

A Drop from the Ocean of Eye Consciousness

I put this booklet together out of my desire to share dharma information.

Most of it I have translated from different Tibetan sources, or closely relied on them. The section on the three conditions according to the Mind-Only comes from the 'Ornament of the Seven Valid Cognitions, Dispelling Mental Darkness', which was composed by Khe-drub-je, who was one of the two main disciples of Lama Tsong-Khapa. The section of direct and indirect realisation is based on the same text.

The section on the substantial cause of the eye sense power comes from the 'Ornament of Valid Cognition' by the first Dalai Lama, Gyal-wa Gedun Drub. The source for most of the rest is the 'Collected Topics', which was composed by Yong-dzin Purchok Rinpoche, who was a tutor of the thirteenth Dalai Lama. Here and there I have added my own comments or used alternative terms, such as visual consciousness for eye consciousness. Eye consciousness is the more correct translation.

Any faults in this text are entirely mine.

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Dedication

May the precious bodhimind
Not yet born arise and grow
May that born have no decline
But increase forever more.

Homage

NAMO GURU MANSHUGOSHAYA
JAMPEL SHONU GYUR-PA LA CHAK-TSEL-LO
I prostate to the teacher youthful Manjushri.

Analysing the Causes, Conditions & Effects of Visual Consciousness

Definition of visual consciousness

A consciousness generated in dependence on its uncommon empowering condition of an eye-sense power

Definition Key:

A consciousness - that which is clear and knowing; the 'clear' eliminates form, e.g. the eyeball, chemical reactions in the brain etc., as eye-consciousness.

Generated in dependence - shows cause/effect relationship

Uncommon - not shared with the other five types of consciousnesses

Empowering condition - that primarily generating directly through its own power

Eye-sense power - a clear subtle form residing in the container of the eye-ball.

Example

The eye-consciousness apprehending blue

Significance of the Sense Power

The empowering condition of the eye sense power is responsible for the distinguishing characteristic of the eye-consciousness to apprehend mainly visual stimuli; out of the three conditions it is the condition that primarily causes the eye-consciousness to apprehend primarily form source.

Likewise, the ear sense power is responsible for the ear consciousness to apprehend primarily sound out of the five sensory inputs, and so forth.

Exception: The omniscient eye-consciousness of a buddha, which realises not only visual input, but all phenomena of multiplicity as well as of suchness. But because it is still eye-consciousness because of arising in dependence of its uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power.

In this way, what makes each of the six types of consciousness unique and distinctive from each other is their uncommon empowering condition; they are labelled relative to their uncommon empowering condition.

The strength of the eye sense power determines the strength of the eye-consciousness. When the eye sense power becomes weaker, as can happen in old age, then the eye-consciousness also becomes weaker. In such a case one can use glasses, which can complement the sense power.

The eye sense power is a clear subtle form that is a very hidden phenomenon residing in the container of the eyeball. As such it is nothing we would see with our eye-consciousness while dissecting the eyeball.

Confusing 'Relationship' with 'Being'

In the West there is a tendency to confuse the sense-consciousness with the physical sense power. One reason is probably our preoccupation with physical objects, but another reason is confusing 'relationship' with actually 'being' that object.

Because we can observe a relationship between the physical eye and our visual perception we assume that the eye is that which perceives. Similarly, because we observe a relationship between certain parts in the brain and certain emotions, we assume that those emotions are parts of the brain; e.g. a change in the chemistry of the brain brings about an emotional change.

However, observing that a change in A (the brain) brings about a change in B (parts of the mind) is only proof that parts of the mind are related to the brain.

It is logically incorrect to say that A is B because I can observe that A changes if I change B.

Likewise it is incorrect to say that e.g. attachment is a part of the brain because I can observe a relationship between attachment and certain parts of the brain. Modern science has certainly established a profound relationship between the brain and parts of the mind, but that does not prove that the brain is the mind.

These findings by modern science about the relationship between the physical body and parts of the mind do not contradict Buddhist thought.

Rather they complement it, since in Buddhism it is taught that different types of consciousness do indeed need a physical basis for their generation; e.g. the eye-consciousness.

Invalid syllogism: Consider the subject 'Visual Perception' – it is the physical eye – because I can observe a change in the visual perception directly proportional to a change in the physical eye.

Valid syllogism: Consider the subject 'Visual Perception' – it is related to the physical eye – because I can observe a change in the visual perception directly proportional to a change in the physical eye.

Eye-consciousness & Meditation

Another favourite misconception is to hold eye-consciousness to be a suitable agent for meditation; e.g. looking at a candle flame. Regarding this Phabonka Rinpoche stated very clearly in his *Liberation in the Palm of your Hand*,

“... the elephant mind has to be tied to the pillar of the object, therefore one needs an object for calm abiding, the basis to which it can be tied. Regarding the object of meditation, one can practise by focussing at any object. But, Hindus who focus on pebbles and fine pieces of wood to attain calm abiding, and Bonpos who focus on 'A' to attain calm abiding, make these objects of meditation mental objects. They don't practise by gazing with their eyes. The practise by some dissidents to gaze at the object of meditation with the eyes is inferior to even the two above. Calm abiding has to be attained on the mental consciousness and not on the eye.”

Lama Tsong Khapa in his *Great Exposition on the Stages of the Path* said,

“That master Yeshe-de refuted the opponent's meditation of placing the statue in front of oneself and that gazing at it with the eyes was well done. Sine concentration isn't attained on the sense consciousnesses, but on the mental consciousness, the direct focus of concentration is the direct object of mental consciousness, and that is what has to be held by the mind. That is also why it is taught that, in accordance with what was said earlier, one has to focus on the mental image, or the reflection that arises, of the actual object.”

Here are some reasons why the eye-consciousness is an unsuitable medium for attaining concentration and why one will not be able to attain calm abiding and special insight on the basis of it.

1. The eye-consciousness is too fickle and unstable, both from the point of view of its empowering condition as well as from the point of view of its focal condition; e.g. its continuity is interrupted when one blinks, and it only generates in the presence of visual stimuli.
2. The eye-consciousness is a coarse consciousness that belongs by nature to the desire realm. Calm abiding on the other hand is a very fine and subtle awareness that belongs by nature to the higher realm.
3. Eye-consciousness can not apprehend subtle objects such as impermanence or selflessness, and therefore can't act as the antidote against afflictions.
4. In the Prasangika system the eye-consciousness of sentient beings is always tainted by true appearance.
5. It is a very commonly reported experience of meditators that the sense consciousnesses subside upon entry into deep meditational states.

The way a visual object, such as the body of the Buddha, becomes the object of one's meditation is that upon having looked at the outer representation of a picture or a statue of the Buddha, one then concentrates on the reflection of that image in one's mental consciousness. Concentrating on the external form would become a distraction. As Kamalashila said in his *Stages of Meditation*,

“ Only the mind that naturally engages an internal focus continuously after having calmed the wandering to external objects, and which is endowed with ecstasy and pliancy, is called calm abiding.”

While looking at a candle flame might bring some calmness to the mind, this has probably more to do with the mental attention to the object and the soothing mental image created in our mental consciousness, than with the eye-consciousness. If we try to keep the focus on our eye-consciousness than it will just become an obstacle.

Explaining the five ever-present mental factors in relation to eye consciousness

The term eye consciousness can refer each to the main eye consciousness, the mental factors that accompany the eye consciousness, as well as the combination of main eye consciousness and its accompanying mental factors. All of these are consciousness generated in dependence on its uncommon empowering condition of the eye-sense power.

Five Ever-present Mental Factors (*feeling; recognition; intention; attention; contact*)

There is always a minimum of five mental factors, which are called 'the five ever-present mental factors', that accompany any primary consciousness.

1. Feeling - happy, suffering or neutral experience through which the ripening of the results of virtues and non-virtues karmas are individually experienced.
2. Recognition - a knower apprehending the uncommon characteristics of the object.
3. Intention - a mental factor that moves and directs its accompanying mind to the object.
4. Attention - the engaging of the mind, having the function of making the mind apprehend the object.
5. Contact - a knower that, after object, sense power, and consciousness have been combined, establishes (clarifies, distinguish) the object according with the feelings, such as happiness and suffering, to be experienced.

If any of them is missing then the engagement of the object will not be complete:

No feeling - no experience of happiness or suffering;

No recognition - no apprehension of the uncommon characteristic of the object;

No intention - no directing to the object;

No attention - no placing of the mind on a particular object;

No contact - feeling will not generate.

Therefore it is explained that for complete engagement of the object the five ever-present mental factors need to be complete.

The primary consciousness shares five samenesses with its accompanying mental factors:

1. Same basis - relying on the same empowering condition
2. Same focus - generated from the same object
3. Same aspect - arising in the same aspect
4. Same time - generated simultaneously
5. Sameness of substance – being of similar individual substance

Example

The combination of the primary eye-consciousness apprehending blue and its accompanying entourage of five ever-present mental factors is the eye-consciousness apprehending blue.

The primary eye-consciousness is distinguished by its mere apprehension of blue, while the mental factors distinguish themselves through specific functions; e.g. the function of intention is to move the mind to the object.

Feeling experiences blue, either as happiness, suffering, or as neutral. One factor that can determine the experience is whether or not one likes blue.

Recognition apprehends the individualistic feature(s) of blue, which distinguish blue from other objects.

Intention is the karma that draws one's consciousness to blue.

Attention engages the primary consciousness with blue, making it apprehend blue.

Contact establishes blue as something to be experienced with happiness, suffering or equanimity.

The primary eye-consciousness apprehending blue and its accompanying entourage of five ever-present mental factors share the five samenesses:

Same basis – they all are generated from the same uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power that is their cause.

Same focus – they are all generated from blue.

Same aspect – they all arise in the aspect of blue.

Same time – they all generate, abide, and disintegrate simultaneously.
Sameness of substance – they are all the same individual substance in that there is always only one substance of each, i.e. only one mental factor of feeling with only one primary consciousness.

There are three possibilities between primary eye-consciousness (A), i.e. visual mind, and eye-consciousness (B).

Both: Primary eye-consciousness apprehending blue

Neither: Auditory (ear) - consciousness

B but not A: The mental factor of feeling that accompanies the primary visual consciousness apprehending blue.

There is nothing that could be the primary eye-consciousness but not the eye-consciousness.

Eye-consciousness according to Sautantrika (direct visual perception; distorted visual consciousness)

Direct Visual Perception (Primary direct visual perception; subsequent visual perception; visual perception to which the object appears but is not ascertained)

Definition: An unmistakable awareness free from conception, which is generated in dependence on its uncommon empowering condition of an eye sense power and its focal condition of form.

Divisions:

1. Primary direct visual perception

Definition: A newly incontrovertible knower free from conception arising in dependence on its uncommon empowering condition of an eye sense power. Example: The first moment of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue.

2. Subsequent direct visual perception

Definition: A knower free from conception that realises the realised, which arises in dependence on its uncommon empowering condition of an eye sense power. Example: The second moment of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue.

3. Visual awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained

Definition: An eye-consciousness that has a clear appearance of the self-

characterised phenomenon that is its object of engagement, but which can't induce an ascertainment of that object of engagement.

Example: The direct perception apprehending blue that induces doubt about whether one has seen blue or not; the mental direct perceptions apprehending the five sensory inputs of form and so forth, of ordinary individuals.

Distorted Eye-consciousness (cause for distortion lies: on the basis, in the place, in the object and in the immediately preceding condition)

Definition: An eye-consciousness that engages its object in a distorted way.

This is synonymous with mistaken eye-consciousness and with eye-consciousness to which a non-existent appears clearly.

Divisions:

Cause for distortion is on the basis; e.g. eye-disease, which causes the generation of the eye-consciousness to which one moon appears as two moons.

Cause for distortion lies in the place; e.g. like being in a boat, which causes the generation of an eye-consciousness to which trees appear to be moving.

Cause for distortion lies in the object; e.g. a whirling firebrand, which causes the generation of an eye-consciousness to which a firewheel appears.

Cause for distortion is on the immediately preceding condition; e.g. being mentally angry, which generates an eye-consciousness that sees (the place as) red.

Difference between mistaken consciousness and distorted consciousness

1. Mistaken consciousness - synonymous with a knower mistaken with regards to the appearing object.

2. Distorted or wrong consciousness - synonymous with a knower that is mistaken with regards to the apprehended object.

There are three possibilities between (A) mistaken consciousness and (B) distorted consciousness:

Both: Like the eye-consciousness to which one moon appears as two (non-conceptual), or the conceptual grasping at the self of person.

A but not B: Like the inferential valid cognition of impermanent sound. All inferential cognitions are mistaken because they are mistaken with regards to the appearing object, which is the mental image that appears to them as the apprehended object, even though it isn't the apprehended object. But they are not wrong with regards to the apprehended object because they have grasped their investigated meaning.

Neither: Like the visual direct perception apprehending blue.

There is nothing that could be B but not A, since all distorted consciousness are necessarily also mistaken. All conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken anyway, and all non-conceptual consciousnesses that are mistaken with regards to the apprehended object are also mistaken with regards to the appearing object.

Eye-consciousness according to the Prasangika (direct visual perception; distorted eye consciousness)

Some points specific to the Prasangika system:

- All consciousnesses of ordinary individuals are mistaken consciousnesses for the reason that their objects appear to them as truly existent. That is why it does not specify the definition of direct visual perception as unmistaken.
- All subsequent cognisers are direct valid cognisers.
- All dualistic consciousnesses are direct valid cognisers with regards to their appearance.

Direct Visual Perception (valid visual direct perception; visual awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained)

Definition: An awareness free from conception, which is generated in direct dependence on its uncommon empowering condition of an eye sense power and its focal condition of form.

Divisions:

Valid Visual Direct Perception

Definition: A valid direct perception incontrovertible with regards to its manifest object of comprehension through directly depending on its uncommon empowering condition of an eye sense power.

Visual awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained

Definition: An eye direct perception that has a clear appearance of the phenomenon that is its object of engagement, but which can not induce an ascertainment of that object of engagement.

Distorted Eye-consciousness

Definition: An eye-consciousness that engages its object in a distorted way.

This is not synonymous with mistaken eye-consciousness and with eye-consciousness to which a non-existent appears clearly.

Some divisions:

Physical sense power harmed by internal adventitious conditions, e.g. eye disease, which can cause the appearance of falling hairs to the eye-consciousness;

or yellow eyes, which can cause eye-consciousness to which the white conch shell appears as yellow;

or ingested datura, which can cause all kinds of distorted eye-consciousnesses

Physical sense power harmed by external adventitious conditions

e.g. a mirror, which cause the eye-consciousness that mistakes the reflection of form for the actual form;

or white sand and sunlight, which can cause the eye-consciousness that mistakes the mirage for water;

or the herbs or mantra applied by the magician, which causes the eye-consciousness that mistakes the piece of wood for a horse or elephant.

The Objects of Eye-consciousness (appearing object; held object; object of one's clinging; engaged object; apprehended object; focal object)

In General

That to be known by awareness is the definition of 'object' in general.

Nominal divisions: Appearing object; held object; object of ones clinging; engaged object; apprehended object; focal object.

Appearing Object

If it exists there is a pervasion that it is an appearing object, because if it is a functionality there is a pervasion that it is the appearing object of direct perception, and if it is permanent there is a pervasion that it is the appearing object of conceptual thought.

Appearing object of non-conceptual consciousness - if it appears to a non-conceptual consciousness then it is its appearing object.

Appearing object of conceptual consciousness - the mental image of the object is always the appearing object of the conceptual thought apprehending that object. The appearing object of conceptual thought is also said to be synonymous with permanent.

If it appears to a conceptual consciousness there is no pervasion that it is the appearing object of that conceptual consciousness; e.g. blue appears to the conceptual thought apprehending blue, but it is not the appearing object of that thought.

Held Object

The held object of a consciousness is synonymous with the appearing object of that consciousness.

Object of One's Clinging

The 'object of ones clinging' refers to the main object, i.e. the apprehended object, of conceptual thoughts.

That the apprehended object of conceptual thoughts is called the object of ones clinging, while the apprehended object of non-conceptual consciousnesses is not referred to as the object of clinging, is a reference to the different ways these consciousnesses engage their object, and not because we can not be attached to the objects of the five senses.

Example: Vase is the object of the clinging of the conceptual thought thinking, 'this is vase'.

Engaged Object

The engaged object of a consciousness is a valid object that is engaged for the purpose of acceptance or rejection.

Temporary day to day object of engagement, e.g. the car.

Ultimate object of engagement, e.g. the truth of cessation free from all stains.

The engaged object of valid direct perception is synonymous with the apprehended object of valid direct perception. But the engaged object of a distorted direct perception is not synonymous with its apprehended object. For example, the white colour of the snow-mountain is the engaged object of the eye-consciousness to which the snow-mountain appears as blue, but it is not the apprehended object. The apprehended object of that consciousness is blue snow-mountain.

The engaged object of valid conceptual thought is synonymous with the object of clinging of valid conceptual thought and the apprehended object of valid conceptual thought.

Apprehended Object

The apprehended object of a consciousness is the main object of that consciousness. The main aspect that the consciousness arises in, is the aspect of the apprehended object.

The apprehended object of a direct perception is synonymous with the engaged object of direct perception.

The apprehended object of conceptual thought is synonymous with the object of the clinging of conceptual thought.

Focal Object

Sound is the focal object of the grasping at permanent sound, but not the apprehended object.

The Objects of Direct Visual Perception (apprehended object; appearing object; engaged object; held object; focal object)

In the example of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue:

Apprehended object - the main object; i.e. the object that possesses the aspect in which the consciousness arises mainly as, which in this case is blue.

Appearing object - blue and everything that is of indivisibly one simultaneous substance with blue regarding place, time and nature, such as the impermanence of blue.

Engaged object – the engaged object of valid visual consciousness is synonymous with the apprehended object of valid visual consciousness.

Held object – synonymous with appearing object

Focal object - blue and everything that is of indivisibly one simultaneous substance with blue regarding place, time and nature, such as the impermanence of blue.

A knower that has arrived at (grasped) the meaning that it analysed is the definition of a valid consciousness.
Rule: The apprehended object of a valid consciousness always exists, and the apprehended object of a distorted consciousness never exists.

The main object of eye-consciousness is visual stimuli, or in more traditional Buddhist terms, form source.

Definition of form source: that which is held by the eye-consciousness

Definition of visual stimulus - that which is held by the visual consciousness

Divisions:

Form - that suitable to be form is the definition of form.

Divisions:

Form is divided into the five sources: 1) form source; 2) sound source; 3) smell source; 4) taste source; 5) tactile source.

They are all suitable to be form because they are suitable to cause the harm of future lives through meeting with the physical sense powers.

Form source:

Colour - Suitable to be shown as a hue

Primary colours: blue, yellow, white and red

Secondary colours: colour of cloud, smoke, dust, mist, shade, sunlight, darkness and brightness

Shape - suitable to be shown as shape

Long, short, round, square, even, uneven, high and low.

Colours and shapes are referred to as sources or stimuli because they are a door through which the mind and the mental factors are generated and increased. They are also suitable to be form since they are forms. This means they are suitable to cause the harm of future lives through meeting with the physical sense powers.

They cause the harm of future lives through coming into contact with the physical sense powers, because through that they generate the perception of pleasant, neutral or unpleasant shapes and colours, which then generates happy, neutral or unhappy feelings. These feelings in turn become the cause for attachment, ignorance or anger to arise, through which in turn one creates contaminated karma that causes one to take re-birth in cyclic existence.

That is why it is recommended to be always mindful and keep the doors of the senses under control. As a beginner on the path mental afflictions will be generated merely through the meeting of the doors of the five senses with the object. Taking a 'Time Out' from the object(s) can be a good way to relieve the mind.

The Objects of Distorted Visual Consciousness

In the example of the eye-consciousness to which one moon appears as two moons:

Apprehended object - two moons

Appearing object - one moon; one moon appears as two moons.

In the example of the eye-consciousness to which the white snow-mountain appears as blue:

Apprehended object – the blue snow-mountain

Appearing object – the white colour of the snow-mountain

Engaged object – the white colour of the snow-mountain

Focal object – the white colour of the snow-mountain

The Three Conditions of Visual-Consciousness According to the Sautantrika (focal condition; empowering condition; immediately preceding condition)

Focal Condition

Definition: That primarily generating directly the aspect of the consciousness;

or: That primarily generating directly the consciousness as possessing its aspect

In the example of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue

Def.: That primarily generating directly the blue aspect of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue;

or: That primarily generating directly the eye-consciousness apprehending blue as possessing its aspect

Example: Blue

If it is of one simultaneous substance with blue regarding place, time and nature then there is a pervasion that it is the focal object of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue; e.g. like the impermanence of blue.

Debate No.1: The difference between the focal condition of a valid eye consciousness and a conceptual thought

Someone who does not understand the difference between a direct perception and a conceptual consciousness says, ' it follows that it is incorrect to posit blue as the focal condition of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue because it is incorrect to posit blue as the focal condition of the conceptual thought apprehending blue.'

Answer: There is no pervasion, because even though one posits the form source, i.e. the visual stimuli, that is its object of comprehension, as the focal condition of a valid eye-consciousness, it is not the same for conceptual thoughts. For conceptual thoughts the karmic imprint on their immediately preceding condition is posited as the focal condition.

The karmic imprint on the immediately preceding condition of the conceptual thought apprehending blue is the focal condition of the conceptual

thought apprehending blue because it is that primarily generating directly the blue aspect of the conceptual thought apprehending blue. Even though blue is a focal condition of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue, it is not a focal condition of the conceptual thought apprehending blue.

The definition of 'focal condition' of explicitly demands it to be a direct cause of the consciousness, and blue isn't a direct cause of the conceptual thought apprehending blue, but an indirect cause.

The conceptual thought apprehending blue is a result of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue, which is in turn a result of blue. That is why the conceptual thought apprehending blue is an indirect effect of blue.

Debate No. 2: The focal condition of distorted consciousness

Someone who doesn't know the difference between a valid consciousness and a distorted consciousness says, 'it follows that it is valid to posit for all direct perceptions their object of apprehension as their focal condition - because from primary valid eye-consciousness to primary valid body-consciousness the apprehended object is posited as their focal condition.

Answer: There is no pervasion to the reason, but it is not possible to accept the thesis because: For valid yogic-cognisors the union of calm abiding and special insight that is their cause is posited as their focal condition. And for omniscient consciousness the accumulation of three countless great eons of merits that is its cause is posited as its focal condition. It is different for sense-consciousnesses.

Further: According to you it would follow that all distorted consciousnesses don't have a focal condition - because your way of positing the focal condition is correct. This thesis is however unacceptable because if it is consciousness there is a pervasion that its focal condition is an existent.

It follows it is like that because:

For conceptual distorted consciousnesses one posits mostly an imprint on their immediately preceding condition as their focal condition, and for non-

conceptual distorted consciousnesses there are multiple ways of positing their focal object.

For the eye-consciousness to which one moon appears as two moons the one moon is posited as its focal condition;

For the eye-consciousness to which a mirage appears as water the white sand and the sunlight are posited as its focal condition;

For the eye-consciousness to which an illusion appears as horse and elephant the illusory mantra-substance is posited as its focal condition.

There are countless different cases of focal conditions.

The Empowering Condition

Definition: That directly generating the consciousness primarily through its own power

In the example of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue

Def.: That directly generating the eye-consciousness apprehending blue primarily through its own power;

Examples

The eye-sense power that is the uncommon empowering condition of the direct perception apprehending blue and the mental sense power that is the common empowering condition of the direct perception apprehending blue.

Debate No.1: Difference between uncommon empowering condition and empowering condition

Someone says, 'take the subject 'eye-consciousness', - it follows it is a mental consciousness - because it is a consciousness that depends upon its uncommon empowering condition of a mental sense power. If 'reason not established'; take the subject 'eye consciousness', - it follows it is a consciousness that depends upon its uncommon empowering condition of a mental sense power - because it is a consciousness that depends upon its empowering condition of a mental sense power.

Answer: There is no pervasion to your reason. However, your reason is established. Take the subject 'eye-consciousness', - it follows it is a consciousness that depends upon its empowering condition of a mental sense power - because it is consciousness.

If it is consciousness there is a pervasion that it depends on it empowering condition of a mental sense power.

Debate No.2: Focal condition and empowering condition

Someone who doesn't understand the difference between the focal condition and the empowering condition says, 'take the subject 'eye-sense-power that is the empowering condition of the eye consciousness apprehending blue', - it follows it is the condition that primarily generates the eye-consciousness apprehending blue as being in the aspect of blue - because it is the condition that out of the six sources specifically generates the apprehension of blue by the eye-consciousness apprehending blue.

Answer: There is no pervasion to your reason. However, your reason is established because, - the eye sense power is the condition that specifically generates the eye-consciousness as apprehending form source. It follows it is like that because the fact that each of the six consciousnesses apprehends only one of the six sources comes about through the influence of the uncommon empowering condition.

Debate No.3: Empowering condition in general and in the context of the three conditions

Someone who doesn't know the difference of empowering condition in general and empowering condition as part of the three conditions of consciousness says, 'it follows it is incorrect that the six types of consciousness are classified through their uncommon empowering condition - because it is possible for a taste sense power to become the uncommon empowering condition of the ear-consciousness apprehending sound. If 'reason not established'; it follows that it is possible for a taste sense power to become the uncommon empowering condition of the ear-consciousness apprehending sound - because it is possible for a taste sense power to become the empowering condition of the ear-consciousness apprehending sound.'

Answer: There is no pervasion to your reason. However, your last reason

is established because there is an ear-consciousness apprehending sound that hears words spoken in dependence upon the empowering condition of the taste sense power.

In general condition and empowering condition are synonymous. In the particular context of being the empowering condition that is part of the three conditions of consciousness it has to be a direct cause of that consciousness. The taste faculty, i.e. the sense-power of the tongue, is not a direct cause of the ear-consciousness.

The Immediately Preceding Condition

Definition: A knower primarily generating directly the consciousness as mere clear and knowing experience

In the example of the eye-consciousness apprehending blue

Def.: A knower primarily generating directly the eye-consciousness apprehending blue as mere clear and knowing experience

Example:

The consciousness that arises immediately before the direct perception apprehending blue, and that pays attention to blue.

Summary

In short, if it is a sense consciousness there is a pervasion that it has all three conditions and if it is consciousness there is a pervasion that it has an immediately preceding condition and an empowering condition.

If it is a sense consciousness there is a pervasion that a physical sense power is its uncommon empowering condition. In the *Sutra of Valid Cognition* it says ‘ its name came because of the sense power’.

If it is a mental consciousness there is a pervasion that its uncommon empowering condition is a mental sense power because out of the statement in the *Sutra on Valid Cognition* that ‘ knowledge of form takes two aspects, depending on the eye and the mind’, the statement ‘ depending on the mind’ is a valid statement.

The Three Conditions of Visual-Consciousness According to the Mind-Only

The Focal Condition

According to the Mind-Only system, the arising of any sense-consciousness in the aspect of its object comes about through the power of karmic imprints, and not through the object showing the aspect from its side. Therefore, the generation of the sense-consciousness in the particular aspect of the object is caused by a karmic imprint on a preceding consciousness. This potential in the nature of a karmic imprint of the concordant family on the preceding consciousness is the main condition for generating its resultant subsequent sense-consciousness in the aspect of the object. For that reason it is the focal-condition of that resultant sense-consciousness.

The Immediately Preceding Condition

There is no difference between the presentations of the immediately preceding condition according to the Sautantrika and the Mind-Only.

The Empowering Condition

The Sautantrika and Mind-Only agree that the entity that is the empowering condition of the eye-consciousness is responsible for the distinguishing characteristic of the eye-consciousness to apprehend only form and no other of the five sensory inputs; that out of the three conditions it is the condition that primarily causes the eye-consciousness to apprehend only form. But while the Sautantrika assert this entity to be matter, the Mind-Only assert it to be in the nature of a potential on the immediately preceding condition.

Looking for the Substantial Cause of the Eye Sense-power

A generator generating its effect mainly as its substantial continuum is the definition of a substantial cause.

Definition Key:

A generator - a cause

As its substantial continuum - continuum of its nature or identity; in Buddhism the substance of a functionality equals the nature or identity of that functionality. Since the identity of the seed is the potential of the identity of the sprout, the sprout is a continuity of the identity of the seed.

Mainly - emphasises the way the seed generates the sprout, i.e. as its substantial continuum.

Example

Like the first moment of eye sense power being the substantial cause of the second moment of eye sense power.

Debate No.1:

If it is asked: Then, what is the substantial cause of the first moment of eye sense power of the next life? It is nothing but the last moment of eye sense power of this life because it is stated: The five sources of this life alone; are the generating cause of other bodies.

If this is further analysed: Does the physical sense power that just took re-birth in the desire realm, after having taken birth from the desire realm in the formless realm, have a direct substantial cause or not?

If no: It follows it hasn't a concurrently arising condition – because it doesn't have a substantial cause. There is a pervasion because – only that supporting a substantial cause in the generation of a result is called concurrently arising condition. If accepted. It follows it hasn't a cause – because it has neither a substantial cause nor a concurrently arising condition. If accepted. It follows it is either always existent or non-existent – because it has arisen without cause.

Then: It has a direct substantial cause because it is a functionality.

Since there is no eye sense power in the formless realm, what is the direct substantial cause of the eye sense power of a person who has just taken rebirth in the desire realm from the formless realm?
If it is a functionality there is a pervasion that it has a substantial cause.

Debate No.2:

If it is said: Its direct substantial cause is the mind just about to take rebirth from the formless realm.

That is incorrect because it would be flawed for matter and knower to act as the substantial cause for each other since it is stated, 'What consciousness would be the substantial cause of non-awareness'; also: 'It is also established because; non-consciousness isn't consciousness's substantial cause.'

This refers to the fact that consciousness can't act as the substantial cause for something that is atomically based, i.e. form, and that mental consciousness can only arise from mental consciousness.

Debate No.3:

If it is said: The physical sense power just about to take rebirth from the formless realm acts as the substantial cause.

That is also incorrect because –in the formless realm physical sense powers don't exist because form doesn't exist in the formless realm.

Debate No.4:

In case it is said: The physical sense power just about to take rebirth from the desire realm is its direct substantial cause.

Take as the subject 'being of the desire realm just about to take rebirth from the desire realm into the formless realm and then again into the desire realm' – it follows it takes birth in the desire realm immediately after death – because its physical sense powers act as the direct substantial cause of subsequent physical sense powers belonging to the desire realm.

Take that subject – it follows immediately after death it takes simultaneously rebirth in both the desire and formless realm – because of that reason as well as also taking rebirth in the formless realm.

Debate No.5:

In case it is said: There is not mistake of birth in the desire realm immediately after death – because the mind just about to take rebirth from the formless realm, which is the concurrently acting condition for the generation of the first of the subsequent physical sense powers by the final of the preceding physical sense powers, doesn't exist preceedingly.

Well then, does the final of the preceding physical sense powers abide until the generation of the mind just about to take rebirth from the formless realm or does it cease? If we look at the first: It follows the final of the preceding physical sense powers belonging to the desire realm is a permanent functioning phenomena.

If we look at the second: Take the subject first instance of the subsequent physical sense powers belonging to the desire realm - it follows the previous last instance of physical sense powers belonging to the desire realm isn't its substantial cause – because it is disintegrated at the time of its direct concurrently acting condition.

Debate No.6:

If it is said: The physical sense power just about to take rebirth from the desire realm is its direct substantial cause since the earlier and latter physical sense powers are interrupted by that belonging to its family and not by something discordant.

That is incorrect because this can't eliminate the fault explained previously.

The fault that the substantial cause of the first moment of physical sense power that just took rebirth in the desire realm from the formless realm would not be simultaneous with its concurrently acting condition

Gyal-wa Don-dun drub: Only the potentials of the physical sense powers on the mind of no-form, placed there at the time of the preceding death and transference from the desire realm, are the substantial cause for the first instance of physical sense powers born later in the desire realm.

Debate No.7:

Then, if someone says: Are the potentials of the physical sense powers on the mind of no-form matter, awareness or neither.

If we look at the first: This entirely contradicts the meaning of 'What consciousness would be the substantial cause of non-awareness'.

If we look at the third: Take that subject – if follows it isn't a functionality – because it is neither matter nor awareness. You accept both reason and predicate. There is a pervasion because: Functionalities are either matter or awareness.

Answer: Take the subject 'a being' – it follows it isn't a functionality – because it is neither matter nor awareness.

Then: Even though the potentials of the physical sense powers are functionalities they are not posited as either matter or awareness. They are posited as non-associated compounded phenomena.

While form and consciousness can't act as each others substantial cause, to be the substantial cause of form it doesn't have to be form; e.g. the karmic potentials of the physical sense powers can act as their substantial cause.

Debate No. 8:

Someone says: But then it follows that form exists in the formless realm—because the seed of form exists there.

Answer: Then it follows that in the formless realm non-virtue exists – because the seed of non-virtue exists there.

This refers to the fact that there is no non-virtue in the form and formless realm.

Sarva Mangalam

