



## **Unity in Duality**

**Introduced through an exposition of Tendrel**

**Tarab Tulku Rinpoche XI, Lharampa Geshe / PhD.**

*“If one finds the origin of the beginning of the beginning one has found the key to the interrelated nature of everything.”*

### **Introduction**

#### *Ancient knowledge and Western science*

Already in the 1930ies and 1940ies a well-known Tibetan scholar, Gendün Chöpel, expresses the view that there are important links between science and the ancient knowledge or wisdom of Buddhism. After Gendün Chöpel travelled in India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), he wrote a book about his encounters. In it he mentioned that there was a Buddhist Pandhita living in Sri Lanka, who gained incredible faith in Buddhism only after he had studied Western science. Apparently the Pandhita had said that “Buddhism and Western Science go hand in hand”, and that “if they run together, they will support each other”, and “that they can even make great leaps together”<sup>1</sup>.

Also His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has clearly stated the connection between the ancient wisdom of Buddhism and modern science. He has up to date held 25 conferences on this subject matter. He has also participated in a great number of other conferences on science and spirituality, as well as having engaged personally in dialogues with Western scientists. He has even encouraged scientific research into Buddhist meditative practices. All of these encounters have brought H.H. the Dalai Lama to introduce a basic science education in Tibetan Buddhist monastic colleges and academic centres, in order for Tibetan scholars to engage not only in ancient ‘inner science’<sup>2</sup>, but in the modern type of science as well.

His Holiness believes that modern science and the ancient ‘inner science’ of Buddhism share a common objective: to serve humanity and to create a better understanding of reality. He feels that science offers powerful tools for understanding the interconnectedness of all phenomena, and that such an understanding provides an essential rationale for ethical

---

<sup>1</sup> Gendün Chöpel (Tib.) *Ge-'dun chö-'phel, rGyal-khams rigs-pas bskor-ba'i gnam-rgyud gser-gyi thang-ma* (Scientific Expedition to Various Countries), 1990, Tibet (ISRN7 – 80589 – 002 – 1/z.1).

<sup>2</sup> (Tib.) *Nang don rigs-pa* (literally: ‘inner science’)

behaviour and the protection of the environment. His Holiness summarized these ideas in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech:

*“With the ever growing impact of science on our lives, religion and spirituality have a greater role to play in reminding us of our humanity. There is no contradiction between the two. Each gives us valuable insights into the other. Both science and the teachings of the Buddha tell us of the fundamental unity of all things.”*

### *Buddhism and Religion*

Generally seen Buddhism is in the West regarded as a religion. But it is useful to reflect upon the fact that religion is a purely Western concept. In the Tibetan language we do not have a term with the same meaning as religion. So later, when the concept religion was introduced to the Tibetan culture, it was difficult to find a translation. In the dictionary we can see that the word the missionaries<sup>3</sup> chose to convey the meaning of religion within Tibetan language was *chö*<sup>4</sup>. However, *chö* does not bear the same meaning as the western term religion. *Chö* is the Tibetan translation of the Sanskrit term *dharma*, which originally means: “what it is in itself”, i.e. what is the nature of reality or what is the nature of mind and phenomena. Later *dharma* / *chö* started to relate to many different meanings, all depending on the context. It could mean ‘phenomenon’, also it could mean ‘the deepest nature of reality’, *nirvana*. *Dharma* / *chö* can also be the name of Buddha’s teachings, which imply philosophical teachings including metaphysics and logic, as well as teachings in science of mind and meditation as well as yogic teachings and practice. Finally, as a later development, *dharma* / *chö* can also relate to the religious aspect of Buddhism as well as to connote the different religions. For instance, referring to Christianity one says *Dharma* of Jesus, Islam is called *Dharma* of Mohamed and Buddhism is called the Buddha *Dharma*. However, in this context *dharma* has the connotation of ‘teaching’ rather than ‘religion’: Jesus’ teachings, Mohamed’s teachings etc.

Thus, when you hear *Buddha Dharma*, it comprises all the aspects of Buddhism, which in the West would relate to most of the disciplines within the humanistic sciences, including religious studies in theory and practice as well as to some aspects of the natural sciences. Also it should be mentioned that Buddhism as a religious practice is never separated from the science of mind and phenomena, as the goal of the religious practice actually is to realize the deepest nature of mind and phenomena. So you can see that the term of *chö* or *dharma* in many respects differs from the term religion. We can maybe even say that the term religion could be misleading as a translation for *dharma* / *chö*.

Even though in the Tibetan language and in Sanskrit, as well as in any of the other languages related with Buddhist culture, there does not exist a term or concept that exclusively denotes the area of religion, because of the Western influence nowadays one can hear the term *dharma* / *chö* being used in this sense. When the term ‘religion’ is being used in this way, i.e. as an un-reflected translation of *dharma* / *chö*, people in the West often come to think that Buddhism is only a religion.

On the other hand, since the conceptual reality both in the modern world of the West as well as in the East has a very strong impact on modern man, the reductionistic translation of *dharma* to ‘religion’ is causing a particular problem for modern Eastern people as well. When people that are living in a modern Eastern culture are exposed to modern Western materialistic beliefs and knowledge, they simultaneously get the conceptual information that

---

<sup>3</sup> It was the Christian missionaries who created the first Tibetan - Western dictionaries in order to translate the Bible.

<sup>4</sup> (Tib.) *Chos*

Buddhism is only a religion, and nothing more than that. Because of the incapability of bringing together materialism and Buddhism as a religion, along with adopting a materialistic belief system these modern Eastern people lose their cultural heritage - not only the religious aspect, but likewise the whole field of humanistic and natural inner sciences that are fundamental to Buddhism.

#### *Ancient 'Inner' Science - The Tendrel view*

After having made this point clear we can start to look into the view of *tendrel*<sup>5</sup>. The beginning of Buddha's teachings, the first turning of the wheel of *dharma / chö*, was connected with *tendrel*, the 'interdependent origination of phenomena', or simply: 'the interrelated nature of phenomena' as an explanation of the nature of phenomena and the nature of mind. The goal of Buddha's teachings was the realization of the true nature of reality. This realization brings the adept into contact with the non-dual nature basic to duality, i.e. *nirvana*.

Buddhism generally refers to a threefold differentiation consisting of 1) The "basis", *zhi*<sup>6</sup>, the nature of ourselves and reality in their interrelationship; 2) The "path", *lam*<sup>7</sup>, the realization of that interrelated nature of our-selves and reality; 3) The "goal" or result, *dre*<sup>8</sup>, having gone beyond normal reality, having reached peace or *nirvana*.

The *tendrel* view, which is being exposed here, is dealing with the 'basis', and the basis mainly from the view of the object-side, as seen in Nagarjuna's exposition of *Tendrel*. *Tendrel* is here basically relating to an 'inner' scientific analysis of phenomena, and is in this way well connecting with the Western scientific approach.

The view of *tendrel* is fundamental to the ancient 'inner science'. This view describes the nature of reality as interdependent and interrelated. It is said to originate with Shakyamuni Buddha (500 B.C.) but seemingly has roots all the way back to the ancient Brahmin tradition (4<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C.), which in this way even possibly connects the *tendrel* view to the roots of Western knowledge.<sup>9</sup>

Nagarjuna (approx. 150-250), one of the two most important Indian Buddhist philosophers, in many of his famous works<sup>10</sup> gives the highest praise to Buddha for his teaching on *tendrel*. Also Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), founder of the Tibetan-Buddhist *Gelug*-school<sup>11</sup> and one of the most famous Tibetan scholars, in one of his well known works<sup>12</sup> likewise composed a renowned hymn of praise to Buddha for the profound insight made available through the exposition of the *tendrel* view.

The reason for these praises is that the *tendrel* view is very specific to the teaching of the Buddha. Although the nature of reality has been expressed in many different ways since well before the time of Buddha Shakyamuni, it seems that what makes the Buddha's teaching

---

<sup>5</sup> (Tib.) *rTen-'brel*, commonly translated to 'interdependent origination'

<sup>6</sup> (Tib.) *gZhi*

<sup>7</sup> (Tib.) *Lam*

<sup>8</sup> (Tib.) '*Bras*

<sup>9</sup> According to Gendün Chöphel's research on the origin of the Brahmin tradition (Tib. *Ge-'dun chö-'phel*), *rGyal-khams rigs-pas bskor-ba'i gtam-rgyud gser-gyi thang-ma* (Scientific Expedition to Various Countries), 1990, Tibet (ISRN7 – 80589 – 002 – 1/z.1).

<sup>10</sup> For example in the *Mulamadhyamakakarika*

<sup>11</sup> One of the four Tibetan-Buddhist schools, i.e. Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu, Gelug, at the same time being the school of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

<sup>12</sup> (Tib.) *rTen-'brel bstod-pa*

very particular is this rendering of reality nature in the form of the interdependent nature of all that exists, an exposition unequalled by other contemporary teachers.

As mentioned in the Tendrel Sutra<sup>13</sup>, to realize the *tendrel* nature is the basis for understanding the nature of reality / duality and for understanding enlightenment / the non-dual. In other words, if one understands the *tendrel* nature, one understands the nature of *samsara* / duality and *nirvana* / the non-dual; and likewise, if one does not understand the *tendrel* nature, one does not understand the nature of dual existence and the non-dual. In the Pali Buddhist Sutra Majjhima-Nikaya<sup>14</sup> it says:

“If you realize the nature of *tendrel*, you have realized the nature of *dharma*, the nature of reality / phenomena”.

In the Sutra Salu Jangpe Do<sup>15</sup> it says in a similar way:

“If you have realized the *tendrel* nature, you have realized *dharma* (the nature of reality / phenomena) and if you have realized *dharma*, you have realized Buddha (enlightenment / the non-dual)”.

Also in accordance with the Tendrel Sutra and its commentary by Vasubandhu (approx. 320-400), the *tendrel* nature is a universal law governing dual existence. In the Tendrel Dodrel<sup>16</sup> Vasubandhu is quoting the Sutra, saying:

“Buddha is telling that the nature of *tendrel* is not a system he has made up, and it is not made by anyone else either. He says that the *tendrel* nature is the natural way for reality to exist. The *tendrel* nature is the original nature of reality”.

We can also see that the *tendrel* view had a great impact on Tibetan Buddhism in practice, as within Tibetan Buddhism different mantras are expressing the *tendrel* nature of reality, for example the so-called Tendrel Mantra, which in its literal translation from Sanskrit to English says:

“The Thatagata<sup>17</sup> has expounded that all the (dualistic) phenomena, which originate from causes, as well as the causes themselves, are subject to cessation (implying that if one can change the cause, one can change the result). Therefore he is a sublime master.”

The Tendrel Mantra is used on very special occasions such as consecrations of holy places, statues, stupas and temples. Also one can often find the Tendrel Mantra at the end of holy texts. The Tendrel Mantra is furthermore applied in a wide variety of circumstances, such as for protection, purification, subjugation etc. This points to the very special meaning and quality of the *tendrel* view as a focal point of Buddhism.

Therefore all together within the context of Buddhism, the understanding of *tendrel* is the

---

<sup>13</sup> (Tib.) *rTen-'brel mdo*

<sup>14</sup> Majjhima-Nikaya, Vol. I, p. 191, Pali text Society

<sup>15</sup> (Tib.) *Sa-lu ljang-pa'i mDo*

<sup>16</sup> (Tib.) *rTen-'brel mDo-'grel* by Vasubandhu, Tibetan Tripitaka, Vol. 104, No. 5496, 69a8-bl, Peking edition, Otani University

<sup>17</sup> Buddha

fundamental foundation for the spiritual basis, path and result<sup>18</sup>, which I had the opportunity to study and practice from a very young age at the Drepung Monastery University. Due to such an environment, where we could draw upon the wealth of Buddhist knowledge, and where practice, study and debate were daily routine; we were well acquainted with the view of *tendrel*. Especially during my teenage years I became very dedicated to trying to really understand the deeper meaning of *tendrel* – which many years later I expressed by the key term ‘*Unity in Duality*’<sup>19</sup>.

## Inner Science of Mind and Phenomena – The Scientific Approach of Buddhism

Before entering into my presentation of essential aspects of the *tendrel* view, I would like to comment on the traditional investigation of the Buddhist “inner science”, which has brought forth this particular view.

### *The scientific foundation of Buddhism*

First of all it is necessary to understand that Buddhism has many facets, of which the so-called religious facet as already mentioned is the most well known to people. However, the foundation of Buddhism is scientific in its approach. Generally within the Indian tradition, and to my knowledge especially in the Buddhist tradition, runs a line of pertinent questioning into the nature of phenomena and the nature of ‘mind’, establishing what in Tibetan is called *nangdön rigpa*<sup>20</sup> (inner science) and its highly respected academic tradition, which in actuality is constituting a deeply founded ‘inner science of mind and phenomena’. In ancient India, at the time of the four major ‘science of mind and phenomena-schools’<sup>21</sup>, the names of such great ‘scientists’ as Nagarjuna (approx. 150-250), Asanga (approx. 395-470) and Candrakirti (approx. 600), only to name a few, bear testimony to this specific way of scientific investigation.

Ancient Indian Buddhist texts, translated to Tibetan language in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, categorized five major “sciences”, which apart from *nangdön rigpa* (inner science) included *sowa rigpa*<sup>22</sup> (medical science), *dra rigpa*<sup>23</sup> (science of language), *tanzig rigpa*<sup>24</sup> (science of logic) as well as *zor rigpa*<sup>25</sup> (science of art)<sup>26</sup>. In this categorization the term *rigpa* is thus somehow used in the same way as the Western term ‘science’.

---

<sup>18</sup> (Tib.) *Gzhi, Lam, ‘Bras*

<sup>19</sup> *Unity in Duality* is Buddhism in my presentation speaking to modern man. *Unity in Duality* refers both to the ‘basis’, the science of mind and phenomena; to the ‘path’, the practice applied for personal development, art-of-relating, psychotherapeutic as well as spiritual application; and to the ‘goal’ to bring harmony within and in between people as well as between people and nature, towards the realization of ‘peace’. However, in this exposition, with *Unity in Duality* I relate to the object of the “basis”, the fundamental view of reality, however in its natural interrelatedness with the subject.

<sup>20</sup> (Tib.) *Nang-don rig-pa*

<sup>21</sup> The Vaibhasika-school, Sautrantika-school, Yogacara-school and Madhyamaka-school.

<sup>22</sup> (Tib.) *gSo-ba rig-pa*

<sup>23</sup> (Tib.) *sGra rig-pa*

<sup>24</sup> (Tib.) *gTan-tshig rig-pa*

<sup>25</sup> (Tib.) *bZor rig-pa*

<sup>26</sup> The Tibetan term *rigpa* (Tib. *Rig-pa*) in this connection denotes ‘science’, although in other contexts it has different meanings.

Sometimes also the Tibetan term *tshan rig*<sup>27</sup> has been used to denote Western science. However, in the last century the Tibetan scholar Gendün Chöpel introduced the term *rigsar*<sup>28</sup>, implying a new way (*sar* meaning new) of doing *rig*. Gendün Chöpel was relating *rigsar* directly to the Western tradition of modern science, as opposed to the traditional approach of investigation used throughout the Indian and the later Tibetan tradition – from Buddha’s time around 500 B.C. until the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>29</sup>. Before entering into an explanation of this traditional approach, I find it important not only to emphasize the similarities between *nangdön rigpa* (inner science) and *rigsar* (Western science), but also the difference between them.

The differences between the ancient ‘inner science’ and modern Western science express themselves in my understanding both in regard to the assumptions basic to the investigation, as well as in regard to the method. The method will be discussed below, but concerning the basic assumptions we can see that from the beginning of the schools of ‘inner science’, all the way up until now, it has been taken for granted that what we experience is always interconnected with our *way* of experiencing. This implies that none of what we consider to exist exists independently of the one experiencing it. Subject and object are seen as existing strictly in an interrelated way, and all investigations by the schools of ‘inner science’ have been firmly rooted in this understanding. Whereas Western scientific investigation – especially after science disconnected from its religious and philosophical basis – seemed to rely on the underlying assumption, that the object exists independently of the subject. Taking the subject to be some kind of ‘neutral observer’ of a reality existing out there in its own right, this type of investigation aimed to arrive at results, based on the idea that the object can be investigated by the subject without the subject interfering with the findings. However, I know that this preconception was shaken by modern Western scientists, such as Niels Bohr, modern particle physics and also from within other disciplines. Still, as many of the scientists attending the Munich Tendrel Conference, 2002, expressed, this modern scientific understanding of the interrelationship between the investigating subject and the object investigated had not yet been able to widely permeate the actual dealings and considerations of the scientific and academic community as such.

### **The ‘Inner Science’**

The Buddhist ‘inner science’ comprises a well-defined investigative approach, which is at the same time experiential and experimental. Scientific work was highly valued within the Tibetan tradition, as expressed by the words of the founder of the Sakya-school, Sakya Pandita (1182-1251), who said in one of his great works<sup>30</sup> that the inner scientific research is very important, and even if one was to die tomorrow, one should still carry on to use the scientific approach.

The ‘inner science’ contains a progression of views of the nature of reality, which simultaneously exhibit a keen interest in the nature and the functioning of the mind, epistemological questions as well as ontological ones. Furthermore, ‘inner science’ has been deeply concerned with research into the question, whether that, which we experience, is in accordance with the nature of reality or not. At the same time Buddhism has developed

---

<sup>27</sup> (Tib.) *Tshan-rig*

<sup>28</sup> (Tib.) *Rig-sar*

<sup>29</sup> Buddhism was first introduced in Tibet in the 8th century A.C., and since this time it has continuously developed theoretically as well as being applied practically. From the 11th century onwards we find an unbroken living tradition of academic study and practice, continuing on into this century. In India this ancient tradition did not continue and it therefore only survived as part of the Tibetan culture.

<sup>30</sup> (Tib.) *Sa-skya legs-bshad*

practices, in order to allow for the realization of our perceptive / cognitive errors, as to rejoin more directly the nature of reality.

Since it is based on the *tendrel* view, i.e. the interrelated nature of all that exists, a particularity permeating all of the ‘inner science’ implies that the investigating subject and the object of investigation are considered to exist in a strictly interrelated way.<sup>31</sup> This implies that when trying to find out what the nature of reality is, all investigation is necessarily founded upon the distinction between the different ‘subjective’ tools of perception/cognition in correspondence with their different respective objects. In other words, according to the Buddhist ‘inner science’ we cannot experience a so-called ‘objective’ reality, which exists independently of the experiencing subject - an insight shared by modern physics, such as for example expressed by Niels Bohr on many occasions as well as by Werner Heisenberg, the latter in connection with his ‘uncertainty principle’.

Like physics, the ‘inner science’ is taking its departure in the sense reality. Differentiating various ways of experiencing reality, the ‘inner science’ reaches to a basic level of sense reality that lies before conceptual naming and interpretation, as well as reaching to realities that are fundamental to the sense reality itself. It is in making the sense reality, as well as more fundamental realities below the surface of our ordinary reality, its object of investigation that the ‘inner science’ transgresses the frame of mere philosophical inquiry, revealing its connection to modern natural science. If the goal of the investigation is to really find out what reality nature is, as it is stated by ‘inner science’ and modern science alike, it seems indispensable to embark into this investigation from the basis of the pure sense reality / pure matter nature, as this is the level that is commonly shared by all humans and unmitigated by individually coloured conceptualisation and interpretation.

### **Inner Investigation**

‘Inner science’ is an inner type of investigation, because it doesn’t use any outer equipment. But even though the investigation of the ‘inner science’ is not conducted by means of mechanical tools, its rules and methods are based on well-defined forms of correct argumentation<sup>32</sup>, logical deduction<sup>33</sup> and the necessity to base the investigation on and refer it to previous findings<sup>34</sup>. It seems that through this investigation the same natural laws are becoming transparent as in modern science. For example, are the compounded nature, the causal nature, the interrelated nature, as well as the moment-to-moment changing nature of phenomena, all of which are part of the *tendrel* nature of phenomena referred to below, distinguished as being basic natural laws of reality. Thus, without relying on any kind of mechanical tool, ‘inner science’ seems to reach some of the same fundamental understanding of the nature of phenomena as modern science.

The investigation of the ‘inner science’ is conducted on different levels of subject – object interrelationship with its point of departure in the senses and sense reality. Taking the subject – object interrelationship into account at each step of the investigation qualifies the ‘inner science’ at the same time as an ‘experimental’ as well as an ‘experiential’ science. Looking from the perspective of the underlying methodological principle, we can actually find the same procedure as in modern science, i.e. to explore the nature of phenomena on succeeding deeper levels.

---

<sup>31</sup> Asanga (c. 395-470), one of the two most important Buddhist philosophers, set forth the rules of the interrelationship between subject and object, implying that the object does not exist in and by itself independently of the experiencing subject.

<sup>32</sup> *Tsema* (Tib.) *Tshad-ma*, literally meaning “right measurement” but also implying valid cognition

<sup>33</sup> *Tentsig rigpa* (Tib.) *gTan-tshig rig-pa* (science of logic)

<sup>34</sup> *Lung dang rigpa* (Tib.) *Lung dang rig-pa*. *Lung* is your reference to your sources, where *Rig-pa* is the right way of proving

## **Application of the Scientific Findings towards Subject and Object alike**

In the ancient cultures of Tibet and India the knowledge of *tendrel* has been applied not only to the object, but quite naturally also to the subject of the subject-object interrelationship, through application of this knowledge to the field of personal investigation and practice. In these ancient cultures the view of *tendrel* has thus been used as a basis for understanding the nature of reality, the nature of ourselves, as well as for understanding how to deal with one's body-mind, in order to create the best possible conditions for a balanced continuation of existence among mankind, as well as between man and nature towards 'peace'.

This experiential aspect, nurtured by personal investigation and practice and fundamentally based on the insight into the subject-object, body-'mind'<sup>35</sup> as well as the matter-'energy'<sup>36</sup> interrelationships, seems to have fostered mainly a development of the subject, whereas the modern scientific tradition, at least until recently, seems to have more strongly emphasized the application of their scientific findings towards a very successful exterior development. Therefore, until now, the deep knowledge of modern science in my view does not seem to have had its full impact in the personal and environmental dimensions of the modern cultures.

I believe that the view of *tendrel*, as it is formulated by the 'inner science' as well as by modern science, if applied equally to the subject as well as to the object, has a very special value for the modern world, as it seems to carry a great potential for healing many of the wounds pertaining to our present condition.

## **The Tendrel - Unity in Duality Conference**

I have been in the West now for over thirty years, and I had the great fortune to have a lot of opportunities to meet with scientists both from the 'hard' as well as from the 'soft' sciences. On the basis of these meetings I could see that the ancient view of *tendrel* is deeply connected with the results of the research of modern Western science.

In order to investigate further the connection between ancient 'science of mind and phenomena' and modern science, in October 2002 in Munich I initiated a conference under the heading of "Tendrel - Unity in Duality", where scientists from different academic disciplines could meet in order to engage in dialogue, with the view of *tendrel / unity in duality*, the interconnected nature of reality, as the platform for discussion. To make this common platform available, when inviting the speakers they were sent an abbreviated version of the exposition on *tendrel* you find below. In this exposition *tendrel* is being introduced from the view of the great Buddhist scholars Nagarjuna and Tsongkhapa as well as from my own side. In this context, in the words of Prof. Richard Ernst: "...they describe the network of interdependency in a four-dimensional coordinate system spanned by the Eight Tendrels, pair-wise combined in the Four Essential Natures"<sup>37</sup>.

---

<sup>35</sup> 'Mind' within the *U.D.* notation is used in inverted commas in order to indicate that this term is used here in a much broader meaning than in its common usage.

<sup>36</sup> 'Energy' within the *U.D.* notation is used in inverted commas in order to indicate that this term is used here in a different and much broader meaning than in its common usage within physics.

<sup>37</sup> See Prof. Richard Ernst's foreword to this book.



## II The Investigation of Reality on the Basis of *Tendrel*

### Introduction

Within the ancient ‘inner science’ the investigation of the nature of ‘mind’ and phenomena is carried out from two different perspectives, approaching from the object and from the subject respectively of the subject-object continuum. As already mentioned the investigation through the object and through the subject is deeply grounded in the understanding of their interrelationship, but also in their natural inseparability.

Approaching the investigation through the *object*, the ‘inner scientists’ were uncovering the cause and effect nature of existence, which in turn implies the compounded nature of everything that exists, together with the moment-to-moment changing nature or transitory nature of phenomena. This is leading to the deepest nature of existence, which saturates everything and has been called by various names, such as the ‘void-nature’ (devoid of characteristics) / ‘potential nature’ / ‘nature of unity’.

In connection with the object, *tendrel*, the interrelated nature, has been expounded in various ways. One of the most famous and important expositions is that of the Indian philosopher Nagarjuna. The term the “Eight Tendrels of Nagarjuna” is very well known among the Tibetan scholars and in their works we find frequent references to Nagarjuna’s Eight Tendrels: “*becoming, cessation, the finite, the infinite, localization, de-localization, part and whole*”. Nagarjuna mentions the Eight Tendrels in his praise to Buddha, which is preceding his work *Mulamadhyamakakarika*<sup>38</sup>, as well as in the actual text of this work. In his praise to Buddha, Nagarjuna does not directly explain the Eight Tendrels, but is merely praising Buddha for expounding their ‘void-nature’. Neither in the *Mulamadhyamakakarika* itself does Nagarjuna explain the interdependent origination of these eight key natures, but here as well he merely describes how each of the Eight Tendrels does not inherently exist in and by itself. However, exposing the Eight Tendrels in this manner as ultimately devoid of inherent existence is actually implicitly pointing to their strong relevance on a conventional level.

Later on Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), in his commentary on Nagarjuna’s work<sup>39</sup>, mentions that Nagarjuna’s “Eight Tendrels” are connected with the “Four Essential Natures” of reality: the *individual identity* is connected with *becoming and cessation*, the *time nature* is connected with *finite and infinite*, the *space nature* is connected with *localization and de-localization* and finally the *conjunct nature* is connected with *part and whole*. But Tsongkhapa gives no further elaboration or explanation on the nature of these connections between Nagarjuna’s Eight Tendrel and his own Four Essential Natures.

Nevertheless it seems to me that Tsongkhapa’s connecting his Four Essential Natures to Nagarjuna’s Eight Tendrels is a very important point. Why is that so? Because each one of Tsongkhapa’s Four Essential Natures serves as a key to open up a much deeper understanding of each of the four pairs that constitute Nagarjuna’s Eight Tendrels, which makes these Four Essential Natures important gates of investigation for understanding the reality nature of phenomena itself, implying a profound understanding of the interrelationship between *matter and ‘energy’*. In this respect Tsongkhapa seems to indicate that we need to understand the *individual identity*, the *time nature*, the *space nature* as well as the *conjunct nature* of phenomena, in order to understand how phenomena truly exist.

Both modern science and the ancient ‘inner science’ want to trace down matter nature in order to find out what is its base. It looks like modern science, when investigating the nature

---

<sup>38</sup> Nagarjuna, *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, (Tib.) *dBu-ma rtsa-ba’i tshig-le ’ur byas-pa shes-rab ces bya-ba*, 1970, Delhi.

<sup>39</sup> Tsongkhapa, (Tib.) *dBu-ma rtsa-ba’i tshig-le ’ur byas-pa shes-rab ces bya-ba’i rnam-bshad rigs-pa’i rgya-mthso*

of matter, is likewise investigating the individual nature of phenomena, the time nature, the space nature as well as the conjunct nature. In that way these two otherwise seemingly different sciences do share some of the same fundamental entrances to their respective investigations.

When I read Tsongkhapa's commentary on Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, relating the Eight Tendrels to the Four Essential Natures, I was greatly inspired to enter into further investigations, to uncover the nature of the connections them between. During the run of this investigation it became apparent to me that we are indeed talking about pairs of *tendrel*, as Tsongkhapa pointed out by relating them in this manner to his Four Essential Natures. I realized, that *becoming* and *cessation*, the *finite* and the *infinite*, *localization* and *de-localization* as well as *part* and *whole* are pairs, both by virtue of their opposing natures as well as by virtue of their uniting natures, i.e. by virtue of their *unity in duality* nature itself. It is because they do have a *unity in duality* nature of being *simultaneously opposing and uniting*, that these four pairs actually constitute the fourfold essential nature of phenomena. Uncovering the unity in duality nature of each of the four pairs of *tendrel* in this way, the connection between Nagarjuna and Tsongkhapa became apparent.

Below, under "The investigation of reality on the basis of *Tendrel* through the object Part I", I will first of all present the way in which Nagarjuna's Eight Tendrels and Tsongkhapa's Essential Natures are connected and highlight each other, in that the very *unity in duality* nature of each of Nagarjuna's Four Pairs of Tendrel constitute the respective one of Tsongkhapa's Four Essential Natures.<sup>40</sup>

Consequently, this particular understanding furthermore opened up a new way of expressing the *tendrel* nature of phenomena, which lead me to introduce the *tendrel* view in terms of the *Three Unity in Duality* interrelationships of and between the pairs of 'energy' and *matter*, *subject* and *object*, as well as *body* and 'mind' that saturate all our reality. This new expression of *tendrel* seems to make the ancient universal *tendrel* knowledge more easily accessible and applicable for modern people, facilitating and supporting personal as well as transpersonal development. Therefore below I will additionally be presenting these *Three Unity in Duality* interrelationships or Three New Pairs of Tendrel, which are partly relating to the object investigation and partly to the subject investigation: The *matter-energy* interrelationship will be discussed in relation with the object, whereas the *tendrel* exposition in regard the *subject-object* interrelationship, as well as the *body-mind* interrelationship, will be discussed under "The investigation of reality on the basis of *tendrel* through the subject".

## **The Investigation of Reality on the Basis of *Tendrel* through the Object-side Part I**

In order to expound the investigation conducted by the 'inner science' in regard to the object, in this first part I will present Nagarjuna's Eight Tendrel as Four Pairs of opposites / unities, relating them in this way to Tsongkhapa's Four Essential Natures. Viewing the Eight Tendrels in their interrelationship with the Four Essential Natures as four opposing and simultaneously uniting Pairs of Tendrel, as will be expounded below, seems helpful to clarify and show the importance of the ancient insight into the nature of phenomena. The

---

<sup>40</sup> Tarab Tulku Rinpoche: 'Tendrel' Science of Mind and Phenomena, I (Tib. *Nang-don rig-pa'i gzhung-las byung-ba'i sems-kyi tshan-rig rten-'brel snang-ba'i gzi-byin*)

Four Pairs of opposites / unities presented here are *becoming* and *cessation*, the *finite* and the *infinite*, *localization* and *de-localization*, as well as *part* and *whole*.

### ***The ‘Individual Identity’ in Terms of ‘Becoming’ and ‘Cessation’ of Phenomena***

*The ‘individual identity’ of phenomena is constituted by virtue of the unity in duality nature of ‘becoming’ and ‘cessation’, i.e. simultaneously being of opposing as well as of uniting nature.*

If one generally observes phenomena, one can see that all phenomena have their own individual way of being or individual identity, like trees, plants, animals, humans, stones, etc. All phenomena of matter nature have their own identity, even down to the smallest particle that still occupies its own space and has its own time nature. In order to explain the conditions under which such an individual identity comes into being, we can for instance look at a tree.

For a tree to grow it needs a seed and it is directly linked to the tree as its *primary cause*. For a tree to flourish, grow strong and have green leaves it however also needs *secondary causes* such as water, relatively rich earth, sunlight and generally good conditions. One can apply this to any existing matter phenomenon as well as to all phenomena existing on a subtle matter level, by saying that all existences have their own individual identity or way of being, because they all have particular primary and secondary causes, i.e. they all have an exclusive individual set of causes and circumstances.

Furthermore, when a tree becomes old, one can chop it down and use it to make furniture. When the furniture becomes old, one can chop them to pieces and use them as firewood. The fire burns the wood to ashes, which later disintegrate into subtle matter and energy. In this way any kind of matter phenomenon is eventually subject to disintegration and *cessation* and will cease to exist on a matter level.

In the Abhidharma-literature<sup>41</sup>, which will be expanded upon later on, it states that in the beginning of time first there was 'energy', then there was subtle matter, and then later came the gross level of matter, in whose form individual beings and everything we consider to be manifest are presently existing. In this way the whole universe is seen to evolve in a *circular movement* - 'energy' becomes subtle matter, which later changes into a gross level of matter. In this gross level of matter the gross individual identities of phenomena manifest. But at a certain time this process reverses, i.e. the rough matter nature naturally changes again to subtle matter and later again becomes 'energy'. Thus the process of becoming and cessation describes a circular movement, which seems to continue endlessly.

According to the ancient “inner science” it seems like the whole universe has this intrinsic nature of creation, being and cessation. If one imagines the life-span of a plant from beginning to end, one can say that the plant is created when the seed sprouts, the plant is being as long as it lives, and it ceases when it decays. However, looking more closely at this living organism, one can also say that on the cellular level the intrinsic process of creation, being and cessation is actually taking place in every split second in order for the plant to continue its existence as well as in order for it to come into being in the first place, in order for it to grow and finally in order for it to decay. Therefore, on a deeper level, creation, being and cessation are not only happening continuously, but are as well *happening simultaneously*.

---

<sup>41</sup> The subject of the Abhidharma literature is ‘knowledge’ or ‘wisdom’. The Abhidharma is one of the so-called ‘three baskets’ or Tripitaka, which contains what Buddhism is about.

Seen from this perspective creation and death, i.e. becoming and cessation, in respect to the individual identity of phenomena are inseparable. Without a simultaneously ongoing happening of cessation and becoming, no becoming whatsoever can take place. Likewise, without a simultaneously ongoing happening of becoming and cessation, no cessation can take place either. It is commonly said that the cause of cessation is no other than the cause of becoming itself<sup>42</sup>. From this we can understand that being is never static, but is always connected with the action or movement of a simultaneous and ongoing happening of becoming and cessation. It is this action or movement, which is necessary for phenomena to uphold their existence.

This understanding of the nature of phenomenal existence, as being subject to continuous and simultaneous creation-cessation, is already reflected in the way the historical Buddha explained the *First Noble Truth*. In 500 BC, Buddha Shakyamuni turned the first wheel of Dharma in Sarnath, where he expounded the teachings on *The Four Noble Truths*. In the *First Noble Truth*, the *Truth of Duhkha*, an explanation of the nature of dualism, one of the main points is that all dualistic-phenomena are *anitya*<sup>43</sup>, i.e. part and parcel of a *continuous flow*. According to the Buddha it is precisely this transitory or continuously flowing and striving nature of phenomena, which characterizes dualistic or *samsaric* existence of never being in peace, peace here being *nirvana*.

### Summary

All matter phenomena in the universe have their own individual identity. This is due to the fact that every single phenomenon possesses an essential causal nature, implying that each one has its individual set of primary and secondary causes, which naturally encompasses creation, being and cessation, for the matter phenomenon to continue to exist.

Creation, being and cessation can be looked upon at different levels. One can talk about the lifespan of an individual existence, which is born, lives and dies. However, if one looks more closely at the moment-to-moment existence of an entity, one realises that simultaneous creation, being and cessation are encapsulated in every split second of the individual's existence. Becoming and cessation of a phenomenon thus do not just happen once in a lifetime, but in order for a phenomenon to uphold its existence, this pulsation of becoming and cessation takes place within every split second. Creation and cessation are therefore vital factors for each individual existence to partake in the continuous flow that constitutes its individual identity.

*Thus, in accordance with the natural conditions of phenomena, the simultaneously opposing and uniting natures of becoming and cessation are inseparable from the phenomena's individual identity - Unity in Duality.*

### The 'Time Nature' in terms of the 'Finite' and 'Infinite' Nature of Phenomena

*The 'time nature' of phenomena is constituted by virtue of the Unity in Duality nature of the 'finite' and the 'infinite', i.e. as simultaneously being of opposing as well as uniting natures.*

Generally time can be defined in two ways: Measurable time and eternal time, or finite and

---

<sup>42</sup> (Tib.) 'Jig-pa phyis 'byung gi rgyu la ma ltos-pa

<sup>43</sup> *Anitya*, the Sanskrit word, and *mitagpa*<sup>43</sup>, the Tibetan word, both mean 'flowing'. Actually *anitya* without the first 'a' means static and the 'a' is a negation. Similarly in Tibetan, *tagpa*<sup>43</sup> means static, and the *mi*<sup>43</sup> negates the word, so both words negate 'static' beingness, implying a "continuous flow". Often *mitagpa* is translated as transitory, which I feel doesn't quite capture the real meaning of the Tibetan word.

infinite time. In modern culture, everything one does is measured by precisely defined increments of time. However, from another point of view, as for instance from a philosophical or spiritual perspective, one can talk about beyond of time and space limitation as well as 'eternal' love, 'eternal' peace or 'eternal' life, all implying some kind of notion of 'eternal' time.

Whether talking about human beings or phenomena, time is actually connected to an entity's own movement and changing nature, but generally we, humans, connect time solely to movements outside of us. All our considerations, for example of the age of people and things, imply a measurement on an abstract time scale.

In ancient times people observed the movement of the sun rising and setting, the light changing from day to night and back to day, in this way distinguishing a whole range of periods such as morning, noon, evening, day, month, year etc. These natural rhythms were then adopted as the measuring scale for everything else. In this way time came to be defined, based on the movement of something outside of what is to be measured. Later on humans have created an even further abstraction of time by developing the clock. Using moving indicators for hours, minutes, seconds allowed for splitting up time in even smaller abstract increments.

This type of abstract time measurement gives the impression that there is something like an outer time, independently existing by itself, which is continuously moving forward in seconds, minutes and hours, while we remain static. For example, when people have a meeting they say: 'The meeting will last 50 minutes', measured by the arms of the clock moving, and it is as if the meeting itself and the persons participating in the meeting remain unchanging during all of these 50 minutes. But on closer observation the meeting itself, as well as the participants, each have their own individual time, based on their own individual nature of continuous movement and change. The way the meeting is measured, however, is based on an abstraction from their respective proper time nature.

Since an incessantly moving and changing nature is inherent in all the different phenomena themselves, including human beings, we can say that time does not exist outside of 'oneself' or 'itself'. Still, we use an outer device such as a clock to measure time, in this way creating an abstracted idea of time, which we take to be the 'real' time. Even more so, we can have the idea of a whole 'time-zone' that is independently existing outside of us, which we can move in and out of as can be seen in certain films, where the protagonist is travelling to "the past" or to "the future".

However, if one wants to understand a cat's time nature, one shouldn't look at the inherent changing nature of a dog, because each individual entity has a different time nature. Likewise, if one tries to find one's *own proper time nature*, one cannot find it outside of one's own existence, outside of the continuous movements of one's own being, which is nothing but moment-to-moment creation, being and cessation. One's own proper time exists only within oneself.

Since the moment-to-moment creation, being and cessation nature of any entity is what constitutes its 'real' time nature as well as the entities' continuation, we can differentiate two ways of continuation and thereby two kinds of 'real' time nature respectively: finite time and infinite time.

If one looks at the lifespan<sup>44</sup> of a particular tree from seed to being fully-grown, one will conclude that the tree, as we know it, is finite, because at some point it is born and eventually it dies. Upon further examination of the tree in respect to its moment-to-moment changing nature of creation, being and cessation, one furthermore discovers that the lifespan of the

---

<sup>44</sup> This is a free rendering of the Tibetan term *rig gyün* (Tib.) *Rigs-rgyun*, which refers to the (finite) continuation-line of a *particular* entity.

particular tree is made up by countless finite moments, i.e. moments that have *a beginning and an end*. Thus the particular tree is subject to a finite existential continuation-line.

When looking from a universal perspective, however, there is no beginning, middle or end to the lifeline<sup>45</sup> of a tree. On the one hand, if tracing back where the seed of the tree is coming from, one eventually reaches an 'energy' nature. On the other hand, when the tree dies, it becomes first wood, then a piece of furniture, then firewood, etc., at some point becoming 'energy' again. This process from 'energy to matter and from matter to 'energy' is not just evolving on a linear time scale, but rather implies a *circular temporal movement* from 'energy' to matter to 'energy' etc., that continues without end. In this way the single tree is also partaking in infinite time, in terms of the nature of unceasing transformation and continuation of substance itself.

On a more rough level, one can say that the tree *simultaneously* possesses two time natures. One time nature of the tree is the *finite time span* of its manifestation as a particular individual identity, which has a beginning and an end, including many finite moments. The other time-nature of the tree is the *infinite circular time line* the tree is partaking in through its substantial nature that has no beginning, middle or end. In this way on the more rough level of existence finite and infinite time are inseparable.

Furthermore, on a more subtle level, like for instance on the cellular level of the tree, creation, being and cessation are happening not just continuously but as well simultaneously. The single cell partakes at the same time in its particular finite existence as a single cell as well as in the infinite continuation-line of its substantial nature. Thus on this subtle level of existence finite and infinite time are likewise inseparable.

We have seen that on the subtle level creation, being and cessation, and thereby the three times of past, present and future are actually inseparable, but our normal idea of time is that time is divided into past, present and future. However, even on our ordinary level this division of time is not fixed, but on closer investigation proves to be relative. For instance, when talking about the present, it is difficult to specify what the present actually is.

In our normal view one can say the past has gone, the future hasn't come and the only thing existing is the present or the now-ness. If one asks, how long is the now-ness, it seems to be a relative phenomenon, because if one says that yesterday is past, tomorrow is future and today is present, it implies that the present lasts a day. However, one can also say the morning is past, the evening is future and the afternoon is present, which means that the present lasts an afternoon. If one imagines a candlelight lasting for one hour, one can say that the flame has been present for one hour. But one can also count 60 minutes in the hour and argue that each minute of the candlelight's existence has a past, present and future. If one imagines a candlelight lasting for three minutes and one focuses on the second minute, then one can conclude that in the second minute the flame is present, whereas in the first minute the flame is past and in the third minute the flame is future. From this we can see that what we call 'now-ness' is completely dependent on where our focus is. Therefore the time of the present is relative. Since the *division of past, present and future* is in this way *depending on what we call the present*, even on our ordinary level it is difficult to make fixed categories of past, present and future.

Then we have experienced time: Generally human beings experience the present as lasting a few minutes, but this is also relative. Some human beings are able to experience the present as shorter and others are able to experience the present as longer. If one could imagine other forms of existence with different abilities, they might experience the present as very short or they might experience the present as very long.

---

<sup>45</sup> This is a free rendering of the Tibetan term *dzä gyün* (Tib.) *rDzas-rgyun*, which refers to the (infinite) continuation-line of the nature of its substance (substance here refer not only to its matter level of existence but even beyond its materialisation).

According to a Buddhist legend, Asanga, the great scholar and one of the most prominent Buddhist teachers, went to Tushita<sup>46</sup> to receive teachings from Maitreya. Asanga felt he was being there just one morning, but when he came back to earth he had been away for fifty years. Thus it seems like the beings in Tushita experience fifty years of human time as just one morning.

In the Buddhist texts it also states that the *bardo*, the period between death and the next life, can take up to 49 days. But this is relative as well, as 49 days in *bardo*-time can take a million years in human time. Furthermore, according to the texts, the *bardo*-being experiences the present as much longer than just a few minutes, which is the normal duration of our human experience of the present. The experience of the present in the *bardo* can last many years in our time.

According to the aforesaid, it seems that the *experience of the present can be extended*, all in accordance with the 'body-mind' experiencing. The present can be prolonged to last one minute, ten minutes, one hour, one month, a year, a decade or even more.

If one holds the view that a few minutes are the present, then the minutes before were the past and the minutes to come are the future. But if one imagines an experience of the present that is longer than just a few minutes, what we used to call past and future beforehand now would be encompassed by this more prolonged present. In this way any *present always encompasses a past and a future*.

When talking about past, present and future it seems like their sequential order as well is relative. If one says for example 'the child will be born next year', it is implying that the future is coming first. Once the child is born, the child is present. When the child is old and dies, it is past. Thus, when talking about something that has not yet come into existence, the future comes first, the present is second and the past is last, because due to the causal nature of the individual existence the three times of future, present and past are integral components of the process of becoming, being and cessation respectively.

But one can also say: 'last year, I was in India, this year I am in Denmark and next year I will be in the U.S.A'. This way of talking seems to be implying the idea of different independently existing 'time-zones' we can move in and out of, such as the 'time-zone' of "next year". In this way the past is coming first, the present is second and the future is last.

However, there should not be *different sequential orders of the three times* depending on the individual perspective, if it wasn't for the relativity of the sequence of past, present and future.

## Summary

The abstract 'time zones' we call 'the past', 'the present' and 'the future', which we believe to exist outside of ourselves, are only an idea and do not substantially exist, however we usually do take them to exist in such a way. Due to the causal nature of the individual identity of phenomena, the three times of future, present and past only 'really' exist in connection with the incessant movement of creation, being, and cessation, which is inherent in the respective entity.

On this basis we can distinguish finite and infinite time, which are inseparable. Since creation, being and cessation are happening simultaneously in every split second of the moment-to-moment-changing nature of existence, the three times of past, present and future likewise exist simultaneously.

Also we saw that the division of time into past, present and future is an expression of the finite nature of time, whereas the relativity of the division of time into past, present and

---

<sup>46</sup> Tushita is important in Buddhism, as it is said to be the place where all the Buddhas are coming from.

Buddha Shakyamuni (the historical Buddha) in accordance with the legend came from Tushita. When he came to earth, Maitreya (the coming Buddha) became head of the Tushita.

future is an expression of the inseparability of the finite and the infinite time nature themselves.

*Thus, in accordance with the natural conditions of phenomena, the simultaneously opposing and uniting natures of the finite and the infinite are inseparable from the phenomena's time nature – Unity in Duality.*

### **The 'Extension in Space' in regard to 'Localization' and 'De-Localization' of Phenomena**

*The 'space nature' of phenomena is constituted by virtue of the unity in duality nature of 'localization' and 'de-localization', i.e. simultaneously being of opposing as well as of uniting nature.*

In the *Pramanavarttikam* by Dharmakirti (7<sup>th</sup> century), and the *Abhidharmakosakarika* by Vasubandhu (5<sup>th</sup> century) it is stated, that matter nature is characterized by *occupying a defined extension in space*. When a matter phenomenon occupies a certain space, all other matter phenomena are prevented from occupying that same space at the same time. Hence the material nature of phenomena implies their spatial confinement or localization.

For example, a single tree has its own space, implying that no other tree can be in this same space, and so it is with all kind of matter phenomena like stones, houses, persons, etc. Nothing that has matter nature and possesses an individual identity mixes up with something else. According to Tsongkhapa<sup>47</sup> its concrete extension in space thus defines the individual identity of any matter nature phenomenon. Generally, according to the view of 'inner science' it is common to connect the individual identity both with the phenomenon's 'space nature' as well as with its 'time nature'.

On an ordinary matter level of phenomena we can agree that matter obstructs matter. However, the nature of phenomena also implies that apart from an outer matter nature, phenomena simultaneously possess an inner 'energy'<sup>48</sup> nature, or we can also say that phenomena have their own 'energy-field'. The 'energy' nature of a phenomenon is not simply confined to the phenomenon's extension in space in regard its matter nature. The more deeply one penetrates into the 'inner' or 'energy' nature of a phenomenon, the more the *boundaries spatially open*, which means the phenomenon becomes less spatially confined and thereby to a greater and greater extend de-localized.

Since any solid matter phenomenon on a deeper level simultaneously also possesses 'energy' nature, and since this implies that any matter phenomenon, next to its defined localization in space, simultaneously occupies a larger spatially de-localized extension in connection with its 'energy-field', localization and de-localization are actually inseparable within each matter phenomenon.

The localization of a matter phenomenon is connected with its solidity nature. Solidity however is relative. Even though another matter phenomenon is not able to occupy the same space, a less solid form of matter, such as water as well as 'energy', can penetrate the space occupied by a solid matter phenomenon. As 'energy' is not confined to or obstructed by

---

<sup>47</sup> In his commentary to the *Mulamadhyamakakarika* Tsongkhapa writes, that when a phenomenon is not of matter nature, it doesn't have a defined extension in space. In this way the concrete extension in space becomes the criterion for distinguishing whether a phenomenon is of solid matter nature or not.

<sup>48</sup> The Tibetan term *jungwa* (Tib.) '*Byung-ba* denotes what was there, before matter nature appeared. It is translated here to the term 'energy' in adverted commas. Within the discussion of the matter-'energy' interrelationship the 'inner science'-understanding of *jungwa* will be explained more in detail.



matter, by virtue of *having both matter nature and 'energy' nature*, phenomena are at the same time confined and localized as well as not confined to a particular place and therefore de-localized.

What we have named 'localization' and 'de-localization' Nagarjuna expresses by the terms 'the coming' and 'the going'. According to my understanding these terms imply on one hand that when an individual material phenomenon, which occupies a certain extension in space, is moving, its spatial extension moves accordingly. For instance, a sheet of paper is occupying a certain space. If I move this paper to somewhere else, the space, which the paper is occupying, is moving as well.

On the other hand, to comprehend the 'moving' of the occupation of space, or as Nagarjuna calls it, 'the coming' and 'the going' of space, one has to understand *the nature of the phenomena's extension in space*. In order to explain the *tendrel* nature and the 'void'-nature of phenomena, 'the coming' and 'the going' pertaining to 'space nature' are relative. From the perspective of where something is coming to, it is 'coming', but from the perspective of where it left from, it is 'going'. Therefore one cannot make a definite statement as to whether something is 'coming' or 'going'. That means that 'the coming' and 'the going' are always relative and relational in regard to something else. Even though in a certain way 'the coming' and 'the going' are two different and opposing movements in space, still 'the coming' and 'the going' are *relative, relational and conventional*.

Let us take the example of a forest, to understand what this implies. What is the space of the forest? The forest consists of a large area covered with trees. This is the space of the forest. However, one cannot separate the space of the individual tree from the space of the whole forest. If one were to take away one individual tree-space after the other, in the end there would be no more forest-space left. Thus the whole forest-space is not more than a sum of the space occupied by the individual trees. Only the togetherness of the trees make up the whole, which we call 'forest'. But one cannot find the wholeness of the forest-space outside of the space of the individual trees. In other words, there is no space of the whole apart from the space of the individual identities that are making up the whole.

If we were to just move the individual trees inside of the forest space, we could not say that the forest-space itself has moved. However, if we were to really move the trees to somewhere outside of the area of the previous forest-space, we could say that we have moved the forest-space as well.

However, looking at it from a bigger scale, if we consider this whole earth-space, the forest-space is just a little part of it, and so wherever we move the forest-space, we are still moving it within the earth space. Seen from the perspective of the whole earth, we are not really moving the forest anywhere else, as long we keep moving it inside of the earth-space. Likewise, if I say I am moving away from Denmark, I really have to move outside the Danish area. If I just move within Denmark, I cannot say I have moved away from Denmark. At the same time, if we go down in scale and look at the subtle level of the individual tree, we can find that it has numerous smaller components. We can distinguish the particle level and the individual space of each particle, and the particles constantly shift position within the tree, without the whole tree-space moving.

In that way, however much we might talk about 'the coming' and 'the going', it is just implying *a movement within the wholeness itself*. As a consequence we cannot really separate 'the coming' and 'the going'.

### *Summary*

The existence of matter is characterized by occupying a defined extension in space, preventing all other material phenomena from occupying that space at the same time. Hence

the material nature of phenomena implies their spatial confinement or localization (“the coming”).

However, apart from an outer matter nature, phenomena simultaneously possess an inner ‘energy’ nature, which is not confined to the matter extension of space, but is to a greater extent de-localized (“the going”).

By virtue of having both matter nature as well as ‘energy’ nature, phenomena are at the same time confined and localized as well as not confined to a particular place, and therefore de-localized

*Thus, in accordance with the natural conditions of phenomena, the simultaneously opposing und uniting natures of localization and de-localization are inseparable from the phenomena’s space nature - Unity in Duality.*

### **The ‘Conjunct Nature’ in regard to the ‘Part’ and ‘Whole’ Nature of Phenomena**

*The ‘conjunct nature’ of phenomena is constituted by virtue of the unity in duality nature of ‘part’ and ‘whole’, i.e. simultaneously being of opposing as well as of unified nature.*

The conjunct nature of phenomena is one of the most important aspects for material reality to appear. All matter nature of reality is said to be *dijä*<sup>49</sup>, compounded nature. This Tibetan term literally means, that something is the product of many things coming together. In this respect conjunction is referring to the ‘meeting’ of the different components, which make reality appear. Conjunction can be described in two particular ways. One explanation refers to the *gathering of the various components of the phenomenon itself*, which ultimately leads into its particle level. The other explanation refers to the conjunction of the *primary and secondary causes*, which are necessary for a phenomenon to come into being and likewise to uphold its existence. The conjunction pertaining to the causal nature as well as to the phenomenon’s components are both necessary for substantial reality to appear.

The first conjunction is the ‘meeting’ in respect to the causal nature of phenomena. As previously said, there are two types of causal nature. The first cause or primary cause instigates that the phenomenon comes into being, and for this process to be completed, secondary causes are needed. The secondary causes are the conditions, which add to the process of becoming of the phenomenon and which help the phenomenon to sustain its existence. For the primary and secondary causes to produce a result, or in effect for a phenomenon to achieve its own special ‘individual identity’, a *conjunction between the primary and secondary causes* as well as *among all the secondary causes* is indispensable.

For example, for a seed to develop into a tree, not only the seed, which is the primary cause, needs to come together with all the secondary causes, but a number of secondary causes as well need to gather. There are many conditions, which need to be fulfilled for a tree to grow in a healthy manner. The seed needs to be planted in fertile soil, it needs water and sunlight, and when the seed begins to sprout above the ground, it needs further support. All these secondary causes need to harmonize both among each other and in connection with the seed in order for it to grow into a strong and tall-standing tree.

Thus all the causes need to be conjunct for the tree to become and to continue to exist, because even after the tree has come into being. It still needs earth, water, sun and nourishment. This is the case for all matter realities, because for each material phenomenon to exist and continue existing its respective primary and secondary causes need to be conjunct.

---

<sup>49</sup> (Tib.) ‘Dus-byas

The conjunction of the various components of material existence can be looked at both on a rough level as well as on a subtle particle level.

A very common example in Buddhism, which is also given in Candrakirti's *Madhyamakavatara*, uses a carriage made up by all its different parts to illustrate that phenomena do not possess an inherent existence, but are rather *composed of various components*.

To give some other examples of this rough level of conjunct nature, there are different artistic techniques used in sculpture, drawing or other art forms, whereby the artist portrays a whole through compounding it by many different parts. Also for example an electronic picture is compounded by many pixels, and as one gets closer, one can see that the picture is made up of hundreds and thousands of little dots. Yet another example is that when witnessing the opening ceremony of the Olympic games, one can observe thousands of people holding different coloured pieces of cloth. Depending on their movements, the crowd can form a flag, different words or pictures. These different images are actually compounded by all these people holding different coloured cloths. This can serve as an illustration of the principle that something only appears on the base of a coming together of many components. Actually everything we call material existence is based on that same principle of the conjunction of components.

Investigating further into reality, we can see that this principle repeats itself on deeper and deeper levels. We can illustrate that again with the example of the Olympic games: firstly, from an aerial view we can see a flag or another image being formed, compounded by people holding different coloured flags. However, also the individual people holding the flags are compounded by many components: legs, arms, hands, feet and heads etc. These individual parts of the bodies are again compounded by numerous cells, each of which is again compounded by atoms, and these by more and more subtle particles continuing endlessly. In this way, in accordance with the 'inner science' all substance existence has endless levels of compounded nature - from its rough appearance towards the very most subtle level of existence.

In the Abhidharma it is described how the matter nature of reality on a deeper level is compounded by different subtleties of particles. The Abhidharma explains how, through the conjunction of particles on all levels of subtlety, long before it becomes visible to the human eye, matter nature evolves to increasingly more rough levels. Only as the particles gain a more gross nature, the object begins to manifest and become visible to us. In accordance with the Abhidharma this process, which will be described in detail in connection with the matter-'energy' interrelationship, essentially is the basis of all material phenomena. We can find it within all types of substantial realities, such as plants, trees, the human body, stones, in other words, within anything that has matter existence.

The ancient 'inner science' holds the view that material reality is built up based on and dependent upon the *harmonious conjunction of all these very subtle particles*. The Abhidharma furthermore explains that on all levels and even on the very subtle particle level the particles are conjunct in such a way that there is still space in between them. From this we can see that the nature of so-called solid reality is not as solid as we think, since it is compounded by a numerous amount and layers of more and more subtle particles in space.

### *Summary*

Both the conjunction between the primary and secondary causes of a phenomenon, as well as the conjunction between its components on a rough and on a subtle level are necessary for any material phenomenon to come into being and to uphold its existence. Material reality

possesses a compounded nature down into its very subtlety. This implies that material reality is the product of all its causes and components harmoniously coming together and working together. Nothing exists in and by itself. In each split second it takes the cooperation of a multitude of different causes and components for a phenomenon to come into being and to continue to exist. Thus compounded phenomena exist as a web of interdependent relationships, characterized by the fact that they simultaneously are a component or part of a whole as well as being the whole itself, containing many components. The individual parts of the whole are separate and distinct, while being unified within the wholeness of the phenomenon. This whole is again partaking in another phenomenon as one of its necessary components. At the same time, the individual parts of a certain phenomenon are themselves constituting a wholeness or unity, composed by single parts.

*Thus, in accordance with the natural conditions of phenomena, the simultaneously opposing and uniting natures of part and whole are inseparable from the phenomena's conjunct nature – Unity in Duality*

## **The Investigation of Reality on the Basis of *Tendrel* through the Object-side Part II**

*In this second part of the investigation through the object-side, I will now present the pair of matter – ‘energy’, the first one of the additionally proposed Three Pairs of *Tendrel*, matter – ‘energy’, subject-object as well as body-‘mind’, which together are constituting the Unity in Duality paradigm. The two latter pairs will be discussed in the context of the investigation of reality on the basis of *tendrel* through the subject-side.*

### **Matter and ‘Energy’ – Simultaneously Opposing and Uniting Interrelationship First of the Three Pairs of *Tendrel* expressing the Unity in Duality Paradigm**

Already in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century Buddhist Abhidharma literature<sup>50</sup> one can find explanations in regard to fundamental element-‘energies’ or element-forces<sup>51</sup> that are considered to constitute the origin of matter. Especially the nature of these element-forces, their developmental process into matter as well as their decisive role for the continuation, change and disintegration of matter are described in detail in the Abhidharma literature. In this context matter does not only refer to the coarse level of matter we are familiar with in relation to the sense level, but likewise to more subtle levels of matter - as briefly presented above under the ‘conjunct nature’.

According to my understanding the interrelationship between the element-‘energies’ on the one hand and matter on the other hand is the decisive point within the theory of the element-forces, since it is due to these forces that matter can come into being, can sustain its material existence throughout continuous change and can as well cease to exist. Accordingly the Tibetan term for the element-forces implies the literal ‘appearance’<sup>52</sup> of matter<sup>53</sup> from ‘energy’<sup>54</sup>. This makes the element-‘energies’ or element-forces the key point in the understanding of matter.

---

<sup>50</sup> Vasubandhu, *Abidharmakosabasyam*, Chap. I

<sup>51</sup> *Jungwa*, (Tib.) ‘*Byung-ba*

<sup>52</sup> The Tibetan term *gyur*, (Tib.) *Gyur* literally means ‘appearing’.

<sup>53</sup> *Jungjur*, (Tib.) ‘*Byung-gyur*

<sup>54</sup> *Jungwa*, (Tib.) ‘*Byung-ba*

The interrelationship between ‘energy’ and matter in all its implications is not made as explicit in the Abhidharma literature, as I will make it in the following exposition. However, from the descriptions of the element-forces and the development of matter that are found in numerous sources<sup>55</sup>, the ‘energy’-matter interrelationship can be clearly deduced.

In the description of what existed before matter or form, the Abhidharma texts speak of an indivisible ‘unity’ of four element-forces. This ‘unity’ cannot yet be called matter. It is not until a later stage of development that the corresponding texts speak of the appearance of a first matter-particle. We can thus generally differentiate between the formless element-forces or element-‘energies’ on the one hand and the first, most subtle form particles on the other hand. I would like to stay a little bit at this point of transition from ‘energy’ to matter and would like to shed more light both on the nature of the formless element-forces as well as on the process leading to the appearance of the first matter particle.

One way to look at the element-forces is in terms of them being a potential ‘energy’-basis of matter or form. In this respect we can distinguish four fundamental potentialities or ‘energy’-qualities within the element-forces: The earth-element-force possessing the quality of structure and solidity; inherent to the water-element-force is the quality of connection, cohesion and harmonization; the fire-element-force possesses the quality of maturation and growth; and the air-element-force owns the qualities of movement, continuation, multiplication and expansion. On the level of the element-forces these four formless potentialities are inseparably united, and as long as they are resting within a state of inseparable ‘unity’, there is no development.

However, in accordance with Abhidharma literatures, if such an inseparable ‘unity’ of four element-forces<sup>56</sup>, i.e. formless, pure potentiality, meets another such ‘unity’ and merges with it, a first, a most subtle matter-‘particle’<sup>57</sup> is said to appear, representing the most subtle nature of visual form, smell, taste and tactility.<sup>58</sup> The original ‘unit’ of four element-particles is said still to be beyond form, but as soon as two such ‘unities’ merge, we are on the subtle level of substantial matter. The merging of two ‘units’ of element-forces already presupposes a certain vibration/movement and thus a level of dual existence. This first merging of two element ‘units’ is followed by a merging of two such ‘double-units’, giving rise to an increasingly coarse level of matter, the reference to our sense-reality, perceivable by our physical sense organs.

One day, as I was drawing the *Unity in Duality* symbol, which consists of sixteen triangles on top of each other, I made an interesting discovery. In Buddhism, mainly in the Tantric tradition, the triangle is a symbol for the origin. Putting two triangles on top of each other in this way becomes the symbol for the unification of two subtle ‘unities’ of element-forces. The hexagonal star one ends up with, is thus a symbol for the most subtle matter nature. If one continuously doubles the triangles put on top of each other to four, eight, etc., when reaching sixteen one arrives at the symbol for the unfolded matter-level, a level that can already be discerned under a microscope. Accordingly, in the Tibetan language these symbols of triangles put on top of each other in sequence are respectively denoted: “very subtle level”<sup>59</sup>, “subtle level”<sup>60</sup> and finally as “coarse level”<sup>61</sup> of matter nature. At the level

---

<sup>55</sup> In the Abhidharma of Panchen Sonam Dragpa (1478-1555) and also here I am drawing on the theory behind the practice of the tantras.

<sup>56</sup> This unity of the four-element-forces is far beyond any material entity.

<sup>57</sup> *Dül tramo*, (Tib.) *Dul phra-mo*

<sup>58</sup> It is interesting that in this context the Abhidharma does not mention sound. There could be either one of two reasons for it: 1) Sound, being the most subtle form of matter it is not mentioned in order to make a distinction to the view of Hindu-philosophy 2) Sound as most subtle matter nature is already contained in the very first joining movement of the two first element unities.

<sup>59</sup> *Trarab*, (Tib.) *Tra-rab*

<sup>60</sup> *Tra*, (Tib.) *Tra*

of sixteen triangles on top of each other, as expressed in the *Unity in Duality* symbol, one has reached a state of relative stability and harmony. At the same time the geometrical symbols of all the element-forces<sup>62</sup> are contained within this figure. In this way the continuity of the subtle 'energy' basis of matter becomes transparent in the *Unity in Duality* symbol. Even though before that day it was clear to me why, for graphical reasons, there needed to be exactly sixteen triangles to constitute the *Unity in Duality* symbol<sup>63</sup>, in the theory of the Abhidharma I now discovered a theoretical explanation for it.

According to Buddhism we can find the four fundamental 'energy'-qualities or potentialities of the element-forces, as described above, basic to every matter existence, and therefore also any living organism from the smallest to the human being, including our body and 'mind'. The theory of the element-forces is founded upon the understanding of the compounded<sup>64</sup> nature of 'mind' and phenomena. Compounded here is referring to the cause-and-effect nature basic to both material and mental phenomena as well as to Nagarjuna's *Tendrel* of 'part' and 'whole', which was explained above in connection with Tsongkhapa's *Essential Nature* of 'conjunction'. Accordingly, the element-forces are not just to be considered the mere origin of matter, rather different Indian and Tibetan Abhidharma texts point to a continuous interrelationship between matter and 'energy', whereby matter is continuously saturated by the element-'energies'. This means, that no matter could possibly uphold its existence without the element-forces, the ongoing feeding from the 'energy'-potentiality. Since the four element-forces in accordance with ancient "inner science" can be found to saturate all levels of matter and 'mind', we could consider that these forces could be extremely fundamental and universal.

Basic to the whole universe is a structuring energy. Everything coming into existence needs and possesses structure. Even before the emergence of matter there is some kind of subtle 'energy' structure. In the same way 'mind' possesses structure. All of this structuralization in the universe is feeding of a specific 'energy'-force, which in the ancient 'inner science' is called the *earth-element-force*. If this force did not exist, first as a potentiality, form existence would not appear, as there would not be any structure. However, in order for this structure to come into being, many components need to join together. Furthermore, this joining needs harmony, i.e. the single components need to mutually support each other and this supporting, harmonizing 'energy' as well is feeding of a specific force, which in inner science is called the *water-element-force*. Once there is harmony and structure, development can go on to its completion. But for any phenomenon to develop and reach its highest point of development, there need to be a forward driving force of ripening and maturing, this force is named the *fire-element-force*. Finally for the phenomenon in the first place to start becoming and as well for it to continue its existence and/or decay, action and movement is needed. This universal force is traditionally called the *air-element-force*. In this way for existence of any matter entity and/or mental phenomenon in this universe to appear all of these four element-forces seem to be needed.

Regardless whether we speak about the evolution of the universe or about our individual development inner science and the Tantras describe these processes in terms of the unfoldment of the element-forces. And the absorption of the element-forces carries us and

---

<sup>61</sup> *Drag*, (Tib.) *Drag*

<sup>62</sup> The square represents the earth-element-force, the circle for the water-element-force, the triangle for the fire-element-force and the half-moon for the air-element-force.

<sup>63</sup> When looking at this figuration grafically appearing, when you place the 16 triangles on top of each other as in the *Unity in Duality* symbol, one is respectively drawn inwards to the central point (unity or potentiality) and outwards to appreciate the full unfoldment of the elements in matter nature (duality) – *Unity in Duality*.

<sup>64</sup> *Düje*, (Tib.) '*Dus-byas*

the universe back into the 'energy'-origin / potential field. In accordance with the 'inner science' it seems that our solid bodies and all other forms of existence evolve from the same basic 'energy'/potential field, from which also 'mind' develops.

The idea of the element-forces is playing an important role in the tantric tradition. In this tradition one works directly with the element-forces, and if the adept has reached a high level of realization of these practices, one also speaks of obtaining the 'mastery over the element forces'. This implies the capacity to voluntarily materialize and dematerialize - initially on an experience level and later also on an existential level.

Accordingly, in the tantric tradition, there are practices using the enveloping process similar to the death process. During the death process both physically as well as mentally a natural absorption of the unfolded element-forces, back into their origin, takes place – the final point of which is referred to as the 'clear-light'.

This natural absorption process is basic for Tantric practices, which always implies absorption of the element-forces: The earth-element-force is absorbed into the water-element-force, which again is absorbed into the fire-element-force and that is absorbed into the air-element-force, which is finally absorbed into the space-element-force / 'mind'-element-force. On the way to the space-/ 'mind'-element-force the Tantric adept is undergoing some particular transformations that are described in detail within the tantric literature, until reaching the 'clear-light' – the goal of his/her practice. The 'clear-light' is said to be the border-zone between duality / *samsara* and non-duality / *nirvana*.

From this pure potentiality of the 'clear-light' again the adept take part in the unfoldment of the space- / 'mind'-element-force, the air-element-force, the fire-element-force, the water-element-force, and finally the earth-element-force. In this practice the Tantric adept thus passes through the *involution process* from matter back to its origin of potentiality of the element-forces, and from there passing through the *evolution process* from pure potentiality back to the manifestation of 'form' / matter for mastering these otherwise unconscious processes. It is this principle of unfoldment and infoldment / absorption, which is basic also to the ancient mandala-practices.

In this we can find a decisive difference between the Abhidharma and the Tantric tradition. While the Abhidharma, as described above, speaks of the element-forces in relation to the origin of matter, the Tantric tradition seems to indicate *two interrelated lines* of development of body and 'mind', both of them leading back into the origin of the element-forces, respectively feeding of that origin. These two interrelated lines of development in their interplay are considered to be the cause for the unfoldment of the whole universe. It is the underlying element-forces of body (form) and 'mind' ('energy'), which ensure that matter can unfold and develop and re-absorb.

With the interrelationship between the element-forces and matter (in Tibetan *jungwa*<sup>65</sup> and *jung gjur*<sup>66</sup>), as expounded in the Abhidharma, we are given an explanation of how all compounded phenomena of this universe, all matter, comes into being from an 'energy'-origin and returns back into it. However, with the practices of absorption / infoldment and unfoldment, which is the underlying principle of Tantric practices such as the 'clear-light' practices, the 'chakra-energy'-practices, the 'illusory-body' practices and the extremely subtle '*lungsem*'<sup>67</sup> practices, we are given the insight as well as the practical guidelines for transforming our existence into more and more subtle bodyminds with the potential ability to experience phenomena at the same subtle level of existence.

---

<sup>65</sup> (Tib.) 'Byung-ba

<sup>66</sup> (Tib.) 'Byung-gyur

<sup>67</sup> (Tib.) *Rlung-sems*

In modern science one is speaking about the nature of matter and about formless 'energy' as well as about an underlying principle of potentiality that seemingly follows different rules and has a different nature than matter existence. In the 'inner science' and in the Tantric tradition one speaks about the deepest nature of 'mind' – clear 'awareness' nature – as well as about the deepest nature of the body – the most subtle movement / *lung*<sup>68</sup>. It is the mastery of the inseparable interrelationship of the subtle and clear 'awareness' principle (of 'mind' nature) and the most subtle movement/vibration (finest trace of 'embodiment')<sup>69</sup>, which is used to develop subtle 'embodiments' like the so-called 'illusory body', in order to perceive subtle levels of reality. This interrelationship between body and 'mind' as well as between subject and object, which I will describe more in detail in the following part of this paper, is an aspect that I have not yet met within modern science.

### *Summary*

In regard to matter-'energy' *tendrel* / interrelated nature, it opens up a perspective and a practical insight into evolution and deployment in terms of the respective progressively unfolding stages of reality as well as the infolding stages. The unfolding and infolding processes can be likened to the breathing of nature, its exhalation and inhalation - exhalation being the materialisation of the original 'energy' / potential nature, and inhalation being the transformation back into its origin. This pulsation takes place over a lifetime of any phenomenon; in the 24 hours circlus of human existence; and in every split second or every shortest moment of time.

In accordance with 'inner science' matter is said to be both compounded and fleeting. For matter to continue its existence, in each split second it needs the interaction of many components, which implies that the existence of matter is dependent on the cooperation of all these components coming together in each and every moment, and it needs the continuous unfoldment from 'energy' / potential nature into matter as well as the infoldment of matter into its 'energy' / potential origin.

Thus in accordance with the ancient 'inner science' it seems that our solid bodies and all other forms of existence are evolving from the basic 'energy' / potential field from which also 'mind' develops. Existence seems only to be possible due to this continuous saturation of 'energy' throughout all its manifold forms. As the universe is inseparable from its resonating 'energy'-origin, matter and 'energy' are likewise inseparably interrelated, and as a consequence of that body-'mind' as well as subject-object are also inseparably interrelated, as will become obvious from my presentation below.

*Both the diversity of matter and 'energy' as well as the unity of matter-'energy' are thus an integral part of their interrelationship, i.e. they are of simultaneously opposing und uniting natures – Unity in Duality.*

### **The Investigation of Reality on the Basis of *Tendrel* through the Subject-side**

In my exposition of the investigation of reality on the basis of *tendrel* through the subject-side, I will now present body and 'mind' as well as subject and object interrelationships, the second and the third of the *Three Pairs of Tendrel*.

---

<sup>68</sup> (Tib.) *Rlungs*

<sup>69</sup> *Shinto trarab lungsem*, (Tib.) *Shin-tu tra-rab lung-sems*



## Body and ‘Mind’ – Simultaneously Opposing and Uniting Interrelationship The Second of the Three Pairs of Tendrel expressing the Unity in Duality Paradigm

When speaking about the body-‘mind’ interrelationship from the perspective of ‘inner science’, first of all on a human level we need to differentiate ‘mind’ into its five sense-minds<sup>70</sup> and a 6<sup>th</sup> mind<sup>71</sup>. My argument unfolding below is that all our types of mind are interconnected with their embodiment.

In this context it should be pointed out that in the discussion of the body-‘mind’ interrelationship both ‘body’ and ‘mind’ are viewed from their perceptual mode of functioning, which means that what is at focus in regard the body are the five physical senses with their two aspects, the five sense-organs<sup>72</sup> and the connected five effectual-sense-powers<sup>73</sup>.

In respect to the five sense minds the Abhidharma literature<sup>74</sup> speaks of five effectual-sense-powers that can be localized in connection with the corresponding physical sense organs. It is these five effectual-sense-powers, which enable the sense minds to experience their corresponding sense-objects. The five effectual-sense-powers are seen as the intermediating factors between the sense organs and the sense minds.

If there is a disturbance in connection with a physical sense organ, this leads to a disturbed perception of the respective sense mind. Also if one of the effectual-sense-powers is impaired, the corresponding sense-mind experience is likewise impaired. Thus we can see that the five sense minds perceive their object in dependence on the specific structure, range and general condition of the five physical sense organs as well as in dependence on the functioning of the connected five effectual-sense-powers. Also, with the physical disintegration of the body at the time of decaying and dying, where the physical sense organs stop functioning, since they are losing their basis the sense minds stop functioning as well. In this way we can reason that on a sense level there is an indispensable interrelationship between body and ‘mind’.

On the basis of any of the five-sense-mind’s experience, the 6<sup>th</sup> mind appears - in our human mind predominantly the conceptual mind<sup>75</sup>, which in accordance with the *Unity in Duality Science of mind and phenomena* represents one of the three aspects of the 6<sup>th</sup> mind next to the image mind<sup>76</sup> and the feeling mind<sup>77</sup>. If we were not making any sense experience based on our physical senses, the conceptualising mind would not even start to function, since it relates to the sense experience - however in an abstracting, describing and judging way. Furthermore, if it weren’t for this conceptualisation of the sense experience, we wouldn’t make mental so-called ‘wholeness’-image-creations based on the conceptual description,

---

<sup>70</sup> *Wangpö namshe nga*, (Tib.) *dBang-po’i rnam-shes lnga* include the visual sense mind, auditory sense mind, olfactory sense mind, gustatory sense mind and the body sense mind. From an ‘inner science’ point of view the ‘receptors’ of the body-sense, whose related sense organs are in the whole body, are not confined to the mere surface of the body, but rather can be found *within* the whole body. In this way the body cannot only sense outer objects, but can likewise sense it self down to every single cell.

<sup>71</sup> *Yiki namshe*, (Tib.) *Yid kyi rnam-shes*, which according to the ‘U.D. science of mind and phenomena’ comprises the three mental aspects of *togpā namshe* (Tib.) *rTog-pa’i rnam-shes* / conceptualizing-mind, *namgwa namshe*, (Tib.) *sNang-ba’i rnam-shes* / image mind, and *nyungwe namshe*, (Tib.) *Myong-ba’i rnam-shes* feeling mind.

<sup>72</sup> *Wangten khogpa nga*, (Tib.) *dBang-rten khog-pa lnga*, i.e. the visual sense organs, auditory sense organs, olfactory sense organs, gustatory sense organs and the body sense organs, the latter comprising ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ body-sensations.

<sup>73</sup> *Wangpö zugchen nga* (Tib.) *dBang-po’i gzugs-chen lnga*

<sup>74</sup> Both the Hinayana Abhidharma as well as the Mahayana Abhidharma

<sup>75</sup> (Tib.) *rTog-pa’i rnam-shes*

<sup>76</sup> (Tib.) *sNang-ba’i rnam-shes*

<sup>77</sup> (Tib.) *Myong-ba’i rnam-shes*

which again are the base of pleasurable and un-pleasurable<sup>78</sup> mental feeling experiences. In this way also our emotions wouldn't arise, since they are usually initiated by the conceptual mind and the corresponding image mind. I.e. the normal level of the image mind as well as the feeling mind would not come about without the conceptual mind functioning, and the conceptual mind functioning would not come about without the functioning of the sense-minds, which again is dependent on the physical sense organs.

Our normal human life experience of happiness and suffering is in this way based on our conceptual perception, which in turn is based on our sense perception, mediated by our sense powers located within the physical sense organs. All our common human experience is thus connected with our conceptual mind and with our physical body.

In this way it becomes clear that on our normal human level exists indeed an interrelationship between our body and our mind - our human body is the basis for our whole experience of reality. This idea, that all our mental activity is related with our body, on further inquiry we can find throughout all of the Abhidharma literature.

This interrelationship between the ordinary mind and the physical body furthermore becomes elucidated in the description of the death process in accordance with the Tantric tradition. When the element-forces of the body become weaker as the body decays, this implies that the physical senses become weaker and so do the sense powers, until decreasing completely at the time of death when the body stops functioning. Because of this the sense minds, the conceptual mind and the emotions likewise become increasingly weaker, until ceasing to function all together at the end of the death process. The reason for this is from the Tantric perspective, that the functioning of the physical body level is inseparably connected to the functioning on a coarse mental level. From this can thus be seen that not only the five sense minds, but rather our whole coarse mental functioning<sup>79</sup> is interrelated with our physical body.

Furthermore, body and 'mind' seem to be interrelated on more subtle levels in accordance with both the Sutra and Tantra literature. Here we can find various references to subtle bodies that are basic to our coarse physical body. In accordance with the Buddhist tradition of meditation<sup>80</sup>, within the field of the 6<sup>th</sup> mind one can develop apperceptive abilities similar to the five sense minds. Doing so, one systematically develops an embodiment of the 'energy'-senses, a so-called 'mind'-body or 'subtle' body, through which the 6<sup>th</sup> mind is able to experience form/colour, sound, smell, taste and body-sensations, independently of the coarse body, i.e. independently of the physical sense-organs. On the basis of such a 'subtle' embodiment it is possible to develop both more subtle cognitive abilities as well as abilities of higher 'intuitive' feeling minds<sup>81</sup>. In this way the 'subtle mind' and the 'subtle body' are likewise inseparably interconnected.

In the Sutras and Tantras we can find a number of references to subtle embodiments, such as for example the *bardo body* – a 'subtle embodiment' that is manifested in the intermediary

---

<sup>78</sup> *Dedug nyongwa*, (Tib.) *Dedug myong-ba*, i.e. experiences of happiness *dewa* (Tib.) *De-wa* and suffering *dugnyal*, (Tib.) *Dug-ngal*.

<sup>79</sup> *Namshe ragpa* (Tib.) *rNam-shes rag-pa*

<sup>80</sup> For example the practice of *shine* (Tib. *Shi-gnas*, Skt. *Samata*), which is the practice of one-pointedness and clear perception without use of the physical sense organs, leads to the cultivation of special 'energy'-sense-powers. These are not physical sense-powers, but they possess a *lung* (Tib. *Rlung*) nature and are connected with a subtle embodiment. See further elaborations on *lung* below.

<sup>81</sup> It is a fundamental principle of the Tantric approach to refine the 'body' more and more, in order to refine the 'mind' as it is inseparably interconnected with it. In this way one obtains through an increasingly subtle embodiment an increasingly subtle 'mind'. This principle finds its expression in the *dzogrim*, (Tib.) *Dzog-rim* stage, the Tantric completion stage, as expressed in the mastery of the chakra-energy, dream-body and the illusory-body.

state between death and rebirth and of which is said that it can pass through coarse matter, such as walls. Another example for an even more subtle ‘mental body’<sup>82</sup> is the so-called *illusory body*. The Tantric adept at first develops a so-called ‘impure illusory body’, which is followed by a so-called ‘pure illusory body’ of even more subtle quality and accordingly of even more subtle perceptive abilities. Our normal senses are strongly limited spacio-temporal, but when embodying a ‘subtle body’ the time-space dimension opens up according to its subtlety. All depending on the degree of opening of the ‘subtle mind’ based on the ‘subtle embodiment’ the adept can thus enter a dimension of experience beyond the normal time-space limitation, which apart from the body-mind interrelationship also points to the interrelationship between subject and object, on which I will be expounding below.

Also in according with the Buddhist practice of Dream Yoga it is natural for us to use our *dream body* in the dream state, in which all sense-abilities such as seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and body-sensing are embodied when we dream. The dream-body is not obstructed by matter, which implies that it is likewise a ‘subtle’ or ‘mental’ body. Due to the extended time-space-limitation of the dream-body, the corresponding dream-‘mind’ naturally possesses heightened abilities, which can take us beyond our normal mental limitations – if we are able to master the dream-body and the dream-state. This is the reason why within the Tibetan shamanistic tradition, within Buddhist Tantra as well as in many of the ancient traditions all over the world the dream state is being used for spiritual purposes as well as for finding solutions for the riddles that occupy us – be it of a philosophical, scientific or other nature.

What I think is important in this context is that from this ancient tradition we can learn that the body and ‘mind’ are interrelated as well as that the body sets the frame for the corresponding level and limitation of the ‘mind’. Also we can see from the ancient ‘inner science’ that the more subtle the embodiment, the less it makes sense to separate body and ‘mind’. Furthermore, in the Tantric literature we find descriptions of an extremely subtle ‘bodymind’ phenomenon that is called *lungsem*<sup>83</sup>. *Lung*<sup>84</sup> refers to the extraordinarily subtle ‘body’-aspect and *sem*<sup>85</sup> refers to the extremely subtle ‘mind’-aspect of the inseparable *lungsem*-unity. On this highly subtle level of ‘body’-‘mind’ the ‘bodymind’ is interrelated to such an extent that even though they are distinguishable in words, they are inseparably united. In this context one is using the metaphor of the one who can move, yet cannot see (‘body’-aspect), and the other one who can see yet cannot move (‘mind’-aspect) in order to illustrate the interdependence of *lung* and *sem* - one without the other would not be able to function, thus *lung* and *sem* are absolutely inseparable. One can also say that *lung* is the ‘body’-aspect of an extremely subtle level<sup>86</sup> of the element-forces<sup>87</sup> and that *sem* is its inseparably connected ‘mind’-aspect.

From the perspective of the level of *lungsem* one can also illustrate what happens during the extension of the time-space-experience in the context of what may be called clairvoyance: If for example I was sitting here and was able to see what happens at the same time in India, or

---

<sup>82</sup> (Tib.) *Yid-lus*

<sup>83</sup> (Tib.) *Rlung-sems*

<sup>84</sup> (Tib.) *Rlung*

<sup>85</sup> (Tib.) *Sems*

<sup>86</sup> I would like to remark that we find here a terminological difference between the Abhidharma, i.e. the Sutra-level and the level of Tantra. While in the Abhidharma one differentiates merely between *jungwa* (Tib.), ‘*Byung-ba* / the formless element-forces on the one hand and different levels of *jung gyur*, (Tib.) ‘*Byung-gyur* / matter on the other hand, the Tantric tradition furthermore is differentiating within *jungwa*, (Tib.) ‘*Byung-ba*, different levels of subtlety. The reason is that within the process of absorption the element-forces lose their power of manifestation and sink back more and more into a state of pure potentiality. This is equated to increasingly subtle levels of the element-forces.

<sup>87</sup> (Tib.) *Lus kyi ‘byung-ba phra-mo*

what will happen next year, this implies that from this point here and now something is moving in time and space, which so to speak makes the connection to the object of my enquiry. That, which travels, in accordance with the ancient tradition is the *lung*, the extremely subtle 'body'-aspect, with which *sem*, the extremely subtle perceiving 'mind'-aspect is inseparably connected.

### *Summary*

Thus we can find confirmed on this extremely subtle level what we have already seen on the coarse and subtle levels of body and 'mind': Without body there is no 'mind'<sup>88</sup>, in other words, if there is 'mind' there is also an embodiment accordingly. Whenever we speak about 'mind' it needs a corresponding embodiment: be it on a coarse, subtle or extremely subtle level. As shown above, the 'coarse' body and the 'coarse' mind are interrelated with each other; likewise the 'subtle' body and the 'subtle' mind are interrelated with each other; and likewise it is so in the 'extremely subtle' bodymind.

It seems to me that already at the very beginning of evolution the intrinsic universal 'mind'-'energy' is crystallizing in a form aspect, and in this way 'mind' always remains with a 'body'-aspect, just as 'body' always remains with a 'mind'-aspect to it. In this, the 'body'-aspect sets the frame for the way in which the 'mind' aspect can function – especially in terms of the spacio-temporal limitations. What I mean to say is that the 'mind', always being of an 'energy' nature, is bringing forth a 'body' aspect on different levels of evolution, which is a 'form'-crystallization of 'mind' itself on various coarse / subtle levels, at the same time it is an expression of the degree of dualistic unfoldment.

*Both the duality or diversity of body and 'mind' as well as the unity of body-'mind' are thus an integral part of their interrelationship – i.e. they are of simultaneously opposing and uniting natures - Unity in Duality.*

## **Subject and Object – Simultaneously Opposing and Uniting Interrelationship The Third of the Three Pairs of Tendrel expressing the Unity in Duality Paradigm**

Among the schools of the Buddhist 'inner science of mind and phenomena', as mentioned in the introduction, among the interrelationships we foremost find described the subject and object interrelationship. With reference to the literature of the 'inner science' I would like to present here some of the different views, which show that the subject-object interrelationship is an intrinsic part of our experience and our whole existence. These systematically built-up views take us in an increasingly more radical way through the development of the 'inner science of mind and phenomena'.

Generally in Buddhism the 'mind'<sup>89</sup> and its object have a special relationship, which is implying that they cannot be separated from one another. This is why these two poles are always viewed in their interrelationship.

The Yogacara-school of 'science of mind and phenomena' for example states that the five sense minds<sup>90</sup> and the five sense objects<sup>91</sup> and the latter's reference possess the same root<sup>92</sup>.

---

<sup>88</sup> See also the *General Introduction to Tantra* by Khedrub Je, who says: "Without body no mind would exist. And without body and mind there would be no voice."

<sup>89</sup> *Nangsem*, (Tib.) *Nang-sems*, literally translated to 'inner-mind'.

<sup>90</sup> *Wangpö namshe nga*, (Tib.) *dBang-po'i rnam-shes lnga*, i.e. the visual sense mind, the auditory sense mind, the olfactory sense mind, the gustatory sense mind and the body sense mind.

This root is considered to be an ‘energy’-imprint in the ‘mind’<sup>93</sup>, that in Tibetan is called *bagcha*<sup>94</sup>.

In the Yogacara-school<sup>95</sup> evolution or the unfoldment of existence is explained in terms of three progressive stages of manifestation<sup>96</sup> consisting of:

- *Basic principle* of the universe and of existence<sup>97</sup>
- ‘*Self*’-*identification*’, the rising above the basic principle looking back at ‘itself’<sup>98</sup> and
- ‘*Other*’-*identification*<sup>99</sup>.

Following the manifestation of these dualistic principles, ‘self’ and ‘other’ gradually unfold into a more and more coarse level of being, and thence into an increasingly dualistic state of manifestation and materialisation.

The *basic principle* of the universe and existence is said to contain all these three dualistic principles in a dormant or potential ‘form’ as ‘energy’ imprints or *bagcha*<sup>100</sup>. The presence of these ‘energy’ imprints or this potential field is the cause by which the whole universe and the whole of existence unfold. In other words, the *basic principle* is said to contain within itself the potential nature of the universe and of existence as such. In this way both the one experiencing – the subject – and that which can be experienced – the object – arise from this *basic principle*.

Thus, according to the Yogacara view it is the same ‘mental imprint’, which brings forth both the five sense minds – i.e. the subject-pole – as well as the five sense objects – i.e. the object-pole and the referential object. In this way from the beginning subject and object are indispensably related.

The second principle of ‘*self*’-*identification*’ is insofar considered the root of the creation of all dualistic existence<sup>101</sup>. It is the universal “self-holding” that forms the basis of the unfolding process into increasingly more coarse forms and levels of ‘*self*’-*identification*’ – the subject pole – which at each stage determines the ‘*other*’-*identification*’ – the object pole and referential object – and is standing in interrelation with it. Even at our human level of manifestation, regardless of what we experience and the tools by which we experience, both the subject-poles as well as the object-poles and the referential objects are interrelated and are rooted in the potential nature of the *basic principle*.

---

<sup>91</sup> Form/colour, sound, smell, taste, objects of the body-sense.

<sup>92</sup> The text I am referring to here uses the Tibetan term *dzä* (Tib.) *rDzas*, which can also be translated to ‘substance’ – albeit not in a material sense.

<sup>93</sup> ‘Mind’ here refers to a rudimentary level of ‘mind’, *alayavijnana*. If we should explain *alayavijnana* in western terminology we could say that it is beyond the mind of the single individual but at the same time is not separate from the single individual. We could relate it to “Universal mind”, or maybe even in Jungian terms we could make connection to “the collective unconscious”.

<sup>94</sup> *Bagcha*, (Tib.) *Bag-chags*, imprints can be of individual origin, of human origin (origin of the specific species), or of universal origin. In this context I am relating to the latter two of the three levels of *bagcha*.

<sup>95</sup> For example the Indian philosopher Vasubandhu in his work *Trimsikakarika*

<sup>96</sup> *Gyurpa namsum*, (Tib.) *Gyur-pa rnam-gsum* / (Skt.) *trividhah parinamah* / the three progressive stages of manifestation.

<sup>97</sup> *Künshi namshe*, (Tib.) *Kun-gzhi rnam-shes* / (Skt.) *alaya-vijnana* / substratum ‘awareness’.

<sup>98</sup> *Nyönyi namshe*, (Tib.) *Nyon-yid rnam-shes* / (Skt.) *klesa-vijnana* / primordial ‘self’-‘identification’ or ‘self’-referential ‘awareness’.

<sup>99</sup> *Jüla nampar rigpa*, (Tib.) *Yul-la rnam-par rig-pa* / (Skt.) *visaya-vijnapti* / ‘experience’ pertaining to phenomena.

<sup>100</sup> (Tib.) *Bag-chags*, (Skt.) *vasana*,

<sup>101</sup> In Buddhist terminology dualistic existence is named with the Sanskrit term *samsara*.

The evolutionary perspective exposed above thus suggests an ongoing interconnection between subject and object in their unfoldment to the level of our existence and in their way of experiencing, based on an original ‘substantial’ identity of subject and object in terms of *bagcha*.

Also in accordance with other Buddhist literature<sup>102</sup>, for instance in connection with the “Wheel of Existence”<sup>103</sup>, there are three root-principles for the creation of the universe and of existence. The first principle is ‘*self-identification*’<sup>104</sup>, the primordial splitting from the whole. As a consequence of this first principle the two other root principles of *attraction*<sup>105</sup> and *rejection*<sup>106</sup> arise, in order to sustain and secure the continuous existence of the entity, laying the foundations for the corresponding ‘*actions*’<sup>107</sup>. The universe and the whole of existence are said to be the effect of these ‘*actions*’. The idea of the three basic principles, the ‘*self-identification*’, *attraction* and *rejection*, being basic to the creation of the universe and to existence is integrated in all Buddhist schools.

Also from the point of view of the Abhidharma it looks as though subject and object since the beginning of evolution are closely connected. In the Abhidharma it says that all the different types of phenomena appear from *karma*<sup>108</sup>. This *karma* has two aspects: Its main aspect is a mental function<sup>109</sup> that in Tibetan is called *sempa*<sup>110</sup>, which implies a movement of mind towards the object. This *sempa*, this mental movement, produces a second aspect of *karma*, which implies mental and physical actions, i.e. thoughts, feelings and activities. Looking at the main aspect of *karma*, i.e. *sempa*, this mental movement towards the object is connected with mind. Its appearance creates an ‘energy’ imprint in the ‘mind’, which bears an effect both on a general-universal level, i.e. in relation to the reality of all existence, as well as on an individual level, i.e. in relation to the reality of the individual. From this point of view we human beings, including our body and including all we are able to experience and what exists apart from that, in short: all of the inner and outer reality is coming about from *karma*, action, mainly in relation to *sempa* and the *bagcha*, based on the three root principles.

It also says in a Sutra: *It is ‘mind’<sup>111</sup> that created this world*<sup>112</sup>. According to this Sutra the whole universe is created by ‘mind’, a view, which is followed both by the Hinayana as well as the Mahayana schools.

These ideas are common Buddhist ideas, which again seem to express the view, however in different terms than the Yogacara School, that inner reality – the subject pole – and outer reality – the object pole and its reference – stem from the same root.

In the Madhyamaka-school of ‘science and phenomena’ – I am referring here to a very

---

<sup>102</sup> The Vinaya literature, the Mahayana as well as the Hinayana Abhidharma.

<sup>103</sup> In the Vinaya tradition there is a description of how the whole of existence comes about and maintains itself. The image illustrating this idea is the ‘Wheel of Existence’.

<sup>104</sup> *Dagdzin ma rigpa*, (Tib.) *bDag-'dzin ma rig-pa*. *Dag dzin* means ‘self holding’ in the sense of a ‘self’-reference or –‘identification’ and *ma rigpa* means a lack of intrinsic awareness. The principle of *dagdzin ma rigpa* is symbolized by a pig in the centre of the Wheel of Existence.

<sup>105</sup> *Döpa*, (Tib.) ‘*Dod-pa*. The principle of *döpa* is symbolized by a cock / pigeon in the centre of the Wheel of Existence.

<sup>106</sup> *Dangwa*, (Tib.) *sDang-ba*. The principle of *dangwa* is in the Wheel of Existence symbolized by a snake in its centre.

<sup>107</sup> *Le*, (Tib.) *Las*, (Skt.) *karma*

<sup>108</sup> *Karma* is a Sanskrit term, i.e. (Tib. *Las*), both of which can literally be translated to ‘action’.

<sup>109</sup> *Semjung*, (Tib.) *Sems-'byung*, sometimes also translated to mental event or mental factor.

<sup>110</sup> *Sempa*, (Tib.) *Sems-pa*

<sup>111</sup> Here again ‘mind’ refers to the innermost subtle mind-element of potential field or primordial nature.

<sup>112</sup> *Kham sumpo di dagni sem chemmo*, (Tib.) *Khams gsum-po 'di dag ni sems chem mo*. This quote can be found in the Sutra *Sa bchu-pa'i mdo*.

special text<sup>113</sup> by Candrakirti<sup>114</sup>, one of the most important Madhyamaka-philosophers – it is said:

*“One can neither say that the object is separate from the subject, nor that the subject is separate from the object, nor that subject and object are both the same.”*

He explains with a simile: if a crystal (subject, i.e. mind) is placed on a yellow-coloured cloth (object), the crystal takes on a different colour and it is due to the colour and the crystal together that the ‘yellow crystal’ appears. This means, the coloured crystal, the object appearance in the mind<sup>115</sup>, comes about exclusively in the meeting of the coloured surface (object) and the crystal (subject). The crystal is not creating the yellow and the yellow is not creating the crystal. In other words, one cannot say that there is an outer appearance of the object independent of the one appearing in the mind (subject). However, one can neither say that the outer appearance is the same as the appearance in the mind (subject). Thus in accordance with Candrakirti the subject and the object of a given situation in time are interrelated to an extent, that if there is no subject there would be no object appearance<sup>116</sup>, and if there is no object there would not be any appearance of the object in the mind (subject), not any mind-appearance. From this text we can thus see that in the Madhyamaka School subject and object are indeed seen as interrelated.

We human beings possess in connection with our body, i.e. in connection with the physical sense organs and the effectual-sense-powers<sup>117</sup>, as already mentioned, five particular sense abilities. Usually we experience our reality by means of either the sense minds or through the conceptual mind. Both of these perceptual means have their respective objects and are seen as interrelated with it. Without the sense minds and the conceptual mind respectively, the particular forms of reality that these types of mind allow, would not exist – reality here being that, which we experience.

Due to the specific condition of our senses we perceive form, colour, sound etc., i.e. the respective five sense objects. However, the specific quality of our seeing is dependent on the structure of our eyes and on the perspective. Also what we are hearing we are only able to hear due to the anatomic built of our inner ear. If our ears, our senses, our bodies were built differently, we would be experiencing the sense-objects in a different way. It is common knowledge in Western biology that animals possess sense abilities and sense organs different from human beings and thus have different possibilities to experience the sense reality, or simply have a different sense-reality. But also we human beings can expand our sense abilities by using certain mechanical tools such as microscopes or binoculars, in this way making reality experiences otherwise not accessible to us. From these examples we can see that the subject-pole (the sense-minds) and the object-pole (the sense-object) of our sense perception are dependent on the particular condition of our sense organs and on our sense capacity – i.e. on our body and mind. The perception of the so-called ‘objective’ reality, the sense-reality (object-pole) is thus greatly influenced by and interrelated with our specific ‘subjective’ tools and conditions / sense organs and sense-mind (subject-pole).

---

<sup>113</sup> Candrakirti, *Phong-po rab-tu ‘byed-pa*

<sup>114</sup> About 650 A.C.

<sup>115</sup> *Yülchen gyi nampa*, (Tib.) *Yul-can gyi rnam-pa*. Literally: “mind appearance”. To understand this term one has to know that in accordance with Indo-Tibetan ‘science of mind and phenomena’ a mind instant is raising from moment-to-moment, i.e. each exists only a small instant of time.

<sup>116</sup> (Tib.) *Yul gyi rnam-pa*

<sup>117</sup> In the Tibetan ‘inner science of mind’ it is said that inherent to the five physical senses is a corresponding effectual-sense-power *wangpo zugchen*, (Tib.) *dBang-po gzugs-chen*, the Tibetan term *wangpo* meaning power, which points to the empowering effect the senses/sense-powers have upon the experience of the sense reality.

From the *direct* sense experience<sup>118</sup> the Buddhist logic and epistemology<sup>119</sup> distinguishes the *indirect* conceptual cognition<sup>120</sup>. This specifically human reality, the conceptual reality, is interconnected with our specifically human ability of conceptualizing. According to Buddhist logic and epistemology the point of distinction between indirect conceptual cognition and direct sense perception is related to the very particular process of conceptualisation, which is operating by means of abstraction and generalisation as well as naming, thus enabling the human mind to compare and analyse. By way of conceptual subconscious object<sup>121</sup>, through a general negation of similars and dissimilars, an abstraction from the sense object appears, which is named and in turn projected back onto the sense object. This implies that the conceptual cognition ultimately only can experience what it has previously named on the basis of its abstraction, which *in this way* does not exist in the object. What we experience with the conceptual mind (subject) is thus our conceptual reality (object), which is not of the sense-objects, but still referring to them. The nature of this exceptional ability of the human mind is thoroughly described and analysed within Buddhist literature<sup>122</sup>.

We do not share this specific human reality with animals, as they do not have our specific linguistic and abstracting abilities that would enable them to experience our human reality. The conceptual reality (object-pole) is therefore a specifically human reality and as such it only exists in interrelation with the specifically human conceptual mind (subject-pole). Although the conceptual realities do not exist as an inherent quality of the sense-object, they still form the basis for human reality – the human idea-realities and value-realities. We can thus say that the human reality is dependent on the way in which the conceptual mind experiences its interrelated conceptual reality.

Furthermore our selective naming, which is the food for the conceptual mind, is determined by the culture we live in as well as by our general mental condition – somebody from a different culture would cognize and interpret a certain situation sometimes in a very different way, not to speak of people suffering from an acute mental disorder.

On top of our humanly and culturally shared layers of reality we have our own individual conceptual reality – corresponding to the crystallization of different identity patterns based on former experiences. If a person has made problematic experiences, for instance not feeling loved and supported in the developmental period, this person inevitably creates vulnerable ‘self’-referential identifications that strongly influence his or her selective naming and thereby the conceptual experience of reality.

These culturally determined realities (object) cannot be said to exist in and by them selves, but are experienced in interrelation only with the conceptual mind socialized in this particular manner (subject). Also the private realities (object), which are determined by the vulnerable self-references, are not existing in and by them selves either, but are experienced as such due to former ‘imprints’ in our basic individual ‘mind’ (subject). Conceptual reality, as it is based on an abstraction from the physical sense reality, can therefore take us from heavenly-experiences to the deepest paranoia – all in accordance with the self-referential feeling created by our current ‘self’-identification.

Since the object experience, and especially the experience of the object on a conceptual level, is so closely related to the subject, this opens up the possibility to work with our mind,

---

<sup>118</sup> Wangpo ngönsum, (Tig.) *dBang-po ngon-sum*

<sup>119</sup> First expressed by Dignaga and later expounded upon by Dharmakirti in his *Pramanavarttikam*

<sup>120</sup> *Togpe namshe*, (Tib.) *rTog-pa'i rnam-shes*

<sup>121</sup> *Dogpa*, (Tib.) *lDog-pa*

<sup>122</sup> See the *Pramanavarttikam* by Dharmakirti and numerous commentaries to *Pramana* by Indian and Tibetan scholars.



as we do for example in psychotherapy, in order to change certain problematic experiences. If subject and object were not interconnected in this particular way we would not be able to change our fearful etc. experiences of reality. This is not only true for problematic experiences, but also in our everyday-life. If we understand the interrelationship between subject and object, the 'outer reality' loses its power over us, because we know that the subject is holding the key for its reality experience and we may become less outerly determined.

Another way to view the subject and object interrelationship is in the context of more subtle levels of perception and reality. If the perceptual / cognitive means used by the subject are of a coarse type, so is the experience of the object, and visa versa. The more subtle tools of perception / cognition are utilized (subject), the more the subject has access to more subtle and uniting levels of reality (object).

### *Summary*

I have tried to show that on any level of experience the type of mind (subject) we use will access *the* and only *the* particular and corresponding reality (object), which naturally implies that there is an inherent and indisputable interrelationship between subject and object for the better or for the worse, all dependent on whether we use our insight into our decisive role in the appearance of reality.

*Both the diversity of subject and object as well as the unity of subject-object are thus an integral part of their interrelationship – Unity in Duality, i.e. they are of simultaneously opposing und uniting natures - Unity in Duality.*

### **III. After word**

The spiritual goal of Buddhism being to realize the unity or 'void' nature, Nagarjuna used the insight into the integral nature of existence of the Eight Tendrels as the proof of the 'void'-nature of existence as well as the proof of the non-inherent existence of the Eight Tendrels of phenomena them selves.

But if we just consider our normal life, leaving out spiritual goals, when experiencing something as problematic this seems to be due to our holding the view of some - if not all - of these four pairs of contradictions divorced from the view of their unities: i.e. problems seem to rise due to the experienced contradiction between 'becoming' and 'cessation', between the 'finite' and the 'infinite', between 'localization' and 'de-localization', between 'part' and 'whole'.

The contradictions and the unities are present at all times. The 'finite', 'localized' and 'part' appearance on a surface level of existence is common to all that exists. Beyond that the 'infinite', 'de-localization' and 'wholeness' prevails. It is exactly this continuous flow, the unification beyond the surface, that makes existence possible and without which it would come to a natural halt.

Also, the basically deep survival instinct, the wishing to survive pre-eminent in all types of existence (not least in humans) is disrupted and deeply disturbed by experiencing the contradiction of the opposites only. Connecting with the underlying experience of continuation would support and sustain the deep feeling of survival, which naturally strengthens the individual.

Implementing the understanding of the integral nature of existence of these Four Pairs of Opposites - Unities, or even better, if we could embody the experience of these, many of our problems in life would decrease and instead give rise to a positive impact in terms of harmony and insight, which could carry us far beyond our present condition, both individually, inter culturally, internationally as well as in our connection with nature.

In order to integrate the oppositions and the unities for transcending the connected problems, insight into the *Unity in Duality* nature of reality by means of the three unities of body-mind, subject-object and energy-matter seems to be very beneficial.

As we experience reality on the basis of the body condition (physical senses), the body sets the frame for the mind. Deepening the co-operation between these two interrelated aspects of *body and 'mind'* makes the mind naturally calm down and its experience of reality becomes more natural and balanced. Deepening the subtlety in regard to body-mind it is possible once again to reconnect with our many different latent abilities, experiencing a more unified level of reality and thereby also to reconnect with the experience of *becoming* and *cessation* as part and parcel of the underlying stream of continuation.

As '*energy*' is always basic to and saturates *matter*, when dealing with matter this implies a connection to the '*energy*' beyond matter nature. When we experience the '*energy*' of matter, matter becomes no longer *localized* and isolated. Touching the basic nature of matter, its '*energy*' basis, implies that the functional entities of the individual manifestation are no longer separate, but are interrelated, basically *unified* and *de-localized*.

As the conceptual mind, the normal human *subject*-pole, abstracts and crystallizes reality, the normal human *object*-pole, it can only conceive of the *parts* and not the *whole* and it cannot conceive of the ongoing process of existence. Identifying with any of the conceptually fixed moments of existence encapsulates and fixes the subject and gives rise to fear of its *finite nature*. Being less ruled by the conceptual mind opens up to the natural flow of existence and allows for our partaking in its *infinite nature*.

May this insight be generously used by all human beings.

May it be expounded and explored to its depths

May it lead to harmony between different nations, different views and religions

May it lead to a longed-for balance between man and nature for the benefit of both.

Copyright © 2003 Tarab Tulku Rinpoche and Lene Handberg

Tarab Institute, Hørsholm Kongevej 40, 2970 Hørsholm, Denmark

Email: [info@tarab-institute.org](mailto:info@tarab-institute.org) or [lhandberg@gmail.com](mailto:lhandberg@gmail.com)

Website: [tarab-institute.org](http://tarab-institute.org)

