### 9

#### THE EMPTINESS OF THE MIND

(Mahamudra)

PRACTICE





### The Asian Classics Institute Practice IX: Mahamudra - The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

#### **Syllabus**

Reading One

Subject: What is Mahamudra?

Reading: From The Highway of the Victorious Buddhas and A Lamp for

Making Things Even More Clear by the First Panchen Lama,

Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1565-1662).

**Reading Two** 

Subject: The Six Different Flavors of Emptiness

Reading: From various texts in the lineage of Tsongkapa the Great (1357-

1419).

Reading Three

Subject: Differences in the Mind-Only and Middle-Way School Views of

Emtiness.

Reading: From various monastic textbooks, including the Overview of the

*Perfection of Wisdom* by Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568).

Reading Four

Subject: The Three Degrees of Selflessness.

Reading: The Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom by Master Kedrup Tenpa

Dargye (1493-1568).

Reading Five

Subject: Emptiness According to the Middle-Way Consequence Group.

Reading: The Overview of the Middle-Way by Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye

(1493-1568).

### Asian Classics Institute Practice IX: Mahamudra - The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

#### **Reading One**

The study of Mahamudra by westerners naturally involves two different questions: First, what is the meaning of this popular and mysterious word? Secondly, how do we practice it? We'll cover these questions in three steps, by calling on the first Panchen Lama for a description of the word; by studying the relationship between Mahamudra and the books on worldview; and finally exploring in depth the different Buddhist ideas of worldview.

\*\*\*\*\*

The First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1565-1662), was one of the greatest masters of Tibetan Buddhism. He wrote over 250 separate books and essays, totalling more than 5,000 pages; the vast majority of these works are commentaries upon a wide variety of tantric practices. The following explanation of the "Great Seal," or Mahamudra, is taken from "A Lamp for Making Things Even More Clear," being an Expanded Explanation of the Root Text for the Great Seal (Mahamudra) according to the System of the Precious Tradition of the Virtuous Ones.

This text is a detailed explanation of a shorter verse piece that he wrote on the same subject, entitled "The Highway of the Victorious Buddhas," being a Root Text on the Practice of the Great Seal (Mahamudra) in the Precious Tradition of the Teachings of the Virtuous Ones. These two works together are considered one of the best presentations of Mahamudra ever written.

त्रीयाः में कुर्यः त्र्रीटः तर्रेशः वर्षितः वर्षितः वर्षितः त्रीयः कुर्यः त्रायः वर्षेत्रः वर्षितः वर्षेतः वर्षेत्रः वर्तेत्रः वर्यः वर्यः वर्षेत्रः वर्यः वर्यः वर्यः वर्ते वर्यः वर्यः वर्यः वर्यः वर्षेत्र

#### र्दुवाधीन है।

There are two methods for practicing the Great Seal (Mahamudra); here is a description of how to do the first, which is that of the open teachings. This is in fact precisely the method of practicing that state of wisdom in which one perceives emptiness: the explicit subject matter of the books on the Mother [the Perfection of Wisdom], in their more extensive, medium, and briefer forms.

दत्रम्भः अक्त्मात्मुभ्यः मुद्राः यात्रः यात्

The texts on the Mother of the Victorious Buddhas praise this method as the very life of each of the three paths of the three ways: [the way of the Listeners, the way of the Self-Made Buddhas, and the Greater Way of the Bodhisattvas]. That supreme realized being, Nagarjuna, is in the following words telling us that there exists no path which is not of the very same type, no path which is different from this same method, that can bring one to freedom:

You said that there was but one way: That there was but a single path To freedom, none other at all, Only one that the Buddhas And the Self-Made Buddhas, And the Listeners too must take.

तदुःसंचदुःर्युःचःश्रेरःर्। हुःचर्र्वःशःस्यःग्रीशा विश्वायश्रिरशःविरःर्रेरःशः वर्। र्रेहःश्रेयाःसःताःसरः वर्रःतशःयविषःसःररः स्थ्याः

And that's not all: even in the Way of the Diamond [the Tantric Way] there is no way of viewing your world correctly which is any different than this one; no separate way which is in any way any greater. As the holy one, the Sakya Pandita, has said as well:

विश्वास्त्राध्य प्रमान्य । विश्वास्त्र विश्वास्त्य विश्वास्त्य विश्वास्त्य विश्वास्त्य विश्वास्त्र वि

As far as viewing your world correctly is concerned, Nowhere is there taught a way which is separate, A way which is any different Between the teachings of the perfections And those of the secret word.

If there were any way of viewing the world That were somehow greater than the lack Of imagined existence taught in the way Of the perfections, then all those angels Would also exist in this same way.

Nothing possesses this imagined existence, And so there exists no difference.

### 

It was the Savior, Nagarjuna, whom the Victorious Buddhas foretold would appear to explain to us the meaning of reality—who would blaze this path in our world. And as for those who would come after him, it is just as Lord Atisha has said:

Who is it that's perceived emptiness? It's Chandrakirti, the follower Of Nagarjuna, he whom Those Gone Thus Foretold would appear, A being who had seen reality, Who had seen the way things are. Enlightenment is possible For anyone who follows The instructions come down through him, But not with something different.

रया. इच. स्. कु. हु. क्षं. य. यबुचे त्यहूचे त्या स्त्रीत्य त्या कुचे त्या क

So what you will find here is a book of instructions on the Mahamudra, the Great Seal, according to the true thought of the realized being Nagarjuna, as his words have been explained to us by Master Chandrakirti. I will write my work in accordance with the precious teachings of our glorious Lamas—teachings which possess the power of blessings that have come down to us through an unbroken stream of wise and accomplished beings, instructions for meeting the real nature of our minds.

यश्रिर्यायदे द्वीर प्रदेश स्था के विष्य के विषय के विष्य के विषय के विषय

"Well then," you may ask, "just what does the word *mahamudra*, or the 'great seal', mean here?" The sutra called *The King of Concentration* says:

The nature of all existing things is the seal. . .

The point is that "seal" refers to the nature of every existing thing: their emptiness. And anyone who perceives this emptiness is liberated from every trouble of life; this makes the seal "great," or we can say the "highest" of all things—since, as the line [in the *Amarakosha* dictionary of Sanskrit] goes,

"Great," meaning "highest," or "immeasurable". . .

\*\*\*\*\*

The following selection is taken from Notes on the Differences in Worldview Meditation on the Great Seal (Mahamudra) in the Tradition of the Virtuous Way (dGe-ldan phyag-chen gyi lta-sgom gyi khyad-par skor, ACIP electronic catalog number S6370-153, ff. 96b-97a). This is an account of a reply given by Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851) to a question one of his students had posed on the practice of the Mahamudra.

#### इ.रचुय.अ.तश्रा

सियाः भिः कुषः सुदुः यो रेशकाः स्योः श्रवः संयोः तो । र. सिदुः यो र ४१. २४. ताः ताः भः यो यो ४१. तदु। । यत्तरः भः वयोः तदुः ताभाः दुः भः त्येषः सदी।

#### |त्रःश्वःषोत्रः यर्गेत्रः यरः स्रोत्र्यः स्रो |विसः यदेः चयः चितः त्या

The Lord, Wensapa, once commented upon the differences in deepness in the practice of the Mahamudra as follows:

I'm unable to put at this moment in writing Any ultimate instructions for Mahamudra Which are any different from those just presented And unknown to those of the Land of Snows.

[Wensapa Lobsang Dundrup was an eminent Lama of the Gelukpa tradition who lived 1505-1566.]

## चुःविरःतरःश्री चित्रःश्रःश्र्र्यः यद्देय्याः क्षेत्रःतरः श्रुःश्र्र्याः क्षेत्रः विषःतरः श्रःश्र्र्याः क्षेत्रः

Admittedly one can ascertain readily the difference between the Mahamudra as it was generally understood by other Buddhists in the Land of Snows in those days and as it was taught in the tradition of the Virtuous Ones [the Gelukpa] as a meditation on worldview.

It appears though that it would be difficult to distinguish between the Gelukpa teachings on middle-way worldview and what we call the "Mahamudra of the Virtuous Ones." We see, for example, the following exchange in *Entry Point for Sons and Daughters of the Buddhas*, a biography of the life of the Lord, Konchok Jikme Wangpo.

[Konchok Jikme Wangpo, another high Gelukpa Lama, lived from 1728 to 1791.]

क्षेत्र मार्चमा मासुद र दर्से सः ग्री कें हो र दर्श सर्हे र सुमासः ग्री सुमा के त ने से र पर दर्श

# मु-८गादः तर्राः तर्माः तर्म् अः स्वार्यः से विद्याः धेरः । देः त्याः विदः विद्याः याः । विदः तर्मः तर्माः विदः तर्मः विदः विद्याः विदः तर्मः विदः विदः तर्मः तर

One day, after delivering a teaching, our Lord spoke the following question:

Think about the practice of Mahamudra according to the open teachings. Is it simply a way of meditating on the worldview of the Consequence group [of the Middle Way]? In this case there would be no compelling need for this as an additional practice; it would differ from our normal worldview teachings only in name. It is, moreover, somewhat difficult to establish that it is actually a distinct practice. What do you all think is the right way to address this question?

## यः त्रेन् कुः धेरुः प्रस्ति । त्रेश्वेरः प्रत्याः स्त्राः प्रम् । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेनः स्त्रेतः । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेनः स्त्रेतः । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेनः स्त्रे । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेनः स्त्रे । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रे । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेरः स्त्रे । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेरः स्त्रे । यने स्त्रेरः न्त्रेरः स्त्रेरः स्

Nomonhan Rinpoche offered the following reply:

The answer I think is simple; we are meant to take the term "Mahamudra" as referring to a practice of the wisdom where bliss and emptiness are inseparably combined.

["Nomonhan" was a title by which the Mongols referred to a high Lama. The one referred to here is probably Kundrul Nomonhan Rinpoche, a close disciple of Jigme Konchok Wangpo.]

#### यरे र्झूट र्युर सेर्गु थे वेश बेर यसूयाय सुयाय धेर सेंद लुय य स्

And the response came:

But isn't the "wisdom where bliss and emptiness are inseparably combined" something that belongs to the system of the Secret Word?

#### 

The student replied:

Well yes, that is the case.

योषट्यमः श्रींभायोश्चरः श्रीट्यो श्री श्री स्वाप्त स्

On the other hand, there is the following section from the *String of Drops of Nectar, from the Lips of the Holy Ones,* notes to a teaching on the Mahamudra taken by the Lord, Konchok Tenpay Drunme:

Even our Lord Lama [Je Tsongkapa] is said to have imparted both a teaching on the Mahamudra and the teaching on worldview as it is generally presented; and thus there did come to be separate expressions for the newer and older forms of the practice.

[Konchok Tenpay Drunme was yet another famed Lama of the tradition of Je Tsongkapa; his dates are 1762-1823.]

मुनिद्यायात्रास्य प्राच्यायात्र प्राच्या वर्षे स्वाचित्र स्वाच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वाच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वाच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वाच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच्या स्वच

But consider the actual meaning of the practice; in this sense, there is no difference between the two forms, where one is more subtle than the other. The only point is that—when you undertake to meditate the one way—you first seek to understand the deceptive nature of the mind. And you do so because it is easier to go on to the ultimate nature once you've done this first. And so I would have to say that the only difference is one in how the meditation is carried out.

क्चन्न.कु.च.क्च्चन्न.क्चेन्न.कुन्न.

I could also think, said our Lama, of differences such as the following as well:

- -- the Mahamudra approach makes it easier for beginners to get the object of meditation to appear clearly; and
- -- because of this fact, it is easier for them to eliminate subtle dullness; and
- -- since one is primarily engaged in stopping distraction, then agitation is prevented automatically; and
- -- it serves as an extremely powerful factor that would ripen your mind for the eventual practice of the Mahamudra according to the way of the Secret Word.

### Asian Classics Institute Practice IX: Mahamudra - The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

**Reading Two** 

#### The Six Flavors of Emptiness A Meditation on the Great Seal

The following are six different "flavors" of emptiness that are taught by the different schools of classical Indian Buddhism. They are culled from different texts in the lineage of Tsongkapa the Great (1357-1419). Please note that not all of them would be called true "emptiness," but rather "selflessness" in different classical schools.

### १ द्रमाम्बर्धमारम्प्रम्यम् उत्रामीः यन्याः स्रोत्या

#### **Emptiness, Flavor #1**

The lack of a self which is unchanging, whole, and independent.

[According to the Independent group of the Middle-Way School, this is the gross lack of a self to the person.]

### २ रूप्तमुः श्रुवः यदेः ह्रूषः र्धेदः गुरुषः त्युवः यदेः यद्याः स्रोदः या

#### **Emptiness, Flavor #2**

The lack of a self which is self-standing and substantial.

["Substantial" can mean a lot of different things; here it refers to the lack of a "driver" or "director" of the five heaps over the five heaps. According to the Mind-Only School, this is the lack of a self to the person. According to the Independent group, this is the subtle lack of a self to the person.]

### ३ वाञ्चयारा ५८ वाञ्चयारा वहें द्रा शी कर साहरा वालद रशी राहें र वा

#### **Emptiness, Flavor #3**

The fact that a visible object and the valid perception which grasps the visible object are devoid of any separate substance.

["Devoid of any separate substance" means: "It is not true that they come from a separate karmic seed; rather, they both arise from the same karmic seed." According to the Mind-Only School, this is the lack of a self to things. According to the Independent group, this is the gross lack of a self to things.]

## स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्र स्ट्रिंट्र स्ट्र स्ट्र

#### **Emptiness, Flavor #4**

The fact that the fact that any particular thing is called what it is is something which is devoid of existing by definition.

[Put simply: The fact that things are called what they are is not something which is automatic. According to the Mind-Only School, this is also the lack of a self to things.]

## श्वन श्रेंट श्रेन्य श्वन्य स्वर्धित स्वर्धा स्वर्ध स्वर्य स्वर्ध स्वर्य स्वर्ध स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्ध स्वर्ध स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्ध स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्ध स्वर्य स्वर्य

#### **Emptiness, Flavor #5**

The fact that objects are devoid of existing from their own side through any unique identity of their own, rather than existing simply by virtue of having appeared to an unaffected state of mind.

[According to the Independent group, this is the subtle lack of a self to things, or real emptiness.]

#### **Emptiness, Flavor #6**

The fact that objects are void of existing from their own side through their own identity, rather than existing simply through names [words] and terms [thoughts].

[According to the Consequence group of the Middle-Way School, this—and only this—is emptiness, and there are no separate degrees of emptiness (although emptiness can be divided according to the object that has it: the person or "things," meaning the person's parts). This interpretation is the ultimate one accepted by Lord Buddha; the realized being Nagarjuna; Je Tsongkapa; Khen Rinpoche; for all of tantra; and moreover by anyone who has seen emptiness directly.]

### Asian Classics Institute Practice IX: Mahamudra - The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

#### **Reading Three**

The following group of selections, many from monastic textbooks, give a good overview of the beliefs of the Independent group of the Middle-Way School on the subject of emptiness.

The first part of the reading helps understand the differences between the Independent group, the Mind-Only School, and the Consequence group on the question of whether things exist from their own sides, with their own unique identities. The selection is taken from the Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom (Phar-phyin spyi-don) of Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568), from the glorious Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery (ACIP electronic text catalog number SL0009, Part One, folios 12a-13b). Remember that most of the descriptions of "our own system" refer to that of the Independent group!

Therefore the following is the final form of the idea denied by the reasoning which examines the ultimate:

Anything which existed from its own side with its own unique identity, rather than being simply established as existing by appearing to an unaffected state of mind.

या ब्राम्य र्श्याम्य ग्री केंद्र इस्र व्यय ग्री विष्य कुरे पार्दे द से द ग्री केंद्र विषय में

### 

And this is true because the final form of the way in which physical matter and all other existing objects exist deceptively is through their being established as existing by a state of mind which is unaffected by short-term circumstances that would cause it to make an error.

## বাৰিয়াপ্য-পূব-রিয়াপ্র-প্রত্ম প্রত্ম প্রত

When we describe the state of mind which can establish that physical matter and all other existing objects exist, it is necessarily one which is not affected by some short-term circumstances which would cause it to make an error; it is not the case though that it would have to be a state of mind which was not affected by some long-term circumstances.

याच्चयात्रःश्च्यात्रःश्चेत्रःश्चेत्रःश्चेत्रःयःश्चेत्रःयः विष्ठेतःयः विष्ठेतःयः विष्ठेतः विष्रेतः विष्ठेतः विष्ठेते विष्ठेते विष्ठेतः विष्ठेते विष्रेते विष्ठेते विष्ठेते विष्ठेते विष्ठेते विष

And this is because it is not the case that—when physical matter and other such existing objects appear to be things that exist by definition—this appearance is not something which is affected neither by short-term nor by long-term circumstances; and because it involves being affected by the innate form of the tendency to hold things as existing truly.

चलवान्यःसाध्येद्रःचन्द्रेद्रःचित्रःच्योः स्व्यःच्यः चल्यान्यः स्वयः चल्यान्यः स्वयः चल्याः स्वयः चल्याः स्वयः स्व

#### त्रुवःसशः ब्रेंदः सः विष्ठवाः दवेषिः है।

Here we will explain how this school decides what the two realities are, using some metaphors as well. Two things have to be present with all of these objects: with physical matter and every other existing thing. From the point of view of what appears in the world, they must be established as existing from our side—merely by virtue of their appearing to an unaffected state of mind. From the point of view of emptiness, they must be void of any kind of existence where the object exists from its own side through its own unique identity, rather than by virtue of its appearing to an unaffected state of mind.

### য়ुःत्तुःसःतुतेः दर्दशः संप्यायः ग्रीः द्यार्थे द्यायः यात्रे यात्रे शः स्वायः प्रतः श्री र । सुःत्तुः सुः तुतेः दर्दशः संप्यायः ग्रीः देशः दशः सुवः याद्यः याद्ये शः स्वायः प्रतः स्वायः याद्यः सुवः ।

And so two things have to come together for a functional thing like a sprout: it must be established as existing by virtue of appearing to an unaffected state of mind; and the sprout should exist from its own side through some identity.

The first is necessary since—if it were not—then a sprout would have to be a sprout even to a person who had never been introduced to the idea that the sprout was called a "sprout."

The latter is necessary since—if it were not—then a sprout would be a sprout in exactly the same way as the horn of a rabbit is the horn of a rabbit: merely because we called it the "horn of a rabbit," or just because we imagined something called the "horn of a rabbit."

याश्चर्याश्चर्याश्चर्याश्चर्याहरा देवः नियम् योश्चर्याश्चरः याश्चर्याश्चर्याश्चरः योश्चर्याश्चरः योश्चर्याश्चरः विष्याः विष्यः विष्याः विष्याः विष्याः विष्याः विष्याः विष्याः विष्यः विष्याः विष्याः विष्याः विष्यः विष

### चल्वार्स्स्राध्येत्रः पदेः वर्षेत्रः त्युवासः ग्रीः द्वदः वीसः त्युवः यः वार्षेत्रः ग्राटः । स्रेटः वह्सः चल्वार्स्स्रः स्राध्येत्रः पदेः वर्षेत्रः त्युवासः ग्रीः वार्षेत् रहे।

Consider, by the way, the word "merely" when we speak of physical matter and all other existing objects as being "things which are established as existing merely by virtue of their appearing to an unaffected state of mind." Its use is meant to disallow the idea that these things could be established by virtue of some unique identity of the object itself, rather than being established as existing by virtue of this appearing. It is not however meant to disallow the idea that things do not exist merely through names and terms.

ब्राम्यत्र-पूर्विम्। यह्य-प्रविप्-पूर्विम्। व्याम्य-प्रविप्-पूर्विम्। व्याम्य-प्रविप्-पूर्विम्। व्याम्य-प्रविप्-पूर्विम्।

And this is true because, as the *Perfect Explanation*, an *Illumination of the True Thought*, has a part where it states—

Given the fact that those who belong to this school accept the idea that physical matter and all other existing objects do possess an identity that is not established merely through names and terms . . .

### याञ्चयाश्चर्याश्चर्याश्चर्याश्चर्याश्चर्यात्र्यं यार्वेद्राधेद्राध्ययः यद्भरः यद्भरः यद्भरः यद्भरः यद्भरः यद्भर प्राच्याश्चरः विष्याश्चरः विष्याश्चरः यद्भरः य

Now there is a metaphor which we can use for the idea that physical matter and all other existing objects are established as existing from our side—merely by virtue of their appearing to an unaffected state of mind, and for the idea that these objects exist through some identity of their own.

Think of a case where a magician makes a stick of wood appear as a horse or cow. Two things have to be present here. First of all, the appearance of a horse or cow there around the stick is something that is established as existing by virtue of the minds of the people whose eyes are affected by the magic words and powder, from their side. Secondly, an appearance must also be something coming from the side of the stick.

स्याश्रास्थाणीश्रास्थाणीश्रास्थाणीश्रास्थानास्यः स्वीत्रास्यान्यः स्वीत्रास्यः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रास्यः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्यः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः स्वीत्रः

The first requirement, being established as existing by virtue of the minds of the people whose eyes are affected by the magic words and powder, is necessary since—if it were not—then those in the audience whose eyes were not affected by the magic words and powder would have to see this appearance, whereas they do not.

देवे कें दे विद्यों देश क्रा क्ष्या क्ष्या है। ये विद्यों क्षा क्ष्या क्ष्य क्ष्या क्

In this same situation it is also necessary for the horse or cow to be appearing from the stick's side as well, since—if they were not—then the appearance of a horse or cow would have to occur even in a place where there were no stick; whereas it does not.

पविभुत्। क्षें यहित् सेत्र प्राप्त क्षेत्र क्

Physical matter—and all other existing objects—are similar, in that they are established as existing by an unaffected state of mind; and this is because they are constructed by virtue of an unaffected state of mind and names that fit.

र्स्याश्र्रात्याः अर्द्र श्रुश्चात्र स्वाश्वायः यात्र स्वाश्वायः स्वायः स्वाश्वायः स्वायः स्वाश्वयः स्वाश्वयः स्वायः स्वाश्वयः स्वायः स्वयः स्वयः

They do not, however, exist from their own side through some unique identity of their own, without being established as existing by virtue of appearing to an unaffected state of mind. This is because—if they were to exist this way—then they would have to be some ultimate nature. And if they were some ultimate nature, then they would have to be something which is perceived directly by a certain unmistaken state of mind: that meditative wisdom of a realized being who is not yet a Buddha, and who perceives the real nature of things directly. The fact is though that they are not.

## स्ट्रिंग्याम्यम् म्यूयार्थः स्वितः सः स्वातः दुः सूत्यार्थः स्वायाः स्वायाः स्वायाः स्वायाः स्वायाः स्वायाः स्व

In this situation, where a magician makes a stick appear as a horse or cow, two things apply to the members of the audience whose eyes are affected by the magic words and powder: they stick is appearing as a horse or cow, and they believe that it is.

द्वीरक्षे। मान्नेत्विष्ट्रियाञ्चेत्राश्चार्याश्चार्याः क्षेत्रायाः क्षेत्रायाः स्वीतः स्वीतः

The only condition that applies to the magician himself is that a horse or cow is appearing to him; he does not believe in them. And those members of the audience who showed up later—those whose eyes were not affected by the magic words or powder—have neither the horse or cow appearing to them, nor

any belief in the horse or cow. These same three different permutations apply as well to physical matter and all the other existing objects.

### 

Consider "common" people: those who have not yet had their first experience of the perception of emptiness. Both situations apply to them for physical matter and all other existing objects: these things appear to them to exist truly, and they believe in the way they appear.

Consider now bodhisattvas who have reached one of the pure levels. Even though objects appear to their minds, during what we call the "subsequent period," as something which exists truly, they have no belief in them this way. And this is because neither situation applies to realized beings who are not yet Buddhas and who are perceiving the real nature of things directly; that is, physical matter and other objects do not appear to them as if they existed truly, and they do not believe that these objects exist that way.

यदेन्यराश्चीत्या स्टर्मायर व्यव्याप देश्वित्र क्षेत्र त्युवाया देश्वित्र व्यव्याप देश्व त्याप देश्व त्याप व्यव व्यवाया देश्वर व्यवायर व्यव्यापर व्यव्याप देश्वर व्यव्याप देश्वर व्यव्याप देश्वर व्यव्याप देश्वर व्यव्यापर व्यापर व्यव्यापर व्यव्यव्यापर व्यव्यापर व्यव्यव्याप्यापर व्यव्यव्यापर व्यव्यापर व्यव्यव्यापर व्यव्यव्यव्यव्यापर व्यव्

The Consequence and Independent groups of the Middle-Way School hold the same belief about the following things; both schools hold them to be what is denied by the reasoning which examines the ultimate:

- -- a thing that could exist truly;
- -- a thing that could exist purely;
- -- a thing that could exist as thusness;

- -- a thing that could exist ultimately; and
- -- the thought where you hold that anything could exist in any of these ways.

यहें त्रायः देश्वायः द्रायः द्रायः व्यायः वयः व्यायः व्यः

The Independent group does not however agree that the following are what is denied by the reasoning which examines the ultimate:

- -- a thing that existed from its own side;
- -- a thing that existed by nature;
- -- a thing that existed as a substantial thing;
- -- a thing that existed by definition; and
- -- the thought where you hold that anything like physical matter or the rest could exist this way.

And this is true because they believe that—if something exists—it must necessarily exist as the three left over after you exclude a thing that existed as a substantial thing. There is some discussion about the status of constructs; but they believe that, if something is a functional thing, it must exist as a substantial thing.

र्थः मुन्द्रत्त्रात्त्र्यात्रः सम्बद्धः स्वान्यः स्वान्यः स्वान्यः स्वान्यः स्वान्यः स्वान्यः स्वान्यः स्वान्य स्वाः क्ष्यः स्वेदः द्वात्यः सम्बद्धः द्वात्यः स्वान्यः स्

Neither those who follow the Consequence system, nor those who follow the Indpendent system, accept that any of the following could be the final form of the idea denied by the reasoning which examines the ultimate:

- -- a thing that existed as the way things really are;
- -- a thing that existed as ultimate reality; and
- -- a thing that existed as the real nature of things.

#### र्देन द्रमानदेन याधीन न दे मासुमानु मुनायक सुनायक स

And this is true because—if something is ultimate reality—it must always exist as these three as well.

यीयःश्र-देश्स्त्रात्त्रः योश्वरस्यात्रः हीर।

यभ्वतः योश्वर्धात्रः योश्वरस्य प्रत्रः योश्वरस्य प्रत्ये ।

यभ्वतः याव्यः स्रात्त्रे द्वात्त्रः योश्वरस्य प्रत्ये ।

यभ्वतः याव्यः स्रात्त्रे द्वात्त्रः याव्यः स्रात्त्रः स्रात्ते ।

यभ्वतः याव्यः स्रात्त्रे द्वातः याव्यः स्रात्ते ।

यभ्वतः याव्यः स्रात्ते द्वातः याव्यः याव्यः स्रात्ते ।

यभ्वतः याव्यः स्रात्ते ।

यभ्वतः याव्यः याव

And this is true first of all because the *Perfect Explanation, an Illumination of the True Thought*, states that—when the commentary to the *Sixty Verses of Reasoning* describes nirvana as deceptive reality—what it means is that nirvana must be established as existing as ultimate reality with reference to a deceived state of mind. *Distinguishing between the Figurative and the Literal* also states that the real nature of things exists as the real nature of things; and *Opening the Eyes of the Good and Fortune* states that it doesn't automatically mean that something exists ultimately just because it exists as the real nature of things.

योध्यःक्ष्योत्रान्तव्रेत्रःय। योष्यःश्चेरःयो ह्यःश्चेरःयः योष्यःग्चेरःयः विदःयः विदःयः योष्यःश्चेरःयः विदःयः विदःयोः योष्यः विदःयोः योष्यः विदःयोः योष्यः विदःयोः विदःयः विदःयोः योष्यः विदःयोः विद्यायः विदःयोः विद्यायः विदःयोः विद्यायः विदःयोः विद्यायः विदःयोः विद्यायः व

#### र्रेन्यो सर्वन केन्यो अयुवाय पेन्य प्रति प्रते सेन्य न्या

It would be correct to say then that there is a difference in subtlety between the Consequence and Independent versions of the final form of the idea denied by the reasoning which examines the ultimate. This is true first of all because the Independent group accepts the concept that things can exist by definition, through their accepting the concepts of an independent logical reason; of something that could grow from something other than itself; and of something that could exist as a substantial thing.

The idea is moreover supported by the manner in which the schools explain the concept of what is literal and what is figurative. Master Bhavaviveka denies extensively the idea that the Mind-Only School explains the true intent of the middle turning of the wheel to be the concept that constructs do not exist by definition. And when Shantarakshita and his spiritual son explain the way in which the final turning of the wheel comments upon the middle turning, they explain it as meaning that constructs do not exist by definition in an ultimate way, but do exist by definition in a nominal way.

### Asian Classics Institute Practice IX: Mahamudra - The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

#### **Reading Four**

The following selection is drawn from the same text, the Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom (Part Five, ff. 9a-10a). It gives an idea of how valid the Consequence group considers the division of selflessness into three differing degrees of subtlety:

पश्चिम्याद्यात्र्

The Consequence group of the Middle-Way School draws a distinction between the lack of a self-nature of persons and of things, but only relative to the thing it is which is empty of them; they do not however make any distinction between more or less subtle versions of what it is we deny by the reasoning which examines the ultimate. Here in the Independent School though they recognize both these distinctions.

त्र-पुरानश्वास्त्र-स्थानवु-सुरा भाषिय-श्वरा। योट-चयो-लुय-थ-पुरा-सूट-यश-भाषिय-सु। योश्वरा-यो-ल्य-सूट-यश-प्रप्तिय-श्वरा। योट-चयो-लुय-थ-पुरा-सूट-यश-भाषिय-सु। योश्वरा-यो-ल्य-सूट-यश-प्रप्तिय-श्वरा। योट-चयो-लुय-थ-पुरा-सूट-यश-भाषिय-सु। योश्वरा-यो-ल्य-सूट-यश-

And it is relative to this fact that they can say it's not necessarily the case that something is devoid of existing as a self-standing, substantial object if it exhibits the qualities of growing and stopping. They would also say that, just because something is a person, it's not necessarily the case that it is then devoid of this same kind of existence. And this is because both are disproved by the example of consciousness of the thought.

यक्षिराम्यानस्त्रम् विष्यायाम् अत्यान्त्रे स्वर्ते स्व

Consciousness of the thought is [considered to be] the person: Master Bhavaviveka proves this through both scriptural authority and reasoning, and the master we are dealing with here concurs with him.

### दर्ज्ञा वर्झेश्रश्चरत्यत्वत्रश्चरायात्रश्चरायुः वर्ष्व्याः वर्ष्व्याः वर्ष्व्याः वर्ष्व्याः वर्ष्व्याः वर्ष्व्य वर्ष्व्याः वर्ष्क्ष्यश्चरत्यः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः वर्ष्वयः

We can discuss this question in terms of three divisions: reasoning based on contemplation; deep practice based on meditation; and the result of this meditation.

ग्रीशः ब्रेंटः ब्रे। श्रीः वहिनाः उवः ध्येवः पदः श्रीम। द्योमः वाः म्याः विदः हः पदिवाः विदः स्थाः ध्येवः पदः स्थाः स्याः स्थाः स्याः स्थाः स्याः स्थाः स

Consider the heaps that we have taken on.

Here is the first.

They are something which is devoid of being a person who existing as a self-standing, substantial object;

Because they exhibit the qualities of growing and stopping.

They are, for example, like a wagon.

चयाः यो प्यत्याः ध्यतः भी यादः चयाः प्रदः भी श्रुतः प्रवेशः धी यादः भी श्रुतः प्रवेशः प

If something exhibits the qualities of growing and stopping, it cannot be something which exists as a self-standing, substantial object;

Because if something were the self-nature of a person it could never be something which exhibited the qualities of growing and stopping.

And this is true because, if something were this kind of a self-nature, it would have to be something which were unchanging, singular, and independent.

हेश्चर्यम्बर्द्धः स्वार्थः यहेत्रः स्वार्थः व्याप्तः व्याप्तः स्वार्थः स्वर्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वरं स्वर

Consider the fresh, unerring state of mind which grows from this type of reasoning, and which perceives a kind of emptiness which is the fact that the person is devoid of being a self-standing, substantial object. This is a deductive form of valid perception which has realized the lack of a self-nature to the person, and we describe it as being a realization of an emptiness which has grown from contemplation.

## ब्दावर्चयाची होई म्यास्य हें महिमाराय हों माहिमार क्षेत्र महिमार क

Here is the second division, concerning deep practice based on meditation; we describe it as a kind of realization which grows from meditation: one in which a person engaged in deep practice meditates single-pointedly on this same object, utilizing primarily a combination of quietude and vision.

त्तः वेशकात्तरः चुरित्तवुः द्वीर। यो त्यर्यात्वहूष्यं भीषात्यये त्यां कार्य्यः चीरा त्यां क्षेत्रः मुक्ति । त्येषः मुक्ति । त

Now for the third division, the result of this meditation. There is such a result, because directly speaking one eliminates the manifest form of the learned tendency to hold to a self-nature of persons. The meditation also acts to lower the gross power of the innate tendency.

द्याय में प्राप्त क्षेत्र क्ष

We have the same three divisions, of reasoning based on contemplation and so on, for the second level of deep practice. Here is the first.

Consider the color blue.

It is something which is devoid of being of a separate substance from the valid perception which perceives it;

Because it is invariably found in combination with it.

They are, for example, like your awareness in a dream and anger that you may feel during the dream.

You can understand the remaining details, of the deductive perception and so on, from the preceding presentation.

## याद्ययाः भ्रें स्टायाः स्वायदे स्टिन्। वित्र में स्वायदे स्वयदे स्वायदे स्वाय

As for the second, there is a deep practice here that grows from meditation—for it would be the single-pointed meditation, combining both quietude and vision, focussed on this particular object.

The third, the result of the meditation, is also here: for its work,\* it eliminates the manifest form of the thought that objects and the subject states of mind which perceive them are of a separate substance; and this is the case because one has grasped the fact that the state of mind that perceives a disparity is mistaken.

[\*The Tibetan reading here may be a mistake for {DNGOS SU,}, or "directly speaking."]

The third—that is, the level of deep practice in which one perceives emptiness itself—also comes in three divisions. Here is the first.

Consider the state of mind which is "free of the two."

It is not something which exists truly,

Because it is an example of dependent origination.

It is, for example, like an illusion.

The latter two details follow.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next selection is also taken from the Overview (Part Five, f. 3b), and gives an insight into how the Independent group views the function of meditating upon the three degrees of selflessness.

तर्स्रभन्नामान्त्रम्भ्यापान्त्रभाग्नीयः यहिन्द्रभाग्नीयः यहिन्द्रभाग्नियः यहिन्द्रभाग्नियः यहिन्द्रभाग्नियः यहिन्द्रभाग्नियः यहिन्द्रभाग्नियः यहिन्द्रभाग्नियः यहिन्द्रभाग्

र्श्वर्यं वार्श्वर्यं संस्थान स्थान स्थान

"Well then," you may think to yourself, "how do we in our own position describe the process by which one eliminates the various impurities?" It has been taught that:

One can gain the ability to put a total end to the three—that is, to the obstacles of the mental afflictions, to the gross obstacles to omniscience, and to the subtle obstacles to omniscience—if one meditates with that wisdom which grows from meditation and which sees directly the three degrees of the lack of a self-nature; this itself grows from following the practices of study and meditation to come to an understanding of these three.

Given this statement, it is not the case that in our own position we believe—as do those who assert the existence of functional things which exist truly—that one can eliminate impurities that one asserts exist in truth. The citation rather is demonstrating the principal tenet of how our own system describes the process of eliminating the two obstacles; that is, that we eliminate impurities by meditating upon how these same impurities lack any true existence.

\*\*\*\*\*

The next selection introduces, briefly, the concept of the three levels of deep practice that correlate to the three degrees of selflessness. It is taken from The "Cloud of Offerings, which Pleases the Wise, and Illuminates the True Thought of the Treatise known as the 'Ornament of Realizations,'" being a Combined Word Commentary and Dialectical Analysis of the Fifth Chapter of the Treatise, by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748), also an illustrious author of textbooks for Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery (ACIP electronic text S0195, Part Five, ff. 11b-12a).

।याद्येश्रायास्यायो विष्यूया बुद्राया विष्यूया बुद्राय विषयो से त्राचीत प्रति से याद्राया स्थाया विष्यूया बुद्

## षदः संस्थितः महिषासुः प्रदेशः प्रदेशः प्रदेशः स्थाः स्याः स्थाः स्याः स्थाः स्याः स्थाः स

Here secondly is the position of our own school. The essential nature of a level of deep practice can be defined as follows:

It is that state of knowledge which is of the type that provides a foundation for the combination of quietude and vision, and which can be classified as a viewpoint in the dichotomy between actions and viewpoints.

ईत्यत्वर्त्त्रिरः क्ष्रीः श्राप्त्रः क्ष्रीयाः स्वाध्याः स्वाधः स्वधः स्वाधः स्वधः स्वाधः स्वाधः स्वाधः स्वाधः स्वाधः स्वाधः स्वाधः स्वधः स्वाधः

Levels of this kind can be divided into three: the level of deep practice wherein you realize the selflessness of the person; the level of deep practice wherein you realize the gross selflessness of objects; and the level of deep practice wherein you realize emptiness itself.

\*\*\*\*\*

We return next to Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye's work, for more detail on the function of the realizations of the three degrees of selflessness (Part Five, f. 8b):

यचिर-येयान्यः भ्रूंच्यान्यः भ्रूंच्यान्यः येय्यान्यः येय्यः येय्

In terms of their identities, the various levels of deep practice are stated to be four; but from the point of view of their actual nature, their number is exactly three, for the following reasons. Relative to the teachings which express them, the word of the Buddha, the number is precisely three. Relative to what you meditate upon—that is, the uninterrupted path—the count is also three. Relative to the disciple who is meant to be lead with them, the number is three, and so it is with the mark they leave: exactly three.

द्र-र्याने स्वराधिक त्या विषय स्वर्थ स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्थ स्वर्य स्वय स्वय्य स

The first of these reasons is correct because the three stages of the turning of the wheel set forth, one by one, the three degrees of selflessness; and what is being explained here are the stages by which one meditates upon these three.

याकुरुप्तः ने प्रमाणिकः ने। यदेवे स्वाप्त विकासिकः यो स्वार्थः स्वार्थः विकासिकः स्वार्थः स्वार्यः स्वार्थः स्वर्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वर्थः स्वार्थः स्वर्यः स्वर

The second of the reasons is correct because the three levels of deep practice here are set forth according to the order of the views of reality which perceive the three degrees of selflessness.

पश्चिम्पाद्या रेषाक्षात्र पश्चिम्पाद्य स्थात् स्यात् स्थात् स्यात् स्थात् स्थात् स्थात् स्थात् स्थात् स्थात् स्थात् स्थात् स्था

The third reason is correct because disciples of the three types do their meditation by taking, as their principal object of meditation, these same three levels of deep practice, respectively.

#### यक्षिमार्श्वेद्रायदे सुप्तदे काया दे त्यमास्य स्थान्येषा सुद्रायदे सुर्

The fourth is correct because one attains the three knowledges of the path through meditating upon these three levels of deep practice. In sum, the levels of deep practice number exactly three, since you must definitely meditate upon these three levels to attain the goal of the great enlightenment; no more than these three are required as parts of the view which allows one to eliminate the two obstacles, and these can not be abbreviated into fewer groups.

\*\*\*\*\*

The same work gives an insight into the relationship between the three types of selflessness (Part One, f. 117a):

यःशुःतबरःतदःश्च्र्रिःत्वयःश्चरःत्वारःश्चेता । वित्रुण्णुःत्रेःत्वःश्चेरःविशःश्चरःत्वःश्चेरः। शुःश्चेतःतःत्वशुःत्वरःत्वा वात्रवःश्चेत्वरःत्वाश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतः त्रेश्चेतःतःत्वशुःत्वरःत्वा वात्रवःश्चेत्वरःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतः। श्चेत्रःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेरः। त्रेश्चेतःत्वरःश्चेतःत्वरःत्वेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतःत्वःश्चेतः।

This too would be incorrect, because at the point where the text makes the statement beginning with "Here the six objects of realization and. . ." it is demonstrating that the fact that the thirteen practices are empty of any true existence constitutes the resident nature which is the foundation of the practice of the greater way; at this juncture (1) a rebuttal is being directed to reject the idea that the division into the three types and those who belong to these three types is incorrect. And (2) your point has no connection here.

#### ह्मार्था सुरार्था यदमा सेदास्य मार्था मार्थित स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स्वारा स

The second part of our reason is correct, because the three degrees of selflessness are all mutually exclusive.

\*\*\*\*\*

We return to Choney Lama's treatise for the next selection, which comments on whether the lower degrees of selflessness are true emptiness:

### ह्याबाग्री: सेट. श्रेया शायाश्वया त्या अहं दा श्रेया श्री स्वा विष्या विष्या विष्या विष्या विष्या विष्या विष्य साह्या विषया व

Suppose someone comes and makes the following claim:

It must too be the case that the uninterrupted path in the mind of a person at the end of the process realizes, directly, the form of emptiness which is the absence of a separate substance to physical matter and the valid perception which perceives this physical matter,

Because it perceives this fact directly in a single briefest instant of action.

#### देर खता देश दे. दे. से मार्थ श्रीया विया

[We disagree with your reason.]

But you can't, because it does have the capacity to do so.

Our answer would be that it doesn't necessarily follow.

And one could never agree with your position, because we are talking about the uninterrupted path in the higher way.

## क्षेट्र म्यून्य म्यून्य प्रत्य प्रत्

[It doesn't necessarily follow.]

But it does necessarily follow, because that emptiness represented by the absence of a separate substance to physical matter and the valid perception which perceives this physical matter is deceptive reality.

\*\*\*\*\*

We turn next to a discussion of the distinction between the three tracks mentioned above and the three scopes as described in the teachings on the steps of the path to enlightenment (the lam-rim). The following selection is taken from the Great Book on the Steps of the Path (the Lam-rim chen-mo) of Je Tsongkapa (ACIP electronic text \$5392, f. 58b):

त्रियाक्ष्यः क्ष्यः प्रत्यः स्वर्यः स

All those teachings that were given from the point of view of the tracks of the Listeners and the Self-Made Buddhas can be classified either as teachings that belong to the medium scope itself, or as teachings which are shared with the medium scope. This is because a person of the medium scope reaches a feeling of disgust for every form of this suffering circle of life, and works towards the goal of achieving—for his own sake—the goal of a freedom in which he is freed from the circle.

यमः क्रेंद्र यहा

बिश्यम्बर्ध्यायदेः यहेर्याः स्थ्याः विद्याः व

And this is so because the Lamp for the Path says,

Consider a person who has turned away
From pleasures of the circle of life,
And who has at this very same time turned back
From actions which are negative.
A person who thus is aspiring to
A state of peace for themselves
Is the one that we refer to
As one of the "medium scope."

\*\*\*\*\*

Here finally is a note on the concept of being "substantial," since it is important in the Independent group's description of the gross form of a self-nature to persons. The following selection is taken from Master Changkya Rolpay Dorje's classic Presentation of the Schools of Philosophy (ACIP electronic text S0062, Part Three, ff. 26a-26b).

यक्षित्रः स्वायन्त्रम्भः यो श्राध्यः स्वायः स्व स्वायः स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं न्यः स्वायः स्वयः स्वयः

Generally speaking, there are a great many occurrences of the terms "substantial" and "constructed" in the great works of philosophy. In a general sense, there is no problem in applying the word "substantial" to anything that exists at all, and this is the sense in the phrase, "Once something exists, it can only be substantial." The opposite of this would be something that was constructed; something like the two kinds of a self-nature, which—even though they are held to exist by the imagination—are not something which actually exists.

र्देन नुन्द्रम्य परिष्ट्रम्य परिष्ट्य परिष्ट्रम्य परिष्ट्रम्य परिष्ट्रम्य परिष्ट्रम्य परिष्ट्रम्य परि

"Substantial" in the sense of being able to perform a function refers to functional things; the opposite of this one would be "constructed" things in the sense of general identities.

यहें या हो या का त्यां या त्य

"Substantial" in the sense of being something stable, unchanging, refers to things like unproduced, empty space; a cessation of undesirable objects due to the separate analysis [of the four realized truths during the path of seeing]; and a cessation of undesirable objects not due to such an analysis. The "constructed" things that were the opposite of these would be changing things.

चुर्-रट-ग्रीय-यम्याका-ग्री-क्र्य-संभवा-स्र्रा। श्वय-ग्री-विका-ता-संभवा-स्र्रा । विद्वेद्ध-तर्भ्या-स्र्याका-ग्री-यम्बाका-स्र्राविका-स्राम्याका-स्राम्याका-स्र

"Substantial" in the sense of being self-standing refers to things like the objects that are held by sense consciousnesses, or self-supporting states of mind. The opposite of this kind of substantial would be "constructed" things in the form of changing things which are neither physical nor mental, as well as constructs of the mind.

न्निर्यं मुक्तिः स्वार्ये न्त्री । न्निर्यं मुक्तिः स्वार्ये न्त्री । न्निर्यं मुक्तिः स्वार्ये न्त्री ।

As such, only the last version of "substantial" is the actual one; the previous types are all only "substantial" in name.

यिषयः ततुः क्र्याः में स्थाः त्रीं स्थाः त

#### বক্তম বাই ক্রিয়াম স্থ্রব বি।

Here is the real meaning of this last sense of "substantial":

Anything which is (1) an existing object; and which (2) is self-supporting, in the sense of being able to appear in the mind independently, without relying on the process of appearing in the mind only through the appearance in the mind of other objects first.

यम्याबर्यस्य क्रिं स्वरं द्वे स्वरं क्रिं स्वरं स्वरं

And here is the real meaning of this last sense of "constructed":

Anything which is (1) an existing object; and which (2) is something which must rely on the process of appearing in the mind only through the appearance in the mind of other objects first.

\*\*\*\*\*

Further clarification of this point appears in the same text (Part Three, ff. 26b-27a):

द्री विन्द्रिः स्टामुः स्वरः स्वाप्तः स्वाप्तः स्वाप्तः स्वाप्तः स्वरः स्वरः

The meaning of "substantial in the sense of self-standing" here, and the meaning "substantial in the sense of self-standing" when we speak of the lack of a self-nature to the person, are not the same—great thinkers distinguish

between them as follows. The phrase here is used only to describe something which can appear in the mind in an independent way, without relying on the process of appearing in the mind only after some other objects have appeared in it first. That other use of the phrase describes a controller of the heaps of a particular person who is at the same time independent of the same heaps being controlled: a kind of a director who is self-standing.

वार ब्रा की प्रत्या प्रत्यों का प्रत्ये के का स्था प्रत्ये के स्था प्रत्ये के स्था के

If you use the reasoning that helps you deny the possibility that a self-nature of persons could exist, and thereby deny that the person could exist substantially, then the person must beyond doubt become something which is constructed. At this point then you must establish a way to verify that a person is constructed. This is done first by establishing that there could be no person of this type that could be a self-standing object; by implication then, one comes to realize that the person is something only constructed, on the basis of a composite or a stream of parts.

देश्-वृत्तेः माद्रः विद्यान्य विद्याः विद्य

The way in which we say that a person like this is just a construct is that the specific identity of the person cannot appear in the mind without relying on a basis for the construct (the heaps)—along with words, concepts, and so on. The meaning of what it is for the person to be constructed is that the specific

identity of the person can only appear in the mind through these other things appearing first. Therefore what it means when we say that a person is "something constructed" is the same as what we mean when we speak of things that are constructed here at this point in the present text.

For this reason, the meaning of the word "substantial" as we use it with the "substantial" person whose existence we are refuting should be understood as refering to that "substantial" which is the opposite of this same "constructed"—this is something proven through the reasoning which denies other extremes. As such, the essential point is the same as with the "substantial" you find here.

## Asian Classics Institute Practice IX: Mahamudra - The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

#### **Reading Five**

The following selection gives a brief but exquisite description of how the concept of emptiness is explained by followers of the Consequence group of the Middle-Way School of Buddhism (the Madhyamika Prasangika). It is taken from the Overview of the Middle Way (dBu-ma spyi-don) by Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568), an eminent author of textbooks for Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery (ACIP electronic text number S0021, ff. 125a-126b).

लीलानुन्दा। नुराल्नुन्ध्रन्ध्रामाणीक्निन्दान्त्राक्ष्याक्षाणीः श्रीत्राच्याम् श्रीत्राच्याम श्रीत्याम श्रीत्राच्याम श्रीत्राच्याम श्रीत्राच्याम श्रीत्र श्रीत्राच्याम श्रीत्राच्याम श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्य श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्र श्रीत्य श्रीत्र श्रीत्य

Here we will analyze the statement [from *Entering the Middle Way*, by Master Chandrakirti (650 AD)] where it says, "...The mind of a craving spirit as well, which sees a stream of water as pus." One may begin with the following question:

Let's consider the objects of the following states of mind: the visual consciousness of a craving spirit where a river of water looks like pus and blood; the visual consciousness of a person with a kind of cataract where a clean white porcelain basin looks like a hair has fallen into it; and that kind of meditation where you visualize skeletons—where you imagine that the entire surface of the earth is covered with the bones of corpses. Are all these objects completely equivalent, as far as being something that exists or doesn't exist?

देश्याचन्द्रप्तिः । त्याचन्द्रप्तिः । त्याचन्द्रप्ता । व्याचन्द्रप्ता । व्याचन्द्रपत्ता । व्याचन्ता । व्याचन्द्रपत्ता । व्याचन्ता । व्याचन्द्रपत्ता । व्याचन्द्रपत्ता । व्याचन्द्रपत्ता । व्याचन

प्रि: द्वायः दुनः वर्त्ते स्वायः दनः । । प्रे: द्वायः दुनः वर्ते । स्वायः देवायः द्वायः । । प्रे: द्वायः दुनः वर्ते । स्वायः स्वायः । स्वयः । स्वय

In reply we will first set forth a relevant passage, and then we will explain the passage. Here is the first. The text called *The Abbreviation of the Greater Way* says,

Insofar as craving spirits, animals, Humans, and pleasure beings, each according To their class, have differing perceptions Of a single thing, we say it has no reality.

#### विषान्ता नेवे प्रवास्त्रमान्ये पर्या पर्यं नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्ये नाम्य

Asvabhava, the holy layman with lifetime vows, has explained the passage. His words include the following:

When they look at *a single thing*, a stream of water, each one sees what the ripening of his particular karma forces him to see. A *craving spirit* sees the river full of pus and blood and the like.

#### ने केन त्यानुन वर्षे त्या स्वामा समामान सामी क्षेत्र या निकार में निकार समामित समाम समामित समाम समामित समामित स

An *animal* or such, on the other hand, thinks of this same water as a place to stay, and makes his home there.

#### 

Humans look at the same thing and perceive it as water—sweet, clear, and cool. They drink of it, they wash themselves with it, and they swim in it.

अस्ट क्षी या च्याका ग्री. यर्टे. जेका क्षा तर स्वेया ततु स्वेर हो । विकाया श्री टका ततु स्वेर। विकाया श्री या च्याका ग्री. अस्ट राजा क्षेत्र का तर स्वेया या ततु स्वेर क्षा क्षा या स्वाय स्वाय स्वाय स्वाय स

Those pleasure beings who are wrapped in deep meditation at the level we call the "realm of limitless space" see the water as empty space, for their ability to conceptualize physical matter has dissolved altogether.

Here secondly we will explain the meaning of the text we quoted first. We proceed in three steps: disproving the position of others, establishing our own position, and then refuting their rebuttal. Here is the first.

षक्तान्त्रम् कुष्मक्ष्यं भेत्रक्ष्यं भेत्रक्षयं भेत्रक्षयं

Someone may make the following claim:

Given the statements that have come above, the fact is that we should never again consider anything as being one way or the other.

Well then, you must be suggesting that the system of the Buddha is all the same as the system of every non-Buddhist belief, that there is no difference in their correctness at all. And you must be saying too that we could never state that our Teacher was the highest teacher, and that the teachers of the non-Buddhists are lesser.

क्रमायम् । यहेन्या व्याप्त । यहेन्या व्यापत । यहेन्या । यहेन्या व्यापत । यहेन्या व्यापत । यहेन्या व्यापत । यहेन्या व्यापत । यहेन्या । यहेन्या

।यन्याः तेः श्रेंदः यः याल्दः श्रुट्यः दया

#### बिश्यासुरस्यः धरे द्वीर।

And you must be suggesting all this, for you have claimed that we should never again consider anything as being one way or the other.

Now if you should agree that none of the differences mentioned above exist, we must reply that they do, for as the verse says:

All other teachers now I've given up, And go for refuge now to only You; Why? Because it's You alone who has No fault, and perfected every good.

स्त्र क्र प्यत्र क्षेत्र स्त्र प्रत्र प्रत्र क्षेत्र प्राचित्र क्षेत्र प्राचित्र क्षेत्र प्राचित्र क्षेत्र प्र क्षेत्र क्षेत्र प्राचित्र प्राचित्र प्राचित्र प्राचित्र क्षेत्र क्ष

Someone else might make the following claim:

Suppose a pleasure being, a human, and a craving spirit sit down together and look at a glass filled with water: the thing that we define as "wet and flowing." Since to the perceptions of each different type of being it is real, the glass full of wet and flowing water is in reality pus and blood to the eyes of the craving spirit, and in reality water to the eyes of the human, and in reality ambrosia to the eyes of the pleasure being.

रेदः क्र.व.च्यां च.चाश्रुशः सं.रेदः श्रेयाः वेशः बश्चशः ४८.क्र. शः त्रोवेरः च.क्र.क्र. च.चादः वेयाः क्र. व्यादः वेयाः वेशः व्यादः वेशः विष्ठः व्यादः विष्ठः विष्ठः व्यादः विष्ठः विष्रः विष्ठः विष्ठ

द्वेर। इंग्राह्मनायाः अंग्राह्मने देवे के त्वे नाम्युक्षामाध्ये सान्दान्त व्यापानायाः साम्युक्षामारा के नाम्या इंग्राह्मनायाः यो देवे के त्वे नाम्युक्षामाध्ये सान्दान्त के साध्ये साम्युक्षामारा के नाम्या के साम्या स्वाप्त इंग्राह्मनायाः यो देवे के त्वे नाम्या स्वाप्त साम्या स्वाप्त साम्या स्वाप्त साम्या स्वाप्त साम्या स्वाप्त साम्य

We ask you then a question: in the situation you've just described, is it that the visual consciousness of all three beings are a valid perception, or is it that only one or two of them are a valid perception?

Suppose you say all three are valid. Well then, the glass of something wet and flowing, of water, must be full of something that is all three different things: pus and blood, and each of the others. And then too it must be possible for there to be multiple and yet still valid perceptions which see one thing in two completely incompatible ways. And finally there must be such a thing as a valid perception which correctly perceives that the glass is filled with something which is simultaneously water and yet not water.

Why so? Because, according to your view, the three differing cases of visual consciousness possessed by the three different beings would all have to be valid perception.

दर्र-विक्रान्त्रक्षेत्रः विक्रान्त्रक्षेत्रः स्वर्धितः स्वर्यतः स्वर्धितः स्वर्यतः स्वर्धितः स्वर्धितः स्वर्यतः स्वर्यत

And if you try to agree to these absurdities, you are wrong, for the quality of being pus and blood is incompatible with the quality of being either one of the other two substances mentioned. Moreover, the quality of being water and the quality of not being water are directly incompatible in such a way that, if something exists and lacks one of these qualities, it must then possess the other.

Someone may answer with the following claim:

In the case mentioned, the visual consciousness of the human is a valid perception, but the visual consciousnesses of the other two types of beings are not valid perception. These latter two see something like the pus and blood, and the ambrosia, only because their karma (which is good in one case, and bad in the other) forces them to.

द्र्यः श्रुप्तः श्रुप्तः श्रुप्तः स्त्रः स्त

Well then, according to you, the visual consciousness of the human wouldn't be valid perception either. Because isn't it true that the human sees the water only because his karma (which in this case is halfway between the good and the bad just mentioned) forces him to?

Moreover, aren't you implying then that there is no such thing as a valid tactile consciousness, or a valid auditory consciousness, in the mental stream of any being who is not a human? Because aren't you saying that there's no such thing as a valid visual consciousness in the mental stream of any such being?

Certainly you are, for you believe your original position to be correct. And suppose now that you do agree that such beings can have no such valid consciousnesses.

वर्षा वर्रेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षा वर्रेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षेन्यवे हुर।
वर्षेन्यवे हुर।

Aren't you then implying that these beings never have any case where they are able to reach a definite conclusion about something, or to analyze an object? And if so, aren't you implying that there could never be a case where one of these beings could recognize another? Of course you are, given your position.

र्म्यक्ष्यंत्राचा वस्त्रं ब्रिट्याविर वाक्ष्यं प्राचार में देशके क्ष्यं प्राचार क्ष्यं विराधित वस्त्रं विराधि

Here secondly is the section where we establish our own position. Now suppose three different types of beings—a pleasure being, a human, and a craving spirit, each with their own karma—sit down together and look upon a glass filled with water, the thing we define as "wet and flowing." The glass of water is not at this point one thing which is simultaneously three different objects. Neither is it necessary in this situation for there to be three identical valid perceptions. And when the glass full of wet and flowing water occurs, it occurs with three different, distinct parts to it.

[Translator's note: When the phrase "wet and flowing" (the definition of the element of water) is used here, it should be understood as emphasizing the more general concept of a liquid, rather than the water which the human perceives.]

चम्नेत्रावश्यानेत्राचीयार्थ्यावश्यावश्यान्त्राचीयाः प्रस्ति । स्वर्ध्यान्त्राचीयाः प्रस्ति । स्वर्ध्यान्त्राचीयाः स्वर्ध्यान्त्राचीयाः स्वर्ध्याः स्वर्ध्यः स्वर्ध्याः स्वर्ध्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्य

It is not though the case that, from the time it first started, the glass of water came with the three different parts, or that they stay with the glass of water until it eventually ends. What happens is that one of the parts of the glass filled with wet and flowing water provides a material cause, and the karma of the craving spirit provides a contributing factor; and then based on both of these the later continuation of one part of the glass of water starts being blood and pus.

Another part of the glass of water again provides a material cause, and the karma of the human provides a contributing factor; and then based on both of these the later continuation of one part of the glass of water starts being water.

सिर्वे कर्षा देवे कर्षा योष्ट्रमायीया के राये प्रत्या स्वे स्वर्थ स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्थ स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्

Yet another part of the glass of water provides a material cause, and the karma of the pleasure being provides a contributing factor; and then based on both of these the later continuation of one part of the glass of water starts being ambrosia, and so on.

द्याःशः चार्त्रेश्वः ताः त्याः विश्वः त्यः चीः ताः त्याः विश्वः व

At this point, the glass full of wet and flowing water is something with three different parts. Nonetheless, it is not the case that all three different beings see all three parts. The craving spirit is forced by the bad karma he has collected to see the glass of water as pus and blood; and he doesn't see the other two things. One should understand that a similar case holds with the latter two types of beings.

लाय-तर्र-ज्र्ट्य-स्क्रीं र-यी-लाय-त्या क्रयाय-त्य-स्त्र-त्याय-स्त्र-त्य-स्त्र-स्त्र-स्त्र-स्त्र-स्त्र-स्त्र-स् रेत्र-स्र-त्यी-स्क्रा-याश्य-स्वर-त्र-भ्री-य-भ-लाय-स्र-स्य-स्य-स्य-स्त्र-स्त्र-भ्री-स्य-प्र-स्य-स्य-स्त्र-स्त्

What we just described as happening is only with reference to where a glass of something wet and flowing is an object shared by the three different beings, as they look at it together. When the craving spirit himself though picks up the

glass in his hand and begins to partake of its contents, the glass of liquid is no longer something that exists with three different parts. Since at this point it is something that the craving spirit is experiencing exclusively, its continuation starts being pus and blood.

पश्चान्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभ्वत्यात्त्रभ्वत्यात्त्रभावत्त्रभात्त्रभावत्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभात्त्रभावत्त्रभात्त्रभावत्त्यस्यत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्यस्यत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्यस्यत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्यस्यत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्यस्यत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्त्रभावत्

How the glass of liquid exists originally all depends on the particular outer world from where it has been taken, for each of the three different beings has a different outer world, depending on the specific karma he himself has collected. If the glass of liquid were sweet, cool water taken from the world of humans—a world created by the specific karma of the human in the group—then that would be its original condition, and so on.

मूचायाक्षा अक्ष्म् अक्ष्म् अक्ष्म् अक्ष्म् अक्ष्म् यात्र स्वाधिया अस्ट या यात्र स्वाधिया अस्ट यात्र स्वाधिया यात्र स्वाधिया अस्ट यात्र स्वाधिया यात्र स्वाधिय यात्र स्वाधिया यात्र स्वाधिय यात्र स्वाधि

When we say that a craving spirit looks at a stream of water and sees pus and blood, by the way, we are only talking about some kinds of craving spirits, and not all of them. This is because there are many kinds of craving spirits: some with obstacles in the world around them that prevent them from relieving their craving; some with obstacles that are parts of their bodies; and some with obstacles that relate to the food or drink itself.

यान्तरेष्ठ व्या अवाकाक्रवाकायात्र यावायक्ष याव्यायात्र व्याप्त हेते क्षेत्र व्याप्त हेते क्षेत्र व्याप्त व्यापत्र व्यापत्य व्यापत्र व्यापत्य व्यापत्र व्यापत्य व्याप

# क्रेंद्र रेवा नु विवार्क्षेट्र नित्र नु विवार्क्षेट्र नित्र विवार्क्षेट्र विवार्क्षेत्र विवार्क्षेट्र विवार्क्ष विवार्क्षेट्र विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्य विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्य विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्य विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्य विवार्क्ष विवार्क्ष विवार्क्य विवार्क्ष विवार्य विवार्य विवार्य विवार्य विवार्य विवार्य विवार्क्ष विवार्य विव

There is, moreover, an example we can use for how, when the three different types of beings with their three karmas look all together at a glass full of something wet and flowing, there start to be three different objects, each confirmed by a valid perception. Suppose there is a ball of red-hot steel; one piece of this ball provides the material cause, and the "mantra of steel" provides a contributing factor. Due to these two, a person who has used the mantra of steel on his hand can touch the ball, but he doesn't undergo any sensation of heat; instead, he feels some other sensation. A person who has not used the mantra on his hand touches the ball and does feel a sensation of heat, and no other kind of sensation.

Another example would be the moon in springtime; one part of the feel of its rays on the body provides the material cause, and then the karma of a craving spirit provides a contributing factor. Based on these two, the spirit gets a sensation of heat, which is experienced by the consciousness of the body.

So too with the wintertime sun; one part of the feel of its rays on the body provides the material cause, and then the karma of the craving spirit provides a contributing factor. Based on these two, the spirit gets a sensation cold, which is experienced by the consciousness of the body.

वि:यवट्रक् तार्यीयः मुःश्रेष्टर्याटः। नि:येयायः म्यायः स्थ्यः ताः स्थायः प्रीयः स्थायः ने:योयः म्यायः स्थ्यः स्थायः स्थायः स्थायः स्थायः स्थायः स्थायः ने:योयः स्थायः स्थ्यः स्थायः स्य

#### বিশ্বাধ্যমে শ্রম্

It is a fact that they get this kind of sensation, for [Arya Nagarjuna's] *Letter to a Friend* states:

For craving spirits, even the light of the moon In the spring is hot, and even the winter sun cold.

श्रीत्रात्ते श्रीत्रा देत्रः वया के अद्भेत्त्र स्वात्ते स्वात्ते स्वात्ते श्रीत्रात्ते श्रीत्र स्वात्ते स्वाते स्वात्ते

All of this is caused by the extraordinary circumstances of the particular time and place, for generally speaking it never happens this way: there is nothing at all about the sun that can feel cold, and nothing about the moon that can feel hot. This too is a fact, for there does not exist on the sun any case of that substance we call "covered space."

\*\*\*\*\*

When the text of the Essence of Eloquence was taught to members of ACI by Geshe Tupten Rinchen at Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery, he took great pains to point out that it is not correct—as some Western scholars have stated—that Je Tsongkapa himself adhered to the tenets of the Mind-Only School. The following selection to show that he follows, of course, the beliefs of the Consequence group is taken from the concluding pages of our root text [ACIP electronic text S5396, ff. 112a-112b].

Now suppose you come and ask the following:

We have a question for you. You have shown us how the systems of the two great innovators make the distinction between those parts of the highest of all spoken words which are figurative, and those which are literal. And there are a great variety of ways in which the different kings of all great thinkers have commented upon the true intent of these two. Tell us now—which of these master commentators do you follow; how is it that you yourself decide on what is literal, and what is it that you believe is the ultimate?

विष्यास्त्रीत्यायस्य प्रति स्त्रीत्या स्त्रीत्य स्त्रीत्या स्त्रीत्य स्त्रीत्या स्त्रीत्य स्त्रीत्या स्त्रीत्या स्त्रीत्या स्त्रीत्य स्त्रीत्य

We answer with the following lines:

I can't deny that I feel respect from the bottom of my heart

For all the fine words ever taught by the jewels among this world's sages;

The reasoning though of dependence, invariable, for the cycle and what's beyond

Acts to destroy our tendency to see things to be by the features they have.

विश्वाम् स्ट्रिंश्याक्ष स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्वे स्वर्यः स्वर्धः स्वर्यः स्वर्वे स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्

And when this pure white light of the Moon,\* this excellent explanation,

Has opened wide the night-blooming lotus, the eyes of the intellect,

And we finally see that path set before us by Buddhapalita,

Who then would fail to hold as their core Nagarjuna's excellent way?

[\*Translator's note: The "Moon" here (chandra in Sanskrit) is an allusion to Master Chandrakirti.]

र्मित्रः स्रमः यविद्वानी दे विद्वानी स्वानित्रः विद्वानी स्वानित्

And so—in the context of the way of the perfections—it is the systems of the two great innovators that have spread widely; systems by which, in the ways we have described above, the meaning of that highest of spoken words is divided into the literal and the figurative, to determine what thusness really is. But it is also the case that those wise men who have commented upon the great works of the way of the secret word, and the eminent practitioners of this way, have set forth the meaning of thusness in keeping with one or the other of these very two systems; there is no third system between the two. You should understand then that this method is the path for determining the meaning of thusness for each and every one of the works of the highest of speech, whether we are talking of the open or the secret teachings.

And so imagine a person who tried to find the meaning of thusness without relying on a system taught by one of the great innovators of the two methods. They would be like a blind person without a guide for the blind, racing towards some very dangerous place.

क्रेन्गुःमित्र्यः व्यान्त्रः व्यान्त्रः व्यान्त्रः व्यान्त्रः व्यान्त्रः व्यान्त्रः व्यान्तः व्यानः व्यान्तः व्यान्तः व्यान्तः व्यान्तः व्यान्तः व्यान्तः व्यानः व्यान्तः व्यानः व्यान्तः व्यान्त

And suppose that a person did want to rely on one of these systems, but had not spent a good deal of time acquanting themselves with their great books. Suppose, in particular, that they were relying only on a few short descriptions to determine the difference between those teachings of the Buddha which were figurative, and those which were literal—without having a proper understanding of the subtle, crucial points of reasoning involved. People like this would be taking refuge in words only; and even if they were to attempt to talk about thusness, it would be only words, without any essence.

चूँच.क्षेत्र.क्ष्र्याब्धटा। त्रश्चात्र्याच्यात्रः च्याः याच्याच्याः याच्याः याय्याः य

Try to see how this is true, and never be satisfied with seeing even some great number of the more obvious crucial points on these questions. Make the effort to acquaint yourself well with both the gross and more subtle keys of reasoning that the two great innovators have given us as eyes to see into the Buddha's teaching. And then let your labors continue to flow, like some great stream, coming to an understanding of the profound points of the far-reaching traditions, and the profound traditions, and the more-profound-than-profound traditions, in the teachings of the Buddha.

योष्ट्रभाविश्वास्त्रीत् अत्रान्त्रीत् अत्रान्ति अत्रानि अत्

Take then lastly whatever you have understood and make it the very heart of your own personal spiritual practice: it is for the likes of you, for those of intelligence who hope to see the teachings of the Victorious Ones remain long in our world, that I have set down into words this *Essence of Eloquence*.

Λ	THE ASIAN CLASSICS
X	INSTITUTE

PRACTICE IX

Mahamudra: The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class One

1) The word "Mal	namudra" m	eans "Great	Seal." Ex	xplain tl	he real	meaning o	f each	of
these two words.	(Tibetan tra	ck give the	Tibetan.)					

2) What are the two kinds of Mahamudra?

- 3) Mahamudra is basically a study of the emptiness of the mind itself. What are four advantages of studying the emptiness of the mind, as opposed to the emptiness of objects in general?
  - a)
  - b)
  - c)
  - d)



Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Two

1) It most often seems almost random when we encounter something that we either like or don't like. Describe the "flavor" of "emptiness" that denies that anything is an accident. (Tibetan track give the Tibetan also.)

2) Much of the trouble in our lives comes from judging what we are not really capable of judging. Judgements depend on labels—on how we interpret something. Describe the "flavor" of "emptiness" that addresses how we label things. (Tibetan track give Tibetan also.)



Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Three

1) Explain the metaphor of the magic show that the Independent group of the Middle-Way School uses to help describe their version of emptiness.

2) One of the "flavors" of "emptiness" is very useful for understanding the process of transforming problems into opportunities. Describe it. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)



Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Four

1) What is the one "flavor" of "emptiness" that allows for creating a Buddha paradise, where you live as an enlightened being made of light? (Tibetan track name in Tibetan.)

2) What is the main difference between emptiness flavor #5 and flavor #6? (Tibetan track describe in Tibetan.)



PRACTICE IX

Mahamudra: The Empti

Mahamudra: The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Homework, Class Five

1) A person gets in a car accident; their head goes through the windshield, and they die. Explain the difference between *how* they died and *why* they died—that is, the difference between the apparent cause and the real cause.

2) Describe the role of an act of truth (*satyachara*) in the liberation of India, and the distinction between the apparent results and the real results of our actions.

3) What percentage of what happens to us in the present moment comes from our past thoughts, words, and deeds; and what percentage happens from what we are doing now? Which is to say—what percentage of things have emptiness, and what percentage are self-existent?

4) Describe the difference between "roboclaws" and "gardening."

5) What is very simple and obvious indication that the "roboclaws" approach to life is wrong?



PRACTICE IX

Mahamudra: The Emp

Mahamudra: The Emptiness of the Mind, in Six Different Flavors

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class One

1) The word "Mahamudra" means "Great Seal." Explain the real meaning of each of these two words. (Tibetan track give the Tibetan.)

2) What are the two kinds of Mahamudra?



Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Two

1) It most often seems almost random when we encounter something that we either like or don't like. Describe the "flavor" of "emptiness" that denies that anything is an accident. (Tibetan track give the Tibetan also.)

λ	THE ASIAN CLASSICS
X	Institute

Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class Three

1) Explain the metaphor of the magic show that the Independent group of the Middle-Way School uses to help describe their version of emptiness.

Λ	THE ASIAN CLASSICS
X	Institute

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Four

1) What is the one "flavor" of "emptiness" that allows for creating a Buddha paradise, where you live as an enlightened being made of light? (Tibetan track name in Tibetan.)



Name:
Date:
Grade:

Quiz, Class Five

1) A person gets in a car accident; their head goes through the windshield, and they die. Explain the difference between *how* they died and *why* they died—that is, the difference between the apparent cause and the real cause.

2) Describe the role of an act of truth (*satyachara*) in the liberation of India, and the distinction between the apparent results and the real results of our actions.



Answer Key, Class One

1) The word "Mahamudra" means "Great Seal." Explain the real meaning of each of these two words. (Tibetan track give the Tibetan.)

"Seal" (*mudra*) refers to emptiness, or the ultimate nature of all existing things. "Great" (*maha*) means also "highest," emptiness being the highest of all things, since a person who perceives it thereby begins to stop all suffering. The study of Mahamudra is thus the study of emptiness.

सिया.मी.कुष.र्त्रा

chakgya chenpo

2) What are the two kinds of Mahamudra?

There is a secret practice of Mahamudra and an open practice of Mahamudra. Our course concerns the open practice.

রুবারার্থ্যবারা

ngak luk

মর্ই'ঝুবাঝা

do luk

3) Mahamudra is basically a study of the emptiness of the mind itself. What are four advantages of studying the emptiness of the mind, as opposed to the emptiness of objects in general?

#### The four advantages are:

a) It is relatively easy for people to bring up the object of the meditation (one's own mind) in their mind

mikten char la

b) Because we are focussing on our own minds, it is relatively easy to eliminate subtle dullness

jingwa tramo chu la

c) Since one is also eliminating distraction, then mental agitation is automatically prevented



gupa rang shuk kyi gak

d) This serves as a powerful factor which ripens the mind for the eventual practice of Mahamudra according to the secret way



minje kyepar chen



Answer Key, Class Two

1) It most often seems almost random when we encounter something that we either like or don't like. Describe the "flavor" of "emptiness" that denies that anything is an accident. (Tibetan track give the Tibetan also.)

The flavor referred to here is #3: the fact that a visible object and the valid perception which grasps the visible object are devoid of any separate substance. "Devoid of any separate substance" means: "It is not true that they come from a separate karmic seed; rather, they both arise from the same karmic seed." According to the Mind-Only School, this is the lack of a self to things. According to the Independent group, this is the gross lack of a self to things.

suk dang sukdzin gyi tsema dzeshen gyi tongwa

2) Much of the trouble in our lives comes from judging what we are not really capable of judging. Judgements depend on labels—on how we interpret something. Describe the "flavor" of "emptiness" that addresses how we label things. (Tibetan track give Tibetan also.)

This flavor is #4: The fact that the fact that any particular thing is called what it is is something which is devoid of existing by definition. Put simply: The fact that things are called what they are is not something which is automatic. According to the Mind-Only School, this is also the lack of a self to things.

rangnyi rangnyi chepay tanye jukpay jukshi yinpa ranggi tsennyi kyi druppe tongwa



Answer Key, Class Three

1) Explain the metaphor of the magic show that the Independent group of the Middle-Way School uses to help describe their version of emptiness.

In the magic show, the audience sees a stick as an elephant. The magic can only take place if a number of conditions are present. The magician takes a small stick and throws it on the ground. He mutters some magic words, and sprinkles magic powder in the eyes of the members of the audience. Due to the stick on one side, and the magic words and powder on the other side, there can occur the perception of an elephant. Just so, in this school there must be something "out there" appearing to us, and from our side a perception of it too, cooperating, or there can be no object.

2) One of the "flavors" of "emptiness" is very useful for understanding the process of transforming problems into opportunities. Describe it. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

This refers to emptiness flavor #5: the fact that objects are void of existing from their own side through any unique identity of their own, rather than existing simply by virtue of having appeared to an unaffected state of mind. According to the Independent group, this is the subtle lack of a self to things, or real emptiness

lo nume la nangway wanggi shaktsam mayinpar yul ranggi tunmong mayinpay duluk su druppe tongwa



Answer Key, Class Four

1) What is the one "flavor" of "emptiness" that allows for creating a Buddha paradise, where you live as an enlightened being made of light? (Tibetan track name in Tibetan.)

This "flavor" is emptiness #6: the fact that objects are void of existing from their own side through their own identity, rather than existing simply through names [words] and terms [thoughts]. According to the Consequence group of the Middle-Way School, this—and only this—is emptiness, and there are no separate degrees of emptiness (although emptiness can be divided according to the object that has it: the person or "things," meaning the person's parts). This interpretation is the ultimate one accepted by Lord Buddha; the realized being Nagarjuna; Je Tsongkapa; Khen Rinpoche; in all presentations of tantra; and moreover by anyone who has seen emptiness directly.

ming de shaktsam ma-yinpar, yul ranggi duluk kyi ngune druppe tongwa

2) What is the main difference between emptiness flavor #5 and flavor #6? (Tibetan track describe in Tibetan.)

Both schools describe the existence of a pen, for example, as a combination of something appearing to us (a cylinder) and us thinking of it in a certain way (as a pen). The big difference is that, only according to flavor #6 (the Consequence group version), the *cylinder itself* is just as much a product of this process, and on down infinitely: there is no object all the way on down that comes from its own side. This does not though in any way deny the existence of these objects.



Answer Key, Class Five

1) A person gets in a car accident; their head goes through the windshield, and they die. Explain the difference between *how* they died and *why* they died—that is, the difference between the apparent cause and the real cause.

How they died was that their head was softer than the glass, and enough of their brain was damaged that they died. Why they died was that they had done some harm to life in the past.

2) Describe the role of an act of truth (*satyachara*) in the liberation of India, and the distinction between the apparent results and the real results of our actions.

We distinguish between the apparent results of our actions and the real results of our actions: Mahatma Gandhi understood this distinction for example when he led rows of men non-violently into the face of soldiers who would beat them with sticks. The beating came from a previous negative karma of striking someone else, and had nothing to do with their present activities. Their present activities provided a direct cause for the liberation of India.

3) What percentage of what happens to us in the present moment comes from our past thoughts, words, and deeds; and what percentage happens from what we are doing now? Which is to say—what percentage of things have emptiness, and what percentage are self-existent?

100% empty; 100% are coming from our past actions, or none— it can't be something in between!

4) Describe the difference between "roboclaws" and "gardening."

The "roboclaws" state of mind is demanding results of our current actions in the present moment; it is mistaken, and it is perpetuating our pain, because it doesn't work. "Gardening" is the idea that we plant good seeds by maintaining good deeds now, no matter what the apparent short-term cost. This leads us inexorably to a Buddha paradise.

5) What is very simple and obvious indication that the "roboclaws" approach to life is wrong?

It does not give consistent results: if something really caused something else, then it should always cause it. But the "roboclaws" approach does not give consistent results, so it is not causing what we think it does.



Please cut along the dotted line to make an insert for the binder spine



### THIS COURSE USES A 1 INCH BINDER

# PRACTICE

## 9

#### THE EMPTINESS OF THE MIND

(Mahamudra)

PRACTICE

