
TENETS

Charts

created by

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based on various sources

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Classification of Tenet Systems

Source: Losang Gonchok's *Clear Crystal Mirror*
(Extracted from *Buddhist Philosophy*, Cozort and Preston, pages 89-90)

TENET SYSTEM	DIVISIONS	
BUDDHIST (Insiders) Refute the existence of the referent object of the view of a permanent, unitary, and independent self	PROPOSERS OF NON-NATURE (Madhyamika) Refute the true establishment of things	CONSEQUENTIALISTS (Prasangika)
		AUTONOMISTS (Svatantrika)
	PROPOSERS OF TRUE EXISTENCE Assert the existence of truly existent things	PROPOSERS OF MIND ONLY (Chittamatra) Adhere to the true existence of the internal mind
		PROPOSERS OF OBJECTS Adhere to the true establishment of external objects
NON-BUDDHIST (Outsiders) Attempt to prove the existence of the referent object of the view of a permanent, unitary, and independent self	PROPOSERS OF A VIEW OF PERMANENCE Make superimpositions with respect to hidden phenomena	
	PROPOSERS OF ANNIHILATION Propound that beyond mere manifest appearances there is nothing	

The Four Buddhist Schools of Tenets

Source: Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen's *Presentation of Tenets*

The definition of a person who propounds Buddhist tenets is: a person propounding tenets who accepts the Three Jewels to be the final objects of refuge and who does not assert any objects of refuge other than these.

TENET SCHOOL	SUB-SCHOOLS	
MIDDLE WAY (Madhyamika) A person propounding Great Vehicle tenets who does not assert true establishment even conventionally.	CONSEQUENCE (Prasangika) A proponent of the Middle Way who, by way of accepting just other-approved consequences, does not assert true existence even conventionally.	
	AUTONOMY (Svatantrika) A Proponent of the Middle Way who, by way of accepting autonomous reasons, does not assert true establishment even conventionally .	SUTRA AUTONOMY (Sautrantika Svatantrika) A Proponent of the Middle Way who propounds a presentation of conventionalities through mostly conforming with the Proponents of Sutra.
		YOGIC AUTONOMY (Yogachara Svatantrika) A Proponent of the Middle Way who propounds a presentation of conventionalities through mostly conforming with the Proponents of Mind Only.
MIND ONLY (Chittamatra) A person propounding Great Vehicle tenets who does not accept external objects but does assert truly established self-knowers.	FALSE ASPECTARIANS (Alikakaravadin) A Proponent of Mind Only who asserts that a direct perceiver apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being does engage, polluted by the latencies of ignorance, in the factor of its appearance as a gross form.	
	TRUE ASPECTARIANS (Satyakaravadin) A Proponent of Mind Only who asserts that a direct perceiver apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being does not engage, polluted by the latencies of ignorance, in the factor of its appearance as a gross form.	PROponents OF AN EQUAL NUMBER OF APPREHENDED OBJECTS AND APPREHENDING SUBJECTS
		NON-PLURALISTS
SUTRA (Sautrantika) A person propounding Lesser Vehicle tenets who accepts both self-knowers and external objects.	FOLLOWERS OF REASONING A proponent of Sutra who follows [Dharmakirti's] Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition.	
	FOLLOWERS OF SCRIPTURE A proponent of Sutra who follows [Vasubandhu's] <i>Treasury of Manifest Knowledge</i> .	
GREAT EXPOSITION (Vaibhashika) A person propounding Lesser Vehicle tenets who does not assert self-knowers but does assert truly established external objects.	PROponents FROM KASHMIR	
	PROponents FROM THE WESTERN REGION (Aparantaka)	
	PROponents FROM THE CENTRAL REGION (Magadha)	

History of the Four Schools

Source: Jamyang Shayba's *Great Exposition of Tenets*

<u>Chronology</u> ²	<u>Founder of</u>
Nagarjuna 1 st -2 nd century	Middle Way school
Asanga ~310-390	Mind Only school
Vasubandhu ~320-400	Brother of Asanga ³
Dignaga ~480-540	System of logic and epistemology
Buddhapalita ~470-540	Middle Way Consequence school
Bhavaviveka ~500-570	Middle Way Autonomy school
Chandrakirti 7 th century	Disseminator of Consequence school
Dharmakirti 7 th century	Elaborator of Dignaga's system
Shantarakshita 8 th century	Yogic Autonomy school
Kamalashila 8 th century	Disciple of Shantarakshita
Jñānagarbha 8 th century	Proponent of Sutra Autonomy school
Haribhadra 8 th century	Proponent of Yogic Autonomy school
Shantideva 9 th century	Proponent of Consequence school
Atisha 982-1054	Kadampa school of Tibetan Buddhism
Tsongkhapa 1357-1419	Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism

Main tenets texts used

<i>Presentation of Tenets</i>	Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen (1469–1546)
<i>Great Exposition of Tenets</i>	Jamyang Shayba (1648–1721)
<i>Presentation of Tenets</i>	Jangya Rolpe Dorje (1717–1786)
<i>Precious Garland of Tenets</i>	Konchog Jigme Wangpo (1728–1791)
<i>Annotations</i>	Ngawang Belden (1797-????)

SCHOOL	SUB-SCHOOLS	
MIDDLE WAY (Madhyamika) Founder: Nagarjuna	CONSEQUENCE (Prasangika) Founder: Buddhapalita	
	AUTONOMY (Svatantrika) Founder: Bhavaviveka	SUTRA AUTONOMY (Sautrantika-Svatantrika) Founder: Bhavaviveka
		YOGIC AUTONOMY (Yogachara-Svatantrika) Founder: Shantarakshita
MIND ONLY (Chittamatra) Founder: Asanga	FOLLOWERS OF REASONING Followers of Dharmakirti's Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition	
	FOLLOWERS OF SCRIPTURE Followers of Asanga's Five Treatises on the Grounds	
SUTRA (Sautrantika)	FOLLOWERS OF REASONING Followers of Dharmakirti's Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition	
	FOLLOWERS OF SCRIPTURE Followers of Vasubandhu's <i>Treasury of Manifest Knowledge</i>	
GREAT EXPOSITION (Vaibhashika)	18 sub-schools ¹	

¹ The 18 sub-schools are: Majority Community, One Convention, Proponents of World-Transcendence, Much Hearing, Proponents of Imputation, Monument Ones, Eastern Mountain Ones, Western Mountain Ones, Abiding Firmly, Proponents of the Existence of All, Vatsiputra Followers, Dharmottara Followers, Bhadraryana Followers, Mahasammata Followers, Great Teaching, Dharmagupta Followers, Kashyapa Followers and Uttara Followers.

² Source for dates: *Buddhist Philosophy* (Cozort and Preston) pages 304-308

³ Vasubandhu was first a Vaibhashika, then a Sautrantika, and finally a Chittamatin due to Asanga's persistent efforts. [*Meditation on Emptiness* (Hopkins) page 359]

Avoiding the Two Extremes

Source: Extracted from *Study of Svatantrika*, Lopez, pages 153-154

SCHOOL	AVOIDING EXTREME OF ANNIHILATION	AVOIDING EXTREME OF PERMANENCE
CONSEQUENCE	All phenomena are merely imputed by conception	No phenomenon exists from its own side
AUTONOMY	All phenomena exist from their own side	No phenomenon is truly existent
MIND ONLY	Other-powered and thoroughly established phenomena are truly existent	Objects are not natural bases for names and conception
SUTRA	Objects are natural bases for names and conception	Permanent phenomena are not substantially existent
GREAT EXPOSITION	All phenomena are substantially established	All compounded phenomena are impermanent

Modes of Existence

Source: *Meditation on Emptiness*, Hopkins, page 39

SCHOOL	TYPE OF PHENOMENA	ULTIMATE EXISTENCE ¹ / TRUE EXISTENCE ² / EXISTENCE AS ITS OWN REALITY ³	TRUE ESTABLISHMENT ⁴	EXISTENCE BY WAY OF ITS OWN CHARACTER ⁵	INHERENT EXISTENCE ⁶ / EXISTENCE FROM ITS OWN SIDE ⁷
CONSEQUENCE	All phenomena (ultimately)	NO			
	All phenomena (conventionally)	NO			
AUTONOMY	All phenomena (ultimately)	NO			
	All phenomena (conventionally)	NO		YES	
MIND ONLY	Other-powered phenomena	YES			
	Thoroughly established phenomena	YES			
	Imputational constructs	NO			YES
SUTRA (Followers of Reasoning)	Ultimate truths	YES			
	Conventional truths	NO			YES
SUTRA (Followers of Sutra) and GREAT EXPOSITION	Ultimate truths	YES			
	Conventional truths	NO	YES		

¹ *don dam par grub pa*

² *bden par yod pa*

³ *yang dag par grub pa*

⁴ *bden par grub pa*

⁵ *rang gi mtshan nyid kyis grub pa*

⁶ *rang bzhin gyis grub pa*

⁷ *rang ngos nas grub pa*

The Two Truths

Source: Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen's *Presentation of Tenets*

SCHOOL	CONVENTIONAL TRUTH	ULTIMATE TRUTH	ASSERTION OF 'POT' ¹
CONSEQUENCE	An object found by a valid cognizer analyzing a conventionality and with respect to which that valid cognizer analyzing the conventionality becomes a valid cognizer analyzing a conventionality. Eg. pot	An object found by a valid cognizer analyzing the ultimate and with respect to which that valid cognizer analyzing the ultimate becomes a valid cognizer analyzing the ultimate. Eg. emptiness that is a pot being empty of inherent existence	A pot is merely imputed there by terminology and conceptuality in dependence upon the collection of many particles that are the parts of the pot.
SUTRA AUTONOMY²	An object that is realized in a dualistic manner by a direct valid cognizer directly realizing it. Eg. pot	An object that is realized in a non-dualistic manner by a direct valid cognizer directly realizing it. Eg. emptiness that is a pot being empty of true existence	A pot is the mere collection of the many particles that are the parts of a pot.
YOGIC AUTONOMY			A pot is the factor of appearance that is an appearance as a pot due to the force of activation of a predisposition. (A pot is not the collection of the parts of a pot.)
MIND ONLY	That which is realized by a direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of being together with dualistic appearance. Eg. pot	That which is realized by a direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance. Eg. emptiness that is a pot and the valid cognizer apprehending that pot being empty of being different substances	
SUTRA (Followers of Reasoning)	A phenomenon that is not ultimately able to perform a function. Eg. uncompounded space	A phenomenon that is ultimately able to perform a function. Eg. pot	A pot is the mere collection of the many particles that are the parts of a pot.
SUTRA (F of S) and GREAT EXPOSITION	A phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is cancelled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its individual parts. Eg. pot	A phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is not cancelled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its individual parts. Eg. partless particles	

¹ Source: Ngawang Belden's *Annotations* (extracted from *Maps of the Profound*, Hopkins, page 416)

² Source for Autonomy school: Gonchok Jikmay Wangbo's *Precious Garland of Tenets* (extracted from *Cutting Through Appearances*, Sopa and Hopkins, page 286)

Object Possessors

Source: Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen's *Presentation of Tenets*

SCHOOL		ILLUSTRATION OF THE PERSON	DEFINITION OF VALID COGNIZER	DEFINITION OF DIRECT VALID COGNIZER	SELF-COGNIZER
CONSEQUENCE ¹		Mere I which is imputed in dependence on the five aggregates	A knower that is incontrovertible with respect to its object of engagement.	An incontrovertible knower that apprehends its manifest object.	NO
AUTONOMY	SUTRA AUTONOMY	Mental consciousness	A new incontrovertible knower .	A new incontrovertible knower free from conceptuality.	NO
	YOGIC AUTONOMY	Continuum of mental consciousness			YES
MIND ONLY	FALSE ASPECTARIANS	Mental consciousness	A new incontrovertible knower.	A new incontrovertible knower free from conceptuality.	YES
	TRUE ASPECTARIANS	Mind-basis-of-all			NO
SUTRA	FOLLOWERS OF REASONING	Mental consciousness	A new incontrovertible knower .	A new incontrovertible knower free from conceptuality.	YES
	FOLLOWERS OF SCRIPTURE	Continuum of the aggregates			NO
GREAT EXPOSITION	PROponents FROM KASHMIR	Continuum of the aggregates	No definition given	No definition given	NO
	MOST SUB-SCHOOLS	Mere collection of the five aggregates			
	PROponents FROM THE WESTERN REGION	Mental consciousness			

¹ The two definitions for the Consequence school were extracted from *Understanding the Mind* (Gyatso) pages 95&99

Objects of Abandonment

Source: Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen's *Presentation of Tenets*

SCHOOL		AFFLICTIVE OBSCURATIONS (Obstructions to liberation)		OBSCURATIONS TO KNOWLEDGE (Obstructions to omniscience)	
		COARSE	SUBTLE	COARSE	SUBTLE
CONSEQUENCE		Conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person and the attachment and so forth that arise due to the force of that, together with their seeds	Conception of true existence and the attachment and so forth that arise due to the force of that, together with their seeds	None	Latencies of the conception of true existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of that
AUTONOMY	SUTRA	Conception of a permanent, unitary, independent person	Conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person and its retinue	None	Conception of true existence together with its latencies
	YOGIC	Conception of a permanent, unitary, independent person	Conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person and its retinue	Conception apprehending a form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form to be different substances	Conception of true existence together with its latencies
MIND ONLY		Conception of a permanent, unitary, independent person	Conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person and the three poisons that arise due to the force of that, together with their seeds	None	Conception of things as being true together with its seeds, the latencies of that, and all mistaken dualistic appearances that arise due to the force of that
SUTRA AND GREAT EXPOSITION		Conception of a permanent, unitary, independent person	Conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person and the three poisons that arise due to the force of that, together with their seeds	None (They do not accept omniscience) Non-afflictive obscurations (obscurations to all-knowingness): latencies of the conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person and the negative tendencies of mind that arise due to the force of that	

Coarse and Subtle Selflessness

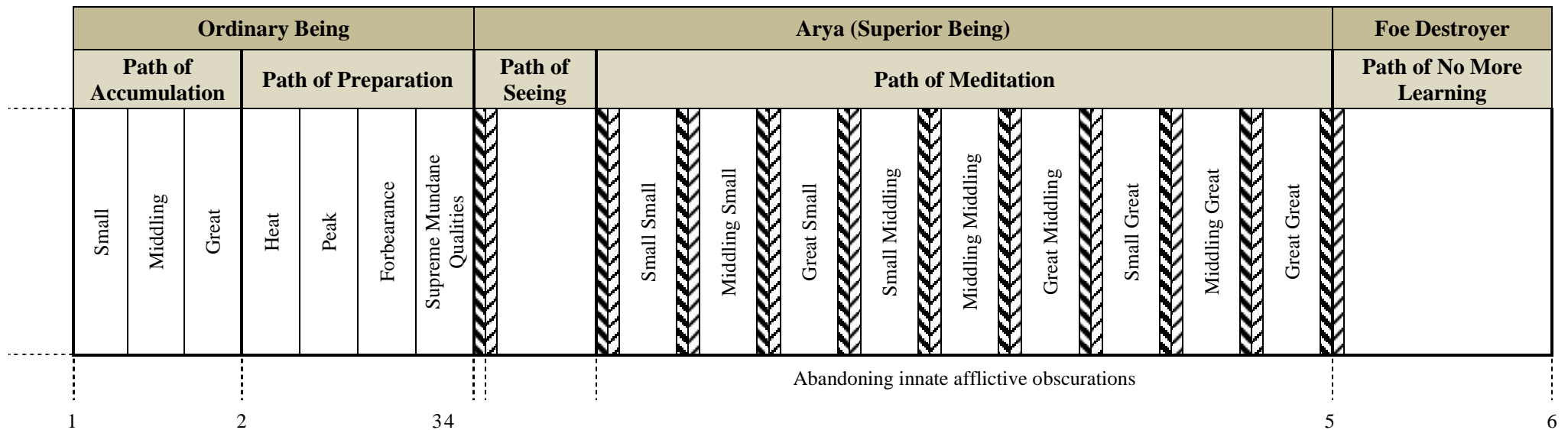
Source: Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen's *Presentation of Tenets*

SCHOOL		SELFLESSNESS OF PERSON		SELFLESSNESS OF PHENOMENA	
		COARSE	SUBTLE	COARSE	SUBTLE
CONSEQUENCE		Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	Person being empty of true existence	Coarse objects composed of partless particles and the valid cognition apprehending them being empty of being different substances	The aggregates being empty of true existence ¹
AUTONOMY	SUTRA	Person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	None	All phenomena being empty of true existence
	YOGIC	Person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	A form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances	All phenomena being empty of true existence
MIND ONLY		Person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	None	A form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances
SUTRA AND GREAT EXPOSITION		Person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent	Person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	None (they accept a self of phenomena)	

¹ True existence for the Consequentialists is equivalent to existence from its own side (i.e., inherent existence) whereas for the Autonomists it is equivalent to existence in a manner of an objective mode of subsistence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.

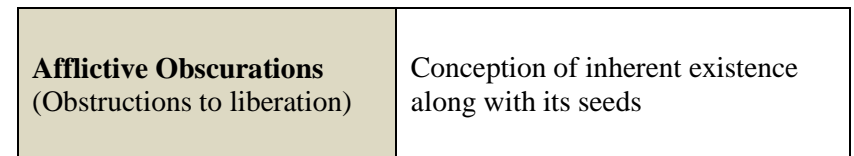
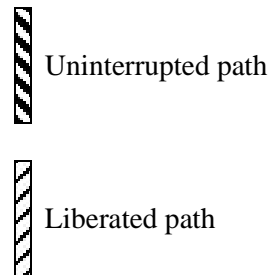
Lesser Vehicle Path

(According to the Middle Way Consequence School)



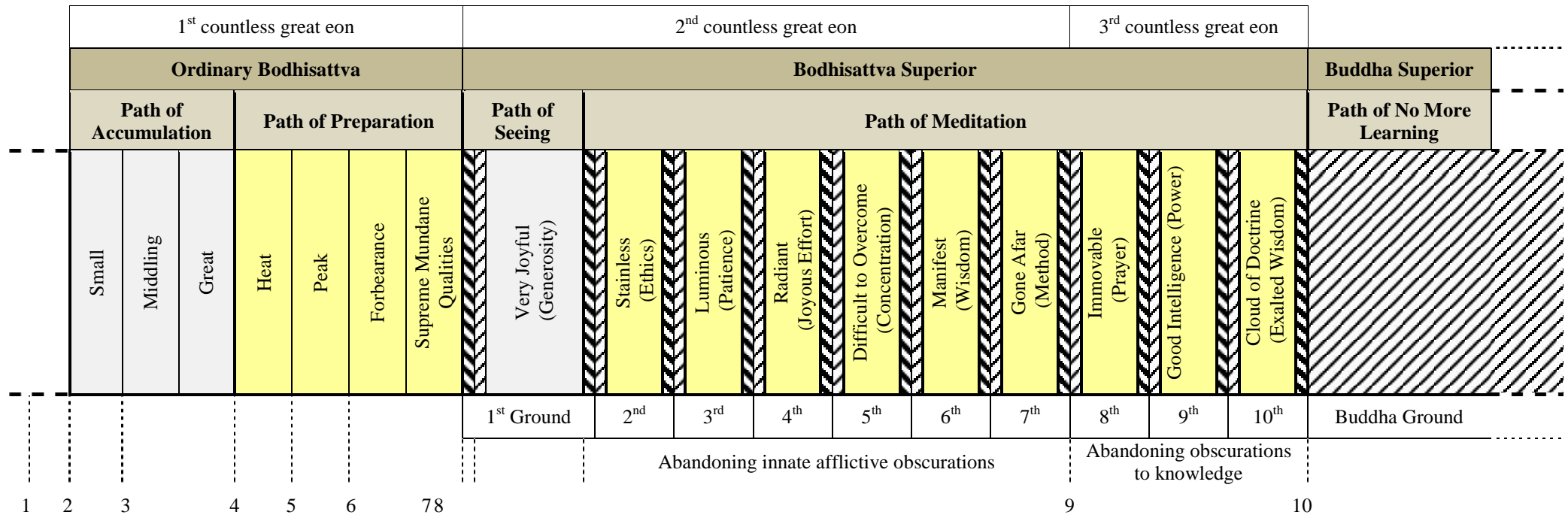
Milestones

- 1 – Uncontrived renunciation
- 2 – Union of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness
- 3 – Initial direct realization of emptiness
- 4 – Abandoned intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations
- 5 – Liberation
- 6 – Exhorted by the buddhas to enter the Great Vehicle



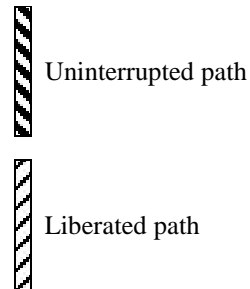
Great Vehicle Path

(According to the Middle Way Consequence School)



Milestones

- 1 – Sharp faculty trainees are pervaded by an inferential realization of emptiness
- 2 – Uncontrived renunciation and mind of enlightenment
- 3 – Will never fall to a lower vehicle
- 4 – Union of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness
- 5 – Roots of virtue cannot be severed
- 6 – No more rebirths in lower realms
- 7 – Initial direct realization of emptiness (Superior)
- 8 – Abandoned intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations
- 9 – Abandoned innate afflictive obscurations
- 10 – Enlightenment (Buddha)



Afflictive obscurations (Obstructions to liberation)	Conception of inherent existence along with its seeds
Obscurations to knowledge (Obstructions to omniscience)	Latencies of the conception of inherent existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of those

'Levels' of Emptiness

Source: Jetsun Chögyi Gyeltsen's *Presentation of Tenets*

'LEVEL' OF EMPTINESS	OBSCURATIONS ABLE TO BE ELIMINATED THROUGH REALIZING SUCH AN EMPTINESS					
	GREAT EXPOSITION	SUTRA	MIND ONLY	YOGIC AUTONOMY	SUTRA AUTONOMY	CONSEQUENCE
The person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent	Coarse afflictive obscurations	Coarse afflictive obscurations	Coarse afflictive obscurations	Coarse afflictive obscurations	Coarse afflictive obscurations	
The person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent	Subtle afflictive and non-afflictive obscurations	Subtle afflictive and non-afflictive obscurations	Subtle afflictive obscurations	Subtle afflictive obscurations	Subtle afflictive obscurations	Coarse afflictive obscurations
Form being empty of existing by way of its own characteristics as a basis for applying the term 'form'			Subtle obscurations to knowledge			
Form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances			Subtle obscurations to knowledge	Coarse obscurations to knowledge		
Phenomena being empty of being truly existent¹				Subtle obscurations to knowledge	Subtle obscurations to knowledge	Subtle afflictive obscurations and obscurations to knowledge
Phenomena being empty of being inherently existent						Subtle afflictive obscurations and obscurations to knowledge

¹ For Consequentialists true existence is equivalent to inherent existence. For Autonomists true existence is not equivalent to inherent existence. For them true existence is existence in a manner of an objective mode of subsistence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.