

CLASSES at Wisdom's Goldenrod, Hector, NY
with Anthony Damiani (AD)
June 24 & July 1, 1981
BUDDHISM; UNIVERSAL FLUX
with Appendix: Classnotes AB 1981 0624 and 0701.

TOPIC: Buddhism

SUBJECT: Universal Flux

SUBSUBJECTS: Sautrantika, Nyaya, Universals, Words, Generic Mentality, Negation

CONTENTS:

Buddhist (Sautrantika) position: words have no direct reference to reality; meaning supplied by generic mentality

Nyaya position: forces of sound shape productive imagination; universals are inherent in matter

Nyaya: tone A is particular, 440 cycles/second is universal; Buddhist: tone A is universal, 440 cycles/second is particular

Nyayas classify time as substance; Sautrantikas do not

Nine theories of word meanings

Why words work: Buddhist explanation through causal efficiency; no need for universals

Reality and word reference: 1) problem of fluxional reality; 2) problem of permanent reality

Circle example: perfect circle vs. instantiated circle; problem of inherence; relationship between universal and particular

Buddhist: words perform a function; words refer to a psychic image

Psychic image aspects: 1) reference to object; 2) meaning content projected as in object; this is fictitious

Word derives signification from fusion of vasanas in generic mentality with sound; word fixes number of vasanas that can become operative

Realists take cosmological approach; focus on essences structuring universe

Buddhist view is from within generic image; focus on subjective experience

Realists explain object constitution; Sautrantikas emphasize importance of how we know things

Buddhist and Realist views are two halves of one whole; "What is the relation between World-Mind and individual within it?"

Buddhist (Sautrantika) view: intentionality reaches and reproduces object; sense-direct perception occurs within organism; changing object is what's real; mixture of generic image with presentation; accept inference as valid pramana

Meaning can't be fixed/static, contradicts concept of change

Generic mentality can portray change despite its permanent nature
Where is idea of circle? Three proposed explanations
What is the principle of selectivity that's operating in the generic mentality?; mind
has natural bias (reason-principle)
Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas vs. Mahayanas: different views on samsaric wheel
Dependent origination: constructive imagination operating on fluxional existence
Karma law: "This whole stream is, therefore that appears"
Jayanta Bhatta's criticism of Buddhist view: debate on universals and similarity;
discussion of full negativity; essence and negation; cow example
Don't underestimate Nyaya logicians; Bengali Nyayas
Appendix: AB class notes

BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Satkari Mookerji, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Universal Flux*, Chapter VII
- Guenther Wachsmuth, *The Etheric Formative Forces in Cosmos, Earth and Man: A Path of Investigating Into the World of the Living*
- Paul Brunton, *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*

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NOTES:

- **RETYPE PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT (hence V10).** From 1981 0624 & 0701 BUD F08.PDF THERE ARE NO AUDIO CASSETTE TAPES EXTANT.
- AB Classnotes appended. Retyped from Classnotes AB 1981 0609 to 1981 0629.PDF and Classnotes AB 1981 0701 to 1981 0829.PDF. All spelling, capitalization, and punctuation corrected, all abbreviations and numbers spelled out in AB Classnotes.
- All spelling and punctuation corrected, some numbers spelled out.

1981 06/24 and 07/01 at Wisdom's Goldenrod Buddhism; Universal Flux

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CLASS, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24 & JULY 1, 1981

ON MOOKERJEE'S BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY OF UNIVERSAL FLUX

CH. VII. "The Doctrine of Apoha"

1 "The Buddhist denies the fundamental assumption of the realist that words contain an objective reference, in all its aspects and bearings. The Buddhist maintains that words have no reference to reality in any sense. Words in their opinion deal with concepts and these concepts are purely subjective constructions." (pp. 107-8)

The Sautrantikas claim that the word refers to the object, but isn't the object, nor is the meaning the object. The meaning is supplied (by the generic mentality); the concept is not pulled out of the object.

2 On the other hand, the Nyayas claim that the meaning and the word can be pulled out of the object. They are inherent in the very material that's shaping our understanding. For them the productive imagination is shaped by the forces of sound. This is the basis of the theory of mantram.

Anthony suggested that this is similar to Wachsmuth's Chemical Ether. This chemical ether or sound ether is active, it is the fluid state. Wachsmuth gives the example that the Egyptians made figures that produces [sic] sounds (*Etheric Formative Forces*, p. 144), suggested that sounds are inherent in matter.

3 The Nyayas' position is that 440 cycles/second is the universal and provokes the particular tone A. The Buddhists say that the 440 is particular and provokes the universal sound A.

4 The Buddhists posit moment after moment of particulars. The Nyayas have difficulty explaining change because of the inherence of the universal.

5 The Nyayas classify time as a substance, but not the Sautrantikas.

6 Are the Nyaya categories of the same order? Paul D[amiani] says they are not, but that the Nyayas never systematized all aspects of reality to a principle. The Nyaya categories are not derived from somewhere else, they are irreducible.

What about the universal "being"? Wherever a universal could inhere, the universal of inherence must inhere.

7 There are nine theories of word meanings.

- 1) The Buddhist or nominalist position -- words are conventional or adventitious, have no objective reference. The word is in the generic mentality.
- 2) The Nyayas' position -- the word relates to the actual reality.
- 3) The word relates to a construction or universal in the thing.
- 4) The word relates to an undefined or unspecified existence.
- 5) A word is a complex of form and matter, idea and thing.

- 6) The word relates to a group or totality (generic concept).
- 7) The word is an image projected on a prakritic entity.
- 8) Words are symbolic gestures.
- 9) A word is an analogy of the object (representationalism theory).

The Buddhists try to criticize 2-9 all at once.

8 If the word is completely adventitious, why is it part of our experience, why does it work?

The Buddhists bring in causal efficiency, and need no universal. Babbling incoherently wouldn't have causal efficiency. The underlying potency is not a universal.

9 The Buddhists' conclusion is that words refer to a moving reality. "It's a cow" in the morning and the evening. But if the cow were to refer to a static reality, then the Buddhists' moving reality would be contradicted.

10 A selection from P.B.'s "The Worship of Words" was read. (*The Hidden Teaching*, pp. 128-9). "In the end the definition which a man gives depends on his individual theory of the universe. Meaning becomes a *creation* of his mind." (p. 128) "Each word has therefore two meanings: the external meaning, which is the objective *fact* or event in external experience, and the internal meaning which is the *idea* of that fact or event which is formed in the mind..." (p. 129)

11 The nine theories of words are coming from different points of view of how the universe is constructed. Insofar as we're doing philosophy, we have to penetrate the meaning of words, why their concepts are efficacious.

12 Second paragraph, p. 115. "Is the import of words a reality or not? If it be a reality, is it fluxional or permanent?"

The two problems that arise are:

- a) If the import of words is a reality, and if reality is fluxional, then what is it that words are referring to that remains the same?
- b) If reality is permanent, why must it be revealed through a series of successive ideas and why does one word refer to different things?

In either case words don't refer to something objective in reality.

13 We are trying to get to the subjective meaning of words. Before understanding what words are, we must first tackle the problem in terms of their reference.

14 Vic gave the example of a circle drawn on the blackboard or in sand. The instantiated circle is in flux, is uneven. But then there's the Idea of Circle.

What does the word 'circle' refer to? How does the perfect circle inhere in the wheel? How does discourse relate the universal and particular?

15 P. 116. The Buddhists' objection to the Realists is that there's a problem if words and universals are related. If the word refers to a universal, there can be no succession of ideas. The efficacy of words is that they perform a function. (What does 'efficacious' refer to?)

16 Anthony asks if the 360 degrees are changing or permanent. They're both.

17 Is the import of words a reality or not? In their analysis of this question, the Buddhists are coming from the Nagarjuna principle.

18 The logicians Dignaga and Dharmakirti are after Nagarjuna. However, Gabriel points out that Mookerjee has his own interpretation of the Buddhists' logic.

19 "The Buddhist rejoins that what is signified by a word is neither a subjective idea nor an objective reality, but something fictitious and unreal." (p. 116) However, this is later contradicted with the words discussed as subjective reality.

20 The word refers to the psychic image of a person, the generic image of his mind. The notion of hypostatization is brought in.

However, the objection that something subjective is not necessarily hypostatized gets brought up again and again. What's criticized by the Buddhists is the power that takes the subjective image to be objective.

21 The psychic image has two aspects:

- a) It refers to the object. (Gabriel suggests this indicates the Sautrantikas are in this way realists.)
- b) The meaning content is projected as in the object. This is what the Buddhists claim is fictitious.

22 In the paragraph on pp. 117-119 more of Dignaga's view and the Buddhists' negative logic is discussed. The word 'apoha' means negation. (p. 119)

23 The difference between the word and its meaning is discussed. The word is a psychic fact or concept. What's fictional is its import, the meaning as meant as an object, its reference to something outside of the generic mind. The conceptual consciousness is a mixture of the meaning generality and the sound generality. The import of a word or meaning is a permanent entity.

24 Anthony asks how this conceptual consciousness is associated with vasanas? Gabriel says Mookerjee doesn't bring them into the Sautrantikas' logic, because then there would be another universal, and sliding into the Yogacaras' point of view.

25 Anthony says the vasanas found in the generic mentality are fused with the sound, whence the word derives its signification. The word fixes the number of vasanas that can become operative.

He gives the example of your reading a story while listening to some music. They are fused in memory. So if you read the story again, you'll hear the music and vice versa.

26 The Buddhists talk of the meaning generality or the formation of the import of words in terms of negation of what the thing is not. Anthony suggests using the word 'selection' instead of 'negation'.

Gabriel suggests that fixing the concept in your mind is the negative or selective part, all the rest is positive. So it is only a relative negation. The meaning of those elements which are fixed in your mind has become permanent for you.

27 The Realists are taking a cosmological view. The Sautrantikas' view is from within the generic image. Anthony says they are talking about two halves of the same thing.

The Buddhists' reference to the external object is not the external object the Realists are talking about.

28 How do we put the two viewpoints together?

- a) The Realists say there are essences in the universe which structure it. These dissipated essences structure consciousness and experience, so the generic mentality arises.
- b) The Buddhists take the point of view from the little mind inside, dissociated from the cosmic view. “It’s only an image.” They use the example of “two ophthalmic patients who see two moons and communicate their experience to each other “ (p. 116), in which two people share a delusion and yet share meaning.

29 The Realists explain how the object is constituted (but they don’t completely explain Being either) but not how the object gets into the subject.

The Sautrantikas claim that what’s important is how we know things, but don’t really deal with the problem of knowledge.

30 Anthony says the Buddhists don’t explain how we know anything outside of concept. The Realists when they say “I have a picture of a tree”, say that’s the way the tree is, because the cosmic forces molded me that way. The Sautrantikas object that the tree may not be the way you conceive it. Anthony wants to put the two together and suggests the question really is, “What is the relation between the World-Mind and the individual within it?”

31 According to the Sautrantikas’ view, intentionality gets to the object and reproduces it. Sense-direct perception takes place within the organism like the Jungian notion that we live within psychic images.

32 For the Sautrantika, the fluxional object is there, also the sense-perception. The impermanent object is what is real, not our notion of objectivity. For them there’s a mixture of the generic image with the presentation.

33 The Sautrantikas accept inference as a valid pramana.

34 The word ‘river’ is not a fixed static meaning. If the meaning is static, as some systems say, change can’t be operative. This is contradictory.

35 Anthony: “The nature of the generic mentality can portray change, even though its nature is permanent.”

36 Where is the idea of circle, as distinguished from the circle drawn on the board, in the sand, etc? “Circle” applies both [to] the moving image in the sand and the fixed concept in my mind. Is “circle” part of the generic mind’s functioning? Where is the intelligibility of circle? Where did circle come from, did it roll down the hill?

A) -- It’s invented.

B) -- It came out of experience.

C) -- It’s an idealization of experience, since there’s no perfect circle in experience.

37 What is the principle of selectivity operating in the generic mentality or psyche, which will provide say the proof of a theorem? This principle is certainly not found in the outside world if that theorem has never been proven.

38 From that total continuity, why do you select certain ideas and not others? Anthony says the mind is naturally biased, that's your reason-principle.

39 The Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas don't have the wheel of samsara as a dharma functioning. The Mahayanas do. Causality is dependent-arising which is the 12-fold wheel.

Dependent origination is the fact of the constructive imagination or selectivity operating on the fluxional existence. The ultimate determinant is the material flux itself.

40 Within the fluxional existence, there's no reason for a given order. But the Buddhists have a strict law of karma "This whole stream is, therefore that appears."

41 At the bottom of p. 122 is Jayanta Bhatta's criticism of the Buddhists. The Buddhists have a relative negation that excludes everything that's not a cow. The Realists say that explanation is not enough, where does the similarity (of one cow to another) come from?

42 Jayanta's counter is that there is a universal to explain similarity, and that the Buddhists' generic mentality is from perceptual knowledge. In perceptual knowledge the principle of selectivity is operating, dissociating everything else from it.

43 At the bottom of p. 123, full negativity is discussed. If negativity were taken that far, you could never have a herd of cows, but only an individual cow. Therefore there could be no possibility of apprehending a cow, for new concepts must be created every moment in time.

44 But the Buddhists don't go that far with their process of negation. Their result is an affirmative.

45 "The negative side of the individual is not anything different from the individual itself and negation of similars is as much a part of its essence as negation of dissimilars." (p. 123)

Similarity is as much a part of the essence as the dissimilar.

46 "If this is a cow, it's different from everything else." Here the Buddhists are using the principle of difference.

In this cow there is the presence of other features found elsewhere, like four legs.

So Jayanta objects -- aren't you using the concept of similarity for definition (like four legs, etc.)?

The Nyayas say if you don't have similars, all you have is just particulars.

47 Anthony says don't underestimate the Nyaya logicians, for there's still a school of Bengali Nyayas.

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APPENDIX: AB CLASS NOTES FOR 1981 0624 & 0701

[Retyped from Classnotes AB 1981 0609 to 1981 0629.PDF and Classnotes AB 1981 0701 to 1981 0829.PDF.]

[Classnotes AB 1981 0624 Begin]

6/24/81

Buddhist -- Universal is in the mind, not in the thing or prior to the thing. Nyaya maintains all three.

Buddhist double reverse theory: Meeting point of subject and object is reverse. Arisal of universal in object is double reverse.

Double reverse of cognition of particular is arisal of universal in subject (process of exclusion = reverse).

Exclusion of everything else leads to concept.

Scholastics bring in Active Intellect to account for second reverse -- abstraction of concept.

Meeting between subject and object is the mystery point which most theories can't explain.

Buddhist says you only grasp grid (planetary spheres).

Nyaya says you grasp all ten levels (Prime Mover - Inerratic to elements).

(AD) [Anthony Damiani]: The Buddhist instant is an abstraction from experience and therefore a universal.

Buddhist concepts evolve ontogenetically and phylogenetically.

Nyaya concepts are abstracted from object which has universal inhering in it.

Read on chemical ethers (Chladni's figures -- tones of Egyptian statues) -- sound ether. [Note: See Guenther Wachsmuth, *The Etheric Formative Forces in Cosmos, Earth and Man: A Path of Investigating Into the World of the Living*.]

Nyaya says there is inherent something in the material that's shaping our understanding (also Mimamsa).

[Classnotes AB 1981 0624 End]

[Classnotes AB 1981 0701 Begin]

7/1/81

"Worship of Words" -- pp. 152-3 [Note: Paul Brunton, *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*, Chapter 6. Dutton 1941 hardcover edition.]

The real question to ask is what is the contact between the words and the universal -- this is the realist's real problem.

Words carry import because of a fusion (association) of meanings (vasanas) with sound. This sound gets associated with this meaning.

Negation = selection and exclusion of others -- this word comes to signify this and *not* that.

Sautrantika speaks of how concepts are formed -- not what forms them. Realist deals with how cosmic forces form our concepts.

Both together give a more complete viewpoint. (There is a subjective and external aspect of knowledge.)

The Sautrantika says the percept and the object are always merged and the separation of the percept from the object is always tainted by the object. Therefore you can have true knowledge.

Realist would say the object always informs the percept (formal identity of percept and object).

The nature of the generic mentality can portray change although it itself is permanent.

What is the principle of selectivity that's operating in the generic mentality (psyche) -- which, for instance, can enable you to prove a theorem -- the mind (as selecting) is naturally biased -- i.e., already has universals (objective reason-principles) impressed in it.

[Classnotes AB 1981 0701 End]