and superior. It is because they have differences due to the extent of their collections of merit and the length of time (spent accumulating merit).

The Svatantrikas assert two kinds of sutras: Mahayana and Hinayana. And, like the Cittamatrins, they assert two parts (of sutras): definitive and interpretive. However, the indication is different because the Cittamatrins assert the first two wheels as sutras of interpretive meaning and the later wheel as sutras of definitive meaning. According to this system, the first and last wheels are sutras of interpretive meaning and the middle wheel has two parts: interpretive and definitive. They assert that those (sutras of) the middle wheel (in which) the object of negation is joined with the qualification 'ultimately' are sutras of definitive meaning, and those (sutras of) the middle wheel (in which the object of negation) is not joined (with the qualification 'ultimately') are sutras of interpretive meaning.



**PRASANGIKA-MADHYAMIKA (Consequence Middle Way School)**

The Prasangika system is explained according to seven divisions, as before.

**1. Definition**

The definition of a Prasangika is: a Madhyamika who, by means of positing a mere consequence known to the other, does not accept true existence, even nominally.

**2. Examples**

Buddhapalita, Chandrakirti and Shantideva are examples (of Prasangika-Madhyamikas).

**3. Etymology**

There is a reason why Acharya Buddhapalita is called a Prasangika. It is because he asserts that an inferential cognizer realizing a proposition is generated in the continuum of a later disputant by (stating) a mere consequence.

**4. Mode of asserting objects**

There are two kinds of objects: hidden and manifest. Hidden objects must be realized by depending on a sign; manifest objects are objects that can be ascertained by ordinary beings through the power of experience, without depending on a sign.

Examples of (hidden objects) are the impermanence of sound and sound's emptiness of true existence. Examples of manifest objects are a pot and a woollen cloth.

Manifest object and directly perceivable are mutually inclusive.

Another way of dividing objects is into conventional truths and ultimate truths.

The definition of a conventional truth is: an object which is found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality and with respect to which a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality becomes a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality.

It is not right to divide conventional truths into two: real conventional truths and wrong conventional truths, because there are no real conventional truths. This is because if it is a conventional truth, it is necessarily not real. This is because if it is a conventional truth, it is necessarily wrong.

It is right to divide conventional truths into two: real and wrong, with respect to worldly consciousness because a form is real with respect to worldly consciousness and the reflection of a face in a mirror is wrong with respect to worldly consciousness. If it is real with respect to worldly consciousness it is not pervaded by existent because truly existent forms are (real with respect to worldly consciousness but not existent.)

The definition of an ultimate truth is: an object found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a final phenomenon and with respect to which a valid cognizer distinguishing a final phenomenon becomes a valid cognizer distinguishing a final phenomenon.

The divisions of ultimate truths are like those of Cittamatra (subtle selflessness of persons and subtle selflessness of phenomena) but this system asserts that true cessations are pervaded by ultimate truths.

**5. Mode of asserting object-possessors**

They assert the mere 'I' imputed in dependence on the five aggregates as the illustration of the person, and person is pervaded by non-associated compositional factor.

There are two kinds of mind: valid cognizers and non-valid cognizers. There are two kinds of valid cognizers: valid direct perceivers and valid inferential cognizers.

They do not assert self-cognizing direct perceivers. Sense consciousnesses in sentient beings' continuums are pervaded by mistaken consciousnesses. Mental consciousnesses and yogic direct perceivers can be (either) mistaken or non-mistaken.

There are two kinds of valid direct perceivers: conceptual valid direct perceivers and non-conceptual valid direct perceivers. Examples of the former are the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound as impermanent, and a remembering consciousness correctly remembering blue that is generated by being induced by a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue. An example of the latter is a sense direct perceiver apprehending form.

Valid direct perceivers are not pervaded by directly perceivable because yogic direct perception is necessarily not directly perceivable. This is because directly perceivable is mutually inclusive with manifest phenomena!

Subsequent cognizers are pervaded by valid direct perceivers.

There are four kinds of inferential cognizers: inferential cognizer (arising) by the power of the fact, inferential cognizer (arising) through renown, inferential cognizer that realizes (the meaning) through an example, and inferential cognizer (arising) through belief.

Inferential cognizer (arising) through renown and inferential cognizer that realizes (the meaning) through an example are included in inferential cognizer by the power of the fact.

If it is a valid cognizer, it is not pervaded by being non-mistaken with respect to its determined object because an inferential cognizer realizing sound as impermanent is a mistaken consciousness with respect to sound as impermanent.

If it is a consciousness it is pervaded by realizing its object of comprehension because the mental image of a rabbit's horns is the object of comprehension of a conception apprehending the horns of a rabbit, and the mental image of sound as permanent is the object of comprehension of a conception apprehending sound as permanent.

## 6. Mode of asserting selflessness

They assert a gross selflessness of persons that is a person's emptiness of being self-supporting or substantially existent, and a subtle selflessness of persons that is a person's emptiness of true existence.

They posit a gross selflessness of phenomena that is the emptiness of a gross object composed of partless particles and the valid cognizer apprehending it being of other substances, and a subtle selflessness of phenomena that is the emptiness of true existence of the aggregates, the bases of imputation.

The two (subtle) selflessness are differentiated according to their bases of emptiness and not according to their objects of negation because the refutation of the object of negation – true existence, upon the base – person, is the subtle selflessness of persons; and the refutation of the object of negation – true existence, upon the base – the aggregates, is the subtle selflessness of phenomena.

The two (subtle) self-grasings are differentiated according to their referent object and not according to their manner of grasping because referring to the base – person, and grasping it as truly existent is the (subtle) self-grasping of persons; and referring to the base of imputation – the aggregates, and grasping them as truly existent, is the subtle self-grasping of phenomena.

## 7. Presentation of grounds and paths

This has two divisions: objects of abandonment and actual presentation of grounds and paths.

*a. Objects of abandonment*

Gross and subtle self-graspings together with their seeds, as well as attachment and so forth (the delusions) together with their seeds that arise due to the power of (self-grasping) are deluded obstacles that mainly obstruct the attainment of liberation.

The propensities of grasping at true existence, and all parts of the mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the power of these (propensities) are obstacles to omniscience and obstacles that mainly obstruct the attainment of an exalted knower of all.

*b. Actual presentation of grounds and paths*

There is no difference in terms of superiority among the views that are the objects of meditation of persons of the three vehicles because all three are alike in taking as their main objects of meditation subtle selflessness of persons and subtle selflessness of phenomena.

There are differences with regard to their main objects of abandonment because hearers and solitary realizers take as their main objects of abandonment the two self-graspings together with their seeds, and bodhisattvas take as their main objects of abandonment the propensities of (self-grasping).

Nirvana without remainder is a suchness distinguished by the abandonment of the two self-graspings and their seeds in the continuums of hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers in meditative equipoise, and nirvana with remainder is the same kind of suchness in the continuums of hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers in the post-meditation state.

Holders of the Mahayana lineage who are definite in the lineage from the very first abandon deluded obstacles and attain the eighth ground simultaneously, and they abandon obstacles to omniscience and attain the four bodies simultaneously.

## Colophon

*Translated from the Tibetan by Kathleen McDonald (Ven Sangye Khadro), based on the oral commentary of Geshe Jampa Tegchok. This edition lightly edited by Jampa Gendun, 1998.*