

- The non-enumerative ultimate truth cannot be taken as an object of any awareness and therefore is not an object of knowledge.

Those are very incorrect because not only does each ultimate—enumerative and non-enumerative—have, [when taken] as object [from between object and subject], the absence of true existence [which is an ultimate truth and hence not an obscurational truth], but also the enumerative ultimate has, [when taken] as subject [from between object and subject], awarenesses of hearing and thinking, and the non-enumerative ultimate has, as subject, exalted wisdoms of meditative equipoise [which take the absence of true existence as their object, and, therefore, even the non-enumerative ultimate, as object, is an object of knowledge, and thus it is wrong to hold that the non-enumerative ultimate truth cannot be taken as an object of any mind]...

Although the absence of ultimately existent production, which is the mode of subsistence, does not have proliferations from its own side, an inference of determinative realization [of the absence of ultimately existent production] comprehends [the absence of ultimately existent production] together with proliferations of dualistic appearance in the perspective of its appearance factor despite the fact that proliferations have disappeared in the perspective of its ascertainment factor. Hence, since it accords with the ultimate that is the object of a Superior's meditative equipoise, it is called a "concordant ultimate." Since the absence of ultimately existent production is without all of the collections of proliferations both in the perspective of the ascertainment factor of meditative equipoise and even in the perspective of its appearance factor, it is called an "actual ultimate" or "non-enumerative ultimate." Therefore, how could even the object found by inference—the absence of truly existent production—be a conventionality!

Word Commentary on Root Text: A division of obscurational truths into real and unreal conventionalities does not exist in the Middle Way's own system. However, in the perspective of a worldly consciousness,^a a human face and a reflection of a face, and so forth, are suitable to receive the conventions "true" and "untrue," and hence respectively are mere real conventionalities and mere unreal conventionalities.

Jam-*yang-shay-ba's* *Great Exposition of Tenets*:¹²⁶⁶ "In the Middle

^a As will be seen below, Nga-wang-bel-den refines this to mean "relative to conventional valid cognition."

{KEY: Bold = Jam-*yang-shay-ba's* *Root Text*. Headings at left margin = Jam-*yang-shay-ba's* outline. Regular text at left margin = Nga-wang-bel-den's *Word Commentary on the Root Text*.}

Way’s own system” is to be taken as “in the perspective of the Middle Way rational consciousness of the unique Middle Way system.” In its perspective it is not suitable to make a division of obscurational truths into the real whose mode of appearance and mode of subsistence agree and the unreal whose mode of appearance and mode of subsistence do not agree because not only Superiors’ meditative equipoise but also their exalted wisdom subsequent to meditative equipoise perceive forms and so forth as like illusions and do not perceive their mode of appearance and mode of subsistence as in agreement...Therefore, obscurational truths are divided into the two—real and unreal—relative to the perspective of coarse, innate, worldly consciousnesses because:

- the six senses free from superficial damage and the six objects apprehended by them are posited as real^a in the perspective of innate coarse consciousnesses
- and the six senses having superficial damage and the six objects apprehended by them are posited as unreal^b in the perspective of worldly consciousnesses...

Proponents of the Middle¹²⁶⁷ themselves also assert such real and unreal [conventionalities relative to worldly valid cognition], but they conventionally do not assert the former type of real [conventionalities relative to a rational consciousness] in their own system...Therefore:

- The worldly perspective in “existing conventionally,”^c the worldly perspective in “existing in the world’s conventions,”^d the convention in “conventional truth,”^e and the noble [or superior] in “noble truth”^f are conventional valid cognitions.
- The worldly perspective in [Chandrakīrti’s statement about real conventionalities] “They are true in just the world,” is an innate ordinary [consciousness].
- The obscurational [consciousness] (*kun rdzob, samvṛti*) in the perspective of which forms and so forth are posited as true must be ignorance.

^a *yang dag*; this is better translated as “correct” for consciousnesses.

^b *log pa*; this is better translated as “incorrect” for consciousnesses.

^c *tha snyad du yod*.

^d *’jig rten gyi tha snyad du yod*.

^e *tha snyad bden pa*.

^f *’phags pa’i bden pa*.

Nga-wāng-bel-den's *Annotations*:¹²⁶⁸ Hence, there are real conventionalities *relative to* worldly valid cognition, or conventional valid cognition, but real conventionalities *relative to* a rational consciousness do not exist because real conventionalities *relative to* the mode of analysis by a rational consciousness do not exist, since something established as real *relative to* a rational consciousness does not exist, for, according to the mode of analysis by a rational consciousness, all phenomena must be established as false and the truly established does not exist...

In this system:¹²⁶⁹

- Since conventional phenomena are not established in accordance with how they appear and conventional consciousnesses are mistaken consciousnesses [in that objects falsely appear to inherently exist], a division of conventional objects and subjects into the real and unreal is not asserted.
- Among the six non-conceptual consciousnesses in the continuum of a common being there are none that are non-mistaken.

However, it is not contradictory that those consciousnesses are valid cognitions able to posit phenomena—forms and so forth—as existing because **although a non-mistaken subject [that is, consciousness] is needed to posit a true object, a mistaken subject itself serves to assist in positing a false object.**

It is explained that:

- The division of conventionalities into real and unreal by other [that is, non-Consequentialist] Proponents of the Middle derives from their assertion of establishment by way of the object's own character
- Here [in the Consequence School] their not dividing conventionalities into real and unreal derives from their not asserting establishment by way of the object's own character.

Since if forms and so forth were posited as real, this would be damaged by a rational consciousness realizing their emptiness, [the Consequentialists] do not divide conventionalities into real and unreal. However, *relative to* only conventional consciousnesses—and not *relative to* a rational consciousness—it is suitable to make a division into real and unreal because although dividing an illusory horse and a fully qualified horse into false and true *relative to* a rational consciousness is not feasible, these are suitable to receive the conventions “false” and “true” *relative to* conventional consciousnesses...

Thus, you should know that:

{KEY: Bold = Jam-yāng-shay-bā's *Root Text*. Headings at left margin = Jam-yāng-shay-bā's outline.
Regular text at left margin = Nga-wāng-bel-den's *Word Commentary on the Root Text*.}

- Although [conventionalities] are divided into the real and unreal *relative to* conventional valid cognition, they are not divided into real and unreal *in the perspective of* conventional valid cognition.^a
- Although conventional phenomena are posited as unreal *relative to* a rational consciousness, they are not posited as unreal *in the perspective of* a rational consciousness^b...

Therefore, “real” in “real conventionalities are not asserted in the Middle Way’s own system” and “real” in “they assert a distinction of real and unreal relative to worldly consciousnesses” are similar in name but not at all similar in meaning. This is because the former “real” is taken as establishment by way of the object’s own character and the latter is taken as an object suitable to receive the convention “true” relative to ordinary worldly thought, just as, for example, in “some persons are coming, and some persons are not coming,” the some who are coming and the some who are not coming do not refer to one substratum...

You should know that although¹²⁷⁰ the consciousness *in the perspective of which* forms and so forth are posited as real is necessarily a consciousness conceiving true existence, there is not the slightest contradiction that a conventional valid cognition is posited as the consciousness *relative to which* forms and so forth are suitable to receive the convention “true”...Moreover, you need to know the distinctions that:¹²⁷¹

- Although an eye consciousness apprehending a form is mistaken *in the perspective of* a conventional consciousness, it is not mistaken *relative to* a conventional consciousness.
- Although an eye consciousness apprehending a form is mistaken *relative to* a rational consciousness, it is not mistaken *in the perspective of* a rational consciousness...

The conventional consciousness¹²⁷² *in the perspective of* which an eye consciousness apprehending a form is posited as mistaken, and the conventional consciousness *in the perspective of* which an eye consciousness apprehending a form is posited as a non-mistaken subject on this occasion are separate...A conventional valid cognition realizing that an eye consciousness apprehending a form is

^a *tha snyad pa'i tshad ma la ltos te yang log gnyis su 'byed kyang tha snyad pa'i tshad ma'i ngor yang log gnyis su mi 'byed*; 192.6.

^b *kun rdzob pa'i chos rnam rigs shes la ltos te log par 'jog kyang rigs shes kyi ngor log par 'jog pa min*; 192.7.

mistaken [with regard to its appearing-object since the object appears to inherently exist] and a conventional valid cognition realizing that an eye consciousness apprehending a form is a real [that is, correct] subject [in that it apprehends the form correctly] are not equivalent, and what is proven by the one is also not refuted by the other.^a

6[#] DIFFERENCE BETWEEN METHOD AND WHAT ARISES FROM METHOD

The conventional are preceders and assisters of a rational consciousness—the means and that arisen from the means.

Word Commentary on Root Text: Conventional consciousnesses are preceders and assisters of a rational consciousness because conventional consciousnesses are the means and a rational consciousness is that arisen from the means.

Jam-*yang-shay-ba's* *Great Exposition of Tenets*.¹²⁷³ Until the five aggregates, six constituents, twelve sense spheres, eighteen constituents, and so forth are established for one's awareness, their mode of subsistence cannot be taught because without ascertaining a substratum, its attributes cannot be ascertained. Therefore, not only must the appearance of the substrata, the qualificands, precede the appearance of the aspect of the ultimate, but also without valid cognitions realizing conventionalities as precursors, a rational consciousness analyzing the ultimate will not arise, and a rational consciousness comprehending the ultimate arises from conventional valid cognitions...

Likewise, the two truths should assist each other, and awarenesses realizing them should serve to assist each other; it is not that when one of them is asserted, the other must be discarded because those two are in a relationship of sameness of entity, like product and impermanent thing, or a conch and its color...

It is explained that:

- although, when analyzed, a self does not exist, the relationship of actions and their fruits is feasible and not contradictory
- and although inherent existence, or establishment from the object's own side, does not exist, objects—the six manifest objects and so forth—as they are perceived by the six direct perceptions are feasible and not contradictory.

^a For a thorough discussion of this topic see Guy Newland, *The Two Truths* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1992), 136-157.

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