

Class Three Outline

I. The Materialist Argument for Why Future Lives are Impossible

A. Three reasons why the mind dies when the body dies

1. The mind is a quality of the body
2. The mind is dependent on the body
3. The mind is the result of the body

II. The Meaning of the Term “Material Cause”

III. Refutation of Materialists

A. Cause of the mind

1. At the moment of birth
2. Changing or unchanging
3. Physical matter or outside
4. The mind of someone else – your parents
5. The result of a cause must resemble the cause and come after it

IV. Meditation Assignment

Fifteen minutes a day on the differences between physical things like the body and mental things like the mind

Reading Three:

The following is a selection from the *Jewel of the True Thought*, a commentary on Master Dharmakirti's *Commentary on Valid Perception* by Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery.

Explanation of Perfected Thought, continued

Here secondly is the part where we disprove arguments that the perfected thought even exists. First we will present the arguments themselves, and then show how we disprove them.

The first of these two is indicated in two lines of the root text:

**Suppose you say that,
because of the fact that the mind**

**Is something that relies on the body,
there is no achieving by practice.**

Those of the Charvaka School say:

Your statement that a person practices compassion over the length of many lifetimes, and then turns into a person who is totally correct, is wrong. This is because there are no past or future lives, and awareness in the mind is something that relies on the body.

They say that there are three ways in which the mind relies on the body. First of all they say the mind is a quality of the body, similar to alcohol and the ability to make someone drunk. Secondly mind is part of the nature of the body, as with a wall and a design on the wall. Lastly the mind is a result of the body, in the way of a lamp and its light.

And they say that, because the mind relies on the body, the awareness in the mind dies when the body dies.

The *Great Commentary* states that "It is explained through similes, and the way one thing stops when another does [?]." The *Jewel of Valid Perception* says,

They believe there is no achieving through practice,
Due to the fact of three different ways:

The mind is an integral part of the body,
A result of the body, and one of its qualities.

The Proof by the Elimination of Other Possibilities

[From *A Number of Necessities, which Those Who Seek for Freedom should Cherish like the Heart in their Breast*:]

The following excerpt is taken from *Clearing Away Darkness of the Mind about the Seven Books of Valid Perception*, a text composed by Kedrup Je.

Suppose you say that the mind of a person who was just born has no cause. You are disproven by the fact that this mind is variable.

Suppose thus that this mind does have a cause. Is this cause unchanging or changing? If it were an unchanging thing that could perform some function, then there would be no possibility that it did not apply in every place and at every time; and so there would be no possibility of its having a fixed relationship where it came and went according to its result.

Suppose then that the latter were true, [and that the cause of this mind were changing.] It would be incorrect to say that this mind could arise from any working thing other than matter or mind, and so it must come from one or the other of these two.

Suppose you say that matter provides the material cause for this mind. Is it the kind of matter which involves the powers of sense, or is it matter outside of them?

Suppose you say it's the first of the two. Is this cause one where all the various sense powers must come together, or is any one or combination of them enough? If the first is the case, then mental consciousness would fail to arise if the sense power of the eye were absent. If the latter is the case, then one's thoughts would have to be able to capture visible objects with the same kind of clarity that the consciousness of the eye does.

Suppose you say that it's outer matter which provides the material cause. Is it matter in the sense of some substance which is a whole, or is it atoms? Suppose you say it's the first. The substance which is a whole can only be something with parts or something without parts.

Dharma Essentials Course IV: The Proof of Future Lives
Reading Three

Suppose you say it's a whole with parts that provides the material cause. We deny you then with the same reasoning we used before: Is this cause one where all the various parts must come together, or is any one or combination enough?

Suppose you say that it's a substance which is a whole, and which has no parts, and which exists distinct from its details, which provides the material cause for the mind. Then when you covered your face with a piece of cloth all the other details of your body would have to be covered as well. If the other details didn't get covered then there would come to be two parts: one that was covered and one that wasn't. These two parts, the covered one and the uncovered one, would be something that applied to the details but not to the whole that had the details. This being the case, you would have to be able to see clearly the face of the whole even when the face as a detail was covered with the cloth.

This position is equally disproven by reasoning that treats other distinctions, such as moving one of your limbs or not, and turning to one side or not.

Suppose you say that atoms provide the material cause for the mind. If it's that the mind arises through each of the atoms, acting independently of each other, then many different mental consciousnesses would have to arise at the same time. If it's that the atoms must act all together in a group, then the mind could never arise if even a single atom were absent.

This reasoning, where we use the process of eliminating all other possibilities, brings us to the conclusion that the material cause for mind is mind itself.

The mind that acts as the cause must moreover either be one which is part of yourself or one which is part of someone else. Suppose you say that a mind which is part of someone else, of someone like your father or mother, acts as the direct material cause for this mind. The problem then arises that—where the father is a skilled artisan, or say foolish, or whatever—the son must always be this way as well.

This leads us to conclude that it can only be a former mind which is part of our own stream of consciousness that provides the material cause [for our mind as it exists just after we are born.]

This means that the past history and future continuation of our minds are simply infinite; and that the existence of past and future lives can be clearly and correctly proven.