

**CLASS at Wisdom's Goldenrod, Hector, NY
with Anthony Damiani (AD)
September 14, 1984
BUDDHISM; MADHYAMIKA**

TOPIC: Buddhism

SUBJECT: Madhyamika

SUBSUBJECTS: Two Truths, Imputation, Mentalism, *Meditation on Emptiness* (Hopkins)

CONTENTS:

Reading Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, on the two truths in Madhyamika

What does it mean to say that a thing doesn't exist the way it appears?

Even imaginary things are existent

Does Madhyamika mean that a thing has a Being which is other than its existence?

Madhyamika doesn't negate the sensible qualities of an object, only its appearing to exist *with* those qualities independently

We are trying to assimilate what Hopkins has written into terms we can understand; we don't want to accept it mindlessly

Reading/discussing Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, on imputation in Prasangika-Madhyamika

Two kinds of imputation, correct and incorrect; even when correct, the image will not coincide with the base, the World-Mind's energy/activity

Image and energy are intertwined, dependently arising; this is the object's "thoroughly established nature"

Substance means Absolute Being, which is empty

Prasangikas will not put a label on reality

Emptiness, conventional truth, and false appearance correspond to sensible appearance, reason-principles, and intelligible

Only a Buddha can have direct cognition of suchness together with cognition of phenomena

Reading/discussing HHDL, *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, on meditation in Madhyamika and Dzogchen; affirming and non-affirming negatives

The only way we can deal with the World-Mind's energy is by superimposing images onto it; those images are not *in* the energy, you put them there

Quantum physics expresses the same idea

What else do you experience but images?

How would the world appear to you if you weren't functioning through a body?

What is the basis of distinguishing between correct and incorrect imputation?

Prasangika says conventional phenomena exist but not in the way the world sees them; discussion of this point

For a worldling, the image is real; for a Prasangika, the image is image
 When studying, don't be afraid to change language around and bring in analogies,
 pictures, images that will help; philosophy has always been difficult
 Vedantists also speak about superimposition, not something unique to Madhyamika
 Plotinus, IV.3.6: the reason we're not fabricating our solar system is because our
 elder sister Soul got there first; Atman is Brahman
 Many minds come together at a certain designated time and collectively produce the
 world
 Short student discussion relating the three natures in Yogacara and Madhyamika

BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Jeffery Hopkins (tr., ed.), Elizabeth Napper (ed.), *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*
- Jeffrey Hopkins, Elizabeth Napper (ed.), *Meditation on Emptiness*
- Krishnachandra Bhattacharyya, *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 1, "Sankara's Doctrine of Maya"
- Ken Wilber, *Quantum Questions: Mystical Writings of the World's Great Physicists*
- Paul Brunton, *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*
- Paul Brunton, *The Wisdom of the Overself*
- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

PLOTINUS QUOTES READ OR REFERENCED: IV.3.6

TRANSCRIBED Verbatim by IT prior to 2018 (V11a); reformatted by jf 2018. This is **V12a** (2023) and has: updated prefatory matter, footer, and audio file name; TOC and Subsubjects completed; Booklist expanded; Plotinus quotes section added; typos/errors corrected; new notes within transcript; new formatting to accord with new conventions. **Archival verbatim transcript – V12a.**

AUDIO FILES: 1984 0914a, 1984 0914b. [Note 1: "Tape" and "Side" refer to original audio cassette tapes that were later digitized into .MP3 Audio Files. Note 2: Some of Audio File 1984 0914a, Side 1 has very poor sound quality, very hard to hear in certain places. In addition, occasionally there is some kind of bleed through either from the other side or from a previously recorded class. There are also hard to hear places on Side 2 (of file a) and at the beginning of Audio File 1984 0914b. Note 3: In 2025, REP Studio cuts dead air and tries to improve sound quality of both audio files.]

1984 09/14 at Wisdom's Goldenrod Buddhism; Madhyamika

[Audio File 1984 0914a Begins]

AH: --go over [couple words inaudible] of the Prasangika view, which is on page 431. If we could restrain discussion until we get to the Prasangika, I think it would be good. In other words I'll just read, and I'll tell you what page I'm on and kind of establish a-- a format that we could work in. Ok?

[short pause with faint background student talking]

HS: Also in the *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, Sidney here will suggest several of the more-- of the essays that directly just speak to the Prasangika. Sid--

SP: What? (SP laughs a bit)

HS: No, there's several essays in *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight* that speak to the Prasangika and just-- this is just interpret-- in-- I think-- we're thinking in terms of the end of September, you know, just so we could have some kind of things we might like to say. But [SP assents] which would be the better one Sid in this connection?

SP: There's-- it appears in a lot of places in here but he explained it in-- in "Six Perfections" section, one of the perfections is on wisdom, how he talks about emptiness quite a lot, and then "The Path to Enlightenment" section has quite a bit more, a little more detailed, and then that's-- and that's it. About the last third of it is on the Prasangika view. And then there's the "Self and Selflessness" chapter, "The Two Truths" chapter, and the "Union of [the] Old and New Translation Schools" is interesting 'cause it [one word inaudible] shows how the Madhyamika fits in with the tantric perspective.

[short pause]

MW: Now you can go home Sidney. (bit of laughter)

SP/S(?): Whew. (some laughter)

AH: Alright, page 405, the topic heading is the "Two Truths" and there's kind of a rehash here of what's in the first part of the chapter. So we're really not missing anything. It's-- the chapter actually starts a few pages before this.

VM(?): Clearly evolving.

AH: Ok, on page 405.

[Transcriber note: I am using *Meditation on Emptiness* by Jeffrey Hopkins, assistant editor Elizabeth Napper, Wisdom Publications, London, 1983.]

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 405, AH reading]: "The two truths are objects, not vague concepts of truth, beauty, and so forth. They are phenomena [(*dharma, chos*)], objects [(*vishaya, yul*)], existents [(*sat, yod pa*)], and objects of knowledge [(*jneya, shes bya*)]."

[short pause]

AH: Definition of what is meant by two truths in Madhyamika. I'll read it again.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 405, AH reading]: "The two truths are objects, not vague concepts of truth, beauty, and so forth. They are phenomena [(*dharma*, *chos*)], objects [(*vishaya*, *yul*)], existents [(*sat*, *yod pa*)], and objects of knowledge [(*jneya*, *shes bya*)]."

AH: Down the page a ways.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 405, AH reading]: "Truths-for-a-concealer are falsities, appearing one way and existing another."

[short pause]

AH: Bottom of the page.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 405-406, AH reading]: "Since those which are divided into the two truths are phenomena...each member of either division is a phenomena, an object, an existent, and an object of knowledge. This means that an emptiness is a phenomenon, object, existent, an object of knowledge as are all other various and sundry objects."

[9¼ second pause]

AH: Go to page 408. Second paragraph, beginning of the second paragraph.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 408, AH reading]: "The emptiness of one thing, though no different in color, shape, and so forth from another emptiness, is not the emptiness of another thing."

[short pause]

AH: Next paragraph.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 408, AH reading]: "If the emptiness of one thing were the emptiness of another, one would be forced to accept that the lack of inherent existence of a pot is the lack of inherent existence of a person and that the apprehension of the inherent existence of a pot is the apprehension of the inherent existence of a person, but this is clearly not the case. One must understand that emptinesses are divided by way of their bases, that is, the things that are empty. Therefore, ultimate truth is not partless..."

[short pause]

AH: "...emptinesses are divided by way of their bases..." Ok, at the bottom of the page.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 408-410, AH reading]: "The presentation of emptiness as different emphasizes the stage of the path concerned with developing an inferential understanding of emptiness. However, there is the powerful experience of utter undifferentiability of subject and object in a direct cognition of emptiness in which it seems that subject and object become more 'one' than the word 'one' could ever convey. For 'one' is always a composite of different things; there is no 'one' that can appear to thought which is not a composite. The Ge-luk-bas must resort to the realm of exceptions and analogies at the time of presenting the *mode* of direct cognition of emptiness; all emptinesses in all world systems are realized, subject and object are like water in water, but for an outside 'observer' subject and

object are different and each emptiness is different from every other emptiness. Sometimes, it seems as if the Ge-luk-bas deliberately disregard the more fantastic, relegating it to the realm of exceptions rather than attempting to blend [AH adds: out] the outlooks of higher experiences with their presentation. It seems as if they occasionally lose sight of the goal during their highly intricate philosophical maneuverings whereas other interpreters seem more content to keep the goal in mind and risk some apparent difficulties in presenting conventional objects.

“This indeed is [AH reads: is indeed] the way the difference between the Ge-luk-bas and the non-Ge-luk-bas often appears, if only because the Ge-luk-bas, having accepted the [AH reads: a] task of laying out all phenomena under the umbrella of valid establishment, must spend so much time in formulating conventionalities. However, there is a deeper point; in his tantra [AH reads: tantric] teaching Dzong-ka-ba objects to those who do not thoroughly practice the stage of generation--roughly speaking, imagination of oneself as a deity and one's surroundings as the environment of a deity. He objects to those who immediately, without ripening their mental continuum, rush to clear away all forms and abide in some sort of vacuity, which is not the vacuity that is a negative of inherent existence but nothingness. Similarly, Jam-yang-shay-ba says that in Tibet few have wished to meditate on emptiness and have called meditation on a vacuity of nothingness meditation on emptiness. [11 second pause] For him and for Dzong-ka-ba, analytical meditation on emptiness involves reflection on the reasons why things do not inherently exist. The meditator should state to himself a subject, such as ‘I’, a predicate, such as ‘do not inherently exist’, and a reason, such as ‘because of not being the same as or different from the mental and physical aggregates, mind and body’. Then, he should continue to prove the reason, reflecting on the meaning until conviction and the resultant intuition are generated. This type of meditation acts as an *antidote* to the misconception of inherent existence whereas mere withdrawal of the mind from the object ‘I,’ though often...”

AH: What's the word?

S: Felicitous.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 410, AH reading]: “...felicitous, will not counteract the misconception of an inherently existent ‘I’.

“In [AH adds: the] Ge-luk-ba teachings, analysis is stressed, and emptiness is presented as the highest predicate, quality, or nature of each object--its lack of inherent existence. Non-perception of it is like not perceiving the best quality of everything one sees--their thoroughly established nature. The attempt to keep emptinesses individual is in order to emphasize that each and every one of these various and sundry objects lacks inherent existence; emptiness is not a vague negative, but a specific negative of inherent existence in each and every object. The content of wisdom is the incontrovertible cognition of this.”

[14¼ second pause]

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 410, AH reading]: “Other than saying that the experience of a direct cognition of emptiness is like fresh water poured in fresh water, of what benefit are words like ‘one’ in leading a yogi to the experience? The experience is entered through analysis, through gaining an inferential intuition into emptiness and directly attacking the very cause of cyclic existence, not through superimposing a vague concept on experience.”

AH: Down at next paragraph.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 410, AH reading]: “For Dzong-ka-ba an emptiness is an imputedly existent phenomenon like any other object, but for Ngok [AH reads: someone else] it is only a designation pointing to this non-finding of objects by an analytical consciousness. Jam-yang-shay-ba says that in that case an emptiness would not exist, and there would be no ultimate truths. These differing systems serve to highlight the fact that nothing can bear analysis. That the Ge-luk-bas are able to view this non-finding as an object, an ultimate object, and as validly established allows them to take literally passages in sutras that others find require interpretation...”

[16¾ second pause]

AH: Page 413.

[11¾ second pause]

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 413, AH reading]: “The two truths are not different entities but one entity within nominal difference. If conventional and ultimate truths were different entities, the lack of inherent existence of a form would not be the final mode of existence of the form because it would be completely separate from the form.”

S: Can you do that again?

AH: Yeah.

VM: These [couple inaudible student words simultaneous with VM] people don’t listen Andrew, we got to do this.

S: You gotta do it with pain. (bit of laughter)

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 413, AH reading]: “The two truths are not different entities but one entity within nominal difference. [AH: One entity--] If conventional and ultimate truths were different entities, the lack of inherent existence of a form [AH: Emptiness.] would not be the final mode of existence of the form because it would be completely separate from the form. Just so, realization of the non-inherent existence of a form would not overcome the conception of the form as inherently existent. Also, [a yogi’s] cultivation of high paths would be senseless because understanding emptiness would not be related with destroying misconception [AH reads: misconceptions] of the objects themselves. ...

“On the other hand, if the two truths were utterly the same, everything true of the one would be true of the other. In that case, for every truth-for-a-concealer such as desire and hatred which was overcome on the path, an ultimate truth also would be overcome.”

S (possible bleed through): What page?

AH: At the bottom.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 413, AH reading]: “Therefore, the two truths are not different entities; they are the same entity. This is what the *Heart of Wisdom* (the *Heart Sutra*) means when it says that emptiness is form and form is emptiness. The two truths are not one, but are nominally

different, for they appear differently to thought. The relationship is called a oneness of entity but a difference of isolates or opposites of the negatives.”

S: What is that word?

AH: Huh?

HS: Isolates.

S: Isolate?

AH: Isolates, isolates, yeah.

S: Like ‘isolate’ isolate?

S: Uh-hm.

S (simultaneously): Yeah.

S: I see.

AH: 414.

[short pause]

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 414, AH reading]: “The meaning can be more easily seen with an example. Take table and product. If the mind turns to deciding whether the two are different, it determines whether there are any non-tables which are products and any non-products which are tables.”

S: I didn’t [one/two words inaudible] what does that mean, products?

MW: Make an isolate.

VM: Any phenomena, yeah.

MW (simultaneously): Ok.

VM: Any compounded phenomena.

MW: Oh.

S (very faint): [couple words inaudible]

VM: That’s onto any appearance, [student assents] as I understand it, can be applied.

S: Yeah.

VM: The product of dependent arising.

S (simultaneously, possible bleed through): [couple/few words inaudible]

S (possible bleed through): End-product.

S: Can we read again please?

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 414, AH reading]: “The meaning can be more easily seen with an example. Take table and product. If the mind turns to deciding whether the two are different, it determines whether there are any non-tables which are products and any non-products which are tables. When it is said, pointing at the basis [AH reads: base] of the imputation ‘table’, ‘This is a table,’ and ‘This is a product,’ it is not obvious just from the statement whether only tables are products. It then must be seen that there are non-tables, such as cups, which are products and that there are no non-products which are tables because non-products are either permanent phenomena or non-existents.”

AH: I’m going to skip over this because it’s too technical for now. This is supposed to be introduction. Let’s go to the bottom of page 415.

[10 second pause]

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 415, AH reading]: “The Jo-nang-bas hold that the two truths are different entities.”

AH: We just heard a discussion that said they are *not* different entities. There’s another view that say they are.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 415, AH reading]: “Theirs is a view of ‘emptiness of other’--an ultimate truth is empty of being a truth-for-a-concealer and a truth-for-a-concealer is empty of being an ultimate truth. This is said to be similar to the Samkhya teaching that the root of cyclic existence is the confusion of the person and the nature and that liberation is gained by realizing that the person is not the manifesting nature and that the manifesting nature is not the person. Through differentiating the two, a yogi is released [from cyclic existence].

“For a Ge-luk-ba, it is true that an ultimate truth is not a truth-for-a-concealer and vice versa, but this distinction does not constitute emptiness. [AH adds: For them] An emptiness is a phenomenon’s *own* lack of inherent existence; thus, this doctrine is called ‘emptiness of self’ which does not mean that a table is empty of being a table but that a table is empty of its own inherent existence. Otherwise, if a table were empty of itself, there would be no tables and, by extension, no phenomena; an emptiness would also be impossible because an emptiness would be empty of being an emptiness.”

AH: Let me read that again, that’s important point.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 415, AH reading]: “For a Ge-luk-ba, it is true that an ultimate truth is not a truth-for-a-concealer [AH reads: is not a conventional truth] and vice versa, but this distinction does not constitute emptiness. [short pause] An emptiness is a phenomenon’s *own* lack of inherent existence; thus, this doctrine is called ‘emptiness of self’ which does not mean that a table is empty of being a table but that a table is empty of its own inherent existence. Otherwise, if a table were empty of itself, there would be no tables and, by extension, no phenomena; an emptiness would also be impossible because an emptiness would be empty of being an emptiness.”

AH: Remember, emptinesses are thought of as being objects of knowledge.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 416-417, AH reading]: “The Jo-nang-ba assertion of a difference of entity between the two truths contradicts the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought* [AH reads: contradicts sutra], but it does reflect the Ge-luk-ba acceptance that at the time of direct cognition of

emptiness (by anyone except a Buddha) none of the conventional phenomena which are the bases of the quality emptiness appear to the mind. A direct cognition of emptiness is non-dual in four ways: (1) all appearances of inherent existence have ceased, (2) all appearances of conventionalities have ceased, (3) all appearances of subject and object have ceased, and (4) all appearances of generic images (or conceptual meaning-generalities) have ceased.

“The disappearance of conventional phenomena is said to be due to the mind’s concentration solely on emptiness and due to the cessation of the five sense consciousnesses. Until Buddhahood a direct cognition of suchness precludes cognition of other phenomena just as cognition of other phenomena precludes direct cognition of emptiness; the stains of the mind are such that [the] one blocks the other. When anyone except a Buddha directly realizes emptiness, merely the quality emptiness appears without the appearance of the qualificands--the phenomena which are empty. ...

“An ultimate truth, [AH: Down at the bottom of the page.] or more literally, a highest object truth [(*paramarthasatya, don dam bden pa*)] is so called because an emptiness is the most exalted of all phenomena and is the object of the wisdom that realizes suchness. It is a truth because it exists the way it appears in direct cognition. Truths-for-a-concealer [(*samvrtisatya, kun rdzob bden pa*)] are so called because all other objects are assumed by ignorance to exist the way they appear. An ignorant consciousness is not just a consciousness which does not know suchness but a concealer of suchness through actively assenting to the false appearance of objective existence. Even in direct sense perception, forms [AH reads: form], sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects appear to exist inherently, as if they existed in their own right. *All* phenomena except emptinesses appear to the cognizers that certify them as existing as if they exist inherently. Since the ignorance that assents to this appearance is the root of cyclic existence, its role in everyday perceptions [AH reads: perception] is emphasized through naming all phenomena except emptinesses ‘truths-for-a-concealer’, truths for ignorance.”

[9¼ second pause]

AH: The bottom.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 417, AH reading]: “To a Buddha, conventionalities appear the way they exist, for a Buddha has eradicated not only the afflictions, the chief of which is the ignorance that misconceives the nature of phenomena, but also the appearance of inherent existence caused by beginningless conditioning to ignorance. Therefore, the explanation that conventionalities do not exist the way they appear does not hold true for a Buddha. Still, even for a Buddha conventionalities--all phenomena except emptinesses--are truths-for-a-concealer because he knows how things are perceived and conceived by others.”

AH: Just a little more. On page 418, top.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 418, AH reading]: “All existents [AH: t-e-n-t-s] except emptinesses are conventional truths and interdependent existents. They are conventional in the sense that they are conventions as consciousnesses or expressions or as objects of consciousnesses or expressions. They are interdependent in the sense that doer depends on doing and doing depends on doer, [etc]. ... Just as the nature of a phenomenon [AH reads: phenomena] depends on that phenomenon [AH reads: phenomena], so the phenomenon also depends on its nature. Furthermore, an emptiness depends on the meditative equipoise that certifies it, and it also depends on its basis of imputation, the non-inherent

existence of an object. Thus, though all phenomena are interdependent, conventionalities are called interdependent existents in order to stress their false appearance as if they exist in and of themselves.

“Since neither ultimate truths nor truths-for-a-concealer inherently exist, the division of the two truths is not an ontological division. Both exist only conventionally...”

[short pause]

AH: Top of page 419. Specifically now--

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 419, AH reading]: “For Prasangika nothing exists objectively, that is to say, as if of its own will right with its basis of imputation. Prasangika philosophy, though emphasizing the subjective element, is still not a turn [AH reads: a return] to utter subjectivity in which what exists for the individual is what exists. There are standards and criteria for valid establishment, and in this sense both suchness and the phenomena qualified by it are objective. The division into two truths on epistemological grounds is a call to eradicate ignorance and to attain the highest wisdom. It is a call to recognition that a conventional cognizer, even if valid with respect to the existence or non-existence of objects, is not valid with respect to their suchness. It is a call to a new mode of perception, to a cognition of a reality that has been ever-present.

“The two truths are not vague realms of misty truth as suggested by translations which use the singular, such as ‘Absolute Truth’ and ‘Conventional Truth’.”

[short pause]

AH: The bottom of the page.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 419-420, AH reading]: “[AH misreads: Since--] Still, at least in the Ge-luk-ba interpretation the emptiness of one thing is not the emptiness of another in the sense of exact identity, and from this viewpoint the term has often been translated here either in the singular with the article ‘an’ as ‘an ultimate truth’ or in the plural as ‘ultimate truths’. Despite this, when referring to a direct cognition in which all emptinesses are simultaneously realized, it seems cumbersome to say, ‘A yogi directly cognizes ultimate truths’, because it seems to imply that only some ultimate truths are being cognized. Rather, usage of the singular as in, ‘A yogi directly cognizes ultimate truth in a totally non-dualistic manner,’ or ‘A yogi directly cognizes emptiness after having become [AH reads: been] accustomed to an inferential realization,’ at least suggests that there is no ultimate truth which at that point is not being cognized. The meaning, nevertheless, is not amorphous, but specific; an emptiness is a phenomenon’s lack of inherent existence. Thus, one ‘reflects on an emptiness’ or ‘generates an inferential cognition of an emptiness’ because it is the emptiness of a specific phenomenon that is being reflected upon and realized.”

[short pause]

AH: Down the page a bit.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 420, AH reading]: “The conventional...”

AH: About the middle.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 420, AH reading]: “The conventional existence of objects is certified by valid cognizers and never eradicated by ultimate analysis, which refutes only the inherent existence of objects...”

AH: Let me reread that because this--

AS: It's important.

AH: This will be a subject of some discussion (in a little while).

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 420-421, AH reading]: “The conventional existence of objects is certified by valid cognizers and never eradicated by ultimate analysis, which refutes only [AH reads: ultimate analysis only refutes] the inherent existence of objects, both conventionally and ultimately. Once ultimate analysis establishes that the inherent existence of an object cannot be found, it cannot be found ultimately or conventionally; hence, the doctrine of the two truths is not a concession to the ways of ignorance. Chandrakirti establishes that even conventionally objects are not their bases of imputation; even conventionally objects are merely interdependent.

“This does not mean that when a truth-for-a-concealer, such as a chair, is perceived, a common being perceives it as a truth-for-a-concealer. Though one must depend on truths-for-a-concealer, such as words, definitions, examples, and so forth, in order to realize an ultimate truth, one must gain an understanding of an ultimate truth--an emptiness--in order to realize that a truth-for-a-concealer is just a truth-for-a-concealer. Beings whose minds have not turned toward emptiness do not actually know truths-for-a-concealer as such, though indeed they perceive and use them every day. Thus, the name ‘truth-for-a-concealer’, itself is a call toward an understanding of emptiness.”

AH: We don't know conventional truths as conventional truths. But we know conventional truths.

S: What do you think Andrew?

S (very faint, possibly part of background): [couple words inaudible]

AH: What do you mean?

S (very faint): [couple words inaudible]

AH: What do I think truth is? Ultimate truth is empty of inherent existence.

AB: But, don't they say a true phenomenon is one in which appears the way it is, [S: That's--] it's not a false--

[short pause]

AH: They establish the *existence* of phenomena, that the phenomena does exist, but it doesn't exist the way it appears. That's the conventional side. Alright.

AD: It doesn't exist the way it appears then what are we talking about?

VM: It appears to have being but in fact it doesn't have being, it only has existence, and I'm using the words ‘being’ and ‘existence’ the way you've provisionally defined them last week I believe it was,

‘being’ as being a sort of eternally real, ontological principle and ‘existence’ is more like appearance or phenomena.

AS: But no-- [AD simultaneously: Alright.] but no objects [AD simultaneously: Yes.] appear to have an infinite being.

VM: Well, these people [AS simultaneously: Do they?] claim, these people claim [AS simultaneously: Who--] that that’s-- that-- I think that’s one of their arguments.

AS: But who ever-- [S: Fight.] [S: Good thing.] I think we-- we had this argument before or discussion now. I mean who *ever* claims that objects have permanent-- I mean every object you ever see is gone the next day or it’s changed, whatever, so--

SP: I don’t think they’re saying that.

AD: Come on in. (some laughter)

AS: No, I’m saying that why--

AD: What does it mean to say that a thing doesn’t exist the way it appears? This tree, this pole, [AD hits pole] doesn’t exist the way it appears? I mean, it might be just a problem of semantics.

SP: Well, I mean, I don’t think they’re refuting permanence because everybody knows the thing you’re seeing is the cause of a particular. You look and you see the pole and it appears to be-- it appears to have an existence independent of your mind cognizing it, [S: I see.] as an external [one/two words inaudible] [S: No.] [S: Yeah.] is that in its own right it’s a quality of the tree and you prove it.

[student(s) assenting]

AD: Alright, I-- I follow that.

SP: I mean I don’t think it’s-- (I mean--)

AD: Well I--

[couple students at once, few words inaudible]

S: Yeah.

VM: Ok, I certainly agree with you but it seems that that notion of independence and self-standing, coming from its own side, naturally existing, all those terms are to give the sense that the thing has a kind of reality independent of-- of our knowing. And that’s the kind of error it would be

SP (simultaneously): Yeah, or [few words inaudible] I mean--

VM (simultaneously): Yeah, but it’s like it’s real in the sense that it doesn’t depend on even your knowing.

AS: I-- but in-- but Ed said, and there’s a-- there’s a small-- small problem with what you’re saying but, they’re careful to argue against Chittamatra.

AH(?): Of course.

AS: They're careful to want to say that there *is* some [S: That's true.] external [SP simultaneously: Objective.] objective given object, so we have to be very careful if we want to [one/two words inaudible]

SP (simultaneously): But they say in the quote that-- that highlights it. Andrew that-- there's a quote there on the snake and the rope. Did we read it?

AH: Yeah.

AS (simultaneously): I mean you-- you don't--

SP (simultaneously): They say snake and the rope there but it-- there's a different quote.

AS: I mean because you say that what it's empty of is standing in its own right and yet they do want to claim that it is a given objective (or something) and not put forth by the mind and saying that it did not put forth. [few words inaudible]

SP (simultaneously): Well-- but that's the-- just in the way it appears, [AD/S(?) simultaneously: Yeah.] I mean it's like it doesn't just appear the way-- the way-- I think they would say that what is objectively supplied is the way you perceive it.

S: Oh, yeah.

VM(?) (simultaneously, very faint): [few words inaudible]

AH: Yeah, they don't seem to be quarreling with the notion of existence. They seem to be quarrelling with the possibility of the appearance of inherent existence.

AD: Well, I was just trying to understand what they're saying. And don't get offended.

AH: Oh no, I'm not offended.

AD (simultaneously): When you say, when you say to me that the thing doesn't exist the way it appears, alright, then I would ask you, well if we take a mirage, doesn't it exist the way it appears? If it didn't, would it possibly be?

AH: You know, last night we had a three hour conversation about that and maybe we should have taken up a bit of that but there are these categories of imaginaries that have-- that are non-existent.

AD: Even imaginary things are existent.

VM: Yes, but they appear to be real.

S: Yes, but they're existent.

AD (simultaneously): I said they're existent, I'm not talking about the reality of the thing. I'm talking about the (existence/existent) of a thing.

VM: Oh ok.

AD: I see a pink elephant. If it didn't exist, I wouldn't perceive it.

AH: Yeah.

AD: Even if it is an hallucination. So if I say I-- I see a pink elephant, alright, I'm talking about something which exists for me.

VM: But at the time you see the pink elephant--

AD: Does-- now the next part, the next part is, *does it exist the way it appears?*

VM: No.

AD: If it didn't exist the way it appears, would I perceive a pink elephant?

GA: (It can) perform the functions of an elephant then it's just the way it appears.

AD (passionately): It performs very well the functions of an elephant! (SP laughs) It has form, the shape, the size, all those things, don't tell me it doesn't exist. Otherwise, if it didn't exist, I wouldn't report it to you!

GA (simultaneously): I didn't say it didn't exist, I didn't say it didn't exist as a pink elephant, I'm just saying if it was really an elephant, it would-- it would start picking up logs.

AD (simultaneously): If it was really an elephant, if it was really an elephant?

GA: If it was really an elephant it would pick up logs.

AD: But are we talking about the reality of the elephant or are we talking about the reality of any phenomena? We're talking about the phenomena, does it-- [GA simultaneously: That's just an example.] does it exist the way it appears? If it doesn't--

GA (simultaneously): That's just an example. That's just an example.

AD: Yeah, yes I know.

GA (simultaneously): It illustrates what they mean by it.

AD: Well that's what I'm trying--

GA (simultaneously): But the example in itself--

AD: That's what I'm trying to find out, what they mean.

GA (simultaneously): That [one word inaudible] elephant does exist as imaginary, as thought. But the examples here-- perhaps (there's a) better [AH assents] [couple words inaudible]

AH: So, if we-- if we deny-- if we deny the distinction between existence and inherent existence, if, you know, if we take that view, that there really is no distinction between, what appears to what exi-- is what exists, if you take that view for a moment, then we really don't have any way of-- you say-- then we could say that what I perceive is the ultimate truth of phenomena.

AD (intensely): No! No, that doesn't entitle you to say it's the ultimate. [SP: (Well I/Why)--] When I perceive a pink elephant it's not ultimate.

[student assents]

AH: Well then is there something about the perception of the pink elephant that could be corrected?

AD: Well we could investigate into the nature of what we know and with that find out whether it's real or not but that's not what's being discussed at all.

VM/S(?): Yeah.

SP: Well I think-- I mean I would agree with Anthony in the sense that we say that-- so whatever-- if you say something exists it means it's an object of cognition. (Then/When) you say that anything and everything there's a possibility (you've just) made it some--

VM: Well--

SP: Whatever, mirage and so forth. But in-- they say that it doesn't exist the way it appears, they're talking about a very specific quality of the object, [VM: In a way.] not just like a mirage appearing to be water but not being water, that it-- the fact of it being-- not depending on the cognition of it.

AD: Do you think then they may be saying something like this, that it has a Being which is other than its existence. In other words if I take this tree that I'm looking at, on the one hand, alright, it has existence. On the other hand, it has a Being which is other than the way it exists. Would that be what they might mean? I'm just poking around.

SP (simultaneously): Possibility, yeah, yeah.

AH: Yes, that's probably what they mean but they're going to express it in a way that won't separate those two things.

S: Ok.

VM: I'm not sure what you mean Anthony, I heard the words and I could repeat them back. I would like repeat, (that appearance is relevant) a little bit?

AD (simultaneously): In other words, if we use the standard terminology that we worked, alright, Being is that which has reality, alright, or is the real. Or we could call it emptiness, we can call it void, it doesn't matter, alright. And then we can speak about-- we could speak about existence as sensible. [student assents] This tree has an existence, I'm looking at it, it's green, brown, etc, ok. Alright, now, the tree that I'm looking at, the sensible tree that I'm looking at is so to speak an object of cognition, and if I inquire into cognition, I come to the realization, alright, that sensible being is not Being at all, alright, it's a momentary flux, alright, it's a moment-to-moment dissipating, so I can't have what I could call identifiable knowledge. [student assents] But if I speak about the *Being* of tree, the *Idea* of the tree, then I'd be talking about something which doesn't alter, which doesn't change. So, I-- there's a possibility that that's what they're referring to.

VM: Yeah. In what sense Anthony, referring to just--

S: What's going on Vic.

AD (simultaneously): The-- that *thing* does not exist the way it appears.

VM: That's what I mean by--

AD: The tree does not exist the way it appears because the tree has a reality, an actual ontological reality. [VM: Ok.] But the way it appears to us, alright, is not the Being of the tree. I'm just trying to find out what they're saying!

VM: So you're taking a-- let me just see if I could--

AD: I mean, if we took him into a philosophy class in any academic university, this is what we'd have to find out, what are we saying.

VM: That's so. Rather than making a negative statement, if I just follow what you're doing, you say well, the Prasangikas or the Madhyamika in general they make a negative statement in the sense that they say well, the appearing pillow doesn't exist the way it appears. Or-- no, I'm sorry, do-- they make-- forget their language. The pillow that appears doesn't have an independent existence. It's not independent of your knowing of it or your imputation upon it and so on. But you were taking-- I-- it seems to me a slightly different angle and that is you're saying its truth or its real Being is *distinct* from its appearance, and it does not appear the way it really is, which seems like you're coming at it from a very different angle. I don't deny that there's large--

AD: All I'm looking for is a way to understand them.

AH: Anthony, if there's-- I think there's another possible complication in what we're discussing. For the Prasangika view, they're going to say that things do exist, but that's-- they have-- they have these-- they have this category. Things exist as varieties of dependent arising and it's at that level that phenomena are valid.

S: Ok.

AH: That's a conventional truth, your-- that existence.

S: Perfect.

AH: The appearance of inherent existence is also a conventional. Then they have an ultimate truth which is the emptiness. So the-- there's the emptiness, the validly existent, and the appearance of inherent existence for them. There's three terms that are in-- that are under discussion, rather than two.

GA (simultaneously): [one/two words inaudible] all terms of the-- that the appearance of inherent existence would be imaginary.

AH: An imaginary.

S: Yeah.

GA: That [AH simultaneously: The existent por--] the conventional (existent/existence) without (appearing true or false)(--/.)

S: I see.

AH (simultaneously): Is other-powered phenomena.

GA (simultaneously): [couple words inaudible] has to be established. Yeah.

AH (simultaneously): Validly established, thoroughly established. So it's three terms. Now if that helps to understand it.

AD: Well could you go over them and see if we understand them.

AH: When they say that-- when they say-- let's just take the experience of the pole. See I experience the pole as being other than the mind, as if it had this being that it lacks. That's-- that's the appearance of inherent existence which is totally in error, you see. The pole does exist as a variety of dependent arising. Phenomena are validated at the level of-- at that level. It does exist, the pole does exist.

GA: (Right.) Could I add to that Andrew that, [AH: Yeah.] in terms of the idea of the pole, the brownness exists, the roundness exists, [AH assents] and that the pole is not empty of being brown or round or tall or (big/thick) or wood. All of those ideas exist [AH: That's--] as instances-- as instances of wood, as instances of round, [AH: Right.] and as instances of brown in the object. They're not negated, that's not what it's empty of, it's not empty of the idea. [AH: Right.] It's empty of appearing to exist *with* all those instances of brown, so forth, independently.

AS: But, if you're [few words inaudible] that just the-- the way you were using idea just now is *not* (literally) [three words inaudible] speaking about [one/two words inaudible]

GA (simultaneously): Yeah, I changed the meaning. Yeah, I'm just saying I try-- I try to point out--

AS (simultaneously): No, but when you speak about brown and so on as ideas--

GA: Exactly, I'm trying to point out that-- [AH: Those are--] [AS simultaneously: That's not-- it's not what--] that referring to emptiness of the being of it is not going to forget--

S: Excellent.

GA: The ideas are there with the object.

S: It's not somewhere else.

AS (simultaneously): No I-- I needed-- ok.

S: No.

AS: But why would you say-- But maybe I'll try again.

S: Go ahead.

GA: Well, go ahead.

AS: We just said that the brown and so on are there with it, they're not negating it. That's not what it's about, that's not what the emptiness is referring to. Agree. That's not what we're calling the Idea of that object. When I talk about the Idea of you, like through the Idea of Man, I don't refer to [one/two words inaudible] of qualities and sounds and so on, those are all the sensible qualities. But I will (refer to) is to say the Idea's there. And that's not something you can-- can have sensibly at all.

VM: Yeah but still--

S: But then how do you know (the Idea)?

AS: That would still be an object, yes, and they say that emptiness is an object [one/two words inaudible] too, [AH: (Like the Buddha), yes.] that there's a direct cognition of emptiness.

S: If we say [one/two words inaudible]

GA (simultaneously): Yeah, but that's why [couple words inaudible]

AH (simultaneously): But emptiness is not some other existent thing in the way that an Idea is some other existent thing.

AS: But-- but when you see that the Idea is there, is it-- is it-- are you other than that Idea?

AH: You just called it an ontic reality in itself.

AS: Isn't that the *Being* of the tree? I'm just-- all I'm saying is that the-- [AH simultaneously: No, I'm trying to under--] the way you're using idea as the sensible qualities is not like--

GA (simultaneously): What I'm-- what I'm trying to indicate is that to try to make an equivalent of what we consider ontically is their way of thinking (on/upon) emptinesses [couple/three inaudible student words] would be to subvert the point that they're trying to make. Everything in the universe, anything that's known, it is a subject of this analysis. If you divide things into sensible and noumenal and try to compare it with their analysis, you're already subverting the thrust of the analysis. So I'm just trying to back up one step and try to see that they are trying to accommodate all-- the same universe that you've analyzed differently. They're trying to accommodate it differently.

AD (simultaneously): I don't think we're subverting. I don't think we're subverting.

GA (simultaneously): Just saying it's a different thrust [S simultaneously: Or not.] in that if you-- well, if you bring in that framework prematurely, that it's just going to squeeze the meaning of the word usage before we have a chance to see what they're--

AS: That might be. [GA assents] But it sound-- a lot of the words sounded very similar. A lot of them [couple words inaudible] talking about-- the way he talked about (the tree).

[student assents]

S: Definitely.

AS: He says-- well Buddhahood, a direct cognition of suchness.

S: Right.

S: Clearly.

AS (very faint): [few words inaudible]

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1984 0914a Ends; Side 2 Begins)

GA: --natures.

AS: Yes.

GA: It has a false nature, that which appears. It has an [couple/three inaudible AS words simultaneous with GA] other-powered nature or dependent nature which has-- [AS simultaneously: And an ultimate.] as its manifestation.

AS: Yeah I know.

GA: And it has an [AS assents] ultimate nature.

AS: And how about when Plato said that every-- that there's three natures of a man. There's sensible appearance of the man, the reasonable, and then the Intelligible or Intellectual soul. Isn't that-- what is the difference? And when I say that the Intellectual is right here, isn't that the same thing? If I ask-- can I leave out the Idea of Man when I speak about you? I mean I could-- I could separate it for purposes of analysis, say well I just have a sensible body and I'll separate that off from the rational man and that from the Intellectual. But in the final analysis wouldn't I say that if you weren't truly an Idea of Man you wouldn't even be here, [GA simultaneously: I don't know--] and in that sense it's two sides-- in that sense the emptiness or the Idea of Man--

GA (simultaneously): I don't know any Idea of Man.

AS: What?

GA: I don't know any Idea of Man, I only know [one/two words inaudible]

AS (simultaneously): On the other hand you don't *not* know it, there-- isn't-- isn't this--

AD (intensely): You don't know the Idea of Man, then [AS simultaneously: You can't not-- you--] how could we communicate with each other? [AS: In--] How do we talk to one another if we don't have concepts, general meanings?

GA (simultaneously): Yeah. Ok, I know that idea of man but I don't know some Idea of Man that is *other* [one word inaudible]

AD (simultaneously): Well, wouldn't that concept-- wouldn't that [AS simultaneously: Yeah (couple words inaudible)] concept also have, so to speak, a prototype? Why can't we try to assimilate what this man has written in this book into a terms we can understand? I mean I for one would like to understand him but I'm not going to give-- give over to something I don't understand and just accept it and repeat it back to you, I can't--

GA: I'm trying to understand what he's saying without converting it into a prior framework.

AD: Ok, let's do that.

HS: Good, without converting it Gabriel, when you see a person--

AD (simultaneously): You show-- you tell me-- you show me the person who could do that.

GA: I just (did try).

AD (simultaneously): And I-- and I will tell you that what you just said is we do not apperceive.

GA: I'm not saying I'm not lending my own historical understanding. I'm just trying to make a point.

AD: Well if everyone is forced by the necessity of the situation to assimilate through the processes of apperception according to what he understands, then why don't I be conscious about it and just do it deliberately? I don't have to hide behind a bush. I know I'm doing this. But it's better than just taking a sentence and not understanding what he means. I'd like to start off again at the beginning and take one sentence at a time and have you explain it to me.

VM: Let's do it. [few seconds of faint background student talking] I think we should start right at this sentence here.

HS: What Sidney?

SP: We'll waive that clause now but I think [HS simultaneously: What?] the snake, you know--

GA (simultaneously): It's on page 438.

SP (simultaneously): Well--

HS: Yeah, yeah, I know.

SP: Yeah (where) he brings out all the topics through the sensible, [S: Herbert--] if I remember (correctly).

HS (simultaneously): This is a special request from the Dalai Lama. (bit of laughter)

[couple seconds of background student talking]

AD: This isn't similar to KCH-- KCB is it? You're going to convince us that the snake isn't there?

SP: No, that's-- [HS simultaneously: (Go on Sidney.)] that's why I wanted to read it.

AD: Ok.

SP (simultaneously): Save my place Andrew. (bit of laughter)

S: Ok.

AD: You know what I'm referring [student assents] to, the article where he insists [one inaudible HS word simultaneous with AD] that it's not there? [Note: See Krishnachandra Bhattacharyya, *Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 1, "Sankara's Doctrine of Maya".]

[students assent]

SP (simultaneously): Yeah, this is a very different--

S: (Pure infinity.)

S: Isn't it the same one?

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 437, HS reading]: "Objects are imputed in the [HS reads: a] way..."

S (simultaneously): (Which page?)

HS: Oh, excuse me, 437, the last paragraph.

AD (simultaneously): Yell at us Herbie.

HS: 437 on the last paragraph.

DR: Read it slow, nobody else--

S: Yeah slowly.

S: Yeah, uh-hm.

S: Read it slow?

S: Yell at us slowly. (bit of laughter)

[few faint background student words, AH laughs]

AH: Alright. (bit of laughter) I'll do it.

AD: Let's try.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 437-438, AH reading]: "Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope. Just as much as a snake cannot be found among the parts of the rope either individually or collectively, so phenomena, even when correctly imputed, cannot be found among their [AH reads: the] bases of imputation, individually or collectively, and, of course, not separately. Nevertheless, there is a difference between a snake wrongly imputed to a rope and a snake rightly imputed to a proper basis of designation because the latter [AH: the proper basis] can perform the functions of a snake. Therefore, when Prasangikas cite the example of a rope-snake, it illustrates only the mode of imputation; the purport of the example is not that the *existence* of phenomena is the same as the existence of a rope-snake. A rope-snake does not exist and cannot perform the functions of a snake whereas things do exist and create effects within the context of being ultimately unfindable nominalities.

"The most difficult point in the Prasangika system is this: the utter unfindability of phenomena in their bases of designation and yet their ability to perform functions. Prasangikas do not deny the *bhava* [(*dnegos po*)] which is defined as 'that which is able to perform a function', particularly the function of creating an effect. They deny the *bhava* which means inherent existence...the non-dependence of things on their parts, their bases of designation, or the consciousness that designates them. Thus, when an emptiness of inherent existence is rightly seen in an object, understanding of imputed existence is furthered. When imputed existence is rightly seen, understanding of the emptiness of inherent existence is furthered. As long as these two are seen to be contradictory, that is, as long as a refutation of inherent existence seems to refute the effective existence of phenomena, one has not passed beyond the views of [AH adds: the] non-Madhyamikas."

AB(?): Uh-hm.

S: Andrew [one word inaudible] on the way back.

AH: (Yes sir.)

VM: (Let's/Just) do it again, that's nice.

AB (simultaneously): But in-- in the terminology we were using, think that-- they seem to be saying it's perhaps that the existence-- if you look at the reality of the thing, its Being, you can't find the thing the way it exists as an appearance in the Being of a thing.

AH: I'm sorry Alan. Just say it again.

AB (simultaneously): I don't know how to-- how else to say it again. They're saying that in the emptiness-- the appearance of a thing does not exist in the base of designation. Now I'm trying to put that in other words. You have the appearance-- is that wrong Vic?

VM: I think so.

AD: But could-- could you be patient enough and I wanted to have it reread.

AH: Sure.

AD: I didn't [AB simultaneously: Sure.] think it through.

AB: Ok.

AH (simultaneously): Ok. This is-- this is a discussion of imputation.

AD: Yeah.

AH: And he said--

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 437, AH reading]: "Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope. Just as much as a snake cannot be found among the parts of the rope either individually or collectively..."

AD (simultaneously): Wait, wait, wait, wait, start again.

AH: You want me to start again?

LR: Read [AD simultaneously: Yeah.] slowly, [S simultaneously: (Right.)] slower.

S: Listen to him.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 437, AH reading]: "Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope."

AD: Now you notice he's saying objects, not names.

AH: That's clarified in there.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 437-438, AH reading]: "Just as much as a snake cannot be found among the parts of the rope either individually or collectively, so phenomena, even when correctly imputed, cannot be found among their bases of imputation, individually or collectively..."

AD: Ok let's stop there, [student assents] explain that.

[few faint inaudible student words in background]

AH: Well, if we stop there we're going to have an argument. Can I read the next paragraph? (laughter, student words)

AD: Are we going to be afraid of arguments? Is our ego so delicate? What are we, all little Ferdinands running around here? (some laughter, student words)

AH: Could I-- let me read-- let me read two more sentences.

AD: Ok, read two more sentences.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "Nevertheless, there is a difference between a snake wrongly imputed to a rope and a snake rightly imputed to a proper basis of designation because the latter can perform the functions of a snake.

"Therefore, [VM simultaneously: That's a nasty (one word inaudible)] [when] Prasangikas cite the exam..."

AH: What?

VM: This is the second sentence, leave and go.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "Therefore, when Prasangikas cite the example of a rope-snake, it illustrates only the mode of imputation; the purport of the [AH reads: this] example is not that the *existence* of phenomena is the same as the existence of a rope-snake. A rope-snake does not exist and cannot perform the functions of a snake whereas things do exist..."

AH: So they're not describing the what-- that-- if they say the objects are like the snake that we impute on a rope, that's not the purpose of the example. The purpose of the example is only to describe the process of imputation upon a basis of designation. And in the case of the rope-snake, when you look for the snake individually or collectively, it cannot be found in the basis.

AD: Well, let's see.

AB (simultaneously): Well-- so isn't that mean that you can't find the existence of the thing in its Being?

S: Yeah. I don't think they're that--

AH (simultaneously): You see, that-- I would like to re-- repeat a distinction.

AD (simultaneously): No, I'd like to start over again, not-- I won't get off these sentences till I understand them. So, can we start with that first sentence?

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 437, AH reading]: "Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope."

AD: Objects are imputed.

AH: By thought.

AD: How do you understand that?

AH: That thought imputes a pre--

AD (simultaneously) (intensely): Now look, they're not saying that the name-- I'm not imputing the name 'snake' to that rope. [VM: No sir.] I'm imputing *objecthood* [student assents] to that.

VM: Yes. Why can't you [AD simultaneously: Right?] say the mind projects objects?

AH: There's not a distinction for them between objects and nominality.

HS/S(?): No, no.

AD (intensely): You mean when I say "a hundred dollars" I got it in my pocket?

AH: If you have a proper basis.

AD (simultaneously) (intensely): If I say "a hundred dollars" do I necessarily have it in my pocket?

AH: Not necessarily.

AD (intensely): Is there a distinction?

AH: Oh, there's a distinction [S simultaneously: (Emptiness.)) between whether or not you have the hundred dollars.

SP (simultaneously): Presence of the objective base with this.

AD (intensely): I only answered his question. He said there's no distinction between them. He says they're the same.

S: Well--

AD (intensely): I can only answer him.

GA: The process of imputation is the same.

SP: They're both thought. But one's a-- one is a thought that has existence (as/is) a factor and one is thought that-- which doesn't have that snake.

AD (simultaneously): Well then you're-- let's say-- I think what you're saying is something like this. I'm walking in the woods, alright, and there's a rope and I superimpose or I impute that it's a snake. But that's not going to work because it's not going to function like a snake, in other words, I step on it, it don't bite me.

S: Right.

AD: Alright? I keep walking. There's a snake, alright, and I step on it. Now this functions as a snake, (some laughter, student words) alright, he bites me, alright. (some laughter, student words) The first case, the first case, alright, I impute objecthood to the rope on the ground, right, and in the second case I do likewise, I impute objecthood. [VM: Yeah.] In the first case, alright, I'm imputing this image of a snake onto a rope, alright, and I have a false imputation, it's not real. In other words, that's not a snake there. [students assent] In the second case, there's a true imputation.

S: Uh-hm.

S (simultaneously): Right.

AD: Now, if I can go a little further. Then would they be saying something like this: insofar that the mind is ceaselessly projecting images, I can project these images on the right thing or the wrong thing.

VM: Sure, uh-hm.

AD: Yeah?

AH: Sure.

AD: Alright. Then read the first two sentences please.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 437-438, AH reading]: “Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope. Just [as much] as a snake cannot be found among the parts of the rope either individually or collectively, so phenomena, even when correctly imputed, cannot be found among their bases of imputation...”

JB: Well it can't be “just as”, there's a reason.

AD (simultaneously): Now wait a minute, now wa-- wait a minute. Now--

AH: See in the second case Anthony--

AD: Now, what are they doing now? (some laughter)

AH: They're telling you that when the s--

AD (simultaneously): What are they doing now?

AH: They're telling you that when you-- the second case--

AD (intensely): Regardless of what image you throw on the object, alright, it's not going to coincide. That's what they're saying now.

AH: Well it coincides at the level of practical usage.

AD (intensely): No!! That's not what we're discussing!

AH: That's *all* we're discussing is conventional--

AD: Uh-uh. Read the sentence again.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 437, AH reading]: “Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope. Just as much as a snake cannot be found among the parts of the rope...so phenomena, even when correctly imputed, can[not]...”

AD (simultaneously): Yes, so phenomena, even when correctly imputed--

AH: In the case of the snake that bit you, when you-- it-- when--

AD (simultaneously): So-- no, no, no, no, don't go that way. Finish it, finish the line.

S: "...so phenomena, even when correctly imputed..."

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 437-438, AH reading]: "...cannot be found among their bases of imputation..."

AD (simultaneously): Now, let me try again, alright. Let's say-- I'm going to try an example, ok. Let's say that I have this uls-- ultra-- or let's say I see you like Ishvara sees you, alright, this pulsation of light, ok, instant after instant there I see you like-- almost like a neon sign, lighting, going out, lighting, going out, ok. I don't see Andrew but I see this pulsation of light taking place. But now let's say I take that recipient or that perceiver, alright, and now I superimpose on him the human faculties, the sense-organs. Now he must see a man there. He will not see this pulsating electric beams, alright. He's not going to see like an-- let's say like a scientist would try to conceive that behind this phenomena there is this energy which is working itself-- you know, which is structuralized in a certain way and that if I perceive it, I will be able to see just energy and not this phenomena. No. What they're saying there is, because of the way we are organized, because this is the way the sense faculties operate, we have no choice but to impose upon this energy or this activity, alright, certain images that are coming from us. These images could be correct or incorrect. That's secondary. But what's important here is that that's what they mean by phenomena.

AS: And further, that even if you impute correctly [one/two words inaudible]

AD (simultaneously): Well wait, wait, before we go further, [AS: Wait what--] do you follow that?

VM: No. I didn't follow.

AD (simultaneously): Ok. That's why there's no sense going further.

AS: No, I was going to try and explain what you-- I meant just to go further and explain that.

AH (simultaneously): I'd like-- Anthony, could you say it again please?

AS (simultaneously): I-- ok.

AD: Go ahead, go ahead Avery.

AS: I-- Andrew, I thought the-- the li-- the specific example, to say that (you could perceive), that-- that if-- if now you try and-- if now you find a snake and it really is a snake, they're saying you're still-- you still will never find snake among that pile of life energy or whatever it is. [VM: Right.] I mean that's their point, they're saying that, ok, if you impute-- if you impute snake to something which is a rope, which you thought was a rope, well that's one level of wrong imputation. But even when-- even when you've correctly, so to speak, imputed a snake and it performs the *function* of snake-hood, it still is not in any way snake, first of all because everything you know about snake, the object that you projected, this-- the object you've-- as you've imposed it is a function of your *own* mentality, and that's not what that [HS simultaneously: (one/two words inaudible) yeah.] pile of energy or elec-- of pulsating energy is in itself, you're gonna-- if we can even say "in itself", it's not what that basis of imputation is like.

AH (simultaneously): But are you-- are you-- yes, I understand that.

AS: I mean (aren't) [few words inaudible]

AH (simultaneously): But are you arriving at the conclusion, are you arriving at the conclusion through this analysis that the snake doesn't exist?

AS: No.

S: Yeah.

AS: No, just the line you said that-- the funny line you mentioned, that even when you do correct it, even when-- what does that line say again?

S: Which one?

AH (simultaneously): When you do correctly impute, the snake cannot be found among [SP assents] the bases of imputation.

AS: It's like you look in this bunch of pulsating electrons of light, you're not going to find snake. That's your--

HS (simultaneously): But isn't that so? That's so, right, [AS assents] because look(--/,) you won't find a snake there.

AD: Yeah.

AS: Right.

HS: But you had the experience when the snake bit you of a-- a snake in relation to you as an existing entity. [AS: Well, (yeah).] It bit your body.

AD (simultaneously with AS and HS): Yeah, you as an existing human being, yeah.

AH: Yes, yes.

S (simultaneously): It bit this [one word inaudible]

AS: Somehow this pile of light--

AD: But you see what I'm trying to understand is the basis of imputation. [student assents] That's what I'm trying to get at.

AS: Which is this energy.

AH: It seems that the basis-- when it's correct, there's some sort of coincidence between the individual mind and the World-Mind's flashing, and that's a correct connection.

AD: Say it again, I'm sorry.

AH: When there's a correct imputation, when the-- when the imputation works--

AD: No, a correct imputation would be only because of efficiency in functioning.

AH: Yes, when it works. It seemed that there's coincidence then between the World-Mind's presentation and individual mind. They connect in some sort of synchronous way. They say that--

AD (simultaneously): Yeah, but if [AS simultaneously: (For me.)] those things, alright, if that object or let's say that energy pulsating from the World-Mind, or if you don't want to bring in anything like that, you know, just the pulsating energy, and you call them point-instants, by definition, alright, point-instants is beyond any understanding through our images. We're going to superimpose our images on those point-instants and we're going to refer to that as the basis of imputation--"that's a snake"--because that energy is structuralized to operate in a certain way and not another way, [AH assents] whereas the rope is not going to operate that way. Now that-- all I'm trying to do is understand what they're talking about. And we have to tear it down sentence by sentence, there is no other way, I told you it's going to be long, tedious, and a pain in the neck. I went through this when I studied the medievals. I recognize(d) the scholasticism soon as I hit it. Let's go on.

S: Ok.

AD: You can't do more than a page or two a day.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "Nevertheless, there is a difference between a snake wrongly imputed to a rope and a snake rightly imputed to a proper basis of designation..."

AD: Yeah, you want to make sure you throw your images correctly.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "...because the latter can perform [the] functions..."

AD: Yeah.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "Therefore, when Prasangikas [AH reads: Therefore, with this]..."

AD (intensely): But suppose I say the pink elephant performs a function...artistically! (laughter) I just want you to understand that they're not going to get away by bringing in the word 'function'.

AH: Also, they're not going to use the material-- material world as the criteria for what functions or not.

AD: Ok, let's try, but go on a little more.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "Therefore, when Prasangikas cite the example of a rope-snake, it illustrates only the mode of imputation; the purport of the example is not that the *existence* of phenomena is the same as the existence of a [AH reads: the] rope-snake. A rope-snake does not exist and cannot perform the functions of a snake whereas things do exist and create effects within the context of being ultimately unfindable nominalities."

AH: You want me to read it again?

AD: Yeah, I think so, I understand they're saying on the one hand, we won't put these two levels-- these two phenomenal objects at the same level because they're different. [VM: Right.] There's the phenomenal

where you correctly say this is a snake, alright, and there's a phenomena where you say this rope is a snake.

AH/S(?): Yeah.

AD: They're both phenomena but one seems to be like correct and the other one seems to be incorrect. I follow(ed) that point but I still didn't get the gist of what he--

AH: Ok.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "...the purport of the example is not that the *existence* of phenomena is the same as the existence of a rope-snake."

AH: 'Cause they're going to hold things do exist.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "A rope-snake does..."

AD (simultaneously): Who would they-- would ever deny that?

AH: No, they won't.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "A rope-snake does not exist and cannot perform the functions of a snake..."

AD: What do you mean? What do you mean a rope-snake doesn't exist?

AH: Well it can perform a function that it could give me a heart attack and kill me.

VM: But not by poisoning you [couple words inaudible]

AH (simultaneously): But that's in my own [HS simultaneously: So they can't--] psychotic [S simultaneously: Right.] stream.

LR (simultaneously): Doesn't have the power of the world-image.

VM: But not by poisoning you.

AH: It doesn't have the power of the world-image.

VM: Well-- That's right. But in some ways it doesn't-- doesn't seem fair to bring in world-image and so on.

AD: Rope-snake doesn't exist, (right)?

LR (simultaneously): Well what do they mean by basis [GA simultaneously: I think they--] of imputation then, right?

AD (simultaneously): What do they mean, you know.

AH: It means it's--

AD: We want to understand what they mean.

VM: I think we talked about it last week.

AH (simultaneously): See 'cause they're-- they're using existence--

AD (simultaneously): Huh?

SP/S(?): They're using existence snake (instead of) the rope. (some laughter)

SP: He didn't say it didn't exist.

GA: The hallucination of rope-snake, yes, but the rope-snake, there is-- when you bring in the fact of rope next to the snake, it doesn't exist.

AD: Ok, just [GA simultaneously: Like (couple/three words inaudible)] reread that, ok, yeah.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 438, AH reading]: "...Prasangikas [AH reads: they] cite the example of a rope-snake, it illustrates [only] the mode of imputation; the purport of the example is not that the *existence* of phenomena is the same as the existence of a rope-snake. A rope-snake does not exist and cannot perform the functions of a snake whereas things do exist and create effects within the context of being ultimately unfindable nominalities."

AH: So, although [GA simultaneously: But wait (one word inaudible)] things-- although things do exist as varieties of dependent arising, you also speak of that existent thing as lacking inherent existence.

GA: In comparison to that, in Chittamatra we could say that things' conventional existence *do* have (an actual/a natural) existence. But for these guys, they're going to say that conventional existence exists *within* being empty, ok, that this idea of (an actual/a natural) existence or that the pole is there objectively outside of all these other factors isn't conventional truth. For them that isn't even conventional. For them a conventional truth is this very evanescent type of process. Things exist *within* being-- *within* not being able to be found as objectively existent. [AH simultaneously: I'm trying to make--] That's not a good word, 'inherently', but--

AH: But I was trying to make that point earlier Gabe, that things exist for them, they establish, then validate existence as varieties of dependent arising, not as appearing [VM: Self-standing.] self-standing things. [student(s) assenting] And then that's all on the side of convention for them.

SP: Put up this model, this is the Buddhist model and energy is in it.

S (possibly part of background): Right, I guess. I'm not really sure.

SP: So, you have a certain kind of image-- I mean a certain kind of energy and on that energy, because there is the inner cognition, you see an image of the snake. And that the image of the snake is the psyche I guess. So it's a real appearance. It has the image, this is the energy, and that when you say you got bit, you got bit by the image. So the curious thing is the ability of this image [couple/three words inaudible] (conscious). [few inaudible student words] I mean you don't say the energy bit you, you say the image bit you. You say what you saw or you're saying [few words inaudible] and so forth.

AH/S(?): Yeah.

LR: Yeah but you--

AH: But the energy pattern interacted [SP simultaneously: The what?] with another energy pattern, but that's not we're describing-- that's not what we're describing as the experience [SP simultaneously: What--] of the snake biting you.

SP: You say that the snake is-- is real, then you're-- that the energy is the-- the-- the basis for the correct image, nonetheless you got bit by the image.

AD: Yeah.

VM: No but look, isn't the--

LDS (simultaneously): But empowered by the energy. [student assents] That's not--

LR (simultaneously): I don't understand what you mean, I'm not-- I think you get bit by the whole thing.

SP (simultaneously): Well they say the hardest thing to understand is the fact that a-- that a-- an image can perform a function, an imputation could perform a function.

AH: An image got bit by an image.

LR: Chip, even if you extracted the image that couldn't have bit you. But couldn't it--

GA (simultaneously): That's exactly it. But it would still bit you.

LR (simultaneously): So it wouldn't just be the image [couple inaudible student words simultaneous with LR] that bites you.

GA (simultaneously): No, no, the point [S simultaneously: (one/two words inaudible) it wouldn't--] is that it still bit you even though you can extract an image.

LR/S(?): I didn't get it.

S: But what?

GA (simultaneously): Even though when you analyze--

AD: Why can't you even extract the image?

S: (If--)

LR (simultaneously): Sidney said the image bit you. And-- (some laughter)

VM: It's crazy Linda.

AD: Yeah, in other words you can't talk about an energy biting you.

LR: Really funny. (laughter, student words) I think it's the whole thing (because--)

VM: Except the notion of 'you' [AD simultaneously: Wait, tell me what bit you.] and 'biting' is image.

GA: But the whole idea of this is that the argument goes both ways, as soon as you try to grab the image, say "Well the-- [LR simultaneously: Then why separate and say the image bit you?] the image bit me," then you can say, well wait a minute, without that energy it couldn't have bit me. That's right. The object

is not found separate from its [SP simultaneously: Yeah (couple/three words inaudible)] basis of designation. [LR simultaneously: So why say the image bit me?] Nor is it found-- nor is it found solely as its basis of designation.

LR: No, it's both.

GA: So, we analyze it one way and we say well, it's the image that bit me.

AD (simultaneously): Nor is it found solely-- What do you mean?

GA (simultaneously): It's-- it's [couple inaudible student words simultaneous with GA] neither found solely as its basis of designation or [AD simultaneously: As the image.] as solely separate from it. So as soon as Sidney tried to pull the image away, Linda said no, wait a minute, without the energy it-- it couldn't have bit me. Ok, that's one side of the argument. The other side of the argument is that it isn't *just* the energy. That energy is not going to have the snake, it could be many other things at the same time, (probably).

LR (simultaneously): So, I'm not saying-- [AD simultaneously: (No, no--)] so then why say it that way (when/where)--

AD (simultaneously): Wait, I [few inaudible student words simultaneous with AD] don't follow here. That energy could be other things at the same time?

GA: Well, from the point of view of relativity. [three/few words inaudible] the snake and that energy could be appearing in many varied ways to different entities. But without even getting into that fur-- part of analysis, on the one hand, when we analyze the snake, we can't reduce it just to that energy, ok. We-- we realize it as an image. On the other hand we realize that it couldn't have bitten us without having some basis in that energy. It's neither wholly-- this is the key word, it's neither absolutely identified with that energy, nor is it absolutely separate from it.

S: I think--

GA: Ok? It's a-- and [AD simultaneously: Nor is it absolutely--] nor is it in some murky in-between area.

AD: Wait, let me ask you questions as you're saying it. Nor is it absolutely identified with it. Now, what is *it* that is identified with the--

GA (simultaneously): Ok, if the snake-- if the--

AD (simultaneously): If the snake--

GA: --were totally--

AD: Alright then, let's use the [one word inaudible] alright, so it's clearer.

GA: Ok, if the snake were to be found as what it is made out of, ok, that energy--

[short pause]

AD: Yeah, those patterns of energy.

GA: Ok. If-- if it were to be found to be those patterns of energy, ok, then we would not have experienced it as snake. In other words when we analyze it and say "Well it's just really just flashes of energy," we've lost snake, we lost the experience. So we can't reduce it or identify it totally with its basis of designation, whether you want to say the basis is energy [AD: Ok.] or flesh or bones, doesn't matter what level you make that basis. That basis of designation--

AD (simultaneously): So, what else do you have to identify it with besides those pattern-- those energy patterns?

GA: Ok. At the same time, if I try to understand snake separate from all of those things, as absolutely separate, let's say I say the idea of snake bit me, it was a mental experience, absolutely utterly mental, totally dependent on my own cognition, that would be wrong too.

AD: Why?

GA: Because then I could be bitten by it-- any time I think of being bitten by a snake I would be poisoned. So I cannot say that absolutely the idea of snake, even though I know it as a mental experience, is separate from its basis of designation. It couldn't be absolutely separate or else every time I have a thought of being bitten by a snake I would actually be bitten.

AD: Alright, then what you're saying is something like this, on the one hand we have this pattern of energy which is the underlie of the image that I'm going to superimpose on-- on it, snake. And a combination of these two is a-- functions as a snake and actually bites me. If I try to separate them, alright, if I try to separate the pattern of energy from the image of the snake, then I'm going to have confusion, I'm not going to know what's in-- in the background. I have to realize that without these two intertwined [sic; intertwined] the way they are, I can't speak about being bitten by a snake.

GA: Yeah.

AD: The image of the snake-- you know, that's coming from the Sautran-- Sautrantika school, right? They believe in the generality of meanings which is extracted or acquired from images.

[student assents]

GA (simultaneously): Yeah, but in this case this image is not dependent on one instant of the object but it could be an imposition on many instants [one/two words inaudible] many [couple words inaudible]

AD (simultaneously): Well, if you're saying that this snake image could be thrown out any time by this person, that it has what they call a permanency. Isn't that the way that a Sautrantika [student assents] refer to it?

GA: They do but not so much Madhyamika Prasangika(s).

AD: Yeah. But the-- for the Sautrantikas, the images that you have are permanent, I mean, they're for your life. You're going to be referring to these images any time you want to explain something. [GA assents] Alright, so we're saying that these two together is the way they're going to try to understand and explain to you what-- what this second and third snake is. [three/few inaudible GA words simultaneous with AD] Not the first one which is a false imputation.

GA: It's real-- it's really the other way around, they never posit this process as, you know, an image and this equally is something, it's the other way around.

AD: Well tell me the other way around.

GA: It's-- when they put the two together they say the object is a dependent arising. You say [AD simultaneously: No, no, no, no. No, no.] what is a dependent arising, they say well, the object is neither found to be absolutely its energy patterns nor is it found absolutely separate. *And*, that perception of its lack of being the same or different is its thoroughly established nature.

AD: Is its what?

GA: Thoroughly established nature. Its truth, its reality is its lack of being different of either of those.

S: Right.

[short pause]

AH: They describe that as the mode of being of phenomena, which is the middle way.

AD: Now tell me, how different is that from what I said before when we said that the object exists. When we say exist we're speaking about it as sensible. [student assents] But its true Being is *not* in existence.

AH: That's exactly the same.

AD: This is what they're saying now.

GA: Except the only difference is, it's just very slight, but in their mode, because they're not going to be-- ever be positive about this, they would say that even that Being lacks inherent existence. In other words, the perception of that reality, [AD simultaneously: Now--] even that is-- is not something--

AD (simultaneously): Now you have to explain-- you have to explain what you're saying.

GA: If I were to say now that I realize that the snake is-- is neither totally separate from this energy pattern, nor could I have perceived it without my cognition, when I have perception of this reality, it puts me into a state where sensible appearance actually disappears and I perceive the--

AD (simultaneously): But, I don't follow. (Proceed.)

GA (simultaneously): Well if I were to actually perceive this emptiness, the fact that the snake can neither be dissolved into its basis of designation nor into my mentality, that would be a mystical-- that would be either an inferential understanding of emptiness or a mystical experience. It would--

HS (simultaneously): Of what-- of what though?

GA: That would be a realization of emptiness, emptiness of snake.

HS (simultaneously): No, but of what-- in-- in relation to the snake what would--

GA (simultaneously): It would be a rela-- rea-- realization of the emptiness of [HS simultaneously: The--] inherent existence of the snake.

HS: The reality of the snake?

GA: And that is the snake's thoroughly established nature.

HS: Would it be its reality though?

GA: Well, it has-- [AD simultaneously: (I-- I--)] the snake has a conventional truth and a ultimate truth. Its conventional truth is its-- is its snakehood. Its ultimate truth is its emptiness.

HS: But-- but its reality, right?

GA: You could say its reality, yeah.

LR (simultaneously): Chip, why are you afraid of saying its reality, because--

HS (simultaneously): Ok, ok, now what's its--

GA: Well because I want to be careful 'cause the tendency in this school of thought here at the Center is to immediately look at that substantially. And their tendency--

AD (simultaneously): Absolutely.

GA: Yes.

AD: If you know what [GA simultaneously: Their tendency--] substance is, absolutely.

GA: Their tendency--

AD (passionately): Our substance is as empty as yours! (laughter)

GA: Ok, it's just a difference in view.

AD: No, [GA simultaneously: Their--] no difference of view!

Few students at once: No.

LR: No, it's not different but you're affirming it is.

AD (passionately): *Substance means Absolute Being*. Absolute Being has no time, no place, it's out of all this. It's as empty as you could want *anything* to be, unless *you* interpreting substance in a peculiar way!

GA: No, what-- what I was saying is that if I were to say-- if-- to realize this emptiness and say now I know the reality of the object, it is this emptiness, they would say "No, you missed the whole point!" [S: Huh.] The o-- the object-- that's the best part of the object, its emptiness, but it still has its thinghood and it still has its false appearance. It's not like the reality is some other thing.

AD/S(?): I--

HS: But when--

GA (simultaneously): And so they don't allow you even in their mode of-- of apprehension of this to posit the reality as some other thing, this reality of the object. But if I were immediately if I were to say, well now that I've realized the reality of the object, they would say well that's empty too.

HS: But when you say you have an object what-- thing you said before, you had told that objects are meant, right? You wouldn't deny the mentalness of experience, right?

GA: No.

HS: Ok. When you have an object, what's the reality of an object? In any-- in layman.

AD: No, he's trying to convince us that the Prasangikas will not put a *label* on reality.

GA: They will not posit in-- [S simultaneously: Reified nature, ok.] the ultimate analysis in a positive way. The only positive thing is to speak of conventional truth and even that is within the understanding of emptiness [few words inaudible]

HS (simultaneously): But you want to say that the emptiness, the reality, is what they call non-affirming negation.

GA: It's a non-affirming negative, you're not left with some other thing.

HS: You're not-- but you're left with the *reality* of the thing.

GA (simultaneously): You're left with the real--

AD (simultaneously): You remember-- you remember the-- you remember the Guenther article we read many years ago, [HS: Chuang-Tzu, yeah.] I forgot the name of it, [LR simultaneously: If you say (couple words inaudible)] maybe you remember?

HS: Right.

AS: Yeah.

S: Right.

AD (simultaneously): Where he said that even the fingernails belong to me. A Buddha was speaking and he says "Even those fingernails are included in my definition." Wouldn't the Platonists and the Neo-Platonists say the same thing, that the Idea of Man doesn't *exclude*?

AS: Includes all the particulars.

AD: Every particular that's needed. [students assent] Now, what we're saying or what you're saying is similar to what these people are saying. The-- the Prasangikas see that you must have, so to speak, the ultimate reality or the emptiness, you must have the conventional truth and then the false appearance, these three things are necessary. And the way Avery pointed out before you're speaking about the sensible appearance, the rational reason-principles that go into making that a sensible appearance, and the intelligible or the substantial aspect of the object, its reality. [AH: Yes.] And these three things are necessary. And when you divide that line that Plato speaks about, if you really divide it, then you are in an elementary grade of understanding because that line always stays as one line.

AS: Yeah, but I thought that's what-- thought that's what Gabriel was pointing out.

AD (simultaneously): Yeah that's-- that's what they're saying.

LR: Yeah but Gabriel [S simultaneously: True.] doesn't *want* to be saying the same thing.

S: Why not?

GA (simultaneously): [couple/three words inaudible] that's ok, you know. It just depends(--/.)

AS (simultaneously): He just wants to make sure that when he says the same thing he wants to make sure that what he understands by the same thing is it really *is* the same thing.

GA: Yeah.

S: No but-- yeah but there are two little problem(s).

GA (simultaneously): In other words, like when Anthony sometimes has said there is a point of view from which you could say if you added up *all* the universes, you know, all the actualities ad infinitum, you could approach Being, ok.

[couple seconds of faint inaudible student talking, some/all of it possibly background]

HS: But e-- but even there Gabe--

GA (simultaneously): Once you think in this way, what--

HS (simultaneously): Gabriel, even there let--

AS (simultaneously): [couple words inaudible] this way.

GA (simultaneously): --as in the Madhyamika analysis, I'm just trying to help you understand their viewpoint, [AH: Yeah.] to understand what is what here, they would say that in understanding emptiness, even if you understand emptiness in a profound way in which there is this, you know, understanding of the emptiness of *all* phenomena, they don't describe it as some other thing, Being, or the generality. They never describe it as a noumena. They would describe it as the emptiness of all phenomena that ever have or would exist.

HS: No, but--

AS (simultaneously): But [one/two words inaudible]

GA: All universe subs--

AS (simultaneously): But we read this--

AD: But that's like saying-- that's the same as saying that insofar that you have a universe, there must be an intelligible reality from which it springs.

S: Yeah.

AD (intensely): Why is there such a fetish on these words?

AS: And I thought your whole point was just saying--

GA (simultaneously): It's-- it's not a fetish on words, it's an attitude of analysis, and there are other modes of analysis like the tantric.

HS: Look, Gabriel--

GA (simultaneously): I'm just saying that this is a consistent mode of analysis that never posits some noumena that is other than the phenomena. The phenom-- anything that can be an object of knowledge, even if it's a class of Being, is to them going to be a phenomena and is going to have three natures.

AS: So then you're saying Hopkins [GA simultaneously: Any--] is wrong here, right?

GA: Anything that you know--

AS: So-- so you're disagreeing with what Hopkins says. He says--

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 416, AS reading]: "Until Buddhahood a direct cognition of suchness [AS emphasis] *precludes* [AS adds: the] cognition of other phenomena just as cognition of other phenomena [AS emphasis] *precludes* [AS adds: a] direct cognition of emptiness..."

AD: And I'll show you many texts that wouldn't agree with that.

AS: And then-- and then finally just later on--

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 416, AS reading]: "When anyone except a Buddha directly realizes [AS reads: cognizes] emptiness, merely the quality emptiness appears without the appearance of the qualificands--[AS adds: that is] the phenomena which are empty."

AS: They say only at the level of Buddhahood can you have a perception of both-- of all-- of-- as it were of the direct presence of that emptiness or reality with the appearance of it. Until then you only have either the cognition of the reality or emptiness or you have the cognition of the sensibility [one/two words inaudible]

AB (simultaneously): Avery, is that what they mean when they say that the phenomenon is not findable in the base, that when you perceive the Being of a thing you can't perceive the appearance of it at the same time.

VM: No, I don't think so, I think not finding it means you try and analyze it.

AD (simultaneously): Let's-- let's make-- let's make it really drastic, ok. You're sitting at the edge of a Presence. You're about to enter the Void. You enter the Void. Is there the reality of any objects which-- can you speak of the Void, the Ultimate Reality, and an object?

AB: The only way you could do it is for a Sage who would-- would do--

AD: Now regardless of how you answer, right, the point would be that Hopkins says "No, that can't be."

AB: Right.

AD: Is that right? Hopkins is saying, if you understand, if you are Void, then there *are* no more objects.

AB: Right. And if you perceive the phenomenality of the object you don't experience the Void.

AD (simultaneously): Then-- then you're out of the Void, you're not in the Void no longer, you're now in the phenomenal world, [few inaudible student words simultaneous with AD] regardless of how exalted that phenomenal world may be.

AB: Right.

AH: Unless-- unless you're a Buddha.

VM: But, why can't we-- but don't we say--

AD (simultaneously): We can leave that there, we don't have to answer it.

AB: No.

VM: Don't we say the same thing though Anthony, we say only a Sage has sahaja samadhi where he actually notes the appearances as an unfolding of the Real but also *sees* the appearances?

AD: Yeah, but I didn't want to [VM simultaneously: How is that any different?] answer, I didn't want to answer it because that would prejudice our unders-- [VM simultaneously: No, but I mean how--] you know, our reading of Hopkins now. [student assents] [VM simultaneously: Isn't that--] I'm saying, we could just leave it hang there.

AB: But what does he mean when he says-- 'cause I thought this was the same thing, that the phenomena is not findable in the base?

VM: Let me try.

AB: Isn't that what we just said, that when you perceive the base or the reality of the thing you can't find the phenomena at the same time.

AD (simultaneously): There's no "you" there that perceives anything, when you found the base.

GA: That's-- that's the base.

AB (simultaneously): So there's no phenomena.

AD: Hm?

GA (simultaneously): They say that when you get to these experiences, you really have to push it. Because of the oneness of the experience, it's very hard to say what the object or subject might be.

S: I agree.

AS: Well in the experience you're not going to say, "Hey, this is the base of--" (AS laughing a bit) [GA: Yeah.] [couple/few words inaudible]

[student assents]

GA: Well, but in their-- I'm just saying that in their mode of analysis they would persist in this mode of not objectifying the object. You see what I'm saying? I'm not saying that there aren't other schools of thought. There are many other schools but those others would say--

AD (simultaneously): What do you mean will not objectify the object?

GA: They will not-- well maybe better would say they will not reify the object. Let's say the object--

AD (simultaneously): Oh that's all-- that's all nonsense, that's all nonsense.

GA (simultaneously): Let's say the object is emptiness of self.

AD: Uh-hm.

GA: Ok, just, they're going to say-- or let's use a different word, let's say the mind, ok, let's say there's a wisdom-consciousness which is a subjective cognizing consciousness--

AD: Cognitive-ness, yes.

GA: --and the object is the mind, ok. They would say that even that mind is empty of inherent existence.

AD: Of course [AH simultaneously: I--] I would say it's [AS simultaneously: Why heed it?] empty of ex-- inherent existence, it is *Being*!

HS: By definition it's sheer immateriality, of course.

AH: No, this point that's being discussed, I found a short section in this book today, the specific-- specifically to this point and I'm going to read it.

GA: Last chapter.

AH: It's the last chapter, "Union of the Old and New [Translation] Schools," and the Dalai Lama said in this essay that [S, possibly part of background: What page are we on?] this is a personal interest of his and he's researched it personally and this is a result of his research.

S: What page?

AH: At the bottom of page 214, he takes first the view of the Middle Way Consequence School of which discussion we're having now, Prasangika. He says--

[Transcriber note: AH is using *Kindness, Clarity, and Insight* by the 14th Dalai Lama, translated and edited by Jeffrey Hopkins, co-edited by Elizabeth Napper, Snow Lion Publications, 1984. I am using the 25th Anniversary Edition, Snow Lion Publications, 2006.]

Dalai Lama XIV [*Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, p. 242, AH reading]: "In the Middle Way Consequence School, this realization..."

S (simultaneously): Slower Andrew.

AH: What? Huh?

AD: Slowly.

AB (simultaneously): Slowly.

Dalai Lama XIV [*Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, pp. 242-243, AH reading]: "In the Middle Way Consequence School, this realization is described in terms of understanding that phenomena exist only

through the force of nominal conventions and not inherently. According to Geluk and other explanations [AH reads: interpretations], during meditation only the absence of inherent existence is taken as the object of one's mode of apprehension, not anything else--just the mere negative of inherent existence which is the object of negation. The practitioner seeks to remain in meditation without losing that object. A consciousness ascertaining this meaning must have the aspect of realizing a non-affirming negative, a negation that [AH reads: which] does not imply anything positive in its place. It is a fundamental tenet of the Middle Way system that emptiness is a non-affirming negative."

AH: Then he goes on to say in the next paragraph--

Dalai Lama XIV [*Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, p. 243, AH reading]: "In the Great Completeness [AH reads: In the older tradition, in the Great Perfection school], however, one meditates on the basic mind of clear light, one-pointedly observing the factor of mere luminosity and knowing; thus, this meditative mind does not have the aspect of realizing a mere non-affirming negative. Still, prior to this stage when being introduced to the basic mind in the practice called "breakthrough," the [AH reads: that] practitioner of the Great Completeness [AH reads: Great Perfection] analyzes from where the mind arises, where it abides, and where it goes. In the course of this practice, as in the texts of the Middle Way School, it is ascertained that the mind is devoid of the extremes of conceptual elaboration; this is realization of its absence of inherent existence. Later, in meditating on the basic mind, or [AH reads: basic mind of] clear light, which is free from arising, abiding, and going away, the practitioner is meditating on an affirming negative, in which the basic mind appears but is understood as empty of inherent existence."

AH: So this description and this discussion talks about what is specifically the non-affirming negative that Prasangika keeps harping at, and also the-- another view where you could speak of that experience as being an aff-- an affirming one.

GA: That would-- maybe I could bring up the point that the difference in the views, that in the first view there's-- because you're in your conceptualizing consciousness, because the analysis, whether in thought or in meditation, is being done from the level of the conceptualizing consciousness and (I--)

[Audio File 1984 0914a Ends]

[Audio File 1984 0914b Begins]

[Transcriber note: First half minute of this file has very poor sound quality, hard to hear.]

S: [couple words inaudible]

S (very faint): [few words inaudible]

GA: In other words, utilize [one/two words inaudible] in other words.

HS: (But then) emptiness of inherent existence of the object (is) really. That's [few words inaudible] Ok.

GA: The object also appears in its place, it's not like who-- the object [three words inaudible] that's, but never [couple words inaudible]

HS: Ok. But the objects are-- but you-- now you started by, so to say, meditating on an object, right, and getting to its reality, right? And you're getting to its reality defined as a non-inherent-- an emptiness of inherent existence is what the reality is called.

GA: Yes.

HS: Now when you say nothing else appears, has any-- you started looking for the object, right? So nothing else *has* to appear 'cause you're always looking for the object.

S: Right.

HS: Now, how about when-- we s-- we spoke of the times when you get to the say, in terms of-- you know, where you switch to start seeing like reasons of things and then you want to know like the depth of the meaning of a reason and you have to so to say head towards imagelessness, you know, towards the-- the non-imaged part of the reason. And yet, from the inside you say, you started out with the object. Are you heading towards the *reality* of the object, that which is without image, that part of the reason which is without image? 'Cause you want to-- like if it imaged, it would inhere, because there-- it would be using your imaginative function, [student assents] it would appear, would appear to have inherent existence. But-- I think they're talking about something that really is, you know, you're saying a mere vacuity and nothing else appearing, I don't disagree, but the-- but the object under-- under cer-- that you're looking for is always so to say this ideation form, and it doesn't have to-- nothing else *has* to appear. Like you don't have to get anything else there, [AH: I think that--] 'cause you're always heading toward it.

VM: I don't think Andrew hasn't been [couple/three words inaudible]

GA (simultaneously): But I think the difference, [S to VM simultaneously: Right, he does.] let me use this example of difference, you were meditating on the luminosity of the mind, that's an example of an affirming negative in that you're meditating on something, yet that something lacks inherent existence. It isn't a reified object, it's the mind.

HS: The mind is always immaterial, yeah.

GA: Ok [couple/three words inaudible] so it's an affirming negative. Whereas when you're meditating on emptiness, that's a *non*-affirming negative. You're not meditating on a particular quality other than the lack of inherent existence.

HS: Of a particular object.

GA: Whatever, any phenomena.

HS: No, no, no you're starting with-- you're starting looking for the reality of an object, looking for the ultimate truth of a thing. [AS simultaneously: (Think so.)] You're not looking for no-- you're not looking for just-- you're not going out there freelance looking for void natures. You're starting with a-- with an analysis.

GA (simultaneously): No, you're not looking-- but you're not-- you're not necessarily looking for a-- for something [one word inaudible] You're analyzing experience.

HS: You're trying to understand the reasons--

GA (simultaneously): You're not analyzing some other thing.

HS: Right, you got this dependently arisen phenomena, and he said somewhere in there, you start to reason into dependent arising. You start to see into the causes and conditions of thing(s). So you take a phenomena and you look for its reality, ok. So if for us like any-- any of the principles that you name, if they had like a phenomenal kind of referent and you just have to look behind it, so I have to look behind it. The person inside the self, you start to look behind. And I suspect that you have to start to head towards imagelessness. And yet the-- and yet it's this speci-- it still fits the function of being the specific thing, you know. This is-- I mean this is-- this is (what/why) I say is-- this is real profound and I'm not just talking.

AH: It seems that if you-- if you start with an analysis toward the object, then you're going to wind up with a non-affirming negation. If you start the analysis toward the mind, and the mind is the object of analysis, then you can have an affirming.

AD: Could we go back to the quote that we've been working on, [student assents] you know, and--

VM: Snake-rope?

AH: Which one?

AD: Yeah. Where we've been working on, very beginning where we working on. I don't think we (were through with/we've approved of) that, were we?

VM: No, I don't think so.

AH: What page is it?

S: 438.

AH: What did you want to do, go over it again Anthony?

AD: Yeah, I d-- I don't know that I understand it.

AH: Alright.

S: What page?

S: (437.)

AH (simultaneously): 437 it starts and it's-- You want to read it again?

AD: Yeah.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, pp. 437-438, AH reading]: "Objects are imputed in the way that a snake is imputed to a rope. Just as much as a snake cannot be found among the parts of the rope either individually or collectively, so phenomena, even when correctly imputed, cannot be found among their bases of imputation, individually or collectively..."

AD: Alright. Yeah, that's what I (would--/want.) This is for *my* satisfaction. Instead of the word "phenomena cannot be found in their bases of imputation," images cannot be found there. That's what they're saying.

VM: How about material objects Anthony, would that work too?

AD: Images will subsume even that.

AH: Anthony, in their definition of--

AD: I just told you that's what I interpret.

VM: Yeah.

AD: You interpret it your way, go ahead.

S: Go.

AH: I wasn't going to interpret my way, I was going to agree with what you said, that for them a phenomena *is* an image.

HS: Yeah. What appears to the mind is a phenomena.

AH: What appears to the mind.

SP: That's the point I was trying to make with being bit by the image, because they say the image can't be found on the basis of designation but I think--

S: Well if your experience is only image--

S: I'm not-- I don't really understand--

AD (simultaneously): It kind of-- it kind of, you know, like-- like I felt I was being led astray by the word 'phenomena'. They mean images. There's *no* way that you can, from patterns of energy, bring about images, something that comes from let's say the storehouse you won't see.

SP: That's why-- yeah, that's what I-- I think that's one of the points that they make of this thing, (the building) of this thing, the objectivity of the object. The base of designation is [one/two words inaudible] objective given, but when you search in the objectively given all you find is subjective nature(s).

AD: Yeah.

SP: I mean (we/you) don't find anything else until we get to that [one word inaudible] that's like something-- you can only talk of them [one/two words inaudible] And so it's actually these images which-- (from) which perform these functions of life.

LR: Well that's-- that's the thing that I-- that's where I fall off your explanation.

S: But why?

AD: The only way we can understand is, something that we don't know what it is, doing something we don't know what *that* is. (laughter) It's by saying it that way, that this undescribable, indescribable

energy, alright, the only way that we understand that is when we superimpose images on it. This is the only way we can deal with it. Now those images *are not in the phenomena, they are not in* [AS simultaneously: Or the energy.] *what you see*.

LR: Yes, yeah.

AD (simultaneously): *You* are putting it there.

LR: Yeah, no I--

SP: And then you come up with this idea of a base of designation but that's another image because you have to account for the reality of your images. So you make a-- you have an image of the reality of your imagery.

AD: I think, I think it might be worthwhile here for Vic to give us a lecture on Heisenberg. You reading that *Quantum Questions*? [Note: Ken Wilber, *Quantum Questions: Mystical Writings of the World's Great Physicists*.]

VM (simultaneously): Yeah I am. You reading it too?

AD: Yeah.

S: Maybe I don't understand this.

AD (simultaneously): They say-- [LR simultaneously: Of course.] they say it better in quantum physics.

VM: I think so.

LR: Ok, but can I ask Sidney something?

VM: If you ask him for me.

AD: I don't know.

S: Yeah. (bit of laughter)

S: Is he here?

[few seconds of background student talking]

LR: Are you on the way out now or something? (SP laughing, some laughter)

AD: Hurry up, ask him before he gets out. (some laughter)

AS: He carries-- carries his books there with him so I can-- (AS laughing)

LR: I think I follow the point (but/that) when you say-- it's a question of in your mind all you can come up with is what we experience is your images. But that's not the same as saying what bit you was your image.

AD: Of course it's the image! But, what else do you experience *but* images!

S: Got to say more [one/two words inaudible]

LR: What else do I experience or what else do I name?

AD (simultaneously) (intensely): But images, yeah. You-- look at me yelling at you. What else do you experience but images!! Volume, tone, irritation, aggravation, (laughter) what else do you experience!!

VM: [couple words inaudible]

LR (simultaneously): No, I experience the real thing behind that, that's why it has [couple words inaudible]

VM (simultaneously): Oooh.

AD (simultaneously): No, no, no, no, no. [VM simultaneously: That's like--] You don't experience the real thing behind it.

SP: You *posit* the real thing, [AS simultaneously: It's--] give that [couple/three words inaudible]

VM (simultaneously with SP and AS): You'd be in-- be in samadhi.

AS: It would be like [LR simultaneously: I disagree.] saying that you experience [SP simultaneously: Yeah.] the 440 vibrations or the whatever. That's not what your experience is of, it's really your-- the sensations, so on.

AD (simultaneously): Can't you tell the difference, like when you look at [LR simultaneously: No, except that (one/two words inaudible)] television the images are dead, when you come to the Center the images are alive? [VM simultaneously: Much better.] Or is it vice versa? (laughter)

VM: There's no commercials here though.

LR (simultaneously): Yeah, and the life. Where is that life?

AD: Life is always in the images.

LR: Not in the energy.

AD: Well of course it's in the energy. Again, now you're getting to what Gabriel was trying to explain to you.

GA (simultaneously): If you ask them where the energy came from--

LR (simultaneously): Right, that's what I'm trying to [AD simultaneously: Yeah.] get to because that doesn't seem to be what Sidney's saying, that's why I--

GA (simultaneously): If you ask them where the energy came from Linda, they would say the karmic predispositions of the collective individuals perceiving. So it's still--

AD (simultaneously): They don't want to say-- they-- they-- they don't want to personalize it in any way. (AD laughing)

LR: No, this is important question though because if you-- if you-- (some laughter)

AD: Well we're getting to important points one at a time, aren't we?

GA: I'd say, [VM simultaneously: Yeah I think so.] (in) the object.

AH: Linda, you objected-- you objected to the notion that there's a-- you said that you experienced a real thing behind that image? [HS simultaneously: And Sid--] What-- what do you-- what do you imagine that real thing to be behind the image?

LR: Well, that's the point, if I imagine it [SP simultaneously: What you imagine it to be, that's right.] to be anything I'm back in the images.

AH: It's another image, yeah.

GA (simultaneously): That's right. Like so--

LR (simultaneously): Yeah, so I'm not talking about when, you know, my apperception, I'm not trying to talk about it-- I-- I'm trying to separate how I *explain* an experience to myself and the actual [SP simultaneously: But when you ex--] moment of the bite, I mean, [AH: Yes.] talking about a snake bite.

SP (simultaneously): When you explain--

HS (simultaneously): You say the snake bit you.

LR (simultaneously): He's talking about-- Anthony's talking about himself, it's the same thing, you know.

S: Uh-hm.

SP: But Linda, when you explain (some laughter, student words) the bite, you explain that this-- that the snake moved through the grass or the path right where you were walking and you walked too close [LR simultaneously: I agree, expla-- explanation--] to it and it bit you, the whole explanation is in terms of imagery.

LR (simultaneously): I agree, the ex--

SP: The whole cause and effect is in terms of the imagery.

LR: I would agree.

VM: And anything that the--

AS (simultaneously): But it doesn't *have* to though.

LR (simultaneously): But if you explain it to yourself, all you can explain it-- the only way you can explain it is in terms of the images. You can never, it's unnameable, [SP assents] you could never explain--

SP (simultaneously): All of your theory of causation is like, you know, is within striking distance of the snake and that's going to evolve with that base all along.

LR (simultaneously): Yes, I agree.

SP: So, all the causes are in the images as far as [few words inaudible]

LR: Ok. But the event, moment, the suchness--

AD (simultaneously): How would the world appear to you if you weren't functioning through a body?

VM: It wouldn't appear I don't think. It wouldn't appear, in fact anything you could say that's experience in the broadest sense--

AD: You *hope* it don't appear. (AD laughing a bit)

VM: Well, maybe (bit of laughter) it appears, I-- that's only rumor.

MW: I don't know, how?

AD: Well, if you have a real mystical experience, if you cut out the sense functioning and the body functioning, alright, all you have is (light/life), [VM: (Light/Life).] (you have) bhava. You won't see anything else. You certainly don't see that wheel looking at me and listen to me yelling at you, do you? You don't see me as a being of light, Bodhisattva. So images is the only thing you know about me.

LR (simultaneously): This is a bad example.

AD: No, basically what we're saying is very true, alright, that it's through images that we explain these things to ourselves.

LR: I'm not talking about the explanation.

AD (simultaneously): But when you find out that images themselves, alright, have only a pseudo-existence, all our theories collapse.

LR: And does the snake bite only have a pseudo-existence too?

AD/S(?): Sorry?

AS (simultaneously): [one/two words inaudible] somehow.

LR (simultaneously): Does the snake bite, the moment of being bitten by a snake, is that only a pseudo-existence also?

VM: It's a conventional truth.

SP: Don't worry. (laughter)

AH: Because it's a--

AD (intensely): Don't use the word 'only'. It's an image!

LR: Say it then?

SP: Well because you say it adds something to it.

AD (simultaneously): Because when you say 'only,' when you say 'only' she's going to think that you are devalorizing it.

SP: No, I'm not deprecating [few words inaudible] (some laughter)

AD: I'm just trying to acquaint you with her psychology. (AD almost laughing)

SP: Oh. (laughter)

VM: Yeah.

AH: Image is not pseudo.

HS: You better do it quick. Where are you going?

SP/S(?): Always.

S: Hey. (laughter)

AD (amidst laughter): Come on, you need even more help, you're gonna need some more help [one word inaudible]

AS (simultaneously): [few words inaudible] handcuff [one/two words inaudible] handcuff, stage two. (laughter)

S: Right.

AS: He's got them just like Smith.

AB: Sidney, leave the base here so we can impute the image.

SP (simultaneously): [few words inaudible]

LR: He's got his shoes on too. Sidney, where are you going! (laughter)

AS: See, astrology explains that. [AD simultaneously: Red alert!] Tim is a triple Virgo and he's got three stages, he's a triple Pisces, he has three stages too. The third one is out the door, (laughter) second one is the coat, the first one he's got the (boots) (already/all ready), (laughter, student words) his shoes on.

VM: Smith only one.

AS: But Andrew, in the back of the text-- can I ask you a question on the text? There-- there was-- there was a point which maybe verges on Linda's thing which seems-- this whole bit of functional and so on, there's always a point that it always bothers in some way. On the one hand you say well you can't find snake in this business, that's the one you just read, so we can't find-- there's no image to be found in this pure energy. You can't find any images there in that pure-- in that pure energy. But then, but then you make a statement like, well if imputing the image of a snake to the *real* basis, to a certain base, *is* functionally efficacious, and yet imputing it to the basis which is a rope is not efficacious. Then I have a funny thing and you say rope-snake, there's two different things, rope, snake. But wait a second, the snake part you're saying is the image but the rope part you're trying to give to this base again which is pure energy. [student assents] Now there's something peculiar there.

GA (simultaneously): But [one/two words inaudible] we say that, we say that.

AS: Ok, but there's something--

VM (simultaneously): The rope is another imputation Avery. What if [AS simultaneously: Yeah. No, no, I know.] even at-- even seeing the rope is another imputation.

AS: Well that may be so but then you're-- then you seem to be confusing two levels with this-- with this example of the rope-snake that I don't [one/two words inaudible] understand.

SP: Well I think they'll explain it.

AS (simultaneously): I think they're-- if the-- if the-- if the base really has no differentia in it, then-- then what is the basis of making this distinction between correctly imputed phenomena and non-correctly-imputed?

SP (simultaneously): Well there is a differentia.

AS (simultaneously): They say well it's just functional. But what do you mean by that?

GA: Base is very--

AS: Yeah, I know it's different [student assents] and-- but I want to go--

SP: But nonetheless, what-- you don't need to watch out for the energy, you need to watch out for the snake.

AS: True.

HS: Yeah, so when you say "watch out for the snake," you're talking the base of the pheno-- of the object snake is the snake, right? It's not the energy.

VM: No [one/two words inaudible] no.

HS (simultaneously): Like-- when you-- wait a minute, the base of the object snake is the snake.

VM: No.

GA: Yeah, when [S simultaneously: No.] you-- but let's do the-- hang on, hang on.

VM (simultaneously): You're pro-- you're imputing a phenomena on top of a phenomena.

GA: Let's do the analysis.

HS (simultaneously): No, no-- well no-- no, no wait.

GA: Wait a second, let's do the analysis. When--

HS (simultaneously): You have an experience of an object, right, and you want to look inside the object and find its reality. What's the object you're looking into?

GA: Ok let-- ok let me--

SP (simultaneously): You're looking at a snake.

HS: Right. Now, and you say--

AS (simultaneously): [couple words inaudible] better terminology.

HS: Huh?

AS: You better use better terminology 'cause when you say you're looking at-- you say the object is the snake, again snake is again this image that-- that [couple/three words inaudible]

GA (simultaneously): Yeah, it's the thing now, there's two things, there's--

AS: Yes, I know.

GA: They're saying that there's a mind which is not analyzing which would experience the snake biting you.

AS: Yeah, non-analytic(al) [one/two words inaudible]

GA (simultaneously): The non-analytical mind. No matter how much analysis we do is not going to erase the snake biting you. It's never going to have--

AD (simultaneously): Yeah, we call-- we call that the form of perception.

S (simultaneously): Right.

GA: Ok?

S: Very good.

GA: Now, let's analyze it. We're in a different mode, now we're going to analyze it, what's--

AD: Now you're going to use the triple modes of understanding.

GA: So I say, well, you know, I'm trying to find a snake. First I imagine it's outside of me, ok, separate from my cognitional apparatus. And I could analyze that it isn't, you know, that *really* snake is *not* a separate experience from my cognition. Or I could take a different view. I could say well where is the snake? It's made out of flesh and bones and teeth and eyes, you know. Well how do these things add up to a snake? I can't find it as a sum of its parts or as not and I can't find it without its parts. Or I could go further and I could say well, it's made out of atoms and electrons and protons and if I go even further the quarks (and then energy).

S (simultaneously): Yeah, I know, reduction [couple words inaudible]

GA: Yeah, and once you're in the mode of analysis, you're going to keep finding more and more and more bases of designation. Every one of those things you came up with is a basis of designation, even energy is a basis of designation of the thought "snake" depending-- depending on how you're experiencing that image. If you experience the image "snake" as imputed on energy, then that was your-- your experience, [AS simultaneously: Oh ok. No, no, I thought that wasn't--] and when you analyze that, you're not going to find it.

AS: Ok, but could I-- that wasn't-- There is a differentia being made between correctly imputing this image of snake a certain way and incorrectly imputing it or differently. [HS assents] Alright? Now

that's-- everybody makes that distinction, even in Madhyamika too. Take the example [HS simultaneously: Function is the criteria.] [one/two words inaudible] this bread, right? This is a criteria.

GA/SP(?): Yeah.

S: And--

AH (simultaneously): Why are we interested-- why are we interested in what's a correct imputation? We only have to worry about the ones that are incorrect, right?

VM: No.

AS: Well, no but in [S simultaneously: (couple words inaudible) you really want to know what that--] some sense the-- [VM: No.] in some sense any imputation is incorrect. That was the line you read that you never find-- he-- you have two lines. One says--

AH (simultaneously): No, no, because-- because you can't find the snake mean-- doesn't mean that the imputation is incorrect.

AS: Right, exactly, that's what I'm trying to understand see, that's-- that's a very-- that's-- you-- in some sense-- in the sense that you *never* find the image in this energy, *any* imputation is in some sense non-ultimate, is in some sense (wrong/form). Isn't that what it means? That any-- any appear--

HS (simultaneously): Not wrong though, just not ultimate.

S: It's conventional.

AS: Any phenomena is in some sense incorrect.

AB: Don't you know it's not ultimate?

LH (simultaneously): Don't-- don't they say right at the end of that [AS simultaneously: Unreal.] [one/two words inaudible]

AH: If it's-- if it's seen [few inaudible LH words simultaneous with AH] as-- excuse me Larry, if it's seen as other than a variety of dependent-arising, it's unreal.

AS: I just meant in the sense that what you just read, that even when the imputation of the image of snake upon a basis is functionally efficacious because it really bites, it *still* is in some sense unreal because you never [student assents] find an image in that basis of energy at all, [AH(?): Right.] whether it's a corr-- whether it's-- whether the basis is a basis for snake or not. What was the line-- the line you read there?

VM: Right.

HS: That's really (the point), yeah.

AH (simultaneously): I don't see the point.

LH (simultaneously): Doesn't it say at the end of that sentence [couple words inaudible] [SP simultaneously: It's towards the end.] [few words inaudible] is that what's really happening when the imputation is made.

AS: Ok.

RG: It can't (focus it) [couple words inaudible] 'cause of the act.

S: Gabriel(--/.)

HS (simultaneously): But-- [SP simultaneously: Gabriel, they want Gabriel.] but I think they say-- when they say to look in the basis of phenomena and you're not going to find it, I think they do--

VM (simultaneously): Base of imputation.

HS: The basis of imputation, on a base of designation, and you won't find the object, I think they're just trying to get you back to the experience. The experience is-- was that you were bit by a snake. And I don't-- you know, you-- it wasn't so to say an interchange of energy, you know. If that was the experience, then you have to analyze what's the energy pattern. [student assents] But the experience was "I was bit by a snake."

LR/S(?): Well, go on.

HS: And let me just-- in simple say. What-- what-- what would be another criterion for truth for phenomenal existence? What other criterion is there but so to say--

AD (simultaneously): Their own efficiency.

HS: Yeah, but appropriate functioning, yeah.

AD: Their own!

HS: I mean it's not like you could say--

AD (simultaneously): Their theory of truth is efficiency.

HS: Yeah, yeah. But could you say that the truth is self-revealing in terms of phenomena? I mean, I don't-- I don't-- you know, what would be like another way to approach that? Say it.

S (very faint): Uh-hm.

SP: I don't know if I'm going to a different country but, the more that you investigate into the experience, the more subjectivity behind, you know, there would be. The assumption is when you're looking at the experience of trying to find it right there where you're looking there's an object. Subjectively it's so, and yet everything that you discover about this thing objectively [one word inaudible] is subjectively given, namely intelligible [HS assents] information, you know, like-- like it's this and it's that and the other thing, and you come up with all kinds of ideation but it's not the experience. So, I think the import is discovering how much-- the fact that total-- everything you could describe about the object, except that it is an object, comes from the subject side.

VM: Yeah but even the notion of object in a sense, wouldn't you say that that's a kind of image or reification of a-- of a concept in a sense? Because [SP simultaneously: No.] object always implies that it's-- at least the way I use the word, always implies that it's in relation to a subject and so you're still in the triple form. [student assents] So you have to even push it farther than that, don't you?

LR: (Yeah/No), I don't--

SP (simultaneously): No, but it seems to have some qualities in order to get it to go [one/two words inaudible]

VM (simultaneously): I know, there's an element of objectivity in the M-- in the Madhyamika but it's hard to find.

AS (simultaneously): [one word inaudible] an element of [one word inaudible] But, they're just saying it's that e-- the World-Mind's energy, [student assents] as Anthony already said.

VM: Ok, but you would never speak about that in objective mode though.

AS/S(?): Well--

SP: But I think the falsity--

VM (simultaneously): It depends I guess on how you're using the word 'object'.

AS (simultaneously): What do you mean by 'objective'?

VM: Yeah. Let's say, anything in opposition to-- to some kind of embodied subject.

AS (simultaneously): It can't appear, in other words, it's that right image. But then that's just what he was saying there. I thought that-- that [VM simultaneously: Yes.] last line is just saying that this energy or whatever, givenness, is never really the image, he says Gabriel is harping on is not the same as and is not different from it.

SP: Wait. [one/two inaudible VM words simultaneous with SP] I think the falsity that [one/two words inaudible] (is always) bringing up is the non-distinction between the imputation and the base.

VM: Who's always bringing it up?

SP: Tsongkhapa.

VM: Uh-huh.

SP: And he looked at, and that even when you correctly impute, and we're always (the same), that what really is the subjective is objective and out there. As-- you really think you're looking at the-- at this event. Now you are, say, in terms of these images. But you think that the image sitting out there is something that you-- [possibly another student: I mean I think they'd (pretty much--)] [HS: But the--] So even when you're imputing correctly, it's incorrect in the sense that you don't make the imputation real, snake is just (moving) it out, get out there.

HS: Then what would then be co-- conventional truth (of/uh)--

SP/S(?): What would be [one word inaudible]

HS (simultaneously): What would be conventional truth then?

SP (simultaneously): No, well they--

AD: Well wait. Sidney, couldn't I say that what you just said, that presence(/.) I can correctly give the name for that object out there and know it's an image. And couldn't I also at the same time know that that's-- by knowing that it's an image I also know that I'm an image along with that, I'm included in that image. [student assents] Could we do that? [student(s) assent] [short pause] Alright, go ahead.

AH: And Herbie's question is about conventional. "The key to the Prasangika..." This is top of 439.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 439, AH reading]: "The key to the Prasangika assertion of conventional phenomena is that though they assert the existence of what the world says exists, they do not assert that phenomena exist the way [that] the world sees them."

VM: Would they see them as standing in that--

AD (simultaneously): Well, the language is atrocious.

VM: Yes it is.

HS: But if you just-- I think if you follow what Anthony's saying, if-- let's say--

AD: You repeat that and we'll go over that? [AH: This will--] This'll give rise to semantic problems galore.

AH: This will start another lively argument.

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 439, AH reading]: "The key to the Prasangika assertion of conventional phenomena is that though they assert the existence of what the world says exists, [AH: They agree with that.] they do not assert that phenomena exist the way [that] the world sees them."

HS: But can I try something? Be-- before--

VM (simultaneously): It's very simple, they're saying they don't exist as [AH/S(?) simultaneously: Inherently.] the way they're existing in the sense of self-standing, [AH simultaneously: Well--] independent of the imputation, so on and so forth.

HS: No, no, I think it's just what you're saying.

AH (simultaneously): It's not so simple because the way the world [VM simultaneously: It is that simple.] sees them is via images.

LR: [couple words inaudible] [AS simultaneously: Step three.] [few words inaudible]

HS (simultaneously): The image of five [one/two words inaudible]

AS: Step three. (some laughter)

GA: But, image is [couple words inaudible]

VM (simultaneously): Hey, see you later Anthony. (laughter)

AH (simultaneously): Anthony, the way-- the way the world sees phenomena is as images, is that so?

VM: No, as [GA simultaneously: That's (couple words inaudible)] reified objects.

HS (simultaneously): As things.

AH: As images.

VM: No, I don't think the world [AS simultaneously: Oh no.] talks about images.

HS: But I think if the world were to see the phenomena as images they'd be seeing them as thoughts.

AH: I actually have a question here if I could get it out.

GA (simultaneously): Images are what exists.

AH (simultaneously): Could I-- could I try again please?

HS: Yeah, oh yeah you can.

AH: They said-- they said--

Jeffrey Hopkins [*Meditation on Emptiness*, p. 439, AH reading]: "...they assert the existence of what the world [AH emphasis] *says* exists, [HS: The pole.] they do not assert [AH reads: but they are not going to assert] that phenomena exist the way [that] the world sees them."

HS: Yeah, the material pole.

AH: So, the way the world sees phenomena is through the senses as images, is that so?

AS: As real.

HS: I guess, yeah.

AS (simultaneously): Kind of like PB [LR simultaneously: As material.] says it exists but it's unreal. He said-- they're not denying--

AH (simultaneously): We're not e-- we're not even having the same conversation Avery. (laughter)

LR: [few words inaudible]

AS (simultaneously): What-- yes.

VM: I think we are.

AS: I think we are.

AH (simultaneously): We keep changing the conversation. (some laughter)

AS: No but, but that's-- it's--

AH (simultaneously): I-- I actually have a question, I'd like to get an answer to it. Let me try again. What does it mean that phenomena exist the way the world s-- they do not assert that phenomena exist the way the world sees them?

AS: That world-- I just-- I--

AH (simultaneously): I don't know if they're talking about-- you think they're talking about World-Mind?

AS: No, no [VM simultaneously: No.] I'm saying, [S simultaneously: How about knowledge?] I think it's like what PB says, maybe I'm wrong, but I just-- you-- I *was* answering your question.

AH: Oh, I'm sorry.

AS: Maybe incorrectly though. (AS laughs) That I won't assert. But, the-- though-- they assert that the objects, yeah, the pillow, the cup, the pole and so on, the Madhyamika will agree, these *exist*, [AH: Uh-huh.] but they don't agree that they exist in the way that the world says. What does the normal man on the street say they're real. So PB says it exists but it's not real.

VM: And by real, let me just build on that a little bit to tie in with this language, by real the average man means independent of my knowing or subjectivity or my perception. That's what they are denying. The world believes in the 6 o'clock news that the pole exists or-- and all that kind of level, the conventional truth.

AD (simultaneously): That it has its own existence.

VM: That it has its own existence.

AH: Ok, so how do--

VM: They call it inherent existence, natural existence. We don't like those words though.

AH: So what do they mean by this-- what do they assent to then?

VM: They assent there is a phenomenal [student assents] appearance.

AS: Yeah, as Anthony said an image, they agree there's an image, you can't deny it. An image appears. Soon as you say "image appears", you can't deny that.

AD: And for the worldling, alright, that image is real stuff. [AD hits something] They'll kick it and they'll show you, [student assents] you know, [AS simultaneously: Kick the tire, kick(ed) it.] they'll kick it and say "See, it's real."

VM: You got to kick [AH simultaneously: Because--] the tire when it's by the car.

AD: Huh?

VM: I'm sorry.

AD: That's what the worldly would say. What would the Prasangika(s) say?

AH: Well if-- if I call it a pole or call it image, in either case I kick it I'm going to break my toe.

HS: Yeah, so that's not the problem then, right, so you could-- therefore you could assert the-- the objective existence of the thing and still call it an image.

AD (simultaneously): Philosophy (becomes a message).

VM: I didn't get it [AS simultaneously: What Herbert? What did you say?] Andrew, you'd have to say it (again).

AH (simultaneously with VM and AS): Whatever I call it--

HS (simultaneously): Therefore, just by Andrew's magnificent proof, you could then assert the-- the existence of the object and not deny its image nature. It functions as a pole, when you kick it in the right way you break your toe. And yet you know it to be an image.

AH: See I can't validate phenomena by saying it's just an image. What-- what the hell kind of validation is that?

HS: But what-- but when you use-- [AB simultaneously: It depends what you mean by image.] what do you use to validate [VM simultaneously: What do you mean by image?] phenomena other than your mind? (bit of laughter) No, come on Andrew, seriously. [AS simultaneously: Let's not use that.] But you use your mind(--/.)

AS: The philosopher or the man on the street does that? I thought you pointed out before, if you really *did* know it was an image, then you would know the reality. That's the strange thing, the-- the no-- the guy on the street says it's reality and doesn't realize it's an image. The Madhyamika realizes it's an image and that is whatev-- that is the correct existence that it has.

S: Uh-hm.

AD (simultaneously): As soon as you realize that it's an image, then you, alright, you make-- you're making the point for the Prasangika.

S: Uh-hm.

AH: So their validation--

HS: The fact of the object.

AH (simultaneously): Are you speaking of image as the experience of mentalism or the thought of phenomena as being images?

AD (simultaneously): Does-- when you speak to a person out in the street, does he call that an image or does he call that a real pole?

VM: Real pole, real pole.

AH (simultaneously): It doesn't matter what he calls it.

AD (simultaneously with VM): It's a real pole to him, isn't it?

SP: Sure.

AH (simultaneously): We--

AD: It's a real pole for him, isn't it?

VM: It is.

AD: He doesn't call it an image.

AH: But if I-- even if I call it an image, I still experience it the same way he does unless I'm enlightened.

AD (simultaneously): No, no. No. Once you-- once you already are aware that it's an image, you don't perceive it the same way like he does.

AH: I may be able to have some gyrations mentally about whether or not it's atoms or energy and all that but I can't lie to myself about the fact that I experience the same pole that he does.

AS: Is it-- you remember Guenther has this beautiful line where he says not that something different is seen but that you see it differently? There is definite difference in the perception.

VM: But [AH simultaneously: But not-- not for me there isn't.] that's a real experience of mentalism, that's not--

AS: Yeah, but that's [AB simultaneously: That's what we're talking about.] what-- I think that's what we're talking about.

RG (simultaneously): (Know it) Andrew.

VM (simultaneously): I agree, I agree but Andrew's--

AS (simultaneously): We're not talking about a conception of what the thing is.

AH (simultaneously): Different cha-- different cha-- different-- different conceptions about what the thing is but--

AS: That won't do it.

VM: No, no.

AS (simultaneously): Not just a different conception Andrew, I think [VM assents] he's not talking about just a different conception.

S: Ok. [couple/few inaudible student words simultaneous with S] Andrew there's a-- there's a d-- a discussion in here about how for the Prasangika it's not enough just to have the conception but you have to transform it into an experience.

GA: I think Andrew, I think in order to get a grasp of it--

AH (simultaneously): I appreciate-- I-- it's not-- I want to butt in. I appreciate you people (some laughter) [HS simultaneously: Helping you.] helping me with this difficult problem because it's bothering me for a long time [one/two words inaudible]

VM: But you have a question but you don't like any answers.

S: Yeah Andrew.

HS: He likes the problem, he *likes* the problem. (some laughter)

AH: You haven't heard the question yet. (some laughter)

S: I thought he heard it.

GA: Instead of talking about the pole [AB simultaneously: Let's hear the question if you want (one/two words inaudible)] or [few words inaudible]

HS (simultaneously): Anna has a question, Anna has one. (bit of laughter)

[couple seconds of background student talking, laughter]

HS: Anna's been raising her hand for at least fifteen minutes, now come on guys.

AP: Could you say that the [one/two words inaudible] is the confusion or the basis of designation to the image?

S: Who's confused? (laughter)

S: All of us.

S: Pick three of us.

AP (simultaneously): [few words inaudible]

HS (simultaneously): It doesn't matter, just pick anybody, we're all confused.

GA: The whole world. (more laughter)

AP: What can one do if (they) confused? They say that is the basis of designation but why (confused), and by designation that is [one word inaudible] right? So what are those two things they saying they are, but what is it on then if we confuse that basis of designa-- the image with the basis of designation?

AH: They say thought imputes upon a base. The base is imputed by thought.

AP/S(?): Ok.

AH: They say what im-- what imputes thought? Thought imputes thought. So within that definition, I don't see how there could be-- like how do you describe a confusion?

AP: Well, that the image is taken somehow-- the thing is taken to be inherent in this image.

[short pause]

VM: Yeah, I think I understand what Anna was saying, I just [couple words inaudible]

AH (simultaneously): I'm sorry Anna, I missed it.

VM: Can I try it Anna and see if I understand you? Are you [AP simultaneously: Uh-hm.] saying that there's a basis of imputation and there's an image upon it. Now, a more sophisticated guy than the real man on the street, this is the man in-- the white collar worker, he-- he says, "Yeah, I know, I know, the way I see it is overlaid with my psychology and so on, on the other hand there really is something real and objective there [student assents] *underneath* my psychology, *underneath* my imagery."

AH: Behind it.

VM: Behind it, whatever you want to say.

AH: Above it. (bit of laughter)

VM: Now, is that what you mean by confusing image and the basis of designation, that they're continuously contending that beneath the image there's something substantially-- I don't think substantial the way Anthony use it like the Greek notion of substantial but let's say independently existent, [AP simultaneously: Yeah, uh-hm.] self-standing, that kind of thing.

AP (simultaneously): Describe it (to, yeah, yeah). I was thinking what we did with-- with the three functions, knowing, willing, and feeling, and how-- how it was the confusion of the functions which give rise [VM simultaneously: Oh.] to illusion. And that [couple/three words inaudible]

AD (simultaneously): Not to the illusion, that [AP simultaneously: Or to that-- yeah.] gave rise to the false--

AP: Appearance.

AD: Yeah, or the true convention.

AP: Yeah.

AD: In other words, the m-- the-- the-- the confusion of the functions will bring about the snake-rope or will actually bring about the snake, the real snake that you see in images. Yeah. But, I don't think we're ready to discuss that right now. [10 second pause] Say listen, when is it, next week we're going in? (SP laughing)

LR: Two weeks.

VM: No, two weeks.

AD (simultaneously): Is it two weeks?

LR: Two weeks. [three/few words inaudible] explain Vedanta.

RG: Right.

VM: This is the-- you mean there's only one more of these classes left?

AD: That's all.

VM: Oh we got a lot to do then. (laughter)

AD: [couple/three words inaudible] yeah.

LR/S(?): Good aspects.

AD: Well, it might be a good idea to have classes every day. But you won't come, so why bother, I mean-- (AD laughing a bit, some laughter)

S: Well--

AD: Take the book and read it by yourself.

LR: Do you have some suggestions?

AD: I got no suggestion. (bit of laughter)

[untranscribed: 3 minutes 45 seconds worth of background discussion on class logistics and upcoming HHDL trip, AD involved]

AS: I-- the only-- the only reason I-- I was-- I-- I was not leaving out the (Sunday is/Sundays) 'cause I think that the-- if I understood what Anthony's doing, was the reading of the *Wisdom* could help [VM: Oh yeah.] towards understanding the Buddhism, otherwise, if you were going to do that, I think that actually wou-- do you think we're going to stay here(./?)

VM (simultaneously): Oh yeah, sure.

AD: Yeah, yes.

AB (simultaneously): You have us continue this, [student assents] yeah.

AS: Ok. I just thought that might be a helpful way to understand their view.

AD: It would, it would, you know, after they-- they've [one/two words inaudible] but now it's--

AS: But right now it's-- yeah.

AD: It's not worth it.

AS: Ok. So Sunday then we're going to do some Buddhism.

AH: What-- what would be a good-- what topic you want to do, you want to continue with this--

AD: I think you ought to just continue the way you've been going.

AS: Keep doing it.

AD: Just keep doing it.

AH (simultaneously): Well the way we've been going Anthony, it's-- whatever paragraph we read we spend three hours on, so--

LR: What's wrong with that?

S: Yeah.

S: What's wrong with that?

VM (simultaneously): As long they're fine.

S: Yeah.

S: Slow is [one/two words inaudible]

AB (simultaneously): It's good. It's helpful.

AD (simultaneously): Did someone declare that you were an omniscient Buddha and that you read a paragraph you'd understand it?

AH: No, but is there a specific topic that you would suggest?

AD: I think, I think you just should continue what you're doing, keep struggling to understand sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase. It'll come along. It'll come along.

LR: Andrew, that's what we've been doing for sixteen years, [AH simultaneously: No I just want--] one paragraph [few words inaudible]

AS (simultaneously): From that book there is.

AH: There is some more material on the notion of imputation, if you want to take that up [AD simultaneously: Yes.] and follow it (painfully).

S (simultaneously): Yeah [one/two words inaudible]

S (simultaneously): Could you stick that on the wall?

AD: I think you already began-- I think you're beginning to see something of the depths that they're working with and the way they use language and that you're going to have to, you know, do a little thinking [one/two words inaudible] And, don't be afraid to change language around. Don't be afraid to bring in analogies and pictures and images, whatever will help.

AH: Well the topic cannot-- is admitted in several translations as being the most difficult one in their whole system.

AD: So philosophy's always been difficult, since when it has been easy! How many people you see going out, running, buying philosophy books!

AH: Yes, that's true, but the specific issue tonight of imputation upon a base is the most difficult thing in *their* system to understand.

AD (passionately): But, it's relatively easy when you consider it the way the Vedantists-- They do the same thing. They keep speaking about superimposition, false superimposition on Brahman. They're doing the same thing. There's nothing *novel* about this here. The Brahmins are saying the same thing--"Look, we superimpose on Brahman the world that we perceive." Then we complain about what we're seeing, but that's besides the point. (laughter) What do you think they're doing? An imputation on a design-- on a basis where you could designate something. Well, what is this object that I'm calling it a snake? Isn't it an object that belongs to Nature? Isn't it a natural object? But if you investigate and keep on analyzing, alright, you'll end up with atoms, alright, and then quarks, and then what? Then energy. And then you go into the unknown, emptiness, nothingness!

AH: As the base.

AD: As the base, yeah.

AH: But it seems that we want another-- we would like to have another stream to support that base, like another way of-- if-- you know, I got-- it was the most difficult thing for me to understand over the

months and years is this natural tendency to think that there's just like individual mind-stream and somehow connecting with a cosmic mind-stream and then I got experience. Well that's not what they're describing, they're not-- That may be so from another point of view, but their point of view is not a description of two streams that are intersecting providing us with experience.

VM: What about that stuff we read last week when he talked about those higher beings providing conditions for lower beings to evolve in? You don't think that is a cosmic soul and then the individual evolves within that milieu?

AH: Certainly there is that kind of analysis available in the literature, but this specific dialectic I think is describing something other than two converging streams of mentation to provide us with a world.

VM: I thought that *was* a Prasangika treatise.

AD (simultaneously): You remember the way Plotinus put it? He says the reason we're not fabricating our Solar system is because our [S simultaneously: Soul got there first.] elder sister Soul got here before we did. [Note: See Plotinus, IV.3.6, sixth para.]

S: He said what?

S: [couple words inaudible] a base.

AD (simultaneously): Our elder sister Soul got here before we did. Just look at the point of view the man is working with. It's almost like he regards soul as soul, whether he's speaking about the Solar Logos or his own soul. And essentially there's no distinction between them or difference between these two. [GA simultaneously: But for Prasangika--] Alright, now we would be s-- that would be another way of saying that there's no difference between Atma and Brahma.

AH: Or another way of saying perhaps that imputation by thought upon a base which is also imputed by thought(--/.)

AD: Well that-- that I want you to pull out the passages.

AH: Well they say again and again, thought imputes upon a base. What imputes the base? Thought imputes the base.

AD: Now what is he speaking about? I mean, do we know? I mean that's too short. In other words, insofar that I'm-- my mind manifests the World-Idea, am I not imputing, so to speak, on the World-Idea my thought, [S: Sure.] on Thought?

AH: It seems that that's so but it also seems that this view is-- is r-- in some way erasing the distinction between your mind and World-Mind's thought.

S: [one/two words inaudible]

GA: [couple words inaudible]

AS (simultaneously): But, (you know), again it doesn't in the sense that they continually, just like Chittamatra [one word inaudible] saying it's all mind and saying the same(--/.), and saying that there *is* some objective basis, [S: Well, that's also (one word inaudible)] [VM simultaneous with S: That's right.]

some given. They don't want to say that it's all [VM: It's all from the individual mind.] from mind or even all from one mind, they want to retain a given. Thought does [one word inaudible]

GA: Well the only reference to this in this book is-- to this dualism is it does say that the sub-- very substance of the [one word inaudible] is created by the collective [one word inaudible] of all the beings throughout the Solar system. Now that's [one word inaudible]

AD (simultaneously): PB says [LR simultaneously: (Dragon.)] the same thing in the *Hidden Teaching*.

GA: It's a pretty wide open thing, if you don't want to call it World-Mind, but they will not claim it.

S (simultaneously): It's (a disease).

AD: Yeah. But he says the same thing in "The Birth of the Universe". All these minds (can come/come-come) together at a certain designated time and collectively produce the world that they're going to experience.

AS: He speaks of the collective-- when the collective karmas of the universe have exhausted themselves--

AH: How this--

GA (simultaneously): They would say what is it produced out of was collective vehicle vrittis. Listen, they just don't designate the occa-- the World-Mind or any independent deity standing outside of it but what they call the functions are there. If you look at the Word-Mind just in terms of its function, you would be very close to that.

VM: That's just like in--

AS (simultaneously): But you know what? I guess maybe this one was so long ago but that was-- we didn't tie two things together that I think should be tied together, and that is we spoke about these three levels that they speak of as an ultimate truth, they speak the paratantra, and then there's the imagined and they have three levels also. It seems that we're saying here that the three levels are first of all the imagined, the i-- the image. The second level is what we're calling any level of base and this would be various levels all the way up to what we seem to be speaking of as any-- finally just going to be end of all these bases, you would just have this emp-- the Void.

AD: The basis of designation?

S: It's not just what you (thought).

AS: Yeah, I'm saying that you have-- you have an i-- you have the image, you have this image, and then you have the basis.

GA: But the image for them-- for them doesn't exist at all.

AS: Right, that's what I'm saying.

GA (simultaneously): Not unless it's a false [one word inaudible]

AS: Exactly, that's the first level, that's the parikalpa. Now the paratantra for them is whatever the basis is.

GA: The real phenomena.

AS: If it's the energy-- it could be energy, below that it could be another level. There could be levels of energy below that.

GA: Or it could be the forms, [AS: Right.] brown, circle, [HS: Ok.] you know, [AS simultaneously: And--] it's all the constituent parts [student assents] that you can analyze.

AS: But it seems like [GA simultaneously: Consciousnesses is(--/.)] even-- even the-- even the energy here you're speaking of, there's a-- that's where you get to this-- you can go beyond that and say that there's this *ultimate* nature which is void, which we haven't really spoke about that [one/two words inaudible] But this seems to be similar to when PB wants to take the whole causality right out of causality and say ultimately you just have this principle of Mind. And that's what they're speaking about as the *ultimate* truth of emptiness, that no matter what-- no matter what of these functional [couple words inaudible] you call that, (whatever now) what kind of paratantra combined-dependent-- or even if you speak of collective karmas in all the universes, still you have to analyze and find that there is this ultimate void nature.

GA: Yeah, because (their/that) only-- only intelligibility you find is within the mind, ok, and you're going to analyze it into its parts. There is no causal-- there's no causality that gives it any meaning beyond that (equation) that one could sell. I mean you keep coming back to mind [couple words inaudible]

AH (simultaneously): Avery, that discussion of the three natures on page 388, 38--

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1984 0914b Ends; Side 2 Begins)

AS: --emptiness. People from the emptiness point of view have a real shadow on substance and just as (in pure/impure)-- the emptiness point of view doesn't really understand what substance *means* to the substance people, the substance people don't understand what emptiness means to the [one/two words inaudible]

AH: So, what's the next-- next chapter?

AD (simultaneously): Let them go, let them go.

S (simultaneously with AH and AD): What you said-- what you said is good.

AS: We're done.

AH (simultaneously): We're going to meet Sunday or--

AS: Yeah, Sunday.

AB (simultaneously): Sunday.

AH: Alright.

AS: Sunday. We'll (convert/devote) all of the-- all next week to him. Might as well.

S (simultaneously): And it has-- and it has to be invol--

[Audio File 1984 0914b Ends]