The Essence of Abhidharma

Vasubhandu's 108 Dharmas
with Sthiramati's Yogacara Twist

SOURCEBOOK

RIME SHEDRA CHANTS

ASPIRATION

In order that all sentient beings may attain Buddhahood,
From my heart I take refuge in the three jewels.

This was composed by Mipham. Translated by the Nalanda Translation Committee

MANJUSHRI SUPPLICATION

Whatever the virtues of the many fields of knowledge
All are steps on the path of omniscience.
May these arise in the clear mirror of intellect.
O Manjushri, please accomplish this.

This was specially composed by Mangala (Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche). Translated by the Nalanda Translation Committee

DEDICATION OF MERIT

By this merit may all obtain omniscience
May it defeat the enemy, wrong doing.
From the stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness and death,
From the ocean of samsara, may I free all beings

By the confidence of the golden sun of the great east
May the lotus garden of the Rigden's wisdom bloom,
May the dark ignorance of sentient beings be dispelled.
May all beings enjoy profound, brilliant glory.

Translated by the Nalanda Translation Committee

First Edition - 2017

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An Advanced Buddhist Studies/Rime Shedra NYC Course
Eleven of the Tuesdays from January 10th to March 28th, 2017 from 7-9:15 pm
(Omitting February 14th)

Syllabus

Sources:

- **ISBP:** ***The Inner Science of Buddhist Practice: Vasubandhu's Summary of the Five Heaps with Commentary by Sthiramati*****, Translated and Introduced by Artemus B. Engle**
- **SB: Rime Shedra Sourcebook on Abhidharma**

Readings:

1) **<u>Class One: The Context for the Study of the Abhidharma in the Four Foundations of Mindfulness</u>**
   a) **In Class Reading ISBP:**
      i) The Four Closely Placed Recollections, pp. 138-147
      ii) Introduction 245
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2) **<u>Class Two: Abhidharma Issues</u>**
   a) **Reading - SB**
      i) <u>The Abhidharma Context</u>, *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijnana in the context of Indian Buddhist Thought*, William S. Waldron, excerpt pp. 46-59, **SB pp. 11-18**
      ii) *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: It's Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality,* Y. Karunadasa:
         (1) <u>The Real Existents</u>, pp. 16-22, **SB pp. 19-23**
         (2) <u>The Analysis of Mind</u>, pp. 68-75, **SB pp. 28-31**

3) **<u>Class Three: Matter, Part One</u>**
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      i) *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: It's Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality,* Y. Karunadasa
         (1) <u>The Analysis of Matter</u>, pp. 152-159, **SB pp. 39-42**
         (2) <u>The Material Clusters</u>, pp. 205-216, **SB pp. 43-51**
      ii) <u>Atoms and Structure</u>, *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma*, Herbert Guenther, pp. 181-185, **SB pp. 55-57**

4) **<u>Class Four: Matter, Part Two</u>**
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   b) **Reading - ISBP:**
      i) *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Acariya Anurudda*, Trs, Ed. and Commentary by Bhikkhu Bodhi:
         (1) <u>Compendium of Matter</u>, excerpt pp. 199-206, **SB pp. 63-66**
         (2) <u>Comprehensive Chart on Matter</u>, pp. 262-263, **SB pp. 67**

5) **<u>Class Five: Universal Mental Factors -Feeling, Perception, Cognitive Formations, etc.</u>**
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      i) *The Patthana and the Development of the Theravadin Abhidhamma,* L.S. Cousins, Journal of the Pali Text Society (1981), *pp. 52-69*, **SB pp. 69-78**

Break Week Reading

1) **Reading - SB**
   a) *From Reductionism to Creativity: rDzogs-chen and the New Sciences of Mind*, Herbert V. Guenther, **SB pp. 79-95**
      i) <u>A Structural Model of "Mind"</u>, pp. 23-34
      ii) <u>The Contextualized System "Mind" Sociocultural Operators</u>, pp. 41-51
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         (2) The 89 & 121 Cittas at a Glance (chart), p. 28, **SB pp. 59**

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      ii) <u>Conditioned Forces Dissociated from Thought</u>, *Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence*, Collett Cox, pp. 67-74, **SB pp. 96-102**

8) **<u>Class Eight: The Eight Consciousnesses</u>**
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      i) <u>Chapter Four: Building Up Experience in the Latent Area of the Mind</u>, *Living Yogacara: An Introduction to Consciousness-only Buddhism*, Tagawa Shun'ei, pp. 29-43, **SB pp. 107-114**
      ii) *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Acariya Anurudda*, Trs, Ed. and Commentary by Bhikkhu Bodhi, **SB pp.**
         (1) <u>Analysis of Functions</u>, pp. 106-108, **SB pp. 59-60**
         (2) <u>The Mind Door Process</u>, pp. 141-143, **SB pp. 61-62**
         (3) <u>A Complete Eye Door Process</u>, p. 155, **SB pp. 62**
   c) **Optional Reading:**
      i) <u>Chapter Five: The Production of Things</u>, *Living Yogacara: An Introduction to Consciousness-only Buddhism*, Tagawa Shun'ei, pp. 45-60, **SB pp. 115-122**

10) **<u>Class Ten: Issues in Cognition</u>**
   a) **Reading - SB**
      i) <u>The Sautrantika Theory of Representational Perception</u>, *Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception, pp. 152-167*, **SB pp. 123-132**

ii) The Cognitive Process, *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: It's Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality,* Y. Karunadasa: pp. 138-151, **SB pp. 32-38**

11) Class Eleven: The Eighteen Dhatus and Their Relations

a) Reading - ISBP:

i) The Eighteen Constituents 353-357

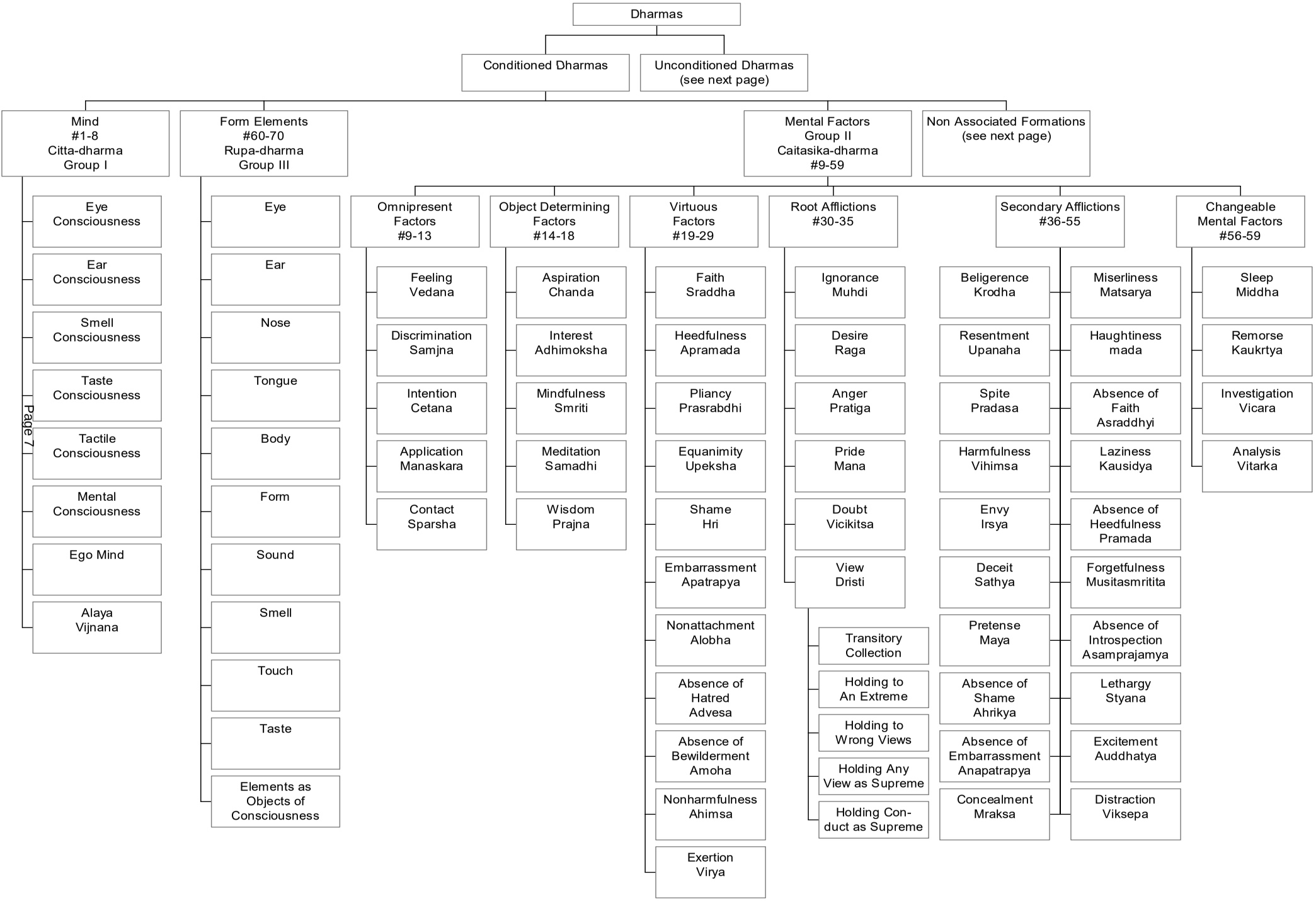
ii) Further Classifications of the Constituents 358-369

b) Reading - SB

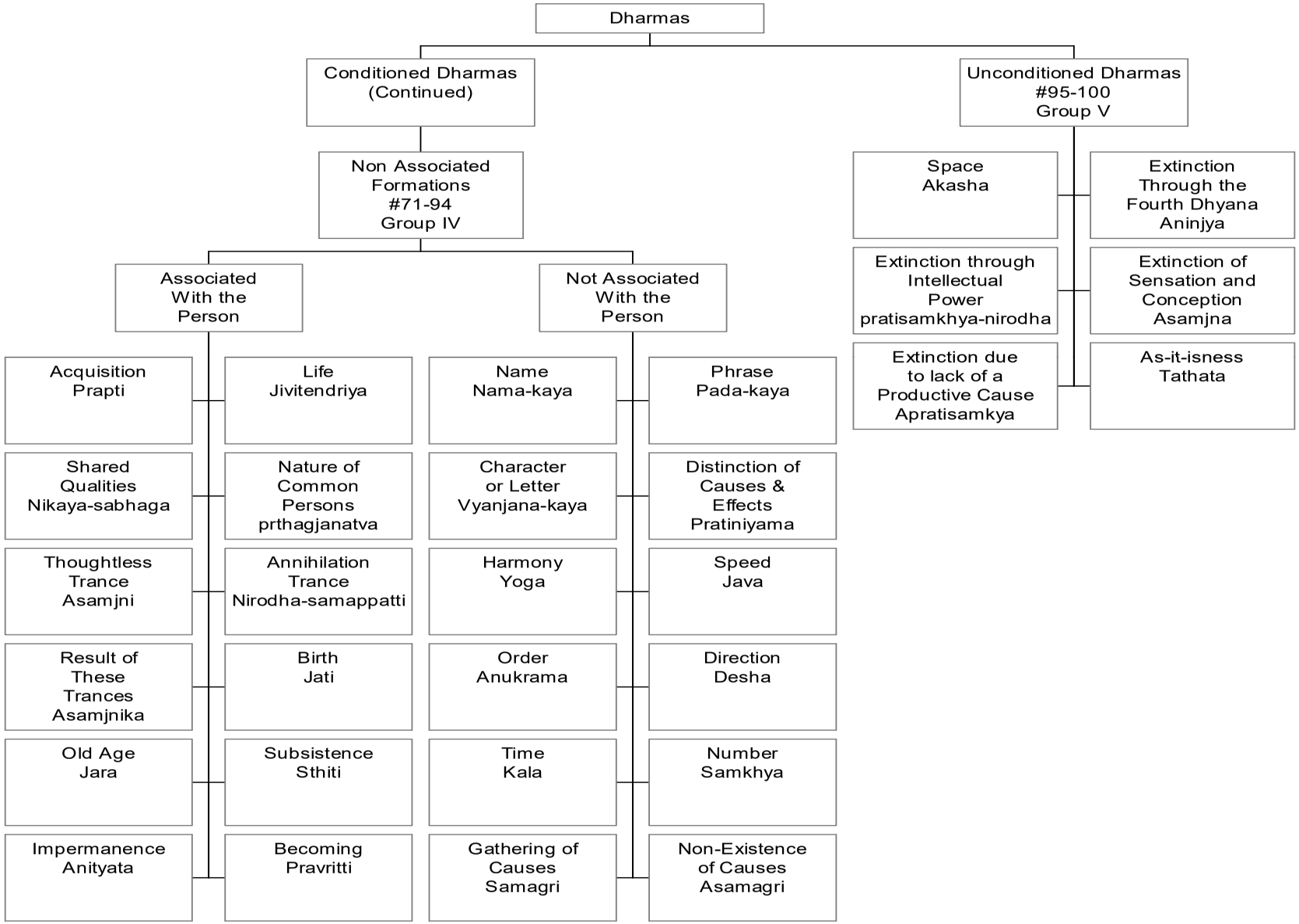
i) The Conditional Relations, *The Theravāda Abhidhamma: It's Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality,* Y. Karunadasa, pp. 262-265, **SB pp. 52-54**

ii) The Twenty-Four Conditions and their Varieties (Chart), *A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma: The Abhidhammattha Sangaha of Acariya Anurudda*, Ed. and Commentary by Bhikkhu Bodhi, pp. 304, **SB pp. 68**

The 100 Dharmas - Part I



The 100 Dharmas – Part II



The 51 Mental Factors

I. Omnipresent Mental States

A. Feeling
B. Discrimination
   1. Identification
   2. Differentiation
C. Impulse/intention
D. Mental engagement
E. Contact

II. Object Determining Mental States

A. Aspiration
B. Belief
C. Mindfulness
D. Meditative stabilization
E. Superior knowledge

III. Virtuous Mental States

A. Faith
   1. Confidence
   2. Inspired/lucid/clear
   3. Aspiring
B. Shame
C. Embarrassment
D. Non-Attachment
E. Non-hatred
F. Non-ignorance
G. Joyous effort
H. Suppleness/pliancy
I. Conscientiousness
J. Equanimity
K. Non-violence

IV. Root Afflictions

A. Desire
B. Anger
C. Pride
D. Ignorance
   1. About karma and its results
   2. About suchness
E. Doubt
F. Afflicted view
   1. The transitory collection
      a) Skandhas as a self
      b) The self as having the skandhas
      c) The skandhas as mine
      d) The self as abiding in the skandhas
   2. Holding an extreme view
      a) Permanence
      b) Nihilism
   3. Wrong view as supreme
   4. Wrong ethics as supreme
   5. Wrong views

V. Secondary Afflictions

A. Wrath/belligerence
B. Resentment
C. Concealment
D. Spite
E. Envy/jealousy
F. Miserliness
G. Deceit
H. Dissimulation
I. Harmfulness
J. Non-shame
K. Non-embarrassment
L. Lethargy
M. Agitation
N. Non-faith
O. Laziness
P. Non-conscientiousness
Q. Forgetfulness
R. Non-introspection
S. Distraction

VI. Changeable Mental States

A. Sleep
B. Contrition
C. Investigation/examination
D. Analysis

Figure 3: The Basic Emotions and the Proximate Factors of Instability

This chart presents a list of basic emotions which give rise to the proximate factors of instability. Here Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan's *Sems-dang sems-byung* is compared with Mi-pham's *mkhas-'jug*. The three poisons—erring-bewilderment, aversion-hatred and cupidity-attachment—give rise to the lack of intrinsic awareness [ma-rig-pa]. According to Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan, man is a complex phenomenon and there is never only one cause for any situation in which he may find himself. For a complete list of the six basic emotions, see p. 64; for the twenty proximate factors of instability, p. 82.

Basic Emotions	*Proximate Emotions*	
	Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan [*Sems-dang sems-byung*]	*Mi-pham* [*mkhas-'jug*]
Anger [khong-khro]	indignation, resentment spite, malice	indignation, resentment, spite, jealousy, malice
Erring-bewilderment [gti-mug]	slyness-concealment, deceit, dishonesty, shamelessness, lack of sense of propriety, gloominess, lack of trust, laziness, unconcern, desultoriness	slyness-concealment, deceit, dishonesty, shamelessness, lack of sense of propriety, gloominess, lack of trust, laziness, unconcern, desultoriness
Aversion-hatred [zhe-sdang]	jealousy, shamelessness, lack of sense of propriety, unconcern, desultoriness	dishonesty, shamelessness, lack of sense of propriety, laziness, unconcern, desultoriness
Cupidity-attachment ['dod-chags]	avarice, deceit, dishonesty, mental inflation, shamelessness, lack of sense of propriety, ebullience, unconcern, desultoriness	avarice, deceit, dishonesty, mental inflation, shamelessness, lack of sense of propriety, ebullience, laziness, unconcern, desultoriness

THE BUDDHIST UNCONSCIOUS

The ālaya-vijñāna in the context of Indian Buddhist thought

William S. Waldron

RoutledgeCurzon
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

2

THE ABHIDHARMA CONTEXT

> Religio is false without philosophy, in just the same way as philosophy is false without religio.
>
> (St Augustine, *Epitome*)

The Abhidharma project and its problematic

We have examined the important role of *vijñāna* (P. *viññāṇa*; note: hereafter we will use primarily Sanskrit terminology, reflecting the original language of our sources) within the series of dependent arising, as both the subsisting dimension of individual samsaric existence, and as a core component of the cognitive processes that typically lead to actions perpetuating such existence. This is not the whole picture, however, for the samsaric round would come to a halt if there were no afflictive passions (*kleśa*) instigating karma-inducing activities. Thus, as essential as vijñāna may be for the *continuity* of samsaric existence, it is the pernicious influences of the afflictions (*kleśa*), together with the karmic actions they inform, that are essential for its *perpetuation*.[1] In other words, while samsaric vijñāna may be the product of one's past actions, it is the presence of the afflictive energies (*kleśa*) in one's present activities that creates new karma. And since these are only activities that one can affect, religious effort is necessarily oriented towards controlling one's motivations and directing one's activities in the here and now.

The early Buddhists thus concentrated upon an analysis of one's present actions and the motivating intentions behind them, relying upon the relatively simple analyses of mind we surveyed in the first chapter. In the centuries following the Buddha's lifetime, these analyses developed into increasingly explicit and systematic methods of discerning the underlying motivations, and hence the karmic nature, of each and every intentional action. Over time, the Buddhists transformed what was originally a straightforward and largely descriptive psychology into a highly complex, systematic, and self-conscious *meta-psychology* – still with the explicit aim of eliminating the afflictive, karma-creating energies that perpetuate cyclic existence. This is, in brief, the Abhidharma project.[2]

In this approach, the Abhidharma emphasis upon the active processes of mind seemed to overshadow the subsisting yet subtle influences from the past – particularly

the underlying tendencies toward the afflictions (*anuśaya*) and the accumulation of karmic potential (*karma-upacaya*). To grossly simplify the situation, these subsisting influences came under the purview of Abhidharma analysis only insofar as they overtly affected immediate processes of mind. But these subsisting influences could not, by their very nature, all be active, or even discerned, within one's mental processes at any given moment; they were by definition latent or potential for most of the time, and hence unavoidably obscure. Thus, two main factors that were indispensable to the Buddhist view of samsaric continuity across multiple lifetimes – the persistence of the latent afflictions and the accumulation of karmic potential – were not easily ascertained in an analysis which focused exclusively on present and active processes of mind. The existence of these subsisting factors, their patterns of arising, and their possible influences on all one's mental processes until attaining liberation – all these became problematic within the Abhidharmic analytic.

And they became problematic, we shall argue, because of the inherent tension between Abhidharma's ultimate *aim* and its immediate *method*; between the overriding religious aim of stopping the inertial energies of samsaric life altogether, and the means to that end – the systematic description of the momentary and present processes of mind. The unavoidable distinction between the persisting influences from the past and the active processes in the present would eventually bring about an explicit recognition of the kinds of influences that underlie and enable every action yet which remain inaccessible to analyses limited to immediate mental processes – it brought about, in short, a recognition of unconscious mind.

Both "aspects" of vijñāna which we analyzed in the first chapter – vijñāna as "consciousness" and vijñāna as "cognitive awareness" – were central to these problems. It was the fateful disjunction between these two originally undifferentiated aspects of *vijñāna* – with exclusive validity accorded to momentary cognitive processes at the expense of subsisting consciousness – that eventually led to the postulation of a distinct category of vijñāna, a "repository" or "base" consciousness, an "*ālaya*" vijñāna, to represent those subsisting aspects of mind which had become marginalized within the new Abhidharma analytic.

We focus on the Abhidharma project at such length because it was within the historical and conceptual context of Abhidharma scholasticism that the Yogācāra school arose, and within whose terms the notion of the ālaya-vijñāna was expressed. An understanding of this context, of its technical terms, and of the problematic issues it gave rise to is thus indispensable for untangling the interwoven logical and exegetical arguments for the ālaya-vijñāna, which, we shall see, are almost wholly products of the "Abhidharma Problematic."

Background of the Abhidharma

We must first briefly sketch the historical background to Abhidharma Buddhism. The doctrines we examined in Chapter 1 belonged to the *Sūtra-piṭaka*, the

Collection of Discourses, purported to be the words of the Buddha himself.[3] Almost all later traditions of Indian Buddhism descended from these early teachings, either directly or indirectly, and most of them have sought validation for their distinctive doctrines by recourse to this or that passage in these early *sūtras*. These discourses have thus served as a counterbalance by which divergent doctrines were weighed and judged, lending South and Southeast Asian Buddhism, despite its huge historical, geographic, linguistic, and cultural variety, a certain unity of thought and practice.

But just because the Buddha's teachings were given at different times, to diverse audiences, and in varying circumstances, the discourses preserved many teachings that were not readily reconcilable with each other, did not expound a topic in a complete or systematic fashion, or were not of equal benefit to those most assiduously practicing the Buddhist path. Consequently, possibly even during the Buddha's lifetime, the Buddha's followers began composing more consistent and systematic presentations of his teachings. The initial attempts in this direction are preserved in a collection of texts, some of which are considered to be the Buddha's words, called the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*, the Collection of Higher Doctrine.[4]

As it was several centuries before any of the three Collections (including the Collection of Discipline, *vinaya-piṭaka*) were actually written down, these "texts"[5] were transmitted orally in typical Indian fashion, with different groups of monks committing different Collections to memory. In such circumstances, divergent versions of the early discourses tended to increase as the centuries passed and as various implications of the teaching continued to be drawn out. This was particularly true in the case of the Abhidharma texts, which were constantly undergoing a process of systematization and refinement. Moreover, and just as important, there was no central authority to determine exactly what was or was not orthodox doctrine. This process of diverging interpretations and their proliferating implications was instrumental in the gradual rise of different schools of doctrine and practice.

Though it is certain that these processes – the gradual divergences of doctrine, the composition of new Abhidharma texts, and the formation of different schools of interpretation – were well under way in the centuries following the Buddha's demise, the available documentary evidence gives us only the barest outline of its early history.[6] The processes through which the various schools, traditionally numbering eighteen, came into existence are largely lost in the mists of Indian history.[7] We possess extensive textual materials from this period only from the Sthaviravāda/Theravāda school,[8] predominant in present-day Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, and from the Sarvāstivādins, the predominant Abhidharma school in classical India (but whose texts are primarily extant only in Chinese translation).[9]

We reach surer historical ground only in the first few centuries CE, the second half of Buddhism's first millennium, when we are blessed with a large body of Abhidharma texts from a variety of schools. Outstanding in terms of its

comprehensive scope, systematic organization, and continuing influence through the centuries, is the work of the fourth-to-fifth century CE Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu, the *Treasury of Abhidharma* (*Abhidharma-kośa*).[10] With a few major exceptions (the early Theravāda text, the *Kathāvatthu*, and some of their distinctive doctrines) we will limit our examination of Abhidharma to the viewpoints expressed in the *Abhidharma-kośa*. These are traditionally thought to represent those of the Sautrāntikas, the "Followers of Sūtra," as well as those of the Sarvāstivāda, the "All-Exists" school. We focus upon the *Abhidharma-kośa* for two reasons. First, Vasubandhu was, with his half-brother Asanga, one of the two founding figures of "classical" Yogācāra. His corpus of work, his recurrent religious and philosophical concerns, even his technical vocabulary, bridge both of these traditions. Moreover, the relationship between the Yogācāra and Sautrāntika schools is currently being re-examined, leading one scholar to wonder whether "Vasubandhu's so-called Sautrāntika opinions are, in fact, Yogācāra *abhidharma* in disguise" (Kritzer, 1999: 20). Both of these make the *Abhidharma-kośa* an exceptional contemporaneous witness to the wider problematics surrounding and leading to the conceptualization of the ālaya-vijñāna.

Although it might seem strange for those concerned with the disjunction between the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna schools of Buddhism to contextualize the "Mahāyāna" Yogācāra school in terms of "Hīnayāna" Abhidharma, the continuity and overlap between them, in India at any rate, is larger than their differences. The Yogācāra school should, in fact, be considered one of the "Abhidharma" schools, as it produced a corpus of Abhidharma literature[11] parallel to and contemporaneous with that of the other Abhidharma schools, chiefly the Theravādins and Sarvāstivādins. Although these three bodies of Abhidharma literature differed in many of their details, they nevertheless shared the same basic presuppositions, carried out their analyses in a similar fashion, and expressed themselves in nearly the same terminology. They belonged, in short, to a single intellectual milieu. And they were all, accordingly, troubled by much the same systemic problems; it was primarily their solutions to these problems that differed.

In order to understand the rationale and arguments used to defend and describe the alaya-vijñāna, it is therefore essential that we look at this common basis of doctrine in the Abhidharma traditions – their most important concepts, the problems those led to, and the various solutions the different schools offered for them. Only then will we be able to fully appreciate the complex set of arguments put forward by the Yogācāra thinkers themselves.[12] And we shall see that, in important respects, the ālaya-vijñāna is quite the most original solution to the Abhidharmic Problematic – a solution that, while remaining faithful to the presuppositions of the Abhidharma analytic, also harks back to, or rather self-consciously resuscitates, the two dimensions of vijñāna first found undifferentiated in the early teachings of the Pāli texts.

The aim and methods of Abhidharma: *dharma* as irreducible unit of experience

There is little doubt, as Stcherbatsky (1956) suggested long ago, that the central notion of Abhidharma is the concept of *dharma*. There is considerable doubt, however, as to what this elusive term actually refers to. We will suggest a synthetic, and slightly idiosyncratic, interpretation of the term, which we believe usefully elucidates the Abhidharma materials, fully aware of the diversity of interpretations concerning this central, yet – after twenty centuries – still hotly debated notion.

The Abhidharmists took the early Buddhist idea that the beings and things of the world are impermanent, selfless, and dependently arisen and extrapolated it to apply to all phenomena whatsoever. They argued that referring to anything in terms of entities or wholes (e.g. tables, persons, or even thoughts) is merely a conventional way of designating continuing yet provisional collocations of simpler, more fundamental elements or factors, which alone could be said to truly exist. Accordingly, the Abhidharmists, when speaking technically at least, supplanted the everyday conventional expressions found in the early discourses with descriptions of experienced things "as they really are" (*yathābhūtam*). That is, elaborating upon the term used to denote the objects of the sixth, mental mode of cognitive awareness, they described experience in terms of their irreducible *dharmas*. Formulating the doctrine in terms of *dharmas* was of cental importance in Abhidharma, because, as the *Abhidharma-kośa* claims, "apart from the discernment of the dharmas, there is no means to distinguish the defilements (*kleśa*), and it is by reason of the defilements that the world wanders in the ocean of existence" (AKBh I 3).[13] Those topics of the traditional discourses that were not formulated in, or could not be transposed into, dharmic terms were considered to be merely provisional or conventional truth (*saṃvṛtisatya*), whereas the doctrine (*dharma*)[14] as formulated in purely dharmic terms was considered to be the "higher doctrine," the "*abhi*" dharma, because it is turned toward the ultimate *dharma* (*paramārtha-dharma*), that is, towards Nirvana.[15] This analysis of experience in terms of its irreducible constituents, its dharmas, was to irrevocably alter the style and content of Buddhist doctrinal discourse.

Among the many subjects discussed in the Abhidharma literature, particular attention was paid to the analysis of mental processes and their associated activities, since it is these that generate karma. What had begun in the early discourses as a relatively simple if insightful "folk psychology" was gradually transformed into a systematic analysis of the entire world of experience in terms of its momentary and discrete constituents. This involved systematically formalizing the terms used in earlier analyses of mind, such as feeling, apperception, cognition, desire, and so forth, by defining their distinguishing characteristics, specifying the circumstances that condition their arising, and delineating their complex interrelationships. In this way, the ongoing processes of mind were exhaustively analyzed into momentary and discrete units or constituents of experience, discernable through the trained eye of higher insight – they were analyzed, that is, into *dharmas*.

Abhidharma thus became, in Bhikkhu Bodhi's words, a "phenomenological psychology" whose "primary concern ... is to understand the nature of experience, and thus the reality on which it focuses is conscious reality, the world as given in experience" (*Compendium*, 1993: 4). But what does a "phenomenological psychology" mean? And what is a "unit or constituent of experience"? And how is all of this related to vijñāna, the central concept of this book? Consonant with the analytic tenor of the Abhidharma traditions, we must systematically reformulate our earlier approach to cognitive awareness.

One of the standard definitions of cognitive awareness (*vijñāna*) is that it arises as "the discrete discernment [of objects]" (AKBh I 16, *vijñānaṃ prativijñaptiḥ*). Two important implications follow from this. The first is articulated well enough in early Buddhism: that all conditioned phenomena appear impermanent and changing. The second is brought out more clearly in the Abhidharma traditions: that cognitive awareness is not only conditionally arisen, but it arises as a function of discerned distinctions. If we examine the implications of this definition, we can more deeply appreciate the nature of the Abhidharma project, the status of its dharmas, and the entire series of theoretical problems that followed from this innovative mode of analysis.

As we have seen, cognitive awareness arises when a stimulus appears within an appropriate sense domain, impinges upon the sense-faculties (or mind), and there is attention thereto. Cognitive awareness would not arise without the occurrence of this stimulus, without some impingement upon the sense organs and faculties. To speak of the arising of cognitive awareness is therefore to speak of an event, a momentary interaction between sense organs and their correlative stimuli. To say that "everything is impermanent," then, is not so much a declaration about reality as it is, as a description of cognitive awareness as it arises. Cognitive awareness is thus – by definition – temporal and processual.

It is also discriminative. Gregory Bateson makes a suggestively analogous point:

> our sensory system ... can only operate with *events*, which we can call *changes* ... it is true that we think we can see the unchanging ... the truth of the matter is that ... the eyeball has continual tremor, called *micronystagmus*. The eyeball vibrates through a few seconds of arc and thereby causes the optical image on the retina to move relative to the rods and cones which are the sensitive end organs. The end organs are thus in continual receipt of events that correspond to *outlines* in the visible world. We *draw* distinctions; that is, we pull them out. Those distinctions that remain undrawn are *not*.
>
> (Bateson, 1979: 107, emphasis in original)

Without an awareness of such distinctions, without such stimuli, there would be no discernment of discrete objects, no separate "things." This is arguably already implied in the term *vi-jñāna*, whose prefix, *vi-*, imparts a sense of separation or

division (cognate with Latin "dis"), suggesting a "discerning or differentiating awareness" (PED 287, 611; SED 961). Cognitive awareness, in other words, necessarily arises as a function of discernment (*prati-vijñapti*).[16] As Bateson observes: "perception operates only upon difference, all receipt of information is necessarily the receipt of news of *difference*" (1979: 31 f., emphasis in original). That is to say, that unless some distinctive stimuli – marked off from others in terms of temperature, brightness, intensity, and so forth – impinges upon the sense faculties and organs, there will be no arising of cognitive awareness.[17] This is not to say that "discrete objects are actively cognized" (see Ch. 1, n. 51), but rather, more subtly, that *the contextual distinctions that make stimuli distinct are themselves constitutive of cognitive awareness in the same way that change is.*

Thus, just as a moment of cognitive awareness arises as a temporally distinct event, so too does it arise in response to contextually distinct phenomenon. These distinctive events are therefore – by the very logic of this mode of analysis – momentary *and* discrete. And it is these events, we suggest, that are called *dharmas*. A *dharma* refers to each of these momentary[18] and distinct events insofar as they give rise to, or perhaps more precisely co-arise with, a moment of cognitive awareness.

An awareness of differences, we see, does not arise outside of a context, since differences are only meaningful between phenomenon. "Objects", that is, give rise to cognitive awareness only insofar as they stand out within a surrounding context. But a distinction is not a "thing." "Difference," as Bateson points out, "being of the nature of relationship, is not located in time or in space ... Difference is precisely *not* substance ... difference ... has no dimensions. It is *qualitative*, not *quantitative*" (Bateson, 1979: 109 f., emphasis in original). This applies, we submit, to dharmas as well. That is, dharmas are neither substances nor "things" in and of themselves. As Piatigorsky points out:

> a *dharma*, in fact, 'is' no thing, yet a term *denoting* (not being) a certain relation or type of relation *to* thought, consciousness or mind. That is, *dharma* is not a concept in the accepted terminological sense of the latter, but a purely *relational notion*.
>
> (Piatigorsky, 1984: 181, emphasis in original)

These distinctive events, these dharmas that co-arise with cognitive awareness, are relational in yet another, more reflexive, sense as well: while dharmas may ultimately refer to experiential phenomena, what *counts* as a dharma in any system of description must itself be distinguished from other dharmas. That is, individual dharmas only occur within a larger context which functions not only cognitively, in conjunction with the forms of sensory cognitive awareness, but – even more importantly – conceptually, within a system of interrelated yet mutually distinctive definitions. In other words, although we can, and must, speak of the definition of each single dharma, we cannot speak of what a dharma "truly is" outside of a given system of analysis wherein such definitions are meaningful.[19]

The meaning and function of any particular dharma is, in other words, dependent on all the other dharmas with which it is contrasted.

Each dharma is therefore defined in terms of, or perhaps more precisely *as*, its own distinguishing mark or identity, its *svalakṣaṇa*,[20] which sets it off from other dharmas. These do not represent unchanging substrates possessing specific attributes, since dharmas are "relational notions," not substances; rather, the distinguishing characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*) of a dharma is inseparable from the dharma itself.[21] Like the spaces on a chessboard, each dharma thus marks off a notional, logical, and psychological space within a system of description which, in theory, encompasses the entire domain of relevant experience.

And it is this notion of dharmas – as discrete events which carry their own "mark" in conjunction with the arising of cognitive awareness – that became the basic "unit" with which Abhidharma philosophy outlined and analyzed the processes of mind.

This thus entails one further level of reflexivity: an awareness of *doing* analysis. That is to say, extrapolating from dharmas as the second kind of object that gives rise to a moment of mental cognitive awareness, dharmas here also refer to objects of thought and reflection inasmuch as they too impinge upon mind. That is, insofar as the discrete factors that condition the arising of cognitive awareness themselves become objects of thinking *about* cognitive awareness, then these too become dharmas.[22] This is the sense in which Piatigorsky calls Abhidharma a "metapsychology," a system of thought that self-consciously "deals with the various concepts and categories of consciousness as the primary objects of investigation" (1984: 8). This is what we, and we presume Bhikkhu Bodhi, mean by a "phenomenological psychology."

In sum, Abhidharmic discourse expressed in terms of dharmas has several distinct and interrelated characteristics:

(1) it depends upon a *phenomenological* analysis of experience in descriptive terms;
(2) it is *metapsychological* in the sense of being a self-conscious, systematic analysis of experience;
(3) it is a comprehensive description of experience in *systemic* terms, that is, in which all of its items are mutually defined and distinguished from one another; and
(4) finally, Abhidharma thinkers considered an analysis of experience in terms of dharmas as the *only ultimate* account of "how things really are" (*yathābhūtam*).

This "dharmic discourse" provided a common language, a shared outlook, for an entire era of Buddhist thinking in India. For while different schools held radically different positions regarding the ontological status of dharmas, their distinctive definitions, and the interrelationships between them, it was only because they shared more or less these same basic assumptions that they could even hold such debates in the first place. This is why, for example, the Yogācārins,

who are usually considered idealists, could argue with the Sarvāstivādins, who held to a realist position, or with the Sautrāntikas, who were akin to nominalists.[23] For despite all their differences, they inhabited a shared universe of discourse based upon the primacy and privileging of this specific mode of existential analysis.

Although this notion of dharma may be considered merely an elaboration of traditional Buddhist teachings on impermanence and selflessness, it entails a radically different set of implications. As Stcherbatsky provocatively describes this brave new dharma world:

> The elements of existence [*dharmas*] are momentary appearances, momentary flashings into the phenomenal world out of an unknown source. Just as they are disconnected, so to say, in breadth, not being linked together by any pervading substance, just so are they disconnected in depth or in duration, since they last only one single moment (*kṣaṇa*). They disappear as soon as they appear, in order to be followed the next moment by another momentary existence. Thus a moment becomes a synonym of an element (*dharma*), two moments are two different elements. An element becomes something like a point in time-space. . . . Consequently, the elements do not change, but disappear, the world becomes a cinema. Disappearance is the very essence of existence; what does not disappear does not exist. A cause for the Buddhists was not a real cause but a preceding moment, which likewise arose out of nothing in order to disappear into nothing.[24]
>
> (Stcherbatsky, 1956: 31)

Strange as it may seem, these are precisely the consequences of a phenomenological psychology so construed: the "differences that make a difference," as Bateson famously puts it, that are "not located in time or in space" (1979: 110), that exist only disjunctively and hence relationally, and only insofar as they are transitory events, as they momentarily impinge upon the various sense faculties – these dharmas are, as the *sūtras* continuously state, evanescent like a "dew drop, a bubble, a dream, a lightning flash or a cloud."

As an explanatory system, however, this analysis of experience in terms of such momentary dharmas raises a number of difficult conceptual problems. If dharmas are "disconnected in breadth," to whom or what do they apply? And if they are "disconnected in duration," how can causal conditioning function over time? These became major explanatory challenges for the Abhidharmists, topics that shall be addressed in one form or another throughout the remainder of this book. The Abhidharmists only discussed the first question, that of the referent of personal identity, in fairly limited ways, since it is so largely subsumed within the second question, that of causal continuity. Stcherbatsky suggests the basic Abhidharma approach to this problem, however, when he states above that "a cause is not a real cause but a preceding moment." For although dharmas

are insubstantial, discrete, and last no longer than an instant, some of the causal and conditioning influences operating between them, both simultaneously and over succeeding moments, necessarily have longer-lasting effects. Some dharmas, that is, are more equal than others. It is to these sets of problems that we now must turn.

The basic problematic: two levels of discourse, two dimensions of mind

This notion of dharmas as momentary, discrete, and ultimately real constituents of experience created a powerful analytic for ascertaining the characteristics and components of our mental processes; accordingly, Abhidharma theory analyzed the processes of mind and body almost exclusively in these terms. For, as Vasubandhu claims (in AKBh I 3), there is no other way of pacifying the afflictions (*kleśa*) than through the discernment of dharmas, the sole purpose for which Abhidharma was taught.[25] Abhidharma is thus the systematic analysis of the phenomenal world in terms of such discrete and momentary dharmas, directed by the overriding soteriological aim of discerning and eradicating the afflictive emotions (*kleśa*) and thereby abandoning the karmic actions they instigate.

For all its analytic power, however, this analysis of mind in terms of dharmas inadvertently created a host of systemic problems. Although they are complex and tightly interwoven, we will group the problems pertinent to our concerns into two sets:[26] (1) those pertaining to the analysis of momentary, overt processes of mind, enshrined in "dharmic discourse" itself, and (2) those pertaining to the subsisting aspects of the mental stream, which, being nearly inexpressible in dharmic discourse, remained more or less couched in traditional terms.[27] These two sets of doctrinal issues – and their respective discourses – correspond roughly to the two senses of vijñāna discerned in the first chapter: that of momentary cognitive awareness, and that of a subsisting samsaric sentience. We shall return to this point soon enough. But first we must briefly outline these two problematic areas.

First, dharmic analysis dissects experience into discrete components in order to discern how they co-operate, that is, how they operate together within a single moment of mind. This enables one to ascertain whether or not that moment of mind is influenced by the cognitive and emotional afflictions (*kleśa*). This is the paramount aim of analysis because, we remember, it is the afflictions that influence the karmic nature of an action, making it karmically skillful or unskillful. We shall call this analysis of the dharmic factors discernable at any particular moment *synchronic analysis* or *dharmic analysis*, and its doctrinal expressions *synchronic* or *dharmic discourse* – a discourse expressed exclusively in terms of dharmas which last merely a moment and interact only with other simultaneously existing dharmas, or with those of immediately preceding and succeeding moments. The problems that synchronic discourse raises for our purposes primarily concern the ongoing status of the underlying tendencies and the accumulation of karmic potential, and the compatibility of both of these with

karmically divergent moments of mind – issues that become particularly acute in connection with the gradual nature of the path to liberation. In other words, the strictures of dharmic discourse created severe problems in accounting for all the pertinent aspects of the mental stream at any given moment.

The second set of problems is in effect the inverse of the first: since only dharma discourse describes "how things truly are," it is only the strictly momentary dharmas that are ultimately real at any given moment. But the indispensable relationship between causal conditioning and temporal continuity, of how the past continues to effect the present, becomes nearly inexpressible in a discourse in which only momentary, currently effective, dharmas are considered to be truly real. Again, this was particularly problematic for such traditional continuities as the accumulation of karmic potential and the persistence of the afflictions in their latent state – continuities whose elimination was the stated purpose of Abhidharmic analysis in the first place. The Abhidharmists, in other words, had from the beginning contextualized their ultimate, dharmic analysis within a larger framework of conventional terms and expressions. In particular, they relied upon such conventional referents as "persons," "mind-streams" (*citta-santāna*), or "bases" (*āśraya*), in order to refer to the ongoing "subjects" of samsaric continuity, all the while recognizing that these could not themselves be considered dharmas,[28] momentary and discrete factors of experience which carry their own mark. We shall call this continued reliance upon traditional continuities *diachronic* or *santāna discourse*. The persistence of these modes of expression in the face of Abhidharmic claims to ultimate discourse represents more than mere vestiges of pre-Abhidharmic thinking, however; it also reflects the inherent difficulties of the Abhidharma project as a whole.

This created a dilemma for Abhidharmic theory. On the one hand, the active influences of the afflictions and the type of actions they instigate are expressible in ultimate dharmic terms only to the extent that they are immediate factors of experience. As Piatigorsky rightly observes, "the Abhidhamma is a 'theory of consciousness'" (1988: 202, n. 17); anything outside of the arising of conscious awareness is inexpressible in dharmic terms. On the other hand, the continuity of the factors constituting individual samsaric existence *in toto* can only be described in the more conventional, non-dharmic terms of the diachronic mental stream. But by its very method, Abhidharma explicitly privileges the first discourse at the expense of the second. *And this exclusive validity accorded to the synchronic analysis of momentary mental processes threatened to render that very analysis religiously vacuous by undermining the validity of its overall soteriological context – the diachronic dimension of samsaric continuity and its ultimate cessation.*[29] This is, in short, the Abhidharmic Problematic.

We shall examine the development of the synchronic analysis of mind-moments, its continued reliance upon the diachronic discourse of samsaric continuities, and the multiple problems provoked by the fateful disjunction between them. We shall find that this disjunction became more untenable as the implications of the exclusive adherence to synchronic, dharmic analysis became more fully

realized. And we shall see that here too, vijñāna is not only central to both of these discourses, but that these discourses correspond closely to the two aspects of vijñāna we discerned in the early texts. In contrast to materials in the Pāli texts, however, their differentiation in the Abhidharma was explicit, the problems it raised were recognized, and some kind of solution to those problems was proposed by nearly all of the schools we have sufficient knowledge about (see Appendix II).

Although the various Abhidharma schools acknowledged and addressed these problems, they were understandably loath to forego the analytic power of dharmic discourse. It was, roughly speaking, this continued disjunction – entailed by a dogged adherence to the exclusive validity of dharmic discourse in the face of the acknowledged and obvious dependence upon diachronic, santāna discourse – that, in our analysis, generated the Abhidharmic Problematic toward which the ālaya-vijñāna was addressed. To appreciate this, however, we must examine the specific systems of mental analysis and particular terms in which these issues were couched.

Analysis of mind and its mental factors

Abhidharmic analysis focuses upon *citta*, roughly "mind," and the mental processes that occur simultaneously with it at any given moment. The term *citta*, "thought" or "mind,"[30] has an ancient pedigree in the earliest Buddhist texts, denoting the basic process of mind[31] which can become contaminated or purified by the nature of one's actions, and, for some at least, eventually liberated.[32] It is what we might loosely call the "subject" of samsara. The karmic nature of each moment of *citta* is determined by the particular kinds of mental processes or factors (*caitta* or *cetasika*, derived from *citta*, meaning "mental") that occur with and accompany it. As with *citta* itself, all of these mental factors (*caitta*) are dharmas, that is, momentary events arising in conjunction with cognitive awareness and discerned in analytic insight. Most of them, such as sensation, intention, feeling, apperception, etc., were already used in earlier Buddhist doctrine.

These mental factors, these *caitta*, play an especially important role in Abhidharmic analysis because it is the particular kind of relationship they have with the central locus of mind, with *citta*, that determines the karmic quality of that mind-moment.[33] Generally speaking, a moment of *citta* and its concomitant mental factors (*caitta*) stand in reciprocal relation with each other,[34] a relationship which is karmically neutral; that is, they simply co-occur. However, when particular mental processes arise in reference to the same cognitive object and through the same perceptual faculty, they so closely follow and envelop (*anuparivartana*) that central locus of mind (*citta*) that that moment of *citta* as a whole takes on the karmic qualities of the factors accompanying it (Stcherbatsky, 1956: 25–6). This close relationship is called "conjoined" or "associated" with mind (*citta-saṃprayukta*).[35] In other words, it is the processes that are "associated" with a moment of *citta* that determine the karmic nature of the actions in that

moment. For example, when afflictive emotions such as anger or lust arise, they are "associated" with that moment of *citta*, karmically coloring whatever actions (including mental actions) they accompany. Consonant with the earlier definition of karma as intentional action, it is therefore the *intention* (*cetanā*, one of the primary mental factors) which accompanies and motivates an action that determines its karmic nature,[36] that determines what effects it will accrue for the future.

Accordingly, these moments of mind and their associated mental factors, together with the actions they instigate, are classified in terms of the results they lead to: actions that produce pleasant or desirable results are called "skillful" or "healthy" (*kuśala*); actions that produce unpleasant or undesirable results are "unskillful" or "unhealthy" (*akuśala*);[37] and actions which produce neither are considered neutral or indeterminate (*avyākṛta*). In this fashion, all moments of mind were categorized according to their motivating intentions, the actions they accompany, and the results they potentially lead to.[38]

The complete Abhidharma analysis of mind and its processes, which quickly becomes extremely complicated and technical,[39] is beyond the scope of this study. The main point for our purposes is that the karmic quality of each mind-moment as a whole is determined by, and hence categorized in terms of, the particular relationship between the *citta* and the mental factors that accompany it. That is, its karmic quality is determined by whether those accompanying processes influence and envelope that *citta* in the karmically significant relationship called "associated" (*citta-saṃprayukta*), or whether they accompany mind in one of several less influential, and hence karmically neutral, relationships such as being simultaneous (*sahabhū*) with, or being "disjoined" or "dissociated" from mind (*citta-viprayukta*). This last is particularly noteworthy.

While most ordinary active mental processes directly influence that moment of *citta*, and are therefore "associated with mind" (*citta-saṃprayukta*), the Abhidharmists realized that there are many other processes which co-occur in a moment of *citta* that are much less obtrusive and thus have little or no karmic influence. Some of these were categorized as "karmic formations dissociated from mind" (*citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra*),[40] a category consisting primarily of such anomalous factors as "life power" (*jīvitendriya*), or the very nature of dharmas to arise, abide, and fade away (*jāti-*, *sthiti-*, *jarā-lakṣaṇa*). This indeterminate category was flexible enough to encompass dharmas of various kinds and often on radically different grounds. It comprised, in effect, whatever processes were needed to give a coherent account of the continuity of experience, but not influential enough to affect it in a karmically determinate manner; hence they were called karmically "indeterminate" (*avyākṛta*). The very existence of such a category already suggests some of the difficulties a purely synchronic analysis of mind entails. For an analysis of the overt and obvious activities of mind alone necessarily neglects many factors that are essential to, and constitutive of, experience at any given moment. It was for this reason that the ongoing influence of the underlying tendencies (*anuśaya*) and accumulated karmic potential, for example, were often discussed in connection with this category. Indeed, these particular topics became the

focus of considerable debate in the *Abhidharma-kośa*, a debate in which an underlying, karmically neutral basis of mind called "ālaya" vijñāna eventually participated as well.

The initial formulation of the problematic in its synchronic dimension: the accumulation of karmic potential, the presence of the underlying tendencies, and their gradual purification in the Kathāvatthu

By asserting that the ultimate account of "how things actually are" comprises only the processes discernable at the moment, synchronic dharmic analysis not only renders individual continuity problematic (to which we will return shortly), but it undermines the integrity of the individual mind-stream at any particular moment. For it precludes any ultimate account of the very factors that define one's samsaric existence: the presence of accumulated karmic potential (*karmopacaya*) and the persistence of the underlying tendencies, both of which – by definition – are not fully active in every single moment. Following the strictures of dharmic analysis, however, they must be ascertainable in the moment-to-moment analysis of mind in terms of dharmas in order to be considered ultimately true.

Clearly, the present, active, and overt processes of mind, with all their associated and karmically determinative mental processes, cannot comprise the entirety of any individual "mental stream." If they did, this would lead to either of two equally unacceptable consequences. On the one hand, if even a single moment of mind arose that was associated with skillful mental factors, this would, in and of itself, sever the continuity of the accumulated karmic potential and the latent afflictions – and this would virtually constitute liberation. But if, in order to uphold their continuity, one held that the persisting accumulation of karmic potential and latent afflictions were continuously active, karmically, then *all* moments of mind would have to be afflicted and karmically skillful processes would never be able to occur. This raises several vexing questions: if these potentialities were not active, then in what way could they still be present, in order to accord with the Abhidharmic criteria for dharmas? But if they were present, then why would they not influence that *citta* in a karmically effective way? Moreover, how could the latent tendencies together with both skillful and unskillful accumulated karmic potential co-exist in the same moment of mind, if that moment is to be characterized as exclusively skillful, unskillful, or neutral? The answer seems clear enough: the present and active processes of mind described in dharmic analysis simply cannot comprise the entirety of mind at any given moment. These issues were raised earlier in our discussion of the latent tendencies in the early Pāli texts, but here they are couched in terms of the Abhidharma analytic, which renders them particularly problematic.

These problems were recognized at a very early stage in the Abhidharma literature and were crucial in the development of the concept of the ālaya-vijñāna.

THE THERAVĀDA ABHIDHAMMA

Its Inquiry into the Nature of Conditioned Reality

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CHAPTER 1

THE REAL EXISTENTS

In the entire vocabulary of the Abhidhamma no other term is as central to defining its theory of reality as *dhamma*. In its characteristically Abhidhammic sense it embraces not only the basic factors into which the whole of phenomenal existence is resolved, but also that which transcends phenomenal existence, namely the unconditioned reality of *Nibbāna*.[1] This rendering of *dhamma* in an all-inclusive sense is nevertheless not without antecedence. In the early Buddhist scriptures (Pāli suttas), too, we find it used in a similar sense. A case in point is the well-known statement: *sabbe dhammā anattā* (all things are non-self).[2] There is, however, a difference to be noted here. In the earlier texts "*sabbe dhammā*" means "*all things*" in a general sense, whereas the Abhidhamma uses it in a technical sense to mean "*the basic factors into which all things can be resolved*". In this shift of the term's meaning from a general to a technical sense we can trace most of the methodological differences between early Buddhism and the Abhidhamma. For it is within a framework where *dhamma* is postulated as the basic unit of reference that the Abhidhamma seeks to present all its doctrinal expositions. In this methodological difference we can also observe a shift in emphasis from an empiricist to a rationalist approach.

The *dhamma* theory of the Abhidhamma is based on the philosophical principle that all the phenomena of empirical existence are made up of a number of elementary constituents, the ultimate realities behind manifest phenomena. It is this principle that provides the rationale for all the modes of analysis and classification found in the Abhidhamma systematization. The *dhamma* theory is, however, not merely one principle among others in the body of Abhidhamma philosophy. It is the base upon which the entire system rests. It would thus be quite fitting to call this theory the cornerstone of the Abhidhamma. Yet the *dhamma* theory was intended from the start to be much more than a mere hypothetical scheme. It arose from the need to make sense out of experiences in meditation and was designed as a guide for meditative contemplation and insight. The Buddha had taught that to perceive the world correctly is to see, not self-entities and substances, but bare phenomena arising and perishing in accordance with their conditions. The task the Abhidhamma specialists set themselves was to specify exactly what these "bare phenomena" are and to show how they interact with other "bare phenomena" to make up our "common sense" picture of the world.

The *dhamma* theory was not peculiar to any one school of Buddhism but penetrated all the early schools, stimulating the growth of their different versions of the Abhidharma. Of these, the Sarvāstivāda version of the theory, together with its critique by the Madhyamaka, has been critically studied by a number of modern scholars. The Theravāda version, however, has received less attention. There are sound reasons for proposing that the Pāli Abhidhamma Piṭaka contains one of the earliest forms of the *dhamma* theory, perhaps even the oldest version. This theory, after all, did not remain static but evolved over the centuries as Buddhist thinkers sought to draw out its implications and respond to problems it posed for the critical intellect. Thus the *dhamma* theory was repeatedly enriched, first by the Abhidhamma commentaries and then by the later exegetical literature and the medieval compendia of Abhidhamma, the so-called 'little finger manuals', such as the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, which in turn gave rise to their own commentaries and sub-commentaries.

The present chapter seeks to trace the main stages in the origin and development of the *dhamma* theory and to explore its philosophical implications. The first part will discuss the early version of the theory as represented by the Abhidhamma Piṭaka. At this stage the theory was not yet precisely articulated but remained in the background as the unspoken premise of Abhidhamma analysis. It was during the commentarial period that an attempt was made to work out the implications of early Abhidhamma thought, and it is this development that will be treated in the subsequent parts of this chapter.

The Early Version of the Dhamma Theory

Although the *dhamma* theory is an Abhidhammic innovation, the antecedent trends that led to its formulation and its basic ingredients can be traced to the early Buddhist scriptures which seek to analyze empiric individuality and its relation to the external world. In the discourses of the Buddha there are five such modes of analysis. The first is that into *nāma* and *rūpa*.[3] This is the most elementary analysis in the sense that it specifies the two main components, the mental and the corporeal aspects, of the empiric individuality. However, what we must not overlook here is that *nāma-rūpa*, when it occurs in the twelve-factored formula of dependent arising, conveys a more specific sense. In this specific sense, *nāma* means five mental factors that invariably arise with consciousness, namely, feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volition (*cetanā*), contact (*phassa*), and attention (*manasikāra*). *Rūpa* in *nāma-rūpa* means the four great material elements and the materiality that depends on them.[4]

In this specific sense, therefore, we cannot consider *nāma-rūpa* as an exhaustive definition of the empiric individuality. *Nāma-rūpa* represents only a part of the individuality, the other part being represented by *viññāṇa*, which is consciousness. That *viññāṇa* is not part of *nāma* is shown not only by the statement that *nāma-rūpa* has *viññāṇa* as its condition (*viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṃ*) but also by the other statement that *viññāṇa* has, in turn, *nāma-rūpa* as its condition (*nāma-rūpa-paccayā viññāṇaṃ*).[5] What both statements show is the reciprocal conditionality of *viññāṇa* and *nāma-rūpa* and not that one could be subsumed under the other. What has been observed so far should show that it is not correct to translate indiscriminately *nāma-rūpa* as mind and matter, or to define the psychophysical personality as consisting of *nāma* and *rūpa*. The textual or the doctrinal context should be taken into consideration to determine whether the two terms are used in the general or in the specific sense.

The second mode of analysis is that into the five *khandhas* (aggregates): corporeality (*rūpa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), mental formations (*saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*).[6] The third is that into six *dhātus* (elements): earth (*paṭhavī*), water (*āpo*), temperature (*tejo*), air (*vāyo*), space (*ākāsa*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*).[7] It will be noticed that in the second analysis attention is focused more on mental aspects, for while they are represented by four aggregates, what is non-mental is counted as one. In the third, on the other hand, attention is focused more on non-mental aspects, for while they are represented here by five elements, what is mental is counted as one. It is very likely that the two analyses were made to supplement each other. The fourth analysis is that into twelve *āyatanas* (bases of cognition): the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind; and their corresponding objects: the visible, sound, smell, taste, touch, and mental objects.[8] The fifth analysis is that into eighteen *dhātus* (elements of cognition). It is an elaboration of the immediately preceding mode obtained by the addition of the six kinds of consciousness which arise from the contact between the sense-organs and their objects. The six additional items are the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mental consciousnesses.[9]

Now the purposes for which Buddhism resorts to these different modes of analysis are varied. For instance, the main purpose of the *khandha*-analysis is to show that there is no ego either inside or outside the five *khandhas* which go to make up the empiric individuality. None of the *khandhas* belongs to me (*n'etaṃ mama*); they do not correspond to 'I' (*n'eso' ham asmi*), nor are they my self (*n'eso me attā*).[10] Thus the main purpose of this analysis is to prevent the intrusion of the notions of 'mine', 'I' and 'my self' into what is otherwise an impersonal and egoless congeries of

mental and physical phenomena. The analysis into twelve *āyatanas* shows that what we call individual existence is a process of interaction between the internal (*ajjhattika*) sense-organs and the external (*bāhira*) sense-objects. The analysis into eighteen *dhātus* shows that consciousness is neither a soul nor an extension of a soul-substance but a mental phenomenon which comes into being as a result of certain conditions.[11] There is no independent consciousness which exists in its own right.

In similar fashion, each analysis is used to explain certain features of sentient existence. It is, in fact, with reference to these five modes of analysis that Buddhism frames its fundamental doctrines. The very fact that there are at least five kinds of analysis shows that none of them is taken as final or absolute. Each represents the world of experience in its totality, yet represents it from a pragmatic standpoint determined by the particular doctrine which it is intended to illuminate.

The purpose of our referring to the five types of analysis is to show that the *dhamma* theory of the Abhidhamma developed from an attempt to draw out their full implications. It will be seen that if each analysis is examined in relation to the other four, it is found to be further analyzable. That the first, the analysis into *nāma* and *rūpa*, is further analyzable is seen by the second, the analysis into the five *khandhas*. For in the second, the *nāma*-component of the first is analyzed into feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness. That the analysis into *khandhas*, too, can be further analyzed is shown not only by the use of the term *khandha*, which means "group", but also by the next analysis, that into six *dhātus*. For, in the latter, the *rūpa*-component of the former is analyzed into five, namely, earth, water, temperature, air, and space. That the analysis into six *dhātus* is also further analyzable is seen from the fact that consciousness, which is reckoned here as one item, is made into four in the *khandha*-analysis. That the same situation is true of the analysis into twelve *āyatanas* is shown by the next analysis, that into eighteen *dhātus*, because the latter is an elaboration of the former. This leaves us with the last, the *dhātu*-analysis with eighteen items. Can this be considered final? This supposition too must be rejected, because although consciousness is here itemized as six-fold, its invariable concomitants such as feeling (*vedanā*) and perception (*saññā*) are not separately mentioned. It will thus be seen that none of the five analyses can be considered exhaustive. In each case one or more items is further analyzable.

This, it seems to us, is the line of thought that led the Ābhidhammikas to evolve still another mode of analysis which in their view is not amenable to further analysis. This new development, which is more or less common

to all the systems of Abhidharma, is the analysis of the world of experience into what came to be known as *dharmas* (Skt) or *dhammas* (Pāli). The term *dhamma*, of course, looms large in the discourses of the Buddha, found in a variety of connotations which have to be determined by the specific context. In the Abhidhamma, however, the term assumes a more technical meaning, referring to those items that result when the process of analysis is taken to its ultimate limits. In the Theravāda Abhidhamma, for instance, the aggregate of corporeality (of the *khandha*-analysis) is broken down into twenty-eight items called *rūpa-dhammas* (material *dhammas*). The next three aggregates — feeling, perception, and mental formations — are together arranged into fifty-two items called *cetasikas* (mental factors). The fifth, consciousness, is counted as one item with eighty-nine varieties and is referred to as *citta*.[12]

Thus the *dhamma*-analysis is an addition to the previous five modes of analysis. Its scope is the same, the world of conscious experience, but its divisions are finer and more exhaustive. This situation in itself does not constitute a radical departure from the earlier tradition, for it does not as yet involve a view of existence that is at variance with that of early Buddhism. There is, however, this situation to be noted: Since the analysis into *dhammas* is the most exhaustive, the previous five modes of analysis become subsumed under it as five subordinate classifications.

The definition and classification of these *dhammas* and the explanation of their inter-connections form the main subject-matter of the canonical Abhidhamma. The Ābhidhammikas presuppose that to understand any given item properly is to know it in all its relations, under all aspects recognized in the doctrinal and practical discipline of Buddhism. Therefore, in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, they have classified the same material in different ways and from different points of view. This explains why, in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and other Abhidhamma treatises, we encounter innumerable lists of classifications. Although such lists may appear repetitive, even monotonous, they serve a useful purpose, bringing into relief, not only the individual characteristic of each *dhamma*, but also its relations to other *dhammas*.

One widespread misunderstanding of the *dhamma* theory of the Theravāda Abhidhamma is that it amounts to some kind of radical pluralism. As the Venerable Nyanaponika Thera observes, "It has been a regular occurrence in the history of physics, metaphysics, and psychology that when a 'whole' has been successfully dissolved by analysis, the resultant 'parts' themselves come in turn to be regarded as little 'wholes.'"[13] This is the kind of process that culminates in radical pluralism. As we shall soon see, about a hundred

years after the formulation of the *dhamma* theory such a trend surfaced within some early schools of Buddhist thought and culminated in the view that the *dhammas* exist in all three divisions of time, future, present, and past. Such a situation is certainly not true of the Theravāda Abhidhamma - for the simple reason that the whole edifice of its *dhamma* theory is based not only on analysis (*bheda*) but also on synthesis (*saṅgaha*). The analytical method dominates in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, which according to tradition is the first book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka; here we find a complete catalogue of the *dhammas*, each with a laconic definition. The synthetical method is more characteristic of the *Paṭṭhāna*, which according to tradition is the last book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka; for here we find an exhaustive catalogue of the conditional relations of the *dhammas*. The combined use of these two methods shows that, according to the methodological apparatus employed in the Abhidhamma, a true picture of the nature of reality must be based on both analysis and synthesis.

In this connection we find the following verse in the *Nāmarūpapariccheda*, an Abhidhamma compendium of the medieval period, which draws our attention to the importance of the two complementary methods of analysis and synthesis:

> Analysis and synthesis are praised by the wise,
> liberation in the *Sāsana* [comes from] analysis and synthesis;
> the purpose of the method of analysis and synthesis is ultimate;
> [here] is explained the heading of analysis and synthesis.[14]

Bheda is the commentarial term for analysis. It is sometimes paraphrased as "the resolution of the compact" (*ghana-vinibbhoga*) into its component parts, or "of the aggregation (*samudāya*) into its constituents (*avayava*)".[15]

Thus if analysis plays an important role in the Abhidhamma's methodology, no less important a role is played by synthesis. Analysis shows that what we take to be one is really many, what appears to be a unity is only a union of several factors. Its purpose is to dispense altogether with the notion of self or substance, the belief that there is an inner and immutable core in our objects of experience. However, analysis can achieve this objective only partially, for when it dispels the notion of substance from what is analysed all that it does is to transfer the notion of substance from one locus to another, from the whole to the parts, from the thing which is analysed to the factors into which it is analysed. The notion of the substantial forest vanishes, yielding place to a multiplicity of equally substantial trees. This inadequacy of the analytical method could be remedied when it is supplemented by synthesis (*saṅgaha*), i.e., the inter-relating of the factors obtained through analysis. Synthesis shows that

the factors into which a thing is analysed are not discrete entities existing in themselves but inter-connected and inter-dependent nodes in a complex web of relationships, so that none of them could be elevated to the level of a substance or discrete self-entity. Thus both analysis and synthesis combine to demonstrate that what is analysed and the factors into which it is analysed are equally non-substantial.

It is only for purposes of definition and description that things are artificially dissected and presented as discrete entities. The truth of the matter is that the phenomenal world of experience exhibits a vast network of relational categories where nothing can exist in splendid isolation. As the sub-commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* observes, if the Abhidhamma resorts to analysis it is "because the nature of things which are amenable to analysis can be elucidated only through analysis."[16] We find more or less the same idea in the sub-commentary to the *Abhidhammāvatāra*, when it says: "Whatever distinguishable characteristic there is among the *dhammas* that have come into oneness as *dhammas*, it is but proper to hold it out as a separate entity, because it results in the clear understanding of the meaning."[17]

In point of fact, the Theravāda commentarial exegesis was not unaware of the possibility of misrepresenting the *dhamma* theory as some kind of pluralism. In this connection the commentary to the *Itivuttaka* says that one could mistakenly transgress the bounds of the *dhamma* theory (*atidhāvanti*) by ignoring the causal relationship of the *dhammas* and by focusing only on the principle of plurality (*nānattta-naya*), a situation which, it says, could lead to the extremist view of annihilation (*uccheda*): "This self and the world indeed get annihilated with no prospect of causal continuity".[18] The sub-commentary to the *Dīghanikāya* has a similar observation to make: "The erroneous grasping of the principle of plurality (*nānatta-nayassa micchāgahaṇa*) is due to the undue emphasis on the radical separateness (*accanta-bheda*) of the *dhammas*. This is the cause of the dogmatic adherence to the notion of annihilation (*ucchedābhinivesassa kāraṇaṃ*)."[19] What both sub-commentaries seek to show is that the *dhamma* theory is not a reductionist view of existence leading to nihilism. Reductionism is the binary opposition of substantialism. The Abhidhamma view of existence sets itself equally aloof from both extremes.

If the *dhamma* theory is not radically pluralist, it does not represent some kind of monism either. Any such interpretation, as the Pāli commentaries say, is due to overstressing the principle of unity (*ekatta-naya*) and undue focussing on the absolute non-distinctness (*accantaṃ abhedagahaṇa*) of the *dhammas*. This necessarily paves the way to the wrong view that the *dhammas* constitute an un-analyzable absolute unity.[20]

The rejection of both alternatives means that *dhammas* are not fractions of a whole indicating an absolute unity, nor are they a concatenation of discrete entities. They are a multiplicity of inter-connected but distinguishable co-ordinate factors. They are not reducible to, nor do they emerge from, a single reality, which is the fundamental postulate of monistic metaphysics. If they are to be interpreted as phenomena this should be done with the proviso that they are phenomena with no corresponding noumena. For they are not manifestations of some mysterious metaphysical substratum but processes taking place due to the interplay of a multitude of conditions.

In thus evolving a view of existence which cannot be interpreted in either monistic or pluralistic terms, the philosophy of the Abhidhamma accords with the "middle doctrine" of early Buddhism. This doctrine avoids both the eternalist view of existence which maintains that everything exists absolutely (*sabbaṃ atthi*) and the opposite nihilistic view which maintains that absolutely nothing exists (*sabbaṃ natthi*).[21] It also avoids, on the one hand, the monistic view that everything is reducible to a common ground, some sort of self-substance (*sabbaṃ ekattaṃ*) and, on the other, the opposite pluralistic view that the whole of existence is resolvable into a concatenation of discrete entities (*sabbaṃ puthuttaṃ*).[22] Transcending these two pairs of binary extremes, the middle doctrine explains that phenomena arise in dependence on other phenomena without a self-subsisting noumenon which serves as the ground of their being.

The inter-connection and inter-dependence of these *dhammas* are not explained on the basis of the dichotomy between substance and quality, what the Pāli Buddhist exegesis calls "the distinction between the support and the supported" (*ādhāra-ādheya-bhāva*).[23] A given *dhamma* does not inhere in another as its quality, nor does it serve another as its substance. The so-called substance is only a figment of our imagination. The distinction between substance and quality is denied because such a distinction leaves the door open for the intrusion of the theory of a substantial self (*attavāda*) with all that it entails.

It is with reference to conditions that the inter-connection of the *dhammas* should be understood. The conditions are not different from the *dhammas*. The *dhammas* themselves constitute the conditions. As one Pāli exegetical work observes, "Here is found neither a self nor a non-self; it is the *dhammas* that generate *dhammas*".[24] How each *dhamma* becomes a condition (*paccaya*) for the arising of another (*paccayuppanna*) is explained on the basis of the system of conditioned genesis (*paccayākāra-naya*). This system, which consists of twenty-four conditions, aims at demonstrating the inter-dependence and dependent origination of all *dhammas* in respect of both their temporal sequence and their spatial concomitance.[25]

CHAPTER 2

THE NOMINAL AND THE CONCEPTUAL

What emerges from the *dhamma* theory is best described as *dhamma*-realism, for as we have seen, it recognizes only the ultimate reality of the *dhammas*. What is interesting about this view of existence is that it involves more denials than affirmations. We have already noted how it denies the notion of substance and quality and as we shall see in the sequel it also denies the objective reality of time, space, motion, physical contact, and the notion of gradual change. Only the ultimate reality of the *dhammas* is affirmed; whatever that cannot be subsumed under the heading *dhamma* is deprived of its ultimate reality. What we can observe here is the principle of parsimony in the analysis of empirical existence and an attempt to ensure ontological minimalism. Then, how does the *dhamma* theory interpret the "common-sense" view of the world, a kind of naïve realism in the sense that it tends to recognize realities more or less corresponding to all linguistic terms? In other words, what relation is there between the *dhammas*, the basic factors of existence, on the one hand, and the objects of common-sense realism, on the other? What degree of reality, if any, could be bestowed on the latter?

It is in their answers to these questions that the Ābhidhammikas formulated the theory of *paññatti* — concepts or designations[1] — together with a distinction drawn between two kinds of truth, consensual (*sammuti*) and ultimate (*paramattha*). This theory assumes significance in another context. In most of the Indian philosophies which were associated with the *ātma*-tradition and subscribed to a substantialist view of existence, such categories as time and space and such notions as unity, identity, and universality came to be defined in absolute terms. The problem for the Ābhidhammikas was how to explain such categories and notions without committing themselves to the same metaphysical assumptions. The theory of *paññatti* was the answer to this.

The term *paññatti* conveys such meanings as making known, laying down, manifestation, designation, appellation, notion, and concept. The term occurs both in the Suttas and the Vinaya, sometimes in a general and sometimes in a somewhat technical sense.[2] Its use in the Abhidhamma in a technical sense to mean concept or designation could, however, be traced to the Poṭṭhapāda Sutta of the *Dīghanikāya*, where we find the well-known saying of the Buddha on the use of language: "These, Citta, are names (*samaññā*), expressions (*nirutti*), turns of speech (*vohāra*), and designations (*paññatti*) in common use in the world. And of these the

Tathāgata makes use indeed, but is not led astray by them".[3] This saying assumes significance in the context of the Buddha's use of the word *atta-paṭilābha* (obtainment of self) in order to designate the three kinds of the obtainment of self, the gross self, the mental self, and the formless self. The point emphasized is that the use of the word obtainment of self does not in any way imply the recognition of a self-entity which persists in the three different obtainments. There is no permanent substantial entity that could be observed to correspond to the term 'self' (*atta*). Here the term *atta* is a *paññatti*, a designation in common use in the world, which the Buddha uses without clinging to it (*aparāmasaṃ voharati*).[4]

The earliest reference to *paññatti* as used in the Abhidhamma is found in the Niruttipatha Sutta of the *Saṃyuttanikāya*. Here it is said that the division of time into past, present, and future and the designation of time as "was", "is", and "will be" are three pathways of expression (*nirutti*), designation (*adhivacana*), and concept-making (*paññatti*).[5]

What may be described as the first formal definition of *paññatti* occurs in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*. Here the three terms, *paññatti*, *nirutti*, and *adhivacana* are used synonymously and each term is defined by a number of appropriate equivalents:

> *Yā tesaṃ tesaṃ dhammānaṃ saṅkhā samaññā paññatti vohāro nāmaṃ nāmakammaṃ nāmadheyyaṃ nirutti vyañjanaṃ abhilāpo.*[6]

In Mrs Rhys Davids' translation: "That which is an enumeration, that which is a designation, an expression (*paññatti*), a current term, a name, a denomination, the assigning of a name, an interpretation, a distinctive mark of discourse on this or that *dhamma*."[7]

Immediately after this definition, it is said that all the *dhammas* are the pathway of *paññattis* (*sabbe dhammā paññattipathā*). What this amounts to saying is that all the *dhammas* can be designated by linguistic terms. Thus one distinction between *paññatti* and *dhamma* turns out to be that between expression and reality.

In elaborating on this the Pāli commentary says that *paññatti* means the process of predicating: "What is it that is predicated? It is 'I', 'mine', 'another', 'another's', 'a person', 'a state', 'an individual', 'a man', 'a youth', 'Tissa', 'Datta', 'a conch', 'a chair', 'a mat', 'a pillow', 'a monastery', 'a cell', 'a door', 'a window' — these are the various ways of predicating".[8] This miscellany of examples is so designed as to include any kind of predication through the symbolic medium of language. Elaborating on this further, the commentary observes that there is no such thing that does not constitute the object of

being named, in other words, that nothing can escape the possibility of being named. There is one thing, it is said, which coincides with all things and all things in one thing. This one thing is the act of naming (*nāma-paññatti*), which is said to be applicable to anything in the four spheres of existence (*catubhūmaka-dhammesu nipatati*).[9]

In this regard the commentary makes this interesting observation: "There is no living being or phenomenon that may not be called by a name. The trees in the forests and the mountains are the business of the country folk. For, they on being asked 'what tree is this?' say the name they know, as 'Cutch', 'Butea'. Even of the tree the name of which they know not, they say, 'It is the nameless tree'. In addition, that stands as the established name of that tree. And the same with fishes, tortoises, etc., in the ocean".[10] This all-embracing role, which the commentary assigns to name or naming (*nāma*), reminds us of two stanzas occurring in the *Saṃyuttanikāya*:[11]

> What has weighed down everything?
> What is most extensive?
> What is the one thing that has
> All under its control?
>
> Name has weighed down everything;
> Nothing is more extensive than name.
> Name is the one thing that has
> All under its control.[12]

Since *paññatti* represents name and meaning as concepts, it has to be distinguished from *dhammas*, the category of the real. And since the term *paramattha* is used in the Abhidhamma as a description of what is ultimately real, the above distinction is also presented as that between *paññatti* and *paramattha*, or that between *paññatti* and *dhamma*, because *paramattha* and *dhamma* are mutually convertible terms. Thus we have the category of *paññattis* on the one hand representing that which exists as name and concept, and the category of *dhammas* on the other, representing that which exists as ultimate constituents of existence. The two categories imply two levels of reality as well. These two levels are the conceptual and the real. It is the distinction between that which depends on the operation of mind, and that which exists independently of the operation of mind. While the former owes its being to the act of cognition itself, the latter exists independently of the cognitive act.

These two categories, the *paññatti* and the *paramattha*, or the conceptual and the real, are said to be mutually exclusive and together exhaustive of the whole of the knowable (*ñeyya-dhamma*).[13] Thus what is not *paramattha* is *paññatti*. Similarly what is not *paññatti* is *paramattha*.

Hence the *Abhidhammāvatāra* makes this assertive statement: "Besides the two categories of *paramattha* (the real) and *paññatti* (the conceptual), a third category does not exist. One who is skillful in these two categories does not tremble in the face of other teachings".[14]

Although the theory of *paññatti* is formally introduced in the works of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, it is in the Abhidhamma exegesis that we find more specific definitions of the term along with many explanations on the nature and scope of *paññattis* and how they become objects of cognition.

In the first place, what is called *paññatti* cannot be subsumed under *nāma* (the mental) or *rūpa* (the material). Hence the *Nāmarūpapariccheda* describes it as "*nāma-rūpa-vinimmutta*", i.e., distinct from both mind and matter.[15] This is another way alluding to the fact that *paññattis* are not *dhammas*. Both *paññatti* and Nibbāna are excluded from the domain of the five aggregates.[16] Since *paññatti* refers to that which has no corresponding objective counterpart, it is also called *asabhāva-dhamma*, i.e., *dhamma* without own-nature.[17] This description distinguishes it from the real factors of existence. Since *sabhāva*, the intrinsic nature of a *dhamma*, is itself the *dhamma*, from the point of view of this definition what is qualified as *asabhāva* (absence of own-nature) amounts to an *abhāva*, a non-existent in the final sense. It is in recognition of this fact that the three salient characteristics of empirical reality, namely, arising (*uppāda*), presence (*ṭhiti*), and dissolution (*bhaṅga*) are not applied to them. These three characteristics can be predicated only of those things which answer to the Abhidhamma's definition of empirical reality.[18] Again, unlike the real existents, *paññattis* are not brought about by conditions (*paccayaṭṭhitika*).[19] For this same reason, they are also defined as "not positively produced" (*aparinipphanna*). Positive production (*parinipphannatā*) is true only of those things which have their own individual nature (*āveṇika-sabhāva*).[20] Only a *dhamma* that has an own-nature, with a beginning and an end in time, produced by conditions, and marked by the three salient characteristics of conditioned existence, is positively produced.[21]

Further, *paññattis* differ from *dhammas* in that only the latter are de-limited by rise and fall. Unlike the *paññattis*, the *dhammas* come into being having not been (*ahutvā sambhonti*); and, after having been, they cease (*hutvā paṭiventi*).[22] *Paññattis* have no own-nature to be manifested in the three instants of arising (*uppāda*), presence (*ṭhiti*), and dissolution (*bhaṅga*). Since they have no existence marked by these three phases — the nascent, present, and cessant — such temporal distinctions as past, present, and future do not apply to them. Consequently they have no reference to time (*kāla-vimutta*).[23] For this self-same reason, *paññattis* have no place in the traditional

analysis of empirical reality into the five *khandhas*, for what is included in the *khandhas* should have the characteristics of empirical reality and be subject to temporal divisions.[24] Nor can *paññattis* be assigned a place in any of the four planes of existence recognized in Buddhist cosmology (*paññatti bhūmi-vinimmuttā*).[25] Another noteworthy characteristic of *paññattis* is that they cannot be described either as conditioned (*saṅkhata*) or as unconditioned (*asaṅkhata*), for they do not possess their own-nature (*sabhāva*) to be so described.[26] Since the two categories of the conditioned and the unconditioned comprise all realities, the exclusion of *paññattis* from these two categories is another way of underscoring their unreality.

What the foregoing observations amount to saying is that while a *dhamma* is a thing established by own-nature (*sabhāva-siddha*), a *paññatti* is a thing merely conceptualized (*parikappa-siddha*). The former is an existent verifiable by its own distinctive intrinsic characteristic, but the latter, being a product of the mind's synthesizing function, exists only by virtue of conceptual thought.

In the Theravāda Abhidhamma we find two kinds of *paññatti*. One is called *nāma-paññatti*, concept-as-name, and the other *attha-paññatti*, concept-as-meaning. The first refers to names, words, signs, or symbols through which things, real or unreal, are designated. "*Nāma-paññatti* is the mere mode of recognizing (*saññākāra-matta*) by way of this or that word whose significance is determined by worldly convention."[27] It is created by worldly consent (*lokasaṅketa-nimmitā*) and established by worldly usage (*lokavohārena siddhā*).[28] The other, called *attha-paññatti*, refers to ideas, notions, or concepts corresponding to the names, words, signs, or symbols. It is produced by the interpretative and synthesizing function of the mind (*kappanā*) and is based on the various forms or appearances presented by the real existents when they are in particular situations or positions (*avatthā-visesa*).[29] Both *nāma-paññatti* and *attha paññatti* thus have a psychological origin and as such both are devoid of objective reality.

Nama-paññatti is often defined as "that which makes known" (*paññāpanato paññatti*) and *attha-paññatti* as "that which is made known" (*paññāpiyattā paññatti*).[30] The former is an instance of agency-definition (*kattu-sādhana*) and the latter of object-definition (*kamma-sādhana*). What both attempt to show is that *nāma-paññatti* which makes *attha-paññatti* known, and *attha-paññatti* which is made known by *nāma-paññatti*, are mutually inter-dependent and therefore logically inseparable. This explains the significance of another definition which states that *nāma-paññatti* is the term's relationship with the ideas (*saddassa atthehi sambandho*) and that *attha-paññatti* is the idea's relationship with the terms (*atthassa saddehi*

sambandho).[31] These two pairs of definition show that the two processes of conceptualization and verbalization through the symbolic medium of language are but two separate aspects of the same phenomenon. It is for the convenience of definition that what really amounts to a single phenomenon is treated from two different angles, which represent two ways of looking at the same thing.

The difference is established by defining the same word, *paññatti*, in two different ways. When it is defined as subject, it is *nāma-paññatti* — the concept as name. When it is defined as object, it is *attha-paññatti* — the concept as meaning. If the former is that which expresses (*vācaka*), the latter is that which is expressed (*vacanīya*).[32] In the same sense, if the former is designation (*abhidhāna*), the latter is the designated (*abhidheya*).[33] The two kinds of *paññatti*, thus, condition each other like subject and object. Since *attha-paññatti* stands for the process of conceptualization, it represents more the subjective and dynamic aspect, and since *nāma-paññatti* stands for the process of verbalization, it represents more the objective and static aspect. For the assignment of a term to what is constructed in thought — in other words, its expression through the symbolic medium of language — invests it with some kind of relative permanence and objectivity. It is, so to say, crystallized into an entity.

According to its very definition *attha-paññatti* exists by virtue of its being conceived (*parikappiyamāna*) and expressed (*paññāpiyamāna*). Hence it is incorrect to explain *attha-paññatti* as that which is conceptualizable and expressible, for its very existence stems from the act of being conceptualized and expressed. This rules out the possibility of its existing without being conceptualized and expressed.

As noted above, names (*nāma-paññatti*) can also be assigned to *dhammas* which constitute the category of the real. However, what should not be overlooked here is that names given to *dhammas* do not have corresponding *attha-paññattis*, concepts-as-meanings. In this connection the sub-commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* observes: "A *dhamma* having its own-nature is profound (*gambhīra*), but a *paññatti* is not".[34] What this seems to mean is that objects of conceptual thought like tables and chairs are easily recognizable, whereas the *dhammas* are difficult to be grasped.

That names given to *dhammas* do not have corresponding *attha-paññatti*, concepts-as-meanings, is also shown by the identification of *attha-paññatti* (also called *upādā-paññatti*) with what is called *sammuti* or consensual reality.[35] Thus the denotation of *attha-paññatti* includes only the various objects of conceptual thought, which constitute the consensual reality (*sammuti*), and not

the constituents of ultimate reality (*paramattha*). Accordingly, we can have the following sequence: *attha-paññatti* (meaning-concept) = *upādā-paññatti* (derivative concept) = *sammuti* (consensual reality).

It is, in fact, not by resorting to *paññattis* but by transcending them at the higher reaches of mind's unification that one should be able to go beyond the conceptual and establish one's own mind directly on the real (*dhammas*). This is what is called the transcendence of the conceptual level (*paññatti-samatikkamana*). In this connection the meditator should first go beyond such concepts as "earth-element", "water-element", etc., and establish his mind directly on the individuating characteristics that correspond to them, such as solidity, viscidity, etc. It is when one is continuing to focus one's uninterrupted attention on them that the individuating characteristics become more and more evident, more and more clear and one's whole material body appears in its true form as a mere mass of elementary material constituents, all empty (*suñña*) and impersonal (*nissatta, nijjīva*).[36]

The logical conclusion that is thrust upon us by the Buddhist doctrine of *paññatti/prajñapti* is that all hypostatized entities and all objects of reification are nothing but conceptual constructions, or logical abstractions, or pure denominations with no corresponding objective realities. Only the *dhammas* are real. A *dhamma*, as noted earlier, is defined as that which has its own-nature (*sabhāva, saka-bhāva*) or own-characteristic (*sa-lakkhaṇa, saka-lakkhaṇa*). The characteristics common to all the *dhammas* are known as universal characteristics (*sāmañña-lakkhaṇa*). Three of the best examples of universal characteristics are impermanence (*aniccatā*), suffering (*dukkhatā*), and self-less-ness (*anattatā*), which are known as the three signs (marks) of sentient existence (*tilakkhaṇa*). Although these three characteristics are fundamental to the Buddhist view of phenomenal existence, in the final analysis, they too turn out to be conceptual constructions. As the *Abhidhamma Mūlaṭīkā* says when we consider them as separate abstractions they, too, share the nature of conceptual constructs (*paññatti-gatika*), with no objective reality (*paramatthato avijjamāna*).[37] For, in addition to, and distinct from, what is subject to impermanence, there is no separate independent entity called impermanence. The same situation is true of the other two characteristics as well.

Even the principle of "dependent origination", which is set forth as the central conception of Buddhism, turns out to be a conceptual construction. Because in addition to, and distinct from the *dhammas* that arise in dependence on other *dhammas*, there is no independently existing entity called "dependent origination". However, some Buddhist schools had a tendency to reverse this process. We learn from the *Kathāvatthu* that some

Buddhists, the Pubbaseliyas and Mahīśāsakas according to the commentary, who wanted to elevate the principle of dependent origination to the level of an unconditioned entity. In refuting this idea the Pāli commentary observes: Besides and in addition to such factors as ignorance there is no separate entity called "dependent origination".[38]

We find a similar situation recorded in the *Kathāvatthu* in respect of the Four Noble Truths as well.[39] Since the Four Truths are described in the early Buddhist discourses as *tathāni* (true, real) and *avitathāni* (not otherwise), some Buddhists, the Pubbaseliyas according to the commentary, argued that they are a set of unconditioned realities. Here a distinction is made between truth as concrete base (*vatthu-sacca*) and truth as characteristic (*lakkhaṇa-sacca*). The former refers, for example, to the actual experience of suffering. The latter refers to the abstract characteristic of suffering. While the former is conditioned (*vatthu-saccaṃ saṅkhataṃ*), the latter is unconditioned (*lakkhaṇa-saccaṃ asaṅkhataṃ*).[40] Here, the Theravāda position is that the abstract characteristic of suffering has no objective existence distinct and separate from the actual experience of suffering.

We find another interesting attempt at reification, attributed to a Buddhist school called Uttarāpathakas. They held that "there is an immutable something called such-ness (or that-ness) in the very nature of all things, material or otherwise [taken as a whole]".[41] Since this such-ness cannot be brought under any of the particular conditioned realities such as materiality, it is therefore reckoned to be unconditioned. Thus distinct from matter, there is materiality of matter (*rūpassa rūpatā*). In the same way there is feeling-ness of feeling (*vedanāya vedanatā*), perception-ness of perception (*saññāya saññātā*) and so on.[42]

In this regard the Theravāda position is that all these hypostatized entities and attempts at reification are due to overstepping the bounds of *paññatti* (*paññattiṃ atidhāvitvā gaṇhanti*). Therefore, they are to be understood as conceptual constructs, pure denominations with no objective counterparts.

Now let us examine the different kinds of *attha-paññatti* (= *upādā-paññatti*). In the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* we find them arranged into six groups:

> There are [1] such terms as 'land', 'mountain', and the like, so designated on account of the mode of transition of the respective elements; [2] such terms as 'house', 'chariot', 'cart', and the like, so named on account of the mode of formation of materials; [3] such terms as 'person', 'individual', and the like, so named on account of the five aggregates; [4] such terms as 'direction', 'time', and the like, so named according to the revolution of the moon and so forth; [5] such terms as 'well', 'cave', and the like, so named on account of the mode of non-impact and so forth; [6] such terms as *kasiṇa* signs and the like, so named on account of respective elements and distinguished mental development.[43]

The six kinds of *paññatti* mentioned here are concepts of continuity (*santāna-paññatti*), collective concepts (*samūha-paññatti*), local concepts (*disā-paññatti*), temporal concepts (*kāla-paññatti*), and sign concepts (*nimitta-paññatti*).

What follows is Lama Anagarika Govinda's arrangement of the six kinds:

1. inorganic material forms, based on physical laws of nature; e.g., 'land', 'mountain';
2. organized material forms, based on constructive intelligence; e.g., 'house', 'chariot';
3. organic forms, based on the five psycho-physical aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*); e.g., 'man', 'individual';
4. immaterial forms of locality (*disā*) and time (*kāla*), based on the revolutions of celestial bodies (like the moon);
5. immaterial forms of spatial quality (*asamphuṭṭhākāra*, lit. 'non-contact'); e.g., 'pit', 'cave';
6. immaterial forms of visualization, based on spiritual exercises (*bhāvanā*, meditation); e.g., the after-image (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) of hypnotic circles (*kasiṇa*).[44]

All instances of *attha-paññatti* can also be brought under two main headings, namely, collective concepts (*samūha-paññatti*) and non-collective concepts (*asamūha-paññatti*). A collective concept is due to the grasping of a group as one (*samūhekattagahaṇa*), i.e., the imposition of unity on diversity, the grasping of many-ness as one-ness. The best example of such grasping is the wrong belief in a living being as a self-entity (*satta-sammosa*).[45] The correct position is that 'distinct from the group' (*samūha-vinimmutta*), there is no living being as a self-entity.[46] It is by the resolution of the compact (*ghana-vinibbhoga*) that the true position becomes evident.[47] Two examples of non-collective concepts are time and space.

Besides the six main kinds of *attha-paññatti* mentioned above, the Abhidhamma commentaries and compendiums refer to many other kinds. In this connection the *Puggalapaññatti Aṭṭhakathā* is the most informative. It mentions several classifications of *paññattis*. Some of them are from the canonical texts (*pāḷi*), some are according to the methods of the commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā-nayena*), and others are neither from the canonical texts, nor from the commentaries, but according to the methods of celebrated exegetes. What follows is a brief description of each of them.

CHAPTER 4

THE ANALYSIS OF MIND

It was the early Buddhist teaching on the nature of mind that determined the scope, methods, and orientation of the psychology that we find in the Abhidhamma. Therefore it is necessary to begin this chapter with a brief introduction to the basic principles of the early Buddhist analysis of mind.

Early Buddhism recognizes three basic psychological principles. The first is the dependent arising of consciousness, expressed in the well-known saying: "Apart from conditions, there is no arising of consciousness."[1] Consciousness is not some kind of potentiality residing in the heart and becoming actualized on different occasions. Nor is it a static entity that runs along and wanders without undergoing any change, a kind of permanent soul entity that transmigrates from birth to birth.[2] Consciousness always springs up in dependence on a duality. "What is that duality? It is (in the case of eye-consciousness, for example) eye, the visual organ, which is impermanent, changing, and becoming-other and visible objects, which are impermanent, changing, and becoming-other. Such is the transient, fugitive duality (of eye-cum-visible objects), which is impermanent, changing, and becoming-other. Eye-consciousness, too, is impermanent. For how could eye-consciousness, arisen by depending on impermanent conditions, be permanent?"[3] The coincidence (*saṅgati*), concurrence (*sannipāta*), and confluence (*samavāya*) of these three factors, which is called sensory contact, and those other mental phenomena arising in consequence are also impermanent.[4] Just as the friction of two sticks produces fire, even so consciousness springs up from the interaction of sense-organs and sense-objects. Depending on whether it springs up in respect of the eye, or the ear, or any other sense-organ, it is named accordingly.[5]

The second basic principle of early Buddhist psychology is that consciousness does not exist as an isolated phenomenon. It always exists in conjunction with the other four aggregates into which the empiric individuality is analysed. Hence the Buddha says: "*Bhikkhus*, though someone might say: 'apart from corporeality, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from volitional formations, I will make known the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and rebirth, its growth, increase, and expansion', that is impossible".[6] Thus consciousness cannot be separated from the other four aggregates. However, it can be distinguished from the other four aggregates, and it is this circumstance that makes it definable and describable.

The third basic principle of early Buddhist psychology is the mutual dependence of consciousness and '*nāma-rūpa*'.[7] *Nāma* is a collective name for five mental factors, namely feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volition (*cetanā*), sense-impression (*phassa*), and mental advertence (*manasikāra*).[8] These are the basic mental factors that necessarily arise together with any kind of consciousness. For as that which constitutes the knowing or awareness of an object, consciousness cannot arise in its solitary condition. It must be accompanied at least by five mental factors known as *nāma*. *Rūpa* means the four great elements of matter (*mahābhūta*) and the materiality that is dependent on them (*upādā-rūpa*).[9] It seems to refer to the organic matter that enters into the composition of a living being. The reciprocal dependence of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* means that just as much as consciousness cannot exist without *nāma-rūpa*, even so *nāma-rūpa* cannot exist without consciousness. Since *rūpa* in *nāma-rūpa* means the material components of a living being, the reciprocal dependence of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* shows how Buddhism understands the nature of mind-body relationship.

Buddhism avoids the dualistic theory which maintains that mind and matter are strictly separate entities. It also avoids the monistic theory which maintains that mind and matter are finally reducible to one, either to mind (idealism) or to matter (materialism). Setting itself equally aloof from these two positions, Buddhism explains the mind-body relationship as one of reciprocal dependence.

The three psychological principles that we have discussed so far combine to dispense with the notion of a mental substance. There is no thing-in-itself beneath or behind the mental phenomena into which the mental continuum is analysed. Consciousness is in no way a self or an extension of a self-substance:

> It would be better, *bhikkhus*, for the uninstructed world-ling to take as self this body composed of the four great elements rather than the mind. For what reason? Because this body composed of the four great elements is seen standing for one year, for two years, for three, four, five, or ten years, for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years, for a hundred years, or even longer. But that which is called 'mind' and 'mentality' and 'consciousness' arises as one thing and ceases as another by day and by night. Just as a monkey roaming through a forest grabs hold of one branch, lets that go and grabs another, then lets that go and grabs still another, so too that which is called 'mind' and mentality' and 'consciousness' arises as one thing and ceases as another by day and by night.[10]

It was this radically dynamic nature of early Buddhist psychology that gave direction to its Abhidhamma version. The Abhidhamma psychology begins by analysing the apparently continuous stream of consciousness into a number of cognitive acts. Each cognitive act is, in turn, analysed into two component parts. One is bare consciousness called *citta* and the other a constellation of mental factors called *cetasikas*. The conception of a cognitive act in this manner can be traced to the early Buddhist analysis of the individual being into five aggregates. Among them the four mental aggregates are always inseparably conjoined.[11] While *citta* corresponds to the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandha*), the *cetasikas* represent the other three mental aggregates. *Citta* as the knowing or awareness of an object is generally counted as one, while *cetasikas* which function as concomitants of *citta* are fifty-two in number.

Their position in relation to the well-known twelve *āyatanas* and eighteen *dhātus* is as follows: While *citta* corresponds to *manāyatana*, the *cetasikas* come under *dhammāyatana*, the sphere of mental objects. This shows that *cetasikas* are directly apprehended by *citta* without the intermediate agency of any of the physical senses. Since *manāyatana* is internal (*ajjhattika*) and *dhammāyatana* external (*bāhira*) this shows, as Th. Stcherbatsky observes, that the principle of externality of one element in relation to another is recognized in the mental sphere as well.[12] For in the *āyatana* division while *citta* (*manāyatana*) becomes the subjective part, the *cetasikas* are placed in the objective part (*dhammāyatana*). This distinction, it may be noted here, does not correspond to the modern distinction between the subjective and the objective. This is, perhaps, traceable to the Buddhist denial of a self-entity as the agent of experience.

In the *dhātu*-analysis *citta* is represented by seven items, namely, mind (*mano*) and the six kinds of consciousness based on the five physical sense-organs and the mind. Among the seven items the first is the mental organ as bare consciousness. The next five refer to this same mind (*mano*) when based on the five physical sense-organs, namely eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, and body-consciousness. The sixth is mind-consciousness, i.e., consciousness having non-sensuous objects. This shows that mind (*mano-dhātu*) in its capacity as a cognitive faculty performs two functions. The first is its function as that which cognizes non-sensuous objects, i.e., as the sense-organ sensitive to ideas. The second is its function as the *sensus communus*, i.e., as that which organizes and integrates the individual experiences of the physical sense-organs. We find this twofold function recognized in the earlier scriptures as well, when they say that while each separate sense is active in its own sphere the mind is the resort of them all.[13]

However, on the definition of *mano-dhātu* there is no unanimity between Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda, the two major schools of Abhidharma. The Sarvāstivāda position is that *mano-dhātu* is not a separate entity, distinct from the six kinds of consciousness. It is the name given to the consciousness that has ceased immediately before the emergence of the next.[14] In this sense *mano-dhātu* is the *āśraya*, the *point d'appui* of the consciousness that immediately follows it. In view of this causal function, it receives the name mind (*manas*), mind-element (*mano-dhātu*), and mind-faculty (*manendriya*). It is only as an explanatory device that it is counted as a separate entity.[15] The Theravāda too says that the immediately preceding consciousness is a condition for the immediately succeeding one. However, because of this circumstance the preceding consciousness is not defined as *mano-dhātu*. For the Theravāda *mano-dhātu* is distinct from the six kinds of consciousness.

As noted above, although the *cetasikas* are external to *citta*, their relationship is one of inseparable association and invariable concomitance. *Citta* as bare consciousness can never come into being as a solitary phenomenon, in its true separate condition. It necessarily arises together with *cetasikas*. Nor can the *cetasikas* arise unless in conjunction with the arising of *citta*. Sometimes we read, "the *citta* has arisen" with no mention of the *cetasikas*. It is like saying, the king has arrived, for he does not come alone without his attendants, but comes attended by his retinue. Even so *citta* always appears together with a set of *cetasikas*. There is, however, this difference to be noted. Whenever *citta* arises with some *cetasikas*, there are other *cetasika*s which do not arise together with it at the same time. This means that while *citta* can arise leaving aside some *cetasikas*, no *cetasika* can arise without the *citta*. Hence the *cetasikas* are described as "occurring by leaning on the *citta*" (*cittāyattavutti*).[16] It is, in fact, *citta* that coordinates the *cetasikas* and thus functions by way of dominance (*adhipatibhāvena*).[17]

The distinction between *citta* and *cetasikas* as separate psychic events is said to be very subtle. Just as it is not possible — so runs the illustration — to separate off the different flavours in a syrup or soup and say: here is the sourness and here the saltiness and here the sweetness, even so both *citta* and *cetasikas* blend together harmoniously in such a manner that one cannot be separated from the others. This is true of a series of such psychic moments as well.[18]

Their relationship is therefore described in the *Kathāvatthu* as one of *sampayoga*, con-yoked-ness. *Sampayoga* implies the following characteristics: concomitance (*sahagata*), co-nascence (*sahajata*),

and con-joined-ness (*saṃsaṭṭha*).[19] This means that *citta* and *cetasikas* arise together, run together, cease to exist together, and thus exhibit a harmonious unity. We find this same idea in the Pāli commentaries when they refer to four characteristics common to both *citta* and *cetasikas*. The first is simultaneous origination (*ekuppāda*). The second is simultaneous cessation (*eka-nirodha*). The third is that they have a common object of attention. In the case of eye-consciousness, for instance, a datum of visibility functions as an object common to both. The fourth is that they have a common physical base (*eka-vatthuka*). In the case of eye-consciousness, for instance, both *citta* and *cetasikas* arise with eye as their common physical base.[20]

Commenting on these characteristics the commentaries raise this question. Since the life-span of all mental *dhammas* is same, why is simultaneous origination mentioned in addition to simultaneous cessation. For if *citta* and *cetasikas* arise together they should necessarily cease together. The answer is that this is in order to exclude material *dhammas* which, sometimes, arise together with mental *dhammas*. In such a situation, the material *dhammas* do not cease together with the mental *dhammas* because the life-span of matter is longer than that of mind. Hence the need to mention both characteristics. Again there are two mind-originated material phenomena, called bodily and vocal intimations, which arise and cease together with consciousness.[21] Where these two (and all other material *dhammas*) differ from *citta* and *cetasikas* is in their inability to experience an object. Therefore if only the first two characteristics are mentioned, it can give the wrong impression that mind-originated matter too can experience an object of cognition. It is in order to avoid such a wrong impression that the third characteristic, i.e., having a common object (*ekārammaṇa*), is mentioned. If the fourth characteristic is mentioned it is in order to recognize that in whichever plane of existence material aggregate is found (the sensuous and the fine-material spheres) *citta* and *cetasikas* have the same physical base, either one of the five material sense-organs or the heart base.[22]

Sometimes we find the relationship between *citta* and *cetasikas* explained under eight aspects, namely, simultaneous arising (*ekuppāda*), simultaneous cessation (*ekanirodha*), having the same object (*ekālambana*), having the same physical base (*ekavatthuka*), concomitance (*sahagata*), co-nascence (*sahajāta*), con-yoked-ness (*saṃsaṭṭha*), and common occurrence (*sahavutti*).[23] This is an attempt to combine what the *Kathāvatthu* and Pāli commentaries say on their relationship.

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma too we find more or less the same idea. In a given instance of cognition, both consciousness and mental factors have the following characteristics: (a) an identical sense-organ as their base (*āśraya*), (b) an identical object of cognition (*ālambana*), because the function of both is to grasp their respective domain (*viṣaya-grahaṇa*), (c) an identical form (*ākāra*), because both take their characteristic form after the object, (d) an identical duration (*kāla*), because both arise and cease together, and (e) identity as to the number of *dravyas*, that is to say, in a given instance of cognition, there has to be only one consciousness and it should be accompanied only by one of each of the kind of concomitants that should arise together with that particular consciousness.[24]

On the *citta-cetasika* relationship we find a dissent view recorded in the *Kathāvatthu*. It says that mental states do not pervade each other (*anupaviṭṭha*) as oil pervades sesame-seeds, or sugar pervades cane.[25] This seems to be based on the assumption that if some mental states pervade other mental states, they are like qualities inhering in substances, a distinction which all Buddhist schools reject. The Theravāda counter-argument is that the close association between mental states is not a case of one inhering in another. Rather, it is a case of describing the relationship between mental states when they exhibit such characteristics as concomitance, co-existence, con-joined-ness, a simultaneous genesis and a simultaneous cessation, and all having a common physical base and a common object.[26]

Both *citta* and *cetasikas* show how a multiplicity of mental states combines to produce a single unit of cognition. What we call an instance of cognition is neither a single isolated phenomenon nor a substantial unity. Rather, it is a complex of multiple mental states each representing a separate function and all combining towards the cognition of the object. Their internal combination is not based on the substance-quality distinction. *Citta* is not some kind of mental substance in which the *cetasikas* inhere as its qualities. As mental *dhammas* or basic factors of psychological experience they are co-ordinate. They are neither derivable from one another nor reducible to a common ground. Their relationship depends entirely on the principles of conditionality. In this connection the *Paṭṭhāna* enumerates six conditional relations.

The first is by way of co-nascence (*sahajāta*). This means that each mental state, *citta* or *cetasika*, on arising causes the other mental states to arise together with it. The second is by way of reciprocity (*aññamaññā*) which is a subordinate type of the first. In this relationship each mental state is at the same time and in the same way a conditioned state in

relation to the very states that it conditions. The third is by way of support (*nissaya*). It refers to something which aids something else in the manner of a base or foundation. The condition by way of support can be pre-nascent (*purejāta*) or co-nascent (*sahajāta*) in relation to what it conditions. Here, the reference is to the latter kind because each mental state supports the others which are co-nascent with it. The fourth condition is by way of association (*sampayutta*). In this relationship each mental state causes the other mental states to arise as an inseparable group, having the four characteristics which we mentioned above. The fifth and sixth conditional relations are by way of presence (*atthi*) and non-disappearance (*avigata*). Both are identical and differ only in the letter. Here one mental state helps another to arise or to persist in being by its presence or non-disappearance. In view of this broad definition given to this conditionality, the previous four conditional relations become subsumable under it.[27]

What we have discussed so far highlight only the multiple internal relations within a single unit of cognition. However, a single unit of cognition is not an isolated event that could be understood only with reference to the present moment. It has a past as well as a future as it becomes a conditioned and a conditioning state in relation to the preceding and succeeding cognitive acts. These relations, as Venerable Nyanaponika Thera says, can be described as its "multiple external relations".[28] We find them explained in the *Paṭṭhāna* under four aspects of conditionality. The first and second, called proximity (*anantara*) and contiguity (*samanantara*), are identical in meaning and differ only in the letter. Formally defined, they refer to a relationship where one mental state causes another mental state to emerge immediately after it has ceased, thus preventing the intervention of another mental state between them. Between the preceding and the succeeding cognitive acts there is no gap. This is precisely what *anantara* and *samanantara* mean. The other two conditions, called absence (*natthi*) and disappearance (*vigata*), are also identical in meaning but differ only in the letter. The first refers to a mental state which by its absence provides the opportunity for the presence of another. The second refers to a mental state which by its disappearance provides the opportunity for the appearance of another. Both describe the relationship between the preceding and succeeding mental states.[29] What we find here is a continuous, uninterrupted, incessant flow. As one Pāli sub-commentary says "As long as the preceding cognitive act does not disappear, so long the succeeding cognitive act does not appear. Due to their incessant appearance, without any gaps in between them, they appear as one."[30]

Cognitive acts, unlike material clusters (the minimal units of matter),[31] do not arise in juxtaposition. They necessarily arise in linear sequence. Here one can speak of only temporal sequence and not spatial concomitance. As we shall see in the sequel, in the Pāli Buddhist exegesis matter is defined as that which is extended in three-dimensional space. The same situation is not true of mind. As one Pāli sub-commentary observes, strictly speaking mental *dhammas* have no spatial location of genesis (*uppatti-desa*), although it is possible to speak of physical sense-organs and their objects as their places of arising (*sañjāti-desa*). At a given moment there can be only one cognitive act. What is more, the present cognitive act cannot cognize itself. It is just like the same sword cannot cut itself, or the same finger-tip cannot touch itself.[32] This amounts to a rejection of what is called "*taññānatā*", i.e., the idea that the same consciousness has knowledge of itself.[33]

CHAPTER 10

THE COGNITIVE PROCESS

The Abhidhamma theory of cognition is based on two basic ideas of early Buddhist psychology. One is that mind is a process without an enduring substance. The other is that all psychological experience is a continuum of mental events. Accordingly cognition is not the immediate result of the contact between the sense-organ and the sense-object. Rather, it is the cumulative result of a continuum of cognitive events. The process begins from a simple sensory contact and proceeds gradually to the apprehension of the object. There is no self or subject behind the cognitive process as an enduring entity experiencing the object or an agent directing the various mental activities. They take place naturally according to the principles of psychological order (*citta-niyāma*), each stage in the continuum being conditioned by the immediately preceding one (*laddha-paccaya-citta-santāna*).[1] *Ācariya* Buddhaghosa, after describing the process of cognition, makes this interesting observation: "There is no agent or director who, after the object has impinged on the sense-organ says: 'You perform the function of attention or you perform the function of cognition'".[2] Each of the various acts such as adverting attention to the object functions according to their own law and the whole process is recognized as the law of the operation of the mind (*citta-niyāma*). The momentary mental events do not occur in the mind. Rather, the momentary mental events themselves are the mind.

The cognitive process, as described in the Abhidhamma, is mainly based on a formulated theory of moments and the conception of *bhavaṅga* consciousness. What is called *bhavaṅga* is not a kind of consciousness additional to the 89 or 121 types mentioned earlier. It is a name given to one of the resultant consciousnesses when it performs a particular function. In this technical sense, the term occurs first in the *Paṭṭhāna* of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka and then in the *Milindapañha*.[3] However, it was in the Pāli exegetical works that the idea came to be fully developed. The term literally means "constituent of becoming" but what it means as a technical term will become clear if we refer here to the two streams of consciousness recognized in the Pāli exegesis.

One is called *vīthi-citta*. *Vīthi* means a pathway or a process. Hence what is called *vīthi-citta* refers to mind when it is active, that is, when consciousness occurs in a cognitive process. The other is called *vithi-mutta*. It refers to mind when it is free from cognitive processes,

that is, when it is in its passive condition.[4] These two processes could be referred to as process-consciousness and process-free consciousness respectively.

The process-free consciousness performs three different functions. The first is its function as *bhavaṅga*. In this capacity it ensures the uninterrupted continuity of individual life through the duration of any single existence. For whenever the process-consciousness is interrupted as, for example, in deep dreamless sleep, it is immediately followed by the process-free consciousness, thus preventing the possibility of any gap arising in the continuous flow of consciousness. Whenever a cognitive process subsides the *bhavaṅga* consciousness supervenes. In other words, it intervenes between every two cognitive processes and thus separates them as two different cognitive units. The second function of the process-free consciousness is its function as death-consciousness (*cuti-citta*), the last consciousness to occur in any individual existence. The third function of the process-free consciousness is as rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-citta*), the first consciousness to occur at the moment of rebirth. Immediately after the rebirth-linking consciousness has arisen and fallen away, it is followed by the *bhavaṅga* consciousness, which performs the function of preserving the continuity of the individual existence.[5]

The process-free consciousness, too, has its object. It is identical with the object an individual has experienced in his last cognitive process in the immediately preceding existence. When a person is almost near death some object will present itself to the last cognitive process of that person. This object can be one of three kinds: (1) an act of good or evil *kamma* committed earlier, (2) a sign or image of the *kamma* (*kamma-nimitta*) which will determine the kind of rebirth awaiting him, (3) a sign of the plane of existence (*gati-nimitta*) where the dying person is destined to be reborn.

Whenever the process-free consciousness performs the three functions of death, rebirth-linking, and life-continuum in all these instances it has its own object, i.e., an object which is identical with what an individual has experienced in his last cognitive process in the immediately preceding existence. This situation conforms to the early Buddhist teaching that there is no such thing as an uncaused consciousness. Therefore the process-free consciousness should not be understood as an unrelated entity existing by itself. As E. R. Sarachchandra observes it is also a cognizing consciousness although it does not cognize the external world. Nor is the process-free consciousness an undercurrent persisting as the substratum of the process-consciousness. It does not function like a self-conscious soul, nor is it the source of the process-consciousness.[6] The two streams of consciousness are not parallel movements functioning concurrently.

The placid flow of the process-free consciousness must be interrupted if the active process-consciousness were to operate. In the same way it is only when process-consciousness consisting of a cognitive process subsides that the process-free consciousness supervenes. There is thus an alternative flow of the two streams of consciousness.

A cognitive process, as mentioned above, is called *citta-vīthi* and the activity set in motion is called *visayappavatti*, a process having reference to an object. However, it is after the sense-organ, and not after the sense-object, that each cognitive process is named. The six cognitive processes are referred to as those based on eye-door, ear-door, nose-door, tongue-door, body-door, and mind-door. The door, *dvāra* in Pāli, is the word used for the sense-organs, because it is through them as media that the mind interacts with the objects and it is through them that the objects enter the range of the mind.

Of the six doors of cognition, the first five are the five physical sense-organs. The reference is not to the visible sense-organs, what in common parlance are known as the eye, the ear and so on, but to their sentient organs (*pasāda*). Based on the six doors of cognition there are six cognitive processes. The first five, which involve the physical senses, are together called the five-door-processes (*pañca-dvāra-vīthi*) and the sixth the mind-door-process (*mano-dvāra-vīthi*). The mind-door is the channel from which even the five-door processes emerge. Therefore they are sometimes called mixed door-processes (*missaka-dvāra-vīthi*) as they involve both the mind-door and a physical sense-door. Accordingly the ideational processes that occur solely at the mind-door are also called bare mind-door-processes (*suddha-mano-dvāra-vīthi*).[7]

The five-door cognitive processes follow a uniform pattern although they are based on five different sense-organs. The objects presented at each sense-door could differ on their degrees of intensity. These objects accordingly are classified into four grades: very great (*ati-mahanta*), great (*mahanta*), slight (*paritta*), and very slight (*ati-paritta*). The words "great" and "slight" do not indicate the size or grossness of the object. They refer to the force of the impact the objects can have on the consciousness. In this particular context "great" and "slight" should be understood as strong and feeble.[8] One question that arises here is why the strength or weakness of the sense-organs is not taken into consideration here. As faculties it is the sense-organs that determine the degrees of intensity of the five kinds of consciousness, and this is precisely why each consciousness is named, not after its object, but after its sense-organ. However, if only the relative intensity of the sense-object is taken

into consideration here, this is to recognize the force of the stimulus as determined at a given moment by all possible factors. If the object is "very great", it will give rise to the maximum number of cognitive events, and if "great", "slight" or "very slight", this will reflect in the number of cognitive events that the object will generate.

A cognitive process with a very great object will give rise to a full cognitive process whose temporal duration will consist of seventeen mind-moments. When computed in relation to mind, the life-span of a moment of matter is equal to seventeen mind-moments. Therefore, if the cognitive process lasts for seventeen mind-moments this does also mean that it lasts for one moment of matter. The cognitive process with a very great object is the one where the object which enters the avenue of sense-door remains until it is fully grasped by that cognitive process.

A process of cognition begins when the placid flow of the *bhavaṅga* begins to vibrate owing to the impact of the sense-object entering a sense-door. This initial stage is called the vibration of the *bhavaṅga* (*bhavaṅga-calana*). In the second stage the flow of the *bhavaṅga* gets interrupted. This is called the arrest of the *bhavaṅga* (*bhavaṅga-upaccheda*). These two stages are, strictly speaking, not part of the cognitive process. Rather, they pave the way for its emergence. It is at the third stage that there arises the five-door adverting consciousness, called so because it adverts attention to the object at the sense-door. This is the beginning of the stream of process-consciousness which launches into the cognitive process (*vīthi-pāta*). The next stage could be one of the five types of sense-consciousness that cognizes the impingent object. If it is a visible object eye-consciousness will arise performing the function of seeing (*dassana-kicca*), and if it is sound, ear-consciousness will arise performing the function of hearing (*savaṇa-kicca*) and so forth. In this particular context sense-consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is defined as the mere awareness of the presence of the object. If it is eye-consciousness, it is the mere act of seeing (*dassana-matta*), if it is ear-consciousness, it is the mere act of hearing (*savaṇa-matta*) and so forth. It does not produce knowledge of any sort. It represents the initial level of consciousness when the impinging object "is experienced in its bare immediacy and simplicity", prior to its discriminative functions by the succeeding cognitive events. As clarified in Chapter 7, at this stage eye-consciousness is a form of non-verbal awareness. Through it one knows "blue" but not "this is blue". "This is blue" is re-cognition which involves some form of verbalizing. It is known only by mind-consciousness.

Next in the order of succession are the three types of consciousness (*citta*) performing the functions of receiving (*sampaṭicchana*), investigating (*santīraṇa*), and determining (*votthapana*) the object. It is at these three successive stages that the object comes to be gradually comprehended by the discriminative and selective functions of the mind.[9]

Immediately after the stage of determining (*votthapana*) comes the most important cognitive event in the cognitive process. This is called *javana*, a technical term whose meaning is "running swiftly". *Javana* "runs swiftly over the object in the act of apprehending it". It is at this stage that the object comes to be fully comprehended. For this purpose it is necessary for *javana* to have seven swift "runnings" over the object.

Javana has three main aspects: the first is cognitive, the second affective, and the third volitional. Its cognitive aspect is defined as "experiencing the object" (*anubhavana*). As to the affective aspect of *javana* we find two divergent views in the Theravāda exegesis. One is that *javana* does not produce any emotional reaction towards the object cognized. It is only after the end of the cognitive process does any feeling-tone arise. After the seven acts of cognition have arisen and fallen one by one in succession, there arises an emotion of attraction or aversion towards the object. One reason given for the non-emotive nature of *javana* is that the preceding cognitive events remain emotionally neutral and therefore the *javana* in itself is not in a position to initiate any feeling tone. Another reason given is that both *javana* and the cognitive events preceding it arise and perish in such quick succession that they cannot develop any inclination either to be attracted or repelled by the object.[10]

This explanation does not clarify how the emotive reaction could occur after the cognitive process is over. What this perhaps means is that the emotive reaction arises among the ideational processes that arise in response and consequence to a cognitive process based on any of the physical sense-organs.

The opposite view is that *javana* has an affective dimension as well. Depending on the attractive or repulsive nature of the object, the *javana* is either attracted to or repulsed by it.[11]

Javana, as noted above, has a volitional aspect as well. It is the only stage in the cognitive process which is associated with volition (*cetanā*). Unlike any of the preceding stages, *javana* has thus the ability to make an act of volition, and since all volitional activities can be morally qualified as wholesome and unwholesome, the *javana* is the only stage that has an ethical aspect as well.[12]

The final stage in a full process of cognition is called *tadārammaṇa*, a term which literally means "having that object". It is called so because it takes as its object the object that has been apprehended by the *javana*.[13]

What we have examined so far are the different stages in a full cognitive process occasioned by a "very strong" stimulus (*balavārammaṇa*). Such a cognitive process necessarily culminates in registration (*tadārammaṇa*) and is therefore called *tadārammaṇa-vāra*, a process ending in registration. If the stimulus is "strong", it will set in motion a cognitive process leading only up to *javana*. Such a process is called *javana-vāra*, a process leading to *javana*. If the stimulus is "slight", the cognitive process will end in *votthapana*, the determining consciousness. Such a process is called *votthapana-vāra*, a process ending in determining consciousness. If the stimulus is "very slight", it will result only in the vibrations of the *bhavaṅga*. It will not ensue a cognitive process and is therefore called *moghavāra*, a sensory stimulation without effect.

A full cognitive process ending in registration contains nine different stages but to make it complete another stage called the past-*bhavaṅga* (*atīta-bhavaṅga*) is added at the very beginning of the process. The past-*bhavaṅga* is the mind-moment that occurs in the process-free consciousness immediately before its vibration (*bhavaṅga-calana*) due to the impact of the object at the sense-door. The entire process beginning with past *bhavaṅga* and ending with *tadārammaṇa* takes place within seventeen mind-moments. The calculation is made by assigning a definite number of moments to each stage of the process, in the following manner:

	Stages of the cognitive process	Moments assigned
1.	past-*bhavaṅga* (*atīta-bhavaṅga*)	1
2.	*bhavaṅga*-vibration (*bhavaṅga-calana*)	1
3.	*bhavaṅga*-arrest (*bhavaṅga-upaccheda*)	1
4.	five-door-adverting (*pañca-dvāra-āvajjana*)	1
5.	sense-consciousness (*viññāṇa*)	1
6.	receiving/assimilating (*sampaṭicchana*)	1
7.	investigating (*santīraṇa*)	1
8.	determining (*votthapana*)	1
9.	*javana*	7
10.	registration (*tadārammaṇa*)	2
	Total number of mind-moments	17

It will be noticed that though the past-*bhavaṅga* is assigned one mind-moment, apparently it does not play a role in the cognitive process. Why it is introduced needs explanation. According to the Abhidhamma theory of moments, matter is weak and lethargic at the sub-moment of arising but strong and efficient at the sub-moment of existence.[14] Therefore a material object must pass its sub-moment of arising and arrive at the sub-moment of existence in order to have an impact at the sense-door. It must also be noted that in terms of temporal duration the sub-moment of the arising of matter is exactly equal to a mind-moment.[15] This situation should show that the mind-moment called past-*bhavaṅga* coincides exactly with the sub-moment of arising of the material object. It is in order to recognize the arising-moment of the material object that the past-*bhavaṅga* is added to represent the initial stage of the cognitive process.

The addition of past-*bhavaṅga* makes the cognitive process to consist of seventeen mind-moments. As noted above, seventeen mind-moments are exactly equal to the life-span of one matter-moment because the mind is said to change rapidly and break up more quickly than matter.[16] Accordingly a matter-moment which arises simultaneously with a mind-moment perishes together with the seventeenth mind-moment in a given series.[17] When it is said that a complete cognitive process lasts for seventeen mind-moments it does also mean that a complete cognitive process lasts for one matter-moment.

Why the cognitive process is calculated in this manner can be understood in a wider perspective if we examine here the Vaibhāṣika-Sautrāntika controversy on the causality of cognition. Any act of cognition, it may be noted here, involves the participation of at least three things, namely the sense-object, the sense-organ, and the sense-consciousness. According to the theory of moments, however, these three items are equally momentary. (For the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas do not make a distinction between mind and matter as to their life-span.) Since causality demands a temporal sequence between the cause and the effect, how can a causal relationship be established between three equally momentary things?

The Vaibhāṣikas seek to solve this problem by their theory of simultaneous causation (*sahabhū-hetu*), according to which the cause need not precede the effect. Both cause and effect can be co-existent and therefore as far as this situation is concerned causality can be defined as the invariable concomitance of two or more things.[18] Accordingly the object, the organ, and the cognition can arise simultaneously and operate as cause and effect, as in the case of the lamp and its light or the sprout and its shadow.

The Sautrāntikas take strong exception to this interpretation. They reject the Vaibhāṣika theory of simultaneous causation on the ground that the cause must necessarily precede the effect and therefore to speak of a causality when the cause and the effect are co-existent is meaningless. The example of the lamp and the light makes no sense because the lamp is not the cause of light, both the lamp and the light being results of a confluence of causes belonging to a past moment. Hence they maintain that object is the cause of cognition and therefore the object must precede the act of cognition. The two cannot arise simultaneously and yet activate as cause and effect. The whole situation is clearly brought into focus by the following objection raised by the Dārṣṭāntikas:

> The organs and the objects of the sense-consciousness, as causes of sense-consciousness, belong to a past moment. When (for example) a visible object and the eye exist, the visual consciousness does not exist. When the visual consciousness exists, the eye and the visible object do not exist. In their absence during the moment of (visual) consciousness, there is no possibility of the cognition of the object. Therefore all sense-perceptions are indirect.[19]

This is what led the Sautrāntikas to establish their theory of the inferability of the external object (*bāhyārthānumeyavāda*).[20] What is directly known is not the object but its representation. The existence of the object is inferred from its correspondence to the impression perceived. The causal relationship between the object and its cognition is determined by the peculiar efficiency of the sense-object. This is also known as the theory of representative perception (*sākāra-jñāna-vāda*).[21]

This is a brief statement of how the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas solved the problem posed by the theory of moments to the causality of cognition. The Vaibhāṣika position is that the external object, though momentary, can be directly cognized as it activates simultaneously with the act of cognition. The Sautrāntika position is that the momentary object can never be cognized directly, but has to be inferred, since the object as cause has to arise before the act of cognition.

The Theravādins' solution to the problem takes a form different from both. What enabled them to solve the problem is their theory that the life-span of a moment of matter is longer than that of a moment of mind. The theory makes it possible for a given material thing to arise before the arising of consciousness, at least before the occurrence of one mind-moment, and yet be the object of that very same consciousness. The fact that a material object lasts as long as seventeen mind-moments means that it allows itself to be fully cognized by a series of seventeen

cognitive events. Thus the Theravādins were able to establish the theory of direct perception of the external object despite their recognizing the theory of momentariness.

However, this explanation was not acceptable to the members of the Abhayagiri Fraternity. The theory they presented was similar to that of the Sautrāntikas. It says that the physical objects of sensory consciousness are not only momentary but atomic in composition, and therefore they disappear as soon as they appear "just as drops of water falling on a heated iron ball." As such they cannot come within the range of the respective consciousnesses based on the physical sense-organs. They become objects of mind-consciousness, but not objects of sensory consciousness. The clear implication is that they are inferred as objects of mind consciousness.[22] It is not possible to say more about this theory of the Abhayagiri Fraternity as there is only a passing reference to it in one of the Pāli sub-commentaries.[23]

If the Theravādins retain the theory of direct perception, this does not mean that conceptual activity does not contribute anything to the original bare sensation. It is of course true that as far as one single cognitive process is concerned the mind does not edit the raw data of perception in such a way as to falsify the true nature of the external object. The mind only performs the function of selective discrimination so that the external object is more clearly seen as the result of mental activity. A commentary gives this simile to illustrate this situation. When several children are playing on the road, a coin strikes the hand of one of them. He asks other children what it was that hit his hand. One child says that it is a white object. Another takes it with dust on it. Another describes it as a broad and square object. Another says that it is a *kahapana*. Finally they take the coin and give it to their mother who makes use of it.[24] Just as the *kahapana* in the simile the original stimulus which comes to the attention of the mind is gradually identified until it finally comes to be fully experienced at the *javana* stage of the cognitive process.

What is said above is true only of a single cognitive process based on any one of the physical sense-organs. However, each single cognitive process is not only repeated several times but is also followed by several sequels of mind-door or ideational processes, which exercise a synthesizing function on what is cognized. It is only then and then only that a distinct recognition of the object occurs. This will become more clear when we discuss towards the end of this chapter the cognitive processes that occur exclusively at the mind-door.

Another issue that divided Buddhist schools concerned the "agent" or "instrument" of perception. In the case of visual consciousness, for example, what is it that really sees the object. In this connection Venerable K. L. Dhammajoti refers to four different views as recorded in the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā-śāstra*: The Vaibhāṣikas maintain that it is the eye, the visual organ that sees. But it can do so only when it is associated with visual consciousness. It is the visual consciousness that cognizes the object. However, it can do so only when it relies on the force of the eye. What this seems to mean is that while the eye sees the object, visual consciousness is aware of it. Here a distinction is made between seeing (*paśyati*) and discerning or cognizing (*vijānāti*). The second view is the one held by *Ācārya* Dharmatrāta, according to which it is the visual consciousness that sees the object. According to the third view, held by *Ācārya* Ghoṣaka, it is the understanding (*prajñā*) conjoined with consciousness that really sees the object. The fourth view, held by the Dārṣāntikas, is that it is the confluence (*sāmāgri*) of consciousness and its concomitants that acts as the "agent" of seeing.[25]

The Theravādin view in this regard is similar to the one held by *Ācārya* Dharmatrāta. It is the visual consciousness, the consciousness dependent on the eye that sees the visible object. One reason given by those who say that it is the eye that sees is based on the sutta-saying, "on seeing a visible object with the eye" (*cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā*). According to the Theravādins it is only an idiomatic expression, what is called an "accessory locution" (*sasambhāra-kathā*), like, "He shot him with the bow". It is a case of metaphorically attributing the action of that which is supported (visual consciousness) to that which is the support (visual organ), as when one says, "the cots cry" when in fact what one means by that is that the children in the cots cry (*nissitakriyaṃ nissāye viya katvā*). Therefore the sentence has to be rephrased as, "on seeing a visible object with visual consciousness" (*cakkhu-viññāṇena rūpaṃ disvā*).[26]

In this connection the Ancients say: "The eye does not see a visible object because it has no mind (*cakkhu rūpaṃ na passati acittakattā*). The mind does not see because it has no eyes (*cittaṃ na passati acakkhukattā*)".[27] It is argued that if the eye sees, then during the time a person is having other (non-visual) consciousnesses, too, he should be able to see visible things, which really is not the case. This is because the eye is devoid of volition (*acetanattā*). On the other hand, were consciousness itself to see a visible object, it would be able to see things lying behind a wall as well, as it cannot be obstructed by resistant matter (*appaṭighabhāvato*).[28]

Apparently the controversy on whether the eye sees or eye-consciousness sees seems to be a semantic issue. As one sub-commentary observes, when it is maintained by some that it is the eye that sees, they do not mean every instance of the eye but the eye that is supported by consciousness. Likewise, when others maintain that consciousness sees, they do not mean every instance of consciousness but consciousness supported by the eye. Both groups recognize the cooperation of both eye and consciousness.[29] However, there is this difference to be noted between the Vaibhāṣika and Theravāda positions: According to the former, it is the eye, supported by consciousness that sees; whereas, according to the latter, it is the consciousness, supported by the eye that sees.

This whole controversy, according to the Sautrāntikas, is a case of devouring the empty space. Depending on the eye and visible objects arises eye-consciousness. Therefore the question as to what is that sees and what is that is seen, does not arise. There is no agent or action here. What we really see here is the play of impersonal *dharmas*, the *dharmas* appearing as causes and effects. It is merely as a matter of conforming to worldly expressions that it is said: "the eye sees", "the consciousness cognizes".

This interpretation can easily be accommodated within the Theravāda Abhidhamma as well. For although it is said that consciousness cognizes (*viññāṇaṃ vijānāti*), it is a statement made according to agent-denotation (*kattu-sādhana*), i.e., on the model of subject-predicate sentence. It implies that there is an agent accomplishing a certain action. Therefore this statement is not valid in an ultimate sense (*nippariyāyato*). To be valid, it has to be restated in terms of activity denotation (*bhāva-sādhana*) as: "cognition is the mere phenomenon of cognizing" (*vijānana-mattam'eva viññāṇaṃ*). And when this statement is rephrased in the language of causality, it means: "Depending on the eye and the visible, arises visual consciousness."[30]

Another problem that engaged the attention of Buddhist schools is what exactly that constitutes the object of perception. The problem arose in the context of the theory of atoms, what the Theravādins call material clusters (*rūpa-kalāpa*). According to this theory all physical objects of perception are atomic in composition. The question is how an atomically analysable physical object becomes the object of sensory consciousness. In this regard there are two views. The one maintained by the Vaibhāṣikas is that an assemblage or agglomeration of atoms becomes the object of sensory consciousness. It is the atoms assembled together in a particular manner that is directly perceived. This is what they call immediate perception. It is the succeeding mental consciousness that synthesizes the raw data of perception into a synthetic unity, which determines whether the object is

a jug or a pot. This theory ensures that the object of direct and immediate perception is not an object of mental interpretation but something that is ultimately real.[31] The Sautrāntikas object to this view on the ground that if a single atom is not visible a collection of atoms, too, cannot become visible. In their opinion, it is the unified complex or the synthetic unity of the atoms that becomes the object of sensory consciousness. The Vaibhāṣikas reject this view because the synthetic unity of the atoms is not something real but a product of mental interpretation. It is a case of superimposing a mental construct on the agglomeration of atoms. This makes the object of sensory consciousness something conceptual (*prajñapti-sat*) and not something real (*paramārtha-sat*).[32]

The Theravādins' explanation on this matter is similar to that of the Vaibhāṣikas. It first refers to two alternative positions, both of which are not acceptable. The first alternative is to suppose that one single atom (material cluster) impinges on the organ of sight. Here the actual reference is to the colour associated in a single material cluster (*eka-kalāpa-gata-vaṇṇa*). On the impossibility of a single atom generating sensory consciousness, all Buddhist schools agree, for the obvious reason that a single atom is not visible. The second alternative is to suppose that several atoms impinge on the organ of sight. Here the actual reference is to the colour associated with several material clusters (*katipaya-kalāpa-gata-vaṇṇā*).This possibility too is rejected.[33] This does not amount to a rejection of the Vaibhāṣika view. What it seems to mean is that the object of sensory consciousness is not a mere collection of atoms, but a conglomeration of atoms assembled together in a certain manner.[34] In this connection one anticipatory objection is raised. If one single atom is not visible, even a multitude of them are not visible. It is just like assuming that although a single blind person cannot see, a group of them is capable of seeing.[35] It is interesting to notice that this same objection in almost identical terms is raised by *Ācārya* Śrīlāta against the Vaibhāṣika view as well.[36] The Theravādin response to this objection is that the above illustration is not all-conclusive (*nayidaṃ ekantikaṃ*). There is enough empirical evidence to support the view. For instance, although a single person cannot draw a [heavily laden] palanquin or a cart, a number of people joining together and gathering sufficient strength are in a position to do so. Or, it is like many strands of hair becoming visible, as each strand contributes to the total visibility of the hair.[37]

What we have discussed so far relate to the five-door cognitive processes, i.e., those that occur with the five physical sense-organs as their bases. What is called a mind-door cognitive process is one that occurs when ideas or images come into the range of the mind. It is an ideational

process that operates independently of the physical sense-organs. Hence it is introduced as bare mind-door process (*suddha-mano-dvāra-vīthi*).[38] There are four conditions necessary for an ideational process, namely, (a) the mind must be intact (*asambhinnattā manassa*), (b) mental objects must come within the mind's focus (*āpāthagatattā dhammānaṃ*), (c) dependence on the heart-base (*vatthusannissita*), (d) attention (*manasikāra-hetu*).[39] The stimulus in a five-door process, as we have noted, is graded into four according to its intensity. On the other hand, the stimulus at the mind-door process is graded into two as clear (*vibhūta*) and obscure (*avibhūta*).[40] However, there is this important difference to be noted: While the objects of the five-door processes belong strictly to the present moment, the objects of the mind-door process could belong to any period of time, past, present, or future. They could even be free from any temporal reference (*kāla-vimutta*), as in the case of conceptual constructs (*paññatti*) and Nibbāna, the Unconditioned.[41]

A mind-door process with a clear object (*vibhūtālambana*) has the following sequence of events: (a) vibration of the *bhavaṅga* when an object enters the avenue of the mind-door, (b) the arrest of the *bhavaṅga*, (c) mind-door adverting consciousness, (d) seven moments of *javana*, and (e) two moments of registration, after which the cognitive process subsides into the *bhavaṅga*. In the case of a mind-door process occasioned by an obscure object (*avibhūtālambana*), the two moments of registration do not occur.[42] Thus in a mind-door process the stages of receiving, investigating, and determining do not occur because they are mental activities which operate only in relation to an object which is external.

As to how an object enters the range of the mind-door, two occasions are identified. The first is the occasion when mind-door processes arise in response and consequence to a cognitive process based on any of the physical sense-organs. They are called consequent (*tad-anuvattaka*) or consecutive (*anubandhaka*) mind-door processes. Their genesis is due to the circumstance that when a five-door process has just ceased, its past object comes to the mind's focus and sets off many sequences of mind-door processes.[43] It is these mind-door processes that contribute to the distinct recognition of a sense-object. For as we have already noted, such recognition of a given object depends on a number of thought processes which grasp, among other things, its shape, name, etc., supplemented with an overall process of synthesizing the disparate elements into the perception of a unity. All these functions are performed by the mind-door processes which arise as a sequel to a five-door process.

The other occasion when mind-door processes take place is when an object enters the range of the mind-door entirely on its own or "naturally" (*pakatiyā*), i.e., without being occasioned by an immediately preceding five-door process. These are ideational processes which take place without the antecedent of sensory impingement. The commentaries identify three occasions for the revival of such ideational processes. The first is when one revives in memory what one has actually experienced with the five senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. The processes of reflection occasioned by such revival are called experience-based processes (*diṭṭhavāra*). The second type occurs when one revives in memory what one has reflected upon from information or knowledge gathered from a secondary source different from first hand experience, and the processes of reflection occasioned by such revival are called *sutavāra* or information-based processes. The third occasion when ideational processes could occur is when one imaginatively constructs an object on the basis of what one has actually experienced and also on what one has learned from information gathered from a secondary source. The processes of reflection occasioned by such imaginative construction are called processes based on both (*ubhayavāra*).[44]

In the Burmese tradition we find a slightly different classification of the occasions of ideal revival. When one revives in memory what one has actually experienced it is called *diṭṭhavāra*. But when one constructs in imagination fresh things based on one's own experience it is called *diṭṭha-sambandha* (associated with experience). When objects are constructed out of and connected with information gained either by listening to others or reading books it is *suta-sambandha* (associated with things heard). "Any apparently a priori object that may enter the field of presentation from any other sources except the last two is classed as things 'cogitated' (*viññāta*)."[45]

As E. R. Sarachchandra observes the third category is not found in the Abhidhamma commentaries, and as he further observes what seems to be included in the category of the cogitated (*viññāta*) are "abstract concepts, judgements and all forms of thinking that cannot be regarded as being based on sensory experience".[46] The absence of this third category in the Pāli commentaries is not without significance. It clearly shows that according to the mainstream Theravāda view, the third category is not acceptable. What is ideally revived should be based on past experience. Accordingly only what has been experienced through the five physical senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching can be revived as an image in the mind.

CHAPTER 11

THE ANALYSIS OF MATTER

The *dhamma*-theory, as we have seen, is intended to provide an exhaustive catalogue of the components of actuality. What we have discussed so far are the components resulting from the analysis of mind into its basic constituents. The analysis of matter in the Abhidhamma, too, follows a similar pattern. For it is within the framework of the *dhamma*-theory that both analyses are presented.

Definition of Matter

In the Abhidhamma Piṭaka we do not get a formal definition of matter (*rūpa*). What we get instead are individual definitions given to the material *dhammas* into which the whole of material existence is resolved. The commentaries define *rūpa* in the sense of matter as that which has the characteristic of *ruppana*.[1] *Ruppana* refers to mutability of matter, its susceptibility to being "deformed, disturbed, knocked about, oppressed, and broken".[2] The use of the term in this sense is traceable to a *sutta* passage where the Buddha says: "And why, monks, do you say material form (*rūpa*)? It is deformed (*ruppati*), therefore it is called material form. Deformed by what? Deformed by cold, by heat, by hunger, by thirst, by flies, mosquitoes, wind, sunburn, and creeping things".[3]

The characteristic of *ruppana* is often paraphrased as *vikāra*. *Vikāra* is the alteration matter undergoes owing to such adverse physical conditions as cold and heat.[4] *Vikāra* in the sense of alteration is again paraphrased as *visadisuppatti*, i.e., "genesis of dissimilarity".[5] What this means becomes clear in the context of the theory of moments, according to which all material *dhammas* (as well as mental *dhammas*) are of momentary duration. They disappear as soon as they appear without having time to undergo change. Therefore change came to be interpreted, not as the alteration between two stages in the same *dhamma*, but as the disappearance of one *dhamma* and the immediate emergence in its place of another.[6] Understood in this manner, what is called *visadisuppatti* (genesis of dissimilarity) is not the dissimilarity between two stages of the same material *dhamma*, but the dissimilarity brought about by the disappearance of one and the emergence of another. The reference is to the appearance of a series of momentary material *dhammas*, where the succeeding *dhamma* is dissimilar to the immediately preceding one. This phenomenon of "becoming dissimilar" is due to the impact of such adverse physical conditions as heat and cold (*sītādi-virodha-paccaya-sannidhāne visadisuppatti yeva*).[7] Obviously the

reference here is not to the empirically observable change in material things, what the commentaries call "evident decay" (*pākaṭa-jarā*).[8] Rather, it refers to the never-stopping, infinitely graduated, incessant change in matter, what is called "incessant decay" (*avici-jarā*).[9]

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma we find a somewhat different definition: Matter is that which has the characteristic of *pratighāta*. *Pratighāta* is resistance or impenetrability.[10] This characteristic of matter is due to its extension in space (*yad deśam āvṛṇoti*): "Where there is an object with the characteristic of resistance (impenetrability), there cannot be [at the same time] another object, which also has the same characteristic of resistance (impenetrability)" (*yatraikaṃ sapratighaṃ vastu tatra dvitīyasyotpattir na bhavati*).[11] This definition thus highlights the characteristic of spatial extension (*āvaraṇa-lakṣaṇa*) which makes matter resistant and impenetrable.

What is interesting to note here is that the Theravāda, too, recognizes this definition in an indirect way. This will become clear if we examine here the definitions given in the Theravāda to the four great elements of matter (*mahābhūta*), namely, earth (*paṭhavī*), water (*āpo*), fire (*tejo*), and air (*vāyo*). The first represents solidity (*kakkhaḷatta*) and spatial extension (*pattharaṇa*), the second fluidity (*davatā*) and cohesion (*bandhanatta*), the third temperature of cold and heat (*sīta*, *uṇha*), and the fourth distension (*thambhitatta*) and mobility (*samudīraṇa*).[12] These four material elements are necessarily coexistent (*niyata-sahajāta*) and positionally inseparable (*padesato avinibhoga*). They are therefore present in all instances of matter, beginning from the smallest material unit (*rūpa-kalāpa*) to anything bigger than that.[13] Now the fact that the earth-element which represents solidity and spatial extension is said to be present in every instance of matter, is another way of saying that every instance of matter is characterized by solidity — whatever be the degree, and by extension — whatever be the extent. This is another way of saying that every instance of matter has the characteristic of resistance/impenetrability (*pratighāta*).

Material Dhammas

Material *dhammas* are the basic constituents into which the whole of material existence is reduced. Their aggregation and interaction explains the variety and diversity of the physical phenomena of our world of experience. Apart from these material *dhammas*, no other matter is recognized. What is called material substance is explained away as a product of our own imagination. Any given instance of matter is therefore resolvable into these material *dhammas* without leaving any residue to be interpreted in

a substantial sense. The dichotomy of substance and quality has no role to play in the Abhidhamma's analysis of matter (or of mind). No material *dhamma* is either a substance or a quality of any other material *dhamma*.

A material *dhamma* is normally postulated as if it were a discrete entity. However, this does not mean that it has an independent and isolated existence. It is entirely for the convenience of definition and description that it is so postulated. For it always exists in inseparable association with a set of other material *dhammas*. Even when the analysis of matter "ended" in atomism (theory of *rūpa-kalāpa*), this principle of positional inseparability was not abandoned. For even the so called atom (*paramāṇu*) is, in the final analysis, a cluster of material *dhammas* (*rūpa-kalāpa*), one physically inseparable from another, all forming a "heterogeneous" unity.[14]

In the course of this chapter we shall notice that some of the material *dhammas* represent certain phases, modalities, and characteristics of what really amounts *rūpa* in the sense of matter. Strictly speaking, to introduce them as material *dhammas* is in a way to misrepresent their true nature. However, there is this justification for our doing so: The Pāli commentators themselves observe that they are not true material *dhammas*, but nominal entities. Yet as a matter of convention (*rūḷhiyā*), they themselves refer to them by the same term.[15] Hence if we, too, keep on introducing them as material *dhammas*, this, be it noted, is done as a matter of convention (*rūḷhi*).

Although the Abhidhamma Piṭaka refers in all to twenty-seven material *dhammas*, the Pāli commentaries have increased the number to twenty-eight by adding heart-base as the physical seat of mental activity. The final list is as follows. Four great material elements: (1) earth (*paṭhavī*), (2) water (*āpo*), (3) fire (*tejo*), (4) air (*vāyo*); five sense-organs: (5) organ of sight (*cakkhu*), (6) organ of hearing (*sota*), (7) organ of smell (*ghāna*), (8) organ of taste (*jivhā*), and (9) organ of touch (*kāya*); the objective sense-fields, with the exception of the tangible: (10) the visible (*rūpa*), (11) sound (*sadda*), (12) smell (*gandha*), (13) taste (*rasa*); three faculties: (14) faculty of femininity (*itthindriya*), (15) faculty of masculinity (*purisindriya*), and (16) material faculty of vitality (*rūpa-jīvitindriya*); (17) heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*), (18) nutriment (*āhāra-rūpa*), (19) space-element (*ākāsa-dhātu*); two modes of self-expression: (20) bodily intimation (*kāya-viññatti*), and (21) vocal intimation (*vacī-viññatti*); three characteristics of matter: (22) lightness of matter (*rūpassa lahutā*), (23) malleability of matter (*rūpassa mudutā*), and (24) wieldiness of matter (*rūpassa kammaññatā*); four phases of matter: (25) production of matter (*rūpassa upacaya*), (26) continuity of matter (*rūpassa santati*), (27) decay of matter (*rūpassa jaratā*), and (28) impermanence of matter (*rūpassa aniccatā*).

Material Dhammas included among the Objects of Mind (*Dhammāyatana-rūpa*)

These twenty-eight material *dhammas* are represented in the list of twelve *āyatanas* as follows: The five physical sense-organs (Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) constitute the first five internal *āyatanas*. (The sixth internal *āyatana*, i.e., *manāyatana* is mental). The four objective sense-fields (Nos. 10, 11, 12, 13) constitute the first four external *āyatanas*. The four great material elements, with the exception of the water-element (Nos. 1, 3, 4) constitute the fifth external *āyatana*. All the remaining material *dhammas* (Nos. 2, 14-28) constitute a part of *dhammāyatana*, the sixth external *āyatana* representing objects of mind.

***Ajjhattika* (Internal)**		***Bāhira* (External)**	
Cakkhāyatana	= No. 5	*Rūpāyatana*	= No. 10
Sotāyatana	= No. 6	*Saddāyatana*	= No. 11
Ghānāyatana	= No. 7	*Gandhāyatana*	= No. 12
Jivhāyatana	= No. 8	*Rasāyatana*	= No. 13
Kāyāyatana	= No. 9	*Phoṭṭhabbāyatana*	= Nos. 1, 3, 4
(*Manāyatana*)		Part of *Dhammāyatana*	= Nos. 2, 14-28

It will be seen that altogether sixteen material *dhammas* are included in the *dhammāyatana*. They are cognized, not through any of the physical sense-organs, but by mind, through a process of inference. The five physical sense-organs are also of this nature. For they refer not to the visible (gross) sense-organs, but to their subtle counterparts.[16] They are known only as objects of mind-cognition. Hence, strictly speaking, they can also be included in the *dhammāyatana*. However, since they are already represented by five separate *āyatanas*, they are not designated as *dhammāyatana-rūpa*. We shall be using the term *dhammāyatana-rūpa(s)* to mean only those sixteen items which in the Abhidhamma are so designated.

There is general agreement among Buddhist schools that the first five internal and the first five external *āyatanas* are *rūpa* in the sense of matter. From the point of view of early Buddhism, too, this is so. It is in regard to the category of *dhammāyatana-rūpa* that Buddhist schools differ. As we have seen, for the Theravāda it consists of sixteen items. For the Sarvāstivāda, on the other hand, there is only one *dharmāyatana-rūpa*, called *avijñapti-rūpa*.[17] However, seven of the items in the Theravāda list have their counterparts in the Sarvāstivada as well, but not as part of

dharmāyatana-rūpa. They are water-element (No. 2), the two faculties of sex (Nos. 14, 15), nutriment (No. 18), space-element (No. 19), and the two modes of self-expression (Nos. 20, 21). These seven items, with the exception of nutriment, appear as sub-divisions of other *āyatanas*. On the other hand, nutrition appears as a combination of three other *āyatanas*.[18] Such a difference as to the relative position of these seven items and the *āyatanas* presupposes a difference as to their interpretation. But this needs not concern us here.

The Theravādins do not recognize under any guise the *avijñapti-rūpa* which, for the Sarvāstivādins, is the one and only *dharmāyatana-rūpa*. The Dārṣṭāntikas and the Sautrāntikas strongly criticize the very notion of *avijñapti-rūpa*, and oppose its elevation to the status of a *dharma*. For these two schools, it is only a mental construct with no objective counterpart. There is no evidence to suggest that the Sautrāntikas recognized any *dharmāyatana-rūpa*. For them all that is material can be subsumed under the first five internal and the first five external *āyatanas*.

Two things emerge from the foregoing observations. One is that some Buddhist schools did not recognize *dhammāyatana-rūpa*. The other is that two leading schools that recognized it did not agree on what it should constitute. Both seem to suggest that the inclusion of some material *dhammas* in *dhammāyatana* is an innovation on the part of the Abhidharma/Abhidhamma.

However, the Theravāda Abhidhamma seeks to establish a link between *dhammāyatana-rūpa* and early Buddhist teachings. This it does on the basis of a *sutta*-passage where we find material form (*rūpa*) defined in its totality:

> *Yaṃ kiñci rūpaṃ atītānāgatapaccuppannaṃ ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumaṃ vā hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā yaṃ dūre santike vā, sabbaṃ rūpaṃ ...*[19] (Whatever material form there is, past, present or future, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all that material form ...)

It will be seen that this passage uses some pairs of words to embrace components of corporeality in their entirety. Two of them are: (a) gross or subtle (*oḷārika* and *sukhuma*), and (b) far or near (*dūre* and *santike*). These two pairs, according to the Abhidhamma, are meant to distinguish *dhammāyatana-rūpa* from the rest.[20] The five physical sense-organs and the five physical sense-objects are called gross (*oḷārika*), because their presence is easily apprehended through sensory impingement. The other material *dhammas* included in *dhammāyatana* are called subtle (*sukhuma*), because they are not easily apprehended (*duppariññeyya*). They have to be

known only as objects of mind-cognition through a process of inference.[21] The distinction between gross and subtle is, thus, not based on the relative size of the object, but on how its presence can be observed.

Likewise the other pair, far and near (*dūre* and *santike*), in this particular context does not signify spatial distance or proximity. The five physical sense-organs and the five physical sense-objects are called "proximate", because their contact (*ghaṭṭana*) resulting in visual consciousness, etc., witnesses to their very presence. Because of their being thus easily known (*gahaṇassa sukarattā*), they are called "proximate" (*santike*). "Far" signifies the *dhammāyatana-rūpas* because in contrast to the rest they are not easily apprehended (*duviññeyya*).[22]

We find the two terms gross (*audārika*) and subtle (*sūkṣma*) used in a similar sense in the Sarvāstivāda as well.[23] Here "subtle" refers to *avijñapti*, the *dharmāyatana-rūpa*, and "gross" to all other material *dharmas*. An alternative explanation is that the pair does not indicate an absolute dichotomization, but are of relative application (*āpekṣikam*). What is subtle in relation to something could be gross in relation to something else.[24] However, the Sarvāstivādins interpret "near" (*antika*) and "far" (*dūra*) in a different context to justify their theory of tri-temporality. The material *dharmas* that exist now (present) are "near" (*antika*). The material *dharmas* that will be (future) and those that were (past) are "far" (*dūra*).[25]

It is very unlikely that the *sutta*-passage has used the two pairs of words in such a technical sense. We can understand them in a direct and literal sense. What it seeks to lay stress on is the totality of material phenomena (*sabbaṃ rūpaṃ*), first with reference to time (past, present or future), secondly with reference to a given individual (internal or external), thirdly with reference to the nature of material form (gross or subtle), fourthly with reference to its quality (inferior or superior), and finally with reference to its location (far or near). We find the same formula, with the necessary changes, applied to the other four aggregates as well, quiet obviously to stress the idea of "all".

The original *sutta*-meaning of the two terms is, in fact, retained in the *Vibhaṅga* of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka: "Whatever other material form there is, which is not proximate (*anāsanne*), which is not in the vicinity (*anupakaṭṭhe*), far (*dūre*), not near (*asantike*) — this is called material form that is 'far'. Whatever material form there is, which is in proximity (*āsanne*), in near vicinity (*upakkaṭṭhe*), not far (*avidūre*), near (*santike*) — this is called material form that is 'near'".[26]

Equally significant is the explanation given by Bhadanta Śrīlāta, a celebrity of the Sautrāntika School: material *dharmas* that exist in a visible locality (*dṛśya-deśa*) are near (*antika*); those that exist in an invisible locality (*adṛśya-deśa*) are far (*dūra*).[27] The criterion is not whether the material *dharmas* are visible or not, for such a criterion would bring the sphere of visibility (*rūpāyatana*) under one heading and the remaining material *dharmas* under the other.

Another link the Abhidhamma establishes between *dhammāyatana-rūpa* and early Buddhist teachings is the Saṅgīti Sutta of the *Dīghanikāya*. This *sutta* says that all materiality is of three kinds: (a) visible and impinging (*sanidassana-sappaṭigha*), (b) non-visible and impinging (*anidassana-sappaṭigha*), and (c) non-visible and non-impinging (*anidassana-appaṭigha*).[28] The *sutta* does not identify what and what material form is subsumed under each heading.

"Visible" (*sanidassana*), as the Abhidhamma says, is an exclusive adjective reserved for *rūpāyatana*, because of the obvious reason that it signifies "the visible", the sense-field of the organ of sight. "Impinging" (*sappaṭigha*) or "with impact" describes the five physical sense-organs and their sense-objects.[29] For their contact is necessarily associated with some impact and is therefore grosser than that between mind and mind-objects. The other material *dhammas* (= *dhammāyatana-rūpa*), which are objects of mind-consciousness are, therefore, non-visible (*anidassana*) and non-impinging (*appaṭigha*).[30]

Accordingly the twenty-eight material *dhammas* can be subsumed under the three headings, as follows:

A. visible and impinging = the visible, i.e., the sense-field of the organ of sight (No. 10)
B. non-visible and impinging = the five physical sense-organs and their sense-fields except the visible (Nos. 1, 3, 4 = tangible, 5-9, 11-13)
C. non-visible and non-impinging = material *dhammas* included in *dhammāyatana* (Nos. 2, 14-28)

Among the sixteen material *dhammas* that come under *dhammāyatana* only five can be traced to the Pāli *suttas*. These are the water-element (*āpo-dhātu*), faculty of femininity (*itthindriya*), faculty of masculinity (*purisindriya*), edible food (*kabaḷīkāra-āhāra*), and space-element (*ākāsa-dhātu*).[31] Among these five items the water-element and edible food can certainly be included in *rūpa* in the sense of matter. However, it is very unlikely that the Pāli *suttas* understood them in such a way as to justify their inclusion in the *dhammāyatana*, i.e., as two items of materiality that

can be cognized only by the mind (*mano*). As to the two faculties of sex, what is important to remember here is that the *suttas* do not present them as two material *dhammas* cognizable only by the mind.[32] This leaves us only with one item, namely, space-element (*ākāsa-dhātu*). This, it seems to us, is the only item that we can subsume under the heading non-visible and non-impinging. As we shall see in the sequel, when the Abhidhamma includes space-element among material *dhammas*, it means void region, the space bound by matter. This is the meaning it seems to assume in the *suttas* as well. We find the term space-element (*ākāsa-dhātu*) used in the *suttas* when they analyse the living being into six components: the four great material elements, space-element, and consciousness-element.

One question that arises here is why the Sarvāstivādins and the Sautrāntikas do not recognize space-element as a *dharmāyatana-rūpa*. As we shall see, for the Sarvāstivādins, too, it means void region (space delimited by matter), but for them it is something visible (*sanidarśana*). Hence they include it in the sense-field of the visible and not in *dharmāyatana*.[33] The Sautrāntikas take an entirely different position: space-element is a mental construct with no objective counterpart (*prajñapti-sat*).[34]

If we go by the Saṅgīti Sutta's division of material form into three groups, it is only space-element that qualifies as a *dhammāyatana-rūpa*. Where the Abhidhamma shows a development in this regard is when it adds fifteen more items to this category. When we go through these items we will not fail to notice that most of them are not on par with other material *dhammas*. They merely signify certain modes, characteristics, and phases of other material *dhammas*. Then the question that arises here is why they are presented as separate material *dhammas*.

There seem to be two main reasons for this situation. One is the need felt to make the catalogue of material *dhammas* as exhaustive as possible so as to represent all material phenomena in our world of experience. The second is that in doing so not to introduce any distinction between substance and quality into the catalogue of material *dhammas*. Hence the real material *dhammas* as well as some of their modalities and characteristics are all presented under the common designation of *rūpa-dhamma* (material factors). When Buddhism analyses a thing into its basic constituents, those basic constituents are always presented as co-ordinate parallel factors and not as exhibiting a hierarchy. Through this strategy it avoids the substance-quality distinction intruding into the lists of factors. The factors are presented, not as one above or below another, but as one besides another. The idea is to show that the factors into which a composite thing is resolved are not fractions of a whole, but coordinate factors, all connected according to the principles of conditionality.

CHAPTER 15

THE MATERIAL CLUSTERS

The theory of material clusters (*rūpa-kalāpa*), which is the Theravāda version of atomism, has apparently no antecedent history in the books of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, although its basic principles can of course be traced to them. The *Visuddhimagga* and Pāli commentaries seem to be fairly acquainted with the theory, because we find in them a number of technical terms relating to it. However, it is in the sub-commentaries and the Abhidhamma compendiums that we get a fully fledged version of the theory. It has its counterpart in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma as the theory of atoms (*paramāṇu*). The reference in the **Abhidharma-Mahāvibhāṣā-Śāstra* to the views expressed by celebrated *acāryas* on the question whether atoms come in contact or not shows that by its time the atomic theory had become well established within the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma.[1] Is the Theravāda theory then an adoption from the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma? This is a question that cannot be answered satisfactorily because we cannot ascertain how much of the Theravāda Abhidhamma was developed in the now non-extant Siṃhala commentaries before they were translated into Pāli by Ācariya Buddhaghosa and his successors.

Even if we consider the theory as an introduction from the Sarvāstivāda, it is certainly not a complete replica of the Sarvāstivādins' atomic theory. As we shall soon see, there are some fundamental differences between the two theories. But most of them are unavoidable, stemming as they do from the fundamental differences between the two schools over the analysis of material existence. To give but one example: since the Theravādins have recognized a comparatively large number of material *dhammas*, it is but natural that this numerical difference should reflect itself in the theory of material clusters.

One fundamental principle that serves as a basis for this theory can be traced to the Abhidhamma teaching on conditional relations.[2] This principle states that nothing can activate as a single cause, nor can anything arise as a single effect.[3] Both refer to a situation where a plurality of conditions gives rise to a plurality of effects (the conditioned). Thus whether we approach the *dhammas*, the basic constituents of actuality, as conditions (*paccaya*) or as the conditioned (*paccayuppanna*), the inevitable situation is that we have to reckon with a multiplicity of *dhammas*. What this, in other words, means is that all *dhammas*, mental as well as material, arise, not as isolated phenomena but as clusters or groups. We saw how this principle works in the domain of mind as grouping of mental factors by

way of constellations around the many kinds of consciousness. A similar situation obtains in the sphere of matter as well, in what we have described as the principle of positional inseparability. According to this principle the four great material elements and four of the dependent, namely colour, smell, taste, and nutritive essence are necessarily co-existent in the sense that they always arise together, exist together, and cease together, besides being positionally inseparable in the sense that they cannot be separated from one another.[4]

If these eight are described as positionally inseparable, that does not mean that the other material *dhammas* are separable from the material *dhammas* together with which they arise. Then why only the four great elements and four types of dependent matter are described as positionally inseparable? It is because these eight material *dhammas* are necessarily found in all instances of matter, whether they exist as part of the complex that makes the individual living being, or whether they exist outside of it. The presence of one necessarily implies the presence of the other seven. None of them can arise without the concurrent arising of the other seven. In this sense they do not exist in isolation from one another. Although they exist together their relative position is not one of juxtaposition: they do not exist side by side, nor do they exist one above the other. For the reference here is not to material entities, but to material properties. Now in the case of the remaining material *dhammas* the situation is different. None of them can arise in isolation from the eight "inseparables", because the latter provide the basic foundation for the existence of all instances of matter. When any one of them arises together with the eight "inseparables", then it also becomes inseparable. However, there is this difference to be noted: In the case of the remaining material *dhammas*, they can arise in separation from one another. The eye-sensitivity (*cakkhuppasāda*), for example, can never arise in isolation from the eight "inseparables". However, the eye-sensitivity can arise in isolation from, say, ear-sensitivity (*sotappasāda*). The two arise in separation from each other in two different material clusters, each cluster having at least the eight "inseparables".

This distinction between two kinds of material *dhammas* provides the main principle for the Abhidhamma theory of material clusters.

The earliest allusion to the theory is found in two passages of the *Visuddhimagga* where it refers to two ways of looking at the material components of the body. The first passage says that such components of the body as head-hair, bodily-hair, etc., should be understood by way of *kalāpas* or clusters. What in common parlance is called head-hair is only a cluster/collection of material *dhammas*, namely the four great material

elements and four types of the dependent matter, namely colour, smell, taste, and nutritive essence. The passage concludes that what is called head-hair is, in terms of the *dhamma*-analysis, "a mere cluster of eight *dhammas*" (*aṭṭha-dhamma-kalāpa-matta*).[5]

The second passage tells us another way of considering the matter that enters into the composition of the body: "In this body the earth-element taken as reduced to fine dust and pounded to the size of atoms (*paramāṇu*) might amount to an average *doṇa*-measure full, and that is held together by the water-element measuring half as much".[6]

It will be seen that the eight items mentioned in the first passage are the eight "inseparables" that we have been discussing. It will also be seen that the term used to embrace all the eight items in the sense of a group is *kalāpa*. Now in the Abhidhamma sub-commentaries where we get the theory of material clusters in its developed form the term used to designate the smallest unit of matter is *kalāpa*.[7] However, we cannot say that in the *Visuddhimagga* passage, too, the term *kalāpa* is used in this same technical sense. What it says is that head-hair, for instance, is a cluster/collection of eight (types) of *dhammas*. If it had used the term in its technical sense, then it would have said that head-hair is an enormous number of *kalāpas*, each consisting of eight *dhammas*. The term should occur in the plural and not in the singular. For in its technical sense *kalāpa* means the smallest unit of matter and as such head-hair should consist of an enormous number of *kalāpas*. What the passage intends to refer are the eight kinds of material *dhammas* that enter into its composition. The term is used in a general sense, and not in the technical sense.[8]

On the other hand, it can be shown that what the *Visuddhimagga* calls *paramāṇu* (atom) in the second passage corresponds to *kalāpa* in its technical sense. As we have already shown, in the Pāli exegesis the names of the four great elements of matter are used in two distinct senses: one in the sense of characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*) and the other in the sense of intensity (*ussada*). In the first sense "earth-element" means "solidity" (*kakkhaḷatta*); in the second it means "what is solid" (*kakkhaḷa*). For whatever material aggregate wherein the characteristic of solidity is more intense is also called earth-element, although in fact it consists of all the four great material elements and their concomitants.

It will be noticed that when the *Visuddhimagga* refers to the atomization of the earth-element it uses the term in the second sense. In point of fact, at the beginning of the passage it is said that head-hair, bodily-hair, etc., are "earth" and that blood, mucus, etc., are "water". It is also said that they

are called so on account of the intensity of each great material element in them. Now, as we have already noted, according to the principle of positional inseparability the four great material elements and four of the dependent (colour, smell, taste, and nutritive essence) are necessarily co-existent and positionally inseparable. It follows then that those components of the human body, which, because of the intensity of the earth-element are conventionally called earth-element, consist of the self-same eight material *dhammas*. Therefore when head-hair, bodily-hair, etc., are reduced to the size of atoms, each atom in turn should consist of the same eight inseparable material *dhammas*. Thus what the *Visuddhimagga* calls *paramāṇu* (atom) turns out to be an aggregate of eight material *dhammas*. It is exactly identical with *kalāpa*, when the term is understood in its technical sense to mean the smallest cluster of material *dhammas*.

Thus for the Theravāda Abhidhamma, the ultimate unit of matter is not a unitary *dhamma* but a collection of unitary *dhammas*. In the *Visuddhimagga* where we find the theory introduced for the first time, it is called *paramāṇu* (atom).[9] Whereas in the sub-commentaries and Abhidhamma compendiums where we get the theory in its fully fledged version, the term used is *kalāpa* (cluster).[10] The first term shows that it is the smallest unit of matter. The second term shows that although it is the smallest unit of matter, in the final analysis, it is a group of material *dhammas*, all having a simultaneous origination (*ekuppāda*) and a simultaneous cessation (*eka-nirodha*) and thus all forming a unity.[11] Two other terms used to describe the smallest unit of matter are *piṇḍa* (lump) and *rūpa-samudāya* (compound of material *dhammas*). They also show that the smallest unit of matter is a plurality.

The basic principle behind the conception is this: What are called dependent material *dhammas* are always dependent on the great material *dhammas*. Hence the former do not arise independently of the latter. Nor can a single great material *dhamma* arise independently of the other three, and at least four of the dependent, namely colour, smell, taste, and nutritive essence. Thus none of the eight material *dhammas*, whether they are the four great elements or what is dependent on them, can have an independent, isolated existence. They always and necessarily arise by way of groups.[12] Consequently when a given instance of matter, say, a piece of stone, is reduced to smaller pieces — whatever be the number of pieces and whatever be the size of each piece — the fact remains that each of them is a group of material *dhammas*. The smallest unit of matter, whether we call it *paramāṇu* (atom), *piṇḍa* (lump), *kalāpa* (cluster) or *rūpa-samudāya* (compound of material *dhammas*), is no exception to this fundamental law.

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma the theory of atoms (*paramāṇu*) takes a different form. A descriptive definition of the atom, given in the Chinese version of the **Abhidharma-Mahāvibhāṣā-Śāstra*, and as translated by Venerable Bhikkhu Dhammajoti in his *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*, is as follows:

> An atom (*paramāṇu*) is the smallest *rūpa*. It cannot be cut, broken, penetrated; it cannot be taken up, abandoned, ridden on, stepped on, struck or dragged. It is neither long nor short, square nor round, regular nor irregular, convex nor conclave. It has no smaller parts; it cannot be decomposed, cannot be seen, heard, smelled, touched. It is thus that the *paramāṇu* is said to be the finest (*sarva-sūkṣma*) of all *rūpas*. ... Seven of these *paramāṇu*-s constitute an *aṇu*. ... Seven *aṇu*-s constitute a *tāmra-rajas*. ... Seven *tāmra-rajas*-s constitute an *ap-rajas*. ... Seven *ap-rajas*-s constitute a *śaśa-rajas*. ... Seven *śaśa-rajas*-s constitute an *eḍaka-rajas*. ... Seven *eḍaka-rajas-s* constitute a *go-rajas*. ... Seven *go-rajas*-s constitute a *vātāyana-rajas*. ... [in this way, the whole physical universe is composed].[13]

While this "doctrine of seven-fold incremental atomic aggregation" is retained in later works, they give more succinct definitions of the atom. We give below the definition given by Acārya Saṃghabhadra, a celebrity of the Vaibhāṣika school, as translated by Venerable Bhikkhu Dhammajoti from the Chinese version of the **Nyāyānusāra*:

> The finest part in a resistant matter which cannot be further divided is called a *paramāṇu*. That is, this *paramāṇu* cannot be further divided into many [parts] by means of another matter [or] the intellect (*buddhi*). This is then said to be the 'ultimately small' (*parama-aṇu*) among matter. As there can be no further part, it is called the 'ultimately small'. In the same way, a *kṣaṇa* is the smallest [unit] of time; it cannot be further analyzed into half-*kṣaṇa-s*.[14]

This smallest unit of matter, which is not amenable to further analysis, is also called *dravya-paramāṇu*, the unitary atom. However, such an atom does not arise or exist in isolation. It always arises and exists together with other atoms. A number of them having a simultaneous origination and a simultaneous cessation and thus constituting an inseparable material cluster is called *saṃghāta-paramāṇu*, a molecule or aggregate atom. The smallest aggregate is an octad, consisting of the four great material elements and four of the dependent, namely colour, smell, taste, and the secondary tangible (*bhuatika-spraṣṭavya*).[15]

This is a brief statement of the atomic theory of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma. It shows that the Theravāda version is different in many important respects. For the Sarvāstivāda the atom is the smallest unit of

a single unitary material *dharma*, so small that it has no spatial dimensions.[16] For the Theravāda the atom is an aggregate of a number of unitary material *dhammas*. This is why it is described not only as atom (*paramāṇu*) but also as 'cluster of material *dhammas*' (*rūpa-kalāpa*). It thus corresponds, not to the atom of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, but to what it calls the octuple aggregate. The Theravāda term that corresponds to the atom of the Sarvāstivāda is *kalāpaṅga*, i.e., the constituent of a *kalāpa*.

The Sarvāstivādins' atomic theory, it may be noted here, came in for criticism on the part of the Sautrāntikas. What made the Sautrāntikas join issue with the Sarvāstivāda conception of the atom was that it was sought to be defined as devoid of parts (*niravayavat*) and exempt from resistance/impenetrability (*pratighāta*), which is the defining characteristic of matter. According to the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* the second characteristic is a logical corollary from the first. When there are no parts, there cannot be impenetrability/resistance.[17] To the objection that if the atom is of this nature, it escapes the definition of matter, the Sarvāstivādins reply: Certainly the atom is exempt from resistance/impenetrability; but matter in the form of an atom never exists in a state of isolation; when it is in a state of agglomeration, it is susceptible to disintegration and resistance.[18]

But this way of defining the atom, on the part of the Sarvāstivādins, led to further problems. As the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *Vyākhyā* point out, if the atom is devoid of parts and exempt from resistance/impenetrability, then the aggregate, too, will be devoid of both characteristics, because the aggregate is ultimately constituted of the atoms. What is lacking in the latter cannot be predicated of the former.[19] The same criticism was voiced by the Idealist School of Buddhism as well. Although this school did not recognize the ultimate reality of matter, as a base for its polemics, it provisionally agreed with the objection of the Sautrāntikas that the aggregates are ultimately constituted of and therefore cannot be different from the atoms, the difference between one atom and an aggregate being only one of magnitude.[20] If this oneness (*ekatva*) is overlooked it can lead to many mutually incompatible conclusions and will fail to give a rational explanation to many a phenomenon of day to day experience. It is a matter of common experience, for instance, that when the sun rises a given aggregate is found illuminated at its eastern direction and dark at its western direction, or when one sees or touches, say, a wall one does not see or touch its opposite side — two situations which unmistakably point to the conclusion that aggregates have spatial dimensions. This characteristic cannot be predicated of them if the atoms which constitute them do not severally possess it.[21]

It is supposed (by the neo-Sarvāstivādins) that the combination of atoms takes place in such a way that six different atoms occupy six different points in space — east, west, north, south, above, and below. This principle of atomic aggregation carries with it the implication that the atom has at least six sides. On the other hand, if it were contended that the locus occupied by one atom is common to all the six, then the atom being devoid of parts and exempt from resistance/impenetrability, all the six would coalesce into one, the difference between the magnitude of one atom and that of the six would vanish — a situation which would lead to the very collapse of the theory of atoms.[22]

Thus the Buddhist atomic theory gave an opportunity for the Buddhist Idealists to add another argument to their theory that matter is not logically admissible. They argued that if the atom has spatial dimensions, this is to admit its divisibility — a situation which goes against its definition as the most subtle (*sarva-sūkṣma*). On the other hand, to deny its spatial dimensions is to deny the spatial dimensions of the aggregates — a situation contradicted by common experience. If anything the atom should have spatial dimensions. But what is spatially extended is by its very nature divisible and what is divisible cannot be a real entity (*dravyasat*).

Thus the main problem the Buddhist atomists had to face was the definition of the atom. In this situation let us see what the Theravāda position in relation to this problem is. For the Theravādins, as we have already noted, the atom is not "the ultimately small" of a unitary material *dhamma* but "the ultimately small" of a cluster of unitary material *dhammas*. But is not a constituent *dhamma* smaller than the group and is it not more logical to recognize it as the atom (*paramāṇu*) and to define it as the smallest of all (*sabba-pariyantima*)?

According to the Sarvāstivāda the question will certainly justify an affirmative answer for in their view it is nothing but logical to define the constituent as the atom although an atom cannot exist in isolation from seven other atoms. What is more, any aggregate by its very nature, admits divisibility and to describe as the most subtle what admits divisibility is a contradiction in terms.

The Theravāda, on the other hand, seems to have followed a different line of argument. It is true that since the *rūpa-kalāpa* is an aggregate of material *dhammas* each of the constituents that makes up this aggregation is smaller (subtler) than the aggregate itself. But this is only logically so. In reality the constituent of a *rūpa-kalāpa*, i.e., the *kalāpaṅga*, does not exist by itself; it is in inseparable association with other constituents. With this the

Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, too, agrees. The Pāli commentators observe that although it is possible, for the sake of defining the individuating characteristics (*lakkhaṇa*), to speak of colour, taste, smell, etc., as separate *dhammas* yet positionally they are not separable from one another. Colour, taste, etc., so runs the argument, cannot be dissected and separated like particles of sand.[23] The colour of the mango, for instance, cannot be separated from its hardness (earth-element) or from its taste. This situation is equally true of the constituents of a *rūpa-kalāpa* as well. Hence there is no necessity, other than logical, to postulate the constituent (*kalāpaṅga*) as the smallest of all (*sabba-pariyantima*).

The next question that we need to clarify here is whether the atom, as defined in the Theravāda Abhidhamma, has spatial dimensions or not. In this connection what we need to remember here is that of the four great material elements, the earth-element represents the principle of solidity and extension. And since the earth-element is one of the constituents that invariably enter into the composition of every atom (*rūpa-kalāpa*) it logically follows that every atom is characterized by solidity, whatever be its degree of intensity (*ussada*), and by extension, whatever be its extent. Thus unlike the atom of the Sarvāstivāda, what the Theravāda defines as the atom has spatial dimensions. This gets further confirmed by a reference in the Siṃhala *sanne* to the *Visuddhimagga* when it says that *ākāsa*, the intervening space between two atoms (*rūpa-kalāpas*), "has the function of delimiting the atom as this is the lower side (*yaṭa*) of the atom and that is the upper side (*uḍa*) of the atom."[24]

That the atom has spatial dimensions is also shown by a table given to determine its size in relation to a [cubic] inch (*aṅgula*). It occurs in the commentary to the *Vibhaṅga*[25] and the term used is *paramāṇu* (atom), which, as we have seen, is another term for *rūpa-kalāpa*. The table is as follows:

36 *paramāṇus*	=	1 *aṇu*
36 *aṇus*	=	1 *tajjāri*
36 *tajjāris*	=	1 *rathareṇu*
36 *rathareṇus*	=	1 *līkhā*
7 *līkhās*	=	1 *ūkā*
7 *ūkās*	=	1 *dhaññamāsa*
7 *dhaññamāsas*	=	1 *aṅgula* (finger-breadth), i.e., (cubic) inch.

Thus the size of the atom (*paramāṇu*) in relation to a cubic inch is:

$$\frac{1}{36\times36\times36\times36\times7\times7\times7} = 1/576{,}108{,}288$$

We find similar tables presented by other schools of Buddhism that resorted to atomism in explaining the constitution of matter. At best they all may be described as attempts to emphasize how almost infinitesimally small the atom, the smallest building block of matter, is. For the atom is so small that in the commentary to the *Vibhaṅga* it is figuratively described as a particle of space (*ākāsa-koṭṭhāsa*).[26] The sub-commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* observes that the atom comes only within the range of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*).[27] This is similar to the view expressed in some Jaina works, namely that the atom can be known only by those who have *kaivalya-jñāna*.[28]

Another controversial issue among Buddhist schools that adopted atomism was whether the atoms can come in contact with one another. Since the Sarvāstivādins maintained that the atom is devoid of parts and exempt from resistance/impenetrability, any conclusion in respect of this issue should in no way contradict this belief. In point of fact, they take these two characteristics of the atom as the very premise of the expected conclusion. They grant the possibility of two alternatives both of which they contend are equally inadmissible. The first is to assume that the atoms touch in their totality. If this were to happen then the atoms being exempt from resistance/impenetrability would coalesce into one; that is to say, they all would occupy the same locus. The second is to assume that the atoms touch partially. If this were to happen it would mean that the part-less atoms have parts.[29] Another argument, the one attributed to *Ācārya* Vasumitra, is based on the theory of moments. If the atoms could touch one another, whether partially or totally, it would mean that they exist for two consecutive moments. That is to say, an atom should arise first (first moment) in order to touch (second moment). This view, if accepted, will go against the theory that all basic factors of existence, whether mental or material, endure but for one single moment.[30]

On the strength of these arguments the Sarvāstivādins conclude that it is not possible for atoms to come in contact with one another and that between atoms there is always an intervening space. In this intervening space there is no light, and it is so small that another atom cannot occupy it. If the presence of light is denied it is because light being included in the category of matter, to admit its presence is to deny the vacuity between the atoms.[31] If there is an intervening space between atoms this gives rise to the question as to why the aggregates do not get pulverized into atoms due to the impact of other aggregates, because all aggregates are ultimately constituted of atoms. The answer given is that the attractive force of the air-element keeps the atoms together.[32]

The Sautrāntikas, as can be expected, criticize the notion of atomic non-contact. They contend that if atoms do not come in contact, we cannot explain empirically observable contact between aggregates, because the latter are ultimately constituted of the former.[33] In this regard they refer to the explanation given by *Ācārya* Bhadanta as the best, namely that contact is another expression for "absence of interval" or "immediate juxtaposition" (*nirantaratva*).[34] If there is an interval, so they argue, what would prevent the atoms from moving within the interval.[35] In this connection they seem to have overlooked the Sarvāstivāda theory that in the case of momentary material *dharmas* there is no motion. What is momentary disappears wherever it appears.

Let us now consider how the Theravādins responded to this problem. As we have seen, in their view the unitary material *dhammas* that constitute a *rūpa-kalāpa* (the smallest unit of matter) are necessarily co-nascent and positionally inseparable. Therefore the possibility of their being separated by an interval does not arise. Hence the question is whether the *rūpa-kalāpas* can come in contact or not. The answer given is that there is no contact. There is always an intervening space between them. Every *rūpa-kalāpa* is delimited (*paricchindate*) by the environing space.[36] This space or interval is almost infinitesimally small that the notion of delimitation is described as "as if delimiting" (*paricchindantī viya*).[37] However, the *rūpa-kalāpas* do not touch one another, because each *rūpa-kalāpa* is described as "not touched" (*asamphuṭṭha*) by the other *rūpa-kalāpas* separated from it.[38] The clear implication is that the vacuity is a fact, although it is almost infinitesimally small. Hence the delimiting space is said to manifest as "un-touched-ness" (*asamphuṭṭha-paccupaṭṭhāna*).[39] What is sought to be stressed is the separateness of each *rūpa-kalāpa*, that it is an entity physically separated from the other *rūpa-kalāpas*. This separation is not possible if there is contact. And it is the delimiting space that prevents the *rūpa-kalāpas* from mixing together (*asaṃkarabhāva*).[40]

As we have seen, the Sarvāstivāda theory of atomic non-contact is mainly based on the denial of spatial dimensions of the atom. However, for the Theravādins the issue as to the possibility or otherwise of physical contact is a question relating to the *rūpa-kalāpas*, the spatial dimensions of which are not denied. Hence the Theravāda argument for non-contact between *rūpa-kalāpas* has to take a different form. This is based on the view that the constituents of a *rūpa-kalāpa* are positionally inseparable. It is argued that if the *rūpa-kalāpas* are not physically separated by the delimiting space (*paricchedākāsa*), then this will inevitably lead to one of two alternatives, both of which are equally incompatible with the principle of positional inseparability.

The first alternative is to assume that the constituents of a *rūpa-kalāpa* are separated by the delimiting space. In such a situation the separateness and independence of each *rūpa-kalāpa* would vanish, establishing the separateness and independence of each of the constituents of the *rūpa-kalāpa*. The ultimate unit of matter then would be the constituent (*kalāpaṅga*), and not the aggregate (*rūpa-kalāpa*).[41] For the reasons we have already given, the Theravādins are not prepared to accept such a conclusion, for although it is logically true that each of the constituents should be smaller than their combination, in actual fact their position within the combination is one of positional inseparability.

The second alternative is to assume that there is no space between two *rūpa-kalāpas*. Such an assumption means that the characteristic of positional inseparability, which applies only to the constituents of a *rūpa-kalāpa*, has to be extended to the two *rūpa-kalāpas* as well. In such a situation the separateness of each *rūpa-kalāpa* would vanish and both would combine to form a bigger *rūpa-kalāpa*.[42] If the principle could be extended to two *rūpa-kalāpas*, then it could also be extended to three or more and so the process could be indefinitely extended. If a given piece of stone, let us say hypothetically, is composed of one billion *rūpa-kalāpas*, then those billion *rūpa-kalāpas* would become one big *rūpa-kalāpa* precisely as big as that piece of stone. If the piece of stone is one big *rūpa-kalāpa*, then according to the theory of positional inseparability no part of it can be separated. The moment one breaks the piece of stone into pieces then the theory in question, too, so to say, breaks into pieces. Such an assumption would also go against the view of a plurality of *rūpa-kalāpas* and would result in a most improbable situation. For if two or more *rūpa-kalāpas* could combine to form a bigger *rūpa-kalāpa*, then this principle could be extended to embrace the whole physical world, resulting in a situation where the whole physical world would become one mighty *rūpa-kalāpa*.

In this connection, it is interesting to recall here that one of the arguments of the Sarvāstivādins to deny contact between atoms is that if two of them touch in their totality, the atom being non-resistant and devoid of parts, all the atoms would coalesce into one, the whole physical world would coalesce into one atom, so small that no spatial dimensions could be predicated of it. The objection of the Theravādins, when its implications are fully unfolded, is that if *rūpa-kalāpas* could touch each other the whole physical world would become one enormous *rūpa-kalāpa*, precisely as big as the physical world. The Sarvāstivādin objection is that the world would be reduced to an atom, so small that it has no spatial dimensions; the Theravādin objection is that the atom (*rūpa-kalāpa*) would be inflated to the size of the world — two situations literally with a world of difference.

There are in all seventeen different kinds of *rūpa-kalāpa*. The smallest is an octad consisting of the four great material elements and four of the dependent category, namely, colour, taste, odour, and nutriment. This collection of material *dhammas*, called "the bare octad" (*suddhaṭṭhaka*),[43] corresponds to the smallest aggregate-atom (*saṃghāta-paramāṇu*) of the Sarvāstivādins, but for two differences: Firstly, in place of nutriment, the Sarvāstivādin list contains the tangible. The difference is unavoidable. According to the Theravādins, the tangible includes three of the great elements of matter. Hence from the point of view of the Theravāda, it is not necessary to repeat the tangible because it is already represented by the enumeration of the great elements of matter. According to the Sarvāstivādins, the tangible includes "the primary tangible" (*bhūta-spraṣṭavya*), i.e., the four great material elements and "the secondary tangible" (*bhautika-spraṣṭavya*). It is in order to represent the latter, the so-called secondary tangible, that the tangible is repeated, although one aspect of it is represented by the four great material elements. A similar situation is responsible for the inclusion of nutriment in the Theravāda list. As we have noted, while the Theravādins postulate nutriment as a separate material *dhamma*, the Sarvāstivādins consider it as a combination of taste, odour, and the tangible, which three items occur in their list.

The two lists are thus representative of the same items except for the fact that the secondary tangible is not represented in the list of the Theravādins. This is because the latter do not admit that any of the dependent material *dhammas* come under the object of touch.

The other difference is more significant. It is a Sarvāstivādin principle that each dependent material *dharma* has a separate tetrad of the great material elements as its support. Those great material elements that serve as a support (*āśraya*) for a given dependent, say, colour, do not at the same time serve as a support for another, say, smell.[44] Hence, as the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* rightly points out, the smallest aggregate-atom (*saṃghāta-paramāṇu*) should consist of, not eight, but twenty material *dharmas*. The Sarvāstivādin reply is that the nature (*jāti*) of each of the tetrad of the great material elements that support the dependent material *dharmas* remains the same and that therefore there is no anomaly in counting them as four, although there are four of each type.[45] In contrast, the Theravādins believe that the four great material elements of the basic octad (*suddhaṭṭhaka*) are the common support (*eka-nissaya*) of the dependent material *dhammas*.[46]

These, then, are the two main differences between the basic octad (*suddhaṭṭhaka*) of the Theravādins and the octuple aggregate atom (*saṃghāta-paramāṇu*) of the Sarvāstivādins.

The remaining sixteen *rūpa-kalāpas* are formed according to the same principle as adopted by the Sarvāstivādins in forming the *saṃghāta-paramāṇus* other than the octad. The (eight) items of the octad are the basic material *dhammas*; they are present in every instance of matter. Therefore, in all the *kalāpas* these eight material *dhammas* are present as their basis. The other *rūpa-kalāpas* are formed by adding one or more, as the situation demands, of the remaining material *dhammas* (= those other than the eight in question) to the basic octad.

Since we have already examined all the material *dhammas*, we shall confine ourselves to show how they enter into the composition of the *kalāpas*.

Next to the basic octad (*suddhaṭṭhaka*) comes the sound-nonad (*sadda-navaka*), which, according to both schools, is formed by adding sound to the basic octad.[47]

As to the composition of the five sense-organ *kalāpas* or *saṃghātas*, the two schools follow two slightly different methods.

According to the Sarvāstivādins, of the sense-organs the organ of touch consists of the minimum number of *dravya-paramāṇus*. It is a nonad consisting of the basic octad and one *dravya-paramāṇu* of *kāyendriya* (organ of touch) added to it. Each of the other four sense-organ-*saṃghātas* is formed by adding one *dravya-paramāṇu* of each of them to the *kāyendriya*-nonad. Thus while the *kāyendriya-saṃghāta* is a nonad, the other sense-organ-*saṃghātas* are decads.[48]

For the Theravādins every sense-organ-*kalāpa* is a decad (*dasaka*). First one *kalāpaṅga* of *rūpa-jīvitindriya* (material faculty of life) is added to the basic octad to make it organic. The resulting nonad is called *jīvita-navaka*, the vital nonad. The five sense-organ-*kalāpas* are then formed by adding each of the sense-organ- *kalāpaṅgas* to the *jīvita-navaka*. Thus there are *cakkhu-dasaka* (eye-decad), *sota-dasaka* (ear-decad), *ghāna-dasaka* (nose-decad), *jivhā-dasaka* (tongue-decad), and *kāya-dasaka* (body-decad).[49]

The Sarvāstivādins add one *dravya-paramāṇu* of *kāyendriya* to the other four sense-organ-*saṃghātas*, because the other four sense-organs are said to be associated with *kāyendriya* (*tat-pratibaddha-vṛttitvāt*).[50] They seem to have taken the view that the organs of sight, hearing, taste, and smell are certain modifications of the organ of touch, a view accepted by certain Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, too.[51] It is of course true that according to the Theravāda the organ of touch is present in every part of the body (*sabba-sarīra-byāpaka*), existing as it were like oil soaked in cotton.[52] However, there is

no possibility of confusion (*saṅkara*) between the sense-organs as they are said to differ from each other in respect of their characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*), function (*rasa*), and manifestation (*paccupaṭṭhāna*). Why the Sarvāstivādins, unlike the Theravādins, do not include *jīvitendriya* in the sense-organ-*saṃghātas*, is understandable. For, as stated earlier, they have recognized only one variety of *jīvitendriya* which is included in the category of *citta-viprayukta-saṃskāras*.

Since the Theravādins have defined the two faculties of sex as separate material *dhammas* rather than conceiving them as part of the organ of touch, and since they have postulated the heart-base as the seat of mental activity, these three items, too, are explained by way of *kalāpas*, to which corresponding *saṃghāta-paramāṇus* are not found in the Sarvāstivāda. The method of their formation is like that of the sense-organs. That is to say, one *kalāpaṅga* of *itthindriya* (faculty of femininity), *purisindriya* (faculty of masculinity), and *hadaya-vatthu* (heart-base) is added to *jīvita-navaka*. The resulting three decads are called *itthibhāva-dasaka* (femininity-decad), *pumbhāva-dasaka* (masculinity-decad), and *vatthu-dasaka* (base-decad) respectively.[53]

The *kalāpaṅgas* or the constituents of the *kalāpas* which we have considered so far are all *nipphanna-rūpa* (the real). Of the ten *anipphanna-rūpas* (the nominal) only five are recognized as *kalāpaṅgas*.

The five which are not recognized as *kalāpaṅgas* are *ākāsa-dhātu* (space-element), *upacaya* (growth), *santati* (continuity), *jaratā* (decay) and *aniccatā* (impermanence). Why they are excluded needs hardly any explanation. *Ākāsa-dhātu*, i.e., space delimited by matter, is not something that enters into the composition of the *kalāpas*; it is that which intervenes between the *kalāpas*. That is to say, it sets bounds to, and is itself bounded by, the *kalāpas*. The other four items are merely indicative of certain phases of matter. As such they are not material constituents of the *kalāpas*.[54]

The five *anipphanna-rūpas* which are recognized as *kalāpaṅgas* are the two *viññattis* (intimation) and the triad of *lahutā* (lightness), *mudutā* (plasticity) and *kammaññatā* (wieldiness). We have already shown that, although the *anipphanna-rūpas* are called *rūpa-dhammas*, they do not stand for something distinct from the *nipphanna-rūpas*. Accordingly, although some *anipphanna-rūpas* are recognized as *kalāpaṅgas*, they do not stand for something distinct from the *nipphanna-kalāpaṅgas*. Let us take one example to clarify the situation.

Kāyaviññatti, it may be recalled here, signifies a particular position or situation (*ākāra-vikāra*) of a set of mind-originated material *dhammas*

(*citta-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa*) which are *nipphanna*. In the context of the theory of material clusters, *kāyaviññatti* signifies a particular position or situation of the mind-originated material clusters (*cittasamuṭṭhāna-kalāpa*). For the mind-originated matter (*cittasamuṭṭhāna-rūpa*), too, exists by way of *kalāpas*. Now, each of these *kalāpas*, a particular position of which is called *kāyaviññatti*, is indicated by the addition of *kāyaviññatti* as one of its *kalāpaṅgas*. Thus the recognition of *kāyaviññatti* as a *kalāpaṅga* does not carry the implication that it is something distinct from the *nipphanna-kalāpaṅgas*. Its purpose is to indicate the type of *kalāpa*, a particular position of which is represented by the *kāyaviññatti*. It is in this manner that we should understand the significance of the five *kalāpaṅgas* which are *anipphanna*.

Let us now consider those *kalāpas* some of the *kalāpaṅgas* of which are *anipphanna-rūpa*.

The first, called *kāyaviññatti-navaka* (bodily-intimation-nonad), is formed by the addition of one *kalāpaṅga* of *kāyaviññatti* to the basic octad. It represents the *citta-samuṭṭhāna-kalāpa*, a particular position of which is called *kāyaviññatti*. Next comes *vacīviññatti-dasaka* (vocal-intimation-decad), which is formed by the addition of one *kalāpaṅga* of sound and one *kalāpaṅga* of *vacīviññatti* to the basic octad. This represents the *cittasamuṭṭhāna-kalāpa*, a particular position of which is called *vacīviññatti*.[55] The addition of sound is necessary because *vacīviññatti* is intimately connected with vocal sound. Since the Sarvāstivādins treat *kāyavijñapti* as a part of *rūpāyatana*, the sense-field of the visible,[56] they do not recognize a separate *saṃghāta-paramāṇu* corresponding to it. But the same is not true of *vāgvijñapti*. Although it is treated as part of *śabdāyatana*, the sense-field of sound,[57] its composition as a *saṃghāta* is more complex than that of ordinary sound. For the sound which is produced by the great material elements which form part of the organism (*upātta*) does not exist independently of the organs. Hence in the case of the *saṃghāta-paramāṇu* of *vāgvijñapti*-sound, the usual sound-nonad becomes an undecad by the addition of two *dravya-paramāṇus* of *kāyendriya* and *jihvendriya*.

The last four *kalāpas*, to which, except perhaps to one, no corresponding *saṃghāta-paramāṇus* can be traced in the Sarvāstivāda, have as their *kalāpaṅgas* the usual (eight) inseparables of the basic octad, the triad of *lahutā*, *mudutā* and *kammaññatā*, and the two *viññāttis*.[58]

The first, called *lahutādekādasaka* (undecad of material lightness, etc.) consists of the basic octad plus three *kalāpaṅgas* of *lahutā*, *mudutā* and *kammaññatā*. It may be recalled here that the last three items, which represent the physical body when it is healthy and efficient,

arise always together (*na aññam' aññaṃ vijahanti*).[59] This explains why the three items are included in the same *kalāpa* rather than establishing three separate *kalāpas* corresponding to them.

The second and the third, called *kāyaviññatti-lahutādi-dvādasaka* (dodecad of bodily-intimation and material lightness, etc.) and *vacīviññatti-sadda-lahutādi-terasaka* (tredecad of vocal intimation, sound, and material lightness, etc.), are formed by adding *lahutā*, *mudutā* and *kammaññatā* to the previously mentioned *kāyaviññatti-navaka* and *vacīviññatti-dasaka* respectively. The occurrence of the two *viññattis* could be accompanied (facilitated) by the triad of *lahutā*, etc.[60] It seems that it is in order to explain such situations that these two *kalāpas* have been postulated.

The last *kalāpa* is *sadda-lahutādi-dvādasaka* (dodecad of sound and material lightness, etc.). It is the same as the previously mentioned *vacīviññatti-sadda-lahutādi-terasaka* except for the absence of one constituent, namely, *vacīviññatti*. Since the triad of *lahutā*, etc., is included here, it certainly concerns itself with a phenomenon associated with the physical body of a living being.[61] And since *vacīviññatti* is lacking, we may interpret it as representative of vocal sound unaccompanied by *vacīviññatti* as well as sound produced by other parts of the body. In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* there is reference to a *saṃghāta-paramāṇu*, called the sound-decad, which consists of the basic octad and two *dravya-paramāṇus* of sound and the organ of touch. It represents the phenomenon of *upātta-mahābhūtika* sound, i.e., sound produced, say, by the clapping of hands, etc.[62] Cases like these, it may be observed, are represented by the *kalāpa* in question. The non-inclusion of *kāyindriya* as a constituent of this *kalāpa* is understandable, for we have already seen that, unlike the Sarvāstivādins, the Theravādins do not add *kāyindriya* either to the *kalāpas* of the first four sense-organs or to the *kalāpa* of *vacīviññatti*-sound.

This brings us to an end of our survey of the seventeen kinds of *kalāpa*. They all are again classified into four groups on the basis of the four generative conditions (*rūpa-samuṭṭhāna-paccaya*) of matter, namely, *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* and *āhāra*. Since we have discussed them elsewhere, herein we shall confine ourselves to indicating how the *kalāpas* are classified accordingly. It should also be noted here that if a *kalāpa* is conditioned by more than one of the four generative conditions, say, by three (*ti-samuṭṭhāna*), then that particular *kalāpa* is counted thrice. In this way, although there are seventeen distinct *kalāpas*, the number is brought up to twenty-one.

Since the eight material *indriyas* and the *hadaya-vatthu* are recognized as coming into being through the action of *kamma*, the five sense-organ-*dasakas*, the two sex-*dasakas*, the *jīvita-navaka*, and the *vatthu-dasaka*

are brought under *kamma-samuṭṭhāna* (*kamma*-originated). Since the two *viññattis* represent a particular position (*ākāra-vikāra*) of *citta-samuṭṭhāna-rūpa*, the four *kalāpas*, namely, *kāyaviññatti-navaka*, *vacīviññatti-dasaka*, *kāyaviññatti-lahutādi-dvādasaka*, and *vacīviññatti-sadda-lahutādi-terasaka* are brought under *citta-samuṭṭhāna* (mind-originated). The two *kalāpas*, namely, *sadda-navaka* and *sadda-lahutādi-dvādasaka* are *utu-samuṭṭhāna* (temperature-originated). These two *kalāpas* refer to two varieties of sound, the first to sound produced in the body of a living being and the second to sound produced in the insentient (*aviññāṇika*) world. It should be noted here that, although sound arises owing to the concussion (*ghaṭṭana*) of the great material elements, *utu* (temperature of cold and heat) is considered as a special condition for its continuity.

On the other hand, the two *kalāpas*, namely, *lahutādekādasaka* and *suddhaṭṭhaka* are "three-originated" (*ti-samuṭṭhāna*) in the sense that they are alternatively conditioned by consciousness (*citta*), temperature (*utu*), and nutriment (*āhāra*). The first which refers to the triad of *lahutā*, etc., is "three-originated" because bodily efficiency which is implied by the triad could be brought about by a wholesome state of mind (*citta*), or by agreeable nutrition (*āhāra*), or by good temperature (*utu*).[63]

When the basic octad consisting of the four great material elements and four of the dependent is brought into relation with consciousness, as in the case of bodily movements arising in response to a thought, it is called mind-originated (*citta-samuṭṭhāna*). When it arises conditioned by nutrition or by temperature of cold and heat, it is called nutrition-originated (*āhāra-samuṭṭhāna*), and temperature-originated (*utu-samuṭṭhāna*) respectively. All matter, other than that which enters into the composition of living beings, what the commentaries call *dhammatā-rūpa* (matter by nature), is ultimately constituted of basic octads and sound-nonads, both conditioned only by temperature.[64] For the temperature of cold and heat, according to Theravāda, is an essential factor for the arising, continuity and changes of all such matter.[65]

Why the basic octad is not *kamma*-originated needs explanation. It is true that the (eight) constituents of this octad enter into the composition of all *kalāpas*, including those that are *kamma*-originated. It should, however, be recalled here that although some material *dhammas* come into being, being conditioned by *kamma*, yet their uninterrupted continuity is said to depend on the *rūpa-jīvitindriya*.[66] Therefore a *kamma*-originated *kalāpa* should at least be a nonad (*navaka*), consisting of the (eight) items of the basic octad and one *kalāpaṅga* of *rūpa-jīvitindriya*. An octad in itself can never be *kamma-samuṭṭhāna*.

Composition of the Material Clusters

Material Clusters	The Constituents
Suddhaṭṭhaka (basic octad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)
Sadda-navaka (sound-nonad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+6
Jīvita-navaka (vital-nonad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15
Cakkhu-dasaka (eye-decad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+10
Sota-dasaka (ear-decad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+11
Ghāna-dasaka (nose-decad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+12
Jivhā-dasaka (tongue-decad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+13
Kāya-dasaka (body-decad)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+14
Itthibhāva-dasaka (decad of femininity)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+16
Pumbhāva-dasaka (decad of masculinity)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+17
Vatthu-dasaka (decad of heart-basis)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+15+18
Kāyaviññatti-navaka (nonad of bodily expression)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+19
Vacīviññatti-dasaka (decad of vocal expression)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+6+20
Lahuṭ'ād'ekādasaka (undecad of plasticity)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+21+22+23
Kāyaviññatti-lahut'ādi-dvādasaka (dodecad of bodily expression and plasticity)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+19+21+22+23
Vacīviññatti-sadda-lahut'ādi-terasaka (tredecad of vocal expression, sound and plasticity)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+20+6+21+22+23
Sadda-lahut'ādi-dvādasaka (dodecad of sound and plasticity)	(1+2+3+4+5+7+8+9)+6+21+22+23

Abbreviations

1 = paṭhavī-dhātu (earth-element)
2 = āpo-dhātu (water-element)
3 = tejo-dhātu (fire-element)
4 = vāyo-dhātu (air-element)
5 = rūpa (colour)
6 = sadda (sound)
7 = gandha (smell)
8 = rasa (taste)
9 = āhāra (nutriment)
10 = cakkhu (organ of sight)
11 = sota (organ of hearing)
12 = ghāna (organ of smell)
13 = jivhā (organ of taste)
14 = kāya (organ of touch)
15 = rūpa-jīvitindriya (material faculty of life)
16 = itthindriya (faculty of femininity)
17 = purisindriya (faculty of masculinity)
18 = hadaya-vatthu (heart-base)
19 = kāyaviññatti (bodily expression)
20 = vacīviññatti (vocal expression)
21 = rūpassa lahutā (lightness of matter)
22 = rūpassa mudutā (pliancy of matter)
23 = rūpassa kammaññatā (wieldiness of matter)

CHAPTER 18

THE CONDITIONAL RELATIONS

As we saw in the first chapter, the view of reality the Abhidhamma presents is based on the two complementary methods of analysis and synthesis (*bheda-saṅgaha-naya*). The task of analysis is to show that the objects of our ordinary conceptual thought are not substantial entities or irreducible realities. The task of synthesis is to show that the ultimate factors into which they are reducible (= *dhammas*) are not distinct entities existing in themselves but interdependent nodes in a complex web of relationships. It is in order to accomplish this latter task that the Abhidhamma proposes a theory of conditional relations, a theory which is set forth in the last (seventh) book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka.

In the Theravāda sources we find two versions of the doctrine of conditionality. Earlier is the one called *paṭiccasamuppāda*, the doctrine of dependent origination. The principle of dependent origination is expressed by the dictum: "When this exists, that comes to be; [therefore] with the arising of this, that arises (*imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imassa uppādā idaṃ uppajjati*). The opposite process of ceasing is expressed as: "When this does not exist, that does not come to be; [therefore] with the cessation of this, that ceases (*imasmiṃ asati idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhati*).[1]

It is this principle of dependent origination that early Buddhism makes use of to explain the causal structure of individual existence. In the Abhidhamma exegesis this principle is defined as "the arising of effects evenly in dependence on a conjunction of conditions" (*paccaya-sāmaggiṃ paṭicca samaṃ phalānaṃ uppādo*).[2] This, in other words, means that nothing arises from a single cause, and that nothing arises as a single effect. It is maintained that if in the *suttas* only one factor is mentioned as the condition for another, it is in order to focus on the most important condition among many others. And if only one effect is mentioned, it is likewise, to single out the most important effect among many others.[3]

The other doctrine of conditionality within the Theravāda tradition, which we propose to examine here, is the one developed by the Abhidhamma. The causal principle involved here is called *paṭṭhāna-naya*, the method of conditional relations. Its purpose is not to substitute the earlier doctrine of dependent origination but to supplement it. Hence in the *Visuddhimagga* we find a combined treatment of both methods of conditionality. In this work conditional relations of the Abhidhamma doctrine of conditionality are used to explain the relationship between each pair of factors in the Twelve-fold Formula of Dependent Origination.[4]

The doctrine of conditionality of the Abhidhamma is an integral part of the *dhamma*-theory and therefore it assumes its significance within its framework. However, its purpose is not to explain the absolute origin of the series of mental and material *dhammas* into which our world of experience is analysed. This situation is fully consonant with the early Buddhist doctrine of causality whose purpose is not to explain the absolute origin and the ultimate direction of the world but to describe the uninterrupted continuity of the *saṃsāric* process. According to Buddhist teachings no temporal beginning of the universe is conceivable. Accordingly, the Abhidhamma doctrine of conditionality dissociates itself from all cosmological causal theories which seek to trace the absolute origin of the world-process from some kind of uncaused trans-empirical reality.

There are three postulates which the Abhidhamma doctrine of conditionality recognizes as axiomatic:

1. Nothing arises without the appropriate causes and conditions. This rules out the theory of fortuitous origination (*adhiccasamuppanna*), the theory that rejects all principles of causality and conditionality[5]
2. Nothing arises from a single cause. It rules out all theories of a single cause (*ekakāraṇavāda*).[6] Their rejection means that the Abhidhamma dissociates itself from all monistic theories which seek to explain the origin of the world from a single cause, whether this single cause is conceived as a personal God or an impersonal Godhead. It serves as a critique of all metaphysical theories which attempt to reduce the world of experience to an underlying trans-empirical principle.
3. Nothing arises as a single, solitary phenomenon (*ekassa dhammassa uppatti paṭisedhitā hoti*).[7] If we elaborate on this, this should mean that on the basis of a single cause, or on the basis of a multiplicity of causes, or purely due to fortuitous circumstances, there can never be a single effect or a solitary phenomenon.

It is on the rejection of these three views that the Abhidhamma doctrine of conditionality is founded. Their rejection means:

4. From a plurality of causes a plurality of effects takes place. Applied to the *dhamma*-theory this means that a multiplicity of *dhammas* brings about a multiplicity of other *dhammas*.

One clear conclusion that emerges from this situation is that *dhammas* always arise, not as solitary phenomena, but as clusters. This is true of both mental and material *dhammas*. This explains why whenever

consciousness arises, together with it there must arise at least seven mental factors, namely contact (*phassa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volition (*cetanā*), one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*), psychic life (*arūpa-jīvitindriya*), and attention (*manasikāra*).[8] No psychic instance can ever occur with less than eight constituents, i.e., consciousness and its seven universal concomitants. We thus can see that even the smallest psychic unit or moment of consciousness turns out to be a complex correlational system. In the same way the smallest unit of matter, called the basic octad (*suddhaṭṭhaka*) is, in the final analysis, a cluster of eight material factors, namely the four great material elements and four items of dependent matter: colour, odour, taste, and nutritive essence. None of these material factors arises singly because they are necessarily co-existent and positionally inseparable.[9]

There are two other basic principles behind the Abhidhamma doctrine of conditionality. The first is that no mental or material *dhamma* can propel itself into existence by its own power. By their very nature, *dhammas* are completely devoid of own-power, or own-sway (*dhammānaṃ savasavattitābhimāno paṭisedhito hoti*).[10] This amounts to the rejection of the principle of self-causation. The other is that no mental or material *dhamma* can be brought into being by a power external to the *dhammas* either.[11] This amounts to the rejection of the principle of external causation. The rejection of these two theories means that *dhammas* alone help other *dhammas* to arise and persist in being.

Another thing that merits mention here relates to the relationship between the cause (condition) and the effect (the conditioned). The commentaries emphasize that the cause should not be understood as some kind of potential effect. The cause is not "pregnant with the effect" (*na phalena sagabbho*), as the *prakṛti* of the Sāṃkhya philosophy (*Pakativādīnaṃ pakati viya*).[12] The allusion is to the evolutionary theory of causation (*satkāryavāda*), according to which the effect remains in a latent form in the cause, and therefore the effect is some kind of evolute of the cause. Hence the commentaries observe further that "the cause is not in the effect" (*phale hetu natthi*),[13] "the effect is empty of the cause" (*hetu-suññaṃ phalaṃ*).[14] The same idea seems to be expressed by the use of the term '*abyāpāra*' to describe the relationship between the cause and the effect.[15] This is explained to mean: "When the condition exists, there is the arising of the effect; when the condition does not exist, the effect ceases to be. Thus the *dhammas* become causes by the mere fact of their existence. In this way is manifested the fact of *abyāpāra*."[16] What this means is that nothing passes from the cause to the effect. In other words, the cause does not pervade the effect.

The Abhidhamma doctrine of conditionality is based on twenty-four kinds of conditional relation. There are three factors involved when one *dhamma* is related to another *dhamma*. The first is the conditioning state (*paccaya-dhamma*); the second the conditioned state (*paccayuppanna-dhamma*); the third the conditioning force (*paccaya-satti*). A condition is defined as a *dhamma* which is helpful (*upakāraka*) for the origination (*uppatti*) or existence (*ṭhiti*) of another *dhamma* related to it.[17] This means that when a particular *dhamma* is activating as a condition, it will cause other *dhammas* connected to it, to arise, or if they have already arisen, it will maintain them in existence. As we shall see in the sequel, there are some conditions which are helpful only for the existence of other *dhammas*, as for example, the post-nascence condition. Some *dhammas* are helpful only for the origination of other *dhammas*, as for example, the proximity and contiguity conditions. There are others which help other *dhammas* in both ways, to originate as well as to exist, as for example, the root-condition.

It will be noticed that the function of causing the cessation is not attributed to any *dhamma*. The reason for this situation is that a *dhamma* that arises and exists must necessarily come to cessation without the intervention of any causes or conditions. Only origination and existence require causes and conditions, and not cessation. This position is, in fact, consonant with the early Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination (*paticca-samuppāda*), according to which only origination is due to conditions and not cessation. This is precisely why we do not have the expression, "dependent cessation" ("*paṭicca-nirodha*").

A conditioned state (*paccayuppanna-dhamma*) is a *dhamma* that arises or exists in dependence on conditions. The conditioning force (*paccaya-satti*) is that which has efficacy to bring about or accomplish an effect. The conditioning force cannot exist apart from the conditioning state. It is just as the hotness of chilli, which is inherent in it and cannot exist apart from it. Thus the force and the state possessing the force are not two distinct entities. A *dhamma* can, in fact, come to possess more than one conditioning force.[18]

In what follows we will be reviewing the twenty-four conditions in the order they are mentioned in the *Paṭṭhāna*, the Abhidhamma book of conditional relations.

PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY IN THE ABHIDHARMA

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Atoms and Structure

A presentation of the ideas about our 'physical' world would be incomplete if the atomic theory of the Sarvāstivādins was not referred to. However, it must not be assumed that in this theory we have anything like the atomic theory which obtained at the beginning of modern physics, the philosophical consequence of which was that a three-term relation obtains in which the atoms in public mathematical space and time are one term, the sensed qualities in sensed space and time the third term, and the observer the mediating second term. Nor do we find in it an equivalent to the early Greek distinction between the world as immediately sensed which is not the real world, and the world as designated by the mathematically and experimentally confirmed theories of science. For the Sarvāstivādins and also for the Sautrāntikas, who held an atomic view, atoms are not discontinuous but always form a conglomeration, a structural unit. At the minimum eight atoms in the proper sense of the word as indivisible entities, form one structural unit which, however, is unable to exist alone and must be combined with and supported by at least seven similar units. The eight substances (*dravya*), in the terminology of the Sarvāstivādins, which build up one unit are the four great elementary qualities (*mahābhūta*) together with four secondary qualities (*upādāya*), viz., color-shape (*rūpa*), odor, taste, and the tangible. If these atoms, in the loose sense of the term as a cluster of atoms proper, (*saṁghātaparamāṇu*) are found in an organism they in addition comprise the tangibility of the body organization, and in the case of the particular sensory capacities, they in addition comprise the sensibility of the particular sense organization which is inseparably linked with the general body organization.[2] Although we speak of the sensory capacity of an organ it should be noted that in Buddhist conception the sensory capacity *is* the organ, the 'of' belongs only to the projectibility of language.

Between the Sarvāstivādins and Sautrāntikas a dispute had arisen as to the nature of the conglomeration of atoms : Whether the atoms touch each other or whether there are inter-

1. Abhidharmakośa II 22 and Bhāṣya.

vals between them. Or whether there are no intervals between them and yet they do *not* touch each other. The Sarvāstivādins-Vaibhāṣikas held the view that there are intervals between the atoms of the conglomeration, while the Sautrāntikas declared that there are no intervals and yet the atoms do not touch each other. The underlying idea of the atomic theory has certainly been one of structurance, as may be gleaned from the assertion that the arrangement of the clusters of atoms is different with the different organs. Thus the eye atoms are shaped like the cummin flowers, the ear atoms like a birch-tree leaf, the nose atoms like a coronet, the tongue atoms like a half-moon, the body atoms like the body itself, the atoms of the female sex organs like a drum, and those of the male sex organs like a thumb.[1]

Owing to their tendency to reduce everything to, and to deal essentially with, quantitative concepts and laws (*dravya*) as the sole and sufficient condition of structure, the Sarvāstivādins-Vaibhāṣikas overlooked the fact that quantitative laws alone, though always assignable to the patterning or structuring of events, can never describe the event and its structuring. Quantitative laws do not even account for one of the most significant aspects of structure, viz., wholeness. Wholeness itself is the outcome of structuring and structuring takes place at every level of organismic life. The critique of the atomic theory of the Sarvāstivādins by the Vijñānavādins and Mādhyamikas was therefore directed against the reduction of a living process to quantitative laws and, moreover, pointed out an inherent contradiction in terms of the atomic theory. A summary of the atomic theory and its critique is found in sGam.po. pa's Lam.rim and is given here in translation :[2]

"The Vaibhāṣikas say : The nature of atoms is such that an atom is spherical, has no parts, is single, and exists materially. The conglomeration of atoms forms objects (of perception) such as color-shape and other objects. Between the atoms in an atom conglomeration there are intervals. That these atoms

1. Abhidharmakośa I 43-44ab and Bhāṣya. Students of psychoanalysis will be reminded of the relationship between the thumb and sex.

2. Dam. chos. yid. bzhin. gyi. nor. bu. thar. pa. rin. po. chrgyan. zhes, bya. ba. theg. pa. chen. poi. lam. tim. gyi. bśad. pa. fol. 965.

appear to be in one place is like the unity of appearance of a yak's tail in the pasture. That the atoms do not fall asunder is due to the fact that they are held together by the Karman of sentient beings.

"The Sautrāntikas assert : The atoms conglomerate and though there are no intervals in between them, they do not touch each other.

"Although the adherents of an atomic theory make such a claim nothing of what they say is proved. Atoms must be single or plural. If they are single it must be questioned whether they have several sides or not. If they possess various sides, they extend into an Eastern, Western, Southern, Northern, upper and lower direction. Since in such a case they have six sides (and are divisible) the claim of their singleness collapses. If they do not possess different sides, all material things ought to be of the nature of a single atom. But this is not the case, as is plainly evident. In the Viṁśatikā is stated:[1]

> One atom joined with six others
> Must have six parts.
> If six are in one and the same place,
> The aggregate must be as one atom only.

"If you suggest that there is a multitude of atoms as aggregates, the answer is that if one atom were found to exist it would be possible to assume an aggregate of single atoms, but since a single atom is not proved, an aggregate due to a combination of single atoms is not proved."

A similar theory, though in important respects different and superior to it was evolved by the Theravādins. Apart from the fact that they do not recognize atoms as quantitative elements in structure and refer to the quantitative aspect by such terms as octad, nonad, decad and a few more, the highest number being thirteen, the quantitative aspect remains entirely subordinate to the dynamic or kinetic one. As the terms imply, the minimum of quantitative requirements for structuring are eight 'forces', viz., the four great elementary qualities (*mahābhūta*) of solidification (*paṭhavīdhātu*), cohesion (*āpodhātu*),

1. Viṁśatikā by Vasubandhu, verse 12.

temperature (*tejodhātu*), motion (*vāyodhātu*) and four secondary qualities (*upādāya*), viz., color (*varṇa*), odor (*gandha*), taste (*rasa*), and 'force' or 'vigor' (*ojā*), by which latter term is indicated that a firm articulation and organization of such a compound or structure obtains. These eight forces which are never found apart from each other are termed an 'inseparable organization' (*avinibbhogarūpa*) or a 'pure octad' (*suddhaṭṭhaka*)[1] This organization owes its existence to various structuralizing laws, that is to say, any such organization is the manifested form of the structuralizing law and is the empirical, factual, physical, and physiological character of nature and man. The laws that operate at different levels are above all Karman or the fact that the whole of reality is a dynamic process.[2] Then there is *citta* which as we have seen in the narrower sense of the word, is a term for our attitudes in dealing with the world and ourselves; but since an attitude involves the whole organism, the 'inseparable organization' which expresses the structuralizing law of *citta* (*cittasamuṭṭhāna*),[3] represents a behavioristic patterning, inasmuch as popularly speaking, a body not animated by a mind (*citta*), would not behave in such and such a way, and it is therefore correct to say that the particular organization as structuralized by *citta* is the particular mind or living being. Next there is the thermodynamic behavior of organismic life (*utusamuṭṭhāna*).[4] According to biology and thermodynamics any living organism is not in thermodynamic equilibrium. This obtains, because of the second law of thermodynamics, that no living being can exist unless energy comes into it from without. Such energy is supplied by food. It also represents a structuralizing force and is mentioned as the last factor in contributing to structure-formation. It may be said to be the physio-chemical nature of man (*āhārasamuṭṭhāna*).[5]

Another fact we find is that unless a body is at rest, it has kinetic energy. Kinetic energy is termed 'life' (*jīvitendriya*)

1. Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha VI 19.
2. ibid. VI 10; 18.
3. ibid. VI 10; 19.
4. ibid. VI 10; 20.
5. ibid. VI 10; 21.

which, as has been pointed out above, is considered to be a certain amount of power, by which an organism is capable of doing work, i.e., in the language of physics, to overcome resistance. In being active kinetic energy is lost or, in terms of biology, organismic life gradually loses its life. Since the number of constituents can be counted (quantitative aspect) 'life' together with the 'pure octad' forms a nonad.[1] In its further structuralization into a sensory apparatus we arrive at the sense-decads comprising of the pure octads, life (kinetic energy), and the sensory capacity which is the sense organization itself. Naming them after the dominant sensory organization we have an eye-decad, an ear-decad, a nose-decad, a tongue-decad, and a body-decad. Since the body is either male or female and since sex is as important as the other sensory functions, and found at all levels of body organization we have a sex-decad also, which is either male or female. One other decad is mentioned and that is the heart-decad.[2] It was counted as a particular decad that was essential for achieving harmony as far as the psychological processes of perception were concerned. All other senses had a basis of their own, only mind as interpretative operation had no corresponding physiological basis. As most suited the heart was selected, because all our intellectual processes are supported by emotional flux. Moreover, everybody is familiar with the fact that the emergency reactions of fear, anger, joy and the like do affect the heart. As a matter of fact, fear and sexuality, the dominant emotions in most people, increase or lower the palpitation of the heart. If we are now-a-days convinced that the higher skills of life belong to the cerebro-cortical level and not to the vegetative system of which the heart is a suitable symbol, we should not forget that the Abhidharmikas did not want to give an account of the physiological levels of organization according to postulated and deductively and experimentally verified theories.

The greatest structure or the unique event in which structurance continues to operate, is the organized human body. This body is divided into three sections : a lower one extending from the navel to the feet, a middle portion extending

1. Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha VI 18.
2. ibid.

A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma:

The Abhidhammattha Sangaha Of Ācariya Anuruddha

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TABLE 1.1 :
THE 89 AND 121 CITTAS AT A GLANCE

MUNDANE CITTAS			81
Sense–sphere cittas			54
Unwholesome cittas			12
(1) – (8)	Greed–rooted cittas		8
(9) – (10)	Hatred–rooted cittas		2
(11) – (12)	Delusion–rooted cittas		2
Rootless cittas			18
(13) – (19)	Unwholesome–resultant		7
(20) – (27)	Wholesome–resultant		8
(28) – (30)	Rootless functional		3
Sense–sphere beautiful cittas			24
(31) – (38)	Sense–sphere wholesome		8
(39) – (46)	Sense–sphere resultant		8
(47) – (54)	Sense–sphere functional		8
Fine–material–sphere cittas			15
(55) – (59)	Fine–material–sphere wholesome		5
(60) – (64)	Fine–material–sphere resultant		5
(65) – (69)	Fine–material–sphere functional		5
Immaterial–sphere cittas			12
(70) – (73)	Immaterial–sphere wholesome		4
(74) – (77)	Immaterial–sphere resultant		4
(78) – (81)	Immaterial–sphere functional		4
SUPRAMUNDANE CITTAS			8 or 40
Supramundane wholesome cittas			4 or 20
(82) or (82) – (86)	Path of stream–entry		1 or 5
(83) or (87) – (91)	Path of once–returning		1 or 5
(84) or (92) – (96)	Path of non–returning		1 or 5
(85) or (97) – (101)	Path of Arahantship		1 or 5
Supramundane resultant cittas			4 or 20
(86) or (102) – (106)	Fruit of stream–entry		1 or 5
(87) or (107) – (111)	Fruit of once–returning		1 or 5
(88) or (112) – (116)	Fruit of non–returning		1 or 5
(89) or (117) – (121)	Fruit of Arahantship		1 or 5

TABLE 2.1
THE 52 MENTAL FACTORS AT A GLANCE

ETHICALLY VARIABLE FACTORS—13

Universals—7

(1) Contact
(2) Feeling
(3) Perception
(4) Volition
(5) One-pointedness
(6) Life faculty
(7) Attention

Occasionals—6

(8) Initial application
(9) Sustained application
(10) Decision
(11) Energy
(12) Zest
(13) Desire

UNWHOLESOME FACTORS—14

Unwholesome Universals—4

(14) Delusion
(15) Shamelessness
(16) Fearlessness of wrong
(17) Restlessness

Unwholesome Occasionals—10

(18) Greed
(19) Wrong view
(20) Conceit
(21) Hatred
(22) Envy
(23) Avarice
(24) Worry
(25) Sloth
(26) Torpor
(27) Doubt

BEAUTIFUL FACTORS—25

Beautiful Universals—19

(28) Faith
(29) Mindfulness
(30) Shame
(31) Fear of wrong
(32) Non-greed
(33) Non-hatred
(34) Neutrality of mind
(35) Tranquillity of mental body
(36) Tranquillity of consciousness
(37) Lightness of mental body
(38) Lightness of consciousness
(39) Malleability of mental body
(40) Malleability of consciousness
(41) Wieldiness of mental body
(42) Wieldiness of consciousness
(43) Proficiency of mental body
(44) Proficiency of consciousness
(45) Rectitude of mental body
(46) Rectitude of consciousness

Abstinences—3

(47) Right speech
(48) Right action
(49) Right livelihood

Illimitables—2

(50) Compassion
(51) Appreciative joy

Non-Delusion—1

(52) Wisdom faculty

Compendium of Functions (*kiccasangaha*)

§8. Analysis of Functions

Kiccasangahe kiccāni nāma paṭisandhi-bhavanga-āvajjana-dassana-savana-ghāyana-sāyana-phusana-sampaṭicchana-santīraṇa-votthapana-javana-tadārammaṇa-cutivasena cuddasavidhāni bhavanti.

Paṭisandhi-bhavanga-āvajjana-pañcaviññāṇa-ṭṭhānādivasena pana tesaṁ dasadhā ṭhānabhedo veditabbo.

In the compendium of functions, there are fourteen functions, namely: (1) rebirth-linking; (2) life-continuum; (3) adverting; (4) seeing; (5) hearing; (6) smelling; (7) tasting; (8) touching; (9) receiving; (10) investigating; (11) determining; (12) javana; (13) registration; and (14) death.

Their further classification should be understood by way of stage as tenfold, namely: (1) rebirth-linking; (2) life-continuum; (3) adverting; (4) fivefold sense consciousness; and so forth.

Guide to §8

Analysis of functions: In this section, the eighty-nine types of consciousness are classified by way of function. The Abhidhamma posits, altogether, fourteen functions performed by different kinds of consciousness. These are exercised either at different phases within the cognitive process (3—13) or on occasions when consciousness is occurring outside the cognitive process, that is, in process-freed (*vīthimutta*) consciousness (1, 2, 14).

(1) Rebirth-linking (*paṭisandhi*): This function, exercised at conception, is called rebirth-linking, because it links the new existence to the previous one. The consciousness that performs this function, the *paṭisandhicitta*, or rebirth-linking consciousness, occurs only once in any individual existence — at the moment of birth.

(2) Life-continuum (*bhavanga*): The word *bhavanga* means "factor (*anga*) of existence (*bhava*)," that is, the indispensable condition of existence. *Bhavanga* is the function of consciousness by which the continuity of the individual is preserved through the duration of any single existence, from conception to death. After the *paṭisandhicitta* has arisen and fallen away, it is then followed by the *bhavangacitta*, which is a resultant consciousness of the same type as the *paṭisandhicitta* but which performs a different function, namely, the function of preserving the continuity of individual existence. *Bhavangacittas* arise and pass away every moment during life whenever there is no active cognitive process taking place. This type of consciousness is most evident during

deep dreamless sleep, but it also occurs momentarily during waking life countless times between occasions of active cognition.

When an object impinges on a sense door, the *bhavanga* is arrested, and an active cognitive process ensues for the purpose of cognizing the object. Immediately after the cognitive process is completed, again the *bhavanga* supervenes and continues until the next cognitive process arises. Arising and perishing at every moment during this passive phase of consciousness, the *bhavanga* flows on like a stream, without remaining static for two consecutive moments.

(3) Adverting (*āvajjana*): When an object impinges at one of the sense doors or at the mind door, there occurs a mind-moment called *bhavanga-calana*, vibration of the life-continuum, by which the *bhavanga* consciousness "vibrates" for a single moment. This is followed by another moment called *bhavanga-upaccheda*, arrest of the life-continuum, by which the flow of the *bhavanga* is cut off. Immediately after this, a *citta* arises turning to the object, either at one of the five physical sense doors or at the mind door. This function of turning to the object is termed "adverting."

(4—8) Seeing, etc.: In a cognitive process at the sense doors, after the moment of adverting, there arises a *citta* that directly cognizes the impingent object. This *citta*, and the specific functions it performs, is determined by the nature of the object. If the object is a visible form, eye-consciousness arises seeing it; if it is a sound, ear-consciousness arises hearing it; and so forth. In this context, the functions of seeing and hearing, etc., do not refer to the cognitive acts that explicitly identify the objects of sight and hearing, etc., as such. They signify, rather, the rudimentary momentary occasions of consciousness by which the sense datum is experienced in its bare immediacy and simplicity prior to all identificatory cognitive operations.

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(9—11) Receiving, etc.: In the case of a cognitive process through any of the five sense doors, following the *citta* that performs the function of seeing, etc., there arise in succession *cittas* that perform the functions of receiving (*sampaṭicchana*), investigating (*santīraṇa*), and determining (*votthapana*) the object. In the case of a cognitive process occurring in the mind door independently of the physical senses, these three functions do not occur; rather, mind-door adverting follows immediately upon the cutting off of the *bhavanga* without any intermediate functions.

(12) *Javana*: *Javana* is a technical term of Abhidhamma usage that is best left untranslated. The literal meaning of the word is "running swiftly." As a function of consciousness, it applies to the stage of the cognitive process that immediately follows the determining stage[76] and consists of series of *cittas* (normally seven, all identical in kind) which "run swiftly" over the object in the act of apprehending it. The *javana* stage

[76] That is, in the five-door process. In a mind-door process, the *javana* phase follows the mind-door adverting consciousness.

is the most important from an ethical standpoint, for it is at this point that wholesome or unwholesome *cittas* originate.[77]

(13) Registration (*tadārammaṇa*): The word *tadārammaṇa* means, literally, "having that object" and denotes the function of taking as object the object that had been apprehended by the *javanas*. This function is exercised for two mind-moments immediately after the *javana* phase in a sense-sphere cognitive process when the object is either very prominent to the senses or clear to the mind. When the object lacks special prominence or clarity, as well as in other types of cognitive process apart from the sense-sphere process, this function is not exercised at all. Following registration (or the *javana* phase when registration does not occur), the stream of consciousness again lapses back into the *bhavanga*.

(14) Death (*cuti*): The death consciousness is the last *citta* to occur in an individual existence — it is the *citta* that marks the exit from a particular life. This *citta* is of the same type as the rebirth-linking consciousness and the *bhavanga*, and, like them, it pertains to the process-freed side of existence, the passive flow of consciousness outside an active cognitive process. It differs from them in that it performs a different function, namely, the function of passing away.

By way of stage as tenfold: The word "stage" (*ṭhāna*) means a moment, or occasion, between two other *cittas* at which a given *citta* is able to arise. Although there are fourteen functions of consciousness, the five sensory functions of seeing, etc., all occupy the same stage of the cognitive process, between the two stages of adverting and receiving. Thus, the fourteen functions can be condensed into ten stages of consciousness.

§9. Classification by way of Consciousness

Tattha dve upekkhāsahagatasantīraṇāni c'eva aṭṭha mahāvipākāni ca nava rūpārūpavipākāni cā ti ekūnavīsati cittāni paṭisandhi-bhavanga-cutikiccāni nāma.

Āvajjanakiccāni pana dve. Tathā dassana-savana-ghāyana-sāyana-phusana-sampaṭicchanakiccāni ca.

Tīṇi santīraṇakiccāni.

Manodvārāvajjanam eva pañcadvāre votthapanakiccaṁ sādheti.

Āvajjanadvayavajjitāni kusalākusala-phala-kriyā cittāni pañcapaññāsa javanakiccāni.

[77] This is so in the case of non-Arahants. For Arahants, the *javana* are ethically indeterminate. *Javana* is treated more fully in Chapter 4.

The Mind-Door Process (*manodvāravīthi*)

§12. The Limited *Javana* Process

Manodvāre pana yadi vibhūtam ālambanaṁ āpātham āgacchati, tato paraṁ bhavangacalana-manodvārāvajjana-javanāvasāne tadārammaṇapākāni pavattanti. Tato paraṁ bhavangapāto.

When a clear object enters the avenue of the mind door, then the vibration of the life-continuum, mind-door adverting, javanas, and, at the end of the javanas, registration resultants, all take place. Following this, there is subsidence into the life-continuum.

Avibhūte pan'ālambane javanāvasāne bhavangapāto va hoti. Natthi tadārammaṇ'uppādo ti.

In the case of an obscure object, there is subsidence into the life-continuum at the end of the javanas, without giving rise to the registration resultants.

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Guide to §12

The mind-door process: When a cognitive process occurs in one of the sense doors, two doors are actually involved; the physical sense door and the mind door, which is the *bhavanga* from which the cognitive process emerges. What is called a mind-door process is a cognitive process that occurs exclusively through the mind door, without any admixture of the sense doors. This kind of process is also called, for the sake of clarity, a bare mind-door process (*suddha-manodvāravīthi*).

The mind-door process includes both the "limited," or sense-sphere process (*paritta-vīthi*), dealt with in §§12—13, and the cognitive process in absorption pertaining to the sublime (*mahaggata*) and supramundane (*lokuttara*) attainments, dealt with in §§14—16.

The limited, or sense-sphere mind-door process, is itself twofold: (1) that consequent to a five-door process (*pañcadvārānubandhakā*) and (2) the independent process (*visuṁsiddhā*).

(1) Just as when a gong is struck once by a baton, the gong sends forth a continuous stream of reverberations, so, when one of the five sense doors has been impinged upon once by a sense object, after the five-door process has ceased, the past sense object comes into range at the mind door and sets off many sequences of mind-door processes. Because these cognitive processes come as the sequel to a five-door process, they are known as *consequent processes*. They are counted as fivefold by way of the five sense-door processes which they follow.

Ledi Sayadaw explains that it is in these consequent processes that distinct recognition of the object occurs; such recognition does not occur in a bare five-door process itself. An eye-door process, for example, is followed first by a conformational mind-door process (*tadanuvattikā manodvāravīthi*), which reproduces, in the mind door, the object just perceived in the sense-door process. Then comes a process grasping the object as a whole (*samudāyagāhikā*); then a process recognizing the color (*vaṇṇasallakkhaṇā*); then a process recognizing the entity (*vatthusallakkhaṇā*); then a process grasping the name (*nāmagāhikā*); then a process recognizing the name (*nāmasallakkhaṇā*).

"The process grasping the object as a whole" is the mind-door process perceiving, as a whole, the forms repeatedly perceived in individual frames by the two preceding processes, the original sense-door process and the conformational mind-door process. This process exercises a synthesizing function, fusing the perception of distinct "shots" of the object into the perception of a unity, as in the case of a whirling firebrand perceived as a circle of fire. It is only when this has occurred that recognition of the color is possible. When the recognition of the color occurs, one recognizes the color: "I see blue." When the recognition of the entity occurs, one recognizes the entity or shape. When the recognition of the name occurs, one recognizes the name. Thus, Ledi Sayadaw asserts, it is only when a recognitional process referring to one or another specific feature occurs that one knows: "I see this or that specific feature."

(2) An *independent mind-door process* occurs when any of the six objects enter the range of cognition entirely on its own, not as a consequence of an immediately preceding sense-door process. The question may be raised how an object can enter the range of the mind door independently of a proximate sensory impingement. Ledi Sayadaw cites various sources: through what was directly perceived earlier, or by inference from what was learned by oral report; on account of belief, opinion, reasoning, or reflective acceptance of a view; by the power of *kamma*, psychic power, disturbance of the bodily humours, the influence of a celestial being, comprehension, realization, etc. He explains that, if one has clearly experienced an object even once, at a later time — even after a hundred years or in a future life —, dependent on that object, a condition may be set for the vibration of the *bhavanga*. The mind that has been nurtured on such an input of prior experiences is extremely susceptible to their influence. When it encounters any sense object, that object may trigger off, in a single moment, waves extending to many thousands of objects previously perceived.

The mental continuum, constantly being excited by these causal influences, is always seeking an opportunity to emerge from the *bhavanga* and acquire a clear cognition of an object. Therefore, the mental factor of attention present in the *bhavanga* repeatedly causes the *bhavanga* to vibrate, and it directs consciousness again and again to advert to objects that have gained conditions to appear. Even though the *bhavanga citta* has its own object, Ledi Sayadaw explains, it occurs in the mode of inclining towards some other object. As a result of this constant "buzz" of activity in the *bhavanga*, when an object acquires sufficient prominence through other operative conditions, it draws the

continuum of consciousness out of the *bhavanga*, and then that object comes into the range of cognition at the mind door.

The independent process is analyzed as sixfold: (1) the process based on what was directly perceived; (2) the process based on inference from what was directly perceived; (3) the process based on oral report; (4) the process based on inference from oral report; (5) the process based on the cognized; and (6) the process based on inference from the cognized. "The cognized" here includes belief, opinion, comprehension, and realization; "inference from the cognized" includes judgments arrived at by inductive and deductive reasoning.

When a clear object enters, etc.: There are two types of mind-door process pertaining to the sense sphere, distinguished by the intensity of the object. In a process with a clear object (*vibhūtālambana*), when the object enters the avenue of the mind door, the *bhavanga* vibrates and is arrested. Then, a mind-door adverting consciousness turns to the object, followed by seven moments of *javana* and two of registration, after which the cognitive process subsides into the *bhavanga*. This is in the case of beings in the sense-sphere plane; but, for beings in the fine-material and immaterial planes, moments of registration do not occur even when the object is exceptionally clear (see below §§19—20).

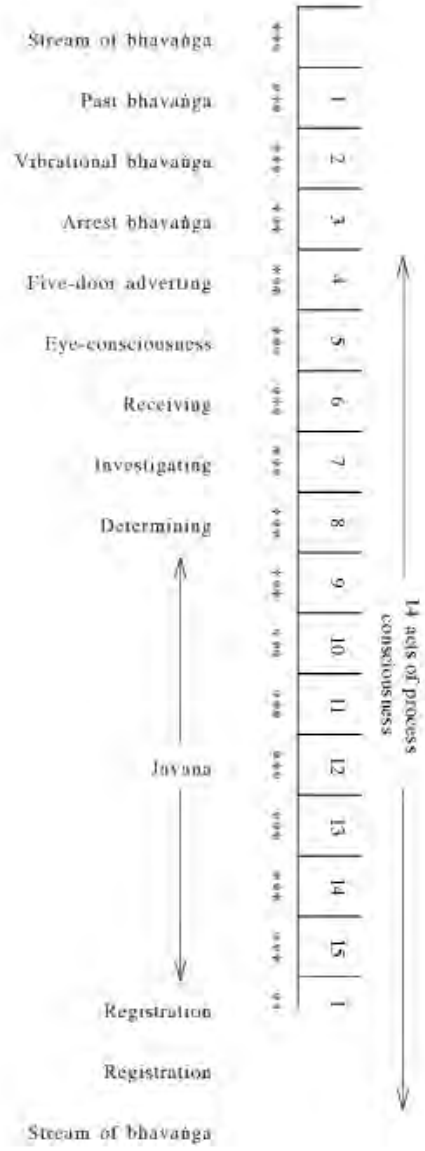
In the case of an obscure object: In the process with an obscure object (*avi-bhūtālambana*), the two moments of registration do not occur under any conditions.

Ledi Sayadaw holds that the subsidence into the *bhavanga* at the end of the *javanas* should be understood as the maximum type of process with an obscure object. However, he maintains that, when the object is obscure, a course ending with two or three occurrences of the mind-door adverting is also found, and a course ending with the mere vibration of the *bhavanga* may also be admitted. For, in the base of bare mind-door process, on countless occasions, an object enters the range of cognition and causes the *bhavanga* to vibrate two or three times, after which the disturbance subsides with no occurrence of *cittas* belonging to a cognitive process proper. Thus, according to Ledi Sayadaw, in the mind door too, there is a fourfold presentation of objects. The course ending with registration can be called a very clear (*ati-vibhūta*) presentation; the course ending with *javanas*, a clear (*vibhūta*) presentation; the course ending with mind-door adverting, an obscure (*avibhūta*) presentation; and the course ending with mere vibration of the *bhavanga*, a very obscure (*ati-avibhūta*) presentation. The clarity of the presentation depends either on the prominence of the object or the strength of consciousness. For a prominent object can appear clearly even when consciousness is weak, while a strong consciousness can clearly cognize even a subtle abstruse object.

§13. Summary

Vīthicittāni tīṇ'eva cittuppādā das'eritā

TABLE 4.1 A COMPLETE EYE-DOOR PROCESS



NOTE: The triple asterisks beneath the numbers represent the three sub-moments of each mind-moment: arising, [illegible] dissolution.

6

Compendium of Matter (*Rūpasangahavibhāga*)

§1. Introductory Verse

Ettāvatā vibhattā hi sappabhedappavattikā
Cittacetasikā dhammā rūpaṁ dāni pavuccati.
Samuddesā vibhāgā ca samuṭṭhānā kalāpato
Pavattikkamato cā ti pañcadhā tattha sangaho.

Having thus far analyzed consciousness and mental factors in accordance with their classes and modes of occurrence, matter (rūpa) will now be dealt with.

The compendium of matter is fivefold: enumeration, classification, origination, groups, and the modes of occurrence.

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Guide to §1

The first five chapters of the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* form, in a way, a complete compendium dealing with various aspects of conscious experience — with the 89 or 121 types of consciousness, with the 52 mental factors and their permutations, with the occurrence of consciousness in cognitive processes and at rebirth, with the planes of existence, and with the classification of *kamma* and its results.

These first five chapters may be considered a detailed analysis of the first two ultimate realities — *citta* and *cetasikas*, consciousness and mental factors. In Chapter 6, Ācariya Anuruddha will analyze in detail the third ultimate reality, matter (*rūpa*). He will first enumerate the kinds of material phenomena; then, he will explain the principles by which they are classified, their causes or means of origination, their organization into groups, and their modes of occurrence. Finally, he will conclude the chapter with a brief look at the fourth ultimate reality, the unconditioned element, *Nibbāna*.

The Pali word for matter, *rūpa*, is explained by derivation from the verb *ruppati*, which means "to be deformed, disturbed, knocked about, oppressed, broken".[93] The

[93] According to the *Mahāniddesa*: *ruppati, kuppati, ghaṭṭīyati, pīḷīyati, bhijjati*.

commentators maintain that "matter is so called because it undergoes and imposes alteration owing to adverse physical conditions such as cold and heat, etc."[94] The Buddha himself, in explanation of the term "matter" or "material form," declares: "And why, monks, do you say material form (*rūpa*)? It is deformed (*ruppati*); therefore, it is called material form. Deformed by what? Deformed by cold, by heat, by hunger, by thirst, by flies, mosquitoes, wind, sunburn, and creeping things" (*Saṁyutta Nikāya* 22:79/iii, 86).

Enumeration of Material Phenomena (*rūpasamuddesa*)

§2. In Brief: Great Essentials and Derived Matter

Cattāri mahābhūtāni, catunnañ ca mahābhūtānaṁ upādāya rūpan ti duvidham p'etaṁ rūpaṁ ekādasavidhena sangahaṁ gacchati.

Matter is twofold, namely: the four great essentials and material phenomena derived from the four great essentials. These two constitute eleven categories.

Guide to §2

Matter is twofold: The Abhidhamma enumerates twenty-eight types of material phenomena, which are in two general categories: (1) the four great essentials and (2) material phenomena derived from the four great essentials. The *four great essentials* (*mahābhūta*) are the four primary material elements — the earth element (*paṭhavī-dhātu*), the water element (*āpo-dhātu*), the fire element (*tejo-dhātu*), and the air element (*vāyo-dhātu*). These are the fundamental constituents of matter, which are inseparable and which, in their various combinations, enter into the composition of all material substances, from the most minute to the most massive mountain. *Derived material phenomena* (*upādāya rūpa*) are material phenomena derived from, or dependent upon, the four great essentials. These are twenty-four in number. The great essentials may be compared to the earth, and the derivative phenomena to trees and shrubs that grow in dependence upon the earth.

All these twenty-eight types of material phenomena are distributed into eleven general classes. Seven of these are called *concretely produced matter* (*nipphanna rūpa*), since they possess intrinsic natures and are thus suitable for contemplation and comprehension by insight. The other four classes, being more abstract in nature, are called *non-concretely produced matter* (*anipphanna rūpa*).

[94] *Sītoṇhādi virodhippaccayehi vikāraṁ āpajjati āpādiyati. Vibhāvinī-Ṭīkā.*

§3. In Detail: Concretely Produced Matter

Kathaṁ?

1. *Paṭhavīdhātu, āpodhātu, tejodhātu, vāyodhātu bhūtarūpaṁ nāma.*
2. *Cakkhu, sotaṁ, ghānaṁ, jihvā, kāyo pasādarūpaṁ nāma.*
3. *Rūpaṁ, saddo, gandho, raso, āpodhātuvajjitaṁ bhūtattaya-sankhātaṁ phoṭṭhabbaṁ gocararūpaṁ nāma.*
4. *Itthattaṁ purisattaṁ bhāvarūpaṁ nāma.*
5. *Hadayavatthu hadayarūpaṁ nāma.*
6. *Jīvitindriyaṁ jīvitarūpaṁ nāma.*
7. *Kabaḷīkāro āhāro āhārarūpaṁ nāma.*

How?

1. *Essential material phenomena: the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element.*
2. *Sensitive material phenomena: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body.*
3. *Objective material phenomena: visible form, sound, smell, taste, and tangibility, the latter consisting of three essentials excluding the water element.*
4. *Material phenomena of sex: femininity and masculinity.*
5. *Material phenomena of the heart: the heart-base.*
6. *Material phenomena of life: the life faculty.*
7. *Material phenomena of nutriment: edible food.*

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Iti ca aṭṭhārasavidham p'etaṁ sabhāvarūpaṁ, salakkhaṇarūpaṁ, nipphannarūpaṁ, rūparūpaṁ, sammasanarūpan ti ca sangahaṁ gacchati.

Thus, these eighteen kinds of material phenomena are grouped together as: matter possessing intrinsic nature, matter possessing real characteristics, concretely produced matter, material matter, and matter to be comprehended by insight.

Guide to §3

(1) Essential material phenomena (*bhūtarūpa*): The great essentials are called elements (*dhātu*) in the sense that they bear their own intrinsic natures (*sabhāva*).

The earth element (*paṭhavīdhātu*): The earth element is so called because, like the earth, it serves as a support or foundation for the coexisting material phenomena. The word *paṭhavī* comes from a root meaning 'to expand or spread out,' and, thus, the earth element represents the principle of extension. The earth element has the characteristic of hardness, the function of acting as a foundation (for the other

primary elements and derived matter), and manifestation as receiving.[95] Its proximate cause is the other three great essentials. Both hardness and softness are modes in which the earth element is experienced by the sense of touch.

The water element (*āpodhātu*): The water element, or fluidity, is the material factor that makes different particles of matter cohere, thereby preventing them from being scattered about. Its characteristic is trickling or oozing, its function is to intensify the coexisting material states, and it is manifested as the holding together or cohesion of material phenomena. Its proximate cause is the other three great essentials. The Abhidhamma holds that, unlike the other three great essentials, the water element cannot be physically sensed but must be known inferentially from the cohesion of observed matter.

The fire element (*tejodhātu*): The fire element has the characteristic of heat. Its function is to mature or ripen other material phenomena, and it is manifested as a continuous supply of softness. Both heat and cold are modes in which the fire element is experienced.

The air element (*vāyodhātu*): The air element is the principle of motion and pressure. Its characteristic is distension (*vitthambana*), its function is to cause motion in the other material phenomena, and it is manifested as conveyance to other places. Its proximate cause is the other three great essentials. It is experienced as tangible pressure.

Taken together, the four great essentials are founded upon the earth element, held together by the water element, maintained by the fire element, and distended by the air element.

(2) Sensitive material phenomena (*pasādarūpa*): Sensitive material phenomena are five types of matter located in each of the five sense organs.[96] The sensitivity is to be distinguished from the gross sense organ that functions as its support. What is conventionally called the eye is spoken of in the Abhidhamma as the composite eye (*sasambhāra-cakkhu*), a compound of various material phenomena. Among these is eye-sensitivity (*cakkhu-pasāda*), the sensitive substance in the retina that registers light and color and serves as a physical base and door for eye-consciousness. Ear-sensitivity (*sota-pasāda*) is to be found inside the ear-hole, "in the place shaped like a finger-stall and surrounded by the fine brown hairs"; it is the sensitive substance that registers sounds and serves as a physical base and door for ear-consciousness. Nose-sensitivity (*ghāna-pasāda*) is to be found inside the nasal orifice, as the substance that registers smells.

[95] This explanation of the characteristics, etc., of the great essentials is taken from the *Visuddhimagga* XI, 93 and 109.

[96] A detailed exposition of derived matter is found at *Visuddhimagga* XIV, 36—70, on which the account given here is based.

Tongue-sensitivity (*jivhā-pasāda*) is to be found diffused over the tongue, serving to register tastes. And body-sensitivity (*kāya-pasāda*) extends all over the organic body "like a liquid that soaks a layer of cotton," and serves to register tactile sensations.

The eye's characteristic is sensitivity of the primary elements that is ready for the impact of visible data; or its characteristic is sensitivity of the primary elements springing from a desire to see. Its function is to pick up a visible datum as object. It is manifested as the foundation of eye-consciousness. Its proximate cause is the primary elements born of *kamma* springing from a desire to see. Each of the other sensitive material phenomena — the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the body — should be similarly understood, with appropriate substitutions.

(3) Objective material phenomena (*gocararūpa*): These are the five sense fields that serve as the objective supports for the corresponding types of sense consciousness. It should be noted that the tangible object is constituted by three of the great essentials: the earth element, experienced as hardness or softness; the fire element, experienced as heat or cold; and the air element, experienced as pressure. The water element, being the principle of cohesion, is not, according to the Abhidhamma, included in the tangible datum. The other four sense objects — visible forms, etc. — are types of derived matter.

Collectively, objective material phenomena have the characteristic of impinging on the sense bases. Their function is to be the objects of sense consciousness. They are manifested as the resort of the respective sense consciousness. Their proximate cause is the four great essentials.

(4) Material phenomena of sex (*bhāvarūpa*): Included here are the two faculties of femininity (*itthi*) and masculinity (*purisa*). These faculties have, respectively, the characteristics of the female sex and of the male sex. Their function is to show femininity and masculinity. They are manifested as the reason for the mark, sign, work, and ways of the female and of the male; that is, for the sexual structure of the body, for its feminine or masculine features, for the typical feminine or masculine occupations, and for the typical feminine and masculine deportment.

(5) Material phenomenon of the heart (*hadayarūpa*): On the heart-base, see Chapter 3, §20. The heart-base has the characteristic of being the material support for the mind element and the mind-consciousness element (see Chapter 3, §21). Its function is to uphold them. It is manifested as the carrying of these elements. It is to be found in dependence on the blood inside the heart and is assisted by the four great essentials and maintained by the life faculty.

(6) The life faculty (*jīvitindriya*): The life faculty is the material counterpart of the mental life faculty, one of the seven universal *cetasikas*. Life, or vitality, is called a faculty (*indriya*) because it has a dominating influence over its objects. The life faculty has the characteristic of maintaining the coexistent kinds of matter at the moment of their

presence. Its function is to make them occur. It is manifested as the establishment of their presence. Its proximate cause is the four great essentials that are to be maintained.

(7) Edible food (*kabaḷīkārāhāra*): Edible food has the characteristic of essence (*ōja*), that is, the nutritional substance contained in gross edible food. Its function is to sustain the physical body. It is manifested as the fortifying of the body. Its proximate cause is gross edible food, which is the base of nutritive essence.

These eighteen kinds of material phenomena: The eighteen material phenomena just enumerated are grouped together as *matter possessing intrinsic nature* (*sabhāvarūpa*) because each type has a distinct objective nature such as hardness in the case of the earth element, etc.; as *matter possessing real characteristics* (*salakkhaṇa-rūpa*) because they are marked by the three general characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self; as *concretely produced matter* (*nipphannarūpa*) because they are directly produced by conditions such as *kamma*, etc.; as *material matter* (*rūparūpa*) because they possess matter's essential characteristic of undergoing deformation; and *as matter to be comprehended by insight* (*sammasanarūpa*) because they are to be made the objects of insight contemplation by way of the three characteristics.

§4. In Detail: Non-Concretely Produced Matter

8. Ākāsadhātu paricchedarūpaṁ nāma.
9. Kāyaviññatti vacīviññatti viññattirūpaṁ nāma.
10. Rūpassa lahutā, mudutā, kammaññatā, viññattidvayaṁ vikārarūpaṁ nāma.
11. Rūpassa upacayo, santati, jaratā, aniccatā lakkhaṇarūpaṁ nāma. Jātirūpam eva pan'ettha upacayasantatināmena pavuccati.

8. Limiting material phenomenon: the element of space.
9. Intimating material phenomena: bodily intimation and vocal intimation.
10. Mutable material phenomena: material lightness, malleability, wieldiness, and the two forms of intimation.
11. Characteristics of material phenomena: material production, continuity, decay, and impermanence. Here, by production and continuity are meant the material phenomenon of birth.

Guide to §4

Non-concretely produced matter: The types of matter in groups (8)—(11) are designated non-concretely produced matter (*anipphannarūpa*), because they do not arise

directly from the four main causes of matter (see §9) but exist as modalities or attributes of concretely produced matter. Thus, they are not included among the ultimate realities (*paramattha dhamma*).

(8) The space element (*ākāsadhātu*): Space, as understood in the Abhidhamma, is not bare geometric extension but the void region that delimits and separates objects and groups of material phenomena, enabling them to be perceived as distinct. The space element has the characteristic of delimiting matter. Its function is to display the boundaries of matter. Its proximate cause is the matter delimited.

(9) Intimating material phenomena (*viññattirūpa*): *Viññatti*, intimation, is that by means of which one communicates one's ideas, feelings, and attitudes to another. There are two means of intimation: bodily and vocal. The former is a special modification in the consciousness-originated air element that causes the body to move in ways that reveal one's intentions. The latter is a special modification in the consciousness-originated earth element that issues in speech, by which one reveals one's intentions. Both have the function of displaying intention. They are manifested, respectively, as a cause of bodily movement and of verbal expression. Their proximate causes are, respectively, the air element and the earth element born of consciousness.

(10) Mutable material phenomena (*vikārarūpa*): This category comprises special modes or manifestations of concretely produced matter. It includes the two types of intimation and three other material phenomena: lightness, malleability, and wieldiness.

Among these, *lightness* (*lahutā*) has the characteristic of non-sluggishness. Its function is to dispel heaviness in matter. It is manifested as light transformability. Its proximate cause is light matter.

Malleability (*mudutā*) has the characteristic of non-rigidity. Its function is to dispel rigidity in matter. It is manifested as non-opposition to any kind of action. Its proximate cause is malleable matter.

Wieldiness (*kammaññatā*) has the characteristic of wieldiness that is favorable to bodily action. Its function is to dispel unwieldiness. It is manifested as non-wieldiness. Its proximate cause is wieldy matter.

(11) Characteristics of material phenomena (*lakkhaṇarūpa*): This category includes four types of material phenomena. Of these, production (*upacaya*) and continuity (*santati*) are both terms for the genesis, arising, or birth (*jāti*) of matter. They differ in that production is the first arising of a material process, the initial launching or setting up of the process, while continuity is the repeated genesis of material phenomena in the same material process. For example, the arising of the body, sex, and heart groups at conception is production, while the subsequent arising of those same material groups throughout life is continuity.

Production of matter has the characteristic of setting up. Its function is to make material instances emerge for the first time. It is manifested as launching or as the completed state. Its proximate cause is the matter produced.

Continuity of matter has the characteristic of occurrence. Its function is to anchor. It is manifested as non-interruption. Its proximate cause is matter to be anchored.

Decay (*jaratā*) has the characteristic of maturing or aging of material phenomena. Its function is to lead them on towards their termination. It is manifested as loss of newness without loss of being. Its proximate cause is matter that is decaying.

Impermanence (*aniccatā*) has the characteristic of the complete breaking up of material phenomena. Its function is to make them subside. It is manifested as destruction and falling away. Its proximate cause is matter that is completely breaking up.

§5. Twenty-eight Kinds of Matter

Iti ekādasavidham p'etaṁ rūpaṁ aṭṭhavīsatividhaṁ hoti sarūpavasena. Kathaṁ?

Bhūtappasādavisayā bhāvo hadayam icc'api
Jīvitāhārarūpehi aṭṭhārasavidhaṁ tathā.
Paricchedo ca viññatti vikāro lakkhaṇan ti ca
Anipphannā dasa cā ti aṭṭhavīsatividhaṁ bhave.

Ayam ettha rūpasamuddeso.

Thus, the eleven kinds of material phenomena are treated as twenty-eight according to their specific properties. How (twenty-eight)?

Essentials, sensory organs, objects, sex, heart, life, and nutriment — thus, concrete matter is eighteenfold.

Limitation (space), intimation, mutability, and characteristics — thus, there are ten that are not concretely produced. In all, there are twenty-eight.

Herein, this is the enumeration of matter.

Classification of Matter
(*rūpavibhāga*)

§6. As Singlefold

Sabbañ ca pan'etaṁ rūpaṁ ahetukaṁ, sappaccayaṁ, sāsavaṁ, sankhataṁ, lokiyaṁ, kāmāvacaraṁ, anārammaṇaṁ, appahātabbam

28 Material Phenomena (§§ 2-5)				16 Classifications (§§ 7-8)															
		Essentials	Derived	Internal	External	Base	Non-Base	Door	Non-Door	Faculty	Non-faculty	Gross, Etc.	Subtle, Etc.	Clung-to	Not Clung-to	Taking Objects	No Objects	Inseparable	Separable
1	Earth	▨			▨		▨		▨		▨	▨		▨	▨		▨	▨	
2	Water	▨			▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨	▨		▨	▨	
3	Fire	▨			▨		▨		▨		▨	▨		▨	▨		▨	▨	
4	Air	▨			▨		▨		▨		▨	▨		▨	▨		▨	▨	
5	Eye		▨	▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨			▨
6	Ear		▨	▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨			▨
7	Nose		▨	▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨			▨
8	Tongue		▨	▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨			▨
9	Body		▨	▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨			▨
10	Form		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨		▨	▨		▨	▨	
11	Sound		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨			▨		▨		▨
12	Smell		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨		▨	▨		▨	▨	
13	Taste		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨		▨	▨		▨	▨	
*	Tangibility	(= 3 great essentials - earth, fire, and air)																	
14	Femininity		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨			▨	▨			▨		▨
15	Masculinity		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨			▨	▨			▨		▨
16	Heart-base		▨		▨	▨			▨		▨		▨	▨			▨		▨
17	Life faculty		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨			▨	▨			▨		▨
18	Nutriment		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨	▨		▨	▨	
19	Space		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨	▨	▨		▨		▨
20	Bodily intim.		▨		▨		▨	▨			▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
21	Vocal intim.		▨		▨		▨	▨			▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
22	Lightness		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
23	Malleability		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
24	Wieldiness		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
25	Production		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
26	Continuity		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
27	Decay		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
28	Impermanence		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨		▨
		4	24	5	23	6	22	7	21	8	20	12	16	18	19	5	23	8	20

4 Causes (§§ 9-15)				21 Groupings (§§ 16-22)																				
				9 Kamma-Born									6 Cons.-Born						4 Temp-Born				2NB*	
Kamma-Born	Cons.-Born	Temp.-Born	Nutrim.-Born	Eye Decad	Ear Decad	Nose Decad	Tongue Decad	Body Decad	Female Decad	Male Decad	Base Decad	Vital Nonad	Pure Octad	Bod. Int. Nonad	Vocal Int. Decad	Undecad	Dodecad	Tridecad	Pure Octad	Sound Nonad	Undecad	Dodecad	Pure Octad	Undecad
▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨	▨
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(= 3 great essentials - earth, fire, and air)																								
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18	15	13	12	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	8	9	11	12	8	11

KEY: 2NB = 2 Nutriment-Born

TABLE 8.2: THE TWENTY-FOUR CONDITIONS AND THEIR VARIETIES

1. Root condition
2. Object condition
3. Predominance condition
   (1) Object predominance
   (2) Conascence predominance
4. Proximity condition
5. Contiguity condition
6. Conascence condition
7. Mutuality condition
8. Support condition
   (1) Conascence support
   (2) Prenascence support
      (a) Base-prenascence support
      (b) Base-object-prenascence support
9. Decisive support condition
   (1) Object decisive support
   (2) Proximity decisive support
   (3) Natural decisive support
10. Prenascence condition
   (1) Base prenascence
   (2) Object prenascence
11. Postnascence condition
12. Repetition condition
13. Kamma condition
   (1) Conascent kamma
   (2) Asynchronous kamma
14. Result condition
15. Nutriment condition
   (1) Material nutriment
   (2) Mental nutriment
16. Faculty condition
   (1) Prenascence faculty
   (2) Material life faculty
   (3) Conascence faculty
17. Jhāna condition
18. Path condition
19. Association condition
20. Dissociation condition
   (1) Conascence dissociation
   (2) Prenascence dissociation
   (3) Postnascence dissociation
21. Presence condition
   (1) Conascence presence
   (2) Prenascence presence
   (3) Postnascence presence
   (4) Nutriment presence
   (5) Faculty presence
22. Absence condition
23. Disappearance condition
24. Non-disappearance condition

(*paccayadhammā*), the phenomena that function as conditions for other phenomena either by producing them, by supporting them, or by maintaining them; (2) the conditionally arisen states (*paccayuppanna-dhammā*), the states conditioned by the conditioning states, the phenomena that arise and persist in being through the assistance provided by the conditioning states; and (3) the conditioning force of the condition (*paccayasatti*), the particular way in which the conditioning states function as conditions for the conditioned states.

In the following sections (§§13-27) Ācariya Anuruddha will explain how the twenty-four conditions structure the relations between the

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THE *PATTHĀNA* AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THERAVĀDIN ABHIDHAMMA

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Vijñānavādin antecedents

Vasubandhu and a number of other Vijñānavādin writers defend the key idealist doctrine of the *ālaya-vijñāna* or store-consciousness from the charge of innovation by appealing to pre-existent notions among the Mahāsāṅghikas and Mahīśāsakas and also to the idea of the *bhavāṅga-vijñāna*.[1] The first two of these are mentioned already by Asaṅga.

One of the principal functions of the concept of *ālaya-vijñāna* is to solve the two closely related problems of the continuity of personality and the mechanism of karma without postulating an unchanging soul or substratum of existence. It is not then surprising to find the *pudgala* doctrine of the powerful Sāṃmitīya school omitted from the list of predecessors. The equally numerous but historically more influential sect of the Sarvāstivāda had no need for a storehouse-consciousness; for it held that past and future dharmas exist and accepted a physical manifestation of karma. Not surprisingly Asaṅga and his successors looked especially for support to ideas derived from the traditions of that considerable body of schools which had not accepted either the *pudgala* or the so-called realist doctrine of *sarvam asti*.

Unfortunately the two sources cited by Asaṅga are among the early Buddhist sects whose particular doctrines are less well-known to us. It is therefore impossible to judge how far Asaṅga's claims for the antiquity of the idea of the *ālaya-vijñāna* are really justified. Vasubandhu's reference to the *bhavāṅga-vijñāna* is therefore of particular importance. He himself attributes it to the Sinhalese sect (Tāmraparṇīya-nikāya), but later Vijñānavādin writers refer to this as a doctrine of the Sthaviras or Vibhajyavādins. At least two of these names must in this context refer to the school known today as the Theravāda.

North Indian Buddhist sources do not often mention the Theravāda before the Pāla period. There are, it is true, a few indications of a measure of interaction.

Chinese sources inform us that the Sinhalese monastery at Bodhgayā which was visited by Hsüan-tsang was founded during the reign of Samudragupta (latter half of the fourth century). Sinhalese monks are mentioned in an inscription at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa dated to the third quarter of the third century A.D. Further south the situation was perhaps rather different. The Ceylon commentaries give the impression that the Theravāda was well established in the Coḷa country in the time of Buddhadatta and Buddhaghosa (fl. c.430 A.D.). Indeed these works show that the Buddhists of the Theravāda school were reasonably aware of their mainly Mahāsāṅghika co-religionists in South India, but knew little of the North Indian systems.

We need not suppose that there was no connection at all between North and South India. This is quite obviously not the case with Buddhist art. More probably ideas and practices percolated slowly in both directions by means of intermediaries. In the present connection, however, it is possible that we should look more specifically to the Mahīśāsaka school for a means of transmission. Asaṅga in fact mentions their doctrine of the *āsaṃsārika-skandha* as a precursor of *ālaya-vijñāna*. Hsüan-tsang informs us that Asaṅga was originally a member of this school himself. Its geographical spread appears to have been particularly wide. Fa-hsien obtained a copy of their Vinaya in Ceylon, while the author of the Jātaka Commentary states that he was invited to compose the work by a monk of the Mahiṃsāsaka-vaṃsa. If we are to believe the *Visuddhimaggagaṇṭhipada*,[2] Buddhaghosa cites a work of theirs entitled Peṭaka; this may or may not be the work known to us as *Peṭakopadesa*. If the two can be identified, this would tend to confirm Bareau's suggestion that the Mahiṃsāsaka were originally the mainland counterpart of the Theravāda.[3]

Origins of the term *bhavaṅga*

Whether there is any direct influence or not, only from Theravādin sources can we at present hope to investigate Asaṅga's claim. The Pali term *bhavaṅga* first appears in this sense in the *Paṭṭhāna* and then in the *Milinda-pañha*.[4] Keith comments:

> The *bhavaṅga*, or stream of being, is a conception barely known in the Abhidhamma, and there not explained, but it evidently has already here[5] the sense of a continuum which is not conscious, but from which consciousness emerges, and which may therefore be reckoned as subconscious.[6]

With some qualification this is the position of the commentaries. It cannot, however, be taken as evidence for an earlier period. The relevant section of the *Milinda-pañha* cannot be dated with certainty much prior to the fifth century.

A rather different approach is taken by Sarathchandra in his study of the theory of the *citta-vīthi*. He writes: 'The word *bhavaṅga*, borrowed from the

Sarvastivada Abhidharma, meant originally a link in the Causal Chain or *pratītyasamutpāda*'.[7] This usage of the term is in fact not unknown to Pali literature. The formula of dependent origination is quite widely known as the wheel of existence (*bhava*). So it is quite natural for its parts to be referred to as factors of existence. Such a usage is explicit in the *Netti-pakaraṇa*, which lists the various terms which make up dependent origination and concludes:

> *Imāni bhavaṅgāni yadā samaggāni nibbattāni bhavanti, so bhavo. Taṃ saṃsārassa padaṭṭhānaṃ.*[8]
> When these factors of existence are conjointly produced, this is existence. Existence is the proximate cause of saṃsāra.

Later in the same work it becomes clear that the term *bhavaṅga* is used in the sense of a factor which tends to produce existence. The term also occurs once in the *Peṭakopadesa*, apparently in the same sense.[9]

The dating of the *Netti-pakaraṇa* and *Peṭakopadesa* is uncertain. Both were known to Buddhaghosa. The *Peṭakopadesa* seems to have influenced the *Vimuttimagga*, a pre-Buddhaghosa work, which only survives in Chinese translation. Ñāṇamoli has, however, shown that the *Netti-pakaraṇa* is in part based upon the *Peṭakopadesa*. He has also argued that the latter shows signs of being in origin an oral work.[10] My own reading of it has left me with the same impression. Since it shows traces of influence from some of the earlier works of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, it may be appropriate to think of the second century B.C. for the work in its present form. Of course it is quite likely that it incorporates earlier traditions. The *Netti-pakaraṇa* was dated by Hardy to 'about the beginning of our era or shortly later.'[11] An earlier date is not impossible.

On this basis it would seem that the use in these two works of the term *bhavaṅga* to designate the links of dependent origination is as old as its use in Sarvāstivādin and Mahāyānist literature. No doubt it is best looked upon as part of the common stock of Buddhist technical terminology of the period. In fact it seems quite plain that this is the original meaning of the term, from which the use to designate a type of consciousness is derived.

In the commentarial literature *bhavaṅga* is explained as meaning cause (*hetu*) of existence. This is perhaps simply to say that the twelve *aṅgas* of dependent origination are identical to the twelve *paccayas* (conditions) or twelve *nidānas* (origins) and are hence in fact causes. This would be reinforced by the widespread use of expressions such as *ten' aṅgena* effectively in the sense of 'for this reason'.

The source of the term *bhavaṅga* used to designate or qualify a particular type of consciousness is then apparent. In the formula of dependent origination the third *aṅga* is consciousness, but in this context it is often used specifically to refer to consciousness at the moment of conception. This would be a less active type of consciousness resulting from past actions. Just such is the *bhavaṅga-citta* of the commentaries. In fact the connection is not entirely forgotten. The

later tradition relates the consciousness at conception (*paṭisandhi*) and at death (*cuti*) to the *bhavaṅga* mind. To a large extent these are treated as special terms for the first and last in the series of moments of *bhavaṅga* consciousness.[12]

The theory of the citta-vīthi in the commentaries

Perhaps at this point it would be useful to turn to the description of the process of consciousness given in the commentarial tradition. From here it may be easier to approach the origin and development of the system at an earlier period in the development of the abhidhamma. The system is set out in the works of Buddhaghosa, in detail in the *Visuddhimagga* and *Aṭṭhasālinī*, more briefly in his Sutta commentaries; in the writings of Buddhadatta and in the Chinese translation of the *Vimuttimagga*. Pali commentators and subcommentators after the fifth century A.D. add only a very little. The present account will be largely based upon the account of Buddhaghosa.[13]

The commentarial description of the consciousness process is highly complex. This is partly due to the abhidhamma attempt to cover all possible cases. So it can be made much simpler by excluding matters which apply only to non-human beings, to defective human beings or to normal human beings who are either experiencing some kind of higher consciousness or have attained some degree of sanctity. In this way a restricted account of the process as it applies to the ordinary person can be given.

Only forty five types of consciousness are then relevant. They fall into two groups:

a) *caused* – the cause will either be delusion or one of the possible combinations among delusion, greed, hate, non-greed, non-hate or non-delusion. Twenty eight types of caused consciousness are listed, divided into eight skilful, eight resultant and twelve unskilful.

b) *causeless* – i.e. not caused by any of the above. These number seventeen. This is made up of five sense consciousnesses which result from skilful action, five which result from unskilful action, the two mind elements (*mano-dhātu*) resulting from skilful and unskilful action respectively, mind consciousness element (*manoviññāṇa-dhātu*) resulting from unskilful action, two mind consciousness elements resulting from skilful action but differentiated by the accompanying feeling, the mind element which is purely activity (*kiriyā*) and the mind consciousness element (accompanied by neutral feeling) which is purely activity.

The term *kiriyā* designates a type of mentality which does not take part in the kammic process – it is neither the result of some previous action nor does it itself give rise to any result in the future. As the term applies most frequently to the state of mind of the arahat, it should not be translated by words such as 'functional' or 'inoperative', which have inappropriate connotations. The *kiriyā* mind is not mechanical, effete or unfeelingly robotic. Rather it is intended to designate the spiritual sensitivity of a man of developed wisdom, who responds

to every situation with appropriate activity without partiality of any kind. Here of course it is occurring in a weak form accessible to all.

Each of the above types of consciousness represents an interlocking complex of phenomena, made up of the appropriate type of mind, a number of appropriate mentals (*cetasika*) and groups of material phenomena of various kinds. The *number* of mentals will vary from a minimum of seven in the simplest form of sense consciousness up to a maximum of thirty five in a developed skilful consciousness. They will also vary *qualitatively* according to the type of consciousness. So for example the feeling which accompanies a skilful mind is itself skilful and qualitatively different to the feeling accompanying an unskilful mind.] The precise details of all this do not concern us here. It suffices perhaps to point out that the commentarial account of all this is firmly based upon the description given in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*. A few additional details have been added, but there are no changes of substance.

Mind door process

In fact this work gives a fairly static account of mentality and matter as they occur in particular moments—analogous let us say to a single frame in a motion picture. The theory of the *citta-vīthi* attempts to show their occurrence over a series of such moments—more analogous to a particular event in the film. Two types of process are described: [Five door process and mind door process.] These may occur in succession to one another or the mind door process may occur independently. We will take the latter simpler case first. This describes the situation of the individual who is absorbed in thought or memory without any direct perception of his sensory environment.

In this mind door process we need only take account of four of the functions (*kicca*) of consciousness:

1. *Bhavaṅga* – this is always one of the eight kinds of consciousness which are resultant and caused. The same type of mentality will normally perform this function throughout the life of a given individual. Its precise nature will be determined either by previous actions recalled to mind at the end of the previous life or by the manner in which death was met. Nevertheless it must be one of the above eight which result from some kind of skilful action or normal human birth could not have occurred. We may interpret its continuance throughout life as the natural mode to which the mind continually reverts as indicating its role of 'carrying' the essential features of the individual—those tendencies which remain apparently unchanged in a particular individual throughout a given life.

2. *Adverting* – this will always be a single occurrence of the *kiriyā* mind consciousness element (uncaused and accompanied by neutral feeling).

3. *Javana* – this will either be one of the eight skilful or one of the twelve unskilful consciousnesses. The term *javana* 'running' appears to be used to indicate the active nature of the mentality which performs this function. We may compare the simile given to differentiate skilful from resultant consciousness:

> . . . the resultant is free from striving and like such things as the reflection (*nimitta*) of the face on the surface of a mirror; the skilful does involve striving and is like the face itself.[14]

Javana mind then makes up all the more active components of the individual. We may interpret [its continual recurrence in different forms as indicating the everchanging manifestations of human personality—all those behaviour patterns formed by experience and habit in the course of life.]

4. *Tadārammaṇa* – this is also called *piṭṭhi-bhavaṅga* 'after-bhavaṅga' to indicate that a special kind of *bhavaṅga* mind can occur immediately after a series of *javana* moments.[15] The term [*tad-ārammaṇa* 'having the same object' is used to indicate that this kind of *bhavaṅga* retains the object of the *javana* mind.] It may perhaps be seen as fixing the conscious experience of the *javana* stage in the unconscious mind. *Bhavaṅga* however is only unconscious in the sense that the subsequent memory of it is unclear. We may perhaps rather see the *tad-ārammaṇa* as providing a substitute which can partially displace the original *bhavaṅga*—not of course completely. This would be especially appropriate in the case of persistent unskilful activity. The function of *tadārammaṇa* is performed by eleven types of resultant consciousness—eight caused and three causeless mind consciousness elements. It will only occur if the mental object is clear. Otherwise as soon as the *javana* mind ceases the mind enters *bhavaṅga*.

This then is the normal flow of the mind when attention is not paid to the senses. If there is no particular activity, it remains in a state of rest: *bhavaṅga*. This continues without interruption in deep dreamless sleep. If thought or memory occur, then the active *javana* stage has arisen. In vague musing or unclear remembering there may be continual alternation between these two modes; for the active mode has only a limited duration before the mind must lapse into its normal passive mode. Of course to refer to these as modes is not

Table 1 Mind door process

function	*bhavaṅga*	*adverting*	*javana*	*tad-ārammaṇa*
citta	caused	causeless mind consciousness element	skilful or unskilful	mind consciousness element
associated cetasikas	up to 33	11	up to 34 or up to 21	up to 33 (caused) up to 11 (causeless)
kammic status	result of action	neither action nor result of action (*kiriyā*)	action	result of action
duration	no definite limit	one moment	up to seven moments	one or two moments

strictly accurate. Abhidhamma envisages a continual flow of consciousness arising and ceasing in every moment 'as if it were the stream of a river'.[16] We may note however that direct transition is envisaged from active mode to passive, but not from passive to active. In the latter case *kiriyā* mind must occur for one moment in order to turn *bhavaṅga* towards the object.

But what is the object at the mind door? Traditionally it may be any kind of object—past, present or future, purely conceptual or even transcendent. In the normal case, however, it will be either a memory of the past or some kind of concept. The door of its arising will be 'one part of the organ of mind reckoned as *bhavaṅga* mind'.[17] To be more exact it is disturbed *bhavaṅga* (*bhavaṅga-calana*) in conjunction with adverting which constitutes the door of mind, often treated in Buddhist thought as a sixth sense. Of course abhidhamma avoids describing consciousness as divided into parts; it always prefers a description in terms of successive moments.

Undisturbed *bhavaṅga* is described as clear or translucent.[18] Evidently it is seen either as storing past experience or as having direct access to the past (or future). In the first case we might understand it as an unconscious storehouse. The mind as a whole is certainly envisaged as accumulating tendencies, but it is not clear how far this would include experiences. What is probably intended is a water metaphor. Just as an undisturbed pool or stream is clear and offers no obstruction to vision, so *bhavaṅga* mind is intrinsically clear and featureless. When the pool is disturbed it is no longer possible to see through it—the water which it contains is now visible. Similarly when *bhavaṅga* mind is disturbed, it is no longer translucent; some part of its content becomes visible. Possibly this would not be so much the mind's content as part of its potential capacity to know becoming realized.

Sense door process

It is more normal to explain the process involving sense perception first. The reason, no doubt, is the predominant part played by the senses in our ordinary life. Abhidhamma evidently conceives of them as conditioning a great part of our experience in a largely mechanical fashion. Technically this would be expressed by saying that five door *javana* is the foundation of mind door *javana*.[19] However sense door process involves a greater number of functions than mind door process and at first appears more complex in its operation. So it is appropriate to list these:

1. *Bhavaṅga* – this was described above, but without distinguishing disturbed *bhavaṅga* as a separate stage.

2. *Disturbed bhavaṅga* – this occurs for two moments only, due to the stimulus of a sense object. Strictly speaking the object enters the field of the mind sense. At exactly the same moment sensory contact takes place with a physical impact (*ghaṭṭana*) upon the subtle matter which is the physical basis for the operation of sense consciousness.[20]

3. *Adverting* – the function of adverting to one of the sense doors is always undertaken by the *kiriyā* mind element, which has in fact no other function apart from turning the mind towards a sense. As was the case for mind door adverting, its duration is for one moment only.

4. *Seeing* – we will take this as our example for the senses. At this stage we are concerned with 'seeing only' with a minimal interpretative element. So this function is performed either by a visual consciousness which is the result of skilful action or by one which is the result of unskilful action. Which of the two it will be is determined by the nature of the object.[21] If it is the result of skilful action the neutral feeling which accompanies it will be subtle and will shade towards pleasant feeling. If it is the result of unskilful action that feeling will be inferior and will shade towards unpleasant feeling.[22] The same will be the case for hearing, tasting or smelling, but not for touching. Tactile sensation is conceived of as stronger. So body consciousness which is the result of skilful action is accompanied by a distinctive form of pleasant feeling, while unpleasant feeling invariably accompanies unskilful resultant body consciousness.

5. *Receiving* (*sampaṭicchana*) – this function is always performed by one of the two resultant mind elements. In fact [mind element has only the role of enabling transit to and from a sense consciousness;] the 'twice five' sense consciousnesses are invariably preceded by one moment of *kiriyā* mind element and invariably followed by one moment of resultant mind element. The point seems to be that [the normal state of the mind is the flow of resultant consciousness. Sense consciousness is quite different to this. So an intermediary is required for the passage between the two. This is rendered very neatly by the simile of the thread. A ground spider extends thread in five directions making a web and settles down in the middle. When one of the threads is struck by an insect, it is disturbed and comes out from its resting place. It *follows along the thread*, drinks the juice of its prey, comes back and settles down in the very same place.[23]

6. *Examining* (*santīraṇa*) – this function is always carried out by one of the three resultant mind consciousness elements. In effect the mind has returned to a weak form of resultant consciousness which is able to examine the object. This can also be expressed by saying that the mental of recognition (*saññā*) is prominent at this stage of the process.

7. *Establishing* (*votthapana*) – is carried out by the *kiriyā* mind consciousness element. We may see it as enabling the arising of the active *javana* stage. The mind is now able to establish the nature of the object. It is often compared to smelling food prior to eating it. Establishing determines the nature of the mind's response to the object which has been identified.

8. *Javana* – was discussed above. It is compared to the act of actually eating the food.

9. *Tad-ārammaṇa* – was also discussed earlier. It resembles the act of savouring the taste of food after it has been eaten.

The most difficult part of the sense door process is probably to be found in

Table 2 Eye door process

function	*bhavaṅga*	*disturbed bhavaṅga*	*adverting*	*seeing*	*receiving*	*investigating*	*determining*	*javana*	*tad-ārammaṇa*
citta	caused	caused	mind element	eye consciousness	mind element element	causeless mind consciousness element	causeless mind consciousness element	skilful or unskilful	mind consciousness element
associated cetasikas	up to 33	up to 33	10	7	10	up to 11	11	up to 34 or up to 21	up to 33 (caused) up to 11 (causeless)
kammic status	result of action	result of action	neither act nor result of action	result of action	result of action	result of action	neither act nor result of action	action	result of action
duration	no definite limit	two moments	one moment	one moment	one moment	one moment	one moment	up to seven moments	one or two moments
feeling	pleasant or neutral	pleasant or neutral	neutral	neutral	neutral	pleasant or neutral	neutral	pleasant unpleasant or neutral	pleasant or neutral

stages four to seven, but it can perhaps be clarified by another of the traditional similes. Some village boys were sitting playing a game on the road with mud.[24] A square coin made contact with the hand of one of the boys. The boy asked what it was that had touched his hand. Another boy said that it was pale (*paṇḍara*). One boy took firm hold of it together with the mud. Another said that it was square and flat. Yet another declared that it was a silver crown (*kahāpaṇa*). They took it and gave it to their mother, who used it for some task (*kamma*). Taking hold of the coin is compared to the mind receiving an object. Identifying it as square and flat is like the stage of examining, while the stage of establishing resembles the decision that it is worth one crown. The actual utilization of the coin (by the mother) is similar to the mind performing the function of *javana*.

What are we to make of this? The implication is clear. Visual perception involves not only seeing itself, but also fixing of the object in the mind, recognition of its general features and identification of its nature. These things are obviously very closely linked. In abhidhamma such a close relationship tends to be expressed in process terms as a succession of moments. A very close connection will be a rapid and constant succession. This is exactly what we have here. [Each single distinct visual perception involves a separate adverting, a separate seeing, a separate receiving, a separate examining and a separate establishing. Each of these occurs for one moment only. The five always occur together and always in the same logically required order of succession.]

Some variations in the process

The same is not true for the five door process as a whole. Only for very great objects i.e. distinct percepts does the process complete all nine stages before lapsing back into *bhavaṅga*. If the sensory stimulus is weaker, then an incomplete process may occur. This is called a fruitless case (*mogha-vāra*). Three possibilities are allowed:

a) Innumerable objects occur at the sense doors without being strong enough to bring about adverting to one of the five doors. In this case only disturbed *bhavaṅga* will occur. Presumably the intention is to indicate that many of our sensory stimuli are not consciously registered.

b) The stimulus may be adequate to bring about adverting and the succeeding stages down to establishing. We are told that this is the kind of case in which one says: 'it is as if seen by me'.[25] What is meant here is probably the type of occasion in which one might say: 'I thought I saw someone among the trees.' Something has been identified but is not yet clearly seen.

c) A stronger stimulus may be sufficient to bring about all the stages down to *javana*, but not enough to produce the last stage. This is illustrated by a simile. The damming of a river is compared to adverting which diverts the mind from the flow of *bhavaṅga*. The series of process consciousnesses is compared to the diverted water running in a great irrigation channel. *Javana* is like the water flooding the fields on both sides of the channel. Lapsing back into *bhavaṅga*

without the occurrence of *tadārammaṇa* resembles water running away through fissures back down to the river. We are told that there is no way to count the number of consciousnesses which do this.

Only one variation is permitted for the mind door process. If the object is clear the *tad-ārammaṇa* stage will arise. If it is not clear the mind will go back down to *bhavaṅga* immediately after the *javana* stage. The reason for this difference between sense door and mind door process is apparent. [Sense door process is aroused by the stimulus of a sense object and exists only in dependence upon such an object. It must then lapse if the object ceases to exist. The same is not the case for mind door process, whose object need not be of the present. The different forms of sense door process are due to variation in the *duration* of particular stimuli even if we experience this as varying vividness of perception. The two kinds of mind door process differ because of variation in the *clarity* of the object, the impulse as it were coming from within.] In practice however the process which terminates with the *javana* stage must be experienced as a lack of perceptual clarity in either case.

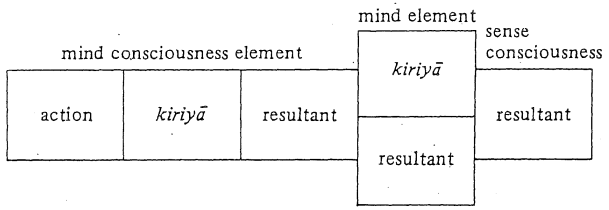
Obviously this is a rather simplified account of the abhidhamma theory of mental process. By excluding higher states of being from consideration much of the intended significance is lost. In fact a hierarchy of different states is involved. This is partly described in numerical terms—weaker states have fewer accompanying mentals than stronger states; skilful states tend to involve more mentals than unskilful ones. Still more important are qualitative differences, often only indicated by a single terminological change. For example supramundane consciousness may not necessarily have more accompanying mentals than a given *lokiya* skilful consciousness. Nevertheless it is qualitatively superior. Moreover each of its accompanying mentals is qualitatively superior to the same mental associated with the corresponding *lokiya* consciousness.

Sequential structure of the process

The simplified account does however have the advantage that it makes much clearer some significant features of the process. This is best shown by setting out the distribution of the forty five consciousnesses in grid form. In each section is given the number of possible types of consciousness together with the maximum number of accompanying mentals (in brackets).

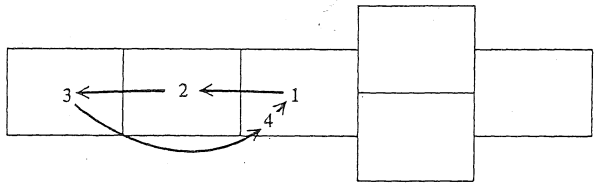
	Mind consciousness element	*Mind element*	*Eye consciousness element*
Skilful or Unskilful	twenty (34)	none	none
Kiriyā	one (11)	one (10)	none
Resultant	eleven (33)	two (10)	ten (7)

If we now rearrange this material slightly we can use it to form a picture of the way in which the process of mind works:

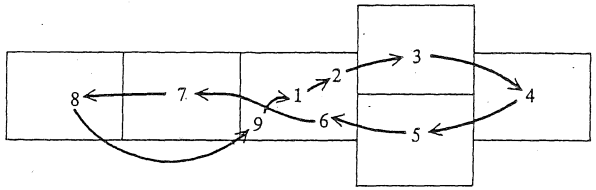


If we now set out the different possible sequences using the same numeration as before, we get:

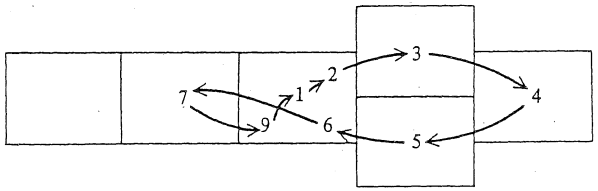
A) *Mind door process*



B) *Sense door process*



C) *Incomplete sense door process*



Two points of particular importance emerge. Firstly any change from the normal passive state of mind (i.e. resultant mind consciousness element) is brought about by *kiriyā* mind. This alone can bring about the arising of skilful or unskilful *javana* mind and only this can turn the mind to a sensory mode.

Secondly mind element always intervenes before and after a sense consciousness. The consequence of these and some other restrictions is to sharply limit the number of permissible successions between moments. This can be set out in tabular form:

permissible succession

from	unskilful	to	unskilful
”	unskilful	”	resultant
”	skilful	”	skilful
”	skilful	”	resultant
”	resultant	”	resultant
”	resultant	”	*kiriyā*
”	*kiriyā*	”	any
from	mind consciousness element	”	mind consciousness element
”	mind consciousness element	”	mind element
”	mind element	”	eye consciousness element
”	mind element	”	mind consciousness element
”	eye consciousness element	”	mind element

impermissible succession

from	unskilful	to	skilful
”	unskilful	”	*kiriyā*
”	skilful	”	unskilful
”	skilful	”	*kiriyā*
”	resultant	”	skilful
”	resultant	”	unskilful
from	mind consciousness element	”	eye consciousness element
”	mind element	”	mind element
”	eye consciousness element	”	eye consciousness element
”	eye consciousness element	”	mind consciousness element

The consciousness process before Buddhaghosa

All of this amounts to a fairly complex and sophisticated theory of mental processes. Naturally the question arises as to its origin. Sarathchandra writes:

> The theory is quite unique in the history of Indian thought, and it was probably the work of Buddhaghosa who came to Ceylon after having immersed himself in Sanskrit philosophy.[26]

This seems a very unsatisfactory statement of the position. The clearest evidence that the theory was well-established in the older Sinhalese commentaries prior to Buddhaghosa and Buddhadatta is perhaps to be found in the *Aṭṭhasāslinī*, the commentary to the first book of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*. Here we find a long passage reproduced under the title of *Vipākuddhāra-kathā*.[27]

Careful reading of this piece, which takes up just over twenty pages in the PTS edition, shows that it is reproduced directly from an old source, almost certainly a Sinhalese *aṭṭhakathā*. It commences with what it calls a *mātikā*, which

in this kind of context is in effect a table of contents. This gives three different enumerations of the various types of resultant mentality. These are attributed to three named Elders. It then immediately states: 'In this place they took what is called the *Sāketa Question*'. This records the traditional response to the question as to whether one *kamma* could have more than one resultant *citta* or vice versa.

Immediately after this we read: 'Again in this place what is called the *Explanation of Prominence* was taken. 'This is referred to by name in the *Visuddhimagga*, where it is regarded as the authoritative decision following the thought of the Commentarial teachers (... *Aṭṭhakathācariyānaṃ matānusārena vinicchayo*).[28] After the *Explanation of Prominence* follows the *Explanation of Roots*. As the passage continues it becomes quite evident that the *Aṭṭhasālinī* has simply taken a section almost verbatim or perhaps slightly condensed from a rather formalized earlier source. Careful analysis would, I think, show some distinctive stylistic features. An earlier passage in the same commentary—the *Dvārakathā*, shows some of the same characteristics and is specifically attributed to the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*.[29]

Since these passages are in any case authoritative and revered, we may suppose that their source is likely to be of considerably earlier date. The work of Adikaram would tend to suggest that little was added to the Sinhalese commentaries after the second century A.D.[30] Even if Adikaram's conclusion's are not accepted it makes little difference in this case. Not only does the *Vipākuddhārakathā* contain a very detailed account of the *citta-vīthi*. Even the differences between the views of the three Elders imply an elaborate theory of the consciousness process forming the basis of their discussion.

The Elders concerned are not unknown to us from other commentarial sources. So it is probably safe to assume that they are historical figures who actually did hold the views attributed to them. In that case we should expect to find the fully elaborated theory of the *citta-vīthi* already developed in the early first century A.D. This appears to be the view of A.K. Warder.[31]

The consciousness process and the Paṭṭhāna

Should we then take it that the theory originated with these Elders and their immediate predecessors? Or does it have a basis in the canonical abhidhamma literature? Ñāṇamoli writes: 'An already-formed nucleus of the cognitive series, based on such *Sutta-piṭaka* material, appears in the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*.'[32] In support of this statement he cites passages from the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Paṭṭhāna*, but he does not appear to have attempted a serious analysis of the contents of the last-named—the final work of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* in the traditional order.

If this is undertaken, the result is rather unexpected. So far from being a later elaboration on the basis of the canonical abhidhamma material, the theory of the *citta-vīthi* appears as only a slight restatement of the *Paṭṭhāna* with minor changes in terminology. Obviously this needs to be argued in detail.

The format of *Paṭṭhāna* is somewhat forbidding, although some of the

essential principles involved seem clear enough. The work introduces for the first time in Pali literature the twenty four types of relation (*paccaya*). These are illustrated by applying them to the twenty two triplets and one hundred couplets of the *abhidhamma-mātikā*—the mnemonic key which structures the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and is employed in the *Vibhaṅga* and *Dhātu-kathā*. The permutations and combinations involved are rather more complex than this. Warder calls it: 'one of the most amazing productions of the human mind'.[33] Fortunately most of the details are unnecessary for the present purpose.

We need only concern ourselves initially with two triplets, one couplet and one of the relations. The triplets are: 1. producing results; resultant; neither producing results nor resultant and 2. pleasant feeling; unpleasant feeling; neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling. The couplet is: caused; causeless. The only relation needed is the relation of succession (*anantara-paccaya*).

From the resultant triplet under the heading 'resultant dhamma related to dhamma neither producing results nor resultant by succession relation' we learn that '*bhavaṅga* is related to adverting by succession relation'.[34] From this it is apparent that *bhavaṅga* is some kind of resultant consciousness, while adverting is some kind of *kiriyā* mentality. The very fact that these terms are used indicates that they designate a group of *cittas* for which no alternative designation is available in the *Paṭṭhāna*. The commentarial usage of *bhavaṅga* which covers all kinds of resultant mentality except resultant mind element and causeless mind consciousness element with pleasant feeling would seem exactly suitable.

Adverting is already referred to as a function of mind element in the *Vibhaṅga*.[35] So we might expect the *kiriyā* mind element to be referred to here. However in the commentarial account given above we saw that the causeless *kiriyā* mind consciousness element (with neutral feeling) performs this function in a mind door process. The *Paṭṭhāna* is clearly of the same view and therefore required a special term in order to exclude the same element with pleasant feeling; for according to the commentaries this does not perform the function of adverting.

In the same triplet under the heading of 'dhamma neither producing results nor resultant is related to dhamma producing results by succession relation' we read: 'Adverting is related to fivefold consciousness by succession relation'. This seems quite clear as it stands. From the same triplet and relation we learn that: 'Fivefold consciousness is related to resultant mind element by succession relation' and 'Resultant mind element is related to resultant mind consciousness element by succession relation'. Here the commentaries restrict the resultant mind consciousness element concerned to the causeless types. From the same source we obtain: 'Resultant mind consciousness element is related to *kiriyā* mind consciousness element by succession relation'.

Later in the same portion of the *Paṭṭhāna* we find that: 'Adverting is related to aggregates which are dhammas producing results by succession relation', 'Preceding aggregates which are dhammas producing results are related to subsequent aggregates which are dhammas producing results by succession relation', 'Aggregates which are dhammas producing results [are related] to

emergence . . . by succession relation' and 'Preceding resultant aggregates are related to subsequent resultant aggregates by succession relation'. Nowhere does the *Paṭṭhāna* permit succession from resultant to producing results nor does it allow succession from producing results to neither producing results nor resultant. The similarity to the tables of permissible and impermissible succession given above is manifest.

Additional information can be added by turning to the feeling triplet.[36] *Bhavaṅga* can have either pleasant or neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling, but adverting can only have neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling. The resultant mind consciousness element which follows resultant mind element may have pleasant feeling. The *kiriyā* mind consciousness which succeeds in turn must have neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling. Emergence (*vuṭṭhāna*) may have either pleasant or neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling.

From the caused couplet we can add:[37] 'Caused *bhavaṅga* [is related to] causeless adverting by succession relation', and vice versa; 'Caused *bhavaṅga* [is related to] causeless *bhavaṅga* by succession relation', and vice versa; 'Caused aggregates [are related to] causeless emergence by succession relation'; 'Causeless aggregates [are related to] caused emergence by succession relation'; [Causeless] adverting to caused aggregates'; '[Causeless] adverting to the [causeless] five consciousnesses'.

In fact almost all the stages of the consciousness process are precisely specified in the *Paṭṭhāna*. So much so that it is clear that we should attribute the theory to the canonical abhidhamma tradition—if not to the earlier abhidhamma then at least to the tradition or authors embodied in the *Paṭṭhāna*. Only a small amount of the technical nomenclature, some details and one significant development appear to be later.

The distinction between mind door and sense door process is known, although those terms are not used. Each of the separate functions is shown. This is best illustrated from the sense door process. *Bhavaṅga* is known by name, but that name is only used where it is needed to avoid ambiguity. In cases where the same statement can be accurately applied both to *javana* and to *bhavaṅga* the two stages are subsumed as 'aggregates' or they may be distinguished as e.g. 'skilful aggregates' and 'resultant aggregates'. The theory of *bhavaṅga* is however fully developed.

The rootless *kiriyā* consciousnesses with neutral feeling are already termed adverting. The succeeding sense consciousnesses are termed the five consciousnesses and succeeded by resultant mind element, which is in turn followed by resultant mind consciousness element with either neutral or pleasant feeling. After this comes *kiriyā* mind consciousness element with neutral feeling, which when specified as adverting is rootless and succeeded by the variety of states which the later tradition calls *javana*. Apart from the last each of these lasts for only one moment. Indeed the *Paṭṭhāna* even allows for the fruitless case in which establishing is unable to bring about the arising of *javana* and simply repeats for one moment.[38] It does not however specify the duration.

The specific names are absent for only three of the functions: receiving, investigating and establishing. Significantly the *mahāṭīkā* to the *Visuddhimagga* comments:[39]

> For those who do not accept the process *cittas* beginning with receiving as well as the heart base, the text (*pāḷi*) has been handed down in various places with the words beginning 'for receiving, for eye consciousness element'; for the text cannot be set aside.

Unfortunately the text to which the *mahā-ṭīkā* refers is not known to us. The functions of receiving, investigating and establishing are not known from any surviving canonical work. In several commentaries there is a mnemonic verse listing the seven functions from *bhavaṅga* to *javana*;[40] no doubt this belongs to the period of the old Sinhalese commentaries if not earlier. The term *javana* is taken from the canonical *Paṭisambhidā-magga*,[41] where it is used in a similar sense. In any case the term adds little to the usage of the *Paṭṭhāna* apart from brevity. This is perhaps the significant contribution of the later terminology.

The *Paṭṭhāna* does not usually use the term *tad-ārammaṇa*. Normally what the later tradition refers to in this way is simply designated *bhavaṅga*—the after-*bhavaṅga* of the commentaries. Often however the *Paṭṭhāna* employs the expression 'emergence' (*vuṭṭhāna*) for *bhavaṅga* and *tad-ārammaṇa* indiscriminately. This is obviously an extension of the older usage of *vuṭṭhāna* to refer to emergence from *jhāna*. Such an extension is quite appropriate since the *jhānas* consist of a series of *javana cittas*; so emergence from *jhāna* constitutes the departure from *javana* par excellence. The *Paṭṭhāna* does however use the expression *vipāko tad-ārammaṇatā uppajjati* in its treatment of object relation (*ārammaṇa-paccaya*).[42] This must be the source of the later usage. Clearly emergence or *bhavaṅga* would be inappropriate here.

By the time of the Sinhalese commentaries two kinds of *tadārammaṇa* are distinguished under the names of root *bhavaṅga* and visiting *bhavaṅga*.[43] The term root *bhavaṅga* properly speaking should refer to that specific type of resultant consciousness which constantly recurs throughout the life of a given individual whenever there is no process at either the mind door or one of the sense doors. It is here extended to include a *tad-ārammaṇa* of the same type even although this would have a different object. However this is obviously closer to the usage of the *Paṭṭhāna*.

It is not in fact quite clear that the *Paṭṭhāna* knows the theory by which each individual has a single basic *bhavaṅga* mind throughout his lifespan. It is this theory which necessitates the distinction of a separate stage of *tad-ārammaṇa*. Many of our earlier sources are a little inconsistent in this regard. The mnemonic verse mentioned above does not include *tad-ārammaṇa* and neither do most of the traditional similes. There is even some uncertainty as to exactly how many moments of *tad-ārammaṇa* can occur—the *Visuddhimagga* records two different traditions on the matter.[44] It may well be the case that the debates recorded in

the *Vipākuddhāra-kathā* reveal the process by which the somewhat later theory of *tad-ārammaṇa* was finally formulated.

The *Paṭṭhāna* itself envisages only that kammically active stages arise and persist for a while. It does not specify seven moments as the maximum duration. It certainly envisages a return to a resultant consciousness. This may be one under the influence of the active aggregates which have just subsided or it may be one of a more long lasting kind. It does not however seem to specify the latter to be unchangeable or lifelong, but the possibility that this is what is intended cannot be ruled out.

Conclusion

It is clear that the theory of the consciousness process is well established in the *Paṭṭhāna*, a work which cannot be later than the second century B.C. To what extent it is to be found in earlier works such as the *Vibhaṅga* remains an open question, but the theory is not a product of the commentarial stage. It belongs rather to the classic abhidhamma.

With such a dating we need also to look again at its possible role in the development of Indian thought. If we assume that at least the idea of *bhavaṅga* mind was current also in other South Indian schools,[45] then the question should be asked as to what influence similar ideas may have had on the early Vijñānavāda.

Notes

This article is a revised version of a paper originally presented in April 1977 at the Third Symposium on Indian Religions, Durham.

1 E. Lamotte, 'Traité de la démonstration de l'acte', *MCB* IV, 1936, p. 250; 'L'Ālayavijñāna dans le Mahāyānasaṃgraha', *MCB*, III, 1935, pp. 207–15; *La somme du grand véhicule*, II, Louvain, Muséon, 1938, pp. 24 foll., 8* foll.; L. De La Vallée Poussin, *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi: La Siddhi de Hiuan-Tsang*, I, Paris, 1928, pp. 179, 196, 198.
2 (Ce 1954) p. 17.
3 A. Bareau, *Les Sectes Bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule*, Paris, EFEO, 1955, p. 183.
4 O. H. de Wijesekera ('Canonical references to bhavaṅga', in Wijesekera, *Malalasekera Commemoration Volume*, Colombo, 1976, pp. 348–52) has put forward an interesting defence of the reading *bhavaṅgam* at A II 79. On balance, however, it seems that Buddhaghosa's reading of *bhavaggaṃ* is preferable in view of A III 202 where *bhavānaṃ aggo* is interpreted along the lines of his comment on *bhavaggaṃ*; cf. also S III 83. However it is quite likely that in the orthography of Pāli manuscripts in Brahmī script such as Buddhaghosa would have had before him, the readings *bhavaṅga* and *bhavagga* would be indistinguishable.
5 Mil 299–300.
6 A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon*, Oxford, 1923, p. 194.
7 E. R. Sarathchandra, *Buddhist Psychology of Perception*, Colombo, Ceylon University Press, 1958, p. 79.
8 Nett 79.
9 Peṭ 98.
10 See the introductions to his PTS translations of Nett and Peṭ.

11 Nett Introduction p. XXXII.
12 Vism 460.
13 The *Visuddhimagga* gives a very systematic account. The three main passages occur in its treatment of the consciousness aggregate (Vism 457–60), in its description of the arising of consciousness as the third link of the dependent origination formula (Vism 546 foll.) and also in the discussion of *arūpa-sammasana* (Vism 617–8). It is nevertheless clear that the *Aṭṭhasāliṇī* preserves earlier material, particularly in the *Vipākuddhāra-kathā* (As 267–87) and to some extent also in the *Dvāra-kathā* (As 82–106). Both of these sources were obviously drawn upon for the Suttanta commentaries also. Notable however is the comment on *sampajañña* at Sv I 194–5, Ps I 262–3, Spk III 191–2, Vibh-a 355–6; Mp III 199 cites Sv.
14 Vism 456.
15 As 271; Vism 547.
16 Vism 458, cf. 554.
17 Vism 483 (mhṭ) = Moh 126; Spk I 180; II 358; It-a I 101; Paṭis-a I 79.
18 As 140; 262; 308; cf. Paṭis I 80; Paṭis-a I 293–4; Ps I 167; Mp I 60 foll.; Dhp-a I 23.
19 Sv-pṭ to Sv I 194 (*mūla-pariññā*).
20 As 72; Vism 617; Moh 21.
21 As 269 foll.; 292–3; Vism 458; 546; Sv III 1037; Spk I 151; Vbh-a 9; Ud-a 203.
22 Vism 456.
23 As 279.
24 As 280–1.
25 As 269; cf. Vism 459; 617; Ps II 226.
26 Sarathchandra, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
27 As 267–87.
28 Vism 103–4.
29 As 82–106.
30 E. W. Adikaram, *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, Gunasena, 1953, pp. 1–42.
31 A. K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 1970, pp. 321–5.
32 Vism Trsl. p. 131 n.; cf. also p. 515 n.
33 Warder *op. cit.*, p. 309.
34 The truncated PTS edition (Tikap) omits; see U Nārada, *Conditional Relations* (CR I), PTS, 1969, pp. 406–7 and Paṭṭh I (Ce 1954) 260.
35 Vibh 89: *sabbadhammesu. . . . paṭhamasamannāhāro*, cf. Moh 128.
36 Tikap 324–6; CR I 338–40.
37 Dukap 45–6; Paṭṭh II (Ce 1954) 668.
38 Tikap-a 259–60; CR I 416.
39 Vism-mhṭ (Ce 1930) 479: *Ye hadaya-vatthu viya sampaṭicchanâdivīthi-cittāni pi nânujānanti, tesaṃ: 'sampaṭicchanāya cakkhu-viññāṇadhātuyā' ti ādinā tattha tattha pāḷi āgatā; na hi sakkā pāḷiṃ paṭisedhetuṃ.*
40 Sv I 194; Ps I 262; Spk III 191; Vibh-a 355.
41 Paṭis I 80–1.
42 e.g. Tikap 155; CR I 143.
43 As 270–1; 276; 285; 287; 360; Tikap 347; Spk III 71; Abhidh-av 50–1.
44 Vism 547; cf. Vism 459; As 265.
45 Buddhaghosa (Kv-a 219) certainly attributes such views to the Andhakas. We should perhaps think of the *mūla-vijñāna* which Asaṅga attributes to the Mahāsāṅghikas. It is not certain how far Buddhaghosa is correct in seeing Kv chap. X, I as referring to *bhavaṅga*.

FROM REDUCTIONISM TO CREATIVITY

rDzogs-chen and the New Sciences of Mind

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disruption of the integrity of the system. The increasing fragmentation of experience results in a low-level, deficiency performance, which is felt to be aesthetically, emotionally, and spiritually unsatisfactory. With the "enthronement of the king," the whole system regains its integrity, is renewed and quickened. Furthermore, it is explicitly stated[11] that when these three levels—the king, his minister, and his subjects—combine, there is consultation. This can only mean that there is, in modern terms, long-range planning, in which the role of the king is to remain creative, if not innovative, and to be primarily concerned with the continuation of processes that move in the direction of the total system's optimization and to stop those which are deemed to be counterproductive.[12]

This hierarchical order of a unitary experiential process carries with it a certain evaluation of its levels in the sense that the thematizing-representational trend termed "mentation," which has its own self-organizing dynamics but tends to terminate in rigid structures, is deemed to be of an inferior nature, because it operates in a less "excitatory," and hence a self-limiting, manner. By contrast, the high-level excitatory operation, which involves the whole system, is of superior quality, because meaning, which circumscribes the dimension of the creative process, is allowed to come to the fore. This is a very important point of differentiation. It constitutes the distinction between a reductionistic, self-limiting view and a holistic, open approach to personal growth. Thus this point has been a major concern of rDzogs-chen thinkers. But the strictly Indian view was structure-oriented and tended toward reduction of reality to a model that could not but rigidify what is better left flexible and alive. For even if Buddhaghosa states that "in mundane matters, an attitude (*citta*) is the chief, the leader, the forerunner; but in matters spiritual, analytical-appreciative acumen (*paññā*) is the chief, the leader, the forerunner,"[13] he is nevertheless concerned with the structure of the situation, which is very much what we intend it to be and we relate to it in a healthy or unhealthy manner. Similarly, for Buddhaghosa, a person's intellectual acumen remains analytical. It isolates and objectifies. The only difference he admits is in frame of reference.

A Structural Model of "Mind"

The earliest Buddhists prided themselves on having reduced the whole of reality to discrete entities and their transitory relations. This made it impossible for them to account for the unity of the human individual and even more impossible to account for the unity of the multifarious programs of his brain/mind. Clearly, there must be something wrong with the initial premises; when they are pursued to their logical conclusions as was done by the Mādhyamika thinkers, they are found to be self-

destructive. A change in perspective not only was called for but actually took place, ushering in, if not part of, a *Zeitgeist* that made Buddhism move in a new direction.

Two points are worth bearing in mind at the outset. The one is the almost irresistible urge to reduce reality, inner or outer, to models that quickly turn into myths. We come to believe firmly in these myths for no other reason than that we have created them ourselves. We are reluctant to change them because they serve as an effective basis for further actions (Jantsch 1975, 1980). The other point is that since *citta*, attitude, refers to a feedback/feedforward mechanism, it presupposes for its operation an environment that, in the human context, is primarily the sociocultural milieu. This milieu presents a set of expectation values; it certainly is not something that is given as fundamental and immutable.

As a feedback/feedforward mechanism, *citta* is an operator among other operators, which together constitute the system "mind." In this schema *citta* is merely the principal operator. Its co-operators are termed in Sanskrit *caitta* (or *caitasa* or *cetasika*), and the connection between the principal operator and the co-operators is so close that one usually speaks of *citta-caitta*. Whether the one or the other is emphasized depends on the context in which they are used. Actually, in order to grasp the full implication of this complexity, one would have to perform the almost impossible feat of fusing the rather static concept of attitude and the more dynamic concept of feedback/feedforward operator into a single dynamic notion. This is precisely what the Buddhist term *citta* is about.

In commenting on the recurring canonical phrase "a person's analytical-appreciative acumen together with its milieu," which includes not only feelings but also morality as a specific structure of one's consciousness, Yaśomitra observes:

> *Citta* is the principal among the *caitta*. Does this mean that the analytical-appreciative acumen must be counted as an attendant to the attitude and not the other way round, because it is of the nature of being an attendant (co-operator)? That is correct. However, when there is discernment as to what is polluting and what is clean, analytical acumen lords it over all other attendants; but sometimes some other problem may be of primary concern, as, for instance, when it is a matter of becoming convinced, in which case belief is the principal operator.[14]

Important to note here is the recognition of fluctuations within the system that contribute to its healthiness and resilience. Also, as the examples indicate, the complex combination of an attitude and its co-operators is active in establishing the validity of that which we attempt to convince ourselves of. This operation is a function of our interaction with the environment and involves internal fluctuations that force the system to cope with a new problem or situation. Consequently, the make-up of an attitude varies continuously.

In this emergent new perspective the relationship of *citta* and *caitta* is not one of ownership but one of *primus inter pares*. This intricate patterning can be made very clear by resorting to modern set theory and its symbols. We can say that all feedback/feedforward mechanisms form a set, which we can write

$$\{\text{all feedback/feedforward mechanisms}\}$$

Letting x stand for feedback/feedforward mechanism, we can rewrite the same set as

$$\{x \mid x \text{ is a feedback/feedforward mechanism}\}$$

which reads "the set of all x is such that x is a feedback/feedforward mechanism." We can further specify a set by some property such that there is only one item (entity or object) with that property. Hence it is possible to allow sets with just one member and write $\{x\}$.

It is imperative not to confuse sets with one member with the member itself. It is simply not true that x and $\{x\}$ are equal. The set $\{x\}$ has just one member, namely x, but x may have any number of members depending on whether or not it forms a set, or if it does, which set. To bring out this difference the Buddhist texts use the term *citta* to indicate a set with only one member, namely *citta*, and the term *caitta* to indicate sets with several members.

Indeed, set-theoretical considerations seem to have been at work in the discussion of the various co-operators (this rendering of the term *caitta* has been chosen to differentiate them from the principal operator *citta*) that are listed and explicated by the Vaibhāṣika school in five different sets and by the Yogācāras, apparently reviewing the Vaibhāṣika listings, in six different sets (to mention only the two major opinions on this point within the Buddhist tradition). The Theravada tradition has remained more or less silent on this subject, although its followers seem to have been well aware of the usefulness of sets.

In the list given by Buddhaghosa, writing in Pali, the term *citta* occurs in the following five member set:[15]

$$\{\textit{phassa, vedanā, saññā, cetanā, citta}\}$$

Vasubandhu , writing in Sanskrit, presents this set:[16]

$$\{\textit{sparśa, manaskāra, vit} (=\textit{vedanā}), \textit{saṃjñā, cetanā}\}$$

The five operators found in all sets are explicated rather consistently by all authors as follows.

Sparśa (Pali *phassa*). This technical term is essentially a process-product word that covers the whole range of that which we have divided into the physical and the mental. We can "touch" a solid object, whether it is something in our immediate environment or on the surface of our own bodies. As embodied beings, we are tactilely programmed and coordinated. But we may also speak metaphorically of "being in touch with" something that may not be a physical thing. As an operator/co-operator, *sparśa* establishes some contact and/or rapport and also is the complexity of a contact and/or rapport so established. How important this operator is within the totality of the system, the living human being, may be learned from the descriptions of it by Buddhaghosa. In explaining the reason why it has been placed foremost among the operators, he likens *sparśa* to the main pillar in an architectural structure in which each structural element is different, yet contributes to a harmoniously interrelated whole. His words are:

> This *phassa* is like a pillar in a palace, providing a firm support to the rest of the structure; and just as beams, crossbeams, wing supports, roof rafters, transverse rafters, and neck pieces are fastened to the pillar and are fixed on the pillar, so also does *phassa* provide a firm support to the simultaneous and associated operations. It is like the pillar; the rest of the operations are like the other building materials in forming the structure.[17]

Although the image of a pillar may lead us into the assumption that *sparśa* is something static, Buddhaghosa is careful to point out its dynamic character: "*Phassa* is a so called, because it touches. Its essential feature is touching; its specific property or flavor is a colliding; its occasion is the gathering of three components; and it provides a basis or foothold for any object to enter its orbit."[18] He is also aware of the fact that the very idea of touching carries with it a strong connotation of concreteness—things do collide, but what about the encountering of an idea? The objection that one should speak of collision only with reference to sensory-specific operations, not with reference to what occurs in the realm of thought, he dismisses[19] partly by quoting from texts using analogies that he takes literally, but also by tacitly recognizing the fact that all language is metaphorical.[20]

But not only does *sparśa* provide an occasion for our being in touch with an external and internal environment, it also is the very state of "being in touch with," which for all practical purposes may be said to be a conscious situation that prompts us to act in one way or another.

This feature of *sparśa* is of particular importance. As human beings, we are tactilely programmed; but this does not mean that only endless repetition of the same processes is possible. On the contrary, our being tactilely programmed is a constant source of novelty, and only to a certain extent

is there predictable regularity. If there were only repetition and absolute predictability, life would not be worth living. We value life and our world because of the novelty it offers. As a dynamic operator, *sparśa* is therefore more than a mere mechanistic collision of three factors (the sensory organ, the sensory object, and the sensory consciousness).[21]

Vedanā. If it were not for the fact that we are tactilely programmed and that the receptor system is spread all over our bodies, we would not be able to feel anything. The tactile program already provides information that invites further exploration. It is with that sense of further exploration that feeling begins to operate and impart value to the world we encounter through our activities. We always experience our world in a "subjective" way, as a felt and appreciated world (Vickers 1968, 1970). The reductionist-objectivist's opposition to anything subjective that he is unable to understand and therefore dismisses as "merely subjective" is rooted in his alienation from himself as an experiencer and his reluctance to come to grips with what counts most in actual living. The close relationship between *sparśa* (the tactile program of our being-in-touch-with) and *vedanā* (feeling) has been noted by all Buddhist writers. Buddhaghosa, for instance, says, "It (*phassa*) occasions feeling, gives rise to it."[22] And Sthiramati declares, "It (*sparśa*) operates by providing a basis for feeling."[23]

The evaluative character of feeling expresses itself in what we shall call judgments of feeling. These are prompted not so much by logic, which is the method of rational (and often not quite so rational) thought, as through resonance and dissonance in relation to our environment, natural and spiritual. We accept (like), reject (dislike), or remain indifferent (for even indifference is a value judgment).[24]

Feeling is very much a total experience to which the other operators in this set remain subordinate, although they contribute and, indirectly, share in the world that is appreciated as part of our existence. The role feeling plays in the psychic household—if we may use this metaphor for the structure of "mind"—is like that of a king who, in the words of Buddhaghosa, by virtue of his authority and understanding as master of the palace, relishes and enjoys whatever he desires and whatever has been prepared for him by the other operators. Specifically he enjoys the tactile program, which is compared with a cook preparing and serving food. In addition, feeling in enjoying what is desirable is also anticipatively selective in enjoying and relishing what promises to be desirable. In this way, feeling opens up new perspectives for vital communication with life.

It will have been noted that in the discussion of feeling all that which we in the West tend to list as feelings or forms of feeling, such as love, trust, confidence, anger, aversion and so on, are not listed at all. In Buddhist thought, this assortment belongs to different sets of operators that

either promote a healthy development of the individual or, quite literally, foul up the working of the system. These "feelings" will be discussed in the section on sociocultural operators and in the chapter dealing with pollutants and quasi pollutants.

Saṃjñā. While feeling (*vedanā*) provides the "climate" of the situation, with the effect that the world we live in is felt to be a valuable one, *saṃjñā* is a sign-creating operator as well as the user of the signs that it creates and that become symbols through this use. These sign-symbols somehow correspond to features of the environment that communicate information to individuals concerning how to go about their business. To be precise, signs are like tags put on something for future identification, or as Buddhaghosa states: "When a king's treasurer and guardian of the state jewels puts a name tag on the jewels, he will, when he is told to bring this or that jewel, light a lamp and with it enter the vault and read the name tag and bring the jewel to the king."[25]

Although signs are connected with certain physical correlates, as the above example shows, they clearly transcend the framework of mere physical correspondence and exchange. In so doing, they become symbols that carry with them some indication of meaning and significance. An essential feature is their emerging gestalt quality, through which the outer world becomes manipulable and is recreated, first in thoughts and ideas, later in creative action. The complexity of the symbolic representation process intimated by the sign/symbol-creating operator *saṃjñā* is well brought out by Buddhaghosa in a lengthy discussion in which he makes the following points:

First, from an overall point of view, the essential feature of *saṃjñā* is its cognitive activity of conceiving in such a way that the sign or symbol so conceived becomes a guiding force for cognitive judgments. Second, the specific feature of *saṃjñā* is the generation of "images," which, as ideas or visions, urge the individual to create form, like a sculptor working on his material. Third, the occasioning operation of *saṃjñā* is actual involvement with an idea, as when blind men "see," and make statements about, an elephant. But such an involvement, lacking concrete correlation, may be a fleeting sensation, like a flash of lightning. Lastly, *saṃjñā* sets the scene for acting on what the symbol representation may indicate is important for survival, as when a young deer, seeing a scarecrow and "thinking" it to be a human person, a hunter, takes flight.[26]

Ideas, to be sure, are nothing immutable; their texture depends on the context in which they occur. As Buddhaghosa noted long ago, when the context is one in which man's analytical-appreciative acumen is operative, any idea that arises will emulate the trend set by this acumen.[27]

Cetanā. This operator is closely related to the previous one. We can conceive of *saṃjñā* as planning, which as a kind of anticipatory action

may even involve an "alarm level" and which by its very nature aims at fixation and stability. In relation to that, *cetanā* can then be said to be actual project execution, in which all the resources of the human system are employed. Vasubandhu laconically states that "*cetanā* is a performance by and within the framework of an attitude; it is the activity of consciousness."[28] Actually, this definition does not say very much; neither do Yaśomitra's and Sthiramati's elaborations.[29] A better understanding is provided by Buddhaghosa. Following an older tradition, he distinguishes between furthering the execution of a program or project moving in a healthy or unhealthy direction and organizing and coordinating the activities that go into the execution of the project. In either case, the role of *cetanā* is less that of an administrator, who relies upon dependable operators within a well-established system, than that of a manager, who by his initiative acts like a catalyst. Referring to a statement by the "Ancients" (the authors of the lost *Aṭṭhakathā*) who compared *cetanā* with a landowner, elaborates:

> This *cetanā* has the nature of a landowner, who having gathered fifty-five strong men, went down to the field in order to harvest. He is exceedingly energetic, exceedingly strenuous, he doubles his efforts, doubles his exertions and, with the words "take your sickles" and other orders, he points out the portion to be harvested. He knows what the laborers need of drink, food, perfumes, garlands and so on, and he takes an equal part in the work. This is the way this simile is to be understood: the *cetanā* is like the landowner; the fifty-five strong men are operators whose work produces healthy results and who themselves are members of the attitude as a whole; the doubling of efforts, the doubling of exertion by this *cetanā*, which, in furthering the enterprise, leads to healthy or unhealthy results, is like the time when the landowner doubles his efforts, doubles his exertion. Furthering of the enterprise by the *cetanā* should be understood thus.[30]

Manaskāra. This term does not occur in Buddhaghosa's five-member set, but does in Vasubandhu's set, which presents a logical redistribution of the ten members of the set propounded by the Vaibhāṣikas.[31] Buddhaghosa uses *citta* instead of *manaskāra* (Pali *manasikāra*). In so doing, he is well aware of the fact that his presentation involves a circular argument. For him, *citta* operates in having a thematic focus—reflecting on what is found in the experiential situation or in the experiencer's attitude and fitting it into an already existing cognitive domain. It seems that for him this is the only possible way of structuring of the experience of a "world," which, for this reason, remains a rather narrowly circumscribed world. To have a thematic focus is to make perceptual judgments. Thus, *citta* makes the perceptual judgment that something is, say, a colored patch, which is "seen" by the eye (which, in turn, can do so because of its

affinity with light) and presented to *citta* for judgment. This is done routinely and with immediacy; and it is this to which we give the name consciousness. He describes this operation in the following words: "Just as the police superintendent holding office in the center of the city where the four main traffic routes converge stops and identifies the people who come by noting, this is a resident and this is a visitor."[32]

In preferring *citta* to *manaskāra,* Buddhaghosa seems to have been influenced by the idealistic trend that is so marked in Indian Brahmanical thinking. Here he was also falling in with the new *Zeitgeist.* However, Buddhaghosa refrains from hypostatizing *citta* into something immutable and eternal. It retains its event character, remaining a sender and receiver of information at the same time. In this operation, it changes the situation and is changed by it. This was indicated already in the opening phrase of the *Dhammasangaṇi,* which we quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

The operator *manaskāra* listed in Vasubandhu's set is specified by Yaśomitra as "a tilting of the cognitive system" (*cetasa ābhoga*). "This tilting of the cognitive system is to make it lean in the direction of its objective reference and to restrict it to a certain instance (provided by the latter). It is an act by the *manas* or, in other words, the *manas* acts in making (itself) lean towards."[33] This definition presents some difficulties because the Sanskrit terms *manas* and *cetas* are apparently used as synonyms, thus adding a further dimension to the contention that *citta, manas,* and *vijñāna* are synonymous or mean one and the same "thing"[34] with the modification that *citta* sets the scene, *manas* thinks its thoughts, and *vijñāna* makes perceptual and cognitive judgments. It is because of this complexity that I here introduce the term "cognitive system" for *cetas* so as to cover every aspect. It is obvious that the general trend has remained the same: what we call "world" is presented as an external ("objective") totality of entities with clearly definable contours, somehow presented to an internal ("subjective") mind. This is precisely what in Western phenomenological studies is called "representational thinking" and described as a movement in one particular direction (Schrag 1969). Long before phenomenology drew attention to the objectifying character of representational thinking, Sthiramati had already exposed this feature:

> Tilting refers to that act by which the mind (*citta*) is brought to face its objective reference. This is an act to keep the mind restricted to its objective reference and this, in turn, means to tilt the mind over and over again in this direction. But this activity is specific to the objective reference belonging to the ongoing process termed "mind"; it is not an instant-by-instant tilting, because this would not ensure the continuity (of the process).[35]

There is also what appears at first glance as an additional set of five operators which Vasubandhu presents in Sanskrit as follows:[36]

{*chanda, adhimokṣa, smṛti, samādhi, dhī*}

The first set we have discussed can easily be understood as an emphasis on the act phase in thinking and a gradual build-up of what may be said to emerge as the "subject," which by virtue of being one pole in the intentional structure of all thought is always engaged with an "object" as the other pole. This second set exhibits a graduation in picking out those features that make objectification and control possible. The meaning of these features lies in their function as termini of "objective" significance. Therefore, on the basis of the inseparability and complementarity of the act phase and object phase in thought, Vasubandhu's splitting the Vaibhāṣikas' ten-member set into two five-member sets must be understood as mutual set-theoretical exploration and clarification.

Chanda. Chanda indicates predilection, implying both a strong liking and a predisposed preference for certain kinds of things. As such, it reflects the individual's embeddedness in his world of desires.

Adhimokṣa. Adhimokṣa strengthens this selectiveness and adds to it the dimension of restriction—that which has been intended becomes the focus to the exclusion of everything else.[37]

Restriction to whatever has been intended can work in two different directions. It can aid in developing and deepening one's understanding of a chosen topic or it can make one intolerant and dogmatic; which direction it takes depends very much on the overall positive or negative character of one's attitude. Dogmatism is the tacit admission that one is intellectually and spiritually dead, because one has come to the end of one's questioning (and is satisfied with the answer that has turned up), and because any further questioning is discouraged and disallowed.

Since one accepts much on trust, the problem of who can be said to be an absolutely trustworthy person looms large. Only too often we learn the hard way that the person whose words we took on trust was well-meaning but stupid and hence unable to guide us through the maze of problems we encountered in growing up. Or we discover that that person had a vested interest, like a politician on an election campaign. This is an example of the negative development of *adhimokṣa.*

Smṛti. This operator performs two different operations. The one is commonly referred to as "memory" or "recollection." The other is more in line with what the computer scientist understands by memory—an instrument initiating action programs. Thus *smṛti* operates as an action system that is effective in the individual's growth to the extent that it is modified to suit this process. We shall use the term "inspection" for this

operation of *smṛti*. Memory and inspection are different in the sense that memory, as commonly understood, refers to that which is past, even if the act of recollection takes place in the present, while inspection is concerned with the present objective constituent in a cognitive situation, which it attempts to keep as constant as possible in order to learn more about it. The intimate relationship between these two operations is made evident by the fact that the inspected objective constituent in a cognitive situation is very often also the objective constituent in a coexistent memory situation (Broad 1951). In the context of Buddhist psychological considerations, *smṛti* is not the futile running after fleeting memories through which one might lose sight of the present exigency, but rather the operator that aids in focusing on the problem at hand. The complexity of its connotations is amply brought out by the various explications provided by various authors. Thus Sthiramati, elaborating Yaśomitra's terse definition,[38] states:

> *Smṛti* is not losing a familiar object; it is the mind's addressing it. A familiar object is one that has been previously experienced. Not letting go is ascribed to it, because the object grasped is prevented from slipping. The repeated inspection of the objective features of the object previously grasped is the addressing it. It operates as nondistraction. For when an object is addressed, there is no distraction for the mind by or toward another object or feature; hence *smṛti* acts as nondistraction.[39]

Because of its overall importance in concentrative processes, Buddhaghosa deals with *smṛti* in terms of its being part of a controlling system (*indriya*): "By it people recollect, or it itself recollects, or it is just recollection. It is a control in the sense of sovereignty, because it overcomes forgetfulness, or it takes the lead in being in attendance."[40] He goes on to explicate its role in furthering whatever is healthy and useful in an individual's development while at the same time inhibiting all that which might impede this development.

Samādhi. Similar to the relationship between *cetanā* and *saṃjñā* in the previous set is the close relationship between *samādhi* and *smṛti*. *Smṛti* is the operator that holds whatever has been selected for inspection as steady as possible before the mind's eye. *Samādhi* is the operator that ensures successful concentration, which has the character of fine focusing. As to this fine focusing, all texts agree that it is both a process and a state. Here, Sthiramati's explication may be cited: "*Samādhi* is the mind's being focused on a topic to be investigated further. This further investigation is concerned with its qualities or defects; and to be focused means that there is no other objective reference to the investigated. It provides a basis for a deeper appreciative understanding (of reality), because if the mind is focused, (things) are understood as they (really) are."[41]

It is worth bearing in mind that concentration as here defined is not an end state as suggested by the popular (and often also scientific) use of the term *samādhi*, for which the usual translation of the term is "meditation." This usage basically serves only an evocative purpose, as is so evident from its propagation by cultist groups. Thus it has little bearing on the key problem, the individual's growth and possible self-transcendence.

Since this operator is also mentioned in connection with other concentration ("meditation") exercises, technically known as *dhyāna*, Yaśomitra makes the interesting statement that inasmuch as *samādhi* is a normal feature of the mind's operation, the *dhyāna* practices merely serve to strengthen concentration. This shows that *samādhi* is not a term for some altered state of consciousness or any other possible object of sensationalism.

Dhī. This term itself is an archaism dating back to the oldest literature of India, the *Ṛgveda*, where it is frequently used. In this set, it is used synonymously with *mati* "intellect" or "judiciousness" by Vasubandhu, and synonymously with *prajñā*, "analytical-appreciative acumen," by Sthiramati. (Both *mati* and *prajñā* are neologisms in the sense that they do not occur in the *Ṛgveda*.)

As an operator, *dhī* remains strictly confined to the domain of representational thinking. According to Sthiramati, its main operational features are that it is involved with

> the examination and investigation of any topic to be scrutinized further; this investigation proceeds in a proper, improper, or nondescript manner. Investigation means screening. It is a discerning judgment, properly or improperly done, with respect to any topic that is a mixture of specificities and generalities. Proper procedure means proper use in that it makes use of statements by trustworthy persons, inference, and immediacy of perception. Its proper procedure is based on this triple operational mode. It further operates within the context of listening, thinking, and creative imagining. A discerning judgment based on statements by trustworthy persons, inference, or immediacy of perception is critical-appreciative acumen operating within the domain of listening; a discerning judgment based on the application of the logical method is critical-appreciative acumen operating within the domain of thinking; and a discerning judgment based on concentration is critical-appreciative acumen operating within the domain of creative imagination.
>
> Its improper procedure is based on the acceptance of statements by persons who are not trustworthy, fallacies of inference, and misdirected concentration.
>
> Its nondescript procedure is based on taking things for granted and on judgments made on the empirical level of reality by the common people.[42]

Sthiramati's insight that this operator can also operate in an improper manner, as it often does, should be ample evidence that the rendering of the Sanskrit term *prajñā* by "wisdom" is contrary to textual evidence and reveals wishful thinking on the part of those who use this rendering. Moreover, such usage also contradicts the accepted connotations of the word "wisdom" in the English language. Such a translation, speaking in the context of the contemporary scene, would make wisdom a characteristic of such notorious destroyers of man and his environment as the military (government-sponsored) and the terrorists (free-lance or agency-sponsored). Both have an uncanny ability to use whatever critical acumen they have to select and act on that which is sinister, degrading, and pernicious.

"Mind" as a Self-Structuring Process

Within the framework of representational thinking so prominent in what is generally referred to as Buddhist philosophy and psychology, we have noticed that set-theoretical considerations were instrumental in the attempt to rediscover the unity of the mind that had been lost in the welter of entitatively conceived operators. We also noticed that there are sets with a plurality of members and sets with only one member. It is a matter of choice whether attention is focused on sets with many members or on a set with only one member. The Yogācāra thinkers, who continued the quest for unity within the framework of representational thought, focused their attention on a set with only one member and referred to it by the term *cittamātra*. In this technical term *citta* was understood to refer to a complex experiential (cognitive) field or situation, and *mātra* to the exclusion of everything else. In other words, *citta* was used to convey the unity of insight and action, knowledge and valuation, thinking and feeling, and much more. This is in contrast to an earlier conception of it as a granular entity among others that in one way or another were connected or associated with it.

Another term used by the Yogācāra thinkers was *vijñapti*. This term indicates information, not in the sense of a transfer of knowledge from one system to another, but in the sense of an announcing of how matters stand with regard to the system's self-organization and self-generation, through which the system renews itself in a prognostic manner specific to its niche—say, the human world—which is experienced as the sum total of all its constituents. These the experiencer describes connotatively on the communicative level and enacts, or acts upon, denotatively. In strictly philosophical terms, the followers of this new trend said unequivocally that the phenomenal world exists only as the apprehended meaning of a system of concepts externalized by language into what is believed to be a physical (and not quite so physical) reality. Since self-organization may

3 The Contextualized System "Mind" Sociocultural Operators

In the previous chapter the discussion centered on those operations that make up what we describe as consciousness. However, in spite of its primary role in the multidimensional texture of a person's life-world, perception/consciousness is so intertwined with conceptual and volitional acts, all of them fed from deeper layers in the hierarchical organization, that we would be ill-advised to set it over and above any one of the operators contributing to the complex nature of what the Buddhists carefully analyzed and termed an attitude (Skt. *citta*)—a shorthand expression for an intricate network of mutually determining forces. The analysis also revealed the Buddhists' positive outlook on life. They began their investigation with what was called a healthy attitude in a world that is already an appreciated world offering much that is desirable. Of course, not everything desirable is conducive to physical and mental well-being, hence a person has to exercise his or her critical acumen. This implies that perception is not for itself, but is praxis-oriented. Within an individual's cultural boundaries, set up by shared values, interests, and standards, each and every individual is always with *others* with whom he inter*acts*. This being-with has a dual character in that it can be the source for love, kindness, acceptance, and joyfulness, but also for hatred, malice, rejection, and gloom. It is an observable fact, with no prior hypothesis such as a transcendental ego or an extramundane dictator needed, that a healthy attitude makes for better relationships in the human context than its opposite, which unless we are prepared to lock ourselves up in an airtight box, quite literally pollutes and poisons the whole atmosphere.

One should constantly bear in mind that a person's world is not merely a world of objects and utensils, but much more a sociocultural world with many different life styles. The operators (*caitta*) specifically active in a person's relating to his or her world have been assiduously investigated by Buddhist thinkers, and their importance in dealing with various situations has repeatedly been stressed. There is considerable consensus with respect to the "number" of these operators, grouped in specific sets. The earlier Buddhists (Sthaviravāda followers) stand alone in their approach to dealing with these operators as related to the social context. They arranged them according to their relative strength or control capabilities within the perspective of an overall movement away from the world of desires and toward contemplative withdrawal. The Vaibhāṣika thinkers,

however, reassessed the rich array of these operators and summarized them in five sets[1] of which the one comprising ten "wide-ranging" operations, as split into two sets of five members each by the Yogācāra thinkers,[2] has already been discussed in the previous chapter. The Vaibhāṣikas' second set of operators generate and regulate behavioral processes and are not rigid norms into which live processes may easily slip. This set is specified as comprised of "wide-ranging operators within the context of a healthy attitude." This set was accepted by the Yogācāras, too. They, however, increased the number of the members of this set to eleven by reinstating the counteragent to delusion (Skt. *amoha*). Buddhaghosa had listed this operator among the three basic nonpollutant operators, and Vasubandhu had equated it with a person's appreciative and critical acumen (Skt. *prajñā*), emphasizing intellectual and intuitive cognition and conceptualization.[3] The Yogācāra thinkers may have been prompted to include *amoha* because they realized that in the interpersonal domain, in addition to what we perceive, what and how we feel and think about others play an important role. The Yogācāra thinkers, who were outstanding logicians, arranged the sociocultural operators according to their internal logic, although there is no particular order to the members within a set. Another point deserving notice is that the Yogācāra thinkers, with their insistence on mind/mentality only (Skt. *cittamātra*), were faced with the problem of accounting for this set without contradicting their initial premise of mind/mentality only. Enter set theory. Often one set is part of some other set. A set S is said to be a subset of a set M provided that every member of S is a member of M. Every member of the set S of sociocultural operators is a sociocultural operator, hence a mentalistic operator (Skt. *caitta*), hence a member of the set M of all mentality (Skt. *citta*). But since the phrase "part of" has unfortunate connotations, (because it suggests a multitude of discrete entities), to avoid this dilemma we can resort to the mathematical notation of

$$S \subseteq M$$

which then reads "S is a subset of M." Taking into account the container metaphor (Skt. *ālaya*) that had crept into Yogācāra thought we can say S is *contained in* M.

The set of ten sociocultural operators is, according to the *Abhidharmakośa*, as follows:

{*śraddhā, apramāda, praśrabdhi, upekṣā, hrī, apatrapa, alobha, adveṣa, ahiṃsa, vīrya*}

According to the Yogācāra followers, the set of eleven sociocultural operators, which will be the basis of our discussion, is:

{*śraddhā, hrī, apatrapa, alobha, adveṣa, amoha, vīrya, praśrabdhi, apramāda, upekṣā, avihiṃsā*}

Śraddhā. This term cannot be easily rendered by a single word in the English language, because it comprises all that we refer to as trust, confidence, certitude, and fidelity as well as all the nuances and gradations of these. It connotes less what is commonly understood by faith, which has too narrow an application in the Western context due to its religious association. This association suggests that *faith* is no more than a belief about something metaphysical and often implies that it functions in a way that is independent of, or even hostile to, knowledge. But faith is far more pervasive than this. Even in our everyday working life we have to take much on faith! Therefore, and also in view of what the original texts have to say, it seems more appropriate to use the term *belief* with its wide range of connotations for some of the uses of *śraddhā*. Indeed, belief serves a vital function in assisting an individual to cope with the wide range of eventualities and vicissitudes he encounters in all phases of life. As such, it is complementary to man's critical acumen, which emphasizes the "rational" aspect of reality and is thus not always the best means of relating to the profoundly nonrational quality of one's life-world. It simply will not do to repress this nonrational aspect; rather one must learn to broaden one's view and remove obscurations in it so that ultimately knowledge may prevail. It is for these reasons that *śraddhā* is given a prominent position among the sociocultural operators.

One of *śraddhā*'s outstanding characteristics, on which all authors agree, is that of clarity, not so much as a static quality, but as a dynamic process effecting clearness, brightness, and pellucidity. Vasubandhu concisely states: "It is the (clearing) clarity of the mental-(spiritual) capacity."[4] Yaśomitra elaborates: "The mental-(spiritual) capacity, which has been made turbid by pollutant and quasi pollutant agents, becomes clear through the application of this trusting capacity, like water that has been brought into contact with the water-purifying gem." Buddhaghosa uses the same simile in discussing the nature of this trust in terms of dominance (Skt. *indriya*), which, following the interpretation of this term by the grammarians, he understands as both the capacity to overcome one's adversaries and as self-reliance.[5]

The clearest account of the various functions of *śraddhā* has been given by Sthiramati:

> *Śraddhā* is (1) belief in the validity of the relationship between one's actions and the consequences of them that one has to bear; (2) clarity of the mental-spiritual capacity; and (3) aspiration. It operates in these three ways such that with respect to something having qualities or not having them, it is belief; with respect to something having

qualities, it is clarity; and with respect to having qualities, given the capability to acquire or to generate it, it is aspiration. These three operational features constitute what is meant by clarity of the mental-spiritual capacity. Furthermore, it is said that *śraddhā* counters turbidness of the complex of mind's factors, that is, by coming into contact with it, the squalidness and turbidness generated by pollutants and quasi pollutant agents cease to exist, and the mind, having come within the range of trust, becomes clear. This is what is meant by clarity of the mental-spiritual capacity. It furthermore provides the basis for aspiration.[6]

Trust allows us to get a glimpse of the depth of our life and enables us to achieve those aims in life that add to its richness and value. Trust serves a therapeutic function in the sense that it revitalizes the individual's inner potential, which then expresses itself in optimally performed actions enhancing interpersonal relationships. Some of these actions include ritual and worship, which are part of an individual's development that cannot be severed from the individual's responsibility to others in society. Trust not only relates the whole world comprising man's societal systems, as well as the ecological order, to the individual, it also relates the individual to this whole world. Perhaps the profoundest understanding of what trust can achieve is provided by the Tibetan thinker Klong-chen rab-'byams-pa in this aphoristic statement:

> There are six ways in which trust can revitalize an individual's inner potential:
> Trust that expresses itself as reverence makes a person supplicate and imaginatively address the inner guiding principle (*bla-ma*);
> Trust that expresses itself as enthusiasm makes a person eager to worship the precious ultimates (*dkon-mchog*);
> Trust that expresses itself as loyalty makes a person imaginatively identify himself with his ideal (*yi-dam*) and live up to it;
> Trust that expresses itself as clarity makes a person actualize Being's possibilizing dynamics in his very being;
> Trust that manifests as unflinchingness turns adverse conditions into favorable ones; and
> Trust that manifests as the conviction that there is an ultimate goal makes a person fuse his finite being with what ultimately matters.
> Therefore, it is of utmost importance to actualize within oneself the path that leads to freedom.[7]

Lest there be any misconceptions concerning the Tibetan terms *bla-ma* and *yi-dam*, with which many people have become familiar, it must be pointed out that they do not stand for concrete entities. They present formulated energies, and if personalistic elements enter, the familiar father figure is absent. Within the perspective of lived-through experience, Buddhist thought enunciates the principle of complementarity, which, when imaged in personalistic forms as male and female in intimate embrace, serves as an ideal picture of a harmonious universe worth striving for. This image also can offer much-needed assurances for our endeavors to overcome our dividedness against ourselves. As formulated energies the mainspring of which is the dynamics of the universe, these images make the experiencer aware of his existentiality. Specifically, the image of the "precious ultimates" (usually referred to as the Three Jewels) sums up the experiencer's spirituality, communicativeness, and social relatedness.

Śraddhā ranges from belief in the intelligibility of the universe, and in the narrower sense, of the social order, to trust in our capacity and ability to transcend ourselves and open up new levels of the "mind" as the system's self-organizational dynamics initiates and involves us in developing interpersonal relationships.

Hrī, self-respect, and *apatrapa*, decorum. These are two further operators that are instrumental in shaping an individual's socially acceptable actions. All authors agree on the close relationship between these two operators and their experiential characteristics: self-respect manifests as shame and decorum manifests as fear. Buddhaghosa, however, seems to have anticipated the modern idea of a multilevel ethics involving different optimization criteria for a system's evolution. He discusses each of these operators in terms of four aspects: basis, autonomy, intrinsic nature, and essential feature. According to this schema, self-respect is grounded in one's self as the center of all the intentional vectors of experiencing. It thus starts from the "I who . . ." that is inseparable from the immediate milieu or social context (Skt. *jāti*, "caste" in the Indian context), as well as from age, character strength, and learnedness. Here the "I who . . ." has been made the arbiter of one's actions and is considered to be of decisive importance. Its intrinsic nature is the feeling of shame and disgust, "just as one is loath to touch an iron ball besmeared all over with excrement."[8] Its essential feature is careful evaluation of the worth of one's milieu, training, heritage, and conduct in relation to one's fellow beings. Thus it implies a show of deference, the measure of recognition that is due to oneself and to others.

Decorum is grounded in the opinion of the world; and what the world at large says and thinks about a thing or an action is of decisive importance. Its intrinsic nature is fear, fear of deviating from accepted standards, and its essential feature is to see what is evil and formidable immediately, "just as one does not touch a red-hot iron ball out of fear of getting burned." Here it is the "me who . . ." that is at the center of the stage.[9]

The analysis of moral conduct as depending on either an "objective" or a "subjective" standard deserves special attention, because it is liable to create considerable confusion if it is taken out of context. Certainly, the

behavior of a person who takes the opinion of the world as the decisive criterion coincides with the views and demands of society. His morality is in accord with the moral viewpoint of his time. What he tries to do and to be is exactly what society expects of him. However, it is by no means to be presumed that the outlook that bases itself on so-called objectively given facts remains the same for all times and under all circumstances. Any such claim merely exhibits the objectivistic fallacy. It is, moreover, a well known fact that objective conditions and objective values vary; only too often they deteriorate and turn into their very opposites, sometimes even acquiring a decidedly morbid character. An individual whose orientation is based on an outer, objective standard, because it is from there that he expects the decisive value to come, must inevitably participate in the downfall resulting from the deterioration of outer standards. As a matter of fact, the moral thinking of a person whose orientation is based on outer standards in no way hinders evil and destructive elements from creeping into his way of life. Indeed, it facilitates this, because his self-assurance, self-righteousness, his unquestioned sense of being right ("this is what I have been told") makes him overlook what is new and valuable and fail to see that what once was good does not remain so eternally. Although decorum is meant to restrain a person from doing evil, if it is not balanced or checked by self-respect, it is hardly able to achieve this end. Buddaghosa compares decorum aptly with a prostitute. "By having made another person's standard one's own norm, one gives up evil by decorum, just like a harlot."[10] Indeed, a person who always conforms to the judgment of others and is always anxious to live up to others' expectations acts like a prostitute who must always be up to what her customers expect. Any holding back on her part would entail loss of business, which would have undesirable economic consequences.

On the other hand, those who rely on inner, "subjective" norms, which evolve in course of the individual's experience of his innate creativity, very often create the impression of ego-centeredness. But just as "objective" conditions do not remain unaltered, so also that which is labeled "subjective" is bound to change. We have already noted that the ego is but an emergent center in a process in which all the residua of the experiences man has had in the course of evolution are active. Only because it is the orientational center in the organization of the world as the product of our own thoughts and actions, it tends to be overevaluated and to give rise to the subjectivistic fallacy, "If I did not exist, the world would not go on." If, however, "ego-centeredness" is applied as a term of reproach, it may be nothing more than lack of understanding on the part of a person who derives his morality from some outer standard, for such a person simply cannot understand that morality as a living experience may well be the expression of a specific structure of our consciousness. To the extent that

we design our life-world by means of our mental constructs, we include in it moral standards that reflect this creative process. Such an awareness not only insists on our own dignity but also makes us respect the dignity of others.

Self-respect and decorum are certainly not metaphysical categories that are assumed to be valid in an absolute sense and to be imposed on us from somewhere in a way that we are supposedly not fitted to understand, thus making it impossible for us to have a say in matters that concern us vitally; rather they are manifestations and expressions of a healthy attitude and an optimizing regulatory device. Their sociocultural importance was already well recognized by the historical Buddha when he declared that, "If these two operators did not guard the world, there would be no recognition of one's mother, of one's mother's sister, of one's mother's brother's wife, of a teacher's wife, or of the wife of one's spiritual preceptors. The world would fall into promiscuity and act like goats and sheep, fowl and swine, cattle and wild beasts."[11]

Alobha, adveṣa, amoha. Although negative in diction, the three sociocultural operators *alobha, adveṣa,* and *amoha* are thoroughly positive in character and hence powerful agents. For reasons discussed earlier, Vasubandhu in his *Abhidharmakośa* only lists the first two operators, but in his *Triṃśikā* lists all three. However, in either case he says little about them. Only Buddhaghosa discusses them in detail under the heading of "healthy roots," because in whatever context they operate, through their triune dynamics, they add to the individual's healthy outlook on life "just as trees that have firm roots are strong and well grounded."[12]

The essential feature of *alobha* (noncupidity) is absence of desire and attachment in relation to any object whatsoever. As an effective antidote to avarice, it makes us give freely and generously. It also makes us modest, so that we do not take more of anything than necessary. Above all, it makes us see flaws where there are flaws. This contrasts with cupidity, which is always eager to conceal any flaws so as to increase our greed.

Through noncupidity, even ordinary people can live happily. Should they still be subject to the duress of having to move from one birth to another, from one existential situation to another, they will no longer be reborn in the world of spirits, symbols of deprivation; for it is through craving, excessive desire to accumulate more than we have already accumulated, that we are made miserable and feel the pangs of hunger or thirst, of never being satisfied.

Noncupidity also causes us to avoid a life directed toward sensual pleasures as the sole aim of our existence. By cutting all the fetters covetousness is eager to put on us, it becomes a condition for health in the widest sense of the word and for the rare quality of feeling content.

Finally, since there is nothing to which we might become attached,

noncupidity opens our eyes to the transitoriness of all that is determinate, differentiated, and allegedly unique. Only a greedy and egocentric person, in his futile hope for lasting enjoyments, fails to see the utter falsity of belief in permanence.[13]

Adveṣa (nonantipathy) essentially means being cooperative "like a friend." In removing ill will and worries, it is "soothing like sandalwood paste," and in promoting gentleness and pleasantness, it is likened to the splendor of the full moon. As a potent remedy against bad manners and unethical behavior, it is the solid foundation of ethics and manners.

In the context of modesty, nonantipathy is the correlate of noncupidity. Within a given social gathering, cupidity makes us take more than is appropriate; antipathy may make us offend our host by not accepting what he offers. Unlike antipathy, which causes a person to be obsessed with demeaning virtues and belittling merits, nonantipathy makes us joyfully acknowledge merits wherever they are found and, most important for practical living, it makes us take the vicissitudes of life (such as aging) in our stride.

Another positive feature of nonantipathy is that it instills in us a deep feeling of the boundlessness of lovingkindness, protective compassion, participatory joy, and benign equilibrium. Furthermore, nonantipathy prevents us from indulging in self-mortification, an obsession with evil that is no more than an aggrandizement of self-importance by inverted means. Nonantipathy brings youth, for a person who is not ruled by antipathy nor consumed by its fire and hatred, which causes wrinkles and makes the hair go gray, remains young for a long time. Nonantipathy also helps us in winning friends, because friends are won by lovingkindness and not lost through it.

Lastly, nonantipathy not only enables us to abandon enmity toward those who show us enmity, but also makes us realize that whatever is transitory is frustrating, because it cannot serve as a solid basis for building one's life and hence is the source of continuing misery. This realization reinforces nonantipathy, for "who would like to aggravate the existing misery he knows through further violent outbursts of anger!"[14]

Both Buddhaghosa and Vasubandhu agree that *amoha* (nondelusion) is essentially identical with appreciative and critical acumen, which is inherent in any healthy attitude. For this reason, Vasubandhu does not list this operator again among the sociocultural ones. Buddhaghosa, who discusses this operator in connection with the two previous "root operators," makes several pertinent remarks concerning its importance. It is a preeminent and powerful factor in the development of all that is healthy. Therefore, it is indispensable for the actual practice of that which leads to the goal of being able to stand on one's own feet, free from any artificial props. If noncupidity prevents us from taking too much and nonantipathy from taking too little, whether on a literal or metaphorical level, nondelusion prevents us from making the wrong choice. In addition, it makes us realize what is possible and what is not, so that we do not feel miserable when we do not get all that our desires demand. Through nondelusion, we are restrained from indulging in futile hopes. Thus there is no fear of death for a person who is not suffering from delusion, because it is a delusion that the local, here-now, determinate data in our everyday working life will not be subject to the ravages of time and death. Most important, nondelusion makes for self-improvement. Only a person who is not deluded by opinions about himself, but sees himself as he truly is—as an ongoing task—acts in a manner helpful for attaining his "goal." The goal in this sense remains a process of continual optimization rather than an end state in the manner of a "self" as an entity that stands within itself or is a hermetically sealed "subject" dressed in the garb of a transcendental ego.[15]

Vīrya (diligence). In order to reach one's goal one needs *vīrya*. The two outstanding modes of this operator are attentiveness and perseverance. Specifically, diligence describes the action of a person who is courageous. The Indian (Sanskrit) term for such a person is *vīra*, "hero," and the Buddhist understood him to be one who attempts to outgrow his drives, impulses, and compulsive behavior and to replace these with moral responsibility. He is not just a bully or some uniformed, decorated ruffian. Diligence also refers to the manner in which we go about our pursuits, both physically and mentally. It plays the dominant role in overcoming indolence and is in charge of the manner in which we tackle a problem.[16]

Buddhaghosa's psychological insight here deserves mention. According to him, diligence may simply be getting rid of a temporary mood of idleness or turning one's back upon mere pleasure-seeking. With its intensity increased, it may severe the ties that bind us to our commonplace world or assist us in crossing the flood of desires. At its highest intensity, it may be a strong effort toward, or the actual act of, crossing to the other shore (i.e., transcending *saṃsāra*). As perseverance, *vīrya* may be that which precedes the solution of whatever is difficult, and continually gaining in strength, it may uproot the pillar of ignorance. It may manifest itself as steadfastness both in strengthening one's healthy attitude and the operators constituting it and generally in maintaining the flow of whatever is healthy. Thereby it effects firmness and resolve in going the way one has decided upon as best for one's spiritual welfare. After all, it was through this firm and unflagging resolve that the historical Buddha uttered the proud words, "May my skin, my sinews, and my bones wither away. Not until I have attained my goal shall I rise from this seat." Since diligence does not dismiss the earnest desire to act positively, it also prevents the individual from shirking his obligations.[17]

This emphasis on acceptance of one's responsibilities contrasts sharply with the contemporary clamor and insistence on rights, which on closer inspection often turn out to be uninformed meddling in the affairs of others. There are no rights without obligations.

Praśrabdhi (relaxation of tension). This operator is one that occurs in the older tradition in a set of six "pairs." This presentation seems to suggest a dualism of body and mind. We say "seems," because on the one hand, there is no evidence for any such dualism, and because on the other hand, the Buddhist terms connote much more than what we ordinarily understand by "body" and "mind." These, in the context of our Western thinking, are postulated concepts, not as in Buddhism, intuitive concepts that address themselves to one's feelings and elicit an immediate response. For Buddhaghosa, "body" is the triad of feeling, sign- and symbol-creating operations, and program executions;[18] for Sthiramati it is a specific joy-enhanced tactile (physical) experience.[19]

The variations of this relaxation of tension, listed separately and discussed with reference to both "body" and "mind," are all what is best described as a feeling-awareness of lightness (Pali *lahutā*) that actively overcomes lassitude, particularly stupor and torpor. In the absence of lassitude, there is flexibility (Pali *mudutā*), which does away with the rigidity that makes it difficult to cope with the unexpected in the midst of life's uncertainties. By contrast, in the presence of lightness and flexibility, the total system can function optimally (Pali *kammaññatā*) in the sense that the individual can apply himself diligently to his work and retain his calmness, just as pure gold remains pure gold regardless of the shapes it is molded into as ornaments. As the system's readiness to operate optimally, this relaxation manifests itself as vigor (Pali *paguṇatā*), which overcomes weakness and the dangers that lie in weakness, of which the worst kind is lack of confidence or trust. Acting with this vigor, the system follows a straightforward course (Pali *ujukatā*). The sociocultural significance of such vigor is that it overcomes all kinds of crookedness and specifically opposes deceit and fraud.[20]

Apramāda (concern). This operator disposes an individual to cultivate all that is healthy and positive and is therefore also figuratively spoken of as cultivation of the healthy and positive. In addition, it protects a healthy attitude from succumbing to polluting forces.[21]

Upekṣā (dynamic balance). The rendering of the Buddhist term *upekṣā* by "equanimity" is correct from a static point of view inasmuch as it suggests a settled attitude of mind unassailable by disturbing influences. However, it misses the dynamic character of this operator, which itself constitutes a process passing through several phases, as already noted by Sthiramati: "*Upekṣā* is the mind going through the phases of balancing itself, becoming poised, and maintaining balance. By these three qualifications, *upekṣā* is shown to be a process having a beginning, a middle, and an end."[22]

By way of illustrating dynamic balance in more concrete terms, we may refer to a person learning to ride a bicycle. Balance can only be maintained by looking into the far distance, the moment one focuses on what is nearby, balance is lost. Thus, dynamic balance introduces a sense of direction in the sense of a "tuning-in" to the overall dynamics of life. This tuning-in has been elucidated in detail on the basis of Sthiramati's analysis by Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po (eleventh century), who, writing in Tibetan, distinguishes between *btang-snyoms* (Skt. *upekṣā*) and *btang-snyoms chen-po* (Skt. *mahā-upekṣā*), by which latter term he understands man having become or being the overall dynamics of life. His words are:

> What is *btang-snyoms chen-po?* If one understands (and feels) that all that is is but like a magic show, and is deeply aware of the fact that the undesirable and that which counteracts it are complementary to each other, one will not strive to get rid of the undesirable, nor will one strive to adhere to that which counteracts it, nor will one strive to bring forth life's meaning (as if it were some thing). One will just abide in Being's uncontrived dynamics.[23]

Avihimsā (noninjury). Concern—which is said to operate in close conjunction with the process of tuning in to the dynamics of Being or one's life stream through the process of dynamic balance—gives a human being compassionate fellow-feeling for all that is alive. This must not be confused with sentimentality, which merely pretends to feel for another person. Compassion, because it deeply feels for the other, is averse to any kind of violence or injury.[24]

Meticulous analysis of the mentality-infused sociocultural operators and of their role in actual living prevented the Buddhists from ever falling into the trap of one of the most reductionistic sciences ever developed—behaviorism, in which mind became the first casualty and what remained was and still is a caricature of a human being. It is not surprising that modern physicists like Jeremy Hayward[25] are drawn to Buddhism, for the new physics restores mind/mentality to its central and legitimate position in nature. Also, the Buddhist contention that a human being like any other living being is meaning-sensitive and is in coevolution with the rest of the universe could well assist the cognitive sciences. These, as George Lakoff has shown,[26] are in a transitional stage, breaking away from thinking in terms of categories that cut us off from lived experience.

4 *Pollutants and Quasi Pollutants*

Pollutants

Emphasis on cognition as an intricate network of operators together with insistence on a healthy attitude, on the one hand, and reference to forces that tend to pollute and frustrate the healthy process moving in the direction of self-transcendence on the other, can easily, though wrongly, be construed as implying and vindicating the traditional Western rigid dualism between cognition and emotion. To this dualism is added the further distortion of regarding cognition to be rational (which is quite irrationally considered to be good) and regarding emotion to be passionate (rationalized for no apparent reason as being evil). But cognition (an unspecifiably broad term) and emotion (equally refractory to definitional precision) are never wholly apart, except in wholly mechanistic models that do not allow for any structural change, and in the manner of the notorious Skinner-box—the ultimate caricature of a human being's dynamic and creative nature—determine the behavior of their prisoners for all times.

It is more than doubtful that such a separation between cognition and emotion is practicable or even, from a holistic point of view, wise to try. Emotions enter the picture whenever interpersonal relationships prevail, whenever something happens that affects the individual in his encounter with the environing world. Emotions not only "move" the individual "out" to a multifaceted world of concerns, but also establish a feedback link by which a very personal relationship even with the material world is established. Cognition, wrongly reduced to, and subsequently identified with, rationality, is predominantly geared to a static universe that, it is believed, can be adequately described or "known" in quantitative terms. But emotion with its fluid affective nuances is geared to a qualitative world that is appreciated either positively or negatively in a way that deeply involves the individual. Maybe the very attempt to separate the "rational" from the "emotional," to reduce a living person to a set of unrelated and isolatable compartments, each of which could then be dealt with in terms of quantity and measurement, was literally felt by Buddhist thinkers to foul up and pollute the working of the total system. So, if only for the sake of ensuring life's continuity, something had to be done about this pollution—but without falling into the trap of reductionism.

Here we reach a critical point where utmost caution is necessary. We have to question ourselves how far it is possible to translate the language of the more subtle processes that we associated with feelings—covering

the whole spectrum from love to hatred—into the more precise language of reason with its organizing principle of logic, which is needed for scientific inquiry and for a clear presentation of what is investigated. Certainly the two languages, the language of reason and the language of feeling and emotion, intertwine; each language assists the individual to enter into a dialogue with other individuals. But even on the level of intelligent discourse, the inner and outer world appear symbolically represented and language remains metaphorical (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). It is merely a matter of preference whether emphasis is on denotative restrictiveness and exclusion or on connotative comprehensiveness and inclusion. But preference is a highly "inexact" descriptive term, because the prior question of "why" has not been answered.

In order to point to and to describe affective/pollutant processes, the Indian languages (as well as the Indo-Germanic languages) use nouns that suggest thingness and separate existence. Thus language assists and tends to reinforce the analytic and representational operations of the mind, but also adds to confusion by making us speak of "pollution" in a general manner and of "pollutants" in a more specific manner. Our preference of the terms "pollution" and "pollutants" to "emotion" and "emotions" in the present context is based on the consideration that such "emotions" as loving kindness, protective compassion, participatory joy, and benign equilibrium are not considered to be emotions in our sense, but powerful catalysts in an individual's healthy development. (For details, see Guenther 1975–76, 1:106ff.)

The earliest Buddhist (Pali) texts list or speak of several pollutants, primarily cupidity-greed (*lobha*), aversion-hatred (*dosa*) and delusion–opaqueness-of-mind (*moha*). These three are somehow subservient to craving (*taṇhā*), which takes the forms of craving for the satisfaction of one's desires, of craving for one's life to continue (preferably in what is imagined to be the world of the gods, who differ from human beings only in their being more powerful and living longer, but on the whole are less intelligent and even morally inferior), and of craving for life simply to end. Apart from describing them in metaphorical terms, the texts say little about these forms of craving, except that they have to be "given up." To this effect, specific techniques were developed, which, however, on closer inspection, pose more problems than they are able to solve.

The problem of pollution and pollutants (Skt. *kleśa*)—the indigenous term is relatively late—assumed a new dimension when the transition of structure-oriented thinking with its static terms to process-oriented thinking with its dynamic concepts took place and when the new "existential" question, "How do I become autopoietically installed in a/the world?" began to replace the epistemological outlook.[1]

In Indian Buddhist thinking, which remained largely structure-oriented,

the original set of three pollutants was soon enlarged to six, but the various schools of Buddhist thought presented various sets. This development may be seen as evidence that the emotions do not readily submit to rational reductionism.

In his *Abhidharmakośa,* Vasubandhu offers the following set of pollutants, which he terms "wide-ranging" and "ever-present," which may be found in an attitude described as polluted, but which are not unhealthy.[2]

{*moha, pramāda, kausīdya, āśraddhya, styāna, uddhava*}

For these, he gives only the following short characterizations. Delusion–opaqueness-of-mind (Skt. *moha*) is the inoperativeness of everything cognitive, whether of an intellectual or experiential nature; it is the dullness and obtuseness that characterizes a person's inability to distinguish between that which merely seems to be and that which actually is the case. Unconcern (Skt. *pramāda*) is the very opposite of concern; it is disinterestedness in cultivating what is healthy in one's outlook on life. Laziness (Skt. *kausīdya*) is unwillingness to make any efforts and the very opposite of diligence and perseverance. Disbelief (Skt. *āśraddhya*) is the very opposite of clarity of the mental-spiritual capacity. Lethargy (Skt. *styāna*) is listlessness and spiritlessness affecting the whole person mentally and physically. Frivolity (Skt. *uddhava*) is the mental-spiritual capacity's unsettledness that prevents it from becoming calm and tranquil.[3]

In his *Triṃśikā* Vasubandhu offers the following set:[4]

{*rāga, pratigha, moha, māna, dṛṣṭi, vicikitsā*}

This set cuts across two levels or operational modes of what is referred to summarily as "mind." One level is made up of what we usually consider to be feelings and emotions; the other is made up of biased cognitive operations active in the formation of the images we have of ourselves and of the outer world. Their bias may well be a spillover of the "emotional" into the "intellectual"—both aspects are cognitive in the sense that they are operations of the mind. Because of their bias they are characterized as system pollutants. It is important, if not imperative, to remind ourselves over and over again of the fact that the terms for these pollutants are descriptive of operations, not representations of entities that can be manipulated at will. Therefore, they also cannot be considered as behavioral acts. Rather, they are moral acts, albeit on a low level. Morality (Skt. *śīla*) is an integral aspect of a healthy attitude, as previously noted. Under certain circumstances this attitude may become polluted, but this is not the same as being unhealthy. Because of its insistence on morality as the cornerstone of human activity, Buddhism stands apart from the Western preoccupation with behavior seen not only as predictable, but also as amoral.

The first three pollutants in the above set belong to what Erich Jantsch has termed "organismic mind" and/or "organismic mentation." This is the level where metabolic and neural processes (mentations) meet as "an integral aspect of the organism in its holistic self-expression and its environmental relations" (Jantsch 1980, 169).

Rāga (passion). The rendering of the Sanskrit term by "passion" seems to be most appropriate and adequate in the present context, because it describes an intense and preoccupying emotion that gives the mind a peculiar bent. In the words of Sthiramati:

> It is (an operator that brings the individual into) a state of being absorbed in a (particular) world-perspective with the pleasures, sensuous and sensual, it offers, as well as of being intent on having such experiences over and over again. It ties (the individual) to frustration, which in this context means the organization of what is physical and mental into (such and such) an individual, initiated by the craving for (any one of the) world-perspectives (described in terms of) desires, aesthetic forms, and formlessness. Hence, this linkage to frustration by passion is alluded to as (moral, karmic) activity.[5]

Pratigha (hostility). This term is synonymous with the more frequently used Sanskrit term *dveṣa* (irritation-aversion-hatred). Its wide range of asocial and immoral implications is well described by Sthiramati:

> It is a vicious sentiment towards living beings, a cruel bent of mind, and a person possessed by it thinks of plans of how to do things to them that are of no benefit to them, such as killing and shackling them. It provides the basis for an inimical disposition and for despicable conduct. (By contrast) amicableness means pleasantness, and a disposition; such is not the case with an inimical disposition, which is suffused with offensiveness. Because of its giving rise to gloominess, the whole mind-set of an individual who is afflicted with such a vicious sentiment is in torment; and following suit the physical component (of his personality) also is in torment, and this inimical disposition with all its wretchedness and destructiveness manifests in each and every movement of the person. No expression whatsoever of despicable behavior remains alien to a person suffused with hostility; hence hostility is said to provide the basis for an inimical disposition and for despicable behavior.[6]

Moha (delusion). This pollutant is essentially the inability to distinguish between that which merely seems to be and that which really is the case. It is most active in preventing any change in the status quo. It does not allow for any mental-spiritual development. It therefore also leads to or supports the fossilization of social systems and the stagnation of culture. Sthiramati says about this pollutant:

> It is the incomprehension of anything that relates to (what are described as) adverse forms of existence, to the appreciable form of (human) existence, and to nirvana as well as to the reasons that logically establish the validity (of all this), and also to the incontestable relationship that holds between one's actions and the effects (one has to endure). This incomprehension provides the basis for the emergence of a globally polluted state of affairs, which is made up of the triad of (specific) pollutant (operators), actions (which have certain consequences), and (the social status that comes by) birth. The emergence of this globally polluted state of affairs is the concretization of a previously experienced globally polluted state of affairs from its subliminal presence into a concrete, subsequent, and overt globally polluted state of affairs. This (triad of) pollutant operators—such as misapprehension, hesitancy, and impetuosity, actions (which have the consequence termed "rebirth"), and (the social status that comes by) birth—operates only in the case of a deluded person, not in one who is not deluded.[7]

The last three pollutants in Vasubandhu's set belong to the level of "reflexive mind" and/or "reflexive mentation," which as an operational pattern of the limbic system or the palaeomammalian brain "contributes significantly to the formation of personal identity" but still has strong ties with the reptilian brain that "manages the processes of the organismic mind" (Jansch 1980, 166–167) described by the first three pollutants. The three pollutants that present this level of greater complexity are *māna, dṛṣṭi,* and *vicikitsā.*

Māna (conceit). *Māna* describes the whole gamut of self-glorification, arrogance, vainglory, and boastfulness, but also the inverted conceit that manifests as belittling oneself (which, of course, has nothing to do with modesty or humility). Because of its emphasis on a self (hypostatized into the Self), conceit overlaps with other ego-centered views already foreshadowed by delusion. Sthiramati discusses the various manifestations of conceit as follows:

> It operates in conjunction with reductionism. Its essential feature is the mind's uptrend. By conferring on (any one of) the psychophysical constituents[8] as they have become organized into an individual, the status of a self, (which then claims the remainders as its property or) "my" (body, my thoughts, and so on). By virtue of this or by virtue of this or that specificity, the individual gives a boost to (his) mind and considers himself to be superior to others. This provides a basis for disrespect and unpleasantness. Disrespect is insensitivity to spiritually minded persons or to (other) worthy persons; it is incontinences in deportment and speech. Its giving rise to unpleasantness means that, over and over again, it leads to rebirth.[9]

While delusion can be said to be halfway between the impulsive (organismic) and (reflexively) cognitive polluting forces operative in a living person, conceit, as is evident from the growing egocentricity associated with it, by adding a further dimension to a person's deepening dividedness against himself, reinforces this sense of self-importance and overevaluation of the ego. This ego, under the pretext of objectivity—a magical and powerful soporific—is turned into an entity called the Self and contrasted with other "objective" entities such as one's body (and maybe even one's mind). These entities are then said to interact; or resorting to the old stereotype of ownership, one declares that the Self (or mind, supposed to be vibrant with life) possesses or has a body, as if this were some lifeless tool to be used. This assumption goes against all evidence. In the modern Western context, Gabriel Marcel pointed out the inherent fallacy of this notion and insisted on the locution of "I am my body." By this statement he indicated that a person's body is a way of becoming and being embodied, and as such is one of the many possible concretions of an ongoing process. The persistence of the mechanistic notion of "Self" and "mine," against which the Buddhists never grow tired of speaking out, has its root in the mind-induced split and symmetry break between the inner and outer world. From this split follows symbolic re-creation and representation of both worlds in such a way that the emissions from the external ("objective") environment are met with an inner ("subjective") model that is active in ordering them. This itself becomes an urge to reduce reality to models that we believe to be meaningful only because we have made them ourselves, but that fail miserably in accounting for the dynamics of living systems as exemplified by a human being's act of self-transcendence, autopoietic existence, and self-organization.

Model building is a continuously ongoing activity. It becomes a dangerous trap if we take the stilts it offers to be reality itself and allow ourselves to be caught in the inevitably static mode, which turns in no time into a stronghold of resistance against change. We need models for an orientation that ultimately coincides with evolution, but any model that blocks life's flow acts as a pollutant. In other words, we need a vision through which we can reach beyond our own limitations as individuals, not pseudovisions, which because of their autistic nature are merely variations of a single *idée fixe*. Such an *idée fixe* is the reduction of reality to a disjunctive aggregate of atomic sensa and their contingent associations, with specific reference to the concrete human individual as a self who owns these sensa.

Dṛṣṭi (vision). Sthiramati's account of the ambiguity of the term "vision," which may be vision proper but also an *idée fixe,* is most lucid. He says:

> Although this term can be used in a general way, here in the context of the system pollutants, it is used with reference to five viewpoints that are of a pollutant nature and that have to do with reductionistic tendencies. This pollutant character, however, does not apply to a proper (world) perspective belonging to the worldly order, which is untainted. While the five viewpoints are alike in their polluted assessment of reality, they differ from each other in their objectives.[10]

The above mentioned varieties of what amounts to a pseudovision of reality tend to confirm an individual in his predetermined opinions and prevent him from acquiring and assimilating whatever new information may come from various sources. All of them, on closer inspection, display an inordinate sense of self that is best described by the slang term "ego trip." This may take the route of a sterile rationalism that attempts to reduce all phenomena to one level of explanation and is irrationally motivated by hostility toward, and contempt for, anything that challenges its "objective" approach. Or it may take the route of any of the aberrations and excesses of the so-called search for spiritual satisfaction, which is equally hostile towards anything that might involve a modicum of critical acumen.

Vicikitsā (dissent). No less an obstacle is provided by another pollutant termed dissent (*vicikitsā*), but which also connotes hesitancy and indecision. Sthiramati has this to say. "Dissent is a disclaimer of the validity of the relationship between one's actions and their consequences, of the four truths, and of the three jewels. Dissent is (the presentation of) different opinions: something might be the case, something might not be the case. It is rightly said to belong to a different category than critical acumen."[11]

It need hardly be pointed out again that all these pollutants have sociocultural implications, too.

The Quasi Pollutants

The distinction which is drawn between pollutants and quasi pollutants reveals a remarkable insight on the part of the Buddhist thinkers into the working of an organism that at each moment presents a different behavioral aspect. There are differences between differences. Some may go deeper and persist longer than others, which may be of only a passing nature. The process of differentiation and the resultant difference indicate a break in the primordial unity. This unity itself may be a mixture of symmetry and complementarity. In terms of mind, mind as a broken symmetry is still symmetrical in view of the pervasive impact of the "wide-ranging" pollutants, while its complementarity is reflected in its subject-object division. There can be no subject without an object and vice versa, in spite of ideological ("metaphysical") claims to the contrary. Within

this overall polluted operational state termed "mind" or "attitude," other pollutants with a limited range of effectiveness are also at work, and it is these that are termed "quasi pollutants." They are state-specific in an individual's overt behavior as expressed in bodily gestures, vocal intonations, and ego-centered thought patterns. Being derivative, as it were, of the wide-ranging pollutants, in spite of their limited range, they reinforce the wide-ranging ones in such a way that between them there exists a feedback loop that remains mostly "negative."

It may not be easy to draw a clear line between pollutants and quasi pollutants. This difficulty is reflected in the Buddhist texts. Already in the discussion of the pollutants in the *Abhidharmakośa,* Vasubandhu expressed his reservations concerning what other followers of the Abhidharma tradition considered pollutants. He went so far as to ridicule them as mere literalists with no comprehension of the fact that the use of language is intentional and connotative, not denotative. Anyhow, from the accounts by the various thinkers and authors who played an important role in the shaping of Buddhist thought, we cannot but come to the conclusion that in their attempt to come clearly to grips with this darker side of human nature, they constantly had to review the problem of what should be considered pollutants and what quasi pollutants.[12]

Remarkable insight into the working of the human mind, always concerned with practical living and the acceptance of interpersonal social responsibilities, is once again revealed in the discussion of two pairs of facets in the psychic household that may or may not act as quasi pollutants.

The first pair is regret and drowsiness. Regret (Skt. *kaukṛtya*) is the feeling of deep disappointment at having or not having done something. It is a quasi pollutant when the scar left by something done or not done continues to give rise to the feeling of disappointment at not having done something negative (unhealthy, despicable) and having done something positive instead. By contrast, regret is not a quasi pollutant (nor is it a pollutant in the strict sense of the word) when it makes one sad about not having done something positive when one had the chance of doing so.[13]

Drowsiness (Skt. *middha*) is understood as a soporific power that makes the mind withdraw from what usually attracts its attention and involvement. As an aspect of *moha* (delusion–opaqueness-of-mind), its functioning as a quasi pollutant derives from an attitude that is dominated by the pollutants proper in which it presents a kind of somnambulistic state on the part of the person afflicted by it. In a healthy person, it refers to the normal rhythm of sleeping and waking.[14]

The second pair is *vitarka* and *vicāra,* which are difficult to render in English except by paraphrasing what they convey. Both notions have a long history, but lost much of their significance as process-oriented thinking became more and more prevalent. The high esteem in which these

functions were once held was due to the fact that they were part of a concentration exercise, which, however, remained within the domain of the representational. This is evident from Buddhaghosa's definition of *vitakka* (Pali for *vitarka*) as

> a probing, a conjecturing. Its essential feature is to make the mind move up to (its) object; (in other words), it hoists the mind onto (its) object. Just as someone goes up to (and into) the royal palace with the help of a person who is the king's favorite or relative or friend, so the mind climbs onto (its) object with the help of *vitakka;* therefore it is said that its essential feature is to make the mind move up to (its) object.[15]

A more detailed discussion, which also unifies the different notions held about this function by various schools of Buddhism—as, for instance, the Sautrāntikas (much favored by Vasubandhu)—is presented by Sthiramati, who has this to say:

> *Vitarka* is a searching mental addressing (of an objective presence), a special operation by critical acumen (*prajñā*) and project execution (*cetanā*). "Searching" means to ask the question "What is this?" and it proceeds by trying to pinpoint (the meaning of the presence). "Mental addressing" is a metaphorical expression for voicing (the meaning of the presence by naming it). The special operation by project execution and critical acumen is such that project execution directs the mind to its object (task), while critical acumen distinguishes between (the object's) positive and negative aspects.[16]

He goes on to say that *vitarka* is a polluted operation when it focuses on hedonism, destruction, and cruelty. It is a nonpolluted operation when it focuses on renunciation.[17]

The same holds for *vicāra,* which according to Sthiramati, following an old tradition, is "a scanning mental addressing (of the objective presence). It makes the judgment, "This is it," because that which has previously come into the focus of its purview is now circumscribed and defined. Both *vitarka* and *vicāra,* serving as a basis for an amicable or inimical disposition, are differentiated from each other in that the former is coarse and the latter subtle."[18] Sthiramati goes on to say that *vicāra* constitutes a polluted operation when it is directed toward ruining another person, but it is a nonpolluted operation when it is directed toward helping others.[19]

Buddhaghosa merely stresses the discursive character of *vicāra,* but illustrates the inseparableness of *vitarka* and *vicāra,* the one coarse and the other subtle, by a number of similes, such as the striking of a bell and the reverberations of its sound.[20] But nowhere does he say that these two functions are also of a quasi pollutant nature.

Disputed Dharmas
Early Buddhist Theories on Existence

An Annotated Translation
of the Section on Factors Dissociated from Thought
from Saṅghabhadra's *Nyāyānusāra*

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Chapter 4

Conditioned Forces Dissociated from Thought

In the Abhidharma doctrinal analyses and taxonomies of experienced phenomena, the conditioned forces dissociated from thought *(cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra)* and, in particular, their nature, function, and existential status became major points of disagreement among the early Buddhist schools. The importance of the dissociated forces as a focus for later scholastic Buddhist controversies is indicated by Saṅghabhadra in the introduction to his **Abhidharmasamayapradīpikā*. As an illustration of the range of disagreement among the schools, Saṅghabhadra lists forty-four topics of controversy, six of which directly concern the conditioned forces dissociated from thought.[1]

The isolation of each of the conditioned forces dissociated from thought as a discrete factor and the establishment of the independent category of dissociated forces contributed to significant changes in traditional Buddhist taxonomies and was instrumental in the emergence of a new classification of all factors into five groups. Though the separate category of dissociated forces is not mentioned in the *sūtras*, both the category of forces dissociated from thought and the individual factors belonging to that category are mentioned in the earliest northern Indian Abhidharma texts.[2] The two categories of "dissociated" and "associated" are also used in the twofold classificatory schemata *(mātikā)* of the Theravādin Abhidhamma tradition. For example, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* classifies all factors *(dhamma)* as associated with or dissociated from causes *(hetu)*, the fluxes *(āsava)*, thought *(citta)*, and so on.[3] Though the phrase 'dissociated from thought' *(cittavippayutta)* appears in the Theravādin classifications, unlike the corresponding phrase *cittaviprayukta* in northern Indian Abhidharma texts, it does not de-

note a separate category of discrete factors. The *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* specifies *cittavippayutta* as follows: "Form and *nibbāna*—these are the factors dissociated from thought."[4] By contrast, the *Prakaraṇapāda,* in its own twofold classificatory schema of factors as associated or dissociated, specifies the term 'dissociated factors' as denoting not only form and the unconditioned factors, which are dissociated from thought, but also the separate category of conditioned forces dissociated from thought.[5] The explanations of 'dissociated factors' in these two texts indicate that in Theravādin texts *cittavippayutta* signifies dissociation from thought alone and, in contrast to the Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma tradition, does not also imply the possibility of dissociation from both thought *(citta)* and form *(rūpa).* These explanations also demonstrate that it was only within northern Indian Abhidharma texts that the conditioned forces dissociated from thought were extended from a simple descriptive classification to a distinct category of discrete factors.

This newly established category of discrete factors dissociated from both thought and form presented a challenge to the traditional methods of classifying all experienced phenomena. The traditional lists of the five aggregates *(skandha),* the twelve sense spheres *(āyatana),* and name and form *(nāmarūpa)* were ill-suited to incorporate factors that are neither thought nor form, nor associated with either. For example, the *Dharmaskandha* subsumes the factors dissociated from thought within the forces aggregate *(saṁskāraskandha)* by dividing it into the two subgroups of associated and dissociated.[6] The traditional sense of the forces aggregate *(saṁskāraskandha)* as referring to mental factors, predominantly volition *(cetanā),* was thus expanded through the addition of the non-mental dissociated factors.[7] The inclusion of these dissociated forces within the *saṁskāraskandha* contributed to a certain tension in the meaning of the term *saṁskāra* evident in later Abhidharma discussions of the term, which the translation chosen here of 'forces' attempts to reflect.[8]

The challenge presented by these discrete dissociated forces to the traditional categories of factors contributed significantly to the creation of new taxonomies: specifically, the new fivefold taxonomy of form *(rūpa),* thought *(citta),* thought concomitants *(caitta),* dissociated forces *(cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra),* and unconditioned factors *(asaṁskṛtadharma).* Unlike the earlier classifications according to the five aggregates or the twelve sense spheres, which appear to have been motivated by an attempt to demonstrate non-self and impermanence, this new fivefold taxonomy reflects a concern for completeness, an interest in classification for its own sake, and a desire to demonstrate the individual, distinctive characteristic of each of the factors classified.[9] This fivefold taxonomy is traced by the tradition to the Ābhidhārmika, Vasumitra,[10] and indeed, it is the first

topic treated in the *Prakaraṇapāda* attributed to him.[11] Regardless of Vasumitra's actual historical contribution, the impetus for this fivefold taxonomy can in part be found in the recognition within early Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma texts of the discrete and real existence of both conditioned forces dissociated from thought and unconditioned factors as well as in the difficulty of including these two types of factors within the traditional categories.[12]

4.1 The Name 'Conditioned Forces Dissociated from Thought'

The name 'conditioned forces dissociated from thought' *(cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra)* was interpreted differently by the various early Buddhist schools and texts. As noted previously, Theravādin Abhidhamma texts understood the term *cittavippayutta* to refer to form, or to form and *nibbāna;* in other words, the term was descriptive referring simply to those factors that were not associated with thought.[13] For the northern Indian Abhidharma texts, *cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra* was not simply a negatively descriptive category representing those factors other than thought, but rather referred to a discrete set of separately existing factors apart from both thought and form. The **Abhidharmahṛdaya* makes this clear by referring to conditioned forces dissociated from thought as "not form and not associated:" "They are not form because they are not included within form; they are not associated because they are without an object-support *(ālambana);* they are conditioned forces because they are constructed by conditions."[14] Similarly, Vasubandhu states: "These conditioned forces are called 'dissociated from thought' because they are not associated with thought and they do not have form as their intrinsic nature."[15]

Saṅghabhadra presents both a general and a specific interpretation of the name 'conditioned forces dissociated from thought' *(cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra).*[16] First, according to the general interpretation, the conditioned forces dissociated from thought include those factors that are not associated with thought, that do not share the same sense basis or the same object-support as thought, and do not arise associated with either thought or thought concomitants. In the second specific interpretation, Saṅghabhadra explains the significance of each of the members of the name *cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra* using a method of definition by exclusion typical of Abhidharma texts. The first member *citta* 'thought' signifies that these forces are of the same category as thought in the sense that they are not form. Since thought concomitants would also be classified as of the same category as thought,

the second member *viprayukta* 'dissociated' is added in order to exclude thought concomitants, which, by definition, are associated with thought. The unconditioned factors are of the same category as thought in the sense that they are not form and yet they, like the dissociated forces, are not associated with thought. Therefore, in order to exclude unconditioned factors, the final member *saṁskāra* 'conditioned forces' is added. Thus, the name *cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra* can be interpreted either as an abbreviation for *rūpacittaviprayuktasaṁskāra* 'dissociated from form and thought'[17] or, as in Saṅghabhadra's interpretation, simply as *(cittaviprayuktasaṁskāra)*, in which the initial member *citta* 'thought' can itself be understood to exclude form, thereby, obviating the need to supply *rūpa* 'form' as the first member of the compound.

4.2 Variant Lists of the Dissociated Forces

Though the category of conditioned forces dissociated from thought is attested in northern Indian Abhidharma texts of all periods, the specific factors included within the category vary. This variation is indicated by the phrase 'and [other factors of] that type' *(ca)*, which is appended to the lists of conditioned forces dissociated from thought in the *Dharmaskandha* and the *Prakaraṇapāda*, and which is even found as late as the **Nyāyānusāra*.[18] Among the early northern Indian Abhidharma texts, the **Śāriputrābhidharmaśāstra* does not include a list of factors explicitly identified as dissociated, but includes, in a list of factors that compose the factors sense sphere *(dharmāyatana)*, several factors that are identified explicitly as dissociated forces in lists offered by other texts: namely, birth *(jāti)*, senescence *(jarā)*, death *(maraṇa)*, vitality *(jīvita)*, the equipoise of non-conception *(asaṁjñisamāpatti)*, and the equipoise of cessation *(nirodhasamāpatti)*.[19] The *Dharmaskandha* presents a list of sixteen factors explicitly acknowledged to be dissociated forces, which are also found in both translations of the *Prakaraṇapāda*, in the *Sa-p'o-to-tsung wu shih lun*, and in the *A-p'i-t'an wu fa hsing ching*. [20] These include:

1. possession *(prāpti)*
2. equipoise of non-conception *(asaṁjñisamāpatti)*
3. equipoise of cessation *(nirodhasamāpatti)*
4. state of non-conception *(āsaṁjñika)*
5. vitality *(jīvita)*
6. homogeneous character *(sabhāgatā)*

7. acquisition of the corporeal basis *(*āśrayapratilābha)* or acquisition of the substratum *(*upadhipratilābha)*
8. acquisition of the given entity *(*vastuprāpti)*
9. acquisition of the sense spheres *(*āyatanaprāpti)*
10. birth *(jāti)*
11. senescence *(jarā)*
12. continuance *(sthiti)*
13. desinence *(anityatā)*
14. name set *(nāmakāya)*
15. phrase set *(padakāya)*
16. syllable set *(vyañjanakāya)*.

In the **Abhidharmāmṛtarasaśāstra*, Ghoṣaka includes accompaniment *(samanvāgama)* rather than possession *(prāpti)* and adds one factor—the nature of an ordinary person *(pṛthagjanatva)*—to this list of sixteen.[21] Dharmaśrī's and Upaśānta's **Abhidharmahṛdayas* as well as the **Saṁyuktābhidharmahṛdayaśāstra* propose fourteen factors; like the **Abhidharmāmṛtarasaśāstra*, these texts omit the three specific varieties of acquisition from the previous list of sixteen and add the nature of an ordinary person.[22] The **Tattvasiddhiśāstra* omits homogeneous character and adds non-possession, and instead of the fourfold group of birth, senescence, continuance, and desinence, includes birth or arising *(utpāda)*, passing away *(vyaya)*, change in continuance *(sthityanyathātva)*, old age *(jarā)*, and death *(maraṇa)*. [23] Finally, the *Abhidharmāvatāraśāstra* and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* enumerate fourteen factors:[24]

1. possession *(prāpti)*
2. non-possession *(aprāpti)*
3. equipoise of non-conception *(asaṁjñisamāpatti)*
4. equipoise of cessation *(nirodhasamāpatti)*
5. state of non-conception *(āsaṁjñika)*
6. vitality *(jīvita)*
7. homogeneous character *(sabhāgatā)*

8. birth *(jāti)*
9. continuance *(sthiti)*
10. senescence *(jarā)*
11. desinence *(anityatā)*
12. name set *(nāmakāya)*
13. phrase set *(padakāya)*
14. syllable set *(vyañjanakāya),*

Saṅghabhadra accepts these fourteen factors, but claims that factors other than these fourteen should also be admitted. The additional factors may either be admitted to exist separately as discrete factors, or they may be subsumed within one of the established fourteen. As an example of the first type, Saṅghabhadra recognizes complete assemblage *(sāmagrī)* as a discrete factor, thereby bringing the total number of conditioned forces dissociated from thought to fifteen. Unfortunately, Saṅghabhadra does not indicate which of the various connotations of complete assemblage he intends.[25] For example, *sāmagrī* can be used to refer to an assemblage of conditions required for the production of a given factor or to refer to the cause of the cognition of any composite object as a whole or to refer to the basis of concord in the monastic community.[26] Whatever Saṅghabhadra's original intention, the commentators interpret *sāmagrī* in this list of dissociated forces as referring to the basis for concord in the monastic community.[27]

As an example of the second variety of additional factors, which are not considered to exist separately but rather should be subsumed within one of the established fourteen conditioned forces dissociated from thought, Saṅghabhadra offers varieties of possession or acquisition: namely, acquisition of the aggregates *(*skandhapratilābha)*, and so on. The commentators indicate that acquisition of the aggregates is one of a group of three including acquisition of the elements *(*dhātupratilābha),* and acquisition of the sense spheres *(*āyatanapratilābha).*[28] These correspond to three varieties of acquisition included in early Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma lists of conditioned forces dissociated from thought: namely, acquisition of the corporeal basis *(*āśrayapratilābha, *upadhipratilābha),* acquisition of the given entity *(*vastupratilābha),* and acquisition of the sense spheres *(*āyatanapratilābha).*[29] Though the precise meaning of these three varieties of acquisition is unclear, they appear as a set in discussions of the process

of rebirth and refer to those forces by which one is said to acquire the corporeal basis, elements, or sense spheres characteristic of a particular rebirth state.[30] The term *pratilābha* is used with this sense in the *sūtra.* For example, acquiring a mode of personal existence *(attabhāvapaṭilābha)* is used as a standard idiom to describe the process of rebirth.[31] Or, in the definitions of the twelve members of the dependent origination formula, birth *(jāti)* is explained as the appearance of the aggregates *(khandhānaṁ pātubhāvo)* or the acquisition of the sense spheres *(āyatanānaṁ paṭilābho).*[32] The Chinese translation of the *Saṁyuktāgama* as well as the *Arthaviniścayasūtra* include in their explanations of birth the acquisition of the aggregates *(skandhapratilambha),* elements *(dhātupratilambha),* and sense spheres *(āyatanānāṁ pratilambhaḥ),* as well as the arising of the controlling factor of vitality *(jīvitendriyasyo 'dbhavaḥ).*[33] Regardless of their original meaning or later function, for Saṅghabhadra, these three types of acquisition are not to be recognized as separately existing forces, but rather are to be subsumed within the larger category of possession.

4.3 Rationale for the Category of Dissociated Forces

The activities of the conditioned forces dissociated from thought are extremely varied, ranging from providing a basis for homogeneity within a grouping of sentient beings to constituting the medium of syllables, names, and phrases, through which meaning is conveyed. Often for different doctrinal reasons in the case of each force, a dissociated force is proposed and its existence is accepted in order to account for some experientially accepted or doctrinally necessary activity. Furthermore, specific doctrinal constraints, again often different in each case, prohibit that force's association with either form or thought. Given the diversity of activities explained and doctrinal constraints satisfied, the category of dissociated forces appears to be a derivative category with no single integrating principle. Instead, it is a miscellany containing functionally unrelated factors that are unified only by their successful operation demanding their separation from both form and thought.

Though there is textual evidence of disagreements among the various schools on the character and activity of particular dissociated forces, the central controversy underlying and directing these discussions concerns the existential status of the individual forces, and more generally, the acceptance of the class of dissociated forces as a whole. Like all factors *(dharma)* enumerated by the Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣikas, the dissociated forces were

claimed to exist as real entities *(dravya)* by virtue of their own unique intrinsic nature *(svabhāva)*. The existence of these factors is proven through inference from the particular activity that each performs.[34] Each of the dissociated forces corresponds to some doctrinally required or to some generally recognized, commonly experienced activity. However, the attribution of a specific activity to a particular factor and the existential status of that discrete factor continued to be subjects of heated controversy in early northern Indian Abhidharma texts long after the dissociated forces were first proposed. For example, in the case of certain dissociated forces, even though their activities were generally acknowledged, their existence was, by some schools, considered provisional and by others, notably the Sarvāstivādins, considered real. In the case of other dissociated forces, their supposed activities were attributed to still other generally accepted factors, thereby obviating any need to posit the discrete existence of a new dissociated factor.

The category of dissociated forces, as the category of factors added most recently to the traditional taxonomies of all existent factors, provides significant clues to the development of Buddhist doctrine and the evolving importance of certain areas of doctrinal inquiry. In particular, investigations into the individual character and existential status of each of the dissociated forces can help to clarify the controversies that these dissociated forces resolved or stimulated and to reveal the logic underlying specific directions of doctrinal analysis. Such investigations can also help to indicate clearly the degree and nature of doctrinal divergence among early Buddhist exegetes as well as the religio-philosophical issues current in the larger pan-Indian sectarian context. As will become evident in Saṅghabhadra's treatment, doctrinal elaboration of the dissociated forces represents a significant stage in the development of Buddhist psychological and soteriological models and, in particular, in the variety and complexity of Buddhist ontological and causal speculation.

Notes

[1] *ASPŚ* 1 p. 778b12ff. These six topics are: (1) the conditioned forces dissociated from thought do not exist as discrete real entities; (2) conditioned forces dissociated from thought abide for several moments; (3) the equipoise of non-conception and the equipoise of cessation are both characterized by present thought; (4) those who die within the heaven of non-conception all fall into bad rebirth states; (5) all sentient beings lack untimely death (a controversial point raised in the discussion of vitality); (6) those who obtain factors connected to the four stages of penetration *(nirvedhabhāgīya)* do not fall into bad rebirth states (a controversial point raised in the discussion of the nature of an ordinary person *(pṛthagjanatva)*, which is identified as a variety of non-possession).

[2] *SP* 3 p. 377c3, 6 p. 392b26ff.; *DS* 10 p. 501b16ff.; *VSŚ* 1 p. 725c5ff., 3 p. 738c20, 8 p. 738b24; *ŚAŚ* 21 p. 664c18. See also Mizuno (1956a).

[3] *DhS Dukamātikā* p. 2–6. See also *VBh Abhidhammabhājanīya* p. 12ff.

[4] *DhS* p. 254: *rūpaṁ ca nibbānaṁ ca ime dhammā cittavippayuttā*. See also *KV* p. 447; *VBh* p. 12.

[5] *PP* (1542) 6 p. 716b8–9, (1541) 4 p. 648c29ff. See also *PP* (1542) 6 p. 714a24ff., (1541) 4 p. 647a5ff., where conditioned factors dissociated from thought are defined as including "form, thought, conditioned forces dissociated from thought and the unconditioned," since thought cannot be associated with itself. See *TSŚ* 2 no. 18 p. 252a21ff., which offers both the twofold classification of factors as associated with and dissociated from thought and the threefold classification of form, thought, and factors dissociated from thought.

[6] *DS* 10 p. 501b16ff. Similarly, the *Saṅgītiparyāya* (*SP* 1 p. 396c6ff.) places the three unconditioned factors within the category of name in the twofold taxonomy of name and form. The *Dharmaskandha* (*DS* 10 p. 500c20ff.) includes the dissociated forces and the unconditioned factors within the factors sense sphere *(dharmāyatana)*. Cf. *VBh* pp. 67, 79, 97.

[7] For an examination and refutation of the view, attributed to Śrīlāta, that the *saṁskāraskandha* is limited to *cetanā*, see *NAS* 2 p. 339b14ff.

[8] See *MVB* 25 p. 127a6ff.; *VB* 6 p. 458a11ff. The connotation of *saṁskāra* also differs depending upon its context of use. It can be used to refer to the motivations aggregate *(saṁskāraskandha)*, in which case it includes both the thought concomitants and the dissociated forces. It can also be used to refer to all conditioned factors, including factors that are form and not form, associated and dissociated. See *MVB* 74 p. 384c2ff.; *NAS* 10 p. 383c2ff. Cf. Katsura (1974) 62ff.

[9] Yamada (1959) 97ff. suggests that lists of the five aggregates and the twelve sense spheres were not intended as taxonomies of all phenomena, but rather were intended to establish non-self. See also Sakurabe (1969a) 65ff.; Yamada (1959) 397ff.; Watanabe (1954) 156ff.

[10] *SAKV* p. 167.22; **Pañcavastukavibhāṣāśāstra* *T* 28 (1555) p. 989b2. Among the many traditional references to a "Vasumitra" the most significant for this topic of the fivefold taxonomy include: (1) the master cited frequently in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* (2) one of the four Sarvāstivādin masters who proposed interpretations of the phrase *sarvam asti;* (3) the author of the *Prakaraṇapāda* (*T* 26 (1541), *T* 26 (1542)); (4) the author of the *Dhātukāya* (*T* 26 (1540)); (5) the author of the **Pañcavastuka;* and (6) the author of the **Āryavasumitrabodhisattvasaṅgītiśāstra* (*T* 28 (1549)). For discussions of these various Vasumitras, see de La Vallée Poussin (1923–1931) intro. p. xliiiff.; Watanabe (1954) 194ff.; Yamada (1959) 391ff.; Lin (1949) 42–52; Demiéville (1958) 423–425.

[11] *PP* (1541) 1 p. 627a9ff., (1542) 1 p. 692b23ff. See also **Pañcavastuka [A-p'i-t'an wu fa hsing ching]* *T* 28 (1557) p. 998c9–11; **Pañcavastuka [Sa-p'o-to-tsung wu shih lun]* *T* 28 (1556); and **Pañcavastukavibhāṣāśāstra* *T* 28 (1555), Dharmatrāta's commentary on Vasumitra's **Pañcavastuka* (see Imanishi (1969)). The status of the *Prakaraṇapāda* as a compilation and its relation to other works attributed to Vasumitra such as the *Pañcavastuka* and the *Dhātukāya* are still unclear. However, the existence of the **Pañcavastuka [A-p'i-t'an wu fa hsing ching]* (*T* 28 (1557)), which was translated by An Shih-kao in the second century, suggests that a text espousing this fivefold analysis at some time circulated independently apart from the present *Prakaraṇapāda*. See Yamada (1959) 395ff.; Demiéville (1958) 425; Frauwallner (1963) 20ff.; and Ui Hakuju's study and translation of many of the works of An Shih-kao (Ui ([1961] 1971) 380ff.).

[12] Though this fivefold taxonomy was considered the characteristic Sarvāstivādin classification of factors in China and Japan, it was only one of many methods of classification and textual organization used in Indian Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma texts. For

example, virtually all northern Indian Abhidharma texts employ the three categories of the aggregates, sense spheres, and elements. The *Jñānaprasthāna* and the *Vibhāṣā* compendia also give evidence of a system of textual organization into forty-two sections with ten perspectives (*JP* (1543) 8 p. 802b7ff., (1544) 5 p. 943b5ff.; *AVB* 37 p. 270b11ff.; *VB* 4 p. 439a7ff.; *MVB* 46 p. 236c12ff., 71 p. 366a11ff., 90 p. 466a17ff.). The *Dhātukāya* examines in great detail the relation between the category of dissociated forces and the classifications by aggregate, sense sphere, and element and presupposes the fivefold taxonomy throughout its discussion. *DK chung* p. 617b18ff. See also Sakurabe (1969a) 73; Yamada (1959) 108ff.

[13] Cf. also *ŚAŚ* 21 p. 664c18ff.; **Pañcavastuka [A-p'i-t'an wu fa hsing ching] T* 28 (1557) p. 998c23.

[14] *AHŚ-D* 4 p. 830c25ff., *AHŚ-U* 6 p. 866a8ff. See also *SAHŚ* 9 p. 943b6ff.

[15] *AKB* 2.36a p. 62.14–15. *ime saṁskārā na cittena saṁyuktā na ca rūpasvabhāvā iti cittaviprayuktā ucyate.*

[16] See *infra*, translation, *NAS* 12 p. 396c13ff. See also Tan'e 4 p. 861a11ff.; Kaidō 4 p. 88a11; P'u-kuang 4 p. 84a29ff.; Fa-pao 4 p. 535b22ff.; *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Saeki ([1886] 1978) 1: 177.

[17] Fa-pao (Fa-pao 4 p. 535b19ff.) offers *arūpa-acittaviprayuktasaṁskāra* as the full expansion of the compound. See also Tan'e 4 p. 860c9ff.

[18] See *infra*, translation and notes to *NAS* 12 p. 396c11. Despite the later classification of seventy-five factors supposedly enumerated within the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Vasubandhu himself refers, at points, to at least fifteen dissociated forces. See *AKB* 4.98 p. 260.17ff., for discord within the monastic community *(saṅghabheda)* as a dissociated force.

[19] *ŚAŚ* 1 p. 526c6ff., 21 p. 663a17ff. Embedded within this list of apparently dissociated factors are two factors—*chieh* and *te-kuo*—whose equivalents are unclear. The text (*ŚAŚ* 21 p. 663a24—b1) interprets *chieh* as bonds *(*saṁyojana)* and *te-kuo* either as the realization or attainment of the fruit *(*phalādhigama, *phalaprāpti)*, or as the fruit of realization *(*adhigamaphala)*. Kimura Taiken (Kimura (1937) 147) explains *chieh* as equivalent to homogeneous character *(*sabhāgatā)* and interprets the compound, *te-kuo*, as referring to the three varieties of possession—acquisition of the corporeal basis *(*āśrayapratilābha, *upadhipratilābha)*, acquisition of the given entity *(*vastupratilābha)*, and acquisition of the sense spheres *(*āyatanapratilābha)*—that appear in the *Dharmaskandha, Prakaraṇapāda*, and other early Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma texts . Watanabe Baiyū (Watanabe (1934) *jō* 13 note 33) divides the compound, *te-kuo*, into possession *(prāpti)* and fruit *(phala)* and interprets fruit as the effect of the equipoise of non-conception, that is, the state of non-conception *(āsaṁjñika)*. If we accept the meaning of *chieh* as "bonds" and assume that this partial list does indeed refer, implicitly, to dissociated factors, then the **Śāriputrābhidharmaśāstra* may be adopting the view that contaminants *(anuśaya)*, or bonds, are dissociated from thought. See Sakamoto (1981) 385; Sasaki (1975) 104ff. The meaning of "attainment of the fruit" for *te-kuo* would be consistent with the primary use in early Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma texts of *prāpti* in relation to praxis and the abandonment of defilements.

[20] *DS* 10 p. 500c20ff., 10 p. 501b20ff.; *PP* (1541) 1 p. 627a18, (1541) 1 p. 628c13ff., (1542) 1 p. 692c5ff., (1542) 1 p. 694a19ff.; **Pañcavastuka [Sa-p'o-to-tsung wu shih lun] T* 28 (1556) p. 995c19ff., p. 997c18ff.; **Pañcavastuka [A-p'i-t'an wu fa hsing ching] T* 28 (1557) p. 998c23ff., p.1001a16ff. The *Saṅgītiparyāya* refers individually to most of the factors included in this list, but not to them as a group: *jīvita SP* 1 p. 368c18; *asaṁjñisamāpatti, nirodhasamāpatti SP* 3 p. 377c1; *sabhāgatā* and the three varieties of *prāpti SP* 11 p. 415c25, *prāpti SP* 18 p. 442c28ff., and *nāmakāya*, and so on. *SP* 14 p. 425a1. The editors of the *Taishō* edition of the **Vibhāṣāśāstra* (*VB* 6 p. 458a16ff.) list sixteen factors substituting death *(maraṇa)* for continuance *(sthiti)*, while the three editions of the Sung, Yüan, and Ming, and the old Sung edition list fifteen factors omitting death. The **Mahāvibhāṣā* and **Abhidharmavibhāṣāśāstra* do not provide a list of dissociated forces, but identify at least nineteen factors as conditioned forces dissociated from thought. These include, in addition to those listed here, the nature of being an ordinary person *(pṛthagjanatva)*, retrogression *(parihāṇi)*, restraint of the sense organs *(indriyasaṁvara)*, lack of restraint of the sense organs *(indriyāsaṁvara)*, and so on. See Nishi ([1933] 1975b) 420–423. The proliferation of factors claimed to be dissociated forces is arrested by identifying certain factors as varieties of others: for example, the state in which the roots of virtuous factors have been eradicated *(samucchinnakuśalamūla)* is identified as a variety of non-acquisition *(asamanvāgama)*. See *MVB* 35 p. 182c4ff.

[21] *AARŚ hsia* p. 979b27ff.

[22] *AHŚ-D* (1550) 4 p. 830c20ff.; *AHŚ-U* (1551) 6 p. 866a3ff.; *SAHŚ* 9 p. 942c24ff.

[23] *TSŚ* 7 no. 94 p. 289a21ff. See also Katsura (1974) 86ff.

[24] *AAŚ shang* p. 982a4ff., *hsia* p. 986a28ff.; *AKB* 2.35 p. 62.11ff. For the twenty-four dissociated factors recognized by the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra*, see *YBŚ* 3 p. 293c7ff., 52 p. 585c9ff., 56 p. 607a23ff.; K'uei-chi's *Ch'eng wei-shih lun shu-chi T* 43 (1830) 2 p. 276b13ff. For the twenty-three listed in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, see *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Gokhale (1947) 18ff.; *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Pradhan (1950) 10ff.; *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*, Tatia (1976) 9ff.; cf. *Abhidharmasamuccaya T* 31 (1605) 1 p. 665b28ff.; *Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā T* 31 (1606) 2 p. 700a16ff.

[25] Both *sāmagrī* and *asāmagrī* are included among the twenty-four dissociated factors enumerated by the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* (*YBŚ* 3 p. 293c7ff.), and *sāmagrī* is there defined as the complete assemblage of causes or conditions capable of producing factors: *YBŚ* 52 p. 587b29ff., 56 p. 608a3ff. The same definition appears in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and *Bhāṣya* (*Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Gokhale (1947) 19; cf. *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Pradhan (1950) 11): *sāmagrī katamā. hetuphalapratyayasamavadhāne sāmagrī 'ti prajñaptiḥ;* (*Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*, Tatia (1976) 10–11): ... *tadyathā vijñānākhyasya hi hetuphalasye 'ndriyāparibhedo viṣayābhāsagamanaṁ taj jñānaṁ manaskārapratyupasthānaṁ ce 'ti. evam anyatrā 'pi yojitavyam.* In accordance with the **Mahāvibhāṣā* (*MVB* 60 p. 313b1ff., 116 p. 602b6ff.) and the **Saṁyuktābhidharmahṛdayaśāstra* (*SAHŚ* 3 p. 898c19ff.), the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (*AKB* 4.98 p. 260.17ff.) defines discord within the monastic community *(saṅghabheda)* as non-complete assemblage *(asāmagrī)* and declares this to be a dissociated factor, thereby indicating that, even for Vasubandhu, the number of dissociated forces is not strictly limited to fourteen. The Chinese commentators debate whether or not any conditioned forces dissociated from thought other than the fourteen listed here should be accepted, and note that according to some, *sāmagrī* should be considered a variety of homogeneous character, and *asāmagrī*, a variety of non-possession. See Yüan-yü 9 p. 234c11ff.; Shen-t'ai 4 p. 317a18ff.; P'u-kuang 4 p. 84b11ff.; Fa-pao 4 p. 535c2ff.; Shūshō 7 p. 155b22ff.; Fujaku 3 p. 134a15ff.; Kaidō 4 p. 88a5ff.

[26] As an assemblage of conditions, see *MVB* 108 p. 561b25. As the cause of the cognition of composites, see *MVB* 21 p. 109b25ff.; *NAS* 4 p. 350c29ff., 8 p. 372c22ff. For a discussion of *saṅghabheda*, discord within the monastic community, which is identified with *asāmagrī* and included among the conditioned forces dissociated from thought, see *MVB* 60 p. 313b1ff., 116 p. 602b6ff.; *NAS* 43 p. 587b8ff.; *SAKV* p. 142.29.

[27] See P'u-kuang 4 p. 84b9ff.; Fa-pao 4 p. 535c2ff.; Yüan-yü 9 p. 234c11ff.; Shen-t'ai 4 p. 317b1ff.; Tan'e 4 p. 860b25ff.; Kaidō 4 p. 87c18ff.; Shūshō 7 p. 155b6ff.

[28] Yüan-yü 9 p. 234c12ff.; Shen-t'ai 4 p. 317b15ff.

[29] P'u-kuang 4 p. 84c22ff.; *SP* 11 p. 415c19ff. *passim; DS* 10 p. 500c21; *PP* (1541) 1 p. 628c20ff., (1542) 1 p. 694a24ff.; **Pañcavastuka [Sa-p'o-to-tsung wu shih lun] T* 28 (1556) p. 997c24ff.; **Pañcavastuka [A-p'i-t'an wu fa hsing ching] T* 28 (1557) p. 1001a25ff. See Imanishi (1969) 8, which suggests that the Sanskrit equivalent for *te* in

this case is *pratilābha,* and not *prāpti.* See also the **Mahāvibhāṣā* (*MVB* 172 p. 865b12–13) where **āśraya(upadhi)–, *vastu–,* and **āyatanapratilābha* are identified, respectively, with **dhātu–, *skandha–,* and **āyatanapratilābha.* For a different interpretation of these three varieties of acquisition, see Watanabe (1936) 314 notes 99–101. See also *YBŚ* 10 p. 323c8ff., 84 p. 769a14ff.

[30] See *SP* 11 p. 415c19ff.; *MVB* 172 p. 865b9ff. *passim,* 176 p. 883a10ff.

[31] *SN* 19.1.1 *Aṭṭhīsutta* 2: 256; *SA* 19 no. 508 p. 135b8. See also Schmithausen's extensive discussion of the term, Schmithausen (1987a) 552ff. note 1477.

[32] *SN* 12.1.2 *Vibhaṅgasutta* 2: 3.

[33] *SA* 12 no. 298 p. 85b12; *Arthaviniścayasūtra,* Samtati (1971) 12–13. The *Nibandhana* (*Arthaviniścayasūtra,* Samtati (1971) 149) on the *Arthaviniścayasūtra* explains the three varieties of acquisition of the aggregates, elements, and sense spheres as referring to three aspects of one's mode of personal existence*(ātmabhāva):* that is, the stream of the aggregates, of the elements, and of the sense spheres.

[34] Saṅghabhadra suggests that homogeneous character *(sabhāgatā)* can also be known through yogic direct perception: see *infra,* translation *NAS* 12 p. 400b11.

LIVING YOGĀCĀRA

AN INTRODUCTION TO
CONSCIOUSNESS-ONLY BUDDHISM

TAGAWA SHUN'EI

TRANSLATION AND INTRODUCTION
BY CHARLES MULLER

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SURFACE MIND AND DEEP MIND

We lead our lives surrounded by all sorts of things. When annoyed, we may try to escape them by moving to the quiet and simple life in the middle of the mountains, but the fact of our being surrounded by many things does not change at all. As long as we are alive, there is no way that we can ever sever ourselves from our environment. In managing our daily lives, we have no recourse but to proceed while maintaining some kind of relationship with all those things that surround us. At such a time, there will always be things, people, and events. Rather than seeking to escape from them, what we need to do is examine the way we cognize these things, and the way we understand their content.

In Yogācāra Buddhism, unusually deep consideration was undertaken in regard to the nature of cognitive function and the objects of cognition. As a result of their investigations, Yogācāra thinkers came to the conclusion that although as a matter of convention we perceive the things of the external world as if they were directly apprehended by us, and although we furthermore think that we correctly interpret their meaning based on this direct apprehension, these objects do not in fact exist in this way. Rather, the Yogācārins said that these cognitive objects are actually transformed by our own minds, and then are reflected onto our minds as *images that resemble those things.*

Since an image that resembles the thing is conjured through transformation and floated on the mind, it is natural that some of its distinctive aspects will be sufficiently transmitted such that we can recognize it. However, we have good reason to doubt the extent to which this manifestation actually

reflects the appearance of the thing as it is. Despite this reasonable suspicion, we proceed along with our lives thinking that we are accurately seeing, hearing, judging, and understanding the objects that impinge on our awareness. Since none of us are intentionally trying to change the appearance of these objects, wanting to distort their shape, or alter their appearance, we unthinkingly live out our lives believing that we are cognizing everything accurately.

An important implication of coming to terms with this observation is that our daily life is not lived only in the mental domains of conscious awareness. The regions of mind which we can reflect on and regulate are known in Buddhism as the six consciousnesses: the visual consciousness, auditory consciousness, olfactory consciousness, gustatory consciousness, tactile consciousness, and thinking consciousness. However, these six kinds of awareness alone cannot account for the full range of our thoughts and activities. For example, standing in front of the same mountain, the seasoned veteran mountain climber and the raw novice see the face of that mountain with a dramatically different understanding. Our ordinary thinking consciousness has accumulated a great number of years' experience, for which it lacks the capacity to contain fully.

It was in regard to this observation that the Yogācārins, deliberating on the composition of our mind and its functions of conscious awareness, came to be convinced that there had to be an additional, deeper layer of mind, which, while continuously imposing its influence on everyday conscious awareness, also served as its underlying basis. Thus, they posited a subconscious region of the mind, comprised of the two deep layers of consciousness of *manas* and *ālaya-vijñāna*.

The custom of numbering the major distinct faculties of consciousnesses was in place from the time of early Indian Buddhism, and was still retained as a basic standard in the lesser vehicle Buddhism taught in texts such as the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāsya*. Yogācāra Buddhism, in its earliest stages, took this traditional scheme as its point of departure, but its thinkers gradually began to develop their own distinct model, having come to the conclusion that these six could not account for the entire mind, and represented nothing more than its surface aspect.

Within these six consciousnesses, the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile consciousnesses each operate specifically in response to

colors and shapes, sounds, odors, tastes, and tactile objects. They correspond to what we know as sight, hearing, sense of smell, taste, and sense of touch—in other words, the five senses, each sensory activity occurring through its corresponding sense organ. These five consciousnesses all share the feature of only being able to cognize a presently existing object as it is.

For example, in the case where the visual consciousness arises based on the presence of a red flower, the material object that constitutes the objective aspect of the visual consciousness is nothing more than the direct perception of a red-hued object with a certain shape. At this point, it is a type of cognition which lacks any intermediary, such as language, to apply meaning. This is what we call direct perception. At this stage, there is no understanding that says, "This is a bright red flower, and this flower is a lotus." The object of cognition at this time is an object as it is in itself—a raw sensate appearance among the three kinds of objects described in chapter 1. Since the lotus flower has an incredible fragrance, the olfactory consciousness naturally arises, creating a scent that is known exclusively by the olfactory consciousness.

The cognition that "this is a bright red flower, this flower is a lotus, and it has a very good smell" is something that occurs on the next level, that of the function of the thinking consciousness *(mano-vijñāna)*. The thinking consciousness, the sixth, accounts for the mental functions of perception, emotion, deliberation, and volition, and is essentially equivalent to what is referred to as "the mind" in everyday language. Expressing this with the present-day idiom of "information processor," the information gathered is that which is perceived by the five consciousnesses, gathered through the five sense faculties.

The method of processing this information is a problem of the function of the thinking consciousness. The five consciousnesses of eyes, ears, noses, tongue, and body all constitute relatively simple cognitive functions. Since these consciousnesses are understood to operate "prior" to the thinking consciousness, they are usually subsumed as a group under the rubric of *prior five consciousnesses.*

The sixth, thinking consciousness, functions concurrently with the prior five consciousnesses. Taking the pure cognition of the object as it is, and

recognizing that "this is a bright red lotus flower, which has a wonderful fragrance" is the function of the thinking consciousness. While the prior five consciousnesses are limited in only being able to directly perceive a presently existent object as it is, the sixth thinking consciousness, while functioning in the framework of the present, can also reflect back upon the past as well as anticipate the future.

Since the cognition of present objects by the prior five consciousnesses just as they are occurs through the sense organs, a temporary interruption (such as when one shuts one's eyes) will lead the cognitive function of that consciousness to be terminated. While the cognition by the prior five consciousnesses is limited to a particular place—the thinking consciousness—the mental activity concerning the lotus flower that has been seen up until then can be continued. It is precisely because of this ability to maintain continuity that one may reflect afterward on the lotus flower repeatedly and from various perspectives, giving one's imagination free reign. Recollecting the past, anticipating the future, or carrying out a variety of calculations and comparisons, and then gathering and synthesizing all of these—these are the functions of the thinking consciousness.

In considering the prior five consciousnesses and the thinking consciousness, we can easily imagine the numerous differences in terms of the range of their function, or the objective referent that they discern. Nonetheless, since the prior five consciousnesses and the sixth consciousness share in common the general function of discerning and distinguishing the content of their respective objects, Yogācāra Buddhism categorizes the prior five and the thinking consciousness together as the *consciousnesses that discern objects*. However, for Yogācāra these six consciousnesses are far from being all there is to the mind, since these object-discerning consciousnesses do not suffice to explain the full gamut of our mental life.

The Ālaya-Vijñāna and the Manas

1. The Limitations of the Six Consciousnesses

As distinguished from the view of the six consciousnesses in place since early Indian Buddhism, the Yogācāras hypothesized that our mind was

composed of eight consciousnesses. The eight consciousnesses include the six object-discerning consciousnesses, plus the *manas* (fundamental mentation consciousnesses), and *ālaya-vijñāna* (store consciousness).

If we attempt earnestly to ascertain the true aspect of our human existence—to whatever degree it is knowable—we must assume that there is a subconscious mind that, while serving as the basis for our existence, is ceaselessly exerting great influence on our conscious daily lives. It is precisely the proof and definition of this subconscious mind that the Yogācāras took up as their central focus of their investigations. Above, we explained that the accumulation of long years of experience is something that cannot be accounted for within the function of the thinking consciousness. To test this, let's reflect on our own past for a moment.

Despite its vast range of function beyond that of the sense consciousnesses, if we consider the sixth consciousness from the perspective of the full range of our past experiences, it turns out to be something quite shallow and limited. Obviously, we forget many of the things we have done over our lifetimes. However, imagine if there were no retention whatsoever of the traces of those events that have occurred within ourselves? If this were the case, no matter what we might apply ourselves to do, it would be impossible for us to improve at anything. However, we know that with even a small amount of practice, we are going to become better and more skilled. For the time being, then, we have to acknowledge that there has to be a mental region where such experiences are accurately retained. But what becomes of the thinking consciousness when we are sleeping soundly? Since its mode of existence is thinking, and thinking has ceased, practically speaking, that consciousness has ceased to exist. There is a complete interruption in the function and existence of this consciousness. This notion of interruption is critical in the Yogācāra theory of the mind.

The thinking consciousness is not something that is operating continuously—it has intervals. This is something that is readily understandable in commonsense terms, but there is a special problem in this fact for Buddhism, since unlike other religions that assume the existence of an enduring soul, or self *(ātman)* that grounds the being and holds it together in times of mental inactivity, one of the basic tenets of the Buddhist teaching is that any such assumed self cannot be anything other than a fiction.

This being the case, there is nothing to unite these interruptions, and even a provisional self as a unifying entity cannot be posited. Having come to this conclusion, they decided that there has to be a latent area of the mind that is uninterrupted, firmly retaining the aftereffects of all we have done. Yogācāra Buddhism argued for the existence of such a mind, and called it *ālaya-vijñāna* (store consciousness).

2. The Ālaya-Vijñāna and the Manas

In Yogācāra, the mind called the *ālaya-vijñāna* is hypothesized to be the most fundamental mind, the mental region that accounts for the unbroken continuity extending from the past to the future.

Practically speaking, there has to be an "I" that is changing on a daily basis. But we know from experience that the I of yesterday is virtually the same as the I of today, and there is not so much difference between the I of a year ago and the I of today. We naturally feel like this. This changing-but-unchanging so-called self is what we take to be our basis, that upon which the stability of our life is maintained. And that basis is the *ālaya-vijñāna*.

In a Buddhist framework, although we say "changing yet unchanging self," we are not talking about an unchanging essence, but something that is fundamentally impermanent in its nature. We nonetheless end up grasping this aspect of continuity and misconstrue it to be an unchanging, reified self. It is said that in addition to the *ālaya-vijñāna,* we also have within us an aspect of mentation that is carrying out this "I-making" function. The Yogācāras first posited this aspect of mind, which they called the *manas,* proposing that there is a function of mind that is secretly, ceaselessly attaching itself to the notion of a continuous and unbroken self. Since the *manas* is also engaged in a rudimentary kind of thought, some of its functions also overlap with those of the thinking consciousness.

It was already stated that the task of gathering and determining how to process information was one of the functions of the thinking consciousness. But it is unlikely that the thinking consciousness would be capable of fully operating in an independent manner during this information processing. Concerning this, Yogācāra hypothesizes that the thinking consciousness has the *manas* as its support (Skt. *āśraya*).

The "I-making" function of the *manas* also has an outward-going influence, since Yogācāra Buddhism understands that no matter how accurate a judgment we endeavor to make, we are essentially incapable of going beyond the purview of a judgment that we believe would be good for our own situation. This is taken as evidence of the pervasive and unbroken function of the *manas*. The *manas* in turn takes the *ālaya-vijñāna* as its underlying basis. Thus, in Yogācāra Buddhism the *ālaya-vijñāna* is understood to be the most basic form of mind.

3. The Three Subjective Transformations

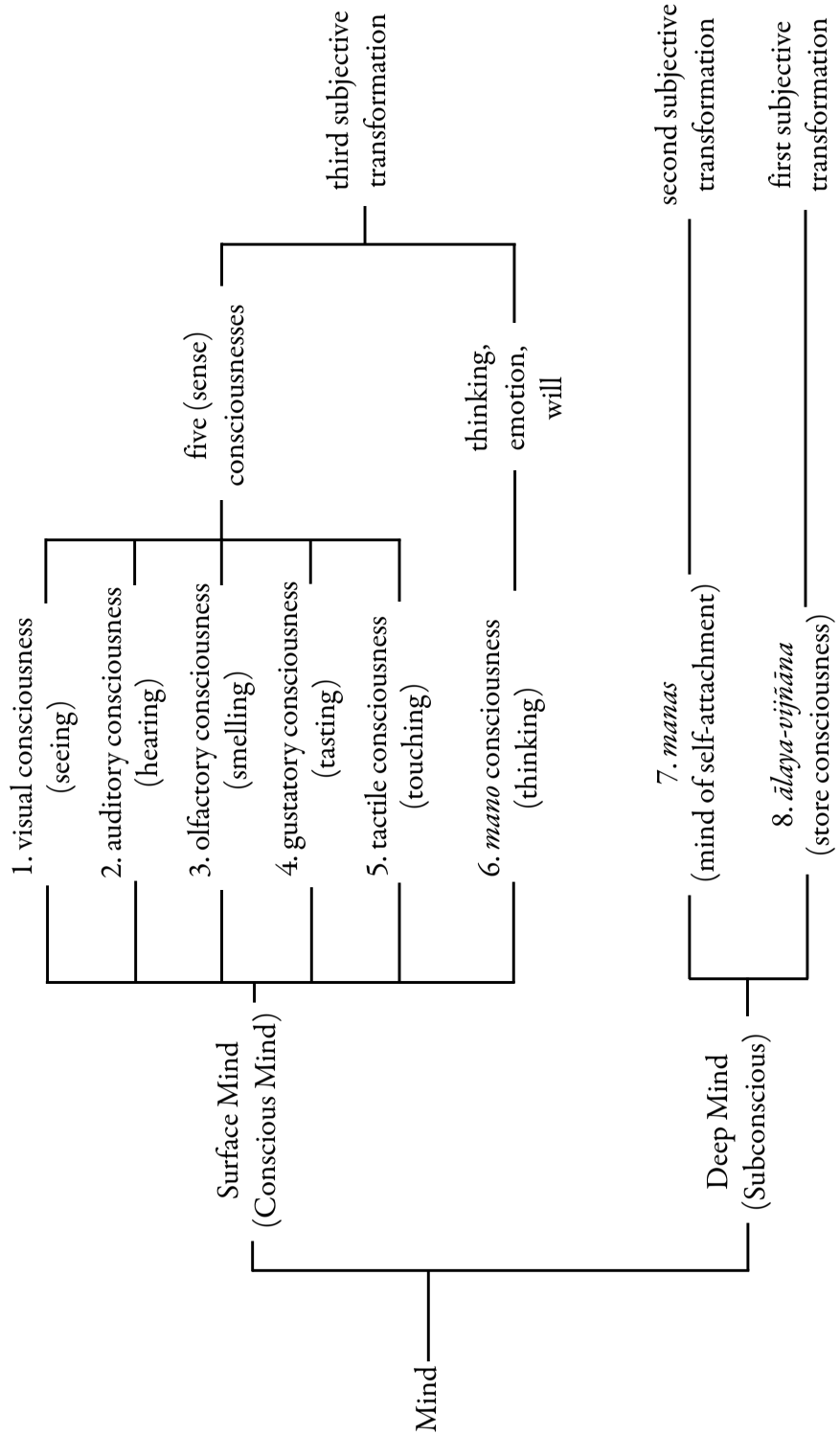
Thus, the Yogācāras began to conjecture the structure of mind as being composed of eight consciousnesses, distributed in two deep levels of mind as the *manas* and *ālaya-vijñāna,* followed by the six surface levels including the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and thinking consciousnesses. As we have also noted, our mind has the function of manifesting the object of cognition on the mind as an "image." In this very important sense, the mind is not simply seen as mind, but as a mind that carries out transformations. This *mind as subjective transformer* consists of three layers.

The first mind as subjective transformer is the *ālaya-vijñāna.* The *ālaya-vijñāna* flawlessly retains all of our past experiences, and recognizes and contextualizes things as we cognize them. Our experiences, according to their depth and significance upon our lives, are difficult to remove.

The second subjective transformer is the *manas.* In this case, objects of cognition are transformed by a deep attachment to the self, and the resulting tendencies to protect and further that self.

Then, already subject to these subconscious influences, the cognitive function of the thinking consciousness and the five sense consciousnesses—that is, the discrimination of things—arises. When one is focused on seeing or hearing, what is seen and what is heard are naturally different from each other. Since these consciousnesses are aware only of their own objects, the only things that are transformed are their own objective images. Thus, the six object-aware consciousnesses together constitute the third subjective transformer.

From this we can begin to understand the profound difficulties involved in knowing the actual way of being of any given thing as it really is.



Chapter Four: Building Up Experience in the Latent Area of the Mind

The First Subjective Transformer—The Ālaya-Vijñāna

After carrying out a detailed analysis of the mind, the Yogācāras became convinced that it was comprised of eight specific regions constituted by the prior five consciousnesses of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body that handle the five senses, along with the thinking consciousness, *manas,* and store consciousness. The Yogācāras posited that these eight kinds of mind-king possessed the ability to subjectively transform everything that surrounds us in the process of three stages, which are known as the three subjective transformations. Among these, the most important is the first subjective transformer, the eighth consciousness, the *ālaya-vijñāna.* In this chapter, we will first take a look at the *ālaya-vijñāna* in its role as the subject that transforms the objects of cognition. *Ālaya* is a Sanskrit word that can be translated as store (or storehouse), and *ālaya-vijñāna* is often rendered into English as the "store consciousness," with the implication that it accumulates and preserves information. What exactly *is* put away in this store consciousness? As a way of getting around to answering this question, we need to first inquire as to which region of consciousness we should regard as being the real center of the mind-kings of the eight consciousnesses. From the perspective of the actual experiences of everyday life, we might well consider the sixth, the thinking consciousness *(mano-vijñāna)* as the center of the mind. We manage our daily lives through the variety of functions governed by the thinking consciousness. However, as we have already mentioned, this thinking consciousness is subject to interruptions—it does not operate continuously.

For example, both fainting and deep sleep bring our thinking consciousness to a halt. While one could argue that the case of fainting is

problematic based on the fact that it is such a rare occurrence, deep sleep is a nightly certainty for most people. We understand that even if the thinking mind seems to operate continuously, it is something that is in fact frequently interrupted, existing only as discontiguous fragments. If there were no mental framework to pull these pieces together, we could not exist as integrated beings. The *ālaya-vijñāna* is necessary to serve as the "backup" for intentional, conscious life.

Our actions and behavior are directly related to our interaction with others. After we complete these actions, we can be certain that they will always be evaluated in some way, and we can be sure that the reverberations of these acts will imprint society to one extent or another, whether it be labeled as an "excellent achievement" or a " crime." In both cases we are clearly subjected to, and imprinted with, a social evaluation; yet this social evaluation is only made possible by our actions being seen through the eyes of others.

So what happens when our negative actions are not seen by others? Since no one is watching, the perpetrator of some nasty business assumes that he will never be subject to public evaluation. Afterward, he may hear people say things like "there are really some bad people hanging around, aren't there." Playing dumb, he sticks out his tongue at them behind their backs, and that's the end of it. From the perspective of society, the case is closed. But what ends up happening to such a person on the inside?

Among the three karmic modes of body, speech, and thought, it is only thoughts that are not accessible to others, as they occur inside our mind as mental karma. However, as explained above in the discussion of the mental factor of volition, in Buddhism, even the thoughts that occur within the mind are understood to have a marvelous function.

It is at this point that the Yogācārin asks what, exactly, is the nature of this that we call our actions. The conclusion is that the dispositions of every act end up leaving behind impressions in the *ālaya-vijñāna,* where the after-effects of our activities are retained.

> Although we are careful when we know we are being watched by others, we should not forget that we are also watched by spiritual beings.

These are the words of the Great Japanese Yogācāra master of the Kamakura period, Gedatsu Shōnin (Jōkei; 1155–1213), from his *Gumei hosshin shu (Awakening the Mind From Delusion)*. We are automatically cautious in our actions and speech—the objects of evaluation by others—when we are in the presence of people, but less so when we think we are not being observed, or when the activity is taking place hidden within our minds. Our world of thought that is unknown to others has an amazing proclivity to fall into dissoluteness. However, Gedatsu Shōnin is telling us that this place is perfectly visible to the eyes of the gods and buddhas, meaning that our negative actions never go unwitnessed.

Our world of thought, where we are secretly at ease, is indeed an untidy place. According to the Yogācāras, everything that occurs here turns into a burden which we must carry in a future life. The *ālaya-vijñāna* retains all of our memories up to the present, and all of the dispositions of activities and behavior have been secretly accumulated in the basis of our minds. These are in turn re-manifested and naturally exude from our being. The Yogācāras take this as the most fundamental underlying operation of our minds.

This kind of automatic exuding of the dispositions of our past experiences in the midst of our cognition is called the *first subjective transformation.* The *ālaya-vijñāna* that retains the impressions of all of our past experiences first acts to transform the objects of cognition. We have utterly no conscious control over what we exude. We cannot help but taking that which is first subjectively transformed as a cognitive object, and this subjective transformation is a reflection of our entire past—which is none other than ourselves. When we discuss the store consciousness as the first subjective transformation, we are talking about this fundamental—and somewhat frightening—point.

To the extent that we deepen this kind of contemplation of the ramifications of the store consciousness, we cannot but end up coming to the conclusion that from this moment forward, we must try to orient our lives in some positive direction. Yogācāra Buddhism is asking us to seek out a way of life grounded in such a recognition and awareness. By positing the existence of the *ālaya-vijñāna,* Yogācāra Buddhism strongly suggests that a life of careless behavior won't do.

The Perfuming of Seeds

Consider a famous novelist who is known for revealing his personal thoughts by taking his own life as his subject matter. This doesn't necessarily mean that he has revealed everything there is to know about himself. There is no one who does not have something within himself that he keeps hidden from others. At the same time, we may assume that because our actions were witnessed by others that the case is karmically closed. Indeed, though the case may be closed on the level of society and human interaction, the ramifications of the negative activity do not disappear, and the impressions are long retained.

We then turn to consider by what kind of process, and in what kind of form, our actions and behavior could possibly be retained, and then accumulated, in the mind's innermost depths of the *ālaya-vijñāna*? It is explained in Yogācāra that "manifest activity *perfumes* the seeds in the *ālaya-vijñāna*." "Manifest activity" can be understood as our concrete activities, and these concrete actions and behaviors end up being "perfumed" into the store consciousness in the form of metaphorical "seeds."

Perfuming means that in the same way that an odor is transferred to and adheres to clothing, one's actions create impressions and dispositions that become planted in the deepest regions of that person's mind where they are retained. These impressions impregnate the store consciousness, and as planted actions, they are called "seeds" as they have the power to give form to the subsequent self.

These seeds, which are secretly impregnated and retained in the *ālaya-vijñāna,* will again generate visible phenomena when the right set of circumstances arises. Since this is exactly the kind of function associated with the physical seeds of plants, they are so named metaphorically. We should not, however, go so far as to construe them as material, substantial seeds.

Seeds are explained as "the power within the eighth consciousness to produce an effect." That is, they represent the causative power to manifest activity as fruit from within the *ālaya-vijñāna.* Seeds represent the momentum of impressions, and also be understood from the perspective of the almost synonymous technical term, *karmic impressions* (Skt. *vāsanā*). Karmic impressions have the connotation of "dispositions caused by perfumation." The notions of seed and perfumation are seminal in Yogācāra Buddhism, and although they may seem to be rather arcane concepts, they are necessary to understanding the operation of karma and consciousness in Yogācāra.

In *The Oriental Ideal (Tōyō no risō),* Okura Tenjin wrote: "Surely the shadow of the past exists as the promise for the future. No tree can grow larger than the potential contained in its seed." Here the word *seed* is being used in its basic biological sense, rather than as a Yogācāra term, and it can be understood as a general truth. However, truth understood by Yogācāra Buddhism is that what we call "the past" exerts an influence on the formation of the future, and the future is something that cannot be so easily changed. This will be covered in depth in the following section.

I have heard that the former *kyōgen* (a form of traditional Japanese theater) master Miyake Tōkurō, who was famous for the severity of discipline he imposed on himself while practicing, had a saying to the effect that "there is no such thing as luck on the stage," considering "luck" to refer to the case where one performs with good technique by mere coincidence. While some may say that things are "by chance" going well, in truth there is no reason why they should, or continue to do so. A first-rate stage performance depends completely on self-discipline through consistent practice.

That which has not been stored up in the *ālaya-vijñāna* won't suddenly appear at the moment one steps up in front of the footlights. No matter how hard one tries, if the requisite potentiality has not been accumulated in the store consciousness, it cannot be manifested upon demand. The same applies for those of us who do not perform on the stage. And what sort of thing, exactly, is perfumed in our *ālaya-vijñāna*? It is on the answer to this question that we now embark, but replacing the word "stage" with the words "human life," and reinterpreting this saying as "there is no such thing as luck in life."

Beginningless Perfuming

In Yogācāra, it is not the case that our actions, being finished, are simply over with, or that we are no longer responsible for them. After the event,

the perfuming seeds, accumulated in the eighth consciousness as potentialities, are keeping record of everything. If we accept this, then the *ālaya-vijñāna* becomes understood as being the accumulated totality of life experiences—nothing other than the present "I." When we think seriously as to how every one of the actions and behaviors after receiving birth in this world are impregnated without loss into the mind's innermost depths, and that this influence continues to extend into our present selves, we cannot but end up being deeply concerned.

Additionally, in regard to the matter of perfuming, Yogācāra posits something called *beginningless perfuming.* This means that perfuming has continued from time immemorial, without beginning, and that the seeds in the store consciousness are not simply produced beginning with birth into this present life.

This brings us to consider our attachment to this life—a desire to keep living. No matter how disappointing or complicated we feel our life has become, we still want to continue in it for as long as possible. Buddhist philosophy states that suffering is produced from this attachment to life, and it is because of this ardent attachment to life that we can continue to struggle through our daily lives.

Most of us firmly maintain this mental state of ardent attachment right up to the moment before death. It is quite likely that the thought "I want to live" that appears at our final moment is the most strongly held feeling in all of life. Buddhism teaches us that it is precisely because we are so strongly attached to life down to its very final moment that we cause ourselves to be reborn into the next life. This is called *transmigration*.

This means that the kind of life we are living here and now is precisely due to the ardent attachment we held for our existence in our former life. And our former life must be something that was brought about by an "attachment to life" in the life before that. This being the case, we can trace our present existence back infinitely into the past. Our store consciousness is not only comprised of all of the actions, dispositions, and impressions beginning with our birth in this present lifetime, but it is also perfumed by the seeds of our actions and behavior from all of our lifetimes in the immeasurable past. This is the meaning of "beginningless perfuming."

Being exposed to this kind of teaching, we naturally become awed at the apparently limitless depth and capacity of this *ālaya-vijñāna,* and concerned about what might be perfumed and contained within us. However, even while wincing at the notion of the vastness of this *ālaya-vijñāna,* we should calmly think, what on earth this "I" is that has been traversing through lifetimes since time immemorial? At such a time, we become newly aware of our ardent attachment to life. With this expression "attachment to life" to replace Yogācāra technical terminology, we may begin to further deepen our mindfulness. In Yogācāra, the cause of reincarnation is assumed to be mental disturbances, which consist more precisely of the mental factors of afflictions and secondary afflictions enumerated in the lists of mental factors in the preceding chapter. It is not explicitly stated in the Yogācāra source texts, but understanding the function of the store consciousness the way it is taught, we can assume that it might, unbeknown to us, be retaining something that reaches all the way back to the very origins of human existence, and life itself. This awareness cannot but give the feeling in each individual that each and every life should be respected as a member of the universe of sentient beings. And, at the same time, each one of us individually needs to be deeply aware of the perspective wherein an attempt is made to live life based on this awareness of respecting every kind of life form.

Three Meanings of Store

There are three connotations identified in the earliest Yogācāra texts related to the *ālaya-vijñāna:* (1) the storer (i.e., storing agent); (2) that which is stored; and (3) the appropriated store. Taking these as the fundamental approaches for considering the *ālaya-vijñāna,* we now move to take another look at what we have discussed regarding the *ālaya-vijñāna* and show how it fits into the framework of these three.

(1) The *storer* indicates that this deep mind is something that possesses the basic quality of being able to preserve our experiences in its seeds. It is the "mind that is able to store all seeds." When this is considered from the perspective of the seeds, these are the things that are stored by the *ālaya-vijñāna*. But if the seeds are looked at by themselves, regardless of their

container, the seeds are that which give rise to manifest activity. They are the main causes of the formation of a self. When the *ālaya-vijñāna* is seen from the causal aspect of such a potentiality, it is called the "consciousness containing all seeds."

(2) *That which is stored* connotes the store consciousness as the recipient of perfuming. The seeds that are the impressions and dispositions of our various concrete activities are able to perfume the *ālaya-vijñāna*. If we take this as storer, the *ālaya-vijñāna* that is the recipient of perfuming becomes that which is stored. In this way, that which is stored becomes the recipient of perfuming. But if this is seen from the perspective of actions and behavior, the *ālaya-vijñāna* that undergoes the perfuming also exists as the result of these activities.

The eighth consciousness seen from this aspect of effect is called the *ripening consciousness* (Skt. *vipāka-vijñāna*). The *ālaya-vijñāna* continues without break from the past to the future, and serves as a backup for the intermittently functioning thinking consciousness. In Yogācāra Buddhism, this eighth consciousness that serves as the basis for human existence is originally of neither wholesome nor unwholesome karmic moral quality, and thus it is said to be of indeterminate (or neutral) karmic moral character.

If this very fundamental source of our existence were intrinsically bad, we would end up cycling again and again through a world of suffering, unable to obtain a foothold to Buddha's world throughout all eternity. On the other hand, if our fundamental basis was intrinsically good, and all people's minds were connected to the buddha-mind, it would be difficult to reconcile this with our everyday experiences in society.

It is also not the case that the variety of our daily activities and behaviors clearly tend in one direction or the other. This is made clear by merely looking at the fifty-one mental factors considered above in chapter 3. Even while we lust after something, we may at the same time reflect strongly on our lust. While diligently devoting ourselves to the Buddha-path, we may inadvertently give rise to anger. Our basic nature is not disposed toward either goodness or evil, but is of indeterminate moral karmic quality.

We are, without doubt, planting the seeds of goodness in the store consciousness with our wholesome activities, and impregnating it with bad impression-potential with our unwholesome activities. This is possible

precisely because the eighth consciousness has no fundamental predisposition toward good or evil—it is of indeterminate karmic moral quality. Depending on the seeds of good or evil that have already been planted, various real and concrete good and evil activities occur. Nevertheless, the eighth consciousness does not incline toward good or evil. Individual actions taken by themselves, along with the perfuming from their impressions, can be wholesome, unwholesome, or indeterminate in karmic moral quality, but if the *ālaya-vijñāna* as the result of activities is viewed as a whole, it is neither good nor evil.

Just as wholesome causes bring wholesome effect and unwholesome causes bring unwholesome effects, cause and effect are understood to be imbued with the same karmic moral quality (in Yogācāra, this condition is denoted with the technical term *continuity of sameness,* or *natural outcome;* Skt. *niṣyanda*). But in the *ālaya-vijñāna*-as-effect, whether or not it is produced by a good or bad seed, the end result of the action is always understood to be of indeterminate or neutral moral quality. This kind of cause-effect relationship is called ripening, and because the *ālaya-vijñāna* as the aspect of effect is seen in this way, it is called the *ripening consciousness.* In other words, in its ripened state it has a different karmic moral quality than its causes. When one thing produces another, the next thing that is produced, while having a direct and close relation to its cause, must also be something different from its cause. Common metaphors include that of the ripening of a fruit, or a baked loaf of bread, which are both quite different in character from their causal stages, and have exhausted their potential for further development.

This aspect of the *ālaya-vijñāna* of being of intrinsically indeterminate moral quality is vitally important from a religious perspective. Although we humans are greatly influenced by our own past, we are at the same time endowed with the potential of creating an entirely different future, starting right here and now, no matter how deeply our past is filled with evil karma. But on the other hand, even if our days were filled with efforts toward cultivating buddhahood, we can never assume that we have safely achieved a level of perfection.

(3) *Appropriated store* refers to the attachment to self-love. We have the feeling that we are spending every day living in a conscious manner. However,

as we have already seen, the operations of the thinking consciousness and prior five consciousnesses are intermittent and are broadly supported by the basis of human existence, the *ālaya-vijñāna*. In Yogācāra Buddhism, it is thought that the only reason we are able to live such a unified existence is because of the store consciousness.

The *ālaya-vijñāna* is a mental region which has arrived to the present in a continuous unbroken stream while receiving uninterrupted beginningless perfuming from the past. And it will continue unbroken into the future. The great Indian master Vasubandhu, who is accorded the bulk of the credit for the foundation of Yogācāra Buddhism, described the *ālaya-vijñāna* in his *Triṃśikā ("Thirty Verses on Consciousness-only")* as "constantly coming forth, like a raging current." Our deep *ālaya-vijñāna* is like a great river, which, while roiling in turbulence from the eternal upstream, rolls without stopping on its way downstream. This store consciousness has always been in a state of continuous alteration.

However, while it is not something immutable, it has the character of being *changeless but changing.* The seventh consciousness, the *manas,* functions in a way of trying to see the unchanging aspect of the store consciousness as an immutable essence. The *manas* takes this ostensive immutable essence as its object and adheres firmly to it, believing it to be a self. This kind of misconstrual and reification of the *ālaya-vijñāna* on the part of the *manas* constitutes the third connotation of store: *appropriated store.*

While in Yogācāra Buddhism the *ālaya-vijñāna* is interpreted with these three connotations of storer, that which is stored, and appropriated store, it is the meaning of appropriated store that tends to be paid the greatest attention. The aspect of existence that is reified by the *manas* is the characteristic of the *ālaya-vijñāna* itself. The Yogācāras argue that the very core of suffering is to be found in the place where the *manas,* the mind of attachment to the ego—engages itself in the activity of attachment, taking the *ālaya-vijñāna* as its object. Thus we can say that the meaning of the appropriated store defines the relation between the eighth, *ālaya-vijñāna,* and the seventh, *manas,* consciousnesses.

Continuity of Sameness

So the relation of the *manas* to the *ālaya-vijñāna* is that the *manas,* the mind of ego-attachment, taking the deep store consciousness as its object, misconstrues it to be the reified essence of the self, and strongly clings to it, and within this relationship, Yogācāra Buddhism sees the causes of all human problems. Therefore, among the three connotations—storer, the stored, and appropriated store—the connotation of appropriated store is the most fundamental from a religious perspective.

The store consciousness that undergoes beginningless perfuming is taken as the object of attachment of the *manas* because of the existence of a mental region—a psychological basis—that appears as changing-but-unchanging, and functions to maintain something that resembles a self-identity. This special characteristic of the *ālaya-vijñāna* is called *continuity of type* or *continuity of identity.* Continuing in a single type means that an unchanging character continues without interruption.

Within the store consciousness there exists a characteristic of continuity in sameness that has continued changelessly and without interruption from the distant past. And the store consciousness, with its indeterminate karmic moral character, is that which takes our daily behaviors and activities that are riddled with interruptions, binds them together, accumulates them, and unifies them.

Dealing with Impermanence and No-Self

The three most fundamental principles that are said to specially identify the Buddhist teachings are (1) impermanence of all phenomena; (2) the selflessness of all phenomena; and (3) the quiescence of nirvāṇa. These are three distinctive characteristics that mark a given set of teachings as being authentically Buddhist, and any teaching not based on these three can be said to be non-Buddhist. Within ourselves and the natural world, all things arise, cease, and change. That such arising and cessation occurs every single instant is the meaning of the impermanence of all phenomena. This is the most fundamental concept in Buddhism.

At first glance, we may be inclined to regard this fact as being patently obvious. No doubt we all understand that all things are constantly changing. Nonetheless, we may not be comfortable with things that are always in a state of flux, as it makes us ill at ease. We struggle to take things that are in flux and continually force them into our framework, reifying and trying to grasp them, while at the same time reifying the understanding gained through this process. Isn't this the way we are functioning every day?

Without a doubt, we are enriching our lives as we accumulate new experiences daily. However, as we age we become increasingly aware of the falloff in our ability to recover from physical fatigue. If at this point we reflect back on our twenties and thirties, we become newly aware of the subtle changes in our physical strength. And we recall that people tried to warn us, but we were too young and proud to take heed. Yet even while we come to understand that our bodies and minds are always changing, we also retain a distinct sense of being thoroughly penetrated by the changing-yet-unchanging.

Some philosophical schools of ancient India were convinced that this changing-but-unchanging aspect existed in people as an immutable essence, and they called it *ātman* ("I," self, soul). This *ātman* was understood to be the subject of transmigration, something immortal, running through the past and future repeatedly through our life and death. But if all things are transient, how can we acknowledge the existence of this kind of invariable, immortal *ātman*? This kind of substantial self was clearly denied by the Buddha, and this idea is the meaning of selflessness of all phenomena.

Even though we understand intellectually that our ego can't be an immutable essence, we still seek such an essence in ourselves and grasp to it, and as a result bind ourselves. The Buddha Śākyamuni called on us to turn against this unfortunate urge, and try to bravely manage our lives based on the realities of impermanence and no-self. He taught that a life lived in accordance with these kinds of realities leads us to a state that is spontaneously and genuinely free of restrictions, and completely pure. This is the quiescence of nirvāṇa, a state of calm manifested in body and mind, within which one harmonizes with reality.

There is a problem here, though, since in addition to the three seals of the dharma, Buddhism includes the notion of reincarnation as one of its basic tenets. Given the doctrine of no-self, what should we understand to be the subject that repeatedly undergoes this birth and death? In ancient India, it was thought that we undergo repeated reincarnation with a substantial, immortal self as subject. But because the Buddha categorically denied such a thing as an eternal *ātman,* Buddhism had to locate a subject of transmigration without undermining the theory of no-self. After the Buddha's death, various theories about this were tendered by a number of Buddhist groups. The most well thought-out resolution of this problem is that of the *ālaya-vijñāna,* as posited by the Yogācāras. As an answer to the non-existence of an enduring essence, they saw a latent mind that continues with the same morally indeterminate karmic quality, storing and accumulating the impressions of past experiences as seeds of potentiality for the production of effects. This, they posited as the subject of reincarnation.

Summary: If Things Can't Be So Simply Washed Away, Then What?

In the thinking consciousness *(mano-vijñāna),* the experiences of our daily lives are quickly forgotten. We may read a novel with great passion, but undoubtedly after the passage of several years, it will be difficult to recall portions of its plot. However, even if it is completely forgotten on the side of the thinking consciousness, it is properly stored in the subconscious region.

We can say that in having this kind of store consciousness that preserves our entire past, our present selves exist atop that same storehouse, which serves as our foundation. In this sense, our past actions and experiences cannot be so easily washed away. But within the range of our memory we may tend to try to wash away the recollection of inconvenient events, to act as if they never existed.

The notion of "washing away" is well understood among the Japanese people in particular. Perhaps there may even be some sense in which consciously dealing with the past is related to a particular cultural ethos. Whether or not this is true, if light is shed on the matter from a Yogācāra

perspective, the mere mutual agreement to forget about an incident only amounts to being the most superficial manner of handling a past problem. Our present existence is constituted by the things we have done in the past, no matter how ugly they may be. The problem is what, exactly, we are perfuming into our *ālaya-vijñāna*.

In the world of Buddhism, cultivation of a particular aspect of our spirit and body is often carried out in a traditional format within a set period of time, and we call this "practice. " But when we exert ourselves in the effort of valuing our daily life as it is, trying not to be sloppy in the three karmic activities of body, speech, and thought, this is not simply called "practice"; rather, it is labeled with the Buddhist technical term *applied practice* (Skt. *prayoga*). This means that, when, on the other hand, practice is not "applied," we are doubtlessly carrying out our daily life in a sloppy way.

Applied practice refers to this kind of maintenance of continual mindfulness. For instance, in the *Avalokiteśvara Sūtra*[3] the term *constant mindfulness* appears often, advising one to be continuously mindful of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. As a result, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is gradually impressed strongly into the mind's innermost depths, and the mindfulness of Avalokiteśvara is accumulated in the *ālaya-vijñāna.* We develop a focused spiritual power, which becomes a support and foundation for future practices.

The past cannot be altered, or brushed off by excuses. We are nothing but a vast, unerring receptacle of our past. And regardless of our past experiences, it is our past in its totality that is the basis of our being. Yet we can, taking this totality as our basis, from this moment forward align ourselves with the Buddha's teaching with a view toward tomorrow. This is the beginning of a life based on the wisdom of Yogācāra.

The possibility for this lies in none other than the fact that the *ālaya-vijñāna* is an ever-ripening consciousness. Although we are standing on an inescapable past, we are existing here and now, in a present state of neither good nor evil—indeterminacy. The Buddha warned us how ill-will can instantly incinerate the forest of merit built with great effort, and thus we should strive to focus and rise above our past indiscretions. In the wonderful words of the *Sūtra of the Deathbed Injunction:*[4] "The one who practices forbearance is a great man possessed of power." However, even if one

is a great man possessed of power, if he gives rise to anger even once, he is no better than an ordinary person.

The fact that we rest upon this firm foundation of the past, and simultaneously have the ability to anticipate a bright future, is our way of being, all contained with in the deeply abiding *ālaya-vijñāna*.

Chapter Five: The Production of Things

The Consciousness Containing All Seeds

If the only function of the *ālaya-vijñāna* were to secretly preserve and accumulate all the impressions of all the activities in our entire past experiences without the slightest bit of loss, it would not act as a source of pain or irritation for us. The problem lies in the fact that the dispositions of past experiences go on to become the major causal factors in the formation of the subsequent "I."

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The term "seeds" refers to nothing other than the potential energy, under the right conditions, to produce subsequent manifest activities related to those that preceded. Seeds can be characterized as "the potential within the eighth consciousness to produce an effect." Yesterday's conduct and today's activity produce what will end up being the self of tomorrow, and the function and power that brings about such a result is called "seeds."

The *ālaya-vijñāna* is called "consciousness containing all seeds" *(sarva-bījaka-vijñāna),* signifying that the impression-dispositions of the past actions and behavior saved in the eighth consciousness end up being the primary causes for the production of *dharmas* of the future. The term *all dharmas* (Skt. *sarva-dharma*) is very common in Buddhist discourse, and so we should provide a very basic explanation of its connotations. Although the range of meanings of *dharma* is extremely broad, I would like to focus here on the two most important meanings that relate to our present discussion.

The first usage is like that seen in the case of the term *buddha-dharma*. The teachings given by the Buddha are called the buddha-dharma, which is commonly expressed simply as *dharma*. When we see such expressions

as "seek the dharma" or "for the purpose of the dharma," this is a reference to dharma as *teaching*.

The second major connotation of the term *dharma,* which is being invoked in the expression *all dharmas,* is the sense of *existence* or *thing*. The term *all dharmas* has the meaning of *all things* or *all phenomena,* referring to all existing things and phenomena. As you may recall, above we introduced the name of the East Asian transmission of the Yogācāra school as the "Dharma-Characteristics" School (in Chinese, Faxiang School, in Japanese, Hossō School), and the usage of dharma there also implies this meaning of *all existences* and *everything*. The Dharma-Characteristics School tended to take a special interest in ascertaining and explaining the true character of these dharmas.

Further, the *production of all dharmas* refers to the appearance of all phenomena in our daily lives, and included within this is the formation of our own selves. The causal power for the occurrence of such dharmas is the seeds that are stored in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. Within the function of these seeds, according to the presence of the right conditions, phenomena are manifested before our eyes. Our own behavior also becomes a manifest actuality, and is no longer mere potentiality.

Seeds and Manifest Activity

The term *manifest activity perfuming seeds* refers to seeds that represent the momentum of the impressions of manifest activity that is impregnated into the *ālaya-vijñāna*—those same manifest activities originally produced by seeds. This process of seeds giving rise to manifest phenomena is called *seeds generating manifest activity.*

In Yogācāra Buddhism, these two functions are never conceived of as operating as two distinct processes, but are always understood to be linked as one—seeds generating manifest activity / manifest activity perfuming seeds. The continuous cycle operates in such a way that the seeds that are the disposition-impressions of past experiences give rise to present actualities and activities, and the impressions of those activities are again stored in the *ālaya-vijñāna*.

To express this, there is the concept of "three successive processes

simultaneously bringing about cause and effect." These three processes are: (1) the creation of seeds from manifest activity; (2) the production of manifest activity from seeds, and (3) the perfuming of those seeds already contained in the *ālaya-vijñāna* by manifest activities. The fact that these three phenomena, while acting as mutual causes and effects, continuously operate one after the other, and that furthermore all of this happens simultaneously, is called *three successive processes bringing about cause and effect simultaneously.*

This is said to happen instantaneously, and according to Yogācāra, in less than an instant the manifest activities produced from the seeds of the reverberations of past activities are again stored into the *ālaya-vijñāna* as their seeds and dispositions. Since this phenomenon has continued without interruption since the immeasurably distant past, it is identical to the beginningless perfuming mentioned previously. The occurrence that we call three successive processes bringing about cause and effect simultaneously gives us a rich sense of a flawlessly functioning system that accepts no excuses.

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It is easy for us to dismiss our habitual conduct as just something that everyone else does, and thus not worthy of special reflection. Certainly, our everyday selves are nothing other than part of our everyday scenery, and self-reflection is a uncomfortable and difficult mode to remain in. Nonetheless, being based on three successive phenomena bringing about cause and effect simultaneously and beginningless perfuming, what we will come to be in the future is deeply rooted in the everyday behavior we have been engaged in up to now. And while taking a thorough look at ourselves is of vital importance in any circumstance, it is nothing less than indispensable in the religious world. It is only through this process that a firm foundation may be built for the attainment of liberation. Real self-reflection can only happen in the context of everyday, normal activity.

Although I have no formal training in the martial arts, the traditional art of *kyūdō* (traditional Japanese archery) has always moved me. *Kyūdō* requires that an incredible level of mindfulness be exercised up to the moment of the release of the arrow, a level of mindfulness impossible for the impatient. And once the arrow is released, excuses are meaningless. One concentrates the mind and body fully on a single point: the distant target.

In *kyūdō,* there is an incredible level of fine-tuning involved in focusing body and mind, to the extent that one feels a moment of unity between one's mind, body, and the target. Even if the arrow that is boldly released after this fine-tuning does not hit the target, one still feels a sense of calm, a feeling that stems from the fact that one still retains the mental and physical harmonization with the target. Using this analogy, we can clearly perceive the meaning of the mechanism of the seeds and manifest activities operating through the three successive dharmas. By handling the affairs of our daily life with the same attitude, we are removing the necessity for excuses in not hitting the target in archery.

Compared to other religious and philosophical systems, Buddhism pays a considerably greater amount of attention to the matter of the inseparability of cause and effect. It is reiterated that all dharmas do not occur other than their basis in cause and effect, making it impossible to imagine that things have evolved by some sort of accident. This is one of the most fundamental aspects of the Buddhist way of thinking. Tradition says that the Buddha, when delivering his first sermon at the Deer Park in Benares, instructed his students with the *Four Noble Truths* and *Noble Eightfold Path,* with the concepts of cause and effect seminal to this teaching. The Four Noble Truths are: the (1) truth of suffering, (2) truth of arising, (3) truth of cessation, and (4) truth of the path.

(1) The truth of suffering clarifies the most fundamental view of Buddhism—that human life is fundamentally unsatisfactory. But can we all not attest that there exists much great joy within our daily living? Our happiness often acts as our daily target, the only thing getting us through days otherwise filled with anger and frustration. But we have come to understand that this enjoyment is transitory. It is too often our experience that when we continue to do something to excess because of the pleasure it brings, that feeling of enjoyment will eventually turn into pain. This is because our existence is based on suffering, even the pleasurable parts.

The Buddha taught that there are eight kinds of suffering. In addition to the four basic types of birth, aging, sickness, and death, we also suffer from separation from pleasurable things (or the people we like); association with undesirable things (or the people we dislike); not getting what we desire; and we suffer from existing within the unstable flux of the five

aggregates. This last kind of suffering is a bit of catch-all for various kinds of suffering, but mainly refers to the suffering we experience in relation to our inability to determine, locate, and account for who we really are, given the fact that we are composed of a wide range of unstable physical and mental factors that are roughly categorized into five groups, known as the "five aggregates." For example, we have the strong desire to maintain eternal youth, despite gradual weakening and aging, and this conflict between our desire and the actuality cannot but bring about discomfort.

(2) The truth of arising identifies mental disturbances (afflictions) or actions and behaviors (karma) as the causes of human suffering. Since suffering occurs because of mental disturbances and karma, it is called *suffering from afflicted activity.*

(3) The third truth, that of cessation, tells us that if we sever the mental disturbances and karma that are the causes of suffering, we can obtain nirvāṇa (peace of mind). The truth of cessation is identified as the true purpose of human existence.

(4) Finally, the truth of the path indicates the method and process by which tranquillity is attained. This path is presented as a list of eight items to be practiced in daily life: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

Within these four truths, we can see the significance of cause-and-effect within Buddhist philosophy. In the first two truths, there is (1) the suffering of human existence (effect) and (2) the mental disturbances and karma that bring it about (cause). In the second two truths, (3) the liberation that is the true goal of human life (effect) is brought about by (4) the daily practice of the eightfold path (cause). The former pair represents an analysis of the actual present human condition, while the latter pair is related to the attainment of liberation. These are known respectively as *tainted cause-and-effect* and *untainted cause-and-effect.*[5] Buddhist philosophy strives to first try to fully comprehend the cause and effect relationships that bring about the actual human condition before progressing further down the path.

The classical Buddhist scholastic text *Abhidharmakośa-bhāsya* elaborates upon the topic of cause and effect as the theory of *six causes, four conditions,*

and *five kinds of effects.* In that text, a detailed and precise examination was carried out regarding the causes and conditions involved in the production of all dharmas. Within these causes and conditions, four general categories were posited, which include: (1) direct causes; (2) causation through similar and immediately antecedent conditions; (3) objective referent as cause/condition; (4) contingent factors as causes and conditions.

Yogācāra Buddhism took this set of four and further elaborated them in this way: (1) A *direct cause* is an immediate cause that produces all the phenomena we experience in our everyday lives. The seeds stored in the *ālaya-vijñāna* function to produce manifest activities. From this perspective, the causes are the seeds. Then, the manifest activities that were produced by the seeds immediately perfume the impression-momentum seeds in the *ālaya-vijñāna* and in this way those manifest activities are the direct causes of those seeds. Thus there are two kinds of direct causes: seeds as direct cause, and manifest activity as direct cause. With these two as condition, all dharmas are produced, an effect that we call *seeds producing manifest activity, manifest activity perfuming seeds.*

(2) *Causation through similar and immediately antecedent conditions* refers to a situation wherein a certain type of mental function (mind-king or mental factor) occurs continuously, with the antecedent mind-king/mental factor becoming the condition for the succeeding mind-king/mental factor. There is no interruption between past and present, leading to what is called a similar and immediately antecedent condition.

(3) The *objective referent as cause* refers to the causative power of the objects of cognition. If an object of cognition is not present as a condition, cognitive function cannot occur, since the projected image (objective aspect) that is manifested in the mind fails to appear. Raw sensate appearances (the things of the external world) both give rise to objective aspects and are indirect cognitive objects, and as such they are included in the category of objective referent as cause.

(4) *Contingent factors as causes and conditions* refers to the ancillary causes and conditions that function in the production of all dharmas, lying beyond the scope of the three causes and conditions introduced above. While the primary requirement in the production of effects is the direct cause, cooperative factors are also necessary—there has to be a

friendly, supportive environment in order for things to occur—or at least an environment that does not *prevent* the occurrence of something. These are the contingent causes. The former case has an active connotation which is called *supporting contingent factors,* and since the latter case is merely a lack of obstruction, it is called *non-obstructing contingent factors.*

The dharmas (in this case, often rendered into English as *elements* or *factors*) are divided into two broad categories: mind dharmas (mental factors), and form dharmas (material factors). Mind dharmas occur based on all four kinds of causes and conditions, while form dharmas are produced by two kinds of causes and conditions (direct causes and contingent factors). Material things are established based on seeds in the store consciousness.

By now we can see how Yogācāra Buddhism explains the occurrence of things mainly through the concepts of *seeds* and *manifest activity*. Since use of the term *all dharmas* has a tendency to depersonalize this process, we should reiterate that point that what is being referred to is nothing other than the content of our daily activities. And the fact that these daily activities occur based on nothing other than the seeds amassed in our *ālaya-vijñāna* means that the responsibility for what occurs in our life is entirely our own. When we are handling things well, we tend to see the causes for success as coming from within ourselves. But when things are not going well, we tend to shift the responsibility and blame to someone else, or to some external factor. The fact that such shenanigans are utterly in vain is due to the fact of the seeds and the manifest activity being direct causes.

In the meaning of "non-obstructing" we can see the breadth of the Buddhist vision in its taking into account ancillary conditions in the production and establishment of each thing. Even the little mundane features of our lives that are passed by and ignored contribute to the constitution of the present "I" at that moment. This realization makes it more difficult to ignore the consequences of all of our daily interactions. And when thinking about supporting causes beyond those of immediate motivation, we can think of ourselves as profoundly situated on top of a vast and fertile ground of production.

Although the manifest activities produced from the seeds plant new impressions back into the *ālaya-vijñāna* as seeds simultaneously with their own production, it is not necessarily the case that seeds perfumed to the

ālaya-vijñāna immediately re-generate new effects. There are, in fact, an overwhelming number of circumstances in which manifest activity cannot be directly attained. This means that the necessary conditions must be anticipated and prepared in order for any event to occur.

Here a problem arises: if the necessary conditions are absent, what happens to those seeds? Eishun (1518–1596) of Kōfukuji Temple in the Muromachi period had this to say:

> Whatever the experience may be, it cannot avoid being retained by the reliable and incorruptible seeds.

In a diary entry from the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth lunar month in the sixteenth year of Tenshō (1588), he wrote:

> This means simply that seeds do not decompose.

In this way, the impressions and dispositions that are retained in the depths of our minds do not disappear simply because there is no suitable environment for their manifestation. The seeds in the *ālaya-vijñāna* that are the causes for the production for the fruit as manifest activity are, in a latent condition, repeatedly produced and extinguished from moment to moment, while simultaneously transmitting and continuing their character, awaiting the proper environment for their manifestation.

This process is called *seeds generating seeds.* These two kinds of seeds—those that produce and those that are produced—exist in causal relation to each other. The preceding seeds (cause) produce the subsequent seeds (effect). Because cause and effect are temporal, it is not a simultaneous relationship as in *seeds generating manifest activity and manifest activity perfuming seeds,* and so it is called *diachronic cause and effect.*

The process of seeds bringing about the continuity in type while repeatedly being extinguished and reproduced is precisely what is meant by *seeds generating seeds.* Earlier we described the *ālaya-vijñāna's* aspect of preserving the continuity of a single type of quality, but this was only one characterization of the aspect of the *ālaya-vijñāna* as essence. From the aspect of its function, it is characterized as *seeds generating seeds.* Thus,

the relationship between the *ālaya-vijñāna* and the seeds can be described as that of the relation between essence and function—aside from seeds, there is nothing in the *ālaya-vijñāna* that we can really speak of.

This further clarifies the point that since seeds generate further seeds in this way, it would be foolish to imagine that the seeds planted by our actions, behavior, and past experiences will naturally fade away over time. The past is something from which we may not escape. We are, no matter what, nothing other than the receptacle of our own past. By keeping keen awareness of the mental processes of *seeds generating manifest activity, manifest activity perfuming seeds* and *seeds generating seeds,* we can begin to behave accordingly and start to follow the Yogācāra way of life. This entails paying continual attention to the fact that our activities proceed through the three karmic processes of bodily activity, speech, and thought, and that every thought passing through our mind has its implications for the future.

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Innate Seeds and Newly Perfumed Seeds

The manifest activities produced from seeds have a single clear result, and manifest activities that appear as effects on the surface have a clearly discernible moral quality to their content. Our daily life is composed by the proliferation of such manifest activities, which develop variously.

Seeds are a way of describing the causal power that will produce results. Since these seeds exist in a latent, unmanifest condition, and are said to be the result *beginningless perfuming,* we have no way to discern their contents. Being unknowable, they defy any sort of observation or evaluation. Since they are unknowable, that means that there is virtually nothing that we can consciously do about them—despite the primacy of their role as the causes of the production of all experienced phenomena.

This means that if I want to try to live from tomorrow according to a Buddhist lifestyle, I have no other recourse but to start not with the unknowable seeds, but the *manifest activities* that are their tangible effects. One voluntarily reflects on one's own manifest activities while receiving the evaluation of others, and based on that creates new behavior. This gradual progression provides us with the opportunity for self-examination within manifest activity.

However manifest activity is something that is characterized by interruptions, which means that no matter how carefully we observe our manifest activity, we cannot come near to knowing the true manner of our own existence by this alone. The seeds both give the main form to our life and serve as its "backup." The main "interactive" processes are those of *seeds generating manifest activity* and *manifest activity perfuming seeds*. But in terms of the problem of bringing about changes in our being, we need to pay special attention to the process that preserves the continuity of sameness in kind, which is the mechanism of *seeds generating seeds.* When we discuss a person's character or basic personality, we must learn to go beyond the range of externally expressed manifest activity and proceed to take into account the latent, unmanifest seeds. Otherwise, we can never gain a sense of the person in his or her entirety.

Manifest activities are nothing more than the behavior constituted by individual actions. That which unites a person's separate manifest actions into an integrated whole is the extent to which they "seem like him" or reflect his individual potential. If we miss this aspect, then even if we have gained a certain sense of the person by accurately observing his separately apparent actions, and even if this sense may seem to tally with what that person really is in his integrated totality, in the final analysis, it has to be different. In order to approach the true aspect of a human being, great consideration needs to be given to the seeds, or the *ālaya-vijñāna,* even though we have no conscious access to them.

The factors that form the totality of someone's character, or personality, are usually distinguished—in all ages and all cultures—into those that are inherent and those that are acquired. Thus, when discussing a person's personality, we often refer to her or his "nature." By *inherent* we mean something that is inborn and not readily changeable—which lacks room for the effects of education and training. As distinguished from the inherent, the *acquired* is that which is assimilated into the person after birth, such as influences stemming from familial environments or social norms that are naturally ingrained; or that which one gains based on one's own application of effort. Psychological theories regarding the formation of personality have shown a tendency to incline in one of these two directions (i.e. the timeless debate regarding *nature* vs. *nurture*). Nowadays, it seems to

be generally understood that personality formation happens through the course of a dynamic relationship of various mutual influences between the innate and the acquired.

Yogācāra presents a classification in seed theory that separates types of seeds in a way that resembles this nature vs. nurture paradigm. This is the division between what are known as *innate seeds* and *newly perfumed seeds*. The concept of *innate seeds* (or *originally existent* seeds) expresses the potentiality for the production of all dharmas naturally included since the beginningless past in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. Since the term *inherent* indicates original peculiarity, innate seeds can be seen as being analogous to the notion of an inherent tendency. However, since they are possessed "originally, from the beginningless past," it is important to realize that this is something with significantly more complex connotations than those of simply *inborn* or *innate,* as is understood in present-day psychological discourse.

*Newly perfumed seed*s are seeds that were not originally present in our bodies and minds at birth. These are the impression-dispositions that are newly impregnated from various manifest activities. From the perspective of the classification of personality-forming factors into "acquired" and "inherent," it is possible to think of these newly perfumed seeds in terms of those that are acquired. Since their perfuming is seen to be something that has continued from the beginningless past, the newly perfumed seeds can be understood as included in the category that we normally consider as *inherent*.

It is often said by those comparing modern psychology with Yogācāra that innate seeds are like inborn nature, while newly perfumed seeds are akin to acquired conditioning. In Yogācāra, however, the distinction between innate and acquired is not simply a matter of whether or not the qualities are "inborn," but a question of whether they are naturally accumulated in the basis of our existence from the eternal past. It is thought that these inherent qualities and the non-inherent newly perfumed qualities produce all dharmas based on their mutual relationships, bringing forth the actuality of our life. While this kind of distinction may be hypothetically made, actually identifying distinct seeds as differing along these lines is somewhat problematic. We may say, in a general sense, that innate seeds are originally equipped in the "I," and newly perfumed seeds are newly planted

in the *ālaya-vijñāna* based on the activities our daily life, but it is in fact impossible to make a concrete distinction between those that are inherent and those that are newly perfumed. Only the buddhas have the ability to discern this sort of thing.

Instead of getting tangled up in this matter, it is more worthwhile to earnestly contemplate how our present daily actions and behavior are planting newly perfumed seeds in the *ālaya-vijñāna*. So here, again, we return our attention to manifest activity. It is also not helpful to merely (and perhaps, fatalistically) regard our manifest appearance and behavior as the generated effects of seeds; rather, it is more important to see our manifest behavior as the causes for the perfuming of seeds which bring influence on all of our subsequent actions and behavior, as well as our entire future destiny.

The character of such a moment in the linking between manifest activity and (newly perfumed) seeds is well expressed in the following short passage from the *Tale of the Vegetable Roots* (1602) by Hong Zicheng of the Ming period. It contemplates the weaknesses of human beings who retrogress after gradually reaching to a certain kind of level.

> While on the path of desire, you should not be so quick to stick your finger in the pot to get a taste. Once you stick your finger in, you fall down a thousand fathoms. While on the path of principle, you should be on guard not to hesitate and retreat. Retreating once, you fall back the distance of a thousand mountains.

The interpretation of this sentence by Usaburo Imai, included in his translation of the text, is as follows:

> Don't temporarily put out your hand thinking to grab an easy opportunity to satisfy yourself. Trying to snatch one time, you end up falling into the depths of ten thousand fathoms (in other words, once you get a taste and remember that taste, you'll end up being drowned in it). (On the contrary), when it comes to the path of principle, even if you find the difficulty bothersome, don't shrink back for a moment. If you shrink back just once, you'll end up being

> separated by a thousand mountains' distance which can never be recovered (because once you regard the task as bothersome, it will only become more and more bothersome).[6]

Who can disagree?

We all have the tendency, whatever the situation, to opt for the easiest way out. By repeatedly continuing in this activity we become habituated. At length, coming to an awareness of this, we realize that it shouldn't be, and the mental factor of regret (Skt. *kaukṛtya*) begins to take hold. Is this not our most authentic mode of being? Yet still, even though we are aware that we shouldn't do such-and-such a thing, we gradually slide back into an easy direction. While one can always make the excuse that we are "only human," the awareness brought about from the Yogācāra perspective should help to prevent us from becoming fully immersed in pleasure and ease.

Six Connotations of Seeds

As we have now come to realize, the Yogācāra view is that the two processes of seeds and manifest activity, while serving as mutual cause and effect, produce all appearances, events, and actions. Our daily lives revolve through the chain of links of *seeds generating manifest activity* and *manifest activity perfuming seeds*. In considering the fact that each one of our activities in daily life perfumes its impression into the mind's innermost depths, and these are accumulated as a potential energy for the subsequent production of all dharmas, we shouldn't be able to engage so lightly in careless activity.

On the other hand, this should not be taken as an excuse for not taking action. We can gain greater awareness of the state of mind that bends the bow toward the distantly-placed target. In the final analysis, what is most important is to simply have a target. In his research on the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra,* Dr. Hashimoto Hōkei has said, "the target is that which serves to gather all the power that a person has." Since this is an expression of his own experience in pulling the bow, it is not mere word play. He also said, "Every person should always have a destination."[7]

It doesn't matter whether we call it a target or a destination. In life, if one has a goal, and one fixes one's gaze on it from afar, one will, as a human being, naturally strive for it.

The Six Connotations

The seeds that represent the *potential within the eight consciousnesses to produce an effect* are understood as operating governed by six different conditions, which are (1) momentariness; (2) simultaneity with their manifestations; (3) functioning in tandem with the appropriate consciousness; (4) having the same karmic quality as their manifestations; (5) production of their manifestations only after the necessary associated causes are present; (6) each seed produces its own peculiar manifestation and no other. These are known as the *six conditions of seeds.* We need to take a moment here and briefly discuss the connotations of each of these distinctive properties in terms of the explanation of seeds given above, especially in terms of the relationship between seeds and manifest activity.

(1) *Momentariness* means that seeds, representing the potentiality for the production of all things, arise, cease, and change without interruption. If it were the case that seeds were something eternal and unchanging, causation would be rendered impossible. The fact that seeds cannot be something eternal and unchanging, but must arise, cease, and change from moment to moment, is the meaning of momentariness.

Next we move to the condition of simultaneous cause and effect as an aspect of the causes and effects in the production of all phenomena, which is the relationship between seeds and manifest activity. This is the meaning of (2) *simultaneity of seeds with their manifestations.* This means that seeds, as the causes for the production of all dharmas, simultaneously contain their effect *qua* manifest activity. This idea was already touched upon in some detail from the perspective of the *three successive phenomena bringing about cause and effect simultaneously* in the context of *seeds generating manifest activity* and *manifest activity perfuming seeds.*

(3) The meaning of *functioning in tandem with the appropriate consciousness* is that the seeds are continuous in their function without interruption, and that they bring about the continuity of the same qualities

without altering them. If that which we understand as cause disappears before it produces its intended effect, then it has lost its meaning. In order for seeds to function as the causal power for the production of all phenomena, they cannot be something that readily disappears. They must continue without interruption. Seeds, as they bring about the continuity of a certain type over a long period of time, act as *seeds generating seeds,* discussed at length above. By "long period of time" here, we are discussing a period of time lasting until the attainment of the final stage of enlightenment, which will be discussed in chapter 10.

(4) *Having the same karmic quality as their manifestations* means that the seeds are of the same quality as the manifest activities they produce. In other words, wholesome manifest activities are caused by wholesome seeds and unwholesome manifest activities are caused by unwholesome seeds. Thus, the meaning of seeds having the same karmic quality as their manifestations means that the quality of a certain behavior or appearance automatically resonates with the wholesome, unwholesome, or indeterminate karmic moral quality of the seeds that produced it.

Seeds are again used as a metaphor for the latent potentiality to give rise to each thing, and we have repeatedly seen them described as *the potential within the eight consciousnesses to produce an effect.* However, in reality, the establishment of all phenomena is attributable not only directly to these seeds. In order for things to occur, various kinds of conditions must also be present. This is indicated by the fifth connotation, (5) *seeds produce their manifestations only when the necessary associated causes are present*. This is stating that the occurrence of events awaits the assembly of myriad conditions.

Finally, (6) states that *a seed produces its own particular manifestation and no other,* meaning that the seeds naturally bring about effects that are homogeneous with their own character.

At a first look, the implications of numbers (4) and (6) may be hard to distinguish, but they do refer to two distinct aspects. In #4, *having the same karmic quality as their manifestations,* the issue is one of the *karmic character* or *moral quality* of the seed. In condition #6, that of production of its own peculiar manifestation and no other, the problem is one of *type* or *kind*. We tend to end up referring to *all dharmas* as if they were just one set of

things, but all of the phenomena that are produced by causes and conditions (known as *conditioned dharmas*) can be broadly categorized into three groups, which include: (1) mental phenomena (including the mind-king and mental factors), (2) material phenomena (called *form dharmas*), and (3) phenomena that can be classified as neither material nor mental (called factors not directly associated with mind; including such things as time, direction, quantity, etc.). In a very general sense, it would not be incorrect to say that seeds are the causes of the production of all dharmas. However, specifically speaking, it is understood that material phenomena are produced from the seeds of form dharmas, and psychological phenomena are produced from the seeds of mind dharmas. This is the meaning of each seed producing its own peculiar manifestation and no other. It is from these conditioned dharmas that our daily life takes its form. When we consider each seed producing its own particular manifestation and no other, we are shown that an "I" cannot be established based solely on a single type of cause. Any phenomenon that is not defined by all six of these conditions cannot be a seed.

Among these six meanings of seeds, I would like here to stress the special importance of the two connotations *production of their manifestations only after the necessary associated causes are present* and *each seed's production of its own peculiar manifestation and no other.* This entails another look at the *four causes and conditions.* From the very start, Buddhism pays great attention to the matter of cause and effect, and within this notion of cause and effect, it places special stress on the notion of causality through a multiplicity of causes and conditions.

In other words, it is impossible to think that all the things that go into the composition of our actual daily lives occur on their own and without due cause. Rather, it is precisely in the midst of a dynamic assembly of manifold causes and conditions that things come into being, while we go about managing our daily lives. Buddhism assumes this way of thinking to be fundamental, and this approach is clarified and elaborated with far greater precision by the Yogācāra notions of *seeds producing their manifestations only after the necessary associated causes are present* and *each seed producing of its own peculiar manifestation and no other.*

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Abhidharma Doctrines and Controversies on Perception

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9. The Sautrāntika Theory of Representational Perception

9.1. Sautrāntika objection to simultaneous causality and the Vaibhāṣika reply

While both the Sarvāstivāda and the Sautrāntika share the premise that all *dharma*-s are momentary (*kṣaṇika*), the Sautrāntika maintains that in the causal process, a cause necessarily precedes the corresponding effect. These two premises — momentariness and the necessary posteriority of effect — when taken together, lead the Sautrāntika to the logical conclusion that all our knowledge of the external world is necessarily indirect. In the second moment when the sensory consciousness arises as the effect, the cause has become past, and therefore is no more existent.

In the Ny, Śrīlāta raises four objections to the doctrine of simultaneous causality:

I. Causality among co-nascent *dharma*-s cannot be established since before they arise, they have not yet come into existence; one cannot specify which *dharma*-s give rise (cause) to which (effect). This would also mean that the present *dharma*-s are without cause, and that we need to seek two other *dharma*-s for the two co-nascent *dharma*-s.

II. It is taught that where there is a cause, there is an effect. If *dharma*-s in the future period can function as causes for other *dharma*-s to arise, there would be the fallacy of *dharma*-s arising perpetually.

III. Among two co-nascent *dharma*-s — as in the case of the two horns of an ox — one cannot prove legitimately which is the cause which is the effect.

IV. In the world, among cases where a cause-effect relationship is universally acknowledged — such as the production of sprout from a seed — such a simultaneous causality has never been observed.[1]

As we have seen above, Śrīlāta clearly depicts sensory perception as a successive process. Saṃghabhadra argues that such a perceptual model

would lead to the *Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika* position that the external object for the perceptual process is necessarily different from the condition qua object (*ālambana-pratyaya*) — that is, from what actually serves to generate the sensory consciousness:

> Why? Because they assert that where the *rūpa*, etc, can serve as the condition for the arising of visual consciousness, etc; such *rūpa*, etc, are necessarily arisen previously (*agraja*). At the time when the *rūpa* exists, the visual consciousness has not yet come into existence; consciousness not yet existing, what then takes the object (*ā-√lamb*)? At the time when visual consciousness exists, the *rūpa* has already become non-existent; the *rūpa* not existing, what serves as the cognitive object (*ālambana*)?
>
> Visual consciousness ought not take a non-existent as object, because they assert that the five consciousnesses take present objects, and because their school holds that the present is not non-existent. The *rūpa* that is being perceived in the present moment is not the condition qua object, since it co-arises with the present visual consciousness.[2]

What Saṃghabhadra means in his critique is that:

(i) As the Sautrāntika too would agree, a sensory perception — and for that matter any perception — necessarily arises with a cognitive object, *O-c* (*ālambana*). There can be no consciousness as such without an object. In the case of a sensory perception, it is also agreed that *O-c* is necessarily in the present moment.

(ii) But since it holds that the perception as the effect must be in the second moment, *O-c* cannot be the same as the external object, *O-e*, existing in the previous (first) moment. Moreover, as the school, holding Vibhajyavādin standpoint, must concede that the present *dharma*, *O-c*, is existent, and that *O-e* is no more; *O-c* and *O-e* are necessarily different *dharma*-s. Hence, it amounts to not only that a sensory perception has no *ālambana-pratyaya*, but also the very impossibility of knowing an external object. Since the past and future *dharma*-s as well as the *asaṃskṛta*-s are all held by the school to be non-existent, there equally cannot be *ālambana-pratyaya*-s for the mental perception of these *dharma*-s; for otherwise one would commit the fallacy of over-generalization (*ati-prasaṅga*) by conceding that non-existent entities can serve as conditions.[3] This would then lead to the untenable position that consciousness can arise without any object serving as one of the two requisite conditions.

9.2. Perception is possible even though the cognitive object is non-existent

However, as we have seen (chapter 4), since the time of the early Dārṣṭāntikas, the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas have held that cognitive objects need not be real existents. Śrīlāta maintains this position, and answers the Vaibhāṣika criticism as follows:

> Those mental consciousnesses that have the past, etc, as objects are not without the cognitive objects; [though] they do not exclusively have existents as objects. Why is that so? Because we say that the mental consciousnesses arisen with the five groups of [sensory] consciousness as the equal-immediate [conditions] (*samanantara-pratyaya*) are [in each case] capable of experiencing (*anu-√bhū*) the [corresponding] object grasped by the preceding *manas* [— i.e. the corresponding sensory consciousness that serves as the *samanantara-pratyaya* for the present mental consciousness].
>
> Such a mental consciousness has as its cause (*hetu*), the **anudhātu*, and its *ālambana-pratyaya* is none other than the [external] object (*viṣaya*) of the [corresponding] sensory consciousness. [The preceding *manas* (= the sensory consciousness) is the cause] because it must have existed first in order that this [mental consciousness] can arise; and [the sensory object is the *ālambana-pratyaya* of this mental consciousness] because the existence or non-existence of this [consciousness] follows the existence or non-existence of that [object]. However, this mental consciousness does not exclusively have an existent as its object, since at this time [of its arising] that object has already perished. Neither is it without a cognitive object, since the existence or non-existence of this mental consciousness follows the existence or non-existence of that [object].
>
> Furthermore, when one recollects (*anu-√smṛ*) an object that has long perished, the arising of [the recollection] in the present moment has as its condition the former consciousness that perceived that object, for this consciousness of recollection belongs to the same series [of which this former consciousness is a member] and is arisen in a serial succession. Although there are other conditions that generate the consciousness of recollection, its arising must be preceded by the perception of that former object.[4]

There are two main points in Śrīlāta's explanations:

(a) Their standpoints of Vibhajyavāda and successive causation do not entail that consciousness can arise without a *O-c* serving as a necessary condition — the *ālambana-pratyaya*. But *O-c* need not be an existent. In fact, at the time when the mental consciousness (he clarifies particularly the case of mental

consciousness) immediately succeeding a sensory consciousness arises, *O-e*, though having become past and therefore non-existent, can nevertheless be 'experienced' by the mental consciousness as its *O-c*. This, as we shall see (*infra*) is in the form of an exact copy of *O-e*.

(b) However, *O-c* is only a supporting condition; the generative cause (*janana-hetu*) for the mental consciousness is the preceding moment of consciousness in the mental series. These two points are inter-connected via Śrīlāta doctrine of the *anudhātu* (*supra,* § 6.5). The *anudhātu* is the fact of causal efficacy manifested in each moment of the person's psycho-physical series. Each present moment — and the Vibhajyavādins can work with only this present moment — subsuming and transmitting all that have been previously experienced, is the generative cause of the succeeding moment of the series. And in this way, all experiences, including *karma* and memory, are preserved and passed down in the series.

Thus in the case of visual perception, the visual object exists in the first moment, conditioning the arising of the visual consciousness of that object (now past) in the second moment. This same object is also experienced as the *O-c* of the immediately succeeding mental consciousness in the third moment. This is because the arising of the mental consciousness is necessarily conditioned by the preceding sensory consciousness as its *samanantara-pratyaya* functioning as the mental faculty (*mana-indriya = manas*); and the arising of this sensory consciousness is in turn necessarily conditioned by the sensory object.

The causal necessity is justified by Śrīlāta with the Buddha's doctrine of conditionality: "this being, that comes to be; from the arising of this, that arises" (*asmin satīdaṃ bhavati / asyo 'tpādād idam utpadyate*). But whereas Saṃghabhadra would interpret the first part of this dictum as referring to simultaneous causality (*sahabhū-hetu*) in contrast to the second part, Śrīlāta takes the whole dictum as referring to the successive cause-effect sequence.[5] The causal relationship may also be justified by the logician (*haituka*) criterion: When A exists or does not exist, B necessarily exists or does not exist; then A constitutes the cause of B. Such a criterion is also used by the Vaibhāṣika as well as the Yogācāra to establish simultaneous causality.[6]

Saṃghabhadra objects to the above explanations by Śrīlāta in details, showing the contradictions and fallacies that result from the latter's Vibhajyavāda standpoint and doctrine of successive causality:

(I) Given the denial that the *O-e* can co-exist with a sensory consciousness, the latter can arise only in the second moment after the ceasing of the *O-e* which it therefore cannot experience; how then can it be experienced by the mental consciousness arising in the third moment? To concede that this mental consciousness can experience the object of the past sensory consciousness, and at the same time that it is not without an *O-c*, is to acknowledge that this *O-c* though ceased is still existent in part. On the other hand, if the *O-c* is held to be completely non-existent, then it amounts to stating that the arisen mental consciousness is absolutely (*atyantam*) without an *O-c*. This then renders nonsensical his assertion: "However, this mental consciousness does not exclusively have an existent as its object", etc. — He must admit the fallacy of this consciousness being without an *O-c*:

> Since he does not acknowledge that the object of a sensory consciousness[7] can be co-nascent with the sensory consciousnesses; it entails that even the sensory consciousness arises only after the object has ceased, how much more so the mental consciousness — [asserted to be] able to experience that object — which is generated immediately after the sensory consciousness? For, it is in the third moment[8] that the mental consciousness arises. If the mental consciousness generated immediately after the sensory consciousness could experience the object of the past sensory consciousness, and yet it is acknowledged that the *ālambana* is not non-existent; then it is clearly an acknowledgement that the object of the mental consciousness, though said to have ceased, still exists in part. If it is held to be totally non-existent; then it clearly amounts to stating that the generated mental consciousness is absolutely without any *ālambana*, and it would be futile to state: "However, this mental consciousness does not exclusively have an existent as its object, since at this time [of its arising] that object has already perished. Neither is it without a perceptual object, since the existence or non-existence of this mental consciousness follows the existence or non-existence of that [object].[9]

(II) To say that it "does not exclusively have an existent as its object, since at this time [of its arising] that object has already perished." is illogical: A perished *dharma* cannot be said to be both existent and non-existent — unless, of course, Śrīlāta adopts the Sarvāstivāda standpoint that a past *dharma* is on the one hand not absolutely non-existent like a sky-flower, and on the other not existent in the same manner as a present *dharma* which alone has activity (*kāritra*).[10] Otherwise, he must state either that the *O-c* of this consciousness is definitely existent, or that it is definitely non-existent.

(III) The proposition that 'the existence of consciousness is dependent on that of the object' implies that the past exists as an entity. If the past object does not exist and yet a present consciousness arises, then it should not be stated that the latter's existence or non-existence depends that of the object. Moreover, it is also meaningless to assert that it is not without an *O-c*: it is on account of the existence of the object that it is said to have an *O-c*; the object not existing as an entity, how can there be an *O-c*?

(IV) When one recollects a long perished object, how can a previously arisen consciousness that perceived that object serve as the condition for the arising of this present consciousness? When the previous consciousness existed, the present consciousness has not come into existence; when the latter exists, the former is no more — how can a non-existent be a condition for a non-existent? How can it be true that the present consciousness arises with a long perished object as the preceding condition? In the long interval that has preceded, a non-existent could not have served as a condition for another non-existent not belonging to the same series — granting such a possibility that a non-existent can be a condition for another non-existent amounts to saying that a hare's horn can generate a hare's horn! Neither can it be argued that the case here is different because of the existence of the *anudhātu* in the consciousness: The present *anudhātu* consciousness has never been generated with regard to the former object, how can it be said that the consciousness that perceived the former object domain, having served as the condition, generates the present consciousness? It cannot be said that the *anudhātu* and the consciousness take their cognitive objects at different times, lest it be that two times exist in a single times! Neither can Śrīlāta say that the *anudhātu* is a different entity distinct from the present consciousness, for it would entail that two consciousnesses arise together within a single serial continuity.[11]

(V) Finally, with the Vibhajyavāda standpoint, Śrīlāta cannot validly speak of a causal succession in his explanations; since what immediately precedes, a non-existent, cannot be causally related to the present, an existent, and — further back in the line — a non-existent likewise cannot be causally related to another non-existent.[12] More generally, even the notion of a progressive serial continuity cannot be valid unless past *dharma*-s are accepted as being continuously existent: serial variation can only be asserted of a continuous existent, not on a *dharma* that exists for a mere moment.[13]

9.3. Sautrāntika explanation of direct perception

Elsewhere in the Ny, Saṃghabhadra refutes the Sautrāntika and maintains that according to the Buddha's teaching, both the *O-c* and the mental faculty are the indispensable causes for generating a consciousness.[14] Śrīlāta, however, argues that even though a knowledge has a non-existent as its *O-c*, the two requisite conditions for perception are nonetheless still fulfilled,[15] by virtue of inferring the successive cause-effect relationship involved. In this argument, he further clarifies how the Sautrāntika arrives at the claim that a present consciousness/knowledge has as its *O-c* a past object. The argument also details how *pratyakṣa* is possible, notwithstanding the seeming contradictory stance of indirect perception:

> It is only after having grasped (perceived) a present [object field] that one is able to rapidly infer (推尋) the preceding and the succeeding. That is, one is able to infer that such an effect in the present is produced by such a type of cause in the past. This cause in turn was produced by such a cause — in this manner back to the distant past. In each corresponding case (*yathāyogam*), through inference, it is directly experienced (**anu-√bhū*,[16] **pratyakṣī-√kṛ*, **sākṣāt-√kṛ*) as if in the present moment (如現證得). One may also infer that such a type of cause in the present will produce such a type of fruit in the future; this fruit in turn will induce the arising of such a fruit — in each corresponding case, through inference, it is directly realized as if in the present moment. In this way, successively examining the past causes accordingly as the case may be, back to the distant past, one directly realizes as if in the present moment, without any error (*aviparītam*). Although at the particular stage, the object field (*viṣaya*) does not exist, the knowledge is nonetheless not without the two requisites [— *ālambana* and *āśraya*].
>
> [This is so because] at the time when a particular cause-knowledge (*hetu-jñāna*) arises, there exists the *hetu-pratyaya* (因緣) [— the *anudhātu* —] in one's serial continuity. That is: there was formerly produced such a knowledge; through a causal succession (*pāramparyeṇa*), it gives rise to a present knowledge of such a form. Since this present knowledge has as its cause the former knowledge; the result is that this present knowledge arises with an understanding conforming to the former one (如昔而解), having as its *ālamabana* the former object. However, that *ālamabana* is now a non-existent; yet though now a non-existent, it constitutes the *ālamabana*. Hence one cannot say that [the present] knowledge is without the two requisites.[17]

Firstly, in Śrīlāta's version of the Sautrāntika doctrine on perception, the so-called "direct perception" expressed by the Sanskrit word *pratykṣa* is clearly a case of retrospection. But it qualifies as a *pratyakṣa* experience

in so as there is an exact correspondence between what is known in this retrospection in the third moment when mental consciousness arises, and the sensory object-field in the first moment: The present *ālambana* that generates the present retrospection is an exact mental representation, having the same appearance — the *ākāra* — of the former object-field. The Vaibhāṣika-s consider the act of recollection as a contribution by the universal (*mahābhūmika*) *caitta smṛti* which arising in every moment of thought functions to take clear note (明記 *abhi-√lap*) of the present object. "It is not the case that without having first taken clear note of the present object-field, there can subsequently be the generation of the recollection of the past [object-filed]."[18] In contrast, the Sautrāntikas deny the existence of *smṛti* as an ontological entity. For them, retrospection or recollection is of the nature of knowledge itself. Or, as Śrīlāta states, a mode of activity of knowledge (*jñānākāra*), i.e., knowledge qua a modality of the activity of thought at each present moment performs the same function of clear noting as the Vaibhāṣika *smṛti*.[19]

Saṃghabhadra argues that since the Sautrāntika maintains that on account of causation being successive, an external object in the preceding moment has not been experienced directly (*pratyakṣam*), there can be no possibility of a subsequent discernment that is of the nature of *pratyakṣa*[20] — having the thrust of vividness and immediacy. The Sautrāntika, on the other hand, argues that not mere recollection, but rather the simultaneity of the experiencing (*anubhava*) and the discerning (*buddhi*) must be admitted to account for such an experience.[21] That is, unless one is self-aware of what one is presently cognizing or knowing — i.e. unless what is termed *sva-saṃvedana*[22] in later Buddhist logical texts is a fact — one cannot in the subsequent moment recollect as a *pratyakṣa* understanding in the manner: "I have experienced such a pleasure or pain."[23] The emphasis here is clearly on the fact the *pratyakṣa* is an experience of a personal nature and is free from error — as when one sees a real before one's very eyes (*prati-akṣa*).[24]

In other words, the Sautrāntika, rejecting simultaneous causality, seeks to account for the sense of vividness and immediacy necessarily entailed in a *pratyakṣa* understanding via a different mechanism: It maintains that the perceptual act is intrinsically self-aware. Like the Sarvāstivāda, it too arrives at the conclusion that the *pratyakṣa* knowledge truly becomes a knowledge only on subsequent recollection; but its doctrinal premises entail that this occurs only in the third moment from the time of the initial appearance of the *indriya* and *viṣaya*.

In AKB, Vasubandhu essentially accepts this Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntika conception. He explains that in spite of the non-existence of the previous object-domain at the present moment of mental consciousness, its recollection is possible because "from the [previous] *citta* of seeing [that object-field], another thought of recollection [now] arises through the process of a [progressive] transformation of the serial continuity."[25] This homogeneous serial continuity is described as containing the memory-seed (*smṛti-bīja*), defined as the capacity engendered by the experience of the initial sensory perception and capable of generating a consciousness of memory subsequently in the same personal serial continuity. These memory seeds are comparable to karmic seeds and plant-seeds in the world.[26] They are not ontological existents, but just efficacies (*sāmarthya*) perpetuated within the serial continuity.[27]

In keeping with this understanding, the Sautrāntika claims that it is consciousness, and not the sensory organ, that sees. Accordingly, when one, conforming to worldly conventions, speaks of the eye seeing an object-domain, it should be understood to mean that the subsequently arising visual consciousness experiences (*anu-√bhū*) or cognizes (*vijānāti*) it.[28] As Vasubandhu explains, consciousness in this case actually does nothing to the cognitive object. It simply arises with a content which is a resemblance (*sādṛśya*) of the object-domain. (See *infra*, § 9.4.). This resemblance is most often – especially in later texts — expressed by the term *ākāra*.

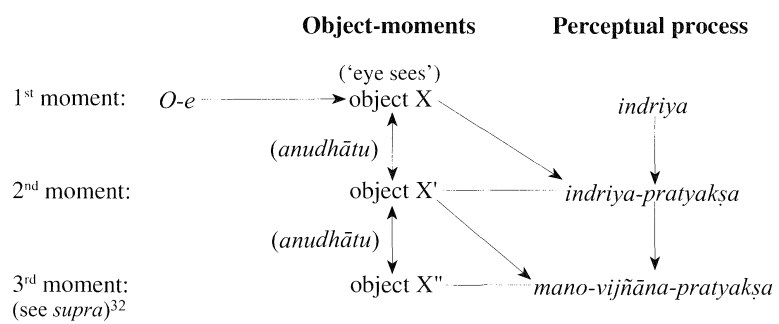
Another point to be noted is that, in Śrīlāta's explanation above, of the possibility of experiencing a past object, he clearly speaks of the mechanism involving *anudhātu*, even though the term is not mentioned explicitly: the present knowledge is called the *hetu-jñāna*, a *jñāna* (= *vijñāna*) corresponding to the experience of the previous sensory object. Its arising is by virtue of a causal succession — the serial continuity being endowed with the *hetu-pratyaya* (如是因智生時, 自相續中因緣有故), i.e., the *anudhātu*.[29] (*Cf.* § 6.5.). Via such a casual succession, thanks to the principle of the *anudhātu* "one directly realizes [the past object] as if in the present moment, without any error." And this constitutes the Sautrāntika notion of *pratyakṣa*.

Various objections, however, are raised against Śrīlāta explanations:
One is that while a knowledge which has as its *O-c* an object previously grasped could be said to have a former object as the present *O-c*; in the case where it has as *O-c* an object which has not been grasped, or recollects future events in a reverse order, how can it have a former object as its *O-c*?[30]

Saṃghabhadra raises other objections: If it is only after a successive search of past causes that consciousness can arise with regard to objects previously grasped, then among the latter the more recently experienced ones would be grasped more quickly than others. Yet this is contradicted by experience: a person presently residing in one place can remember abruptly an event experienced formerly in another far away place — without the need to go through the process of successive deduction.

Another objection: The mental continuum is not always a homogeneous one. Thus, it can happen that immediately after, say, an auditory consciousness, a mental consciousness arises having as *O-c* what was previously perceived. In this case, what constitutes the generative cause of this consciousness? It cannot be the *anudhātu* that has been successively transmitted, since the auditory consciousness did not perceive that object. Nor can it be the consciousness that had perceived it, since that consciousness does not exist at that moment when the mental consciousness is to arise. Neither can it be produced without any cause. With these refutations, Saṃghabhadra concludes that for a Vibhajyavādin who admits the existence of only a single (present) moment, the consciousness that arises having a past or future *dharma* as *O-c* is necessarily without the bi-requisite conditions.[31]

While the Vaibhāṣika maintains that the direct perception by visual consciousness can never grasp a 'jug' as such, the Sautrāntika would say that there is actually the direct perception of the conceptualized 'jug'. And it is with this that one can infer the existence of the atoms out there on the basis of which the superimposed 'jug' is directly perceived. However, this 'direct perception' takes place not in a single — i.e. the first — moment of perception. It occurs in the second moment. The following chart summarizes this process:



X, the representational form (*ākāra*) — a unified complex — corresponding to the external object *O-e*, is the *ālambana-pratyaya* for the *indriya-pratyakṣa*. In the first moment, one can expediently speaks of the 'the eye seeing the object'. It is in this moment that the representation of the object is left in the mental series as *O-e* is passing away. X', the same representation preserved and passed down via the *anudhātu*, is the *ālambana-pratyaya* for *mano-vijñāna-pratyakṣa*. Being simultaneous with *indriya-pratyaya*, it is its *pratyaya*. X" is likewise passed down via the *anudhātu*. Being simultaneous with *mano-vijñāna-pratyaya*, it is its *pratyaya*. X, X' and X" are all mental contents: whether sensory or mental, the object of the *pratyakṣa* experience is always past, and unreal.

9.4. The Sautrāntika doctrine that only the *dhātu*-s are real

Given its Dārṣṭāntika inheritance (see above), it is not difficult for the Sautrāntika to arrive at the conclusion that causality *per se*, as an abstract principle dictating a necessary relationship between two entities conceived as "cause" and "effect", is a mentally superimposed concept. It is from such a premise that the Sautrāntika declares in the debate presented above (chapter 4): "Conditioned by visual organ and visible objects, visual consciousness arises. Herein, what is it that sees, and what is it that is seen? It is really devoid of any activity — a mere play of *dharma*-s as cause and effect (*nirvyāpāraṃ hīdaṃ dharmamātraṃ hetuphalamātraṃ ca*)."

Obviously, it is not that the Sautrāntika denies the empirical fact of causal efficacy as such. But what we do experience — and *ipso facto* know to exist — are no more than the momentary flashing of *dharma*-s, now experienced as so-called "cause", now as so-called "effect". The Sautrāntika acknowledgement of causal efficacy as the only reality finds explicit expression in its view that, in the traditional three-fold classification of *dharma*-s — *skandha*, *āyatana*, and *dhātu* — only *dhātu* can be considered as real. In the AKB[33] "*dhātu*" is explained as having the meaning of "*gotra*"('race', 'species', 'lineage') which is then glossed as "*ākara*", "mine". Xuan Zang[34] renders *ākara* as 生本, 'birth-origin' or 'arising-source'. The *dhātu*-s are mines of their own species, each being the homogeneous cause (*sabhāga-hetu*) of the later moments in the existence of a given *dharma*. This Sautrāntika interpretation of *dhātu* which clearly has the connotation of causal efficacy, is rejected by Saṃghabhadra,[35] as it is more in tune with the Sautrāntika *bīja* Theory. He proposes instead that the eighteen *dhātu*-s are said to be *gotra*-s in the sense of being eighteen

different species, each having its distinct essential nature — a proposition that would accord with the doctrine of Sarvāstitva.

In the Ny, this view that *dhātu* alone is real is put forward by Sthavira Śrīlāta, the leading Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika at the time:

> Herein, the Sthavira asserts thus: Both the supporting basis as well as the objects for the five sensory consciousness do not exist truly. For each individual atom by itself cannot serve as a supporting basis or an object; they can do so only in the form of a unified complex (和合); ... He and his disciples employ the simile of the blind in support of their doctrine. It is said that (*kila* — showing Saṃghabhadra's disagreement) each blind person by himself is devoid of the function of seeing visible forms; an assemblage (和集) of these blind persons likewise is devoid of the function of seeing. Similarly, each individual atom by itself is devoid of the function of being a supporting basis or an object; an assemblage of many atoms likewise is devoid of such functions (See Saṃghabhadra's refutation above). Hence, *āyatana* is unreal; *dhātu* alone is real.[36]

Like the Sarvāstivāda, the Sautrāntika too accepts the atoms as real existents. But whereas the Sarvāstivāda acknowledges the existence of both colour (*varṇa*) and shape (*saṃsthāna*) atoms, the Sautrāntika thinks that shapes are nothing but particular arrangements of the colour atoms.[37] The cognitive object being a superimposed unity, the Sautrāntika view amounts to that a sensory consciousness, like mental consciousness, perceives an unreal, conceptualized object. The above passage further asserts unreality of any subject-object/perceiver-perceived relationship — one on which the very classification of *āyatana* is based. Thus, along with the object of perception, the corresponding sense faculty too, is denied. For the Sautrāntika, it is only the real entities — the *dhātu*-s forming the bases for both the *skandha*-s and the *āyatana*-s — are real in the absolute sense (*paramārtha*)[38] These *dhātu*-s are the realities of causal efficacy. From each individual *dhātu* arises each individual *dharma*; and from this perspective, the *dhātu*-s alone are real in the absolute sense.

Śrīlāta goes further: even consciousness itself, as a real entity having an intrinsic nature, is also denied by him — it is not real in as much as its so-called intrinsic function of being conscious of the object need to be manifested through the unified complex of the perceptual fact wherein the sense faculty must function as the supporting basis, and the object, the supporting condition:

> When the *sūtra* speaks of consciousness as that which is conscious (*vijānātīti vijñānam*), it is not a discourse of *paramārtha*; it is a conventional one (*saṃvṛti-deśanā*). If what is conscious is consciousness, then it ought also to be called non-consciousness. That is: if it is capable of being conscious is called consciousness, then it ought to become non-consciousness when it is not capable of being conscious, [as when a requisite assemblage of conditions is lacking]. It ought not be the case that what is a non-consciousness can be called a consciousness.[39]

This is refuted by Saṃghabhadra who, however, concedes that the statement that 'consciousness is that which is conscious' must not be taken to refer to a real agency, such as an *ātman* which can become conscious completely independent of any supporting conditions.[40] Saṃghabhadra accepts the explanation given by some Sarvāstivāda masters concerning the notion of consciousness as that which is conscious: It is only with regard to the specific nature of *dharma* that the one speaks in conventional terms of an agent, so as to refute the view that apart from consciousness there exists that which is conscious; consciousness actually does nothing in the perceptual process:

> In what other situations does one see the reference of an agent as a conventional expression (*prajñapti*) to nothing more than the nature of a *dharma*? One sees in the world that people speak of a shadow as that which moves. In this case there is no movement; but when it arises in a different place in the following moment (*anantaram*), it is said to move. The same is true for the case of consciousness; when it arises serially with regard to a different object, it is said to be that which is conscious — i.e. conscious of the object — even though there [really] is no action [on its [part].[41]

A similar notion of the 'action' of consciousness is found in a passage in the AKB, though we now know that contrary to the assertion by some scholars,[42] such a notion is not confined to the Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika (except perhaps for the specific term '*ākāra*'):

> Then, as to what is said in the *sūtra* that consciousness is conscious [of the object], what does consciousness do in that case? It does nothing. Nevertheless, just as an effect, though doing nothing whatsoever, is said to correspond (*anuvidhīyate*) to the cause on account of its acquiring its existence (*ātma-lābha*) resembling (*sādṛśyena*)[the cause]; likewise, consciousness, though doing nothing whatsoever, is said to be conscious [of the object] on account of its acquiring its existence resembling [the object]. Now, what is its resemblance? The fact of having the form of that [object] (*tadākāratā*). For this very reason, although it is arisen through the sense faculty as well, it is said to be conscious of the object, not of the sense faculty.[43]

9.5. Yogācāra critique of a unified complex as the perceptual object

Like the Vaibhāṣika view, the Sautrāntika doctrine that the cognitive object is a unified complex is also discussed and rejected in the Yogācāra texts. In the VVS, Vasubandhu seems to have grouped and criticized together the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika views as one, since both hold that the object is a collection (*saṃhata*) of atoms. It may be noted that Vasubandhu rejects such a view simply on the ground that there being no such real entity as an atom, any notion of a group of atom cannot be accepted. This is also reflected in Xuan Zang's rendering of *he-he* and *he-ji* for the single Sanskrit word, *saṃhata* (*Cf. supra*, § 8.5).

Sthiramati, while conceding that a sensory consciousness necessarily takes an agglomerated object, disagrees with the realist that such an object exists independent of consciousness, and that it is its agglomerated form (*samcitākāra*) that is perceived. The view rejected, therefore would seem to the Sautrāntika one:

> And the five groups of consciousness take agglomerated objects since they have the form of such [an object]. But no distinct entity in the agglomerated form is found apart from the mere collocation of the parts (*avayava-saṃhati-mātra*), since when the parts have been analytically excluded, there is no consciousness having [such an] agglomerated form. Hence, it is indeed without an external object that consciousness arises having the agglomerated form.[44]

The Siddhi(C) also has a passage corresponding closely to this. It is argued that the agglomerated form, being unreal, cannot serve as the condition (*pratyaya*) for the sensory consciousness, lest a second moon (as an optical illusion) should engender a sensory consciousness.[45] Kuei Ji[46] identifies the rejected view there as that of the Sautrāntika. He explains that according to the Sautrāntika himself, the agglomerated form has only a conceptual existence, like a second moon which can only be perceived by mental consciousness. Accordingly, it cannot serve as a condition, though it may be conceded to be the cognitive object (*ālambana*) of the consciousness. In support, he cites Diṅnāga's **Ālambana-pratyaya* in which the same view is rejected in similar terms with the specific example of the illusory second moon.[47]

As explained above, for the Sautrāntika, it is no contradiction to assert that perception is necessarily indirect and at the same time that there can be the *pratyakṣa* experience. Dignāga, followed by *Dharma*kīrti and others,

states that there are only two valid means of perception (*pramāṇa*): direct perception (*pratyakṣa*) which perceives the specific characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*), and inference (*anumāna*) which perceives the common-characteristic (*sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*). This is clearly in part an influence from the *Abhidharma* tradition which recognises only two characteristics of existents, *svalakṣaṇa* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*. It is well known that although tradition generally regards Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti as Vijñānavādins, it is quite aware of their occasionally Ābhidharmika-Sautrāntika stance. Thus, the well-known Yogācarin master Dharmapāla, in his commentary on Diṅnāga's **Ālambana-parīkṣā*, states explicitly that Dharmakīrti acknowledges the real existence of external objects.[48] The Sautrāntika, as we have seen, was evolved from the Sarvāstivāda. Accordingly, such influences coming from the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmika doctrines are only to be expected.

In the **Ālambana-parīkṣā*, Diṅnāga, rejecting all views advocating the independent reality of external objects, concludes that "although the external object does not exist, there is the internal *rūpa* which manifests resembling the external object and serves as the *ālambana-pratyaya*."[49] It seems therefore evident enough that he is a Yogācārin — though possibly with some Sautrāntika leaning. Nevertheless, in his *pramāṇa-samuccaya-vṛtti*, we can see him at times attempting to align with some fundamental Ābhidharmika doctrines. Thus, a question is raised there as to whether his doctrine of *pratyakṣa* is contradicted by the *abhidharma* tenets that a sensory consciousness

(a) takes an agglomeration of atoms as object, and
(b) perceives only an *āyatana-svalakṣaṇa* and not a *dravya-svalakṣaṇa* (see above) — since an agglomeration can only be perceived by a mental construction.

Diṅnāga's answer below shows clearly his inheritance from the Ābhidharmika tradition:

> Since it [viz., *pratyakṣa*] is caused by many substances [viz., atoms in aggregation], it is said, in respect of its sphere of operation, that it takes the whole as its object; but it is not [that it operates] by conceptually constructing a unity within that which is many and separate. [Therefore, the definition that *pratyakṣa* is free from conceptual construction is not inconsistent with the Ābhidharmika tenets.][50]

'Kalpanā' in Diṅnāga's definition of *pratyakṣa* is essentially similar to the Sarvāstivāda notion *vikalpa*. It is the process in which the perceived object, which in its intrinsic nature is inexpressible, comes to be associated with *nāman*, *jāti*, etc.[51] This is consistent with the Ābhidharmika notions of *abhinirūpaṇā-* and *anusmaraṇa-vikalpa* owing to the absence of which the sensory consciousnesses said to be a*vikalpaka* (see *supra*). Indeed, some Buddhist masters explicitly equate '*kalpanāpoḍha*' with '*avikalpaka*'[52]

As to Dharmakīrti, his well known definition of *pratyakṣa* as that which is free from mental construction and errors (*pratyakṣaṃ kalpanāpoḍham abhrāntam* /)[53] is also basically a fine-tuning of earlier Sautrāntika doctrines that we have discussed above — the emphasis on non-erroneousness and non-discriminative-ness. While it seems to remain a moot point as to whether he is really a Sautrāntika by affiliation,[54] his Sautrāntika stance is definitely conspicuous. Besides the remarks we have made above, his realist stance is unambiguous in his definition of an existent in the absolute sense as the object of *pratyakṣa* which is the specific characteristic — a unique essence/ entity (*tattva*), the point-instant of efficiency capable of affecting our sensibility (*artha-kriyā-samartha*):

> The object of that [— direct perception —] is the specific characteristic. That of which there is a variation in the cognitive image on account of [its] nearness or remoteness, is the specific characteristic. That alone is the absolutely real. For a [real] entity (*vastu*) is characterized by its efficacy for a purposive action.[55]

Finally, it is worth noting that the Sautrāntika doctrine that a consciousness can experience the object of the sensory object that existed in the preceding moment is also upheld by Dharmakīrti and other Buddhist logicians of later times. This will be discussed in the following chapter.

Notes

1 Ny, 418c. These are refuted at length by Saṃghabhadra — See Dhammajoti, KL, 'The Sarvāstivāda Doctrine of Simultaneous Causality', JCBSSL, Vol. 1, 32 ff.

2 Ny, 447b.

3 *Loc. cit.*

4 Ny, 447c.

5 See, JCBSSL, Vol. I, 33 ff.

6 *Cf.* AKB, 84: *etad dhi hetu-hetumato lakṣaṇam ācakṣate haitukāḥ / yasya bhāvābhāvayoḥ yasya bhāvābhāvau niyamataḥ sa hetur itaro hetumān iti* / Vy, 197*: yasya bhāve yasya dharma-sya bhāvo niyamena na yadṛcchayā sa hetuḥ / itaro hetumān kārya-dharma ity arthaḥ* / Diṅnāga also explicitly invokes this in his *Ālambana-parīkṣā* (T31, 888c) to argue that the internal object-form, though co-nascent with the consciousness, constitutes the *ālambana-pratyaya* of the latter.

7 Lit: 'the five consciousnesses' — same below.

8 In Śrīlāta's doctrine of successive arising: "Consciousness-contact arises following [the moment of] the eyes and the visible. From this further on are generated the *caitta-dharma*-s. The *vedanā*, etc., co-nascent [with consciousness], are called *caitta-dharma*-s. ...The Sthavira [Śrīlāta] asserts that the *caitta-dharma*-s can only arise at the third moment." (Ny, 385b). Also, Ny, 386b: "It is immediately after the *indriya* and the *viṣaya* that [the sensory] consciousness can arise. It is immediately after [the sensory] consciousness that *vedanā* can arise [in the third moment]". Śrīlāta accepts the three — *vedanā, saṃjñā* and *cetanā* — as *mahābhūmika*-s. (Ny, 384b).

9 Ny, 447c.

10 *Cf. Journal of the Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies*, Vol. I.

11 NY, 448a.《阿毘達磨順正理論》卷19:「若有隨界不同彼者，理亦不然。於前境中，今隨界識曾未生故; 如何可言:緣彼境識，前為緣故，令今得生? 不可說言，隨界與識別時緣境，勿於一時有二時故。… 若謂隨界體非今識，應一相續二識並生。」(CBETA, T29, no. 1562, p. 448, a8-13).

12 Ny, 447c–448a.

13 *Cf.* Saṃghabhadra's argument in Ny, 542b.

14 Ny, 628a.

15 智緣非有，亦二決定。

16 AKB(C), 99a gives 證智 corresponding to *anubhava-jñāna* in AKB, 278. Also *cf. yac cakṣurvijñānenānubhūtaṃ tad dṛṣṭam ity uktam* / (AKB, 245; see also below) to: 若境由眼...識 ... 所證, ... 名所見 ... 。(AKB(C), 579a).

17 Ny, 628c.

18 Ny, 389b: 非於現境曾無明記, 後於過去有憶念生。

19 Ny, 389b: 如是明記行相, 即智行相, 無別念 ...This sense of *ākāra* as a mode of mental activity is to be noted, contrasting the usage of the term in the sense of a 'passive' imprint of an object on the mind in perception.

20 Ny, 374c-375a.

21 Ny, 374c.

22 Candrakīrti criticizes this as a Sautrāntika doctrine — See Poussin (ed.) *Madhyāntāvatāra*, 167 f.

23 Ny, 374c: 若五識身唯緣過去, 如何於彼有現量覺?〔答:〕如於自身受有現量覺, 謂我曾領納如是苦樂。

24 See also Ny, 628c.

25 AKB, 472: *darśanacittāt smṛticittam anyad utpadyate saṃtatipariṇatyā* / AKB(C), 157a: "From the past *citta* which had that object-field as perceptual object, there arises now a recollection-consciousness."

26 AKB, 278: *ko'yaṃ bījabhāvo nāma* / ... *yathānubhavajñānajā smṛtyutpādanaśaktir yathā cāṅkurādīnāṃ śāliphalajā śāliphalotpādanaśaktiriti* /

27 AKB, 278 f; Vy, 444.

28 AKB, 245: *yac cakṣurvijñānenānubhūtaṃ tad dṛṣṭam ity uktam* /

29 In the same context of discussing the *hetu-pratyaya*, Śrīlāta explains further on the *pūrvānudhātu*: "They have as their characteristics the *dhātu* formed from the perfuming of various *dharma*-s. ... The intrinsic nature (體) of this *pūrva-anudhātu* is ineffable. It can only be stated to be the six *āyatana*-s which, perfumed by karma and defilement, project the fruit of another life." See *supra*, § 6.5.

30 Ny, 628c. This objection is anticipated by Śrīlāta himself, and he gives an answer — which however, is rejected by Saṃghabhadra.

31 Ny, 628c–629a.

32 *Cf.* above: "its *ālambana-pratyaya* is none other than the object (*viṣaya*) of the [corresponding] sensory consciousness." — Ny, 448a.

33 AKB, 21.

34 AKB(C), 5a.

35 Ny, 343c.

36 *Ibid.*, 350c.

37 *Cf.* MVŚ, 63c.

38 Also *cf.* Ny, 666b.

39 Ny, 484b.

40 Ny, 484b–c.

41 Ny, 342a.

42 E.g., Cox, C, 39.

43 AKB, 473 f.

44 TVB, 16.

45 T31, 4b.

46 T43, 270a–b.

47 T31(no. 1624), 888a.

48 T31, 889c: 又若自許不於識外緣其實事, 應有有法自相違過。然法稱不許.... This is pointed by Lu Cheng. However, there is some disagreement among some scholars as to whether 法稱 here actually stands for the name Dharmakīrti, and the exact sense of the sentence '法稱不許'. *Cf.* Funayama, Toru 船山徹, "Two Notes on Dharmapāla and Dharmakīrti." ZINBUN 35 (2001), 1-11.

49 T31, 888c. This treatise at the very outset (888b) groups the realists' views into two:

(1) The atoms themselves as real substances (*dravya*) constitute the perceptual object; (2) A unified complex is the perceptual object (Sautrāntika). The first group is further elaborated as two: (1a) The individual atoms themselves; (1b) the agglomerated form generated by virtue of the mutual assistance of the atoms existing together (an interpretation of the Vaibhāṣika view). See also Diṅnāga's (*pratyakṣa-pariccheda*) — *cf.* Hattori, M., *op. cit.*, 33, and note 2.17.

50 Translation (with slight adaptation) by Hattori, M, in his *Dignāga On Perception* (Cambridge, 1968), 26.

51 See Hattori, M., *op. cit.*, 25, and note 26.

52 See statement by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla in TSP (stanza 1239-1242), especially 374. *Cf.* Hattori, M., *op. cit.*, 83, note 26 which also cites Mallavādin's *Dvādaśāra-nayacakra*, 59.2-60.1, which explains *kalpanā* in terms of *nirūpaṇānusmaraṇa-vikalpanā*: *athā kā kalpanā / nāma-jāti-guṇa-kriyā-dravya-svarūpāpanna-vastv-antara-nirūpaṇānusmaraṇa-vikalpanā* /

53 Stcherbatsky, Th. (ed), *Nyāyabindu* and *Nyāya-binduṭīkā*, Bibliotheca Buddhica, VII (Petrograd, 1918), Indian Reprint, 42.

54 One of the latest full-length discussion on this is Amar Singh's *The Heart of Buddhist Philosophy — Diṅnāga and Dharmakīrti* (Delhi, 1984) in which the author argues that both of them are decidedly Sautrāntika. Singh brings out substantial evidence especially in the case of Dharmakīrti. However, his assumption that "as Dharmakīrti follows Diṅnāga, he too is then bound to be an idealist [if it can be established that Diṅnāga is an idealist]" (61; also 49, etc.) is not impressive, since Dharmakīrti is not a disciple (in the sectarian sense) of Diṅnāga. Moreover, his interpreting Diṅnāga as accepting the reality of atoms in the *Ālambana-parīkṣā* (61 f) is far-fetched.

55 *Nyāyabindu*, 12-15: *tasya* [*pratyakṣasya*] *viṣayaḥ svalakṣaṇam / yasyārthasya saṃnidhānāsaṃnidhābhyāṃjñānapratibhāsa-bhedastatsvalakṣaṇam/tadevaparamārthasat/ arthakriyāsāmarthya-lakṣaṇatvād vastunaḥ* // *Cf. Saṭīkaṃ Nyāyabinduprakaraṇam*, 12 f; also *cf.* Th Stcherbatsky's tr. in *Buddhist Logics* II, 33 ff.