



How to Define *Sahabhūhetu*: Rethinking Saṃghabhadra's Use of the Concept of Common Effects

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Abstract

The co-existent cause (*sahabhūhetu*) is a type of cause proposed by the Sarvāstivāda school, which arises simultaneously with its effects. However, there is significant disagreement on how to define a *dharma* as the co-existent cause of its effects. One of the central debates revolves around how to interpret the *common effects* (**ekaphala*) criterion employed by the Vaibhāṣikas, especially Saṃghabhadra, to define the co-existent cause. Previous studies have largely overlooked Saṃghabhadra's nuanced application of the concept of *common effects* when discussing specific cases, leading to various misunderstandings. In this article, I begin by analyzing two main scenarios in which Saṃghabhadra applies the concept in question, identifying two distinct usages: common subsequent effects and common simultaneous effects. I then propose an integrated understanding, according to which Saṃghabhadra in fact maintains that if a *dharma* is the co-existent cause of another by virtue of satisfying the *common effects* criterion, it must share both common subsequent effects and common simultaneous effects with that *dharma*. On this interpretation, all cases in which Saṃghabhadra explicitly applies the *common effects* criterion to define co-existent causes can be coherently explained and no counterexamples arise under this understanding. Finally, I extend this understanding to the third scenario and demonstrate its coherence in that context as well.

Keywords Saṃghabhadra · *Sahabhūhetu* · Common effects · Simultaneous causation · Sarvāstivāda

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Introduction

The co-existent cause (*sahabhūhetu*)¹ is a type of cause proposed by the Sarvāstivāda school,² which arises simultaneously with its effects (Dhammajoti, 2016, pp. 202–203). According to Minoura (2004, p. 59), there are three main issues around this concept: its origin, its definition, and whether simultaneous causation is acknowledged within different Abhidharma traditions. Compared to the first issue,³ scholars have significant disagreements over the latter two, with these differences largely centered on the interpretation of Saṃghabhadra's stance. As a later Sarvāstivādin, Saṃghabhadra⁴ inherited a rich but chaotic intellectual legacy, which has led to considerable interpretative challenge.

The core Vaibhāṣika text, *Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (MVŚ, 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, T27, no. 1545), asserts that if the co-arising inseparable A and B possess *common effects* (**ekaphala*, “同一果”), then they are reciprocal co-existent causes (T27, no. 1545, p. 81b10–23).⁵ However, MVŚ does not provide a clear explanation of what constitutes *common effects*.

In contrast, Aparāntaka/Pāścātya claims that if A and B are *reciprocal effects* (*mithahphala*, “互為果”),⁶ then they are reciprocal co-existent causes. This

¹ I adopt the translation co-existent cause following Dhammajoti (2003, 17), rather than alternatives such as simultaneous cause (Cox, 1999, p. 704) or simultaneous relation (Tanaka, 1985, p. 91). This is, on the one hand, because the literal meaning of *sahabhū* is “co-existent,” not “simultaneous.” On the other hand, not all causes that are simultaneous with their effects can be identified as *sahabhūhetu*. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh) (84 | 16–19, 2.51 cd) provides several examples of such cases. For example, secondary characteristics (*anulakṣaṇa*) of the mind (*citta*) are the simultaneous causes of the mind, but not co-existent causes of the mind.

² According to Sarvāstivāda, a conditioned *dharma* (*saṃskṛtadharmā*) can be the six distinct types of causes of different types of effects. When *dharma* A serves as a co-existent cause, the *dharma* B which is simultaneously generated by A is called a virile effect (*puruṣakārāphala*). In contrast, when A serves as a retribution cause (*vipākāhetu*) or a homogeneous cause (*sabhāgāhetu*), the *dharma*s C and D generated are called retribution effect (*vipākaphala*) and emanation effect (*niṣyandāphala*), respectively, which arise subsequently. Cojoined causes (*saṃprayuktakāhetu*) and universal causes (*sarvatragāhetu*) are special cases of the co-existent cause and homogeneous cause, and their effects are similarly called virile effects and emanation effects, respectively. Finally, a conditioned *dharma* can take all *dharma*s except itself as its efficient causes (*kāraṇāhetu*) and this *dharma* is referred to as the dominance effect (*adhipatiphala*) of the other conditioned *dharma*s. For an overview of Sarvāstivāda's causal theory, see Dhammajoti (2015, pp. 161–163).

³ Regarding the study of the origin of the concept of co-existent cause in early Buddhist scriptures, see Kimura (1922) and Ui (1924). For research on the development of this concept in Sarvāstivāda literature, refer to Sakurabe (1978); Saito (2006); Hyodo (1983, 1985a, b). Minoura (2004) provides a comprehensive review on this topic. For translations and interpretations of relevant texts, see Cox (1999, pp. 704–706) and Dhammajoti (2003, pp. 23–26).

⁴ Saṃghabhadra was a contemporary of Vasubandhu, though slightly later, and was active around the fifth century. For an overview of the historical information concerning his life and works, see Cox (1995, 53–60).

⁵ For the translation and interpretation of the relevant passages, see Tanaka (1985, p. 98) and Dhammajoti (2003, p. 20).

⁶ Aparāntaka/Pāścātya, the so-called “outside/western” masters, refers to a branch within the Sarvāstivāda distinct from the orthodox Vaibhāṣikas. They lived to the west of Kāśmīra and held doctrinal views that differed from those of the Vaibhāṣikas, though they were not a separate school outside the Sarvāstivāda like the Sautrāntikas (Dhammajoti, 2007, pp. 5–6).

claim explicitly appears in the **Samyuktābhidharmahrdaya* (SAH, 雜阿毘曇心論) (T28, no. 1552, p. 883b6-16) and is further elaborated by Vasubandhu in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh) (Minoura, 2004, p. 67).

These two formulations represent competing interpretations within Sarvāstivāda literature. In this context, Saṃghabhadra, as a proponent of the Vaibhāṣika and the commentator on the AKBh,⁷ adopts a complex stance in his **Abhidharmanyāyānusāraśāstra* (Ny, 阿毘達磨順正理論, T29, no. 1562). However, most scholars agree on one point: Saṃghabhadra at least endorses the criterion of *common effects*.⁸

However, there is no consensus on how the criterion should be interpreted. Tanaka (1985, p. 101) argues that, according to the Ny, when A and B are said to be the co-existent cause of each other through sharing a *common effect*,⁹ this effect is merely the effect arising “in one of the subsequent moments.” Dhammajoti (2003) critiques Tanaka’s interpretation, asserting that *common effects* refer only to results arising simultaneously with A and B. According to Isshiki (2012, p. 81), however, there is no clear textual evidence to specify the content of *common effects*. More radically, Hyodo (1985b) contends that *common effects* do not refer to any real *dharma* but instead describe how several real *dharma*s collectively complete a certain event. Hyodo’s view resonates with the positions of Puguang (?–664) in Jushelunji (JSLJ, 俱舍論記, T41, no. 1821, pp. 113c07–114a6) and Fabao (active in the 7th–8th centuries CE) in Jushelunshu (JSLs, 俱舍論疏, T41, no. 1822, p. 558a23–b2). They argue that whether *common effects* refer to *dharma*s arising simultaneously or subsequently, this concept leads to various difficulties. If such critiques are valid, Hyodo’s explanation seems to render the criterion of *common effects* more coherent.

Regrettably, none of these studies offer a detailed analysis of how Saṃghabhadra specifically applies the concept of *common effects* in his discussions on the co-existent cause. Even basic questions, such as identifying the cases in which Saṃghabhadra uses *common effects* as a criterion, remain unaddressed. Given this situation, I argue that a rigorous re-examination of Saṃghabhadra’s use of the *common effects* is necessary. Only based on this can we hope to resolve other issues related to the co-existent cause.

The aim of this article is to clarify and understand Saṃghabhadra’s use of the concept of *common effects*. This understanding must satisfy two principles.

P1 (Principle of Effective Explanation): All cases where Saṃghabhadra applies the criterion of *common effects* should be explainable under this understanding.

⁷ Regarding Saṃghabhadra’s school affiliation and doctrinal position, refer to Cox (1995, pp. 55–58).

⁸ Generally speaking, Dhammajoti (2003) argues that Saṃghabhadra adopted a variety of complementary stipulations, including the criterion of *common effects*. A similar position is held by Nakagawa (1975). On the other hand, Tanaka (1985), Minoura (2004), and Isshiki (2012) contend that Saṃghabhadra only adopted the definition of *common effects*. The most extreme position is taken by Hyodo (1985b), who argues that Saṃghabhadra’s stance is confused and incomplete.

⁹ Here is Tanaka’s own expression. He frequently employs the singular form “a common effect” rather than the plural. However, as I will demonstrate later, the so-called **ekaphala* shared by A and B cannot be singular.

P2 (Principle of No Counterexamples): All instances of *dharmas* that meet the criterion of *common effects* must be recognized as the co-existent cause.

The first principle ensures that if Saṃghabhadra deems a case as either satisfying or failing to satisfy the criterion of *common effects*, this understanding should explain why the case meets or does not meet the criterion. The second principle ensures that there are no cases where certain *dharmas* fulfill the criterion of *common effects* yet are not regarded as the co-existent cause, so the criterion derived from this understanding is free from counterexamples.

However, there is no need to adhere to the following principle: “All *dharmas* recognized as the co-existent causes must satisfy the criterion of *common effects*.” This is because it cannot be determined whether Saṃghabhadra intended this criterion to apply to all cases of the co-existent cause.

As the foundation for this discussion, it is essential to identify the cases in which Saṃghabhadra applies the criterion of *common effects* and examine how he utilizes this criterion. Various Abhidharma texts generally agree that instances of the co-existent cause occur in the following three scenarios.¹⁰

S1: When the mind (*citta*) arises together with its concomitants (*cittānuvartino dharma*).

S2: When a conditioned *dharma* (*saṃskṛtadharmā*) arises together with four conditioned characteristics (*saṃskṛtalakṣaṇa*) and four secondary characteristics (*anulakṣaṇa*), making a total of nine *dharmas*.

S3: When the four great elements (*mahābhūta*) arise together.

I will examine Saṃghabhadra’s application of the *common effects* criterion in each of these three scenarios. First, I argue that in the scenarios S1 and S2, Saṃghabhadra’s use of *common effects* is relatively clear, and can be interpreted respectively as implying the usages of common subsequent effects and common simultaneous effects. I then propose an Integrated Understanding that incorporates both of these usages, and demonstrate that it satisfies both the Principle P1 and P2 in these two scenarios. Finally, I extend the scope of this Integrated Understanding to the scenario S3, and argue that it likewise meets the two principles. Taken together, these analyses support the conclusion that the proposed integrated understanding is both viable and competitive.

¹⁰ Regarding which types of *dharmas* could be co-existent causes, Sarvāstivāda texts provide differing lists, as noted by Minoura (2004). However, there is basic agreement on the scenarios under which a co-existent cause occurs, which is established in the AKBh (83 | 20–23, 2.50 cd).

Common Subsequent Effects: the Mind and its Concomitants (S1)

This section examines Saṃghabhadra's discussion on concomitants of the mind (S1), showing how it supports the understanding of common subsequent effects. Beginning with the MVŚ, Sarvāstivāda texts have generally asserted that the mind and its concomitants, arising together, reciprocally serve as co-existent causes. Concomitants of the mind are defined by three aspects: time (*kāla*), effects (*phala*), and moral species (i.e., wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral).¹¹ These three aspects respectively stipulate that those concomitants of the mind must be simultaneous with the mind, must share the *common effects* with the mind, and must align with the mind in terms of moral quality.

The *common effects* here are interpreted as “common effects*,¹² common retributions and common emanations”. Two issues arise here. First, what does effects* mean? Second, must the mind and its concomitants share all types of these effects, or only one type of effect? Saṃghabhadra addresses the first in Ny. I will examine his view, followed by a discussion of the second based on MŚV and SAH.

A. Ny, Volume 15: The Explanation of *Common Effects*.

[Question]: Aren't the [common] emanations and retributions also included under the term “common effects*” (“一果”)? Why are emanations and retributions mentioned separately in addition to “common effects*”?

[Answer]: In fact, the term “common effects*” here can only include the virile and disconnection effects (*viśamyogaphala*).

[Question]: Doesn't this term universally include the emanation and retribution effects as well?

[Answer]: Although it can include them, that is not what this term specifically indicates.

However, there are four types of virile effects: those that co-arise, those that arise without interruption, those that arise after a delay, and those that do not arise. What is being discussed here are effects that do not co-arise with their cause, to refute the view that virile effects only occur in an assemblage (**samūha*, *tshogs p.a.*, “和合聚”) of *dharmas* that arise together with their causes. Because in such an assemblage, the *dharmas* are effects of each other and nothing can be the cause of itself. It has already been demonstrated that the virile effects, which do not co-arise with the aggregation, constitutes *common effects*. Therefore, the

¹¹ AKBh (84 | 02, 2.51 cd): *kālaphalādisubhatādibhiḥ* ||.

¹² To distinguish the concept of *common effects* in the broad sense, the narrower sense of common effect* in this context is marked with an asterisk *.

emanation effects and retribution effects are mentioned separately. (T29, no. 1562, p. 418b10-19)¹³

Samghabhadra holds that the common effects* in this context include the virile and disconnection effects.¹⁴ The disconnection effect refers to *nirvāna*, which is generally not considered a genuine effect. The virile effects typically denote the simultaneous effects of the co-existent causes and cojoined causes.

Samghabhadra further distinguishes four types of virile effects based on the time of their arising, among which only the first type, the co-arisen virile effects, occurs simultaneously with their causes. These co-arisen virile effects are the specific types of virile effects that serve as the results of the co-existent cause. However, he asserts that the virile effects within the common effects* do not include the co-arisen virile effects.

Accordingly, the *common effects* shared by the mind and its concomitants consist only of the subsequent virile effects, the retribution effects, and the emanation effects. This interpretation aligns closely with the view of Tanaka and refutes Dhammajoti's understanding.

However, why does Samghabhadra believe that *common effects* cannot include the co-arisen virile effect? His reasoning is that (1) within this assemblage, the various *dharmas* serve as effects for one another, and (2) a *dharma* cannot be its own effect. This reasoning seems perplexing because the two reasons appear to have no connection, and neither seems related to the co-arisen virile effects.

A proposed strategy here is to consider what consequences would follow if the *common effects* shared by A and B included their co-arisen virile effect C.¹⁵ Then, we evaluate in what sense these consequences would be unacceptable to Samghabhadra.

The primary concern is infinite regress. If A and B share co-arisen virile effect C as a common effect, thereby making them reciprocal co-existent causes, then it becomes necessary to explain why C is A's co-arisen virile effect. Since a co-arisen virile effect is defined as the result of a *dharma* serving as the co-existent cause, therefore it is necessary to explain why A is the co-existent cause of C. To maintain consistency in the definition of co-existent causes, one would also need to identify *common effects*

¹³ Ny: 豈不流異熟亦是一果攝，如何一果外說等流異熟耶？實爾，此中言一果者，但攝土用及離繫果。豈不此言通故亦攝等流異熟？雖言亦攝，非此所明。然土用果總有四種，俱生，無間，隔越，不生。此顯與因非俱有果，為遮唯執與因俱生和合聚中有土用果。此和合聚互為果故，自非自體土用果故。即顯非彼俱起和合土用果中有一果義，是故別舉等流異熟。This passage is cited in Shriramati's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṅkā Tatvārthā* (AKTA) (D 4421: 236b3-5).

¹⁴ Yaśomitra, in the *Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* (AKV 193), also interprets *ekaphala* in the same context as in the AKBh, referring to the virile effects and the retribution effects. Since the retribution effects and emanation effects have already been discussed separately. And the dominance effects are something that all conditioned *dharmas* share, so this type is not considered here.

¹⁵ Both Puguang and Fabao argue that the common simultaneous effects criterion is not tenable. However, Puguang in JSLJ simply repeats Samghabhadra's reasoning (2). Fabao in JSLS, on the other hand, uses the example of conditioned characteristics and secondary characteristics, arguing that there is no common simultaneous effect between them, yet they are co-existent causes of each other. This explanation is unrelated to Samghabhadra's discussion and does not explain why conditioned characteristics and secondary characteristics are co-existent causes of each other.

that include a co-arisen virile effect (e.g., D for A–C, E for B–C). Continuing this process would lead to an infinite regress.

Secondly, this could lead to circularity. To avoid infinite regress, one might identify D as actually being B, and E as actually being (A). In other words, A, B, and C would each be the co-arisen virile effect of the other two *dharma*s. However, explaining the relationship between A and B require invoking their relationship with C which loops back to the relationship between A and (B). Yet, the relationship between A and B is precisely the original issue in need of explanation. This mirrors Saṃghabhadra's first reason that A, B, and C serve as effects for one another. As the above reasoning, introducing co-arisen effects would inevitably lead to circular explanation.

Finally, this could lead to a *dharma* being its own effect. To break the circularity, one might argue that A, B, and C form an assemblage, and posit a shared co-arisen virile effect. However, this approach would inevitably lead to another infinite regress. To prevent it, this common co-arisen virile effect would need to exist within the assemblage of A, B, and C. In this case, it would inevitably result in at least one *dharma* being its own effect. This outcome would violate Saṃghabhadra's second reason: "A *dharma* cannot be its own effect."

Thus, allowing co-arisen virile effects as *common effects* would lead to regress, circularity, or a *dharma* being its own effect, which Saṃghabhadra rejects.

The foregoing clarifies the scope of *common effects*, which includes only the subsequent effects of *dharma*s acting as the co-existent cause, as well as the disconnection effect. Now, let us return to the second of the two questions raised at the beginning of this section: Do A and B need to share all subsequent effects, or is it sufficient for them to share only one type of subsequent effects?

Saṃghabhadra does not directly address this question. However, discussions of the same issue in the MŚV (T27, no. 1545, p. 787c1–16) and the SAH (T28, no. 1552, p. 883b21–27) mention that various types of effects do not always arise. For instance, morally indeterminate (*avyākṛta*) minds and its concomitants inherently lack retribution effects but invariably share the same emanation effects. In other cases, they may both lack disconnection effects but necessarily share other subsequent effects. From this, it follows that if A and B do indeed have specific types of subsequent effects, these effects must be identical.

In conclusion, in S1, Saṃghabhadra employs the common subsequent effects criterion (temporarily setting aside the disconnection effect) to account for the relation of reciprocal co-existent causes between the mind and its concomitants. This means that all types of subsequent effects of A are also all types of subsequent effects of B, and vice versa.

Common Simultaneous Effects: the Problem of Secondary Characteristics (S2)

This section examines a special case within the scenario S2 (conditioned *dharma*–conditioned characteristics–secondary characteristics) which is the "problem of secondary characteristics" concerning the relation between a conditioned *dharma* and its secondary characteristics.

In the scenario S2, Saṃghabhadra holds that any pair among the conditioned *dharma* and the four conditioned characteristics are reciprocal co-existent causes (T29, no. 1562, p. 417c19–24). However, the conditioned *dharma* is the co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics, but not vice versa.

The relationship between the conditioned *dharma* and its secondary characteristics is unique because, under the *common effects* criterion, if A and B share the same effects (whether simultaneous or subsequent), and A thus is the co-existent cause of B, then it follows that B should also be the co-existent cause of A.¹⁶

Does this then mean that, in the case of the problem of secondary characteristics, the criterion of *common effects* is no longer being used for determining co-existent causes? Minoura (2004) and Gao (2016) argue that Saṃghabhadra critiques the *reciprocal effects* criterion and reaffirms the common effects criterion, which they believe accommodates unidirectional co-existent cause–virile effect cases. However, they do not provide detailed explanations. Dhammajoti (2003, p. 48) instead suggests that Saṃghabhadra appeals to other criteria.

I examine this issue through Saṃghabhadra's discussion of the relationship between the mind and its secondary characteristics. Returning to Saṃghabhadra's discussion in Ny regarding concomitants of the mind, he introduces a question: why are the secondary characteristics of the mind not considered as concomitants of the mind? **Abhidharmasamayapradīpikāśāstra* (ASPś, 阿毘達磨藏顯宗論, T29, no. 1563) expands this into the question of why secondary characteristics of the mind are not its co-existent causes.¹⁷ Another part of this issue is the fact that the mind is the co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics, but not vice versa. Saṃghabhadra provides two explanations of this asymmetry.

I will begin by arguing that, based on Saṃghabhadra's explanation of why secondary characteristics are not co-existent causes of the mind (Passage B), the *common effects* criterion is still employed to account for the relationship between them. However, common subsequent effects alone are insufficient to explain why the secondary characteristics are not co-existent causes of the mind; instead, common simultaneous effects must be invoked.

Next, I argue that, drawing further on Saṃghabhadra's account of why the mind can be a co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics (Passage C), the common simultaneous effects criterion can be asymmetrically satisfied, thereby generating a unidirectional co-existent cause–virile effect relation. Moreover, the type of effect relevant to common simultaneous effects must be restricted to the simultaneous dominance effect caused by a powerful efficient cause. This usage is more intricate than that of common subsequent effects.

¹⁶ The issue regarding secondary characteristics first arises in SAH (T28, no. 1552, p. 883b27–c4). Vasubandhu explicitly notes this problem in AKBh (83 | 23–24, 2.50 cd) but does not provide further elaboration.

¹⁷ ASPś: 何緣心隨相非心隨轉法? 以隨相於心非俱有因故。何緣心隨相非心俱有因? (T29, no. 1563, p. 815a19–21) “Why are secondary characteristics of the mind not concomitants of the mind? Because secondary characteristics are not co-existent causes of the mind. Why are secondary characteristics of the mind not co-existent causes of the mind?”

Explanation of why Secondary Characteristics are not Co-Existent Causes of Conditioned *Dharma*

B. Ny, Volume 15: The Explanation of Relationship Between the Mind and Its Secondary Characteristics.

Why are the secondary characteristics of the mind not considered co-existent causes of the mind?

- (1) Because the mind does not arise due to their power.
- (2) Because the mind and its secondary characteristics are not *reciprocal effects*;
- (3) Because they function for only one *dharma*;
- (4) Because they do not share the *common effects* with the mind;
- (5) Because the majority of *dharmas* in the assemblage are not their effects.

For these reasons, secondary characteristics are not called concomitants of the mind.

Conversely, why can the mind be a co-existent cause for its secondary characteristics? Because the secondary characteristics, along with the mind and [the conditioned characteristics] such as production (**jāti*, “生”) and so on, are able to function. (T29, no. 1562, p. 418b22-27)¹⁸

In the passage cited above, Saṃghabhadra provides five reasons why the secondary characteristics of the mind are not its co-existent causes. These reasons can be grouped into two sets based on both the structure of the text and their argumentative logic. The first three reasons all appeal to the notion of efficacy/power, while the last two, in my view, actually concern *common effects*.

Specifically, in the first group: reason (1) states that the secondary characteristic lacks the efficacy to bring about the arising of the mind; (2) claims that the two are not *reciprocal effects*; and (3) states that the secondary characteristic only exerts its power on its corresponding conditioned characteristic. These three reasons reinforce one another—namely, that since the secondary characteristic has efficacy only with respect to a single conditioned characteristic,¹⁹ it has no efficacy toward the arising of

¹⁸ Ny: 何緣心隨相非心俱有因? 不由彼力心得生故, 心非與彼互為果故, 彼於一法有功能故。又與心王非一果故, 聚中多分非彼果故。即由如是所說多因, 隨相不名心隨轉法。若爾, 云何心能與彼為俱有因? 由隨心王, 生等諸位, 彼得轉故。(T29, no. 1562, p. 418b22-27)

¹⁹ According to Sarvāstivāda, the four conditioned characteristics each exert power on the other eight simultaneously arising *dharmas*, while the secondary characteristic only exerts power on the conditioned characteristic it corresponds to. This helps avoid an infinite regress. For example, the production-characteristic causes the arising of the other eight *dharmas*, including the secondary characteristic of produc-

the mind, and thus does not take the mind as its effect. If we consider only these three reasons, Dhammajoti's interpretation holds. However, once the final two reasons are taken into account, the situation becomes more complex.²⁰

Reason (4) states that the mind and its secondary characteristics do not share *common effects*, and this is one of the reasons why the secondary characteristics cannot be co-existent causes of the mind. This indicates that Saṃghabhadra at least considers the *common effects* criterion applicable in determining whether secondary characteristics and a *dharma* share a co-existent cause-virile effect relationship, although this criterion is not satisfied here.

However, as noted by Puguang (T41, no. 1821, pp. 113c26–114a1) and Fabao (T41, no. 1822, p. 558a27–b1), no compelling reason supports that the mind and its secondary characteristics do not share common subsequent effects. Then, if the *common effects* criterion were limited to common subsequent effects, we encounter cases where the relationship between several *dharmas* satisfies this criterion, yet they are still not reciprocal co-existent causes.

Reason (5) states that since most *dharmas* in the *aggregate* (“聚”) are not effects of the secondary characteristics, the secondary characteristics cannot be the co-existent cause of the mind. The *aggregate* here could refer to either the aggregate of the mind and its concomitants or the aggregate of “mind-conditioned characteristics-secondary characteristics.” Regardless, these *dharmas* in this *aggregate* are simultaneous effects possessed by the mind as the co-existent cause. Therefore, the reason (5) essentially states: “Because most of the simultaneous effects of the mind are not effects of its secondary characteristics, the latter cannot be co-existent causes of the mind.” This introduces common simultaneous effects criterion, albeit not the sole criterion.

Reasons (4) and (5) jointly yield two key points. On the one hand, despite sharing common subsequent effects, the mind and its secondary characteristics do not satisfy the *common effects* criterion. On the other hand, one reason the secondary characteristics are not the co-existent cause of the mind is that they do not possess common simultaneous effects. These points strongly suggest that the *common effects* criterion should include common simultaneous effects. This perspective stands in contrast to Saṃghabhadra's position on the scenario S1.

Explanation of why the Conditioned *Dharma* is a Co-Existent Causes of its Secondary Characteristics

Furthermore, regarding why the mind is the co-existent cause of the secondary characteristics, the final part of Passage B provides a simple explanation based on efficacy/power. However, in another explanatory passage, Saṃghabhadra offer a more detailed account.

tion-production, while the production-production only causes the production-characteristic to arise. See Dhammajoti (2015, p. 349).

²⁰ In Dhammajoti's translation (2003, p. 24), the phrase “聚中多分非彼果故” was omitted.

C. Ny, Volume 20: The Analogy Between “A *Dharma* and Its Secondary Characteristics” and “The Great Elements and Derived Matters”.

[Question]: Is it not the case that the mind and its [secondary] characteristics²¹ are also not *reciprocal effects*? Yet, the mind is the co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics. Shouldn't the four great elements (**mahābhūta*, “大種”) and the derived matter (**upādāyarūpa*, “所造色”) be considered in the same way? Why aren't they co-existent causes [of the derivative matter]?

[Answer]: This example is different. Although the mind and its secondary characteristics are not *reciprocal effects*, the *dharma* that is a *reciprocal effect* of the secondary characteristics must be a *reciprocal effect* of the mind. Moreover, the mind and its secondary characteristics share *common effects*, which is why the mind is their co-existent cause. This is not the case for the four great elements and the derived matters, so the great elements are not the co-existent cause for derived matters. (T29, no. 1562, p. 452a29-b6)²²

Here, Saṃghabhadra discusses the difference between the mind-secondary characteristics relationship and that of the great element and derived matter. The opponent argues that these two relationships are analogous—neither involves reciprocal co-existent cause relationship, and neither satisfies the *common effects* criterion (T29, no. 1562, p. 452a26–b2). Thus, the opponent claims that if the mind can be the co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics, then the great element should equally qualify as the co-existent cause of derived matter (I will return to this issue in “[The Integrated Understanding](#)” section).

In response, Saṃghabhadra identifies two unique features of the mind–secondary characteristic relationship, which justify the claim that the mind can be the co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics.

Feature (1) is that for any *dharma*, if it stands in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with a secondary characteristic, then it necessarily stands in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with the mind. According to Abhidharma, such a *dharma* can only be the conditioned characteristic corresponding to that specific secondary characteristic.

This implies that the mind and all conditioned characteristics are *reciprocal effects* whereas a secondary characteristic stands in such a relation only with its corresponding conditioned characteristic. For instance, secondary characteristic of production (*jāijāti*, “生生”) only stands in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with characteristic of production (*jātilakṣaṇa*, “生相”), while production is necessarily in a *reciprocal effects* relation with the mind. Hence, the point here is that the mind and its secondary characteristics share certain common simultaneous effects, namely, a particular conditioned characteristic.

²¹ The original text uses “characteristics” (相), but in the context, it seems more appropriate to read it as “secondary characteristics” (隨相).

²² Ny: 豈不心與心之隨相非互為果而心與相為俱有因, 大與所造亦應如是, 何故非因? 此例非等, 心與隨相雖復相望非互為果而彼隨相互為果法, 定有與心互為果義。又心隨相與心一果, 故心與彼為俱有因, 大與所造無如是事, 故大於彼非俱有因。 (T29, no. 1562, p. 452a29-b6).

Feature (2) is that the secondary characteristic and the mind have *common effects*. This implies that the mind qualifies as the co-existent cause of the secondary characteristic because they share same effects.

It is clear that these two features in Passage C contrast sharply with reasons (4) and (5) in Passage B. The Feature (1) and Reason (5) both concern common simultaneous effects, but they refer to completely different facts. The Feature (2) directly contradicts Reason (4). In what follows, I will propose an explanation that reconciles the claims made in these two passages.

The Usage of Common Simultaneous Effects

I have examined the two explanations offered by Samghabhadra in Passages B and C, and have highlighted the tension between them. I will now argue that these two accounts in fact point to a more complex use of the common simultaneous effects criterion—namely, that it can be satisfied unidirectionally. Building on this, I further discuss what types of effects should be included under this criterion. Finally, I propose a full formulation of the common simultaneous effects criterion.

In the two sets of explanations above, the relations among the mind, conditioned characteristics, and secondary characteristics can be summarized as follows:

Relation I – Subsequent Effects The mind, conditioned characteristics, and secondary characteristics have common subsequent effects.

Relation II – Simultaneous Effects Shared by the Mind and its Secondary Characteristics A secondary characteristic only stands in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with its corresponding conditioned characteristic, and this conditioned characteristic in turn stands in such a relation with the mind. In contrast, the mind and all four conditioned characteristics are *reciprocal effects*, while each secondary characteristic does not stand in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with all four. (Based on Reason 5 in Passage B and Feature 1 in Passage C.)

Relation III – Simultaneous Effects Shared by the Mind and its Conditioned Characteristics The five—the mind and the four conditioned characteristics—are *reciprocal effects*. Specifically, each conditioned characteristic and its corresponding secondary characteristic are *reciprocal effects*, but the mind does not stand in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with any secondary characteristic.

Let us first consider the relation between the mind and its secondary characteristics. The key asymmetry between the mind and secondary characteristics lies in Relation II, which can be captured by two propositions:

Proposition A *All of B's effects of type t X are also effects of A of type t.*

Proposition B *All of A's effects of type t Y are also effects of B of type t.*

Note The basic conditions for type *t* are: (1) the effect occurs simultaneously with its cause; (2) the effect and its cause are *reciprocal effects*.

By substituting the mind and secondary characteristic into A and B respectively, **Relation II** can be interpreted as a case in which Proposition a is satisfied, but Proposition b is not.

If both Propositions hold, then $X=Y$, and A and B “share all effects of type *t*.” In this case, with respect to effects of type *t*, “A and B satisfy the common simultaneous effects criterion.”

This implies that when we say “A and B have common simultaneous effects,” we are in fact referring to two distinct relations: “from the perspective of B, A possesses all of its effects of type *t*,” and “from the perspective of A, B possesses all of its effects of type *t*.” These may also be expressed as “A has common simultaneous effects with B (from B’s perspective)” and “B has common simultaneous effects with A (from A’s perspective).”

Building on this, let us return to Relation II—i.e., the case where Proposition a is satisfied while Proposition b is not. It follows that, with respect to effects of type *t*, “from the perspective of B, A has common simultaneous effects with it,” and “from the perspective of A, B does not have common simultaneous effects with it.” Substituting the mind and its secondary characteristic for A and B, respectively, we arrive at the following: with respect to effects of type *t*, “from the perspective of the secondary characteristic, the mind has common simultaneous effects with it,” while “from the perspective of the mind, the secondary characteristic does not have common simultaneous effects with it.”

In this way, one can coherently explain how Saṃghabhadra could state, first, that the mind and its secondary characteristic do not have *common effects* (Reason 4 in Passage B) according to Proposition b, and later, that they do share *common effects* (Feature 2 in Passage C) according to Proposition a, without contradiction.

The above analysis reveals a key point: the common simultaneous effects criterion can be satisfied unidirectionally—that is, only one of Propositions a or b needs to be met. Of course, if both propositions are satisfied, the criterion is met bidirectionally.

Based on this, the common simultaneous effects criterion allows for unidirectional co-existent cause–virile effect relations. For instance, if only Proposition a is satisfied while Proposition b is not, then A can be identified as the co-existent cause of B, but not vice versa. This, in turn, provides a coherent explanation for why the mind is the co-existent cause of the secondary characteristic, but not vice versa.

To conclude, it is clear that in addressing the problem of secondary characteristics, Saṃghabhadra introduces the common simultaneous effects criterion, whose basic form corresponds to either Proposition a or Proposition b outlined above. This criterion first allows for the establishment of a unidirectional co-existent cause–virile effect relation. Furthermore, if both propositions are satisfied, it yields a bidirectional co-existent cause–virile effect relation.

As of now, one important issue regarding the common simultaneous effects criterion remains unresolved, specifically, which of the five types of effects in the Sarvāstivāda’s theory of causation should correspond to type *t*.

According to Sarvāstivāda's theory of causation, only two kinds of effects occur simultaneously with their causes: the virile effect, as the effect of a co-existent cause, and the dominance effect arising simultaneously with an efficient cause. The former has already been ruled out in “Common Subsequent Effects: The Mind and Its Concomitants (S1)” section. Yet the latter also appears problematic. According to the Sarvāstivāda account of efficient cause–dominance effect (Dhammajoti, 2015, 161–163), any conditioned *dharma*—other than the mind and its secondary characteristics—is the dominance effect of both. This broadly defined category of dominance effects fails to account for the following specific cases about effects of type *t* discussed in the context of the secondary characteristic issue:

1. A secondary characteristic and its corresponding conditioned characteristic are reciprocal type *t* effects;
2. The mind and the four conditioned characteristics are reciprocal type *t* effects;
3. A secondary characteristic is not an effect of type *t* of the other three conditioned characteristics.

In light of this, I propose that we need to appeal to Saṃghabhadra's distinction between two kinds of efficient cause, namely, those that merely do not obstruct the arising of other *dharmas* and those that have the power to bring about other *dharmas* (T29, no. 1562, p. 429a10-13). In the Passage B, Saṃghabhadra gave reason (3) for why secondary characteristics cannot be the co-existent cause of the mind, stating that every secondary characteristic only has power over one *dharma*, while they lack power over the majority of the *dharmas* in the aggregation. Thus, “the majority of *dharmas* in the assemblage are not their effects in reason (5) can be reasonably understood as “the majority of *dharmas* in the aggregation are not the dominance effects caused by secondary characteristics as a powerful efficient cause.” On the other hand, since these *dharmas* are in fact all the virile effects of the mind, the mind has power over them.²³ Therefore, the mind is also their powerful efficient cause.²⁴

Following this line of reasoning, type *t* corresponds to simultaneous dominance effects that are produced by powerful efficient causes. On this basis, the three earlier cases can be properly explained. For instance, production–production and the characteristic of production are reciprocal powerful efficient causes. And the mind and all four conditioned characteristics are reciprocal powerful efficient causes while production–production are not a powerful efficient cause of the characteristic of duration (*sthiti*, “住相”).

²³ ASPs: 此土用名為目何法? 即目諸法所有功能。如是冥符後頌文說: 若因彼力生, 是果名土用。(T29, no. 1563, p. 819a23-25) “What does the term ‘virile’ refer to? It refers to all capacities of *dharmas*. This is consistent with the subsequent verse that if it arises due to power of that one, this effect is called the virile [effect of that one].”

²⁴ This understanding is also echoed by Puguang. Regarding Saṃghabhadra's four types of virile effects, Puguang further elaborated on this distinction in his JSLJ (T41, no. 1821, pp. 114c27-115a2). For co-arisen virile effects, he distinguishes two subtypes: (1) effects that are reciprocally effects of their co-existent causes and conjoined causes, and (2) effects arising from simultaneous performance of action (“造作”). He argues that in the *common effects*, the common virile effects exclude the first subtype but not the second.

Furthermore, when asserting that A and B share a simultaneous common effect C, there is no need to invoke other factors to explain the relationship between A and C (compared with the situation in Passage A). It suffices to claim that A has the power to bring about the arising of C, meaning A is the powerful efficient cause of C. This approach avoids infinite regress, circular explanations, or the situation where a *dharma* is its own result discussed in “[Common Subsequent Effects: The Mind and Its Concomitants \(S1\)](#)” section.

To conclude, based on the analysis of Relation II, the common simultaneous effects criterion can be formulated as follows:

From the perspective of B, A satisfies the common simultaneous effects criterion if and only if all of B's effects of type *t* are also effects of type *t* of A. The converse holds as well.

Note: The conditions for type *t* are: (1) the effect occurs simultaneously with its cause; (2) the effect and its cause are *reciprocal effects*; (3) the effect is a dominance effect produced by a powerful efficient cause.

However, the above restriction of type *t* appears overly strict. According to Relation III, a secondary characteristic is an effect of type *t* of the corresponding conditioned characteristic, but not an effect of type *t* of the mind. However, from the perspective of the conditioned characteristics, the mind, in fact, satisfies the common simultaneous effects criterion. Therefore, in the case of relation between the mind and its conditioned characteristics, condition (2) is not met. Therefore, condition (2) should apply only to B, not to A.

Accordingly, the revised formulation is as follows, which accommodates Relations I–III involving conditioned characteristics.

Common Simultaneous Effects

From the perspective of B, A satisfies the common simultaneous effects criterion if and only if for any *dharma* C, if C and B are *reciprocal effects* of type *t*, then C is also effects of type *t* of A. The converse holds as well.

Note: The conditions for type *t* are: (1) the effect occurs simultaneously with its cause; (2) the effect is a dominance effect produced by a powerful efficient cause.

The Integrated Understanding

Based on the discussions in “[Common Subsequent Effects: The Mind and Its Concomitants \(S1\)](#)” and “[Common Simultaneous Effects: The Problem of Secondary Characteristics \(S2\)](#)” sections, it appears that Saṃghabhadra adopts different usages of *common effects* in different scenarios concerning the co-existent cause. In this sec-

tion, I propose an Integrated Understanding, which holds that in any case where the *common effects* criterion is invoked, both common subsequent effects and common simultaneous effects criteria must be satisfied.

I begin by presenting this Integrated Understanding, then examine whether it meets the two principles initially proposed. Finally, I attempt to extend the scope of this understanding to the scenario S3 that involving the great elements.

Integrating the Two Usages

“Common Subsequent Effects: The Mind and Its Concomitants (S1)” and “Common Simultaneous Effects: The Problem of Secondary Characteristics (S2)” sections examined two scenarios of co-existent causes. Samghabhadra appears to apply only common subsequent effects to S1, but invokes common simultaneous effects in S2. While this may suggest scenario-dependent criteria, I argue for an Integrated Understanding.

To begin with, it should be clarified that the common subsequent effects and common simultaneous effects criteria are not in conflict with one another and can be harmonized. The type of simultaneous effects excluded in the S1 are virile effects, whereas the simultaneous effects introduced in S2 are simultaneous dominance effects produced by powerful efficient causes. Therefore, the common simultaneous effects criterion developed in “Common Simultaneous Effects: The Problem of Secondary Characteristics (S2)” section is not the kind excluded in “Common Subsequent Effects: The Mind and Its Concomitants (S1)” section. Conversely, in the discussion of S2, I have already shown that the mind and its secondary characteristics also satisfy the common subsequent effects criterion. This further demonstrates that the two criteria are compatible.

Then, a further question arises: although they are compatible, must both be met, or is one sufficient in each scenario?

In the scenario S1, the common simultaneous effects criterion must be invoked, without it, as argued in “Common Simultaneous Effects: The Problem of Secondary Characteristics (S2)” section, the exclusion of secondary characteristics as co-existent causes of the mind would remain unexplained, violating the Principle of No Counterexamples.²⁵

In S2, while the common subsequent effects criterion is technically satisfied, it is not strictly necessary. At least concerning conditioned *dharmas* and their secondary characteristics, the common simultaneous effects criterion alone suffices to determine their relationship.

²⁵ Why did Samghabhadra only mention common subsequent effects when discussing the mind and its concomitants? This is likely a historical legacy issue. When the MŚV first clearly defined the concomitants of the mind, the issue of secondary characteristics had not yet been recognized. Texts that explicitly raised the issue of secondary characteristics, such as SAH and AKBh, adopted the criterion of *reciprocal effects* and thus could not explain this issue. Samghabhadra, in his commentary on this section, clearly recognized this challenge. This is why, after listing those concomitants, he first mentioned the need to address the issue of secondary characteristics later and only then discussed the earlier Abhidharma texts’ definitions of “time, effects, and moral species.” This suggests that he realized the traditional definition was incomplete.

This leaves us with two possible options: (1) both criteria should be satisfied in both scenarios; or (2) only S1 requires both. While both are theoretically coherent and the textual evidence does not definitively rule out the second option, the first is preferable for two reasons.

First, it assumes a unified *common effects* criterion enhancing the parsimony of Saṃghabhadra's account. Second, in S1, the conditioned characteristics of the mind are regarded as concomitants of the mind and thus stand in a relation of reciprocal co-existent causes with the mind. As such, they too must satisfy the common subsequent effects criterion in relation to the mind. Since there is no textual evidence to suggest that this relation cannot be generalized to all conditioned *dharmas* and their conditioned characteristics, it follows that any pair within the conditioned *dharmas* and its conditioned characteristics should likewise satisfy the common subsequent effects criterion.

Therefore, I propose the following Integrated Understanding.

The Integrated Understanding

If A is the *co-existent cause* of B by virtue of meeting the *common effects* criterion, then not only must A and B share exactly the same subsequent effects, but also, for any *dharma* C, if C and B are *reciprocal effects* of type *t*, then C is also an effect of type *t* of A. The converse holds as well.

Note: The conditions for type *t* are: (1) the effect occurs simultaneously with its cause; (2) the effect is a dominance effect produced by a powerful efficient cause.

Verification of the Integrated Understanding

Having derived the Integrated Understanding from the scenarios S1 and S2, we now examine whether this Integrated Understanding satisfies both the Principle of Effective Explanation and Principle of No Counterexamples introduced at the outset.

First, the Principle of Effective Explanation has already been shown to hold in the case of the relation between the mind and its secondary characteristics. In addition, we must consider the relation between the mind and its concomitants. In these cases, Saṃghabhadra explicitly appeals to the *common effects* criterion, and we have already established that they share common subsequent effects. Hence, the Integrated Understanding satisfies the Principle of Effective Explanation only if the common simultaneous effects criterion is also satisfied.

Let us consider an arbitrary pair selected from the mind and its concomitants—for example, the mind and a particular mental factor (*caitta*) D. Those *dharmas* that are mutually related to the mind as simultaneous powerful efficient causes include all the other concomitants of the mind apart from mental factor D. Since the mind is taken to be the co-existent cause of these other *dharmas*, it must also be a powerful effi-

cient cause for them.²⁶ Thus, for the mind, this mental factor D fulfills the common simultaneous effects criterion. The same reasoning applies to other instances. The Integrated Understanding thus satisfies the Principle of Effective Explanation.

Next, regarding the Principle of No Counterexamples, we must consider whether there are additional cases that meet the Integrated Understanding and whether the relevant *dharmas* in those cases are regarded as co-existent causes. Two such types of cases can be identified.

(1) The relationship between conditioned *dharmas* and four conditioned characteristics. As shown in “[The Usage of Common Simultaneous Effects](#)” section, these five *dharmas* share both common subsequent effects and common simultaneous effects. They therefore satisfy the common effects criterion of the Integrated Understanding. Moreover, they are indeed regarded as mutually being co-existent causes.²⁷ Thus, the Principle of No Counterexamples is upheld.

(2) The relationship between conditioned characteristics and secondary characteristics. On the one hand, similar to the case of conditioned *dharmas* and secondary characteristics, they share common subsequent effects. On the other hand, from the perspective of the conditioned characteristics, the secondary characteristics do not share common simultaneous effects with them. In contrast, from the perspective of secondary characteristics, for instance, the secondary characteristics of production-production, other three conditioned characteristics share common simultaneous effects with it. And since the only *dharma* that is a reciprocal powerful efficient cause with this secondary characteristic is the corresponding conditioned characteristic, for this secondary characteristic, this conditioned characteristic has no needs to satisfy the common simultaneous effects criterion. Therefore, from the perspective of secondary characteristic, all four conditioned characteristics satisfy the *common effects* criterion and should be its co-existent causes. Though not explicitly stated by Saṃghabhadra, this conclusion is reasonably inferable.

The Integrated Understanding meets both principles across all cases in S1 and S2, making it coherent and plausible.²⁸

²⁶ See note 21.

²⁷ Ny: 有為相與所相, 心與心隨轉, 亦更互為因. (T29, no. 1562, p. 417c20); 諸能相各應說互為俱有因. (T29, no. 1562, p. 417c22-23).

²⁸ A potential challenge concerns whether some cases meet the *common effects* criteria but are not co-existent causes. One such case involves the mind and the secondary characteristics of concomitants of the mind. If a concomitant A is a co-existent cause of its secondary characteristic B, then A must possess B's *common effects*. Since the mind is reciprocally a co-existent cause with A, it should also possess B's *common effects* suggesting that the mind should be the co-existent cause of the secondary characteristics of concomitants of the mind. However, this challenges Saṃghabhadra's position inherited from the AKBh, in which he asserts that the mind is at least the co-existent cause of 58 *dharmas* (AKBh 84 | 06-07, 2.51 cd) including ten omnipresent mental factors (*mahābhūmika*), their conditioned characteristics and the mind's conditioned characteristics and secondary characteristics, but not the secondary characteristics of ten omnipresent mental factors. I do not think the *common effects* criterion can be further refined to address this challenge. Because, for the mind, there is no difference in the type of effects it possesses between its own secondary characteristics and those of concomitants of the mind. Moreover, Saṃghabhadra has never applied the *common effects* criterion to this case. Therefore, this challenge targets his theory rather than my explanation.

Extension of the Application Scope of the Integrated Understanding

Based on Saṃghabhadra's use of the *common effects* criterion in S1 and S2, I have developed the Integrated Understanding. However, in addition to these two scenarios, there is a scenario S3 involving cases of co-existent cause. In S3, Saṃghabhadra's use of the *common effects* criterion is not as directly indicative of a specific usage as in the previous two, but I argue that the Integrated Understanding provides a compelling explanation of his usage in this scenario.

In S3, when the four great elements arise simultaneously, there are three types of cases where causes and effects arise simultaneously.

Case 1 Each great element functions as the co-existent cause of the other three.

Case 2 Each great element arises together with its own conditioned characteristics, and they are reciprocal co-existent causes.

Case 3 The derived matters arise simultaneously with the great elements. According to Vaibhāṣika doctrine, the great elements function as efficient causes for the derived matters and exert their power as five types of causes, generating cause (*jananahetu*), reliance cause (*niśrayahetu*), supportive cause (*pratiṣṭhāhetu*), maintaining cause (*upastambhahetu*), and development cause (*upabrṃhanahetu*). However, they are not the co-existent causes of derived matter (Dhammajoti, 2015, p. 225).

Let us now examine each of these cases in turn.

Case 1 Saṃghabhadra does not explicitly invoke the *common effects* criterion in his analysis of this case, and thus I set it aside for the moment.

Case 2 Strictly speaking, this case still belongs to the general category of the Scenario S2, though it presents a more complex configuration. Saṃghabhadra does employ the *common effects* criterion in his analysis of this case.

D. Volume 15: The Analogy Between “A *Dharma* and Its Secondary Characteristics” and “The Great Elements and Their Production-Characteristics”.

[Question]: Shouldn't the mind also take its secondary characteristics as its the co-existent cause, just as²⁹ the great elements and [their] production-characteristics [are related]? That is, just as derived matters are not the effect of the characteristics [of the great elements] such as production, [yet] these production-characteristics are indeed the co-existent causes of the great elements, so too should it be the case here [between the mind and its secondary characteristics].

²⁹ The original text uses “known” (知), but in the context, it seems more appropriate to read it as “just as” (如).

[Answer]: The [relationship between the great elements and the derived matter] being compared here is not logically consistent with [the relationship between the mind and its secondary characteristics]. This is because, among the *common effects* shared by the mind and the *dharmas* which stand in a relation of *reciprocal effects* with the mind, most are not the effects [of the secondary characteristics of the mind]. Derived matters are not included among the *common effects* shared by the great elements which are reciprocally effects of each other.³⁰ How then could one draw an analogy from the fact that derived matters are not the effects of the production-characteristics of the great elements, and use it to claim a flaw [in the relationship between a *dharma* and its secondary characteristics]?

Furthermore, as previously stated. What was stated before? That the arising of the mind does not depend on the power of its secondary characteristics. However, the great elements and their production-characteristics reciprocally possess the power to give rise to one another, so there is no such flaw in their relationship. (T29, no. 1562, p. 418b26-c6)³¹

In the debate above, the opponent argues that derived matter (“造色”) is not the effect of the characteristic of production of the great elements, or, as phrased elsewhere, that the great elements and their conditioned characteristics do not share one derived matter as a *common effect* (“非同得一所造色果”) (T29, no. 1562, p. 452a24–25). On this basis, the opponent argues that the great elements and their conditioned characteristics are reciprocally co-existent causes even without satisfying the *common effects* criterion. Consequently, by analogy, the mind and its secondary characteristics should also be reciprocal co-existent causes despite not satisfying the criterion of *common effects*.

Samghabhadra replies with two rebuttals. (1) Derived matter should not be included among the *common effects* shared by the great elements and their conditioned characteristics.³² (2) Reciprocal causal power obtains between the great elements and their conditioned characteristics, but not between the mind and its secondary characteristics. Rebuttal (2) appeals to an explanation based on efficacy/powerful, while rebuttal (1) is concerned with the *common effects* criterion.

It becomes clear that this discussion actually involves two distinct questions related to the *common effects* criterion. First, do the great elements and their condi-

³⁰ In this context, I translate “展轉” as “reciprocally”. In Xuanzang’s translation of the AKBh, the term “展轉” typically corresponds either to **pāraparyā/pāraparyeṇa* (“indirectly”) or to **parasparam/anyonyam* (“reciprocally”). The former does not fit the present context, and therefore I adopt the latter interpretation.

³¹ Ny: 若爾, 云何心能與彼為俱有因? 由隨心王, 生等諸位彼得轉故。豈不應知大種生等, 心亦用彼為俱有因? 謂如造色非生等果, 生等非不與諸大種為俱有因, 此亦應爾。如是所例其理不齊。展轉果一果多非彼果故。非諸造色是諸大種展轉果中一果所攝, 何容造色非諸大種生等果故, 例此為失。又如前說。前說者何? 不由彼力心得生故。然諸大種與生等相展轉力生, 故無此失。(T29, no. 1562, p. 418b26-c6).

³² Isshiki (2012, p. 81) argues that the *common effects* of the four great elements refer to the derived matters. However, Samghabhadra’s discussion here refutes this interpretation.

tioned characteristics actually share a derived matter as an effect? Second, whether the type of effect to which derived matter belongs falls within the relevant type of *common effects* shared by the great elements and their conditioned characteristics?

The opponent primarily focuses on the first question and takes a negative stance. In doing so, they implicitly adopt an affirmative stance toward the second question, which allows them to draw an analogy with the case of the mind and its secondary characteristics. Saṃghabhadra, by contrast, focuses on the second question and takes a negative stance. Since he does not dispute the opponent's view on the first question and elsewhere concedes that the great elements and their characteristics do not share a derived matter as a *common effect* (“雖非同得一所造果”, T29, no. 1562, p. 452a25), he should be taken to hold a negative stance on the first question.

Accordingly, we must identify a coherent interpretation of the *common effects* criterion that accounts for Saṃghabhadra's stance on both questions.

First, there are two possible conditions under which one might deny the first point. Condition (1): the derived matter is the effect neither of the great elements nor their conditioned characteristics. Condition (2): the derived matter is the effect of only one among the two. Condition (1), however, poses no real challenge to any version of the *common effects* criterion, and thus would not have warranted a response from Saṃghabhadra. We should therefore consider Condition (2). In light of the opponent's statements, this condition likely means that the derived matter is the effect of the great elements, but not of their conditioned characteristics.

The question, then, is what type of effect is at issue here? The key lies in this: as previously noted, derived matter can only be the dominance effect of the great elements. But as discussed in “[The Usage of Common Simultaneous Effects](#)” section, under the theory of efficient causes and dominance effects, derived matter is also the dominance effect of the conditioned characteristics of the great elements. Therefore, Condition (2) seems to fail. To resolve this, I propose applying the same distinction between two types of efficient causes introduced in “[The Usage of Common Simultaneous Effects](#)” section—namely, that the great elements function as powerful efficient causes, whereas their conditioned characteristics are merely non-obstructive efficient causes lacking such power.³³ On this reading, Condition (2) can be maintained.

Second, Saṃghabhadra's negative stance on the second question could be based on two possible criteria. One is the common subsequent effects criterion: since derived matter does not arise subsequently with the great elements and their conditioned characteristics, it cannot count as their common subsequent effect. While this reasoning is valid, Saṃghabhadra does not appear to adopt this straightforward line of response.

Another possibility is the common simultaneous effects criterion, which excludes derived matter as a type of effect from the scope of *common effects*. As shown in “[The Usage of Common Simultaneous Effects](#)” section, when assessing whether the condi-

³³ This account may face the following objection: if the great elements exert power over derived matter, and their conditioned characteristics exert power over the great elements, then the conditioned characteristics should also exert power over derived matter. The response is that this objection assumes transitivity of power, rejected by Sarvāstivāda. For example, a secondary characteristic has power over its corresponding conditioned characteristic; the conditioned characteristic has power over the conditioned *dharma*, yet the secondary characteristic does not exert power over the *dharma*.

tioned characteristics of the great elements share common simultaneous effects with the great elements, only effects that stand in a relation of reciprocal powerful efficient causes are to be considered. However, derived matter does not stand in such a relation with the great elements. It is therefore excluded from their common simultaneous effects.

Thus, the Integrated Understanding proposed, especially the common simultaneous effects criterion provides a compelling explanation of Saṃghabhadra's position here. This also further confirms the conclusion of "The Usage of Common Simultaneous Effects" section that in scenario S2, Saṃghabhadra introduces the common simultaneous effects criterion.

Case 3 As previously noted, the great elements are powerful efficient causes of derived matter but not their co-existent causes. This has already been addressed in Passage C of "Explanation of Why the Conditioned Dharma is A Co-Existent Causes of Its Secondary Characteristics" section. There, an opponent draws an analogy between the "mind–secondary characteristics" and the "great elements–derived matter" relation, which Saṃghabhadra rejects. As argued in "Common Simultaneous Effects: The Problem of Secondary Characteristics (S2)" section, Saṃghabhadra's response implies that the mind and its secondary characteristics share common simultaneous effects, which justifies the mind as a co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics. By contrast, his rejection of the analogy suggests that the great elements do not meet this criterion with respect to derived matter, which is one reason they cannot be its co-existent cause.

Further, after Passage C, Saṃghabhadra offers an additional explanation: the great elements are always morally neutral (*avyākṛta*), whereas derived matter can be wholesome or unwholesome.³⁴ This can be most straightforwardly understood as indicating that their moral species differ, and hence they cannot consistently share the same type of subsequent effects—namely, emanation effect—which must match the moral quality of its cause. Therefore, they cannot always meet the common subsequent effects criterion either.

Thus, in Saṃghabhadra's account of why the great elements are not the co-existent causes of derived matter, both components of the Integrated Understanding I proposed—common simultaneous effects and common subsequent effects—can be used to explain the different reasons he gives.

To conclude, the Integrated Understanding explains Saṃghabhadra's use of *common effects* in all three cases within S3, thus satisfying the Principle of Effective Explanation. Moreover, as no further cases in this scenario satisfy the *common effects* criterion under Integrated Understanding, the Principle of No Counterexamples is also fulfilled. For these reasons, it is reasonable to extend Integrated Understanding to S3.

³⁴ Ny: 又所造色有善不善, 大種一向無記性攝, 非如是相成俱有因. (T29, no. 1562, p. 452b6-7).

Conclusion

I have examined the various cases in which Saṃghabhadra used the *common effects* criterion when discussing the co-existent cause in three different scenarios. These cases strongly support the Integrated Understanding that Saṃghabhadra's *common effects* criterion not only includes common subsequent effects but also encompasses specific types of common simultaneous effects. This conclusion not only refutes previous misunderstandings of Saṃghabhadra's views but also addresses potential criticisms of the *common effects* criterion.

Abbreviations

AKBh *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu*, Edited by Pradhan, P. Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series 8, Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, 1967.

AKTA *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṭīkā Tattvārthā*, Derge Edition of Tibetan Tripiṭaka, No.4421.

AKV *Sphuṭārthā: Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*. Edited by Unrai Wogihara. Sankibo Buddhist Book Store, 1971.

ASPś **Abhidharmasamayapradīpikāśāstra*, 阿毘達磨藏顯宗論, T29, no. 1563.

D Derge Edition of Tibetan Tripiṭaka.

JSLJ 俱舍論記, T41, no. 1821.

JSL 俱舍論疏, T41, no. 1822.

MŚV **Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā*, 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, T27, no. 1545.

Ny **Abhidharmāyānusāra*, 阿毘達磨順正理論, T29, no. 1562.

SAH **Samyuktābhidharmahrdaya*, 雜阿毘曇心論, T28, no. 1552.

T 大正新脩大藏經 (Taishō Tripiṭaka), Tokyo: Taisho Issaikyo Kankokai.

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