

Profound Inner Principles
Karmapa Rangjung Dorje
Excerpts

...2.) The Explanation of the Manifestation of Mind.

... This [mind] displays freely:
it is empty in essence yet clear in nature,
and its manifestations appear unimpededly as anything at all.

If mind-itself is the ground of everything in samsara and nirvana, how is it that samsara and nirvana appear individually from that [one ground]? **This** mind-itself **displays** its brilliance **freely**—that is the expressive power of wisdom, mind-itself. While [mind-itself] never moves from its essence, emptiness, its nature manifests **clearly**: it is the inseparability of **emptiness** and clarity. **Its manifestations**, or modes of apprehension, **appear unimpededly as anything at all**. As names for those three, the terms “mind,” “mentation,” and “consciousness” are used in the context of samsara, and, in the context of nirvana, the terms “dharmakaya,” “sambhogakaya,” and the “nirmanakaya arising as anything” are used.

Regardless of whether the mind is pure or impure, since its essence is unborn emptiness and its nature is luminous clarity, it is the ground of everything. A distinctive feature of the Mantra tradition is its statement that everything is one in being great bliss. In either case, with its display that is an unimpeded manifestation [of emptiness-clarity, or great bliss], anything at all can appear. An additional sense derived from the previously mentioned “although” is that the various manifestations that appear seem to assume positions as the specific phenomena of percepts and perceivers in samsara and nirvana. From the alaya, afflictive mentation arises unimpededly; from that, the six modes of consciousness; from those, the fifty-one mental factors and so forth; and from those, the appearances of the environment and its inhabitants. The Mantra tradition explains that the various appearances of the winds and channels and external and internal forms arise unimpededly from luminosity or the connate state.

As for [the relationship between mind-itself’s] essence and its manifestations, the exalted Gampopa said, “Connate mind-itself is the dharmakaya. Connate appearances are the light of the dharmakaya.”

The explanation in the Treasury of Abhidharma that mind, mentation, and consciousness are the same represents the Hinayana tradition. Herein the Mahayana tradition, the understanding is that mind refers to the alaya consciousness, mentation to the seventh mentation, and consciousness to the six operative consciousnesses.

Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche (March 1999) commented that emptiness (mind’s essence) correlates to mind (that is, alaya consciousness) and the dharmakaya. Clarity (mind’s nature) correlates to mentation (that is, afflictive mentation) and the sambhogakaya. Mind’s unimpeded manifestation correlates to consciousness (that is, the six sense consciousnesses) and the nirmanakaya.