**Beautiful Golden Rosary of Eloquence Illuminating a Little the Presentation of Awareness and Knowledge**

by Jam-yang-shay-pa

Translated by Elizabeth Napper and Jeffrey Hopkins

(Approximately one quarter of the text is translated here.)

*Namo śrīmañjúghoṣāya svarasvastyai ca mahādhīme prayaccha.*

Having bowed down to the Victors increasing all the abundances of cyclic existence and peace,

And to the treasures of awareness, the gentle voiced (‘jam dbyangs) father and mother [Mañjushri and Svarasvati],

I will shine forth (bzhad) a hundred thousand understandings clearing away the darkness

Of the imputations by other schools and of the guesses of children about awareness.

Concerning that, here the explanation of the presentation of awareness and knowledge has two parts: the presentation of object-possessing awarenesses and the presentation of objects.

**Presentation of object-possessing awarenesses**

This section has two parts: stating the scriptural passage and explaining its meaning.

**Stating the scriptural passage**

With regard to explaining the meaning of awareness (blo) in our own schools, the [second] chapter, Establishment of Prime Cognition in Dharmakīrti’s *Commentary on (Dignāga’s)* “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

Wisdom and so forth, without [following]

The development and diminishment of the body

Develop and diminish due to the features

Of activities of awarenesses (blo).d

**Explaining the meaning of the scriptural passage**

This section has three parts: definitions, synonyms, and divisions.
Definitions

Knower (rig pa) is the definition of awareness (blo). Illustrations are wisdom (shes rab) and prime cognition (tshad ma) for instance. It follows with respect to the subjects, those two [wisdom and prime cognition], that the meaning of knower (rig pa’i don) exists because that which shines on/reveals/dawns/manifests an object and perceives it [OR: that which perceives an object when it dawns] (yul ’char ba dang snang ba) is the meaning of knowing that object (yul de rig pa’i don).

Synonyms

Synonyms exist because awareness (blo), consciousness (shes pa), knower (rig pa), and illuminator (gsal ba) are equivalent.

A definition of consciousness (shes pa) exists because luminous non-materiality (gsal ba’i bem min) is that. Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on Dignāga’s “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

Therefore according to us an awareness (blo) itself
Is a luminous entity (gsal ba’i ngo bo) [and hence the entity of the object] is intensely illuminated (rab gsal).

Moreover, let us speak more extensively [about these]. Its being a knower that perceives its object (rang yul snang ba’i rig pa yin pa) is the definition of its being an awareness (rang blo yin pa). Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on Dignāga’s “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

If it is asserted thus that [the aspect of a former] awareness (blo) [is transferred to a later] awareness (blo),
The [later] awareness (blo) is [itself] established as a knower (rig pa).

Its being non-matter that illuminates its object (rang yul gsal ba’i bem min yin pa de) is the definition of its being a consciousness (rang shes pa yin pa). For, Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on Dignāga’s “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

Because [an awareness] is itself intensely luminous,
The entity of the object is intensely illuminated (rab gsal).

and the Autocommentary to (Śāntarakṣhitā’s) Ornament for the Middle says, “Since a consciousness is luminous, [the luminous] is not illuminated” (shes pa ni gsal ba yin na [gsal ba m]’ gsal bar ma gyur te).

“Non-matter” (bem min) is an oppositional term ('gal zla’i tshig) because Shāntideva’s Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds says, “Consciousness is the opposite, non-matter,” (shes pa bem min log pa ste), a and Śāntarakṣhitā’s Ornament for the Middle says:

Text correction as per Śāntarakṣita, Kamalaśīla, and Masamichi Ichigō, Madhyamakālaṅkāra of Śāntarakṣita: with His Own Commentary or Vṛtti and with the Subcommentary or Pañjikā of Kamalaśīla, trans. Masamichi Ichigō (Kyoto: Kyoto Sangyu University, 1985), 78.

Lo-sang-gya-tsho (blo bzang rgya mtsho) corrects the reading to: “Consciousness is the opposite of matter” (shes pa bem pa’i log pa ste) but declares that even this corrected line is not found in Shāntideva’s Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds; see Phu-khang Dge-bshes Blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho, riggs lam che ba blo rigs kyi rnam gzhag nye.
A consciousness is generated
Opposite from a nature of matter. (rnam shes bem po ’i rang bzhin las/ ldog pa rab tu skye ba ste)

About this, an incorrect side: To say that the definition of a knower (rig pa) is an awareness to which the aspect of an object dawns (yul gyi rnam pa shar ba’i blo) and to say that the aspect of an object does not dawn to a self-knower (rang rig la yul gyi rnam pa mi ’char) are internally contradictory.

Also, an incorrect side: It follows that the subject, a self-knower, is an awareness to which its object appears (rang yul snang ba’i blo) because of being a knower (rig pa). It follows [that a self-knower is a knower] because of being a self-knower. You have accepted the reason, [that is, that a self-knower is a self-knower]. If you accept [that a self-knower is an awareness to which...]

mkho kun btus, Advanced principles of Tibetan logic and disputation (New Delhi: Lochen Rinpoche, 1985), 11.7. However, as Jongbok Yi points out, there is a somewhat similar line in the Chapter on Patience in Shāntideva’s Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds:

Because mentalism [that is, mind] is not physical
It cannot be overcome by anyone in any way.
Due to adherence to the body
The body is harmed by sufferings.

Shāntideva, byang chub sems dpal spyod pa nyid ’jug pa (bodhisattvācaryāvatāra), Derge ed., vol. 3871, 16b.3-16b.4.

Footnote provided by Jongbok Yi.

b In the following blue = true statement; red = untrue statement.
its object appears (rang yul snang ba’i blo)], it follows that the aspect of its object dawns (rang yul gyi rnam pa shar ba) because its object appears (rang yul snang ba).

**Correct side:** [That its object appears (rang yul snang ba)] does not entail [that the aspect of its object dawns (rang yul gyi rnam pa shar ba)].

**Incorrect side:** It follows [that that its object appears (rang yul snang ba)] entails [that the aspect of its object dawns (rang yul gyi rnam pa shar ba)] because the aspect of its object appears (rang yul gyi rnam pa snang ba). It follows [that the aspect of its object appears (rang yul gyi rnam pa snang ba)] because its object appears (rang yul snang ba).

**Correct side:** Again, [that its object appears (rang yul snang ba)] does not entail [that the aspect of its object appears (rang yul gyi rnam pa snang ba)]. One cannot accept any of those three [namely, that (1) the definition of a knower (rig pa) is an awareness to which the aspect of an object dawns (yul gyi rnam pa shar ba’i blo); (2) to a self-knower the aspect of its object dawns (rang yul gyi rnam pa shar ba); and (3) to a self-knower the aspect of its object appears (rang yul gyi rnam pa snang ba)] because a representation-aspect of the object (yul gyi 'dra rnam) does not dawn (yul gyi 'dra rnam ma shar ba) [to a self-knower]. It follows [that a representation-aspect of the object does not dawn (yul gyi 'dra rnam ma shar ba)] because [a self-knower] is an awareness for which the dualistic appearance of object and subject has disappeared (yul yul can gyi gnyis snang nub pa’i blo). It follows [that (a self-knower) is an awareness for which the dualistic appearance of object and subject has disappeared (yul yul can gyi gnyis snang nub pa’i blo)] because of being a self-knower. [Whatever is a self-knower] necessarily is [an awareness for which the dualistic appearance of object and subject has disappeared (yul yul can gyi gnyis snang nub pa’i blo)] because Shāntarakṣita’s Ornament for the Middle says, “Its self-knower does not have a nature of object and agent.” (de’i rang gi rig pa ni// bya dang byed pa’i dngos por min//).

**With respect to that an incorrect side:** It follows that even its aspect does not dawn to that [self-knower] (rang gi yang rnam pa ma shar ba) because it is an aspectless consciousness (rnam med kyi shes pa). It follows [that a self-knower is an aspectless consciousness (rnam med kyi shes pa)] because Shāntarakṣita’s Autocommentary to the Ornament for the Middle says,“It is not feasible to posit an aspect for self-knowers in the manner in which it is expressed for consciousnesses having aspects.”

**Correct side:** [That Shāntarakṣita says this] does not entail [that a self-knower is an aspectless consciousness (rnam med kyi shes pa)] because the meaning [of that passage] is that [self-knowers] do not have the dualistic appearance of object and subject. Otherwise, it [absurdly] follows that [a self-knower] is not a consciousness having an aspect (rnam can gyi shes pa ma yin pa) because [according to you] neither the aspect of itself nor its object appears (rang ngam yul gang gi yang rnam pa mi snang ba). You have accepted the reason, [that is, that neither the aspect of itself nor its object appears (rang ngam yul gang gi yang rnam pa mi snang ba)]. If you accept [that a self-knower is not a consciousness having an aspect (rnam can gyi shes pa ma yin pa)], it [absurdly] follows that [a self-knower] is not even that which has the aspect of

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\[a\] Or “likeness-aspect of the object.”

\[b\] 3a.2.
the apprehender (’dzin rnam yang ma yin pa) because you have accepted [that a self-knower is not a consciousness having an aspect (rnam can gyi shes pa ma yin pa)]. You cannot accept [that a self-knower is not even that which has the aspect of the apprehender (’dzin rnam yang ma yin pa)] because with respect to a sense consciousness perceiving blue (sngo snang dbang shes) [there exist] (1) that which has the aspect of the apprehended (gzung rnam) such as the aspect of blue (sngon po’i rnam pa)\(^a\) and is an other-knowing consciousness (gzhan rig gi shes pa) and (2) the mere-experiencer (myong tsam), the self-knower (rang rig), that which has the aspect of the apprehender (’dzin rnam).\(^b\) For, Gen-dun-drup’s Ornament for Reasoning says:

Since in the likes of a sense consciousness perceiving blue there exist (1) a factor to which the aspect of the object dawns (yul gyi rnam pa shar ba’i cha) and (2) a factor of mere experience (myong tsam gyi cha), the first is that which was the aspect of the apprehended (gzung rnam) and the second is a self-knowing direct perception (rang rig mngon sum).

There are many such distinctions.

\textit{A certain chief logician of Tibet said:} The definition of an awareness is that which knows an object (yul rig par bya ba).

\textit{Correct side:} It [absurdly] follows that the subject, a person (skyes bu, puruṣa), is an awareness because of being that definition [that is, that which knows an object]. The reason, [that is, that a person (skyes bu, puruṣa) knows an object] is easy [to establish].

**Divisions**

There are six divisions [of awarenesses]: division into the two, realizing\(^c\) awarenesses and non-realizing awarenesses; division into the seven awarenesses and knowledges;\(^d\) division into the two, prime [cognitions] and non-prime [consciousnesses]; division into the two, conceptual and nonconceptual [consciousnesses], and division into the two, minds and mental factors.

**Realizing awarenesses and non-realizing awarenesses**

About realizing awarenesses, Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:\(^e\)

\(^a\) The entire phrase is: sngon po’i rnam pa lta bu gzung rnam.

\(^b\) The entire phrase is: myong tsam rang rig dang ’dzin rnam.

\(^c\) Ngwang Gelek text corrected from rtog to rtogs.

\(^d\) Ngwang Gelek text corrected from rigs to rig.

\(^e\) This edition reads:

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\begin{align*}
\text{nges pa rnams kyi ma nges la} & // \\
\text{de ni ji ltar de yul yin} & //
\end{align*}
\]

Hiroshi Nemoto identifies the stanza as I.57 and, pointing out that the citation should be begin a half line earlier, corrects the reading of the third line:

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\begin{align*}
\text{sgro ’dogs med pa’i yul la ni} & // \\
\text{’jug phyir gzhan yang ngo bo gang} & // \\
\text{nges pa rnams kyis ma nges pa} & // \\
\text{de ni ji ltar de yul yin} & //
\end{align*}
\]
Furthermore, (if) whatsoever entity (or aspect) is not ascertained by the ascertaining [consciousness], how could it be the [apprehended] object of that [consciousness]?

Realizing awarenesses

With respect to realizing awarenesses there are two, definition and explaining the meaning of the individual divisions.

Definition of realizing awareness

That which is able to induce ascertainment with respect to that phenomenon in dependence upon the functioning of this awareness (blo de’i byed pa la brten nas chos de la nges pa ’dren nus pa) is the definition of realizing that phenomenon by this awareness,

- because when this awareness ascertains that phenomenon, it eliminates superimpositions that are its opposite (rang gi bzlog zla’i sgro ’dogs),
- because, for example, an inferential cognition ascertaining that sound is impermanent eliminates superimpositions apprehending permanence with respect to sound;
- Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

  Because ascertaining and superimposing mentalities are entities of harmer and harmed.

Explaining the meaning of the individual divisions

When realizing awarenesses are divided, there are two—explicit realizers (dngos rtogs) and implicit realizers (shugs rtogs). From between those two:

realization by way of the aspect of that object dawning to this awareness (blo de la yul de’i rnam pa shar ba’i sgo nas rtogs pa de) the definition of explicit realization of that object by this awareness. Illustrations are, for instance, the realization of blue by a direct perception apprehending blue (sngon ’dzin dbang mngon gyis sngon po rtogs pa) and the realization that sound [is] a product by an inferential cognition explicitly realizing sound as a product (sgra byas par dngos su rtogs pa’i rjes dpag gis sgra byas pa rtogs pa).

Whatever is an explicit realization (dngos rtogs) is not necessarily a direct realization (mngon sum du rtogs pa) because there exists a conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing sound as impermanent (sgra mi rtag par dngos su rtogs pa’i rtog pa yod pa). [That there exists a conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing sound as impermanent (sgra mi rtag par dngos su rtogs pa’i rtog pa yod pa)] entails [that whatever is an explicit realization (dngos rtogs) is not necessarily a direct realization (mngon sum du rtogs pa)] because with regard to whatever is a direct realization, the object necessarily appears clearly (mngon sum du rtogs na yul de gsal bar

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My translation is adapted just slightly from Nemoto’s.
snang bas khyab pa). Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

Whatever is an awareness possessing clear appearance
Is asserted as nonconceptual with respect to that.

Above at the point where the entailment was established, the reason [that is, that there exists a conceptual consciousness explicitly realizing sound as impermanent (sgra mi rtag par dngos su rtogs pa’i rtog pa yod pa)] is established because there exists an inferential cognition explicitly realizing that. There is entailment because Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says:

Whatever consciousness apprehends a meaning[-generality] or a sound[-generality]
Is asserted to be a conceptual consciousness with regard to that.

and also he says in the Chapter on Direct Perception:

By clearing away the web of conceptuality
It appears just clearly.

Furthermore, with regard to the manner of explicit realization and implicit realization there are two—the manner of explicit and implicit realization by prime cognitions and the manner of explicit and implicit realization by non-prime consciousnesses.

THE MANNER OF EXPlicit AND IMPLICIT REALIZATION BY PRIME COGNITIONS
Moreover, with regard to the manner of explicit and implicit realization by prime cognitions there are three—(1) in general the mode of explicit and implicit realization by prime cognitions, (2) the mode of explicit and implicit realization by direct prime cognitions, and (3) the mode of explicit and implicit realization by inferential prime cognitions.

1. The first [that is, in general the mode of explicit and implicit realization by prime cognitions] exists because:

   a. inducing ascertainment by its own force—without depending on another subsequent awareness—through the force of (1) this prime cognition’s mentally attending to that object and (2) the aspect [of that object] dawning [to it]

   is the meaning of explicit realization of that object by this prime cognition; and

   b. despite not presently mentally attending to that object, merely by later mentally attending to that object this prime cognition induces ascertainment of it—without depending on another prime cognition—through the force of its explicitly comprehending its [present] object of comprehension and due to having finished elimination of superimpositions with respect to its [present] object at this time in accordance with the contexta

   is the meaning of implicit realization of that object by this prime cognition. Distinctions are also needed with respect to these.

a The meaning of “in accordance with the context” (skabs dang mthun par) is not apparent to me.
2. The second, the two meanings of explicit realization and implicit realization by direct prime cognitions, exist because:
   a. that which eliminates superimpositions with respect to an object of comprehension upon the aspect of its object of comprehension actually dawning to that direct perception

   is the definition of explicit realization of an object of comprehension by a direct prime cognition. An illustration, for example, is the elimination of superimpositions with respect to blue upon the aspect of blue clearly dawning to a direct prime cognition apprehending blue. And:

   b. that which eliminates superimpositions also with respect to another phenomenon—whose aspect does not dawn to it—through the force of having explicitly eliminated superimpositions with respect to its [present] object of comprehension by way of the aspect of that [present] object of comprehension explicitly having dawned [to it]

   is the definition of implicit realization of another phenomenon by this direct prime cognition. An illustration, for example, is that which through the force of having induced ascertainment—upon the explicit dawning of the aspect of a place that is devoid of a pot—has eliminated superimpositions with respect to the existence of a pot and comes to ascertain the nonexistence of pot by mentally merely attending to it even though the aspect of the nonexistence of pot in that place did not dawn [to it].

3. The third, the two meanings of explicit and implicit realization by inferential prime cognitions, exist because:
   a. that which eliminates superimpositions with respect to an object of comprehension by way of the meaning-generality of that object of comprehension dawning to this inferential cognition

   is the definition of explicit comprehension by an inferential cognition. An illustration, for example, is that which eliminates the superimpositions of apprehending sound to be permanent by way of the meaning-generality of impermanent sound explicitly appearing to an inferential cognition realizing sound to be impermanent. And:

   b. that which eliminates superimpositions even with respect to another phenomenon—whose meaning-generality does not dawn to that inferential cognition—through the force of having eliminated superimpositions with respect to the meaning-generality of its object of comprehension having dawned to it

   is the definition of realizing another phenomenon by the power of that inferential cognition. An illustration, for example, is that which (1) eliminates superimpositions of permanent existence with respect to sound—even though the meaning-generality of the nonexistence of permanent sound does not dawn [to it]—through the force of that inferential cognition having eliminated superimpositions with respect to the meaning-

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\( \text{rjes dpag de’i shugs kyis.} \)
generality of its own [present] object of comprehension that has dawned to it and (2) will ascertain, without depending on another prime cognition, the nonexistence of permanence with respect to sound by merely mentally turning to it.

That the meaning-generality of the phenomenon dawns to that conceptual consciousness is the meaning of the aspect of the phenomenon dawning to that conceptual consciousness.

**THE MANNER OF EXPlicit AND IMPLICIT REALIZATION BY NON-PRIME CONSCIOUSNESSES**

This has two parts: definition and divisions. With respect to the first, the two modes of explicit and implicit realization by non-prime cognitions exist because:

- realization of the remainder by way of the aspect dawning although superimpositions are not *newly* eliminated is the meaning of explicit realization
- realization although the aspect does not dawn is the meaning of implicit realization.

With respect to the second [the divisions], when those are divided, there are the two, correctly assuming consciousesses, subsequent cognitions, and so forth. These will be explained on the occasion of the division of awarenesses into five.

**Decisive Analysis**

*Incorrect side:* Whatever is an awareness realizing a phenomenon at its own time necessarily induces ascertainment with respect to that phenomenon at its own time.

*Correct side:* It [absurdly] follows with respect to the subject, a sense direct perception apprehending a place devoid of a pot, that it induces ascertainment at its own time with respect to the nonexistence of a pot because it realizes that [nonexistence of a pot], because it realizes that [nonexistence of a pot] implicitly. If you accept [that a sense direct perception apprehending a place devoid of a pot induces ascertainment at its own time with respect to the nonexistence of a pot], it [absurdly] follows that even a sentient being’s ascertaining consciousness induces [ascertainment] in this way because of being that [that is, being an ascertaining consciousness] in the continuum of a sentient being.

You cannot accept [that even a sentient being’s ascertaining consciousness induces [ascertainment] in this way [that is to say, at its own time] because it induces an ascertaining consciousness without interruption after itself. It follows [that it induces an ascertaining consciousness without interruption after itself] because two different ascertaining consciousness at one time in one continuum are not feasible, because Dharmakīrti’s Commentary on (Dignāga’s) “Compilation of Prime Cognition” says, “Two conceptual consciousesses are not seen at the same time.”

Similarly, it [absurdly] follows that an inference realizing the impermanence of sound induces at its own time ascertainment also with respect to the nonexistence of permanent sound because it realizes that [nonexistence of permanent sound]. If you accept [that an inferential cognition realizing the impermanence of sound also induces at its own time ascertainment with respect to the nonexistence of permanent sound], it is as above.

*Also, incorrect side:* Realization upon the aspect of that object dawning to an awareness is the meaning of its realization of that object.

*Correct side:* It [absurdly] follows that realization by an awareness is necessarily explicit
realization by it because you have accepted [that realization upon the aspect of that object 
dawning to an awareness is the meaning of its realization of that object].” You cannot accept 
[that realization by an awareness is necessarily explicit realization by it] because implicit 
realization by that [awareness] exists.

Also, incorrect side: If an awareness realizes that object, it necessarily eliminates or has 
eliminated superimpositions with respect to that [object].

Correct side: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, the two subsequent cognitions [conceptual 
and nonconceptual], eliminate superimpositions with respect to their object of comprehension 
because of realizing that [object of comprehension]. The reason [that is, that the two subsequent 
cognitions, conceptual and nonconceptual, realize their object of comprehension] is easy [to 
establish]. If you accept [that the two subsequent cognitions, conceptual and nonconceptual, 
eliminate superimpositions with respect to their object of comprehension], it follows that 
superimpositions with respect to that object are not eliminated by them because 
[superimpositions with respect to that object] have already been eliminated by an earlier prime 
cognition.

Moreover, it [absurdly] follows that the subject, a correctly assuming consciousness, 
[eliminates superimpositions with respect to its object of comprehension] because of realizing its 
object of realization. You cannot accept [that a correctly assuming consciousness, eliminates 
superimpositions with respect to its object of comprehension] because it does not eliminate 
superimpositions of doubt. It follows [that it does not eliminate superimpositions of doubt] 
because of being a correctly assuming consciousness.

Also, incorrect side: Whatever is a nonmistaken awareness necessarily realizes its object of 
comprehension.

Correct side: It [absurdly] follows that the subject, respectively the three awarenesses to 
which an object appears but is not ascertained[—that is, sense, mental, and self-knowing direct 
perceptions which are such that an object appears but is not ascertained—realize their object of 
comprehension] because of being [nonmistaken awarenesses]. You cannot accept [that 
respectively the three awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained[—that is, 
sense, mental, and self-knowing direct perceptions which are such that an object appears but is 
not ascertained—realize their object of comprehension] because of being that subject [that is, 
being awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained].

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a Once it lacks ascertainment, it does not realize an object of comprehension.