Course of our conversation

- Brief overview of tenet systems
- Review of Vaibhashika – taking things apart
- Sautrantika – what really comes to mind?
- Cittamatra – there is only mind
- Nature of the three natures
- Moving toward the middle
Overview of tenet systems

- Tenet means “established conclusion;” i.e. a person knows it to be correct and intends not to give it up
- Approach of pandita vs. approach of yogi
- For yogis and yoginis, view tenet system as rungs on ladder – the higher you climb, the better the view.
- When studying tenet systems move up one rung at a time, reflecting and meditating on what you learn at each stage.
- Higher rungs more dangerous. Pace yourself.

(Adapted from Newland, Appearance & Reality)
Overview of tenet systems

Foundational Vehicle
- Vaibhasika
- Sautrantika

Mahayana
- Cittamatra
- Madhyamaka
  - Rangtong
  - Shentong (Yogacara)
    - Svatantrika
    - Prasangika

(From Progressive Stages of Meditation)
Vaibhashika – Taking it Apart

- Also called Great Exposition or Particularist School
- Primary text: Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakosha*
- Goal is self-liberation
- Method is look at actual moments of experience rather than our conception of experience
- Views the world as disintegrating collections held together only by concepts
- Partless particles and momentless moments
- Searching for self among the skandhas
If the self were the aggregates,
It would be something that arises and ceases.
If the self were something other than the aggregates
It would not have the aggregates characteristics.

(Nagarjuna)
Sautrantika

- Also called Sutra School
- Bedrock of monastic study, especially for Gelukpa
- Goal is self-liberation
- Followers of Scripture and Followers of Reasoning
  - View of two truths for Followers of Scripture is same as for Vaibhashika
  - Primary text on two truths for Followers of Reasoning is Dharmakirti’s Commentary of Dignaga’s Compendium of Valid Cognition
- Method is to break down each moment of experience even further and looks at types of experience
Sautrantika – Valid Cognition

- Moments of perception vs. moments of conception
  - Perception – experiencing phenomena directly through the senses, e.g. eye seeing form, ear hearing sound
  - Conception – experiencing phenomena indirectly through words and thoughts

  “Blending together conception and perception prevents us from seeing either clearly. We don’t really know what we are experiencing. We need to be able to see concepts clearly for what they are, and see sense perceptions clearly for what they are.”

(Contemplating Reality, pg. 54)
Sautrantika – Valid Cognition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Conception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Specifically characterized phenomena</td>
<td>- Generally characterized phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Particulars</td>
<td>- Universals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collective engager</td>
<td>- Eliminative engager</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Appearing objects, but no referent objects</td>
<td>- Appearing objects and referent objects</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Exists from its own side</td>
<td>- Mere imputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Functioning thing</td>
<td>- Non-functioning phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ultimate truth</td>
<td>- Conventional truth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sautrantika – Valid Cognition

“What it comes down is that all the people, places and things that appear to our conceptual mind are not actual people, places or things. We can only think about generally characterized phenomena – abstractions. When our conceptions resemble the specifically characterized phenomena they refer to, they can be extremely useful. All communication and abstract thinking depend on them. Often, however, our abstractions have little correspondence to the things they refer to.”

(Contemplating Reality, pg 59)
“Naked perception [occurs when we] just perceive the object directly, without any name associated with it, without any description of it ... So when there is perception that is free of names and free of descriptions, what's that like? You have a naked perception, a non-conceptual perception, of a totally unique object. A unique indescribable object is perceived non-conceptually, and this is called direct valid cognition.”

(Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche)
Cittamatra – Mind Creates All

- Also called Mind-Only School, or sometimes Yogacara
- Primary texts: *Samadhinirmocana Sutra*, *Lankavatara Sutra*, *Five Treatises of Maitreya* as received by Asanga
- Goal is liberation of all beings
- Believe “mind” is made up of eight consciousnesses
  - First thru sixth – same as earlier schools
  - Seventh – klesha-mind
  - Eighth – ground or all-base consciousness (alayavijnana)
- Believe self and phenomena illusory, but “mind” is real
Cittamatra – Mind Creates All

That which has parts does not exist.
Subtle particles also are not existent.
Appearances apart from mind cannot be observed.
Experiences are all like dreams.
Consciousness free from perceiver and perceived
Exists in genuine reality.
So proclaim those who have gone
To the far shores of the ocean of Yogic Conduct texts.

(Jamyong Kongtrul Lodro Thaye, Treasury of Knowledge)
Cittamatra – Mind Creates All
“There is no way to demonstrate the existence of something that has not appeared to our mind. There is no way to demonstrate the existence of something without it appearing to our mind. Therefore, external phenomena and internal mind are inseparable. Thus, external appearances are just our internal mind. They are truly established as what they appear to be.”

(Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche)
Cittamatra – Mind Creates All

What appear to be outer, perceivable in common,
Are perceiving awareness; they are not referents
Existing as something extrinsic to consciousness,
Because they are only experienced in common.

(Mipham Rinpoche)
Cittamatra – Mind Creates All

- Sense consciousnesses and mind consciousness unstable
- Seventh consciousness – klesha-mind, “the ignorance that believes itself to be me,” characterized by conception, attachment, pride and ignorance
- Eighth consciousness – alayavijnana or all-base
  - “all-base that seizes karmic imprints
  - “all-base of complete ripening”  
    (Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche)
- “Thus mind-only does not mean that only consciousness, and no form, exists; it does not mean only subjects, and no objects, exist. Rather, the point is that subjects and their objects arise together simultaneously, in a single entity.”
  (Guy Newland, Appearance and Reality)
Cittamatra – Mind Creates All

Sense consciousness is a mute who can see;
Conceptual consciousness is blind, but chatters on.
Self-awareness has all faculties complete
And makes a connection between the two.

(Sakya Pandita)