

Lorig-Mind and Awareness

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Please take part in this course with highest motivation to achieve state of Buddha to liberate all sentient beings.

Last time we discussed this topic I briefly covered prime cognition.

There are two types;

Direct and Inferential

Direct prime cognition is an awareness that is free of concepts and which is non-deceptive with regard to its object and it is fresh. It has these three aspects. Since we are discussing Lorig from view of Sautantrika Sutra school, for that school direct cognition must have as its appearing object an impermanent thing.

Let's take visual consciousness which takes as its object a vase. It sees a vase unmistakably for the first time.

When a visual consciousness sees a vase correctly, it sees the vase as the appearing object and all its impermanent attributes. This school believes a direct prime cogniser must be unmistaken regarding its appearing object i.e. the object that appears to a visual consciousness must exist in the way it appears to the visual consciousness. The highest school, Prasangika, will say the appearing object does not have to be unmistaken.

Seeing a vase in the first moment of cognition of it is said to be direct prime cognition. The second moment is said to be subsequent cognition /cogniser.

There is an element of awareness to which an object appears but the object is not ascertained for what it is.

All sense consciousnesses are produced depending on four conditions:

1) main condition 2) object condition 3) immediate condition 4) causal condition.

These four generate a consciousness. Visual consciousness that perceives an object is produced by the four.

Sense prime direct cognition and mental prime direct cognition is another dichotomy.

Sense direct prime cognition is known and generated principally by the specific sense organ /base. There are 5 physical sense bases; eye, ear, nasal, taste, touch and physical sense base.

Visual sense base is usually called the eye. It is a crystal clear orb, within the physical sense base. Ear sense base refers to a very thin membrane deep within the ear. Nasal sense base refers to very fine nerves deep within the nasal passage. Tongue sense base is located on the edge and tip of the tongue, but not on top surface or the underside of the tongue. Do you think it is true that if you place a brown candy right in middle of tongue you wont actually taste the sweetness? Physical/tactile sense base pervades the body. It's all over the body.

I ran through these sense bases to convey the message that they are the prime conditions for the production of sense consciousnesses. They are the main/prime condition for sense consciousnesses to come into being.

Next is **object condition**.

For visual sense consciousness the object condition is provided by the colour and shape of things. The immediate condition for visual consciousness to see the colour blue is a very short momentary mental cognition thinking, it is blue. This precedes the visual consciousness. Since generation of consciousnesses is extremely fast, due to the quickness you feel you have seen it, but that is not so. There is no separate example of causal condition since it is synonymous with causes themselves.

The object of ear sense base is sound, of tongue sense base is taste, of body sense base is a tactile object, of eye sense base is a visual object. If you ask a Buddhist what produces a consciousness they would say it is produced by three things coming together; an object, a sense base and a consciousness. Consciousness as part of the three factors becomes an immediate condition.

There are two modes of production of sense consciousnesses. They can be produced in two ways, by coming in contact with the object and without contact. Sound does not touch the ear sense base. Buddhists have a reason for this statement. Form and sound don't need to contact their respective sense bases for consciousness of it to be generated. Visual and auditory sense, produce valid consciousnesses yet do not impact on their sense bases directly.

When you watch TV you see things and hear things on the screen but because the sense base and object are so far apart what you see and hear is not the sound or form of the object. In such a case objects and sense consciousness are very far apart, yet sense consciousnesses are generated. There are cooking shows, but you don't smell it because tongue and nasal sense consciousnesses need to contact. When you work to develop paranormal consciousness you do so in relation to eye and ear consciousness. There are no cases of achieving this through nasal, tongue and tactile sense organs.

Take vase for example; the first moment of eye consciousness apprehending the vase is a classic example of direct prime cognition. It is free of concept, and unmistakable, so it does not require anything, such as the medium of a meaning and sound image, for it to know its object. It is directly perceived independent of any other media.

Sense consciousnesses, whilst unmistakable, free of concept and fresh are still unreliable and fleeting. They can never become path consciousness. Path consciousness makes use only of mental consciousness which is very dependable and enduring. What makes sense consciousnesses unreliable? When you die they come to an end. When you sleep they dissolve. When you die for example, the object still remains and the sense organ is present but an immediate condition is missing, so sense consciousness is not generated, therefore you can't rely on it. The first moment of sense consciousness is direct prime cognition. The second moment is subsequent cognition, and although it is unmistakable it is not fresh, and therefore not prime.

Sense consciousnesses have the propensity of being an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained. When your passionate mind is visually enchanted and therefore captivated by an object, it is so engrossed in it, that it may hear passing sounds of music, for example, and although it hears something, it can't ascertain what it is hearing. That is the kind of ear consciousness to which sound appears but which cannot be certain of the kind of sound it is hearing. The sound consciousness is not clear due to the visual consciousness being engrossed in the beautiful object. Such is an awareness to which something appears but the object is not recognized nor understood.

Another dichotomy related to sense consciousness is **mistaken and unmistakable** sense consciousness.

Eye consciousness, for example, can be of two kinds, mistaken or non-mistaken.

Mistaken eye consciousness which sees a white snow mountain as a blue snow mountain, the appearance of the white as blue is mistaken. When a snow mountain appears to a defective visual consciousness as a blue mountain, two objects are involved; an appearing object and the determined object or the mode of apprehension of the object or what it is believed to be.

When a person with some problem with their eye sense base sees the snow mountain as blue what is the appearing object? It is the mountain itself. Why? Because the appearing object must exist according to this school. What is the determined object? It is taking the mountain to be blue. The object of mode of apprehension of this mistaken visual consciousness must be a non-existent entity. For example when a defective eye sense base sees the white snow mountain to be blue there is a mistake there because the blueness of the snow mountain doesn't exist. The appearing object of the mountain itself must exist. The way it is perceived though, does not have to exist. It is only determined by the defective eye consciousness. A white snow mountain exists and is seen even by someone with a defective eye sense organ but it is determined by such an organ to be blue. A blue mountain becomes the determined object and this perception will lead to a mistaken sense consciousness. The object of this mode of apprehension of this mistaken visual consciousness must be a non-existent entity. It is mistaken because the mountain is not blue but is only seen as blue. The blueness of the snow mountain doesn't exist.

For all sense bases their appearing object must be a really existent functional or impermanent thing which must exist. For conceptual consciousness it doesn't have to be that way. If an object appears to sense consciousnesses it must exist in reality out there. But when a phenomenon appears to a conceptual consciousness it doesn't need to exist necessarily. If something appears to a conceptual consciousness that thing doesn't need to be its appearing object.

As opposed to seeing a white snow mountain as blue, consider a visual consciousness seeing a yellow vase as yellow. What is the appearing object and what is the mode of apprehension/determined object? The appearing object is the vase itself. When a visual consciousness sees the vase, the appearing object, and believes it is yellow, this is its mode of apprehension. It doesn't only correctly hold it to be a vase, but also sees it as a yellow vase. It has a definite take on what it is. When the white mountain appears as blue, the mountain itself is the appearing object. The whiteness of it is also the appearing object, but the take on it by the mind that it is blue, that is its mode/object of apprehension, blue, and it is mistaken.

With regard to **prime direct cognition there are four: sense, mental, self awareness (apperceptive/ self knowing) and lastly, yogic direct cognition.**

The distinction between mental and sense consciousness is mainly in terms of their prime condition criterion.

Again let's use visual consciousness as an example. Remember it is produced by three conditions. The last is the immediate condition- a fleeting, preceding moment of mental consciousness which thinks to itself, this is blue. That is the immediate condition of a sense consciousness, here a visual one. That fleeting moment of mental consciousness that precedes a visual consciousness is a prime/main condition, but it is not the unique, uncommon prime condition. The uncommon prime condition is the visual sense organ itself. The fleeting mental consciousness is a prime condition but not the uncommon, exclusive prime condition.

Obviously the eye sense base is not the prime condition of a mental sense consciousness. *Form (colour and shape etc) becomes the object condition of a mental consciousness apprehending form as well as the immediate condition needed by every sense consciousness, which was a fleeting mental consciousness, and also happens to be the prime condition of mental consciousness itself.*

Sorry this will need to be clarified.

The distinction between sense and mental consciousness is made in terms of their type of prime condition, not in terms of apprehension of objects because just as sense consciousnesses apprehend their objects so do mental consciousnesses apprehend their objects. Both understand the same objects.

The fleeting moment of mental consciousness before the generation of a sense consciousness, eg visual consciousness, is a common or shared prime condition, both of the sense consciousness and the mental consciousness itself. Whereas the crystal orb of the eye organ is only the prime condition of eye consciousness, and is not a shared condition with the mental consciousness or with nose, ear, tongue etc. It is unique to the visual sense base. The fleeting moment of mental consciousness is a shared prime condition of sense consciousness and mental consciousness, whereas the eye sense base /organ is a prime condition of only the eye consciousness and not anything else.

We'll finish here. Next time I will talk about the remaining three prime direct cognitions; mental, selfknowing and yogic.