THE MIDDLE WAY:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE YOGACARA REINTERPRETATION
OF THE MADHYAMKA CONCEPT OF MADHYAMA PRATIPAD
THE MIDDLE WAY:

AN ANALYSIS OF THE YOGACARA REINTERPRETATION
OF THE MADHYAMIKA CONCEPT OF MADHYAMA PRATIPAD

By

C. JOHN POWERS, B.A.

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

McMaster University
April, 1983
TITLE: The Middle Way: An Analysis of the Yogacara Reinterpretation of the Madhyamika Concept of Madhyama Pratipad

AUTHOR: C. JOHN POWERS, B.A. (Holy Cross College)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. J. Arapura

NUMBER OF PAGES: vi, 302

ABSTRACT: This thesis examines the concept of Madhyama Pratipad in light of the interpretations given by the Yogacara thinkers Vasubandhu and Asanga and by the Madhyamikas Nagarjuna and Candrakirti. I also discuss madhyama pratipad in relation to the concepts of Sunyata, trisvabhava, and pratitya samutpada, and attempts to show in what ways the Yogacara acaryas differ from the Madhyamikas, and in what ways they are similar.
Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank the taxpayers of Canada for their support and financial assistance, without which this study could never have been completed. I would also like to thank my thesis committee, Drs. Arapura, MacQueen, and Whillier for their help; and I would especially like to acknowledge my gratitude to Dr. Krishna Sivaraman for his help, advice and encouragement throughout this project, and for his patient forbearance in the many difficulties encountered in this project and in introducing me to the complexities of philosophical Sanskrit. And I would also like to thank Ms. Nicola Davies for the use of her typewriter and for her sense of humor which helped me through the long hours of typing this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>The Madhyamika Understanding of Madhyamā. Pratipad</td>
<td>p. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>The Madhyamika Refutation of Self</td>
<td>p. 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Madhyamā Pratipad in Yogācāra</td>
<td>p. 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>The Reinterpretation of Śūnyatā by Yogācāra</td>
<td>p. 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>The Philosophy of Yogācāra</td>
<td>p. 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>The Yogācāra Refutation of Realistic Philosophies</td>
<td>p. 140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>p. 165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS


NK - Nyāyakandalī by Śrīdhara, Vizianagram Sanskrit Series, 1895.


NV - Nyāyavārttika by Udyottara, Calcutta: Vizianagram Sanskrit Series, 1895.


PVA - Pramāṇavārttikālaṅkāra by Prajñākaragupta, ed. R. Sāṅkṛtyāyana, Patna, Jayaswal Research Institute, 1955.
Abbreviations (cont.)


INTRODUCTION

This world, Kaccāyana, usually lases its view on two things: on existence (atthitā) and on non-existence (nâtthi-tā). Now he, who with right insight sees the uprising of the world as it really is, does not hold with the nonexistence of the world. But he, who with right insight sees the passing away of the world as it really is, does not hold with the existence of the world.

The world, for the most part, Kaccāyana, is hound up by approach, attachment, and inclination. And the man who does not go after that approach and attachment, determination of mind, inclination and disposition, does not cling to or take up the stand (does not think): "This is my soul!" - who thinks: 'That which arises is just suffering, that which passes away is suffering,' this man is not in doubt, is not perplexed. Knowledge herein is his, not merely other-dependent. Thus, far, Kaccāyana, he has the 'right view.'

'Everything exists' (sabhāma atthi): this is one extreme. 'Everything does not exist' (sabhāma n'atthi): this is the other extreme. Not approaching either extreme the Tathāgata teaches you a doctrine of the middle way. Conditioned by ignorance dispositions come to pass; conditioned by dispositions is consciousness; conditioned by consciousness is the psychophysical personality; conditioned by the psychophysical personality are the six senses; conditioned by the six senses is contact; conditioned by contact is feeling; conditioned by feeling is craving; conditioned by craving is grasping; conditioned by grasping is becoming; conditioned by becoming is birth; conditioned by birth is decay-and-death, grief, suffering...even such is the uprising of this entire mass of suffering. But from the utter fading away and ceasing of ignorance arises ceasing of dispositions, and thus comes ceasing of this mass of suffering.¹

Yogācāra and Mahāyāna Pratipad

The Yogācāra school of Buddhism has been referred to as the "Third Swinging of the Wheel" of Indian Buddhism,² the first two being the Abhidharmika schools of early Buddhism and the Mahāyānīka, the critical phase of Buddhist philosophy. In many ways Yogācāra is the culmination of Buddhist thought in India, as it utilized the most important aspects of earlier schools while avoiding what it perceived as their shortcomings, and by incorporating their positive elements into its own un-
ique system of thought Yogācāra created a philosophy of the "Middle Way" (madhyamā pratipad), the path to realization of Ultimate Truth taught by Siddhārtha Gautama, the Buddha. The basic intention of the Yogācāra ācāryas (teachers)* is to articulate a consistent explanation of the nature of reality and a spiritual path (sādhana) which can free people from their bondage to things and the suffering this causes. The central concern of the Yogācāra writers, as stated in their treatises, is to provide a variety of means whereby suffering may be overcome. This is particularly true of the Madhyāntāvibhāga, which outlines various upāyas (expedient devices) and meditative practices designed to aid in overcoming suffering. The value of each practice outlined in the treatise is clearly stated, and it is also stated that its value is ended when its result is achieved. The Yogācāra ācāryas realize that each person has different awareness mechanisms (faculties whereby reality is revealed to and interpreted by us), and that because of this fact the therapy they provide must be flexible enough to adapt itself to the needs and problems of different individuals.

The Yogācāras see that ordinary beings are constantly suffering from a wide variety of causes, and attempt to

*The Yogācāra ācāryas to whom I will refer in this study are Vasubandhu and Asaṅga (they will also be referred to as "Yogācāras"), and, since the tremendous literary output of these two thinkers makes a study of all their works impossible in a study of this type, I will concentrate primarily on those works which deal with madhyamā pratipad, e.g. the MV, TN DD MS, and VMs.
provide a means whereby this suffering can be overcome. The Yogācāra method is both psychological and ontologic-al - it sees that our problems are caused primarily by our orientations toward the world, in much the same way as a modern psychological counsellor does. Unlike most of modern psychology, however, the Yogācāras do not merely attempt to alleviate the symptoms of suffering, but also try to find the deepest roots of this suffering, and the presuppositions which cause them. The most fundamental of these presuppositions, according to the Yogācāras, is the belief in selfhood, which is the root cause of all suffering and desire. The idea that there is an "I" which is different from "others" leads to the idea of "mine," which leads to craving and desire, which in turn lead to suffering, because desires are often unfulfilled, and even if a person gets what he desires he will eventually lose it, which also leads to suffering. Because this whole process begins with the idea of selfhood, the Yogācāra upāya begins by attacking this idea and helping people to overcome it.

Vasubandhu's favorite therapeutic theory is to conceive of what are commonly called "individuals" as streams of momentary physiological-psychological events. These streams are constantly changing, and the continuity they appear to possess is only apparent. As stated in the MV, this theory is a therapeutic device designed to help those who are excessively attached to the notion of self to
overcome their attachment. Furthermore, the JY even attacks the notion that there is a real distinction between perceiver and perceived, because one's presuppositions about oneself and the world (which are the root cause of suffering) must be challenged in a fundamental way so that one's outlook can be radically changed.

It is important to note when reading Yogācāra treatises that theories presented in them are upāyas whose purpose is to aid suffering beings in overcoming suffering. The theory in the treatises of Vasubandhu and Asaṅga is practically oriented, because it is a series of expedients to alleviate some of the afflictions and wrong views to which people fall prey. (such as the idea of selfhood). According to the Yogācāras, no theory or statement about reality is ultimately true, and all Yogācāra verbal formulations are important only for their therapeutic value. Yogācāra treatises frequently state that all verbal formulations are ultimately only relative, and any theory, no matter how useful or valid it is at a certain point, must ultimately be abandoned.

The ultimate rejection of all viewpoints and theories is the basis of the Yogācāra conception of madhyamā prati-pad. From the standpoint of Highest Truth (paramārtha satya) all reality is Śūnya (void or empty), and no theory or viewpoint can describe it as it is. In this context the Yogācāras are in complete agreement with the Madhyam-
ikas, and the central point which I intend to make in this study is that from the standpoint of highest truth the Yogācāras and the Mādhyaamikas are in accord. The difference between Yogācāra philosophy and Mādhyaamika philosophy is not in their conceptions of the highest truth, but in the upāyas they provide to lead people to its realization. The Mādhyaamika upāya is primarily negative, and operates mainly by dismantling all possible theories about reality.  

Mādhyaamika treatises show how any theory can ultimately be proven to be false using its own assumptions, and by this method the Mādhyaamikas attempt to remove the wrong views which prevent us from realizing the highest truth.

While Yogācāra philosophy aims at the same goal, its method is more positive. The Yogācāras make positive statements about the nature of reality, and connect these with specific meditational practices designed to help ordinary beings to gradually reorient their thinking in successive stages until they can become aware of the highest truth. The Mādhyaamika upāya, according to the Yogācāras, is overly extreme and negative, and leads too easily to nihilism, and so the Yogācāra acāryas describe their path to realization in positive terms.

Accordingly, they deny both these two, reality as well as designation. One should understand that the denial of both reality and designation is the position of the chief nihilist (pradhāna nāstika). Because his views are like this, the nihilist is not to be spoken with and not to be
associated with by those intelligent ones (viśīña) who
live the pure life (brahma-cārin). Such a one, i.e. the
nihilist, brings disaster even unto himself, and
worldly ones who follow his view also fall into misfor-
tune. In connection with this, the Lord has declared:
'Indeed, better it is for a being to have the view of a
"person" than for one to have wrongly conceptualized
voidness...'

Because of the nihilist's wrongly conceptualized
voidness, he is confused with respect to the knowable
thing to the point of denying all knowables; and on
that account one does get born among hell-beings. The
nihilist would bring disaster to the righteous man, the
seeker of liberation from suffering, and he would be-
come lax concerning the points of instruction. There-
fore, denying the given thing as it really is, he has
strayed far from our Dharma-Vinaya.16

Yogācāra, as its name implies, is primarily concerned
with meditational practice (hence the name Yogācāra, or
practice - ācāra - of yoga) which aims at alleviation of
suffering, and the Yogācāras tend to describe their pre-
scribed practices and attainments in positive terms. Un-
like the Mādhyamikas, Yogācāra writers generally clearly
state the purpose and benefit of each upāya they present,17
as well as specific meditational practices which are meant
to precede a reading of their texts. They also describe
the experiences and problems associated with the meditat-
ive states those practices lead to, and in some cases
parts of Yogācāra treatises are only intelligible to one
who has actually experienced these states.18

Yogācāra, in my view, arose as a reaction against
Mādhyamika, not with its general principles, most of which
Yogācāra also followed, but against Mādhyamika's emphasis
on prajñā (wisdom) at the expense of meditation. The Yogā-
caras contend that meditation is the primary means whereby wisdom is attained, not through dialectics, and so Yogācāra philosophy arose as a corrective to the extremist tendencies of Mādhyamika, as a reinterpretation of the true "middle path" (madhyamā pratipad) which avoids all extremes.

It is important to note that in their conception of themselves as exponents of madhyamā pratipad the Yogācāra acaryas were careful to avoid asserting any view of reality as being ultimately true. In this connection, the second major point which I intend to make in this study is that Yogācāra epistemology did not oppose what it perceived as the Mādhyamika tendency toward nihilism with a position of subjective idealism, as is often asserted, but ultimately rejects even idealism as an extreme view.

An important example of this misunderstood conception of Yogācāra epistemology is A.K. Chatterjee's The Yogācāra Idealism, which contends that Yogācāra's position is purely idealistic. According to Chatterjee, Yogācāra philosophy holds that all of reality is a series of mental events, that the content of consciousness is purely subjective, "is merely in thought and has no grounding in external reality." He further contends that the Yogācāras think that: "The thing-in-itself is itself a projection of the subjective, the most primal projection out of which the entire empirical experience evolves." This interpretation has been accepted by many other scholars, and has led to a great
deal of confusion regarding the actual epistemological position of Yogācāra philosophy. It also ignores the Yogācāra treatises which clearly reject this view, such as the Bodhisattvabhūmi, which states:

The given thing (vastu) is neither completely present nor completely absent (neither existent nor non-existent). It is not present, since it is not 'perfected' (parinispatva), owing to its having an inexpressible 'self.' And it is not altogether absent, since in fact it is determined to have an inexpressible essence.

It is unfortunate that Chatterjee based his conclusions on only one Yogācāra text, the VS, which does propound a consistently idealistic explanation of reality, but ignored other important Yogācāra texts, such as the NV, BB, KSP, and TN, all of which reject idealism as an extreme view. Furthermore, a careful reading of the VMS reveals that subjective idealism is not Vasubandhu's final position in the treatise. The main thrust of his anti-realist arguments is that it is not possible to construct a proof for the non-illusory or veridical nature of sense-experience. The Yogācāra emphasis on yoga seems to have contributed to this view, because from the point of view of the highest yogic absorption, in which there is undiscriminated pure consciousness (vijñāna), the sense experiences characterized by the subject-object distinction appear to be illusory, in the same way as dream experience is seen to be illusory from the standpoint of waking reality: "Before we have awakened from a dream we cannot know that what was seen in the dream does not exist."
The conclusion of this analysis is that vijñāna is the only reality (vijñapti-rātratā), but the VMS also states that this is not Vasubandhu's final conclusion. As Triṃśikā v.28-30 shows, the final position of the VMS is a rejection of any position, idealism as well as realism, since any viewpoint is a distortion of highest truth (paramārthasaśatya).

But when (the objective world which is) the basis of conditioning as well as the wisdom (which does the conditioning) are both eliminated, the state of mind-only is realized, since the six sense-organs and their objects are no longer present.

Without any grasping and beyond thought is the supramundane wisdom (of bodhisattvahood). Because of the abandonment of the habit-energy of various karmas and the six sense-organs as well as their objects, the revulsion from relative knowledge to perfect wisdom is attained.

This is the realm of passionlessness or purity, which is beyond description, is good, and is eternal, where one is in the state of emancipation, peace, and joy. This is the law of the Great Buddha.35

The fact that many scholars of Buddhism have concentrated on Yogācāra statements that have an idealistic slant while ignoring the many statements which clearly deny idealism has led to many misunderstandings of Yogācāra philosophy. Since a denial of subjective idealism is as much a part of the Yogācāra concept of madhyama pratipad as its rejection of realism and nihilism, this study will outline how the Yogācāra ācāryas actually present their ontological and epistemological positions, primarily focusing on the IV and BB, and will also refer to the VMS, KSP, KS, and MSA insofar as these are relevant to the Yogācāra doctrine of madhyama pratipad.

Because of the many misconceptions which have arisen con-
cerning Yogācāra, it is of central importance to this study to outline what the Yogācāra position actually is. I will begin by first stating the Mādhyamika conception of madhyama pratipad as presented in the MK, PP, and RV, as well as the Mādhyamika rejection of self, because the Yogācāra concept of madhyama pratipad is based on these and presupposes them.

Both Mādhyamika and Yogācāra are thoroughly Śūnyavāda, and both aim at a realization of paramārthasatya. The major difference between them lies precisely in their paths (pratipadas) to this realization. The point where the Yogācāra ācāryas differ from the Mādhyamikas is in the upāyas they provide to lead people from suffering existence to paramārthasatya.

The Epistemology and Ontology of Yogācāra

At this point it is necessary to briefly outline the Yogācāra position concerning the nature of the relation between subject and object. Yogācāra is commonly associated with the doctrines of viññaptimātratā (that objects are "ideation-only") and sahopalambhanīyama (objects and perceptions of objects always occur together). It has often been wrongly assumed that these doctrines represent the final position of Yogācāra philosophy, although the Yogācāra ācāryas themselves state that they are merely upāyas designed to help suffering ideation-series' (ordinary beings) to overcome notions of "selfhood" and "thinghood," which are what cause suffering in the first place. The suffering ideation-series,
according to the Yogācāras, is afflicted (kliśta) with these and many other wrong views, and assumes that the objects of experience are what they appear to be in perception. Moreover, it assumes that the names and designations commonly assigned to things express their true nature. The Yogācāras state, however, that designations and names are only designations and names, and are incapable of describing the thing-in-itself (vastu) which gives rise to perceptions.

It should be understood that these two views have fallen away from our Dharma-Vinaya: (1) that one which clings to affirming (samāropata) the existence of what are nonexistent individual characteristics, having essential nature only through verbal designations for a given thing, form, etc., or for the dharmas form and so forth; and also (2) that one which, with respect to a given thing (vastu), denies (apavadamāno) the foundation for the sign of verbal designation, which exists in an ultimate sense (paramārtha-sadbhūtam) owing to its inexpressible essence (nirabhilāpy-ātmakatavya), saying 'absolutely everything is nonexistent.'

There is, according to the Yogācāras, something which gives rise to perception, but it is originally free of descriptions and differentiations. In ordinary perception we differentiate and name, and come to assume that in the name we have captured the essence of the thing-in-itself, that things can be known by their names and attributes. The Yogācāras point out, however, that in ordinary perception all we are aware of are our perceptions of objects, which are necessarily subjective. Every awareness of an object is accompanied by some perception of it, and all perception, according to the Yogācāras, involves discrimination.

The afflicted ideation-series effectively creates a reality for itself by imposing distinctions on what is actually
undifferentiated reality, and these misapprehensions of reality lead to further misconceptions, and the process continues propelled by its own momentum. The root cause of this is avidya (ignorance) concerning the true nature of the self and the world, which is essentially Sunya, void of any distinctions and differentiations whatsoever. The afflicted ideation-series perceives things only as they appear, and, in taking this as reality, fails to see them as they are. The Yogacaras realize that in evaluating experiences and in developing a perspective on reality one is already involved in conceptualizing the world. One's combined experiences, conceptualizations, and predispositions lead to the creation of a "reality map," an unarticulated and unconscious view of reality by which one understands experiences and makes distinctions. These "reality maps" tend to constitute experiences in consistent and coherent ways, and this consistency comes to be seen as a subjective unity, a "self," which is actually only the combined aspects of the cosmological construction of the afflicted ideation-series. It (the ideation-series) creates differentiation in reality which is empty (Sunya) of all such distinctions, and, propelled by ignorance, believes that these accurately represent reality as it is, and mistakenly ascribes the notion of selfhood to what is actually a constantly changing ideation-series; the only continuity in this series is caused by the fact that one wrong view leads to another, which in turn leads to another, and so on, giving the impression of consistency, which leads to the notion of selfhood.
The Yogācāras, following the Buddhist doctrine of anātman, contend that there is no enduring self, that each individual is merely a collection of attributes artificially designated and named as a "self," but that the true nature of things is inexpressible. The Yogācāras aim at a transforming awareness by which one intuits the true nature of reality. Any description or name, according to the Yogācāras, is only provisional because it is conditioned, and because descriptions are incapable of expressing paramārthasatya. The first task on the path to awareness is to realize that even profound notions and universal generalizations only serve to perpetuate patterns of imaginations and expectations. The Yogācāras attempt to remove all of one's "mental-emotional supports" in the form of ontological terms by a spiritual process (sādhana) that does not bifurcate experience into such mutually exclusive terms as finite and infinite, existent and non-existent, but rather transforms one's mode of existing so that one reaches a state where one is no longer dependent on, or affected by, conceptual formulations.

For this reason the Yogācāra ācāryas state that one's empirical cognitions are only object-like mental images, but the reduction of objects to viṣṇāna is only a preparatory step toward the intuition of sūnyatā in all things.

Certain persons who have heard the abstruse sūtra passages associated with the Mahāyāna and associated with profound voidness, and that evince only an indirect meaning (ābhīprāyikārtha), do not understand the meaning of the teaching as it really is (yathābhūta). Those ones, imagining it superficially (ayonīśa), thus have views posited merely by logic, without cogency, and speak as follows:
"All this reality is just designation only. And whoever sees accordingly, that one sees rightly." According to those, the given thing itself, which is the foundation for designation, is lacking. But if this were so, no designations would occur at all! How should reality, then, come to be solely designation?  

Vijñaptimātratā is not a statement of an idealistic position, but rather describes a state of awareness which arises when one sees into the nature of delusion and realizes that what one ordinarily perceives is overlaid with and constituted by constructed images (vijñapti). This awareness leads to the arising of prajñā.

The given thing, comprised of dharma characteristics, that is completely freed from both "Being" and "nonbeing"; is not-two. Now, what is not-two, just that is said to be the incomparable middle path (madhyamā pratipad) which avoids the two extremes; and concerning that reality the knowledge (jñānam) of all the Buddha-Bhagavans should be understood to be exceedingly pure...That insight (prajñā) is the bodhisattva's great means (mahan upāya) for reaching Incomparable Perfect Enlightenment. And why? Because of the bodhisattva's firm conviction in voidness, practicing in these and those births and circling in samsāra for the sake of thoroughly ripening the Buddhaharmanas for himself and other sentient beings, he comes to know samsāra as it really is (vathābhūtam).

Ordinary reality should also not be viewed as being completely unreal. This, according to the Yogācāra, is the position of the nihilist, and should be avoided. The world-illusion must be accepted as at least provisionally real in order to be overcome, because it does have the power to bind us, and generally does so. To deny it provisional reality would fail to make sense of the nature of suffering.

Vijñāna's character as constructive ideation can be established, because it does not exist in the way in which it commonly appears, but it is not totally non-existent.
Vasubandhu's bhāṣya comments:

It is not totally non-existent either, because of the existence of this much confusion...if it did not exist there could be neither bondage nor liberation, and this would mean denying the fundamental facts of affliction and alleviation.

Nāgārjuna thinks that following madhyāmā pratipad means refusing to think of either conventional reality (samvṛttisatya) or Absolute Reality (paramārthasatya) as either existent or non-existent. The Yogācāras, however, reject this as an extreme view, and state that reality is both existent and non-existent. It is existent in that it constitutes the real being of phenomena, but is non-existent in that the subject-object distinction we perceive in it is not real. All dualities and distinctions are constructed, and so do not really exist, but they do exist in the same way that a dream or a magical illusion exists - since it is perceived it can be described and to some extent known, but when its true nature is seen it is no longer taken as real. Thought-constructions do exist, but they need not exist, and when one ceases to make distinctions and categorizations they vanish and are no longer perceived as either existent or non-existent.

As long as this awareness has not been reached, however, these thought-constructions do exist. This is the reason for the statement "abhūta-parikalpita exists," which opens the MV. As long as an ideation-series is in ignorance of the true nature of reality it will create its own views of reality and bind itself by them. For Yogācāra the recognition that fund-
amentally there is no distinction between the perceiver and what is perceived is a purifying awareness which leads to a radical reorientation in how one views reality. The Yogācāras recognize that human beings have different types of "awareness mechanisms" which are related to the arising or dissipating of conceptual formulations, and its method attempts to develop the awareness mechanisms of the higher states of mystical absorption, by making positive assertions about the nature of reality (both samvṛtti and paramārtha) designed to awaken the disciple to realization of the emptiness of all concepts.

Positive assertions are seen to be part of a spiritual process (sādhana), and are only provisionally true. Their purpose is to move the disciple beyond his present level of awareness, and they are geared to where he is in the spiritual path. Thus no statement is wholly true, and its value is only as a catalyst to move one forward along the path toward enlightenment which culminates in the actualization of the Tathāgata (fully completed being, a Buddha), whose attitude is not bound by any concepts or propositions, even profound concepts and propositions, because he realizes that all existence is śūnyata, and that nothing can ultimately be positively asserted about it.

Both Vasubandhu and Asaṅga, like Nāgārjuna, are staunch adherents of śūnyavāda, but, unlike Nāgārjuna, clearly state the intention of their methods, which is to free suffering, ideation-series from their self-made (to coin a pun) suffering. They also make it quite clear that their theories are not to be believed
in as being ultimately true. Their purpose is entirely practical, and theories are only valid insofar as they are useful and expedient in helping afflicted ideation-series to reach enlightenment. In the fulfilled (or enlightened) ideation-series there is neither agitation nor complacency. Agitation destroys the calm that is necessary to further spiritual development, and complacency works against compassion (karunā) and energy (vīrya), both of which are essential to the bodhisattva.

Yogācāra is very much a Mahāyāna school, and the ideal which its sādhana aims at is the fully-actualized and completed bodhisattva who has cultivated the pāramitās, sees the world as it is, and so is not confused, agitated, attracted or repulsed by it. In a Mahāyāna ideation-series there is no turning away from the world in passive contemplation - there is a full involvement in the sense-fields of samsāra in order to rescue suffering beings from them.

Again, if he should weary his mind with the aspects of samsāra, impermanence, and so forth...that bodhisattva would very quickly enter parinirvāṇa. But the bodhisattva thus entering very quickly into parinirvāṇa would mature neither the Buddhadharmas nor the sentient beings. Again, how would he become awakened to the Incomparable Perfect Enlightenment? On account of his firm conviction in voidness, that bodhisattva, continuously applying himself, is neither frightened by Nirvāṇa, nor does he strive toward Nirvāṇa.

As the foregoing discussion hopefully shows, the concept of madhyamā pratipad is central to an understanding of both Yogācāra and Mādhyamika. It is also a very complex and multi-
faceted concept, and so this paper will examine its most important aspects in these two schools, e.g., the rejection of "self" and theories about reality and śūnyatā. This study will focus primarily on the soteriological intentions of both the Yogācāras and the Mādhyamikas, and how they conceive their philosophies as leading to enlightenment, as well as the fact that enlightenment is seen by them as occurring in a Mahāyāna Buddhist context. It is significant that both the Yogācāras and Mādhyamikas consider their respective conceptions of madhyama pratipada as the true bodhisattvayāna (way of the bodhisattva) which culminates in the actualization of the Tathāgata. For this reason I will also examine the reasons they give to support their claims of superiority for their respective upāyas, and how these upāyas lead to enlightenment.
CHAPTER ONE

Seeing production as caused
One passes beyond non-existence;
Seeing cessation as caused
One no longer asserts existence.
The Precious Garland, tr. Jefferey Hopkins

I. The Mādhyamika Understanding of Madhyamā Pratipad.

Each school of Buddhism claims to be madhyamā pratipad, the middle path which avoids extremes. Many Buddhists view it as an injunction to avoid the extremes of worldliness and self-mortification, which is the subject of the Dhammacakkapavattana-sutta, the Buddha's first discourse, in which he states that madhyamā pratipad is not merely a theory among other theories, but a bringing to rest of theorizing. Thus it is described as: "deep, difficult to comprehend, tranquil, excellent, beyond dialectic, subtle, intelligible to the wise," but "not easily understood by those delighting in attachment, those rejoicing in attachment."\(^1\) It is also stated to be "beyond the scope of logic" (atarkavāca), and cannot be grasped by those who are obsessively attached to theories.\(^2\) Buddha recognized that no amount of logic or dialectic can convince a true dogmatist of the limitations of his theory, and so Buddha emphasized experience over logic in realization of Truth.\(^3\)

In Buddhist philosophy madhyamā pratipad is thought to be avoidance of extreme views concerning the nature of

(19)
reality. An important statement of this idea is found in the Kaccāyanagotta-sutta, which states that madhyamā pratipad entails a rejection of the extremes of asserting either "everything exists" (sabbam atthi) or "everything does not exist" (sabbam n'atthi). By avoiding these extreme views one overcomes both attachment and aversion for the world, and perceives reality as it is.

Rejection of extreme views is also an important part of the Mādhyamika concept of madhyamā pratipad, and Mādhyamika treatises such as the MMK by Nāgārjuna and the PP (a commentary on the MMK by Candrakīrti) are largely concerned with the refutation of all views about reality.5

In MMK 15.7 Nāgārjuna refers to the Kaccāyanagotta-sutta (referred to as Katyāyanavāda-sūtra in the kārikā), and states that madhyamā pratipad is a rejection of the extremes of asti (existence) and nāsti (non-existence). This sūtra is a major element in the transition from early Buddhism to the Mahāyāna schools of Mādhyamika and Yogācāra6 because of it's statement of an empirical, non-metaphysical theory of causation presented in the background of two metaphysical ideas along with it's conception of a transcendent "middle path," which is akin to the Prajñāpāramitā doctrine of the ineffable ultimate reality which is beyond all description.7

Nāgārjuna was aware of the failure of previous theories
to adequately explain reality, and his MNK represents a determined attempt to deny the reality of upāda (arising) and nirodha (ceasing). The critique of the former view (upāda) is primarily directed against the Sarvāstivādins (literally, 'those who teach that everything (sārvam) exists - asti') and the Vaibhāṣikas (those who follow the teachings of the Vibhāṣās, or commentaries on the suttas). The Sarvāstivādins and Vaibhāṣikas held that there is an unchanging substance (svabhāva or dravya) which, although it does not change, possesses laksanās (qualities) which are in a constant state of flux and change from moment to moment. The critique of nirodha is directed toward the Sautrāntikas ('those who think the sūtras are the end of the Buddha's teaching), who denied the existence of any substance or substratum (dravya or svabhāva), and posited a theory of momentariness (kṣaṇavāda). All phenomena, according to the Sautrāntikas, are essentially non-existent, and they arise in one moment and pass away in the next without enduring for even one instant.

Nāgārjuna contends that these and other theories about the nature of reality are false, and that the use of any linguistic conventions at all in attempting to describe reality is doomed to failure. Conventional terms (samm-uti), which in early Buddhism were symbols agreed upon by popular consent to denote various experiences or combinat-
ions of experiences are seen by Nāgārjuna as deceptive veils (avarana) which conceal the true nature of things.\textsuperscript{15} Even the dichotomy between knowledge and the object of knowledge (jñānajñeya) is valid only at the level of samvr̥ti (phenomenal reality), while ultimate reality (paramārtha sat) is free of all dichotomy, is non-dependent, peaceful, non-conceptual, and must be experienced rather than known.\textsuperscript{16} It cannot be indicated as being one thing or another, and cannot be known as an objective phenomenon.

All objectification and naming is a distortion of paramārtha, according to the Mādhyamika, and the MMK emphasizes that it can only be reached by bringing conceptual proliferation (prapañca) to rest.\textsuperscript{17} This, according to Nāgārjuna, is the essence of madhyama pratipad, which avoids the extremes of asti (existence) and nāsti (non-existence).

Whatever dependent arising is, that we call emptiness. That (i.e. sūnyatā) is a dependent concept and that is itself the middle path.\textsuperscript{18}

According to Mādhyamika, causation cannot be explained without admitting the idea of a substance which is modified in some way, a view which Mādhyamika vehemently denies. The essence of pratītya sammutpāda (dependent origination),\textsuperscript{19} according to Mādhyamikā, is sūnyatā,\textsuperscript{20} which should not be construed as nihilism, because
Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti equate śūnyatā and paramārtha, the highest truth. Thus śūnyatā itself is not an empty or meaningless concept, but a cleansing intuition which frees people from dependence on names and concepts. It is identical with tathā, dharmakāya, and Buddhahood, which are transcendental and thus can only be described in negative terms, and which must be experienced or felt (vedya) for oneself (pratyātman) with the attainment of perfect enlightenment (samyaksambodhi). It is important to note that in the Mādhyamika's view śūnyatā is completely insubstantial and is empty of conceptual proliferation (prapañca-śūnya), and is, therefore, non-conceptual (nir-vikalpa). Thus the Mādhyamika denies the realist position, but also avoids the extreme of nihilism by stating that the true nature of things is not non-existent, but, rather, is inexpressible, indefinable, formless, contentless, nonconceptual. Mādhyamā pratipad, for Mādhyamika, involves avoiding all such extremes and all attempts to conceptualize ultimate reality. As MMK 135 states:

Existence and non-existence are two extremes. Purity and impurity - these are two extremes. Therefore, having given up the two extremes, the wise man takes no position in the middle.

This statement has, in my opinion, been misinterpreted by T.R.V. Murti in his CPR, where he states:

It may be thought that in avoiding the two extremes, the Mādhyamika takes a middle position in between the two. No: he does not hold any middle position. Or,
the middle position is no position.\textsuperscript{26}

This interpretation misses the point of the Mādhyamika dialectic, which is to demonstrate the paucity of all theories and viewpoints as descriptions of ultimate reality; madhyamā pratipad for Mādhyamika does not imply that there is no middle position, but that the true middle position cannot be stated. To say that there is no middle position between extremes would be a confusion not only of linguistic usage, but also of logic. The Mādhyamika critique of all drṣṭis (viewpoints) is certainly based on an understanding of the true nature of reality, since the Kārikās repeatedly state that opponents of Mādhyamika do not comprehend the truth of existence, while the Mādhyamikas do.

As the Kārikās state, however,\textsuperscript{27} the Mādhyamika position is based on a prajñā (intuitive understanding of the true nature of reality), rather than on discursive reasoning or opinion. Thus the Mādhyamika position is not merely a viewpoint among other viewpoints, but a knowledge of all reality at once, a contentless and non-dual intuition of the true nature of things. This prajñā is the position from which the Mādhyamika judges other positions.\textsuperscript{28} It may be termed a meta-position, since it is based on direct understanding rather than on discursive thought, but it is still a position.

If Mādhyamika were a purely critical philosophy whose
only function is to destroy other philosophies, and which has no position of its own, then the Madhyamika would truly be guilty of the charge of propounding nihilism. But this is not the case; as the MMK\textsuperscript{29} and PP\textsuperscript{30} indicate, the Madhyamika dialectic has a soteriological function, which is to lead deluded beings to a direct awareness of the true nature of things. The Madhyamika dialectic begins with an insight into the true nature of things, which constitutes its position, and which motivates its critique of other positions which it sees as inadequate from the standpoint of its own position.\textsuperscript{31} The Madhyamika prajñā reveals the śūnyatā of all drṣṭis, and is a self-conscious awareness which reveals the truth which the drṣṭis try to apprehend. As Murti states:

The implication of the Madhyamika method is that the Real is overlaid with the undergrowth of our notions and views...The Real is known by uncovering it, by the removal of the opacity of ideas.\textsuperscript{32}

This intuition of the true nature of the Real, however, is the position from which the Madhyamika attacks all viewpoints and theories, as MMK XXIV.14 indicates:

Everything makes sense to that person for whom śūnyatā makes sense; Everything does not make sense to that person for whom śūnyatā does not make sense.\textsuperscript{33}

The Madhyamika method seeks to break down conceptualizations and not to acquire new information. Through dialectical reasoning the Madhyamika seeks to bring about a
catharsis, a way to purify one's awareness of reality and disburden it of preconceived notions. It is important to note in this connection that Mādhyamika does not criticize prajñās which are different from its own, but only conceptualizations and viewpoints. For instance, the Vedāntins have a prajñā which reveals to them that all reality is Brahman, the ultimate, transcendent One which is the foundation of all reality. The Mādhyamika does not criticize this intuition as such (i.e., he does not deny that the Vedāntin has this intuition), but instead criticizes its conceptual ramifications, because any prajñā which is developed into an articulated position can be shown to be inadequate, but only in regard to the concepts and formulations associated with it. The Mādhyamika method cannot deny the validity of another intuition which differs from its own, but can and does deny any attempt to conceptualize. For this reason, the Mādhyamika refuses to state his position, because as soon as a position is linguaged and conceptualized it becomes one viewpoint among other viewpoints, and can be attacked and shown to be inadequate.

The Mādhyamika position is the "middle position" which avoids all extreme views, and the Mādhyamika refuses to state his position as a concept or viewpoint, because this would relativize it, and, in relativizing it, leave it
open to attack. A concept or a viewpoint can be attacked; an unstated and unstatable "middle position" which avoids all extreme views cannot. Moreover, it is only because he holds this position (although he cannot state it), that the Mādhyamika avoids the pitfall of nihilism. The Mādhyamika does not disprove other positions just to disprove; his critique is motivated by his understanding of "the way things really are," and his relentless dismantling of other positions aims at producing a transforming awareness in those who are addicted to opinions and viewpoints, to lead them to abandon all relative attitudes and perceive "the way things really are."

Both Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti assert that there is a transcendent reality (paramārtha sat), and they think that there is a possibility of becoming aware of this reality, which is seen by them as a transforming awareness which destroys all relative theories and viewpoints. Thus they do not deny the validity of all knowledge, but only of conceptual knowledge understood as the urge to create theories about reality.

The world does not appear to those who are far away from the truth as it appears to those who are near to it - that is like the mirage devoid of specific characteristics.

Just as a mirage looks like water but it is neither water nor something real, in the same way the groups look like the ego, but in fact they are neither the ego nor something real.

When a man takes this world, which is similar to a mirage, to be either existent or non-existent that
man is under the influence of bewilderment. But if there is bewilderment there is no salvation... But those who have understood things as they really are attain to salvation, in so far as they have taken their standpoint in neither view...For us there is no thesis to be demonstrated, no rules of conduct, and on account of our taking shelter in the supreme illumination, our doctrine is truly the doctrine of emptiness. 38

As this passage indicates, the Mādhaymika position is not "no position," but is an undefinable position which views reality from the position of "supreme illumination," and a later verse also states that "attainment of nirvāṇa does not imply in fact any destruction of worldly existence. That is why even the Buddha, when requested whether this world has an end, remained silent." 39 The following verses go on to state that absolute truth transcends attachments to particular views and ideas. This awareness of the true nature of reality is the basis of all Mādhaymika philosophy, and should not be misconstrued as "no position," but rather as a non-conceptual position. 40

Mādhaymika sees salvation as an immediate possibility at every moment, but it requires a reorientation of one's attitude toward the world, as long as phenomenal structures are taken as real we can become attached to them. The true awareness of reality (prajñā) goes beyond knowledge or discursive thought, and is not a fleeting state of mystical ecstasy, but an awareness which completely transforms one's perception of reality, and which leads to a feeling of equanimity and joy because one is no long-
er attached to false notions. As Professor H. Nakamura states:

In Buddhism the entire stress lies on the mode of living, on the saintliness of life, on the removal of attachment to the world.42

Awareness of śūnyatā leads one to make radical changes in the epistemological presuppositions which determine how one views the structures which are presented in ordinary existence, and it also leads to a fundamental re-definition of one's basic questions about the nature of the world and of existence, since in higher truth (param- ārtha) ideas of essences and attributes do not fit the actual situation. Truth cannot be expressed in declarative statements which can be either affirmed or denied to be valid; questions of truth must be able to affect one's attitudes, choices, and ways of relating to the world, or otherwise they are simply empty speculation.

All things make sense for him for whom the absence of being makes sense. Nothing makes sense for him for whom the absence of being does not make sense.43

The awareness of śūnyatā is a purification process — it frees the mind from attachments, which lead to greed, craving, lust, envy, fear, hatred, and all the other afflictions of worldly existence. śūnyatā is not, however, a solution to these problems, but rather a realization of their basic emptiness, that they were never really problems, but merely self-imposed fetters.44 The Bodhisattva
who has attained to realization of the true nature of things sees that the basic afflictions, राग, द्वेष, and मोह (desire, aversion, and delusion respectively), do not exist because the person they afflict does not exist in fact.\(^{45}\)

Everything arises in dependence on causes and conditions, and what arises in dependence causes suffering (दुःख्या), because things are constantly arising and passing away, and so we will necessarily be separated from what we desire and this will cause suffering as long as we fail to realize this truth and it's implications.\(^{46}\) This insight can free us from craving for, and dependence on, transitory things.\(^{47}\) Moreover, this is the only way, according to मध्यमिका,\(^{48}\) that spiritual attainment can make sense, because if things are as they appear to be, then there is no way to overcome afflicted existence (दुःख्या), and if they are not as they appear, as मध्यमिका asserts, then they can be overcome if correctly grasped, and there can be a spiritual path to reach this realization.\(^{49}\) If there are spiritual attainments then it makes sense that there are people on the way; given this, the Buddhist community (संघ) makes sense as an institution for people seeking release from दुःख्या; given spiritual attainments and the Buddhist community, the enlightened one (Tathāgata) makes sense, and thus the Three
Jewels make sense, and, by extension, everything which leads to enlightenment will make sense, and so will morality and the progressive cultivation of insight.\textsuperscript{51} Candrakīrti concludes this analysis with the statement:

In sum, our case is flawless and is established without contradicting any principles. Your view (i.e. the view of the view of the opponents of Mādhyamika) is very unstable and short-sighted, contradicts principles, and so is full of difficulties. You are too obtuse to discern clear faults and merits.\textsuperscript{52}

Rightly understood, according to Candrakīrti, the Mādhyamika view makes sense of everything,\textsuperscript{53} including the everyday world and its transactions. Mādhyamika asserts that the everyday world must be accepted, if only relatively, as a base, in order for the higher truth of nirvāṇa to be pointed out.\textsuperscript{54} Since \textit{samsāra} constitutes the horizons of ordinary experience, it must be admitted in the beginning in order to be transcended in higher stages of awareness.\textsuperscript{55} Furthermore, there is no specific difference between the everyday world and nirvāṇa;\textsuperscript{56} the ontic range (koti) of nirvāṇa is the ontic range of the everyday world, because no phenomenal categories can be applied to nirvāṇa.

Ultimate beatitude (śīva) is the coming to rest of all ways of taking things, the repose of named things (prapañca); no Truth has been taught by a Buddha for anyone, anywhere.\textsuperscript{57}

When verbal assertions (vācas) cease, prapañca no longer operates, and when all discursive thought ceases,
ultimate beatitude is attained. Not only are one's every-
day ways of thinking transformed in nirvāṇa, but one's
everyday way of perceiving and relating to things actual-
ly ceases to function. The Mādhyamika dialectic seeks
to demolish the urge to conceptual proliferation, and
thus the enigmatic statement that "no Truth has been
taught by a Buddha for anyone, anywhere" means that there
is no true doctrine concerning nirvāṇa, because it cannot
be described or defined in doctrines.

The path for reaching this awareness involves under-
standing fully the underlying dynamic pattern of phenom-
ena, pratītya sammutpāda, the realization that "there is
no element of existence which does not arise dependently;
and so there is no element of existence whatsoever which
is not devoid of self-existence." 60

According to the Mādhyamika, 61 this understanding is
the only one which can bring afflicted existence (duḥkha)
to an end, because if duḥkha were self-existent it could
not cease to be. The whole spiritual path of Buddhism
rests on the notion that duḥkha arises in dependence on
conditions (e.g. craving, envy, desire, etc.) and can be
brought to an end when its causes are extinguished. 62

Whatever arises dependent on conditions can perish,
and duḥkha is dependent on wrongly attributing svabhāva to
the elements of existence, which leads to attachment to
A sky-lotus, for instance, does not exist ontically, and so it cannot perish, since it does not exist, and conversely, a self-existent thing also cannot perish. Thus the Madhyamika's concept of the middle path avoids the extremes of non-existence and existence by stating that duḥkha is not of the same nature as a sky-lotus (i.e. completely non-existent), nor is it self-existent, since in that case it could not be overcome.

The Madhyamika understands śūnyatā in relation to pratītya sammutpāda to be "a guiding, not a cognitive notion, presupposing the existence of the everyday. It is itself the middle way." The concept of śūnyatā extends even to the Buddhist path of spiritual realization – the Buddhist path is not self-existent, because if it were it would already be realized, and so there would be no need to realize it a second time. A path is by definition unrealized, and since the Buddhist path is something to be realized it cannot be self-existent, since self-existence entails immutability. It could neither come into being nor pass away, nor could it change, and would exist as a path whether or not anyone follows it, which is contrary to the notion of a spiritual path. Furthermore, in order for the Buddhist path to be viable there must be ignorance at one point and later perfect realization, but if it were self-existent, the path would exist always as it
is and would not undergo change. 70

Therefore, even enlightenment is dependent - in or-
der for there to be enlightenment, there must be an en-
lighened person, and in order for there to be an en-
lighened person there must be enlightenment.

Nirvāṇa is...what can neither be made extinct,
nor realized, through action, what neither ter-
minates nor is everlasting, what neither ceases to
be nor comes to be. 71

This idea, that nirvāṇa "neither ceases to be nor
comes to be" is central to Mādhyamika thought. Nirvāṇa
is not an existent thing, nor is it non-existent - to
attempt to apply categories of any kind to nirvāṇa sim-
ply does not fit the case, and Candrakīrti states that it
is itself the final coming to rest of all named things
(sarvaprapaṇcōśama). 72 Further, nothing is either cre-
ated or eliminated in nirvāṇa, since nirvāṇa's function
is the dissipation of reifying thought, which never had a
real (i.e. self-existent) basis in the first place. 73 In
the perfected state (nirvāṇa) the putative elements of
existence cease to operate (these are individual life,
actions and afflictions, 74 and the factors of personal ex-
istence, or skandhas) 75 due to the realization that they
were never real, but only appeared to be real, like an
hallucination.

The absence of being as taught here is a great
esoteric wisdom, and realized in practice and fully
grasped, that is, without recourse to the ideas of
existence and non-existence, but as the middle way
(madhyamā pratipad), can lead to full enlightenment. It does this by extinguishing the sacrificial fire of existence consisting of birth, old age, and death.\textsuperscript{76}

Just as nirvāṇa is not existent, it is also not non-existent, or it could not be the guide and substance of the way of Buddhism; it is, rather, the end of the distinction between existence and non-existence.\textsuperscript{77} Nirvāṇa cannot be said to exist, since whatever exists is subject to decay and dissolution.\textsuperscript{78} Candrakīrti compares it to the going out of a light - the going out itself cannot be said to be a real thing, nor is it unreal.\textsuperscript{79}

This metaphor is an important illustration of the Mādhyamika conception of nirvāṇa. The going out of a light is neither existent nor non-existent - it is merely an event which marks the difference between two states of affairs, light and darkness, both of which are dependent on each other, since the going out of a light is dependent on there being a light to go out and on darkness as a resultant state of affairs.

In a similar way nirvāṇa marks the passing away of a state of affairs, avidyā (ignorance), characterized by the urge to create concepts and names; and the actualization of another state of affairs, characterized by equanimity and awareness of the true nature of reality (param-ārtha) in which the urge to conceptualize and name no longer operates.\textsuperscript{80} Thus nirvāṇa cannot be held to be ex-
istent, since then it would be subject to decay and
death, and it would also be compounded, since whatever
is ontically existent is compounded\textsuperscript{81} - what is not
compounded is not ontically existent, like Mādhyamika's
favorite examples of non-existent entities, the horns
of a rabbit and a sky lotus.\textsuperscript{82} Like these non-entities,
nirvāna is not based on causes, as all ontic entities are;
nirvāna is beyond all causes and conditions and so cannot
be ontically existent.\textsuperscript{83}

On the other hand, it is not non-existent like a
sky lotus, since then it would be dependent on the exist-
ent.\textsuperscript{84} Sky lotuses cannot be meaningfully discussed,
since whatever attributes one assigns to them have noth-
ing to refer to, as predicates and the subject of predic-
ation are meaningful only insofar as they have something
to refer to. Thus if nirvāna were non-existent it could
only be so because there is something which does exist
in fact, and so it would be dependent, since there can
only be something non-existent if something can first be
established as existing.\textsuperscript{85} Unreal objects, such as a
sky lotus, the son of a barren woman, or a square circle,
cannot be said to be either existent or non-existent -
they are merely imagined contradictions, and cannot in-
telligibly even be thought, nor can attributes be assigned
to them, because by their very nature they cannot be ex-
perienced.\textsuperscript{86}
Nirvāṇa also cannot be imagined, nor can attributes be assigned to it, not because it is of the nature of a sky lotus, but because it does not fit into any definable or conceivable class of things.\(^87\) Nirvāṇa is what it is, and, moreover, is the only thing that is not other than what it purports to be.\(^88\) Attributes do not apply to it, as in the case of the going out of a light; it is neither large nor small, red nor green, up nor down, good nor bad. It is beyond all predication and thought, and is reached when the fully realized one (Tathāgata) becomes aware of the emptiness of all things.

That which is taken as causal or dependent, is the process of being born or passing on is, taken non-causally and beyond all dependence, is declared to be nirvāṇa.\(^89\)

Nirvāṇa is indistinguishable from saṃsāra, because nothing can be positively asserted about it.\(^90\) In describing nirvāṇa Mādhyamika uses primarily negative assertions, such as "Nirvāṇa is not other than saṃsāra," but this should not be taken as a statement that there is absolutely no difference between them, but rather that in nirvāṇa there are no distinguishing predicates, since these operate only on the level of the everyday.\(^91\)

The difference between nirvāṇa and saṃsāra can thus be termed a qualitative, rather than a quantitative one. Nothing is gained or lost in nirvāṇa, and the world goes on as it always has.\(^92\) The difference is that for the
Bodhisattva all things are perceived as śūnyatā, devoid of svabhāva, and this realization reorients his view of reality such that he no longer perceives phenomena in terms of dichotomizing terms such as existence and non-existence, etc.\textsuperscript{93}

śūnyatā is a non-descriptive term, but Mādhyamika recognizes that words can be used legitimately toward a spiritual end - if applied correctly, śūnyatā brings to rest the manifold of named things through true insight.\textsuperscript{94}

Language as the Mādhyamika uses it is not assertive; it does not point to any real thing, but is meant to be evocative i.e., it is designed to bring about a re-orientation of one's view of reality.\textsuperscript{95} What appear to be grammatical assertions on the part of the Mādhyamika (and in a grammatical sense are actually assertions) are only "śūnya words" (śūnyavācas), empty in themselves, and are only meaningful insofar as they lead beyond language and assertion. They are meant to indicate, but not fully delineate, a path to true awareness, since it must be experienced rather than known.\textsuperscript{96} The "transforming awareness" of nirvāna is the ultimate goal of Mādhyamika philosophy.\textsuperscript{97}

From the foregoing discussion we can conclude some features of madhyamā pratipad as conceived by Mādhyamika:

(1) madhyamā pratipad is not an ontology - it is a way,
and refers specifically to the way the Bodhisattva relates to the things of the world; for all day-to-day activities the things of the world are treated by the Bodhisattva as if they were real, but he is fully aware of the essential emptiness of things, and so they lose their power to entice or bind him. Secondly, madhyama pratipada is not so much a way of being as an attitude which reorients one's relation to the world by clearly seeing its true nature as sunyata. If things are empty they have no power either to attract or repel. The Bodhisattva has an objective attitude which makes him aware of the true nature of the things he interacts with in the world which culminates in the state of nirvana. Finally, nirvana is ontically no different from samsara, and realization of nirvana does not in any way alter samsara itself, or the way things appear to us. Nirvana does not cause the essence of things to be sunyata - they already always have been sunyata, and when we realize this we are no longer dependent on or truly affected by them. In nirvana things lose their effective power and we become free. Wrongly understood, sunyata can destroy people by plunging them into wrong views and heresies, such as nihilism, but when correctly grasped sunyata can lead to Bodhisattvahood, which is characterized by a correct view of the nature of
reality, which brings with it joy, peace, and equanimity.

When through right knowledge one has suppressed any notion of existence or non-existence, one is beyond sin and virtue. Therefore the saints say that this is salvation from greed as well as from conditions of existence.
CHAPTER TWO

Now I am going to make a statement here. I don't know whether it fits into the category of other people's statements or not. But whether or not it fits into their category or whether it doesn't, it obviously fits into some category. So in that respect it is no different from their statements. However, let me try making my statement.

There is a beginning. There is a not yet beginning to be a beginning. There is a not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be a beginning. There is being. There is nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. There is a not yet beginning to be a not yet beginning to be nonbeing. Suddenly there is being and nonbeing. But between this being and nonbeing, I don't know which is being and which is nonbeing. Now I have just said something. But I don't know whether what I have said has really said something or whether it hasn't said something...how can I say anything? But I have said that we have become one, so how can I not be saying anything? The one and what I said about it make two, and the two and the original one make three. If we go on this way, then even the cleverest mathematician can't tell where we'll end, much less an ordinary man. If by moving from nonbeing to being we get to three, how far will we get if we move from being to being? Better not to move, but to let things be!

(Chuang-tzu, Inner Chapters, Section II, p. 38.)

The Mādhyamika Refutation of Self

As we have seen, the Mādhyamika conception of mādhyamā pratipad involves the rejection of all views about the nature of reality. The primary intention of this rejection, as stated in Mādhyamika treatises, is to bring conceptual proliferation (prapañca) to rest, and thus put an end to wrong views. The fundamental wrong view, from which all other wrong views arise, is the belief in selfhood. Because the refutation of self is of central importance to the Mādhyamika conception of

(41)
radhyamā pratipad, this chapter will examine the major aspects of the Mādhyamika rejection of self, and how the Mādhyamikas see their negative upāya as ultimately leading to enlightenment.  

In order for man to be truly free, according to the Mādhyamika, he must rid himself of the concepts which bind him to wrong views and which prevent him from seeing 'the way things really are.' This task is all the more difficult because man's wrong views are of his own making, yet he clings to them as if they were undeniable truth. Candrakīrti thinks that the fundamental illusion, from which all other afflictions and defects arise, is the belief that the self (ātman) is real (satkāyaārthi). Only by overcoming our belief in, and attachment to, this illusion of self can we put an end to the klesas (desires or afflictions), and find the ultimate release of nirvāṇa.

The idea of an eternal, unchanging Self is for the Vedāntins the one undeniable truth, and this truth, that each person essentially is a part of the Universal Self (Brahman), is what makes the eternal flux of saṁsāra intelligible, what makes existence itself meaningful. In a universe of constantly shifting illusions we can hold onto the Ātman as the one truth, an oasis of permanence in a universe of change. Naṇḍī and
Candrapūrtha, however, follow the Buddhist doctrine of anātta, the insight that there is no soul, and that what we take to be an enduring self is nothing more than a constantly changing series of constructs of the five elements of personal existence (skandhas) — saṁjñā (perceptions), vedanā (feelings), saṁskāras (volitional dispositions), vijnāna (consciousness or intelligence), and rūpa (form). The concept of atman is nothing more or less than a misguided attempt to deny the obvious fact of universal change and to create a permanent entity which transcends the world of flux.

Nāgārjuna and Candrapūrtha are concerned not only with demonstrating the impossibility of the atman, but also with refuting Buddhist doctrines which they see as deviations from the middle way of the Buddha, specifically the radical pluralism of the Vaibhāṣikas, which denies the soul but accepts momentary entities as real; the Sarvāstivāda philosophy, which accepts dharma (the ultimate intangible elements of existence) as real, but denies the reality of pudgala, or momentary constructions of dharma; and the philosophy of the Vātsīputrīyas, who propounded the idea of "quasi-permanent" pudgala which exist prior to perceptions. Nāgārjuna and Candrapūrtha refute these and all other views through the prasāṅga method of argumentation,
which uses their opponents' arguments against them by developing the consequences of their argument to the point where it is shown to be, in rigor, "unintelligible" (nopapadyate), unthinkable according to the laws of logic. To demonstrate their rejection of all viewpoints, Nāgarjuna and Candrakīrti then refute the opposing viewpoint (e.g., that self does not exist), and any compromise viewpoints (e.g., self both exists and does not exist, neither exists nor does not exist, etc.). This prasajya method of argumentation aims at confounding our urge to create new viewpoints by showing that any viewpoint is ipso facto false.

Since attachment to the idea of self is the root cause of all other attachments, Nāgarjuna and Candrakīrti are especially concerned to demonstrate its unintelligibility. Beginning in Chapter IX of the PP, "The Agent Subject and His Doing," Candrakīrti demonstrates the reciprocal dependence of all things and shows that nothing can exist by itself, that everything lacks svabhāva (own-being). Through the next four chapters he develops the consequences of the original insight that everything lacks svabhāva, culminating in Chapter XIV, "Self and the Way Things Really Are," an unrelenting refutation of the idea of ātman, or self.

He begins by demonstrating that it is impossible
to truly separate the agent from his action or from its result, since neither can exist without the other. A doer is not a doer unless he does something, just as an action is not an action without an actor to give rise to it and an effect which arises as a result. 15 Each of these - the actor, his action, and its result - are not what they pretend to be, and so are unreal. This is the ultimate test for the Mādhyamikas - if something is not what it pretends to be, it is not real. 16

This does not mean, however, that the Mādhyamika is obligated to accept the opposite view that there is no relation between agent and action and cause and effect, since this would lead to the most pernicious sort of relativism, in which moral behavior of any kind would be unintelligible, since actions would have no results, and there would be no Buddhism or path to salvation since "In the absence of moral consequences as fruition, a path leading to heaven or to liberation is unintelligible." 17

In the next chapter, "The Self as Subject of Perception," Candrakīrti refutes the theory of the Sāmitīya that there must be an enduring subject who exists prior to experiencing and ideation since, they contend, a non-existent entity cannot be the subject of perceptions and ideas. 18 This, however, is impossible according to
Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti, since nothing exists without relation to its material cause.\(^{19}\) Just as a wealthy man must have wealth in order to be wealthy, a self must have perceptions in order to be a self. There is no way to ontologically distinguish the agent, his action, and its result. There is a reciprocal dependence of the appropriator and the appropriated, and neither can exist without the other.\(^{20}\) The self cannot exist prior to perception "because it would lack a raison d'être (astibhāvāt),"\(^{21}\) nor does the self come into being simultaneously with perception because perception does not exist prior to a perceiver, just as the perceiver does not exist prior to perception, and two nonexistent things cannot give rise to something which exists in fact,\(^{22}\) and so Candrakīrti concludes that:

Exactly like the agent subject and his doing, the subject of appropriation and the activity of appropriating can exist only in reciprocal dependence, not each in its own right.\(^{23}\)

Using similar methods of argumentation Candrakīrti goes on to demonstrate that the notions of fire and fuel are unintelligible, because each depends on the other to be what it is,\(^{24}\) and he extends his analysis to include self and the factors of personal existence (skandhas), by stating that their relationship is analogous to the relationship between fire and fuel:

Everything expounded in terms of fire and fuel is, without exception, applicable to self and the
factors of personal existence. 25

The self depends on the factors of personal existence for its being and they depend on it, and so neither can be said to be either exactly the same nor wholly other, as they exist only in reciprocal dependence. Every nameable, perceivable, or even conceivable thing arises in dependence on something else and so is not itself real. The aim of Mādhyamika philosophy is to destroy all theories, to bring the manifold of named things to a halt. This can only be accomplished when we have finally exhausted all viewpoints and have perceived the truth that all things lack self-existence, that they are essentially śūnya, or void, not in the sense of nothingness, but rather that they are nibṣva-bhāva, non-self-existent. 26

In Chapter XIV, "Self and the Way Things Really Are," Candrakīrti examines the various ways of conceiving the self and finds them all lacking. First of all, the self cannot be held to be the same as the factors of personal existence, since they are impermanent, they arise and perish, and so the self would also have to arise and perish, and would thus be unreal, and it would also be multiple, as they are; but if it were real it could not have contradictory states, nor could it arise
or perish.

On the other hand, if it were wholly other than the skandhas it would not be characterizable in their terms, i.e., they could not have the same character,27 as for instance a dog and a table are totally different, since their natures have no connection between them. This aspect of Candrakīrti's analysis of the concept of self is the least philosophically convincing, because he does not show that to consider the self as other than the skandhas is unintelligible, but states that the nature of the skandhas is to arise, exist, and perish, but that if the self is real it must not change and must have no connection with what does change, and so it could not be the object of the sense of "I". The question which Candrakīrti fails to answer is: Why not? The Vedāntins28 hold that the Self is wholly other than the changing, impermanent factors of personal existence, that it exists always apart from and unaffected by them, eternally transcending the world of name and form. Furthermore, it is precisely this Self which is the true "I" free of all accidental adjuncts, and which is not limited or affected by them. Candrakīrti does not actually address himself to refuting this view, but states that if the self were wholly other than the factors of personal existence it
would not be characterizable in their terms, which the Vedāntin would also agree to. Candrakīrti admits this, but states that this doctrine is propounded from "fear" and a lack of understanding of the true nature of the self. At this point\textsuperscript{29} he sounds more like a dogmatist than a true Mādhyamika, since he does not refute the Vedānta standpoint but merely dismisses it as false without demonstrating why this is so, saying simply that "the self is not understood" as different from the factors of personal existence, as consciousness is different from a physical object,\textsuperscript{30} but he gives no logically compelling reason why this is so, and he concludes: "So it does not make sense that the self can be wholly other than the factors of personal existence."\textsuperscript{31}

The reason why Candrakīrti does not successfully refute the theory that the self is different from the skandhas is that he cannot. If the self has no connection with the world of name and form, which encompasses the totality of our experience, how can it be refuted by the language and logic of that world? Obviously, it cannot be refuted, just as unicorns and God cannot be refuted. We can state that they are highly unlikely, but cannot conclusively prove their non-existence, since they are not a part of the world of experience. One cannot perceive them according to any intersubject-
ively accessible method of experience, and so the question of their existence must remain a matter of belief.\textsuperscript{32} Candrakīrti can only state that the self is linked to the skandhas and cannot exist apart from them, like the reflection of one's face in a mirror which disappears when the mirror is taken away, but he cannot demonstrate why this is so.

He further contends that the self is not directly experienced, and is merely a concept imposed on the factors of personal existence and is based solely on them,\textsuperscript{33} but still he does not actually refute the idea of self - he merely states that it must be overcome in order to know the way things really are.\textsuperscript{34}

The factors of personal existence, according to Candrakīrti, purport to be what they are not, i.e., a self, but when we examine them to try to find an enduring entity which underlies them the idea of self vanishes like a mirage when viewed close up:

As a mirage, which looks like water, is not water, nor any real thing, so the factors of personal existence, which are like a self, are not of the self nor of anything real.\textsuperscript{35}

This quote illustrates the difference between what the Mādhyamika sees as two levels of truth, the nevārtha, or truth for those who need to be led, and nītārtha, the truth for those who have been led. The Buddha, according to the Mādhyamikas, taught according to the
level of understanding of his listeners, and since most people are far away from the truth and cling to the false notion of self they must be led, like a man seeing a mirage from far away in a desert, to a point where it is obvious that what he had previously seen was an illusion.36 For those who denied the existence of the self, e.g., the Cārvākas, the Buddha affirmed its existence because those people are also blind to the truth of things. Those who hold this belief are at the lowest level of understanding, because they see only the appearances of the world of forms and are devoted only to it and so they:

...turn their backs on the various endeavors like the rare and desirable goals of heaven and ultimate beatitude; they incessantly and forever perform ill deeds because of their innate dispositions and are headed for a mighty plunging into the hells.37

As long as they deny the self they will refuse to take responsibility for their own actions, since responsibility makes no sense if the existence of the self is denied, as there would be no continuity of karma and its results, act and its responsibility,38 and this idea is unacceptable because, as stated in Chapter IX, if this were true there would be no possibility of moral behavior, no path to salvation (since acts would have no real results), and thus ultimately no Buddhism.39 For this reason the Buddha affirms the existence of self to those
who deny it, while denying it for those who cling to
the notion of self: "Even as the theory of self is not
the truth of things, no more is the theory of non-
self." 40

The theory that there is a self and the opposing
theory that there is not are no more than empty specu-
lations. The truth which the Buddha realized rejects
all such limited viewpoints, as it is beyond what can
be experienced in words and thoughts. For those who
have reached the standpoint of the higher truth
(nitartha) the Buddha taught that the self neither
is nor is not, and that any way we look at it, the con-
cept of self is unintelligible, and in this way "I-
ing" (ahamkara) and "mine-ing" (mamakara) come to an
end, and this realization frees us from attachments.

When I-ing and mine-ing have wasted away both
inwardly and outwardly, possessive attachment comes
to an end and from its cessation personal rebirth
ceases. 41

This is the hidden truth, the truth reserved for
the few initiates who have penetrated beyond the logi-
cal, epistemic boundaries we impose on our awareness by
accepting appearances as real. This truth is frighten-
ing to those who are not prepared for it, since most
people need viewpoints and definite statements about
the nature of the world. For this reason Buddha taught
according to the needs of his listeners.

The realization of ultimate truth begins when language ceases to function, i.e., when we realize that it has no actual thing to refer to. The objects of thought cease to exist because they have been shown to be other than what they pretend to be and lacking self-existence; they arise and perish, whereas "the true nature of things (dharmatā) neither arises nor perishes, as nirvāna does not." 42

Since everything we can express in words or even conceive in our empirically oriented way of thinking is not what it pretends to be and is thus unreal, we must be shown the utter futility of this way of understanding things; as long as we understand theoretically (i.e., attached to theories) we will be unable to finally put to rest the manifold of named things and the viewpoints that cloud our understanding to see the truth which is beyond thought constructs, is unchanging and not other than what it appears to be,43 because:

Afflicted existence, in higher truth, does not arise in any sense; nor does purification arise in any sense. The birth-death cycle is, in higher truth, absolutely the same as non-arising; in it in higher truth, there is no differentiable factor ...in higher truth, all elements of existence are undifferentiable.44

Thus from the standpoint of nirvāna the concepts and viewpoints which have meaning on the level of rel-
ative truth, such as agent and product, fire and fuel, self, and, ultimately even nirvana, are shown to be empty, śūnya, devoid of self-existence, no longer applicable in matters of higher truth, like a musical instrument, which is fine for producing sounds, but is useless for fixing a car. In this way we find tranquillity of mind and realize the serene, eternal truth of the enlightened Buddhas who are not deluded or troubled by appearance.

Near the end of Chapter XIV Candrakīrti attempts to answer the accusation that Mādhyamikas are no different from nihilists, since both deny the self-existence of things and both agree that things have no permanent essence. Candrakīrti denies the charge and states that the nihilists are "naive realists" who do not understand the Mādhyamika insight that all things arise in dependence and are unreal for this reason. The nihilist fails to understand that everything comes into being as a result of conditions, and so he even denies the doctrine of transmigration of karmic effects, which Candrakīrti thinks is an erroneous view. Thus the nihilist sees only the appearances of the world and fails to understand "the way things really are." Although the doctrines of the nihilist and Mādhyamika appear to be similar because both assert the unreality of things, they
are, in the last analysis, completely different because
the way each puts his views into practice differs:

There is no identity of insight or of explanation between the Mādhyamikas who have fully realized
the real nature of things as it is (vastusvarūpa) and who expound that, and the nihilists who have
not fully realized the real nature of things as it is, even though there is no difference in their
theory of the true nature of things. 45

Candrakīrti does not explain what this difference of practice between the nihilists and the Mādhyamikas
entails, but he has given indications in previous chapters, which are more fully developed in the chapter en-
titled "Nirvāna." The essential difference is that the
Mādhyamika's insight into the nature of things leads to salvation, while both the nihilist and the realist
viewpoints only serve to mire men more deeply in the false appearances of the world. Both the nihilist and
the realist, in the last analysis, only see the world as it appears to them, while the Mādhyamika seeks to
know it as it really is. Thus Mādhyamika, unlike the other two positions, is a positive means for realizing
the real truth beyond all relative truths. As Streng
states, it is this "soteriological intention" 46 which
raises the Mādhyamika above the nihilists — he sees a
defect in the human condition and seeks to remedy it
through the cleansing insight of śūnyatā, which trans-
forms and frees us by showing us the truth which is
beyond all relative viewpoints and which leads to nir-
vāna, the ultimate realization, which is also beyond
all viewpoints and, ultimately, beyond what can even
be approached by language, since:

...the very coming to rest, the non-functioning
of perceptions as signs of all named things, is it-
self nirvāna. And this coming to rest being, by
its very nature, in repose, is the ultimate beatit-
ude. When verbal assertions cease, named things
are in repose; and the ceasing to function of dis-
cursive thought is the ultimate beatitude...The
coming to rest of named things as a result of ab-
andoning the basic afflictions and hence of total-
ly extirpating innate modes of thought is ultim-
ate beatitude. The coming to rest of named things
through not seizing on objects of knowledge or on
knowledge itself, is ultimate beatitude.\textsuperscript{47}

Without this soteriological dimension the Mādhyam-
ika would indeed be a nihilist, but it is just this in-
tention which lifts him above the resignation to the
facts of existence which the nihilist advocates. For
the Mādhyamika there is the possibility of salvation,
while the nihilist is forever trapped by his view of
the world, and it is this difference, although it is a
subtle one, which separates the Mādhyamika from the
nihilists.

The Yogācāra acāryas recognize this soteriological
dimension in Mādhyamika thought, but contend that al-
though the Mādhyamika himself may not be a nihilist,
his doctrine leads too easily to a nihilistic position.
The Mādhyamika dialeëtic destroys all viewpoints, which
can lead to the erroneous view that there is no true
view of reality at all. The Yogācārās agree that any viewpoint which can be stated is somehow a distortion of true reality, but state that some views are more correct than others, and Yogācāra philosophy attempts to articulate the most correct view of reality, which can lead deluded beings to the true awareness of the Buddhas, which is beyond all concepts and merely relative viewpoints. This awareness is actually a viewpoint, the only true viewpoint, but cannot be articulated in any way. Thus The Yogācārās reject the Mādhyamika injunction against speculation, not because the Mādhyamika philosophy is nihilism, but because human beings are continuously propounding wrong views, and so it makes sense to articulate the most correct view, the one which can lead to enlightenment, rather than leaving people in the Mādhyamika position that all viewpoints are eo ipso false, which all too easily is misunderstood as nihilism.
CHAPTER THREE

O Śāriputra, where there is emptiness there is neither form, nor feeling, nor perception, nor impulse, nor consciousness; no eye, or ear, or nose, or tongue, or body, or mind; no form, nor sound, nor smell, nor taste, nor touchable, nor object of mind;...no mind-consciousness element; there is no ignorance, nor extinction of decay and death; there is no suffering, nor origination, nor stopping, nor path; there is no cognition, no attainment and no non-attainment.

Therefore, O Śāriputra, owing to a Bodhisattva's indifference to any kind of personal attainment, and through his having relied on the perfection of wisdom, he dwells without thought-coverings. In the absence of thought-coverings he has...overcome what can upset, in the end sustained by nirvāna.

Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya-sūtra IV.

III. Mādhyamā Pratipad in Yogācāra

As we saw in the previous sections, the Mādhyamika is concerned with refuting all wrong views, particularly those of other schools of Buddhism. One school which the Mādhyamikas single out for attack is Sarvāstivāda, a pluralistic philosophy which accepts dharma and the consciousness which perceives them as ultimately real. The dharma exist in themselves and are imperishable, but pudgalas (constructions of dharma) are unreal, since they are transitory. The Mādhyamikas discarded this conception, and stated that all elements of existence are unreal, as is their perceiver, since every part of phenomenal reality is dependent and impermanent.

Nothing dependent can be ultimately real, and so the ultimate reality must be beyond determination and categorization. Phenomena, when viewed from the standpoint of
highest truth (paramārtha), are seen to be śūnya, and so ultimately nothing can be positively asserted about them.\(^1\)

While Abhidharmika philosophy accepted 73 dharmas and the existence of consciousness as a faculty which perceives them, the Madhyamikas denied the reality of any dharmas whatsoever and declared consciousness (vijñāna) to be equally unreal.\(^2\) All reality is an illusion which obscures śūnya, which in its essence is undivided and indeterminate.\(^3\)

Yogācāra, the third phase in the development of Indian Buddhism, is an attempt to find a middle path between the extremes of the realism of early Buddhism and what it perceives as the nihilism of Madhyamika. The Yogācāra acāryas rejected the Madhyamika interpretation of the notion that everything is ultimately śūnya, since it is unintelligible in the Madhyamika analysis how something intrinsically formless and contentless could appear to have form and content.\(^4\) A groundless appearance is absurd, so how could the world of appearance arise from pure, undifferentiated Void (śūnya), which the Madhyamika claims is the basis of all apparent reality? The Yogācāras sought the resolution of this dilemma in an examination of vijñāna (consciousness), the faculty whereby phenomenal reality is re-
vealed to us.

Yogācāra thinkers accept the idea that the empirical world is illusory, but state that this illusion must be grounded in something which is real in itself. This ultimate reality, according to the Yogācāras, is vijnāna, which creates and sustains the illusion of a phenomenal world.

Although consciousness is undifferentiated in its pure state, it creates the world of appearance through an inner dynamism which causes it to produce an other which appears in contradistinction to it. This creative faculty is not separate from consciousness, however, but rather is a part of its nature in its impure state of differentiation, in which it creates out of nothing the contents of empirical consciousness.

The Yogācāras see the Mādhyamika doctrine of sunyata as an overly extreme and too literal interpretation of Buddha's teachings. Sunyata is interpreted by the Yogācāras not as a negation of everything, but as a denial that objects exist apart from something which creates them. The impermanent entities we create are unreal, but their arising must have a basis. This basis is abhūta-parikalpa (constructive ideation), a transcendent, dynamic stream of consciousness which creates all phenomena in itself. All distinctions and relations
are contained in it and have no existence apart from it.\textsuperscript{10}

The \textit{Madhyântavibhâga}, attributed to \textit{Maitreya},\textsuperscript{11} states that the middle path between the extremes of s\textit{at}, and s\textit{asat} (existence and non-existence respectively) involves a proper understanding of the nature of \textit{abhûta-parikalpa} - all existence, according to the Yog\texttilde{\v c}\text{\v c}\text{\'a}ras, is a product of the constructive imagination.\textsuperscript{12} The Yog\texttilde{\v c}\text{\v c}\text{\'a}ras think that the other extreme of non-existence refers to substance, and agrees with the N\text{\'a}dhyamikas that all phenomena lack \textit{svabhāva} and are thus unreal.\textsuperscript{13} In the \textit{MV bhāsya} Vasubandhu asserts that \textit{madhyamā pratipad} is the view which sees existence (\textit{sattva}) as \textit{sūnyatā}, which he interprets as an assertion that existence is neither absolute emptiness (\textit{ekantaśūnya}) nor absolute non-emptiness (\textit{ekantaśūnya}).\textsuperscript{14} Vasubandhu thinks that this is the true meaning of \textit{Prajñāpāramitā} statements such as: "All is neither empty nor non-empty."\textsuperscript{15}

As the foregoing discussion indicates, Yog\texttilde{\v c}\text{\v c}\text{\'a}ra is not so much a total rejection of M\text{\'a}dhyamika, but represents, rather, a constructive reinterpretation of M\text{\'a}dhyamika's basic insights which preserves their original intent while reworking them into a coherent program aim-
ing at total enlightenment. The Yogācāras do not, as is often assumed, reject the Mādhyamika concept of śūnyatā, that all reality is niḥsvabhāva — they reapply it as the basis of a spiritual path (sādhana) which, like the Mādhyamika sādhana, aims at producing a total awareness of the true nature of reality in its adherents. The Yogācāras see the Mādhyamika's unrelenting dismantling of all theories about reality as leading to nihilism, despite the Mādhyamika's assertions to the contrary; it is not enough, according to the Yogācāras, to merely annihilate all views, since this is only an intellectual excercise utilizing discursive thought. The Yogācāras seek to develop a coherent system of philosophy which is at the same time a spiritual path which leads to awareness. Yogācāra is a psychologically based ontology which is designed to produce graduated changes in the practitioner's mind, culminating in the actualization of the Tathāgata.

There has been an unfortunate tendency among scholars of Buddhism to view the respective schools as singly defined positions which arose in opposition to each other and even to the canonical Buddhist texts. While the schools have differed in style, ideas, and some premises, it is misleading to view them as discrete and rigid dogmas which are antithetical to each other, since there
are many points of agreement between the schools (e.g. the validity of the Buddhist path and nirvāṇa), and the philosophical development of each school has to some extent been influenced (if only negatively in some cases) by the others. One example of this influence is the development of Mādhyamika, which, since it is a critical philosophy, could not have occurred without viewpoints and concepts to attack.20

Yogācāra is, in my opinion, a positive example of the influence of the Buddhist schools on each other. Yogācāra arose as a reinterpretation both of Sautrāntika21 and Mādhyamika, and retains those aspects of both schools which are conducive to enlightenment, while rejecting those aspects which it perceives as hindrances to the actualization of the Tathāgata. In the case of Sautrāntika, the major hindrance is its tendency toward realism,22 while Mādhyamika's shortcoming is thought to be its tendency toward nihilism, both of which must be overcome in order to attain Tathātā (pure awareness).23

In both theory and practice the Yogācāras are primarily concerned with vijnāna (consciousness), its nature, development, and workings, because it it the key to the production of the world-illusion as well as the eradication of that illusion - it is both the source of bondage and the means whereby it can be overcome.24
Like the Mādhyamika, the Yogācāra teachers realize that subject and its object can only exist in dependence on each other, but while the Mādhyamika merely establishes this as a demonstrable principle the Yogācāras have devised a system of meditative training which involves transfer of an object to the mind, and progressively eliminating all mental strayings from it, which gradually breaks down the distinctions between subject and object, with the eventual aim of eliminating all distinctions. This leads to the insight that neither mind nor its objects are real, which culminates in the realization that all empirical phenomena are śūnya. Like the Mādhyamika, the Yogācāra acāryas aim at a qualitative, rather than a quantitative, transformation of one's perception of the world. Nothing is either added to or taken away from our knowledge; all that has changed is the way we perceive things. Objects in the world maintain their accustomed characteristics, but the Tathāgata's perception of them has altered in that he perceives their inherent emptiness. The Yogācāra path to awareness bears many similarities to the Zen story of the monk who relates: "When I first began studying Zen, mountains were mountains and rivers were rivers. After a period of studying Zen, mountains were no longer mountains and rivers were no longer rivers. Now, having attained
satori (enlightenment), mountains are again mountains and rivers are again rivers."\textsuperscript{30} Nothing is added or subtracted in enlightenment - in his everyday affairs the Tathāgata still sees things as they appear, but he also sees beyond appearances to realize that they are śūnya, and so they can no longer attract or repel him.\textsuperscript{31} One of the scriptural sources which the Yogācāras refer to is the Samdhinirmocanasutra, which is a conversation between Maitreya (probably the future Buddha referred to in some Buddhist scriptures rather than the semi-mythical founder of Yogācāra of the same name) and the Buddha Śākyamuni which is primarily concerned with the idea that phenomenal existence is ideation-only (vijñapti-mātratā), which is a central teaching of Yogācāra. In one verse Maitreya asks:

\begin{quote}

Lord, are those images cognized in meditation different from the mind that cognizes them, or are they not different? The Lord answered: 'Maitreya, they are not different. And why? Because those images are nothing but conceptualization (vijñaptimātratā). Maitreya, I have explained that the meditative object (ālambana) of consciousness is comprised of nothing but conceptualization.'\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

The knowledge of the Tathāgata is completely purified of all vestiges of the knowable (jñeyāvarana), free of all traces of discursive thought. He sees the selflessness of all dharmas (dharmanairātmya) because he comprehends the sameness (samatā) of all the essential
natures of all dharmas, which is śūnyatā. The correct knowledge arises when the Bodhisattva strives unceasingly to understand śūnyatā, and having done so he knows tathatā directly and perceives reality as it is (yatadvahūta) by perceiving it in accordance with madhyamā pratipad. The two unacceptable positions for the Bodhisattva intent on the highest wisdom are: (1) the realist position, naively held by ordinary beings who believe that there is an actual correspondence between verbal designations and their objects; and (2) the nihilistic position, which misconstrues śūnyatā, thinking that it implies either that only designations exist and not their objects (this, according to the Yogācāras, is the Madhyamika fallacy), that without names things also would not exist; or that nothing whatsoever actually exists (sāram nāsti, the materialist (Cārvāka) position.

In the Bodhisattvabhūmi (literally, "Stages of the Bodhisattva's development") Asaṅga outlines the path of the Bodhisattva which is the true middle way between these extremes. In the chapter entitled "On Knowing Reality" (Tattvārtha) he outlines the two types of knowledge of reality of the Buddhas: (1) yathāvadbhāvika-tā - knowledge of the noumenal aspect of dharmas, their true nature, which is śūnya; and (2) yāvadbhāvikatā,
knowledge of the phenomenal aspect of dharmas, which entails awareness of how they should be understood as functioning in empirical reality. Both of these together constitute direct knowledge of all phenomena (sarvata) in their mode of being, and taken together are two aspects of one insight, that everything is śūnya.37

Following this section, which provides a general outline of the Bodhisattva's career, Asaṅga traces the four stages of awareness on the path of true knowledge:38 (1) the awareness of ordinary beings, which accepts what is universally accepted as true, or "reality" as established by common consent; (2) the awareness of logicians, which accepts only what is demonstrable or accepted according to laws of logic. Logicians are aware only of what can be demonstrated by means of the pramānas (perception, inference, and verbal testimony).39 The realm of the knowable is thought by the logicians to be circumscribed by the limits of whatever can be proven and established by demonstration— and proof logic. It is interesting to note that Asaṅga does not state that the logician's view is completely wrong— it is correct as far as it goes, and is a necessary stage in the Bodhisattva's career (as is the first stage, which is also valid within its own limited view of reality)40 which is only transcended in stage (3), the awareness
of the Hīnayānists and pratyeka-buddhas (literally solitary or selfish Buddhas, or enlightenment for oneself) where cognition is completely purified of the obscurations of the afflictions (kleśāvaraṇa). Those are the Buddhists who pursue Buddhahood for themselves, rather than working for the salvation of all beings, which is the Mahāyāna ideal. The pratyeka-buddhas cut themselves off from all worldly ties and retire into retreat and isolation, fixing their sights solely on nirvāṇa, and although they do instruct aspirants on the spiritual path, they do not accept the Mahāyāna ideal of the Bodhisattva, who feels a need to aid all suffering beings because of his karunā (compassion) for them. Asaṅga admits that the pratyeka-buddhas may acquire great powers, energy, and strength of will, and that their knowledge of reality is superior to that of ordinary people and logicians, but he contends that it is still trifling compared to the awareness of the Bodhisattvas, who have rid themselves of all greed (even for nirvāṇa), delusion, and selfishness, and have total awareness of the universal nature of reality.

According to Asaṅga the four āryan truths (literally, truths of the wise) of Buddhism are the essence of all reality. These are: (1) duhkha - all life is suffering; (2) trsna - all suffering is caused by desire;
(3) nirodha - suffering can be overcome; and (4) the eight-fold āryan path to the cessation of suffering, which culminates in nirvāṇa.⁴⁶

Pratyeka-buddhas can become aware of all existence as characterized by the four āryan truths and can attain the realization of all things as pratītya samutpāda, in which they perceive everything as conditioned and compounded of separate elements. Moreover, by following the Buddhist path they can reach a state of awareness untainted by the three kleśas, rāgadveśamoha (greed, aversion, delusion), or the belief in a soul (atman),⁴⁷ since they realize that what is commonly designated as a self is merely a conflux of separate elements (skandhas)⁴⁸ joined together in a constantly changing construction (pudgala) which assumes the false appearance of selfhood because the changes between moments are too subtle to be noticed, and so the illusion of continuity of mental and physical development arises, and leads to the belief that "I am a self."⁴⁹

Although he states that the pratyeka-buddhas can attain an awareness of some fundamental Buddhist truths,⁵⁰ Āsaṅga also makes a distinction between the levels of awareness of the two types of Buddhist practitioners. The pratyeka-buddhas can attain liberation from the afflictions of greed, aversion, and delusion, but the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas attain complete free-
dom from all obscurations whatsoever, and their cognitions are totally free of all afflictions and knowable objects. The perfected view of reality (4) is hidden from the pratyeka-buddhas by the veil of jñeyāvaraṇa, the "covering of the knowable." They may attain liberation, but cannot attain omniscience like the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, whose knowledge is perfected. Omniscience (sarvatā-jñāta), as the Yogācāras conceive it, should not be construed as complete knowledge of all things, but rather as direct insight into their true nature. Thus the Bodhisattva does not, for instance, know the names of all plants and animals, but has a perfected knowledge akin to that conceived by Spinoza rather than the kind imagined by unphilosophical minds. He may or may not know names, dates, facts, etc., but the core of his insight is an existential awareness of their true nature and a complete knowledge of whatever is conducive to enlightenment. His awareness is free of afflictions, passions, all subjective biases, all dualities and obscurations, and he experiences reality directly as it truly is (yathā-bhūta). The Bodhisattva realizes that all dharmas and pudgalas have no independent self, and that ultimately they cannot legitimately have any qualities ascribed to them. This does not imply that they do not
exist, but that their existence is completely dependent upon their being known, and they cannot exist apart from being known.\textsuperscript{56}

Being is whatever is determined to have essential nature solely by virtue of verbal designation (praṇāptivāda svabhāva), and as such is clung to by the worldly... for ordinary beings, this notion of being is the root of all discursive thought (vikalpa) and conceptual proliferation (prapañca).\textsuperscript{57}

Ordinary beings think that whatever is can be named, and they cannot comprehend the idea that something can be inexpressible, but the Bodhisattva realizes that both names and things arise simultaneously, and that neither can function without the other, that "the thought which gives rise to expressions is dependent upon a given thing; and the thought which gives rise to a given thing is dependent upon an expression."\textsuperscript{58}

Ordinary people conceive that things which are not present, and so cannot be named, are not existent. This idea is mistaken, according to Asaṅga, since dharmas do exist (if only as ideations), but their essential nature is inexpressible (nirabhilāpya).\textsuperscript{59} Phenomena, which are composed of dharma-characteristics, are not designatable as either "existent" or "non-existent." Reality is advaya (not-two), and refuses to be determined by mutually exclusive categories.\textsuperscript{60} This is the true middle path which avoids all extremes, which is the way the Bodhi-
sattva views reality - he sees reality as it is without the obscurations of labels or designations of any sort whatsoever.  

He cultivates praśñā, which is the great means (mahān upāya) for reaching enlightenment. The Bodhisattva should not be content with merely seeking the nirvāṇa of the pratyeka-buddhas, but he also should not disparage it or be frightened of it. He recognizes the validity of the pratyeka-buddhas' spiritual path, but is also aware of its limitations, which are only overcome by the incomparable path of the Mahāyāna, and so he remains equable toward the pratyeka-buddhas and firmly rooted in his conviction of śūnyatā.

If he should weary his mind with the aspects of saṁsāra, anitya, and so forth...that Bodhisattva would very quickly enter Parinirvāṇa. But the Bodhisattva thus entering very quickly into Parinirvāṇa would mature neither the Buddhadharmas nor the sentient beings. Again, how would he become awakened to the Incomparable Perfect Enlightenment?

The Bodhisattva is not tempted by nirvāṇa, nor is he frightened by it, but sees it as void and not worth the effort involved in striving for it, and so he cultivates his insight, develops the perfections of wisdom and leads suffering beings toward praśñā. He realizes that all things are equal, and that all are śūnya, including nirvāṇa, and thus he knows that no thing is any more desireable than any other thing, and
in this way he overcomes all attachments, even to nir-
vāṇa, and so attains perfect equanimity, and, "seeing
everywhere sameness (samata), his mind likewise, he at-
tains to supreme equanimity (paramā pekešām)." 66

In the Bodhisattvabhūmi tathata is equated with
samata (sameness of essential nature) 67 - it is this
insight which leads to the actualization of higher
awareness. Because of his intuition of samata, the
Bodhisattva following the middle way does not imagine
any dharma, no longer produces vikalpa (discursive
thought) or kalpana (constructive ideation), and as a
result he experiences only tathata rather than dharm-
as. 68 He applies himself to mastering all the vidya-
sthanas, the professional skills of the Bodhisattva:
(1) Buddhist philosophy, (2) logic, (3) grammar, (4)
medicine, and (5) technical arts and crafts; having ac-
quired knowledge of these he is better equipped to rid
sentient beings of false views and to lead them toward
release from concepts. Maintaining firm conviction in
his guiding insight that everything is śūnya he cannot
be led away from the truth of the Mahāyāna, and is nei-
ther attracted nor repelled by anything, but steadfast-
ly adheres to the middle view. 69 He attempts to aid
sentient beings, not for glory or material gain, but
from selfless concern for other suffering beings. He
freely gives of his knowledge, material goods, etc., because he has no attachments and seeks only to bring other beings to Perfect Awareness. He is restrained in body and speech, avoids all sins, and is naturally good, quick to forgive and slow to anger. He develops the four necessary attitudes of: (1) maitri (love or friendliness), (2) karuna (compassion), (3) mudita (sympathetic joy), and (4) upeksa (equanimity), and seeks to expand his scope for these feelings until they include all beings.

With the paramita of giving the Bodhisattva aids others and works for them and supports them. The meaning of sīla is that he does not do harm to others; ksānti means that he forgives wrongs done to him by others; by means of vīrya he increases his merits; by means of dhyāna he descends and sets things in motion by means of his transcendent faculties, etc.; by means of prajñā he is able to give good advice which delivers others. With the paramita of upāya-kausalya which is the result of the transformation he experiences with mahābodhi, he can make his āna, etc., unceasing. With the paramita of prāṇidhāna he welcomes everything which is favorable to the paramitās, and so one operates constantly in dāna, etc., strongly desiring the arising of enlightenment in all sentient beings.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Lord: 'Enlightenment,' that is a synonym of emptiness, of Suchness, of the reality-limit, of the realm of Dharma. Moreover 'enlightenment' is Suchness, without falsehood, unaltered Suchness, unaltered non-existence; therefore it is called 'enlightenment.' Moreover enlightenment is a mere word...an undifferentiated object. It belongs to the Buddhas, the Lords; therefore it is called 'enlightenment.'

Subūti: How can the Lord say that full enlightenment is hard to win, when there is no one who can win enlightenment? For, owing to the emptiness of all dharmas, no dharma exists that would be able to win enlightenment. All dharmas are empty...that dharma which would be enlightened in full enlightenment, and that which should be enlightened, and that which would cognize the enlightenment, and that which should cognize it, all these dharmas are empty. In this manner I am inclined to think that full enlightenment is easy to win, not hard to win.

The Lord: Because it cannot possibly come about, is full enlightenment hard to win, because in reality it is not there, because it cannot be discriminated, because it has not been fabricated as a false appearance."

Prajñāpāramitā-astadasāsahasrikā-sūtra LXV, f.611.

IV The Reinterpretation of Śūnyatā by Yogācāra

In the previous sections we have seen how the Mādhyamikas interpreted the concept of śūnyatā, and how Mādhyamika philosophy utilizes śūnya as a way to destroy all possible theories and concepts as attempts to describe reality. The purpose of this method, as stated in Mādhyamika treatises, is to produce an awareness of 'the way things really are.' According to the Mādhyamikas, 1 the best upāya for achieving this end is their negative dialectic, which breaks down all theories and concepts. Thus the Mādhyamika dialectic is
primarily negative, and it interprets śūnyatā as a denial that any positive assertion can meaningfully describe reality as it is.\(^2\) The awareness of śūnyatā in all things enables the bodhisattva who is operating in samsāra to avoid becoming attached to it; and, because he sees that everything is empty, he can safely immerse himself in samsāra and remain secure in his adherence to the middle way.

Vasubandhū and Asaṅga, however, take a more positive view of śūnyatā, and view it in positive terms. While they admit that the Mādhyamika view of śūnyatā may have some value in ridding people of attachments to theories and concepts, they also think that the Mādhyamika approach is dangerous, because it can too easily lead people away from madhyamā pratīpad to the extreme of nihilism\(^3\) and a denial of the efficacy of spiritual striving, as well as the possibility of spiritual progress. For this reason the Yogācāras emphasize the importance of śūnyatā as a meditative concept. Meditation is of central importance to Yogācāra (as the name Yogācāra indicates), and the Yogācāra acāryas extoll it as the primary means whereby enlightenment is attained, and downplay the importance of dialectical disputation.\(^4\) Meditation, for the Yogācāras, is the most effective means of reaching
praṇā, and the main problem with the Madhyamika method as they see it seems to be that the Madhyamikas emphasize praṇā while neglecting meditation, which is the necessary means for attaining praṇā.5

This chapter will examine how Vasubandhu and Asaṅga conceive of śūnyatā, and in what ways their conception is similar to, and how it is different from, that of the Madhyamikas; and how awareness of sunyata is important for the bodhisattva following madhyamā pratipad. Śūnyatā, according to the Yogācāras, acts as a corrective to views and attitudes which deviate from madhyamā pratipad, as it keeps the bodhisattva from becoming attached to things, and also keeps him from becoming detached from samsāra and his task of helping suffering ideation-series to reach enlightenment.6 Because the Yogācāra upāyas aim at producing ideation-series which are neither attached to, nor completely removed from, the phenomenal world, the Yogācāras present their upāyas in positive formulations, to emphasize that there can be actual spiritual progress, that the Buddhist path actually leads to a positive goal.7

For this reason, the Yogācāra acaryas present even śūnyatā in positive terms. śūnyatā does not imply, as the Madhyamikas assert,8 that all things are
nihsvabhāva (devoid of own-nature), but rather that they have an inexpressible nature, which can be known but not described. Furthermore, śūnyatā is not a statement that things are neither existent nor non-existent, but implies that things are both existent and non-existent - they are existent in that they have an inexpressible nature, but non-existent in that all designations and conceptualizations of it are false.

The Bodhisattva, according to the Yogaśāra acar-yas, is a being who has fully understood the inexpressible inherent nature (nirabhilāpya-svabhāvata) of all dharmas, that "whatever is a designation for the individual characteristics, for example 'form,' 'feeling,' or the other personality aggregates...that should be understood as only a designation (prajñāpti-mātram)." A designation is neither the inherent nature of a dharma, nor is it wholly other. This is the philosophical reasoning of the Middle Path by which the Bodhisattva reaches awareness of the inexpressible nature of reality, and such cognition is possible only when all discursive thought has been brought to rest. The designations of things are merely ideas which lead to subjective interpretations and biases - they cannot be the true nature of things,
since they are open to being perceived differently by different people. What appears pleasant to one is painful to another, and what is neutral to one occasions a strong reaction in another because there is no inherent nature which is fixed and determined, or all things would be seen in the same way, nor could they appear differently at different times to different people. Things neither have an essential nature which a name expresses, nor do they acquire a nature by being named.

Suppose that just prior to the attaching of a verbal designation, that dharma and that given thing should be identical with the designation. This being the case, even without the verbal designation 'form,' the idea of form would occur whenever there was a dharma with the name 'form.' But such does not occur.

Now, through employing reasoning like this, one should understand that the essential nature of all dharmas is inexpressible, i.e., completely beyond the reach of expression. And one should understand that just as with regard to form, so with feelings, etc., as previously expounded, even up to Nirvana itself.

This is the point where the Yogacara conception of śūnyatā begins to diverge from Mādhyamika's, because Asaṅga asserts that although all phenomena are merely verbal designations, they arise from a substratum, since without a substratum the idea that objects come into existence at all is unintelligible (nopapadyate). The Mādhyamika conclusion that śūnyatā implies that phenomena arise from nowhere and
return to nowhere is philosophically unsatisfactory because it fails to make sense of our everyday experience, and, moreover, is antithetical to spiritual development because it leaves one firmly mired in nihilism. The Yogācāras claim to overcome this by providing a consistent explanation for the arising of phenomena, utilizing the concept of śūnyatā in such a way that it leads to awareness of the true nature of things. Thus Vasubandhu and Asaṅga developed a school of thought which provides a philosophical explanation of reality, and more importantly, a spiritual path which leads to freedom from all concepts and explanations.

According to Asaṅga, the Ultimate Awareness is based on the intuition that reality is, in its essence, inexpressible, that to hold that things exist is "exaggerating" (samārpana), and to hold that they are non-existent is "minimizing" (apavada). A true conception would entail the realization that there is a substratum which is the base of things, but that its true nature eludes verbal categorization, being outside the realm of what can be named. This substratum is what makes cognition (however distorted) and naming possible at all. Asaṅga criticizes both the "outsiders" i.e., the adherents of the or-
thodox Hindu darśanas, who misunderstand the true nature of reality, and the "insiders" i.e., the Mādhyamikas, who wrongly conceive śūnyatā as denying the existence of things, as well as the substratum which they arise from. Vasubandhu echoes this thought in MV 13.3:

This our definition of the principle of voidness is the only right one. According to it one part of the Elements of existence are not ultimate realities, but the other, the part which remains after the deduction of the first, is absolutely real. Both the definitions of the Mādhyamika and the Sarvāstivāda, on the other hand, are wrong definitions. The first maintains that not a single element is real, the second that everything really exists. The consequence of both these definitions would be to make impossible the principle of voidness itself. Indeed if we with the Mādhyamika declare that not a single element is real, that there is no such particular thing which we could characterize as the real thing which is devoid, then there can also be no general principle of voidness, because indeed a general principle is dependent on the reality of particular things...24

This statement and part III of Asanga's "Tattvārtha" chapter in the BB25 indicate that Yogācāra is not the subjective idealism which many scholars try to make it.26 Shcherbatsky, for instance, in his notes to the previously quoted passage from the MV, states that the thing-in-itself which remains does so only on the level of paratantra, and is transcended in the ultimate awareness of parinīspanna, which is not stated or even implied in the passage.
Shcherbatsky goes on to state that the passage implies that the *yogin* is able to perceive both worlds simultaneously, which is not borne out either by his translation or the original Sanskrit, which literally states:

> Everything is non-existent and everything exists are wrong definitions of *śūnyatā*, because then *śūnyatā* would not exist. If there is this deficiency in *śūnyatā*, then *śūnyatā* is not possible, because the appearance of a quality depends on the existence of *śūnyatā*. 

This thought is also expressed by *MV* 1.2, which states:

> Therefore, all phenomena are determined to be neither (completely) empty, nor (completely) non-empty, (Because) there is being and non-being, and also being, and this is the Middle Path.

Vasubandhu comments:

> All phenomena are empty because they arise from nothingness and are the result of constructive ideation; and all are non-empty because there is no difference (*dvaya*) between the perceiver and what is perceived, since all constructed things are declared to be the same as constructive ideation (*abhūta-parikalpita*), and constructive ideation (in its essence) is devoid of all constructs; it cannot be named or delineated. Constructive ideation exists, but in this existence there is no duality, because constructive ideation is *śūnyatā*, and so the doctrine of *abhūtaparikalpita* is the true middle way.

The foregoing passages make it clear that Vasubandhu does not assert that there is no basis for ideas, but rather that they arise from a substratum which in its essence is indescribable.
stratum of reality is empty of all qualities, but this emptiness itself must exist in order for appearances to be possible. Yogācāra is not a subjective idealism, as is often assumed, since it postulates a basis of ideation.

The Yogācāra acāryas assert that all named and conceptualized things are a distortion of the true nature of the substratum of reality, which cannot be described or delineated in any way. The fact that Yogācāra texts state only that this substratum exists but do not attempt to describe it is probably the reason why this important concept has been glossed over or explained away by some scholars who have written about Yogācāra. The bulk of the BB and MV are devoted to refuting wrong views of the nature of reality and outlining the path to attaining the Ultimate Awareness, but both texts remain virtually silent regarding the nature of the substratum of reality, except to state that it "comprises the true nature of all dharmas."

The Bodhisattva who has attained the highest awareness realizes that names are purely of an imaginary nature (parikalpita), but that the vastu (given thing) does exist as paratantra (relative nature). The vastu exists relatively, dependent on causes and
conditions, and so is impermanent, but the unnameable, indescribable basis, which exists on the level of parinispanna (ultimate truth), is held by both Vasubandhu and Asaṅga to be necessary for the arising of objects at all.  

In section III of the "Tattvārtha" chapter Asaṅga denies what he considers to be a misapprehension of śūnyatā which implies that only names exist and not things, and he states that if there were no basis for designations phenomena could not occur at all.

According to those (who misunderstand śūnyatā) the given thing itself, which is the foundation for designations, is lacking. But if this were so, no designations would occur at all! How should reality, then, come to be solely designation?

There is a mutual dependence of names and things - neither can exist in its own right.  

Thus one should not suppose that the Mahāyāna teaching of śūnyatā implies that vastus do not exist, since a total denial of paratantra prevents one from ever arriving at the true nature of reality, because such a denial leaves one totally mired in nihilism. Thus, according to Asaṅga, the Mādhyamika doctrine of two truths is insufficient as a soteriological device, since the relative existence of paratantra must be asserted in order for one to be able to transcend it in parinispanna. Thus on one level of reality
things are wholly false, or are only relatively true, and in the highest understanding both these relative standpoints are transcended. Thus Vasubandhu and Asaṅga reject the Mādhyamika conception of śūnyatā, since the Mādhyamikas:

...deny both these two, reality as well as designation. One should understand that the denial of both reality and designation is the position of the chief nihilist (pradhāna nāstika). Because his views are like this, the nihilist is not to be spoken with and not to be associated with by those intelligent ones (vijñā) who live the pure life (brahma-cārin). Such a one, i.e., the nihilist, brings disaster even unto himself, and worldly ones who follow his view also fall into misfortune. In connection with this, the Lord has declared:

Indeed, better it is for a being to have the view of a "person" than for one to have wrongly conceptualized voidness.

...Voidness is only logical when one thing is void of another because of that (other's) absence and because of the presence of the void thing itself. But how and for what reason would the void come to be from universal absence (sarvābhavat, i.e., from complete non-existence)? Hence the conception of voidness these describe is not valid. And therefore, in this manner voidness is wrongly conceptualized. Even where Asaṅga and Vasubandhu state that phenomena are ideation-only, they also state that something gives rise to ideation.

For instance, in the bhāṣya on Asaṅga's MS, Vasubandhu states that in order for the alaya (store consciousness) and the six vijñānas (the dif-
ferent states of *manas* and *pravṛtti*) to operate there must be an external stimulus, and that without one the ideational process cannot begin.\textsuperscript{46} Even when Vasubandhu attacks the idea of external object in the *Viṃsatikā*,\textsuperscript{47} this refers to the idea that the object of consciousness, the perceived datum, is internal, and so there is no sure way to infer from it that it exactly refers to an object. External stimuli are only inferrable, and what one directly perceives is only one's own cognition, determined and colored by one's own particular psychic "seeds" (*Liṅga*),\textsuperscript{48} which cause an object to be seen as it appears. As *Karmasiddhiprakārana-tīkā* 214.3 states:

> Consciousness and feelings, etc., do not arise unless mutually present. Thus, if there is consciousness at this time, there will be contact, etc., without a doubt. And if these (other) factors do not exist, then consciousness, alone, does not exist.\textsuperscript{49}

In keeping with his avowed aim of elucidating the true middle way, Vasubandhu consistently avoids the extreme of subjective idealism, and where a statement seems to imply that ideations have no external basis, he states that this is not the final position,\textsuperscript{50} as in his *Māv* bhasya 1.3, which states:

> *Vijñāna* arises as the appearances of mental constructions (*vijñāpti*), sentient beings, and
objects, (but) its objects are non-existent, and in their absence, it also is non-existent.

Vasubandhu comments:

The appearance of self is afflicted thinking arising from the delusion of self, etc. The appearance of ideations is only the six vijñānas, and is not the object of them; and from these arise the appearances of "objects," "beings," and from these false appearances arise the appearances of self and ideations. What arises from this is nothing real, (but) if there are no real external objects, then it is unintelligible that there could be a separate consciousness, and consciousness is only fixed, unreal imagination. But the existence of this imagination as such indicates that consciousness is not fixed.\(^5\)\(^1\)

Vasubandhu goes on to state that if external objects were totally non-existent, there could be neither bondage to them, nor final release, and thus it is clear that Vasubandhu is not, as Sumatiśīla suggests, a "maintainer that the knowable exists within," nor is Yogācāra philosophy a subjective idealism, since, although it does state that all objects are śūnya, our perceptions of objects in some indefinable way point to something beyond appearances.\(^5\)\(^2\)

In order for a thing to be śūnya, it must be present in some way, or the assertion that it is śūnya would make no sense (i.e., there must be something which is śūnya). Those who assert the non-existence of all things misunderstand the true nature of real-
ity.\textsuperscript{53} One can deny the reality of a self-existent entity, but cannot deny the non-self-existent entity, i.e., paratantra.\textsuperscript{54} According to the Yogācāras, voidness (śūnyatā) does exist\textsuperscript{55} - things cannot exist in themselves, since they arise only in dependence on causes and conditions, but to deny that they do not exist at all is absurd. Thus the follower of the Middle Path neither "exaggerates" the true nature of reality (by stating that things exist), nor does he "minimize" it (by denying the existence of things), and so he neither affirms nor denies their existence completely, because he knows that a thing can exist (in the broadest sense of the term) in such a way that it is neither totally existent nor totally non-existent.\textsuperscript{56} The true nature of things is not characterizable in these terms, and so the Bodhisattva is not troubled by non-existence nor attached to existence.\textsuperscript{57} Things, properly understood, no longer bind one to passions or wrong views, and by cultivating this attitude one attains equanimity - realizing the distorting character of names, the Bodhisattva abandons them and the distorting ideas which go along with them, and so becomes a muni, a "silent sage," and he meditates on nothing at all.\textsuperscript{58} He no longer requires any meditational objects at all, since he has realized
their true nature as śūnyatā, and so he exists in a state of pure awareness, unaffected by names and forms, and only resorts to these conventions of ordinary reality in order to free sentient beings from their bondage to concepts and their misconceptions concerning the true nature of things.

Since all dharmas have thus inexpressible essential nature, why is expression applicable at all? Verily, because without expression, the inexpressible true nature could not be told to others, nor heard by others. And if it were neither spoken nor heard, then the inexpressible essential nature could not become known. Therefore, expression is applicable for producing knowledge through hearing.

The Bodhisattva relates to phenomena as being merely names which designate a group of connected characteristics, but he is not, however, a subjective idealist because he recognizes that there is an inexpressible basis of perception. The concept of śūnyatā as conceived by the Yōcācāras thus has two aspects: (1) it is grāhya-grāhakābhāva, a statement of the ultimate non-reality of subject and object, and (2) it is tasya ca svabhāva, the ultimate reality which is their base. Asaṅga clearly states the Yōcācāra conception of śūnyatā in Part II of "On Knowing Reality":

How is voidness rightly conceptualized? Wherever and in whatever place something is not, one rightly observes that (place) to be void of that (thing). Moreover, whatever remains in that place one knows (prajanati) as it really is, that 'here
there is an existent.'...When one knows both those as they really are - namely, that there is just a given thing and there is just a designation for just a given thing - then he neither affirms the existence of what is nonexistent nor denies the existent of what is existent. He neither makes it in excess nor makes it in deficiency. He neither minimizes nor adds.

And when he knows Suchness, as it really is, with its inexpressible essential nature, this is called 'voidness rightly conceptualized,' and called 'well-discerned right insight.' By this means and others consistent with demonstration-and-proof reasoning, he will come to judge that the essential nature of all dharmas is inexpressible.63

According to the Yogācāras, the Bodhisattva following madhyamā pratipad neither affirms nor denies totally, since the true nature of things does not fit either of these two extremes.64 Rather, the true nature of things lies outside the scope of what is describable.65 Madhyamā pratipad is also intrinsically inexpressible; it must be followed rather than discussed, and it results in a non-discursive intuition of the highest truth.66

The Path to this intuition involves four studies (paryēṣapā), which lead to four accurate cognitions (parijñāna): 67 (1) nāmaparyēṣapā - name study, which leads to accurate coignition of the nature of names (n (namaisanāgata) - having studied the nature of names the Bodhisattva realizes that a name as applied to an object is only a designation, a mode of viewing it, or a metaphorical expression.68 If the name, e.g., table,
were not applied to the object called table no one would recognize it as table, and so the Bodhisattva views all such attempts to express the reality of things in words as doomed to failure. The second study is vastuparyesana - object-study, which leads to the corresponding accurate awareness - having seen that names are merely designations the Bodhisattva realizes that the object is undenotable. The third study is prajñāpti-parysthana, the study of the idea (prajñāpti) of the svabhāva of things, and the corresponding accurate awareness. This stage involves attaining the awareness that designations are only designations, because the "essence" (svabhāva) is merely an illusion, a magic creation, a reflection, an echo, etc. The fourth study is višeṣa-prajñāptiparyesana, the study of the idea of things as qualified by an essence, and the corresponding accurate awareness. In this stage the Bodhisattva considers the qualifications relating to phenomena in light of his awareness of non-duality, that neither existence nor non-existence can be posited of them. Since phenomena are non-denotable, they cannot be said to exist, and for the same reason cannot be held to not exist; what is conventionally thought to be material is not material in actual truth, and when this awareness is applied to
the discussion of all categories the Bodhisattva following the middle path sees that they are, without exception, śūnyāta.\footnote{73}

By realizing the true nature of things he attains to perfect insight and pure equanimity towards all things, and they can no longer affect him either positively or adversely, since he realizes that they are ideation-only (vijñāpti-mātratā),\footnote{74} and so he attains the five advantages of the Bodhisattva (anusāsana):

1. cittaśanti - supreme peace of mind; 2. jñāna-darśana - an unimpaired, clear and pure 'view of knowledge' on every subject; 3. he shows unwearying interest in mankind by continuing the round of rebirths (saṃsārakkēdita) to help suffering beings to free themselves from the pain and suffering of rebirth,\footnote{75} and 4. thus he penetrates to the essence of the mysterious teachings of the Tathāgata (saṃdhīyavacanapaṃveśa);\footnote{76} at this point he cannot be separated (asaṃharya) from his devotion to Mahāyāna because of his independence from things (aparapratyayatā), and he experiences perfect joy in his present life, which destroys bodily and mental fatigue caused by his striving for enlightenment, and because of his unimpaired view of knowledge he perfects the virtues of a Bodhisattva, and because of his perfect grasp of the teachings of the
Tathāgatas he is able to destroy the doubts of other beings less advanced on the Path and lead them to Enlightenment, and he can refute the views of his opponents with unerring accuracy and destroy false views. He is able to relate to any level of understanding and to use the most expedient means to show people how to lead themselves out of their bondage. The position of the Bodhisattva with regard to ordinary beings is similar to that of an adult playing with a small child. Children playing with toys generally imagine that their toys are real, and ascribe real qualities and emotions to them which an adult, having moved beyond a child's understanding, realizes are merely the product of the child's imagination. Thus if the child is playing with a toy horse, for instance, the adult will pretend along with the child that the horse is real, and if it breaks a leg he will commiserate along with the child about the horse's fate, although he realizes that the leg is merely a plastic or wooden leg on a plastic or wooden horse, and that the pain which the child assigns to it is merely imaginary. In the same way the Bodhisattva, when relating to ordinary beings, pretends to agree with their limited view of reality and does not tell them outright that their suffering and bondage are
caused by illusions of their own creation, but rather leads them to a point where they come to realize the truth of things directly for themselves. He knows that from the standpoint of paramārtha the relation of subject and object does not exist at all and that all phenomena are illusions, but when speaking in terms of lower truth there is no contradiction in using its language; although ultimately any distinction between knowledge and its contents is purely arbitrary. As the Pramāṇa-Samuccaya states:

From the standpoint of Tathā there is no difference at all. But hampered as we are by avidyā, we perceive only a refraction of reality. All that we know is only its indirect appearance as differentiated by the construction of a difference between a subject and an object.

The Path of Instruction" of the Bodhisattva consists of preparing himself for this insight, and is composed of three main stages: (1) śīla, the cultivation of morality, which is held by all Buddhist schools to be an absolutely necessary preparation for entering on the spiritual path; (2) samādhi, or absorption in the deepest states of transic meditation, which culminates in (3) prajñā, pure, undefiled insight into the true nature of reality, in which he attains four kinds of knowledge: (a) knowledge that all names are avastuka, groundless, have
(95)

no actual referents, and are thus śūnya; (b) knowledge that all vastus lack svabhāva; (c) knowledge that all svalakṣaṇas (individual characteristics) are without svabhāva and are śūnyatā; and (d) knowledge that all dharmas are constantly arising and ceasing, that they also lack svabhāva and are śūnya.

The Bodhisattva following madhyamā pratipad realizes that names are the root cause of discursive thought, because names make possible conceptualizations, which lead to opinions, attributions, exaggerations, and underestimations. Deluded beings assume that a name captures the essence of a thing, and that things can be known as they are by knowing their designations, and this leads to attachment, desire, and suffering (duḥkha). 88 The Bodhisattva knows, however, that "in designations relating to a given thing there is only the mere semblance of inherent nature." 89 Any designation which purports to represent a thing as it is is merely a mirage, a hallucination, a falsification because in highest truth there is no svabhāva whatsoever to be found in things; reality is advaya, not-two, and any distinctions one makes are only ideational illusions. 90 Through this insight he brings prapanca (conceptual proliferation) to rest, and is no longer attached to, or repelled by, them, no
longer suffers on account of them, and so he ceases circling in samsāra and attains supreme knowledge of reality.\textsuperscript{91} He is completely free of discursive thought, and because he has reached complete awareness of, and mastery over, the ideational process, he attains various perfections,\textsuperscript{92} such as sarvata vāsitāprāpti (mastery of power everywhere). This involves various powers, such as mastery of multiform magical creation (nirvāna) and mastery of multiform transformation (parināma), and knowledge of all knowables, because of which he is able to constitute the world as he wishes; he is fully aware of the dynamics of phenomenal transformations, and so he can create them as he chooses,\textsuperscript{93} and he is able to depart from the world when he wishes. Moreover, he is unwearied by his circling in samsāra or his efforts on behalf of other beings,\textsuperscript{94} and he attains supreme peace of mind and understands the true meaning of all the statements of the Tathāgatas, especially those with "veiled intention"\textsuperscript{95} (samdhāya-vacanāni), and he cannot be led away from his devotion to Mahāyāna.

\textbf{il établit que les Dharma avec leur nature de cause et leur nature de fruit, qu'ils soient d'ordre inférieur ou supérieur, ne sont que des concepts de Grāhya et de Grāhaka... Le Bodhisattva développe le germe du contact avec le Dharma-dhātu; c'est-à-dire qu'il développe l'imprégnation de grande audition (bahuśrutavāsanā) du Grand Véhicule...'Révolutionnant son support: parce
qu'en pénétrant la Tathātā, sa pensée et ses mentaux (cittacaitta) deviennent immaculés (pirmala), ou parce que la Tathātā elle-même est pure. "S'assurant tous les attributs du Buddha; les forces (bala), les assurances (vaiśāradya) et les autres attributs du Buddha. "Il acquiert l'omniscience," c'est-à-dire le savoir immaculé et non-empêché (vimalam apratihataṃ ca jñānam) du Buddha.

Śūnyatā as Upāya

The Yogācāra's interpretation of śūnyatā as implying that things both exist and do not exist does not at first glance appear to be a major divergence from the more negative formulation of the Mādhyamikas (that śūnyatā means that things neither exist nor do not exist). Both are statements asserting that the true nature of things is indeterminate and that it cannot be delineated by words or descriptions, and both Yogācāra and Mādhyamika use śūnyatā as an upāya which enables the Bodhisattva working is samsāra to avoid becoming attached to it. As we have seen, however, the positive slant which the Yogācāras give to the concept of śūnyatā had profound consequences for Yogācāra philosophy, and led to some fairly radical departures from Mādhyamika philosophy (e.g. their postulation of a substratum of reality). It is important to remember, however, that the Yogācāra acāryas do not view śūnyatā as a final statement on the
true nature of reality, but as an upāya, and the main intention of the positive formulation of the Yogācāra acāryas seems to be to free the Bodhisattva from attachments to things, while still maintaining his enthusiasm for his task of working for others' salvations. It would, I imagine, be difficult to hold a great deal of enthusiasm for working for countless aeons$^97$ toward the salvation of beings whose very existence has been disproven, but it is, I think, much easier to conceive of him becoming involved in working for the salvation of beings who have at least an indeterminate form of existence (in the broadest sense of the term), even though in the perfected state (parinispanna) such distinctions as existence and non-existence no longer obtain.

Here again we see an example of how the Yogācāras and the Mādhyamikas differ in their upāyas which lead deluded beings to realization of the highest truth, although they are in agreement concerning the highest truth itself. From the standpoint of highest truth one realizes that any description or name simply does not fit the case - nothing can accurately describe things as they are. Both the Mādhyamikas and Yogācāras see their formulations of śūnyatā as being conducive to enlightenment, but it
is important to note that any formulation is only an upaya whose value is finished when its result is achieved.\textsuperscript{98} In this respect I think that the Yogacaras make the character of their formulations as upayas clearer than do the Madhyamikas. Vasubandhu especially states very clearly in the \textit{NV} (e.g. \textit{NV} III.15 and 23) that his formulations are to be understood as expedients, while this idea is only hinted at in the \textit{MMR}\textsuperscript{99} and obliquely referred to in the \textit{PP}\textsuperscript{100}. I also think that the Madhyamikas take their concept of sunyata far more emphasis on sunyata as a true and final description of the nature of reality.\textsuperscript{101}

On the other hand, in Vasubandhu's discussion of "Realities" (\textit{NV} III), after discussing various ways to overcome wrong views concerning reality, such as the concepts of anatta, sunyata, and the skandhas, he concludes: "It should be borne in mind that skill in these knowledges regarding the concepts "skandhas" etc., up to the concepts "conditioned" and "unconditioned (including sunyata) is all upaya."\textsuperscript{102}

These ideas are not to be taken as being ultimately true, but rather as expedient devices whose value is finished when they have fulfilled their function. The Yogacara acaryas' conception of sunyata is similar to the popular Buddhist metaphor of Buddhist teachings.
being like a raft which one uses to cross from one shore to another across a river. But just as one does not carry the raft on one's back after the other shore is reached, so also one should not cling to teachings and upayas which have served their purpose. As a raft is left behind after the river has been crossed, so also all upāyas, including śūnyatā, are left behind when they are no longer conducive to further spiritual progress.103
CHAPTER FIVE

Realism of phenomena is granted only through name labelling sanctioned by culture; 'realness' is thus dependent on the 'otherness' of that named 'real.' Finally, 'realness' in a semantic reality is that which separates subject from object, that which splits. J.C. Pearce, Exploring the Crack in the Cosmic Egg, p. 72.

The Philosophy of Yogācāra

Yогācāra philosophy is often interpreted as pronouncing a consistently idealistic philosophy. While it is true that many Yogācāra treatises (especially the VNS) do have a decidedly idealistic slant, the Yogācāra acaryas also state that idealism is not the final position of Yogācāra philosophy either. The idealistic doctrines of the Yogācāra acaryas are put forth as a corrective to the extreme view of realism, and the reason why most Yogācāra treatises which deal with this idea (e.g. the VNS and KSP) devote so much space to refuting realism is that it is the most prevalent wrong view, and the one which has the most hold on the most people. Relatively little space is spent discussing the extreme views of nihilism and idealism. Nihilism is held to be antithetical to spiritual development, and idealism is useful in helping one to overcome attachment to realism, but must also be given up once it has served its purpose. To hold any position as being ultimately valid is counterproductive to spiritual progress, since madhyama pratiṣñad entails the rejection of any position, no matter how useful or valid it is at a
certain point in one's spiritual development.\(^5\)

The idealistic upāyas of the Yogācāras are designed to cause ordinary beings to call into question their fundamental assumptions about the nature of the world, to show that one can be completely consistent in interpreting the world as being totally other than it appears. Since adherence to realism is the major stumbling block to spiritual progress in the early stages of development, it must be challenged in a radical way.\(^6\) Because this aspect of Yogācāra philosophy is an important corrective to the basic wrong views (which are based on taking things, e.g. the self, as being real), this chapter will briefly discuss the major aspects of the Yogācāra acaryas' refutation of realism. It should be borne in mind that this is only a brief outline of major aspects of the Yogācāra anti-realist discussions, but hopefully will provide a general idea of the ways in which the Yogācāras assail the realist position, in an attempt to show people who hold to the realist view that even given their premises their position is untenable, in an effort to lead them toward the middle position which avoids all extremes. The Yogācāra writers refute every possible way in which the realist can defend his position, and show in great detail that reality can be shown to be
other than it appears. 7

The idealistic philosophy of Yogācāra focuses on vijnāna, which is present in all cognitive states. 8
No cognition of any kind can exist without vijnāna as a base, 9 and so the Yogācāras are especially concerned with demonstrating the creative faculty of consciousness, to show that even our ordinary experience shows that consciousness is capable of creating and structuring reality. 10

The Yogācāra acāryas found the basis for this conclusion in a careful analysis of the workings of consciousness. Consciousness, in the idealistic passages of Yogācāra writings, is held to be the sole reality because it is causa sui and not dependent on anything external to itself; 11 it has absolute self-existence while objects must necessarily be revealed by consciousness. 12 Furthermore, consciousness is always consciousness of something, and since we never experience anything apart from consciousness Vasu Landhu concludes that consciousness and its apparent objects are one and the same. 13 If two things are always found together (i.e., if there are no instances of one occurring without the other) we must conclude that they are two aspects of the same thing, 14 as with smoke and fire. Since smoke cannot occur without fire,
when we see smoke we can conclude that fire is or was present, and in the same way when we perceive an object we can conclude that consciousness is present, since we could not be aware of the object without consciousness.  

The Absolute (consciousness) and the dependent are neither the same nor different — the one can be seen only in the other.

Whatever appears in experience is only in experience; everything we perceive is some form of consciousness. A blue object, for instance, is consciousness characterized with an awareness of blue, and a sensation of heat or light is consciousness having the characteristics of heat or light. According to the Yogācāras whatever is, is subjective, though it appears to possess an objective existence of its own independent of a perceiver. This view is in sharp contrast to the realistic epistemology of Śaṅkara, who holds that consciousness only reveals objects as they are and does not distort them, as light reveals objects to our sight but does not change the objects by illuminating them. Śaṅkara sees consciousness as a purely diaphanous entity which merely allows sensations of real objects to pass through it without any subjective distortion or interpretation (at least in the original perception).
The Yogācāras reject this view, and state that acts of consciousness are the only reality and that objects are created from it. Consciousness is pure act and is not conditioned by anything outside itself. Consciousness is self-motivating and self-legislative, as are Fichte's idea of Pure Ego or Hegel's idea of Reason. Like Pure Ego and Reason, viññāna contains and creates both categories and the objects for which the categories function. The Yogācāra conception of viññāna differs from Fichte's and Hegel's absolute principles in that it is seen as essentially above reason and non-dual (advaya), while the other two principles are grounded in reason and admit the duality of subject and object.

For Yogācāra philosophy objects and consciousness of objects are identical. Objects have no separate existence apart from consciousness, since their existence consists solely in being perceived by consciousness, and so consciousness and objects cannot be spoken of as distinct. In perception we only know objects as perceived; we can never cognize an unperceived state. For this reason the Yogācāras reject the realist contention that consciousness and objects are distinct and that consciousness is purely receptive. To prove his hypothesis the realist would have to show
an instance where an object exists apart from consciousness of it; he would have to "know an object when it is not known." As Vasubandhu states:

Based on the mind consciousness the five consciousnesses (of the senses) manifest themselves in concomitance with the objective world. Sometimes the senses manifest themselves together, and sometimes not, just as waves are dependent on water.

Matter is merely an abstraction, an unnecessary impediment added to the contents of our consciousness, which is independent of its objects. Furthermore, consciousness operates according to its own laws and is not dependent on objects - the relation between cause and effect operates only between moments of consciousness. The momentum of one moment propels the creative faculty forward toward the next moment.

As a result of various ideations which serve as seeds, different transformations take place. The revulsion-energy of these ideations gives rise to all sorts of discriminations.

Vasubandhu and Maitreya conclude that consciousness and its objects are neither exactly the same nor are they different. This is held to be true madhyama pratipad, and rejects Nāgārjuna's contention in the MMK that all reality is completely empty. For Nāgārjuna madhyama pratipad means refusing to think of ultimate reality (paramārtha satya) in terms of either sat (existent) or asat (non-existent). Maitreya thinks
that this is an extreme view which as such should be rejected. \textit{sūnyatā} (which is the true nature of param-ārtha satya) is both existent and non-existent - existent in that it constitutes the real being of phenomena, but non-existent in that in it the subject-object duality does not obtain.\textsuperscript{36}

For Vasubandhu \textit{sūnyatā} is the essential nature of \textit{vijñāna}.\textsuperscript{37} Spiritual progress is possible because the unreal imagination (\textit{abhūta parikalpa}) exists, but salvation would be impossible if only the unreal imagination existed without a ground.\textsuperscript{38} Unless we first admit ignorance as a wrong assumption of the existence of phenomena spiritual questing (as progressive elimination of ignorance and attainment of enlightenment) becomes impossible, since there would be no difference between the state of ignorance and the state of enlightenment.\textsuperscript{39} Vasubandhu sees enlightenment as a process of gradually removing the veil of ignorance to reveal the light of ultimate reality.\textsuperscript{40} \textit{sūnyatā} exists in the unreal imagination (\textit{abhūtaparikalpa}), where it provides the support of meditation and makes enlightenment possible. Unlike Nāgārjuna, Vasubandhu sees this progress as positive,\textsuperscript{41} as moving from a state of ignorance to one of true realization, whereas for Nāgārjuna it is neither positive nor negative, existent
nor non-existent.\textsuperscript{42}

Vasubandhu contends that enlightenment is becoming aware, through spiritual discipline, of the true nature of one's own mind.\textsuperscript{43} As the Anguttara-Nikāya states:

This consciousness is luminous, it is freed from adventitious defilements. The instructed ariyan disciple understands this as it really is. Therefore I say that for him there is mental development.\textsuperscript{44}

Yogācāra, like all schools of Buddhism, sees enlightenment as the ultimate goal of its teachings and practice.\textsuperscript{45} It is possible, however, to overemphasize this aspect of Yogācāra and ignore other important aspects of its teachings. A noted scholar who has succumbed to this temptation is Edward Conze, who holds that enlightenment is the overwhelming concern of Yogācāra teachings, beside which all other concerns are insignificant. Meditation on objects as false thought-constructions is a preliminary stage in overcoming attachment to them, and this process, according to Conze, is a "withdrawal from all external objective supports (śālambana), both through the increasing introversion of transic meditation and through the advance to the higher stages of a Bodhisattva's career when, no longer tied to an object he acts out of the free spontaneity of his inner being."\textsuperscript{46}
While spiritual practices do form an important part of Yogācāra teachings, these teachings are generally aimed at the unenlightened or skeptical person, one who needs to be convinced of the truth of the Yogācāra position, since the enlightened person has no need of its teachings. In addition to offering a spiritual path, Yogācāra is also very much a philosophy. Conze further states that Yogācāra's extensive refutations of other systems are "superfluous," since its essence "lies in mystical realization." This is a gross oversimplification and ignores the complexities of Yogācāra philosophy and the motives behind it. The Yogācāra acāryas attempt to provide an intelligible and consistent interpretation of reality and to convince unbelievers and skeptics that "reality is not as it appears." The Yogācāras propound a philosophy which makes intelligible the true nature of phenomenal reality in terms of ultimate reality. As a philosophy, Yogācāra must be able to produce cogent arguments to establish the truth of its position in contradistinction to others. Buddhism asserts that nirvāṇa is immanent in samsāra, and so any Buddhist philosophy which is concerned with nirvāṇa must also be valid (if only relatively) in samsāra.

An example of this concern is the Trisūkā-vijñāp-
ti-matrata\textsuperscript{51} of Vasubandhu, which is an attempt to demonstrate that there is no such thing as a material object, that only ideas exist. Vasubandhu's method is to provide an intellectually comprehensible explanation for how reality can be completely different from how it appears, to lead those who hear his words to a supra-intellectual understanding of ultimate reality. He does not deny the existence of sensible qualities as such, but denies the existence of an independent material substance which they arise from.\textsuperscript{52} The concept of object adds nothing to the content of our experience, and is, moreover, an illegitimate imposition on it. Whether or not objects exist is fundamentally unimportant, since all we ever know are our ideas of objects.\textsuperscript{53} We can never know things in themselves (except in the highest states of mystical awareness of the true nature of reality), only the way in which they appear to us, which are distorted by perspective and by the senses, which provide only a limited perspective.\textsuperscript{54} Vasubandhu thinks\textsuperscript{55} that we should not conceive of ourselves as having perceptions of a thing, but only as having perceptions. The world exists only in our own minds, and only as constituted by our minds, as a collection of sensations, which are necessarily relative, limited, and so a distortion of "real" reality (tatha-
When we realize that the world we held to be real exists only in our own minds, attachment to it will cease, since it will lose its compelling character, and liberation will result.

_Praṇātī_ (the supposed material substance from which impressions arise) is known to be _śūnyatā_, because it comprises basic non-existence, and also absence of anything (in itself)." 

Vasubandhu comments:

The characteristic of _parikalpita_ is that it is non-existent because it lacks any _prakāra_ (content) whatsoever, and so is only the emptiness of that. The characteristic of _paratantra_ is that it is not as it seems, but still is not completely non-existent, though empty of any definable characteristic. _Śūnyatā_ is the characteristic of _parinispamana_, because its very nature (_svabhāva_ ) is _śūnyatā_, and it is the emptiness of any (semblance of) _prakāra_.

In examining the operations of consciousness Vasubandhu also finds a hermeneutical problem which is subsequent to original perception. In addition to distortions and inaccuracies in original perceptions we also distort perceptions in our interpretations of them. Different beings perceive the same thing in different ways. Men looking at a river may see it as a river which they can use for drinking and bathing, while "hungry ghosts" (_pretas_) see it as a river of pus and excrement because of retribution for their former deeds, and beings in higher realms of existence free of subject-object duality see pure
space. In the same way, one man may perceive a woman as an object of desire, while her father sees the same woman as the daughter he loves paternally; a son sees the same woman as the mother he loves in a different way, while a hungry lion sees a potential meal, and a sage sees only a deluded being who is suffering and fettered by false notions of ego and self-existence of the phenomenal world. From a standpoint of ultimate reality we realize that the interpretations we made were purely subjective ideations, and that while the subject-object distinction is wholly unreal the mind and the mental states it has imposed on viññāṇa are real in a relative sense, as constructions of viññāṇa, and are only unreal when seen from a viewpoint of awareness of parinisspanna.

It may seem absurd, or at least highly unlikely, to postulate that the world we perceive and apparently interact with all the time could be a huge cosmic illusion, that the things we perceive with our senses are not actually present in a surrounding environment. How could the world we concretely experience by smell, touch, taste, sight, and hearing actually not exist? Vasubandhu answers this objection by describing instances where consciousness can be seen to be purely creative. In the MV Vasubandhu shows that this hy-
pothesis is not as far fetched as it appears at first, since in dream states we do create a world independent of empirical perception which operates according to its own rules. Dream-realities are pure constructions of consciousness in which things appear to us as real, but are seen as unreal when we awake.\textsuperscript{65} In the same way, the appearance of empirical reality is shown to be equally unreal when we awake to insight into the true nature of consciousness, which in its pristine state is pure and unafflicted by phenomena.\textsuperscript{66}

Vasubandhu further points out\textsuperscript{67} that we create illusions even in our waking state which are shown to be false when the conditions creating them are dispelled. An example cited by Vasubandhu is the rope-snake illusion, where we superimpose the image of a snake on a piece of rope. As in the dream state, when we become aware of the true nature of what we perceived the illusion is dispelled and we perceive the reality underlying apparent reality.

One reaches the awareness of the bringing to rest of signs by (understanding) the non-contrariness (aviparyasa) of appearances. And by (seeing) the non-contrariness of meaning, one understands the right knowledge of signs. By non-contrariness in mental states one overcomes the elements of the contrary attitudes. By concentration on non-contrariness one grasps well the arising of signs. By non-contrariness in signs (svalakṣaṇa) one actualizes (bhavati) the Path which is the corrective to vikalpa (conceptual thought). By non-contrariness in universal characteristics one
understands the nature of alleviation. By non-contrariness in mental states, (not seeing them as) "impure" or "pure," there arises the state where there is neither removal nor non-removal of the obstructions. By non-contrariness in seeing them as adventitious ( aggiantuka, i.e., non-essential), one knoweth affliction and alleviation as they are (vathabhūta). By this non-contrariness (in viewing reality) one reaches nirvāṇa here and now.68

The previous examples (rope-snake illusion and dreams), according to Vasubandhu, show that consciousness can exist by itself, and can generate the contents of its states by its own inner potentiality (svaśakti) or creative power.69 Furthermore,70 consciousness is self-determining and is ruled by its own laws of development; it is also causa sui, and creates in itself its objects of experience.71 Candrakīrti and Śāntideva object to this idea72 and contend that without an object the knowing consciousness cannot function; if an object is not real it cannot be known. Citta73 is empty and cannot cognize itself - it must have something to cognize, and mere form or idea cannot provide this content. Citta cannot be known and known at the same time without being two, and it cannot act on itself, just as an axe cannot cut itself and a television cannot watch itself.

The Yogācāra reply to this objection74 is that consciousness has to know itself since there is nothing else that can be known. Objects have no existence of
their own - consciousness creates from itself illusory others and opposes them to itself, and becomes aware of itself by dispelling this illusion. As the Buddha states in the Visuddhi-magga:

This, Vaccha, does the Tathāgata know - the nature of form, and how form arises, and how form perishes; the nature of sensation, and how sensation arises, and how sensation perishes; the nature of perception, and how perception arises, and how perception perishes; the nature of the predispositions, and how the predispositions arise, and how the predispositions perish; the nature of consciousness, and how consciousness arises, and how consciousness perishes... the Tathāgata has attained deliverance and is free from attachment, inasmuch as all imaginings, or agitations, or false notions concerning the ego have perished, have faded away, have ceased, have been given up and extinguished.

Vasubandhu states that the basis of our false constructions is real. This is abhūta-parikalpa, the transcendent, dynamic stream of consciousness which creates all phenomena in itself. All relations are in it and it is real, though non-conceptual. For the Mādhyamikas, however, both the given thing-in-itself and abhūta-parikalpa are relative to each other - one cannot exist without the other. Furthermore, both are conditioned, and thus are śūnya; both the thing-in-itself and the categories of consciousness are vikalpa, conceptual constructions. The Mādhyamikas also state that texts taught by Buddha stating that consciousness is the sole reality (e.g. the Visuddhimagga) are merely neyārtha, secondary in import, and not paramārtha, of
ultimate importance. Yoqācāra philosophy accepts the existence of something (vijñāna) and denies the existence of objects, and so is not the true position of Buddha, madhyamā pratipāda, the middle position. According to the Yoqācāra thinkers, however, the objects of consciousness are indeed conditioned, but reality as such would be unintelligible without a basis which is unconditioned and from which conditioned realities arise. 80

Dreams are the basis for Vasubandhu’s establishing his idealism as grasping the true intention of Buddha’s teaching. The dream world, according to Vasubandhu, 81 is a correlate of our waking consciousness - it is a world unto itself and is consistent within its own laws. It is not superimposed on the real world as in mistaken perception or illusion, but is a projection and creation of consciousness without direct reference to the external world. 82 Objectivity is present in dreams, but only as an idea; the apparent reality of dreams is not derived from concrete objective reality, but merely from an idea of objectivity. 83 Śaṅkara states, however, that dreams are based on former perceptions of the external world. 84 New things are not created in dreams, but the already perceived contents of consciousness are perceived in new interpretations and combinations. 85 Vasubandhu replies 86
to this objection by stating that dreams are an exact correlate of the waking state, and that dreams show that consciousness can create its own contents of perception and can project them as objective, which shows that objectification is a function of consciousness. Also, an object can never be experienced apart from consciousness of it, and consciousness can create its own content, even in the absence of real objects. Consciousness is not transparent and passive, but self-luminous and creative.

The realist might object to this: If the world we supposedly create is governed by its own laws, and if the world and these laws are only created, why don't we create them differently? Why do we not create a perfect world? Vasubandhu's reply to these questions lies in the dream experience. Dreams unfold according to their own laws and we cannot shape the course of events in dreams. Bad dreams occur, though they are unwanted, and since the empirical world is likewise a construction, we cannot shape it or alter its laws - we cannot choose the objects of our experience because they arise from the svāśakti of consciousness and come from its deepest recesses, where we exercise no control.

A further realist objection is that "efficiency
is the mark of the real," that only real, physical objects can act on us. There are, however, cases where this can be shown to be false, since experiences and illusions also possess efficiency; nightmares frighten us and mirages cause us to move toward them. Furthermore, efficiency itself is merely an idea, and not directly related to an object of experience, so we may question how the realist arrived at this idea in the first place. The idealist doctrines of Yogacara hold that all of our experience is composed of mere ideas generated by primordial avidyā, and that the basic nature of consciousness, its existence and its efficiency, are due to the transcendental illusion. For the realist even illusion has a basis in previous experience, however, and even dreams (it is contended) can be traced back to previous perceptions of objective reality. If we had not experienced objective reality even the idea of objectivity could not have arisen and even illusion would not be possible, since there would only be the subjective. Vasubandhu replies to this that while every idea does indeed have a cause, this is no reason to suppose that this basis is in external reality - it could as easily arise from an idea, which in turn arose from another idea, and so on ad infinitum.
The second transformation is called the mind-consciousness, which, while it depends on the ideation-store consciousness, in turn conditions it. Its nature and characteristic consists of intellection.

Enlightenment for Yogācāra consists in becoming aware of the illusion of phenomenal reality, in the same way as we dispell the illusion of dreams when we awake. The empirical illusion is not as easily eradicated as dream-illusion, however. The phenomenal world has more of a hold on us, and its illusory nature can be perceived only through a process of intense concentration (abhyasa) on the intuition that the elements of consciousness are unreal in their essence. By learning to discriminate the real from the unreal we eventually dispell the mental constructions we formerly held to be real and perceive reality as an undifferentiated whole out of which all particulars arise. In this state of pure awareness (vijñāpti-mātra-upa-labhāhau) the perception of the objective world disappears, and the role of the perceiving subject also disappears.

In this state consciousness alone remains, but it is no longer consciousness of something else but pure awareness of its own essential nature. This intuition of the true nature of consciousness cuts off the flow of creative energies which give rise to moments.
of consciousness. Pratītya samutpāda, according to Vasubandhu and Asaṅga, pertains to moments of consciousness; each moment of consciousness is impelled by the creative aspect of consciousness and its inner dynamism leads to the arising of the next moment of consciousness. There is no real continuity between thoughts, however; the continuity we perceive in consciousness is only apparent, a stream of essentially disconnected thoughts strung together by consciousness.

For Abhidharma philosophy pratītya samutpāda meant that all nīdānas are causally conditioned. This was developed into a theory of causation, and a theory of dharmas was propounded, along with the idea of kṣanika-tva (momentariness). Dharmas were held to be the only real elements, but no continuity was admitted between dharmas; cause was thought to be only an occasion depending upon which the effect occurs. The Mādhyamikas showed that the notion of causality is untenable in this view because there is no real relation between cause and effect. Also, since the effect depends on a cause it is ipso facto dependent and thus not real. Furthermore, as Nāgārjuna points out, everything depends on something else, and so nothing is intrinsically real.

Vasubandhu admits that the object of consciousness
is unreal, but denies that consciousness itself is unreal. Pratītya samutpāda is the law of causation as regards temporal sequence, but only refers to moments of consciousness - one moment of consciousness arises as a result of the preceding one, but there is no real continuity between them. It is similar to ripples spreading outward on a clear lake, where the forward momentum of one ripple impels the next one, although each ripple is distinct.

Vasubandhu also interprets the twelvefold chain of causation as pertaining to the arising and passing away of moments of consciousness. According to Vasubandhu, the stages of the causal chain occur as follows: (1) The Transcendental Illusion, the root cause of phenomenal life; (2) the effects of Prenatal Biotic Forces, the karmic residue of former deeds; (3) Stage of Intermediate Existence - the seeds of karma remain after the former consciousness dissipates, but a continuity is maintained; (4) The Embryo - one's existence is again contained in an embryo and is subject to the torments of physical existence; all the elements of future existence and the nature of the mind and body are determined in the embryo; (5) Sense Faculties - the body which was indicated in the embryo is completed in the development of the six sense faculties; (6) Sensation - (5) anticip-
ates the experience of sensation, and (6) is its actuality; feelings, both pleasant and unpleasant, begin to be produced, and the illusion of sensation begins; (7) Feeling - the concomitant results of sensation, involving differentiating between pleasant and unpleasant experiences; the consequences of past deeds lead to good, bad, or neutral feelings, and we are tormented by these; (8) Sexual Desire - the new existence which was forecasted by deeds is summed up when sexual desire arises; the preceding development comes to fruition in the desire to perpetuate the species; (9) Attachment to Objects - sexual desire leads to desire of other kinds, and one becomes attached to objects and to other ideas which conduce to the formation of future life; the four kinds of attachment are: (a) attachment to cherished objects; (b) habitual views; (c) belief in the efficacy of religious rites, and (d) belief in the existence of a personal soul; the individual becomes attached to these and they lead to more rebirths; (10) Full Realization of a New Life - the deeds of former existence produce their effects - what was potential is now actual; former deeds produce a new life, intermediate existence contains the seeds which begin to mature in the embryo and reach full fruition in (10), which produces its own seeds; (11) and (12) The Sufferings of a
New Birth, on which a new death follows - the living being is tormented by a new birth and by a new aging process and death.\textsuperscript{114}

In this stream, according to Vasubandhu,\textsuperscript{115} there is nothing abiding, no "soul" or permanent entity; such ideas are superimposed on the causal chain, and there is no real continuity linking the stages. The illusion of continuity leads to the false notion of selfhood and is a result of the process of creation.\textsuperscript{116}

This process occurs in three stages: (1) the ālaya, which operates as a receptacle which stores the vāsanās (seeds or impressions) of past karma, whether good, bad, or neutral, which will give rise to future actions.\textsuperscript{117} Its creativity is cyclic. It takes in the seeds of past actions and brings them to fruition in future vāsanās, the results of which are in turn stored. Vāsanās are motive forces which govern the evolutionary process, and are of two kinds: (i) vipāka-vāsanās - these are the more ultimate; vipākas preserve the continuity of the individual through successive births; when a person dies vipākas force him into a new stream of activity, which begins with a new birth; (ii) niḥsyanda-vāsanās - the fruition of present experiences - vipākas maintain the cycle of rebirths and niḥsyandas supply the contents of those births. The accum-
ulation of seeds is referred to as *hetu-parināma* and their actualization is called *phala-parināma*. Both are *parināmas* because the *ālava* constantly changes; it is momentary, and each moment of existence is determined by what *parināmas* it has stored.

The doctrine of the *ālava* is one of the most controversial ideas of Yogācāra, and in *KṣP* 37 and *Kṣ I.10* Vasubandhu and Asaṅga respectively admit that this is not a doctrine propounded by Buddha in the early canonical works of Buddhism. The reason for this, they assert, is not that Buddha did not accept the *ālava* or was not aware of it, but that he considered it to be too profound and abstruse a doctrine for beginners to grasp. *Sumatiśīla*, in the *KST*, states that Buddha's reluctance to teach the *ālava* to his followers was because the grouping together of *dharma* with such dis-similar characteristics could be misconstrued, and even imagined to be a self.

It has been said by the Exalted One in the *Mahāyāna sūtra* named *Sāndhinirmocana*:

The appropriating consciousness, profound and sub-subtle, moves with all its seeds like the current of a stream; it has not been taught by me to fools, so that they might not imagine it to be a self.

Later on in the same section, a hypothetical opponent asks: "Why would they imagine it to be such?" and Vasubandhu answers:
Because its aspect is without (fundamental) changes as long as ānāgāra lasts. The purpose here was to indicate only those consciousnesses which are gross (sthūla), on account of their substrata, objects-of-consciousness, aspects, and particulars being easily delimited (supari-chchedya), in which the processes of affliction (ṣaṅkūṭa) and alleviation (vyavādāna) are determined on account of their being connected with both afflictions and their antidotes, and through which, being its effects, the consciousnesses related to their seeds can be inferred, but not (to indicate) the cause-consciousness (hetuvijñāna), because it is opposite from those (other consciousnesses) (as regards these features).

In regard to this matter, it can be replied that the consciousness which is the requisite of existence can be indicated suitably (yathāvyuktam) (as being) the collection of six consciousnesses. It has been demonstrated in the Vyākhyāvatī that nowadays not all sūtras are extant. Thus even if in the (extant) sūtras it is not mentioned explicitly, this does not mean that the store-consciousness is not to be accepted.

The role of the Ālaya, according to Vasubandhu and Sumatisila, is twofold: it acts as an "appropriating consciousness" because its contents determine the nature of one's future birth, i.e., what sort of physical surroundings will be "appropriated" as a result of past actions; and it is also the "support-" or "store-consciousness" because it stores the impressions of past karma, which are the basis of one's mental-physical constitution in future lives.

Synonyms (paryāyanāma) for this appropriating consciousness are indicated with the sentences: '(It is further called the appropriating consciousness because) it (appropriates a body for the factors at conception) during the time of rebirth. (Because it becomes the support of the
seeds of all dhāraṇas, it is called the 'store-
consciousness.' Because it is retribution for
former acts, it is called the 'retributory con-
sciousness'). 'Because it appropriates a body'
means 'because it takes possession of (āṭṭhakar-
otti) of a body.' With the phrase 'it is called
the appropriating consciousness,' it is said
that it is 'appropriating' because it appropri-
ates the body. Because it is both appropriating
and a consciousness, it is called 'the appropi-
rating consciousness.'

The āḷāya influences the evolving consciousnesses
1-6 (Transcendental Illusion - Sensation; cf. p. 121-
l23) by coloring their perceptions and development
through the seeds of latent impressions, and the ev-
olving consciousnesses in turn influence the constit-
tution of the āḷāya through the impressions they pro-
duce. In MS I.17 and I.27 Āsāṅga states that the mut-
ual influencing is not only reciprocal, but simultan-
eous, like the arising of a flame and the lighting of
a wick.

The āḷāya consists of a series of momentary entit-
ies, altered by conditions such as the impressions of
the seeds it holds, but continuing constantly "in a
stream" in such a way that it can be held to be a non-
ephemeral event - it is regarded as being the changing
series of seeds which is not interrupted until the fin-
al cessation of nirvāṇa.

...the store-consciousness remains only as a
series, because one (entity) within it continues
only for one moment, and it is furthermore transformed by conditions because it is rendered different by them.\[124\]

The second phase in the process of creation is kliṣṭa-mano-vijñāna, the process of intellection which categorizes and differentiates the indeterminate contents of the ālaya.\[125\] The manas (intellect) reflects on the contents of the ālaya and nurtures them. The result of this is the notion of ego. The ego-consciousness is a precondition for empirical knowledge, because without it the notion of other cannot arise. The manas actually creates something new from the indeterminate seeds of the ālaya, creating distinctions in an essentially unitary consciousness. As KSP \[49\] states:

Consciousness is manas. It is manas because it it produces a sense of ego (manakrtatvāt), and because it becomes intent on other births and objects of sense (visāva). The rest is to be explained as before.

SumatiŚīla comments:

In order to explain in what way consciousness is manas, he says: 'Because it produces a sense of ego...', it gives a sense of self because it produces the concepts of 'I' and 'mine.' Consciousness is also to be known as manas because it is intent on other births... Because of the efficacy of those events concomitant with citta (cittasaṃprayukta)... one is directed towards agreeable births, such as the state of gods, and towards objects-of-sense such as visible, etc. In the sentence 'the rest is to be explained as before' 'the rest' means 'action' and 'mental action'... action is a conditioning of the agent's manas, and similarly... mental action is that action associated with manas because it does not incite the body or voice.\[126\]
In the *VMS* Vasubandhu states that the working of the manas has as its preconditions: (1) ātmadrsti (the false notion of ego); (2) ātmamoha (ignorance about the ego); (3) ātmamāna (elation over it); and (4) atma-prema (attachment to the notion of ego). Ātmadrsti is the imposition of the false notion of ego upon upadāna-skandhas, the momentary constituents of consciousness. The notion of "I" arises due to ignorance of the true nature of the ālava - when the notion of ego arises one becomes attached to it and invents more reasons to substantiate this false notion, which increases bondage. The ego-consciousness is the precondition for empirical knowledge - this initial dichotomizing of essentially unitary consciousness provides the foundation for further distinctions. The ālava is essentially unitary, and when we begin splitting it up we initiate the process of creation of the world-illusion.127 The ego is merely a construction imposed on the fleeting states of the ālava-moments. The manas is not an independent consciousness, but requires a base in the ālava,128 which supplies the seeds of its operation. Its function is relational and its locus is in the ālava. The manas creates nothing new, but merely categorizes what is already created by the ālava, and so the manas has no independent status of its own. In the *VMS* Vasubandhu ex-
plains how this process of intellecction can be stopped by practicing certain meditations. Our will ordinarily has no control over this process, but through vigorous practice we can become aware of it and bring it to an end. For an arhat who has destroyed all afflictions and their residue manas no longer operates; it is also suspended in some trance states, after which it arises again out of the Alaya when the trance is over.

The third phase in the process of creation is pra-vṛtti-vijñāna, the determinate awareness of objects. This is the only consciousness which is empirically known, as the other two are submerged in the unconscious. The pravṛtti is the blooming of the seeds of the Alaya, which creates the empirical universe. It operates by means of the five senses in external perception and internally by knowledge of ideas based on perception.

This process, according to Vasubandhu, should not be viewed as historical. We do not begin with a pure Alaya, but an Alaya already afflicted, and this gives rise to further afflictions. The cycle of karmic forces and their actualization is infinite and self-perpetuating. Further, the operation of each function of vijñāna is dependent on the others, and the process
is reciprocal. Assigning priority to the ālava is only for the purposes of logical discussion and not actual, as all three aspects of vijnāna function simultaneously. The pravṛtti produces the seeds which are stored in the ālava, brought to maturity in the manas, and fully actualized in the pravṛtti, which then produces the seeds which are stored in the ālava, and so on. The only aspect of vijnāna which survives after death is the ālava, which stores the seeds of past karma, which sprout and form a new personality. The ālava is the basis for continuity from life to life and is the ground of illusion, which is itself essentially undifferentiated and becomes infused with karmic impressions which obscure its pristine clarity. Insight into the true nature of the ālava dispells these colorings and halts the influx of new ones, and enables vijnāna to intuit its pure state. The empirical world is seen to be composed of ideas which are vibrations of vijnāna, and we realize that the independence of the object from vijnāna is only apparent.

As this retributory consciousness, (which contains all the seeds, continues in a stream, once it has arisen takes on various forms because of various retributory causes, without any interruption until the limit of nirvāna, it is not severed at this time) ...'which has the force to engender all the seeds' means: which has the force
to engender Beneficial, etc., dharmas (in the future). 'Taking on conception (in the womb)' means when conception in the mother's womb has been taken on by the confused retributory consciousness during the coagulation of the semen (of the father) with the blood (of the mother). 135 'Without any interruption' means 'without any severance (viccheda) at any point.' 'Taking on various forms (because of retributory causes)' means that it becomes varied through the various retributory causes, which are beneficial, etc.... until the termination of the series in Nirvāṇa. 136

In Vasubandhu's philosophy the terms viśīṇāna and viṇkalpa (discursive thought) 137 are synonymous, and, according to both Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, viśīṇānapariṇāma is the actual state of viśīṇāna. As Vasubandhu states in Tīrīṃsikā XVII: "this viśīṇāna is viṇkalpa," and as to the nature of viṇkalpa he states that "anything which is discriminated or conceptualized by the viṇkalpa does not really exist. Therefore the whole world (which is discriminated or conceptualized by it) is consciousness-only." 138 Viṇkalpa or viśīṇāaptiparināma here refers to the consciousness of ordinary beings, who view phenomena conceptually, and so the object which is known through this viśīṇāaptiparināma is not a thing as it really is, but rather is a conception or name. Ordinary beings do not see objects as they actually are, but naively assume that their concepts are the things themselves and do not realize the truth of viśīṇāaptināṭatā (the awareness that all
things are mind-only), as the sage does.

In contrast to this, the mind of the Yogaśāra adepts is called praṇa or nirvikalpa-jñāna (wisdom which is other than the wisdom of vikalpa of vijñāna). He does not know objects by their attributes but, rather, he directly knows them as they really are (vathābhūtārtha), and so he abides in vijñāntimātrata. For the ordinary being who does not realize this truth, whose mind is vijñāna, the object of his awareness is a conceptualized thing and not the actual object; but the sage who realizes the conceptualized nature of all phenomena (parikalpita-svabhāva) attains direct insight into the basis of the arising of named and conceptualized things. As Sthiramati’s commentary on Triśikā XXV states:

Whenever consciousness does not perceive, see, grasp, and attach itself to the teaching, admonitions, as well as natural phenomena of colors and shapes, sounds and so forth, as objects, except (the seeing) mind itself, then since the yogin (a bodhisattva or a Yogaśāra philosopher) sees an object as it really is (vathābhūtārtha), and he is not like a man born blind, at that time the grasp of the consciousness has been broken down and the mind is established in the state of being aware of everything as well as of itself as they really are. There is not only (no object) to be grasped (and there is no grasping consciousness either), but also there arises the super-mundane, non-conceptualizing wisdom in which subject and object (ālambhya-ālambhaka) are identical with each other without nullifying and extinguish-
ing their distinctions (sara-sama). The seeds of the attachment to the two (i.e., the object) to be grasped and the grasping (consciousness) have been broken down and the mind is established in the state of being aware of everything as well as of itself as they really are. The mind has abode in consciousness-only.

When vijnāna no longer perceives objects and is aware only of vijnāna itself, then it sees objects as they really are (vathabhūtārtha), and so vijnāna is aware only of itself. The mind, however, is not seen as an object because there is nothing other than it. The seer and the seen are identical. On the level of phenomenal reality (parikalpita) there is a difference, but when this distincton is overcome there is only consciousness, but it is no longer distinguishable as consciousness, since it has been purified of contents. As Sthiramati states in his commentary on Triaśikā XXIX, since ultimately there is no mind and nothing grasped "this is both no-mind and nothing-grasped." As verse XXII states:

*The Absolute (vijnāna) and the dependent Are neither the same nor different; As in the case of impermanence and permanence, The one can be seen only in the other.*

**Some Objections to Yogācāra**

Yogācāra developed as a necessary extension of the Buddhist doctrine of subjectivity, that the contents of
consciousness have no basis in external reality. The Yoqācāra philosophers went beyond the realistic interpretation of this doctrine by the Sautrāntikas and the purely critical philosophy of Mādhyamika to create a new synthesis between the two extremes. This synthesis, however, contains some problems of its own. How, for instance, do we know of the ālaya and manas when the pravṛtti is the only stage of vijñāna we are aware of? All we know is what comes to our awareness in the pravṛtti, and neither the ālaya nor the manas fall under this category. Furthermore, even in direct insight into the true nature of reality we perceive only pure, unitary consciousness; the ālaya and manas do not seem to be revealed by any form of knowing the Yoqācāras would accept.

Consciousness for Yoqācāra philosophy is not consciousness of something, as in early Buddhist thought or Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, but a real existent which creates unreal thought constructions out of itself. The notion of the three stages of vijñāna is not a mere ideal, however, but an essential aspect of the operation of vijñāna. If this is not known by vijñāna, it is highly problematic for Yoqācāra how we become aware of it.

The Yoqācāra answer to this objection is that the Tathāgata, due to his awareness of Ultimate Reality,
attains a state of omniscience in which he perceives all reality as it is.\textsuperscript{146} In the state of mystic absorption he is aware only of Tathā, but in his everyday living he still perceives empirical objects with phenomenal qualities, but his relation to them changes because, unlike ordinary beings, he sees their true nature, along with their perceptible qualities.\textsuperscript{147} In his omniscience he also perceives the dynamics of their arising in their totality.\textsuperscript{148} The idealistic teachings of Yogaśāra philosophy are primarily aimed at ordinary beings, and outline for them the unperceived (except in higher stages of awareness) inner dynamics of the arising of the world-illusion, with the ultimate aim of freeing them from bondage to it\textsuperscript{149} and to guide them toward the middle path. The Bodhisattva following madhyamā pratipad still perceives the things of the world as they appear, but his awareness has an added dimension whereby he also sees their unconditioned basis and the nature of their arising.

A positive aspect of Yogaśāra idealism is that it can account for wrong perceptions and for two people perceiving in different ways, which, as previously stated, is a major problem for the realist, who sees consciousness as purely receptive. On the other hand, we can ask: If Yogaśāra's assertions are correct, how
can two subjects perceive the same object (though admittedly from different perspectives) at the same time? If vijnāna is a purely creative principle, how can the Yogācāras account for simultaneity of perceptions?\(^{150}\)

This could be accounted for if it were asserted that there is only one creating consciousness, which creates all of phenomenal existence, but Vasubandhu avoids the extreme of solipsism and accepts\(^{151}\) the existence of other minds. He states that we know other minds only imperfectly, but the question remains how we can know them at all, or how we can agree on perceptions. He answers this\(^{152}\) by asserting that minds are constituted similarly, and that this accounts for agreement on perceptions, but this does not answer the question of how distinct and purely creative minds can perceive the same object unless their perceptions are based on an actual object. Either two minds decide to create ideations similarly and simultaneously (possibly through subliminal communication), or there is an incredible coincidence of creation occurring all the time.

The answer to this problem seems to be that consciousness is actually One, and that apparently individual consciousnesses are mere moments in the Universal
Mind, as Hegel asserts. This doctrine is hinted at, but never clearly stated, by Vasubandhu, as in the following passage from the Trīśūlī:

The various consciousnesses are but transformations. That which discriminates and that which is discriminated are, because of this, both unreal. For this reason, everything is mind-only.\textsuperscript{153}

The deeper reason for the simultaneity of people's experiences, however, is that there actually is an unconditioned basis of perceptions, which is distorted by individual consciousnesses. This doctrine is asserted by both Vasubandhu\textsuperscript{154} and Asaṅga,\textsuperscript{155} who state that perception as such is impossible without this basis, and that although it is distorted in experience it still provides the common basis of all phenomenal experience.

A further realist objection to Yogācāra's conclusion (from the standpoint of Advaita Vedānta) is that if the Yogācāras examine the contents of consciousness and fail to find an abiding Self (ātman), this is because the Self is not found in our consciousness.\textsuperscript{156} Yogācāra philosophy tacitly asserts that the only ways of knowing are the ones it accepts, but Śaṅkara asserts that there are ways of knowing the Yogācāras are not aware of, and the ātman is revealed through these.\textsuperscript{157} Like the Yogācāra philosophers, the Advaitins assert
that there are three levels of reality:

(1) Pratīhāsika - the level of phenomenal reality.
(2) Vyavahārika - the level of awareness of illusion.
(3) Paramārthika - Absolute Reality, in which illusion no longer exists.

The Yogācāra analysis, according to the Advaitins, operates only on the level of pratīhāsika, and is not applicable to paramārthika. The Yogācāra replies to this by stating that the Vedāntins are mistaken in their apprehension of Ultimate Reality. The Yogācāra conception of the three levels of reality is as follows:  

(1) Parikalpita - imputed reality of illusion, the wrong notion of objective and subjective existence.
(2) Paratantra - relative reality, or the unreal imagination (abhūta-parikalpa)
(3) Parinispanna - Absolute Reality, or paratantra without any trace of objective or subjective.

There is an obvious similarity between the two hierarchies, and the Yogācāra acāryas would probably agree that the Advaita Vedāntins have a preliminary perception of Ultimate Reality, but have stopped short of the ultimate realization. After recognizing the external world as illusion the Vedāntin is afraid to draw the necessary conclusion that all of phenomenal "reality" is purely the creation of impersonal consciousness, and so he imposes an abiding Self on "reality," which is essentially Śūnya and inherently free of all
concepts and attributes.

When the objective world which is the basis of conditioning as well as the wisdom which does the conditioning are both eliminated, the state of Mind-only is realized, since the six sense-organs and their objects are no longer present.

Without any grasping and beyond thought is the supra-mundane wisdom (of bodhisattvahood). ...This is the realm of passionlessness or purity, which is beyond all description, is good, and is eternal, where one is in the state of emancipation, peace and joy. This is the law of the Great Buddha.
CHAPTER SIX

Mahāmati, those who dwell in the truth of solitude, who have fully realized it by themselves, seeing it to be formless, they (see) that there is nothing but what is viewed by consciousness alone. They will reject the extreme views of being and non-being in phenomenal things, will understand things as they are by means of the three-fold liberation, and will be marked with the mark (of enlightenment?). They will free themselves from that form of existence (characterized by) being and non-being, and will intuitively gain entrance into the awareness of self-knowledge and of the self-nature of things.

The Yogācāra Refutation of Realistic Philosophies.

In the previous chapter we saw the basic outlines of the Yogācāra ācāryas' refutations of realism. These ideas received further elaboration in works such as the KSP and KST, which seem to be primarily directed at realist philosophers and scholastic logicians who the Yogācāras perceive as deviating from madhyāra pratipad (primarily the Vaiśākhaśikaś). The arguments of these works (as well as some parts of the MS, MSA, and MV) seem to be directed at such people, and are aimed at showing them the basic untenability of their positions, and have the eventual goal of helping them to see the truth of the "middle position." Since these dialecticians propound many elaborate and subtle arguments to defend their positions, the Yogācāra ācāryas provide correspondingly elaborate and subtle refutations in

(140)
order to dispel their opponents' deeply rooted and fiercely argued wrong views. This chapter will examine some of the major points in Vasubandhu's and Asaṅga's rebuttals of realist philosophers, which are primarily directed against Buddhist philosophers who the Yogācāras think have taken an extreme position. The Yogācāras attempt to lead other philosophers to realization of the truth of madhyamā pratīpad by showing them how they have deviated from it by holding an extreme position. The reason why they direct their arguments primarily towards other Buddhist philosophers is that all schools of Buddhism claim to uphold madhyamā pratīpad, and so Vasubandhu and Asaṅga try to show them how they have moved away from it in an attempt to help them to overcome attachment to wrong views which deviate from the "middle way" of the Buddha.

The Yogācāras rejected the Madhyamika injunction against speculation as philosophically unsatisfactory and as ultimately self-defeating because it leaves one with no view at all. The Madhyamika dialectic may be conducive to enlightenment for a few unique individuals whose temperaments are suited to the view that all drṣṭis are ipso facto false but, as a true Mahāyāna school, Yogācāra articulates a philosophy which propounds the true view (madhyamā pratīpad), which
Vasubandhu and Asaṅga think can lead all people who are able to grasp ultimate "truth (pararātha satya) to enlightenment, not just those whose mental and emotional constitutions are suited to a purely critical philosophy.²

As Chatterjee states, the main concern of speculation is to find the "ground of all phenomena."³ Yogācāra, as a speculative philosophy, is an attempt to bring to light the underlying structures of existence, as well as their basis, and it does this with the ultimate aim of freeing suffering ideation-series from their dependence on names, concepts, and viewpoints, but, more importantly, Yogācāra philosophy also presents the "right view," the true explanation of the nature of the world which leads to enlightenment.⁴

Vasubandhu and Asaṅga also reject the realist hypothesis as inherently unprovable, because we can never transcend knowledge to discover if the objects we perceive are real.⁵ We are always already involved in the process of categorizing and discriminating, and for the realist hypothesis to be established one would have to know an object when it is not known.

...a result of the act of cognizing in the shape of a definitely circumscribed patch of color or some other (sense-datum), just as an axe (being an instrument through which the act of cutting wood is carried into effect)
must have, as experience shows, a separate effect in the fact that the piece of wood which is being cut becomes separated into two pieces. (Every action has its instrument and its result.) Therefore...this perceptive cognition, (the instrument), is just itself also the result produced by the instrument, there is no separate result, (the act of cognition and its result are the same.)

This illustrates the Yogācāra doctrine of sahajapalambaniyama, that the object always occurs along with consciousness of it. Attributes have no independent physical existence apart from their appearance before consciousness, and only exist as perceived. Vasubandhu and Asaṅga would agree that if a tree falls in the woods and there is no one to hear it there are waves in the air, but no sounds—in empirical knowledge of reality we are aware of consciousness interpretations of reality, not reality itself. Furthermore, any attribute, e.g., blue, is only an abstraction—what we are actually aware of is the impression it blue, i.e., consciousness having the form of blue. Consciousness does not create real physical objects; it is diversified into many modes, which appear to exist externally and independently of consciousness, but which are really only modes of consciousness. One idea generates another idea, and this process does not require any actual external objects. As Chatterjee states, according to the Yogācāras, "objects are hypos-
tatized ideas.\textsuperscript{11}

The main issue between the realist and the idealist is whether consciousness is \textit{sākāra}, i.e., if it has a \textit{prakāra} (content) of its own, or is \textit{nirākāra} (contentless). The realist thinks that consciousness is transparent, that objects merely pass in and out of it without modification, that objects reveal themselves as they are and consciousness perceives them as they are.\textsuperscript{12}

A major problem for the realist is memory; if consciousness is a purely diaphanous entity, it is highly problematic how it can retain impressions. Some schools of realism, e.g. Saṅkhya and Vedānta, try to meet this difficulty by positing the existence of a "mind-stuff" \textit{buddhi} or \textit{citta}, which is transformed according to the various cognitions leaving their impressions on it. This "mind-stuff" is given all the functions which cannot be assigned by the realist to pure consciousness. In Advaita Vedānta, for example, the \textit{sākṣi}-consciousness knows everything all at once; it is the \textit{pramātā}, or consciousness limited by \textit{antahkarana}, an aspect of the mind-stuff, which is aware of succession and makes memory possible. The problem with this conception is that there seems to be no direct relevance of universal consciousness (\textit{sākṣi})
to individual acts of knowledge (buddhi-vrttis). This theory of "mind-stuff" actually creates more problems than it solves for the realist, because if consciousness has an aspect which forms impressions rather than merely allowing them to pass through, then consciousness must have the power to create, because we can have distorted memories and can change the original facts to suit our interests (and actually firmly believe that our version is the true one), and so ultimately consciousness' relation to the object becomes far more tenuous than the realist wants it to be.\(^\text{13}\)

Furthermore, a completely consistent realist cannot admit the existence of memory at all, since consciousness is merely receptive. To state that in memory consciousness re-recognizes the same object of a past memory makes no sense since, according to the realist idea of consciousness being aware of present real objects, it cannot also be aware of something which is no longer present to its awareness, and may have even ceased to exist.\(^\text{14}\) Obviously the realist must admit that consciousness projects at least the memory image, which shows that consciousness has a creative aspect, which lends credence to the idealist hypothesis. This problem is discussed in
KSP 19, where Vasubandhu asks:

...when one has studied a text, and after a long time has elapsed, a memory is still engendered in regard to other objects that have been seen, etc., what is the dharma through which this memory is later engendered for (this object) which has been studied or seen, etc.? And at what moment does it (actually) arise?

Also, as regards the citta which attains (samāpatticitta) the attainment of cessation (of feelings and concepts) (niruddhasamāpatti), through what does the citta which emerges from this state (vyutthānācitta) later arise? 15

The most fundamental objection to the realist position from the Yogācāra standpoint is illusion. If, as the realist asserts, consciousness only reveals objects as they are and does not distort them, the fact that sometimes objects appear to us as real, even in the waking state, which are later seen to be unreal presents a major stumbling block for his position. 16

Not only that, but differences in individual perspective lead to differences in how things are perceived, as a stairway appears differently to a person at the top and one at the bottom, and when something is nearby it appears larger, and appears smaller when farther away. On what grounds, the Yogācāra asks, do we decide which is the true picture of a thing? Also, no two people perceive the same object in the same way, and there are a theoretically infinite number of potential perspectives and no way of deciding which is more or less the true measure of the object. 18
In addition to these difficulties, the realist is also faced with the problem of accounting for illusions such as a straight stick appearing bent in a glass of water or a mirage in a desert, which the realist generally dismisses as being merely optical defects, but this does not obviate the fact that, in these instances at least, consciousness is not merely perceiving objects as they are; and in some cases of illusion, such as the rope-snake example, consciousness actually imposes one thing on another, which it should not be able to do if its action is purely revelatory.\(^\text{19}\)

The realist reply to this is that identifying the rope with the snake is false, but neither the rope or snake is false by itself.\(^\text{20}\) The illusion is only a mistaken identification between two real objects. The snake is real and consciousness is only false when it sees a snake where it is not,\(^\text{21}\) and also there are limits to illusion,\(^\text{22}\) as tables are not mistaken for snakes; so consciousness does not create the snake illusion from nothing and cannot project it anywhere, since there are laws of objectivity according to which consciousness must perceive its objects.\(^\text{23}\)

This statement still does not get around the
fact that a subjective element is operating here - the essential features of a snake are not the same as those of rope, or a snake would always be seen as a rope, and so the mind is clearly projecting something on another thing which is different from it. The mind does not see the rope clearly and fills in details by itself. It fills in a gap in awareness, and if consciousness were only revelatory a gap would only be perceived as a gap, and thus it is clear that consciousness has a creative aspect.

Another example of the creative element of consciousness is the production of dreams. The dream world appears as objectively real as long as it endures and does not depend on a real object like a rope, but exists only as projected. Objectivity is never more than an idea in dreams, and the apparent reality of dreams is not derived from a concrete objective world, but only from the idea of objectivity.

The realist would assert that this very idea is grounded in our knowledge of the objective world, and that even to create an illusory objective world we must first have experienced the real objective world. Without the experience of objectivity we would never have conceived even the idea of objectivity.
Vasubandhu rejects this response because the idea of objectivity is not empirical and does not originate in experience.\textsuperscript{28} The main point of the Yogācāra dream-analysis, however, is simply to demonstrate that consciousness can create its own contents without direct reference to empirical objects. Even if there were real empirical objects we could never be aware of them, only our own ideas, and dreams show that we can create a world and perceive it as objectively real.\textsuperscript{29}

Sahopalamlaniyāma shows that the object and consciousness of it always occur together, and the analysis of dreams completes the analysis by demonstrating the creativity of consciousness, showing that it is able to create its contents out of itself even in the absence of real objects, and thus consciousness is not transparent and receptive, but creative.\textsuperscript{30}

As we have seen before, the Yogācāras also assert that there is a basis of perceptions (though it is indefinable in its true nature) which ordinarily gives rise to our perceptions of things. In addition to perceiving something, however, consciousness also interprets and alters our perceptions, and even creates perceptions and ideas of its own. By admitting that there is a basis for perceptions, and also asserting that consciousness has a creative aspect,
the Yogācāras are able to account for the similarity of different people's perceptions, and can also account for those perceptions (illusions, dreams, etc.) which are either a distortion of "reality" or are a created reality of their own. This is the main strength, philosophically speaking, of the Yogācāra position - by avoiding the extreme of realism it is able to account for illusions and dreams, which are major stumbling blocks for the realist position; and by avoiding the extreme of idealism the Yogācāra can account for the simultaneity of perceptions, which is a major stumbling block for the subjective idealist. Vasubandhu states his position, which avoids the extremes of realism and idealism, in his bhāṣya on MV I.3:

Ideations are the formations of the six consciousnesses, and lack any real objects, because there are no definite differences which could serve to delineate objects and beings, and because the forms of self and ideations are in a state of constant change. Since its objects are not real, consciousness cannot be held to be something separate. Thus consciousness in this case is only unreal imagination.31

Refutation of Realism As Such

The realist thinks that perception is motivated by real objects which exist independently of being
perceived, but Vasubandhu and Asaṅga assert that objects are merely collections of attributes with a name given to them for the sake of convenience.\textsuperscript{32} Moreover, objects possess contradictory attributes;\textsuperscript{33} for instance, a table can be brown and hard at the same time - it is neither just brown or hard, but both at once, along with numerous other attributes. We are aware of our perceptions through the senses, and so it is unclear how the realist can arrive at the idea of table when all we are directly aware of is brownness, hardness, etc.\textsuperscript{34} The notion of substance is a later interpretation which is not given by sense-data.\textsuperscript{35} This problem is discussed in the \textit{Milindapañho}, in which King Milinda asks the Buddhist sage Nāgasena his name, and Nāgasena states his name, but adds that there is no actual Nāgasena, because what is referred to as "Nāgasena" is merely a convenient designation for a disparate collection of parts. The king is unable to accept this idea, and so he questions Nāgasena:

'Pray, bhante, is the hair of the head Nāgasena?'
Nāgasena replies: 'Nay verily your majesty.'
'Is now, bhante, form Nāgasena?'
'Nay, verily, your majesty.'
'Is sensation Nāgasena?'
'Nay, verily, your majesty.'

Milinda asks the same question regarding percep-
tion, predispositions, consciousness, and all of these together, and Nāgasena replies that none of these are Nāgasena, and Milinda concludes:

'Bhante, although I question very closely, I fail to discover any Nāgasena. Verily, now, bhante, Nāgasena is a mere empty sound. What Nāgasena is there here? Bhante, you speak a falsehood, a lie: there is no Nāgasena.'

To illustrate his point, Nāgasena uses the king's chariot as an analogy:

'Your majesty...declare to me the chariot...is the pole the chariot?'
'Nay verily, bhante.'
'Is the axle the chariot?'
'Nay, verily, bhante.'

Nāgasena goes on to ask if the other parts, the wheels, the chariot-body, the banner-staff, the yoke, the reins, the goading-stick are the chariot, to which Milinda replies in the negative, and Nāgasena concludes:

'Your majesty, although I question you very closely, I fail to discover any chariot...Your majesty, the word chariot is a mere empty sound. What chariot is there here? Your majesty, you speak a falsehood, a lie: there is no chariot...

'Bhante Nāgasena, I speak no lie; the word chariot is but a way of counting, term, appellation, convenient designation, and name for pole, axle, wheels, chariot-body and banner-staff.'

'Thoroughly well, your majesty, do you understand a chariot. In the same way, in respect of me, Nāgasena is but a way of counting, term, appellation, convenient designation, mere name for the hair of my head, hair of my body, form,
sensation, perception, the predispositions, and consciousness. But in the absolute sense there is no ego here to be found.  

As this dialogue illustrates, all objects are merely collections of disparate parts and attributes. There is no necessity for the existence of a primal object, nothing beyond its parts and perceived qualities. Thus the realist is unable to account for the fact that one object can be constructed of disparate parts and qualities at the same time.  

Refutation of Atomism

A major feature of the early realistic schools of Buddhism was the theory that reality is made up of dharmas, which are objective but are never perceived, and are only realized through arthapatti (postulation). Dharmas are the ultimate simple reals, and are composed of no smaller parts and have no extension, but still occupy space. The problem with this theory, according to Vasubandhu, is that if things are composed of dharmas they should be perceived as such, but we never perceive dharmas, only wholes (pudgalas), and we cannot assert that what is perceived as a whole is actually composed of atoms, as it is not itself atomic and does not manifest itself as having the character of an atom. How then can
it be that the atom is not itself an object of perception, yet the object of perception is nothing apart from atoms? There is no way to avoid the conclusion that what appears in perception has no objective basis. Furthermore, there is a contradiction inherent in asserting both that everything is divisible into parts and that dharmas are indivisible. ⁴⁰ It is arbitrary to assert that the division process stops somewhere, and if the process cannot be non-arbitrarily stopped somewhere, then the thesis should be rejected as untenable. ⁴¹

Another objection to this theory is that there can be no differences at all between dharmas, since if they are the ultimate simple reals and are indistinguishable from one another, it makes no sense to assert that in combinations they manifest characteristics which they do not have by themselves; ⁴² and if it is asserted that there are types of dharmas, such as dharmas of anger, fear, form, color, etc., they are obviously not ultimate, since each of these are made up of disparate elements. ⁴³ Anger, for instance, is the result of any number of different emotions, such as loss, betrayal, etc., and is not experienced in the same way by different people, or for the same reasons, which is also true of fear; and
form contains attributes such as hardness, resiliency, shape, etc., and if a dharma contains such disparate elements it is not a true dharma, since if it were it could not be broken down any more and could not be distinguished from other dharmas.

The crucial problem for dharma theory is how dharmas combine if they are unitary and impartite, because in order for objects to be made the dharmas must combine in some way. As Kamalāśīla points out in the Tattvasamgrahapañjikā, all contact is of parts with parts, and since a dharma has no parts there is no way that it can come in contact with another dharma. If it comes into contact it has parts, and if it does it cannot be a dharma.

One atom joined with six others must consist of six parts. If it is in the same place with six, the aggregate must be one atom. If one atom on each side of its six sides joins with another atom it must consist of six parts, because the place of one atom does not permit of being the place of the others. If there are six atoms in one atom's place then all the aggregates must be as one atom in quantity, because though revolving in mutual confrontation they do not exceed that quantity; and so aggregates also must be indivisible.

Since it is stated that atoms do not join, of what, then, is the joining of the aggregates? If joining is not proved (of the latter) it is not because they have no spatial divisions.

An absolutely solitary dharma would always exist by itself, since in order to form a whole it must be lined up with others side by side or one on top of the
other, etc. But if a dharma has one side it must have another, and if it has a top it must have a bottom, and thus it has parts and is not a dharma. Therefore, contact must be either partial or total; if it is partial then the dharma is not indivisible because it has parts, and if it is total, then the combination would lead to no increase in size or mass, since a union of two would be no larger than one alone.

Yogācāra vs. the Realist on Dreams

It is important to note that Yogācāra philosophy propounds idealistic doctrines only in order to help people to become free of the extreme view of realism. In empirical matters the Yogācāras recognize the validity of the realist claim, but state that it is false from the standpoint of highest truth (parinirvāṇa). The ultimate aim of Yogācāra philosophy is to free suffering and deluded ideation-series from dependence on, and desire for, the things of the material world, since if phenomena are recognized as ideas they have no more power to bind us. If, however, the world were real, there would be no need for a spiritual path to realize the Truth, since our perceptions would be true. Vasubandhu contends that "the world" is an idea whose actualization and development is determ-
ined by laws, but that these laws are laws of consciousness and not of any empirical reality.\textsuperscript{51} For ordinary beings the world is real. The realist assertion that the empirical world is never sublated in any consciousness (as dreams are sublated by the waking consciousness) is only true of ordinary beings, not of sages who are spiritually advanced enough to overcome the illusion of \textit{samsāra}.\textsuperscript{52} Vasubandhu does not deny that dreams and waking consciousness are different, but does hold that they are of the same nature.\textsuperscript{53} Dreams serve as an indication of the unreality of the waking world. Both are sublated, and the difference in sublation is "only a difference of degree, not kind, because the waking illusion has more of a hold on us."\textsuperscript{54}

The realist objects to this idea on the grounds that dreams are only experienced by one person alone, but empirical reality is intersubjectively accessible. It is not a private world, like a dream world, but is the world.\textsuperscript{55} If everything were merely ideas of consciousness there would be no communication or agreement on the nature or constitution of the world.

Vasubandhu's reply to this\textsuperscript{56} is that what we refer to as the objective world is only a name for the similarities of experiences of different ideation-series, which are based on the inexpressible, unnameable sub-
stratum of reality. Moreover, different consciousnesses are constituted similarly, and so they create experiences similarly. Each individual's world is somewhat different, but due to the partial coincidence of worlds there appears to be a harmony, and since one person can never experience another's reality, the differences are either not noticed or are ignored.57

The realist replies58 that the concept of sahapa-lambaniyama carried to its conclusion would entail solipsism, since if whatever is experienced has no existence apart from experience of it, other consciousnesses necessarily become only ideas in one's mind. There is no reason to see other minds as any more real than the external world. The idealist must eventually agree that he alone exists and that his world is composed of illusory phantoms which come into being only through his consciousness and will cease to be when he does, and so the lonely idealist walks in solitude among the phantasms which constitute his world.

Vasubandhu replies59 that solipsism, if it is a consequence of Yoga-cāra philosophy, is not a final consequence, nor is it a necessarily pernicious doctrine, as the realist holds. A person who has realized the non-self-existence (niḥsvabhāva) of the things of the world is no longer attached to them, and so solipsism properly grasped can serve as an aid to spiritual
progress. It is not, however, the final position, since Vasubandhu contends that ultimately the "I" is no more self-existent than the creations of consciousness. It is itself produced by consciousness and depends on the creative power of consciousness for its very existence. Vijñana is essentially contentless and formless, and so any form and content (which includes the elements of the ego) must be produced by vijñana. A subject is only a subject as long as the false duality of subject and object (grhahyadvaya) is superimposed on vijñana.

A logical response of the realist is that knowledge implies knowledge of something, and this is necessarily a real relation, since if consciousness were the only reality knowledge could not arise. If the idea of blue is the only reality and blue is identical to it, then the idea has to perform two functions at once; it has to project itself as an idea of blue, and at the same time it has to know it as blue. It would have to be subject and object at the same time, although these two are logically incompatible, since an idea cannot both project itself and know itself in the same moment. In order for something to be known there must be another something to know it, since a television cannot watch itself, and an axe cannot cut itself.
Vasubandhu replies that knowledge of something (e.g. blue) arises because knowledge has that form. Knowledge itself cannot be known and so it absurd to say "I know knowledge" - all that can be known are the contents of knowledge, as knowledge itself is only an idea which arises subsequent to perception. An instance of knowledge is a specific idea whose content is projected by itself. The idea is objectified and known at the same time, which involves an imaginary bifurcating of viññāna into subject and object. Vasubandhu contends that on the level of parikalpita "all knowledge is necessarily self-knowledge." Each object is a projection of conciousness which is at the same time known by consciousness. To know involves simultaneously being aware of knowing, since an unconscious knowledge is a contradiction. The subject is self-revealed in every act of knowledge, because without the subject there could be no knowledge, as knowledge requires a knower. Also, the subject does not require something further to grasp it, as some realists argue (i.e., something must grasp the grasper), because it becomes subject and object in the very act of knowing, in being opposed to an object, and thus consciousness divides itself into subject and object, and this process itself creates distinctions.
The purpose of Vasubandhu's idealistic upāyas is to lead ideation-series who are operating on the level of parikalpita to a state of awareness where viññāna is free of objects, in which the subject alone exists without the object standing in relation to it. Vasubandhu states, however, that viññāna is only subjective as long as it opposes another to itself, and when the content of knowledge is sublated the subject also disappears as subject, because there is nothing for it to know when only viññāna remains. Thus viññāna becomes śūnya, because ultimately there is nothing which can be known outside of viññāna. When the illusory idea of subject-object is overcome the knowing function ceases, and all that exists is pure, non-dual viññāna. Viññāna purified of all attributes is śūnyatā. It cannot be characterized by any empirical predicates. Since a thing can be characterized only by its relation to other things, viññāna in its pure state is undifferentiated. When the empirical world is sublated all distinctions cease to operate.

Thought also ceases, because thought requires another for its operation, and without an other one may say that there is awareness, but it is awareness only of itself, pure awareness in which there is not even consciousness of śūnyatā, since viññāna is no
longer distinguishable from śūnyatā. 79 When all its accidental limiting adjuncts are overcome vijnāna exists in its pure state without the illusions of objects to disturb its equanimity. 80 No distinctions whatsoever obtain in parinispanna, as the contents of vijnāna owe their existence to being created by vijnāna. They exist only insofar as they are created, and only as created, while vijnāna itself is not thus dependent. It is what creates all phenomenal reality, and all other realities are dependent on it. 81

As long as vijnāna wills something it is not in the state of parinispanna, because there is still something other than, and opposed to, it, and so in parinispanna vijnāna is completely free of any willed content, and is even free of the idea of not having any willed content. 82 Vijnāna in its pure state is like a clear pool of water which is no longer stirred up and muddied by wind. Without ideation to disturb its pristine clarity vijnāna becomes clear and unafflicted, undisturbed by its creations. 83

Advaita Vedānta philosophy holds that avidyā consists in obscuring the real, e.g., the rope, and imposing an illusion, the snake, over it. The snake is false because it is only subjective and exists only as related to vijnāna. Vasubandhu holds the opposite.
view that the illusoriness of the snake consists in its
objectification, but that it is perfectly real as a
form of vijñāna, and is only false when held to be ob-
jective.\textsuperscript{84} The nature of avidyā is to exist in depen-
dence - it is nothing in itself, and exists only as a
falsification of the true nature of vijñāna, which is
śūnyatā. It's existence is entirely parasitical; it
is a function of vijñāna which hides its true nature
from itself.

The fabricated object (kalpitā) exists in the
world only because of being produced by the con-
structive imagination (māyādidesa). But parinisspanna is a fourfold purification
of cognition.\textsuperscript{85} (Thus one becomes aware that) the essence of
the object is dependence, (and thus occurs) a
purification wherein clarity is accomplished.
The four cognitions are now characterized by
awareness of the clarity of all dharmas.\textsuperscript{85}

Objectivity is only an idea, and is not real in
itself. The subject thinks itself to be other than what
it is, but avidyā can function only as long as its
ture nature is not known.\textsuperscript{86} It is a beginningless af-
fliction - it has always been there, hiding the true
nature of vijñāna from itself. It is not, however,
endless, and when we perceive the true nature of vij-
ñāna avidyā ceases to operate.\textsuperscript{87} Unlike the Advaita
Vedāntin, who holds that the Absolute (Brahman) is
never affected by phenomena (and still provides the
basis of the illusions of samsāra), Vasubandhu and
Asaṅga hold that viññāna is really involved in the empirical world, and it actually becomes phenomena. Its content is identical to it, being merely a modification of viññāna, but the modification is not integral to it and can be overcome.

Because of false discriminations various things are falsely discriminated. What is grasped by false discrimination has no self-nature whatsoever.

When viññāna is rid of all objectivity there is no longer self-consciousness. If a person thinks that he has realized the reality of pure viññāna the negation of phenomena is not complete, because there is no self-consciousness when viññāna is freed from objects.

There is no longer anything to oppose itself to, and so it becomes what it essentially is.

This is the realm of passionlessness or purity, which is beyond description, is good, and is eternal, where one is in the state of emancipation, peace, and joy. This is the law of the Great Buddha.
Concluding Remarks

Yogācāra philosophers, like the Mādhyamikas, maintain a distinction between levels of truth. There is the empirical truth, in which objects appear as if real, and the higher, ultimate truth in which this is seen as illusion; but these two (sāmyrtti and paramārtha respectively) should not be mistaken as being separate realities, since each is real in its own right. Sāmyrtti has a provisional existence which depends on paramārtha, which is the only true reality. Sāmyrtti is only empirically real, and its reality holds only as long as one is deluded by appearances. In pure awareness (dharmatā or tathatā) it is shown to be unreal, like a mirage or a dream.

Paramārtha is not a truth along with the truth of empirical reality - it is the only truth, and when vijñāna, which created the illusion of phenomena, is cleansed of afflictions, paramārtha is realized. Sāmyrtti does, however, have a relative reality, and must therefore be considered, since it does have the power to bind us and prevent us from realization of paramārtha. Although it is essentially nothing sāmyrtti must first be realized as such for its hold to be broken.

In working out the ramifications of this insight the Yogācāra acāryas posit what amounts to a doctrine
of three truths, since in śāṅkara reality is bifur-
cated into two realities, subject and object,\(^5\) and
these are both sublated in parinirvāna (paramārtha or
pure awareness). The phenomenalized aspect of vijnāna
is called paratantra, which is the subjective, and the
third truth is parikalpita, the objective, whose ex-
istence is merely imagined and cannot exist apart
from being imagined.\(^6\) Parikalpita and paratantra to-
gether constitute the totality of our empirical experi-
ence, and when sublated they result in the non-con-
ceptual awareness of parinirvāna.\(^7\) Parikalpita has no
authentic existence, and is only imagined to exist
(kalpanāmātra). It is merely a projection, and it in-
cludes everything we imagine to be other than vijnāna.
In empirical consciousness it is relatively real,
since it can be imagined to exist, unlike a square
circle or the son of a barren woman, whose existence is
immediately seen to be false, while we can imagine pari-
kālpita to be real, and generally do so.\(^8\)

Paratantra is what appears as the subject-object
duality; the form of appearance (parikalpita) is un-
real, but its ground is real and the ground is paratan-
tra, which is vijnāna in its fragmented form, and is
termed paratantra because it is caused and affected by
causes and conditions.
The self-nature which results from dependence on others is produced by the condition of discrimination. The difference between the Absolute (perfect wisdom) and the dependent is that the former is eternally free from what is grasped by false discriminations.

Thus the Absolute and the dependent are neither the same nor different; as in the case of impermanence and permanence, the one can be seen only in the other.

Pratītya samutpāda, in the view of the Yogācāras, operates between moments of vijñāna. The impetus of one idea propels vijñāna forward to the next. Ideas are not produced by external objects, but by other ideas.

As the result of various ideations which serve as seeds, different transformations take place. The revulsion-energy of these ideations gives rise to all sorts of discriminations.10

Paratantra includes all of phenomenal reality (citra-tacāttāstra dhātukā) and is a higher level than parikalpita because in it the external object is seen as unreal, that it is only a form of vijñāna. Paratantra is real on a non-ultimate level of truth, while parikalpita is always pure illusion; paratantra is only sublated in awareness of highest truth, and thus is real but not ultimate. Whatever is only imagined is unreal, but vijñāna itself, the basis of imagining, is real.11 Parinnāpanna, the highest awareness, is identified with awareness of the substratum of reality, and is pure vijñāna freed from any afflictions. It is paratantra after it no longer mistakenly posits the illusion of the sub-
ject-object duality. It is eternally undifferentiated and is just what it is (avikāra-parinispattayāsa parinispannah). When the notion of the other is eliminated vijnāna becomes quiescent because it ceases to create, and so ultimately paratantra and parinispanna are the same.

Its (paratantra's) nature exists as characterized by both duality and absence of duality. The svabhāva of parinispanna therefore is known to be characterized by these two (because the natures of parinispanna and paratantra are the same). Because the objects of parikalpa are characterized by duality (of subject and object), but in them there is only one nature of absence (of the subject-object duality), the svabhāva of parikalpa is thought by ordinary beings to be essentially bifurcated.

Parinispanna becomes paratantra because of accidental afflictions, and this process is like a person afflicted with a psychosomatic disease. When the wrong attitude has been removed, the disease vanishes, and when abhūtapaṇḍita (mistakenly imagining objects to exist) has been stopped the empirical illusion vanishes. The relationship between the three levels can be represented as follows: (See next page)
Ultimately the Yogācāras must deny that there are levels of truth or different truths. There is only one truth, parinīṣpanna, and paratantra is parinīṣpanna when freed from afflictions. It is not essentially a lower level of truth, and can only be seen as such as long as the illusion of objectivity operates.\(^{16}\) Nothing is added to or taken away from paratantra when it is operating under the empirical illusion, since parikalpa is merely illusion, and has no authentic content.\(^{17}\) According to Vasubandhu and Asaṅga, a thing is either wholly true or completely false. Nothing is added to or taken away from vijnāna in parinīṣpanna;\(^{18}\) the two realities are not completely the same, of course, nor are they completely different.\(^{19}\) The only difference is qualitative, since parinīṣpanna is pure, unafflicted vijnāna, while paratantra is limited and
afflicted by phenomena, but there is no quantitative
difference, since *parinjīpānna* contains no more and no
less than *paratantra*.

In *MV* 18.17 Vasubandhu states
that if the world-illusion is absolutely unreal, as
the Mādhyamikas assert, then there can be neither bon-
dage nor final release. If it did not really exist,
at least as illusion, there would be no obscuring of
reality and thus no bondage, and so we could not be
released from it.

Just as there is ultimately no difference between
*paratantra* and *parinjīpānna*, though they are also not
completely the same, in *parinjīpānna* there is no longer
any perceivable difference between *vijñāna* and the sub-
stratum of reality, since they have been freed of all
concepts and imputed qualities, but neither are they
completely the same.

By no longer perceiving duality the appearance
of duality is eradicated; by eradication of this
(duality) one discovers the absence of duality,
which is *parinjīpānna*.

The eradication of that appearance is like the
non-perception of an elephant (in previous verses
Vasubandhu gave the example of a block of wood
appearing as an elephant because of a mantra
chanted by a magician), and this perception is
connected with (simultaneously) seeing the illus-
ion and the wood.

The acceptance of three levels of truth is the
distinctive characteristic which marks a Buddhist phil-
osopher as a *Yogācārin*. In the *Yogācāra* tradition, be-
ginning with Maitreyaṇātha, we find expressed the idea that the Mādhyamika conception of two truths (samyrtti and paramārtha) is a static concept, not as conducive to spiritual progress as the trisvabhāva doctrine. Both the Yogācāras and the Mādhyamikas seek to free people from ensnaring concepts and to lead them toward the highest awareness, but their upāyas are very different. The Mādhyamika method is negative, and seeks to smash our false concepts in an abrupt and final way. In the MMK Nāgārjuna dismantles many commonly accepted theories and demonstrates that apodictic certainty is impossible with any theory, but he is often extremely reluctant to state his own motivations.

The Yogācāra method is more gradual, in the sense that various upāyas are provided to enable the student to overcome attachments and illusions in hierarchically arranged stages. Furthermore, the therapeutic result of each stage is clearly stated by the authors, and it is also stated that the usefulness of each stage is ended once it has accomplished its aim. They often criticize the Mādhyamika upāya, stating that it is lacking as an effective means to salvation, because Mādhyamika philosophy does not make the full force of delusion clear enough. Correctly understood, the doctrine of three truths accomplishes this by demonstrat-
ing that appearance is only creation, is fixed, clearly ordered, and static, and exists only as imagination. Ascribing reality to it leads to delusion and suffering, but the Yogacarás assert that there is also a perfected state of being in which this illusion no longer operates. The "fulfilled" or "perfected" state of parinirvāṇa is attained when parikalpa is no longer perceived as real in any way, even therapeutic varieties of parikalpita, such as Yogacara treatises.

The paratantra, or relative reality, is the connecting link the Yogacarás think is necessary for someone to make the transition from the complete delusion of parikalpa to the perfect awareness of parinirvāṇa. It is the Yogacara equivalent of the Buddhist doctrine of pratītya samutpāda. It is the unreal imagination, because it creates the contents of its awareness, but it also has the potential to rid itself of the afflictions of parikalpa. Thus parikalpa and parinirvāṇa are actually only paratantra in different states. In the parinirvāṇa which is rid of all parikalpa there is also no parinirvāṇa, because there is no goal of parinirvāṇa except when the illusion of parikalpa exists, and since there is nothing to distinguish parinirvāṇa from anything else there is no conception even of parinirvāṇa when paratantra has freed itself of all con-
ceptions.\textsuperscript{30} The \textit{paratantra} as \textit{samsāra}, or as \textit{nirvāṇa}, cannot be denied in the same way, because we really have no concept of it at all.

The \textit{Yogācāras}, like the \textit{Mādhyamikas}, think that the highest awareness is reached through a process of realization. All three truths are essentially \textit{niḥsvabhāva}, but the character of \textit{niḥsvabhāva} is different in each:\textsuperscript{31} (1) \textit{parikalpa} is \textit{lakṣaṇa-niḥsvabhāva}, unreal in its very nature; it has no being of its own, and its apparent characteristics (\textit{lakṣaṇas}) are \textit{only} apparent, while it is essentially \textit{śūnya} and cannot be ascribed any real predicates; (2) \textit{paratantra} is \textit{utpātti-niḥsvabhāva}, it is real but appears to be produced because it is confronted with an other, but the real cause of the other is its own creative power; its apparent production (\textit{utpāṭti}) is unreal, and once this is eliminated it becomes \textit{parinīśpanna}, which is \textit{paramārtha-niḥsvabhāvatā}; (3) \textit{parinīśpanna} is the essence of all reality (\textit{dharma-nīṃ \textit{dharma-ta)}\textsuperscript{32} which is realized through overcoming the idea of epistemological duality.\textsuperscript{33} We arrive at \textit{parinīśpanna} through negation - we cannot ascribe anything to it, and so we can only say what it is not. Although the means to this awareness are primarily negative, it itself \textit{is} a positive state, and also the negation is only an apparent one, ascribed
to it from the empirical point of view, because it really has no contents. Furthermore, it transcends the categories of existence and non-existence; it has none of the qualities ascribed to existent objects, but is also not non-existent (abhāva) because it is nihsvabhāva.34

Vasubandhu makes it very clear, however, that awareness of parinīspannā does not cause one to renounce the world.35 Just as a bodhisattva following madhyamā pratīpad does not take the things of the world as real, so also he does not completely divorce himself from them. As a bodhisattva, he is concerned with helping suffering ideation-series' to reach enlightenment, and so even after he has reached perfected awareness he still voluntarily remains in sāṃsāra. Vasubandhu points out (in MV III) that even in the perfected state there is suffering, because the bodhisattva willingly works among suffering beings to help them to overcome suffering.

Also, it is known that there is duḥkha because of grasping for the appearances of characteristics and connection.

Vasubandhu comments:

In ordinary reality there is duḥkha for the following reasons: (1) grasping, i.e., grasping for false ideas of pudgalas and dharmas; (2) because of the threefold duḥkha of adherence to characteristics; (3) because of connection with
dubhka where one chooses this connection (in the fulfilled nature where the bodhisattva voluntarily chooses to immerse himself in the sufferings of samsāra). Among these three, it should be realized that the succession (of sufferings) arises out of the (illusion of) ordinary reality. 36

It is also important to realize that the doctrine of trisvabhāva is a soteriological device, an upāya, whose purpose is to lead those who are in a state of suffering and ignorance to full enlightenment; but its value is only pragmatic, as is true of all Yogācāra formulations, and is to be left behind when its purpose is accomplished.

The distinction in the order of their (the three natures') svabhāvas is only for the purpose of expediency from the standpoint of expedient usage (vyavahāra); and it is useful for penetrating to their deepest nature, when realized thoroughly from this standpoint.

Parikalpa has a nature pertaining to expedient usage, but this expedient usage nature is actually other (than what it truly is). What is desired here is the utter destruction of the expedient usage nature (vyavahāra samuccheda), (to produce) that nature where there is absence of the other (i.e., absence of the subject-object duality).

First one must penetrate the truth of paramantra, and thus one realizes that its nature is the absence of duality, and thus one enters into the realization that duality is only imagined, and is non-existent.

Thus one enters into the realization of parinिपर, where one sees that the (appearance of) duality is both existent and non-existent. For this reason it is said to be both existent and non-existent...

In order to enter the realization of the true nature of things the characteristics should be viewed as co-locative (yugapad, i.e., all three are the same in highest truth). But
for the purpose of instruction, understanding (parijñā), cessation (of illusion - prahāna), and full awareness (of the truth - prāpti) should be taken in order.47

The Philosophy of the Bodhisattva

The only viable purpose of philosophy, in the Yogācāra view, is to aid spiritual progress.38 As an intellectual excercise it is pointless, since it leads nowhere unless properly applied. There is no practical reason for trying to uncover the true nature of reality, as our empirical experience of reality is no different for having discovered its true nature as being nīḥsvabhāva.39 We still perceive things as they have always been, but our relation to them changes.40 Our practical way of living remains the same, but our orientation towards the world is transformed, and the Yogācāra acaryas think that philosophy properly understood leads one to freedom from pain and suffering.41 The fact that one asks ultimate questions at all indicates dissatisfaction with empirical reality and a desire to find something ultimate, and the Yogācāras meet this need with a philosophy which is at the same time a spiritual path.42 Yogācāra philosophy agrees with the Buddha's insight that all existence is suffering (duḥkha); birth is suffering, disease is suf-
ferring, old age is suffering, and death is suffering, and the Yogācāras attempt to alleviate suffering through insight.\textsuperscript{43} We must first become aware of the fact that all existence is duḥkha and that duḥkha is not merely one factor among other factors of existence, but the very essence of existence. Ordinary people, however, are not aware of this. They perceive duḥkha as occasional suffering, but through spiritual training the full impact of duḥkha is realized. The following analogy is helpful for understanding this concept: A hair in the hand is barely felt, but when it is in one's eye it causes intense pain; the hair is the same in both cases, but when perceived by the eye, which is more sensitive, it has a much greater impact on one's awareness. The bodhisattva's awareness is analogically similar to that of the eye, because the universality of suffering, which is not even noticed by ordinary beings, is experienced by him in its full existential import. Ordinary beings see pain as only occasional, and not as a cause for real concern, and so for them there is no need for philosophy or a spiritual discipline, but the sage feels duḥkha intensely and feels the need to overcome it.\textsuperscript{44}

When we examine the nature of pain we realize that it is determined by attitude. Some people find pleas-
ure in what others consider painful and vice-versa. Also, attitudes can change, and we can take pleasure in something which previously caused pain or discomfort. Pain is not in our experiences, but in our attitudes toward them; experiences and objects are neutral, and only are colored by interpretation, and the Yogācāryas think that the basic attitude of one's mind is the root cause of pain.\(^{45}\) We can overcome certain individual pains, but as long as we persist in attachments to some objects and experiences, and repulsion towards others, we will always be subject to suffering.\(^{46}\) Freedom can only be realized by purifying viññāna of its afflictions (cittameva samklisyate cittameva vyavadāyate).\(^{47}\)

The Yogācāras show that duḥkha is a subjective experience and that its origin is also subjective. When we are separated from something we desire we experience pain, and when something we feel aversion towards is taken away we feel pleasure.\(^{48}\) The only way to become free of pain is to overcome both these attitudes, which can only be done by realizing that objects are empty, only creations of the mind, and when this is fully understood they can no longer bind us.

Thus the purpose of philosophy is to lead one to this realization. It does not in any way change the
world, but leads one to see it as it is, and so it
effects the spiritual change which overcomes bondage to
the creations of our minds. Avidyā is the root cause
of bondage, and philosophy can reveal to us the nature
and cause of avidyā. It demonstrates the unreality of
the external world and the consequent futility of at-
tachment to it.49 Objects are only modes of vijñāna,
and once we realize this we wake up to the true nature
of things. Just as dreams lose their power to bind us
when we awake, when avidyā is overcome empirical ob-
jects can no longer affect us either positively or neg-
avely when we see that they are not external in fact,
but only appear as such.50 The notion of objectivity
is the necessary precondition for bondage, and as long
as we imagine objects to be external to us they can
affect us, and we will react to objects as if they were
real, and the attachments and aversions this occasions
give rise to new creations and the endless cycle of
pratītya samutpāda continues, propelled by our basic
misunderstanding.51 We form impressions, and the ālaya
is created to store and nurture them, and then the
other two vijñānas are formed and complete their func-
tions. This process, of course, is actually beginning-
less, and there is no way to judge one point as being
the starting point. It is similar to Heidegger's
problem of the hermeneutical circle - just as we cannot find a beginning point for interpretation, since we are already involved in the process, so we cannot find the beginning of pratītya samutpāda because we are already involved in it. The difference between Heidegger and Yogācāra philosophy is that Heidegger considers the hermeneutical circle to be an eternal cycle which we can never break free of to attain a completely objective attitude, while the Yogācāras posit the possibility of breaking free of the cycle of pratītya samutpāda by realizing its dependence on vijñāna.\(^5\)

To bring pratītya samutpāda to rest one must stop the forward momentum of the ālaya (āsrayaparāvṛtti), which is accomplished by realization of the illusory nature of phenomena, and this results in tathatā.\(^5\)

In saṃsāra vijñāna is unaware of its inherent nature, and when it realizes this it is liberated:

\[
\text{paśyatāṃ kalpanānātraṃ sarvam etad yathoditam}
\text{akalpabodhisattvānāṃ prāpta bodhir nirūpyate /}
\]

Realizing everything to be illusory, the bodhi-sattva ceases to imagine anything at all; this is bodhi or enlightenment.\(^5\)

This is nirvāṇa, the state of ultimate bliss where vijñāna, no longer disturbed by illusions, comes to rest in tathatā. One thus becomes a Tathāgata, but this does not mean that something new is added or that
something is taken away. The Tathāgata is one who has dispelled empirical illusion, but does not be-
come something he previously was not, but rather real-
izes his true nature. Vijñāna is afflicted because it perceives its own creations as real, but these are merely accidental to vijñāna, not intrinsic to it. Tathatā does not transform vijñāna into something else, but allows it to be what it essentially is by removing what is foreign to it.

Freedom from bondage (mokṣa) is a possibility for everyone. The Yogācāra acaryas realize that everyone has the potential for Buddhahood (tathāgatagarbha) but, because of differences of temperament, not everyone strives for Buddhahood. Most people, in fact, are content with the illusion of empirical reality, and so the potential remains latent. Only one in a million fully experiences the intensity of duḥkha, and only those few will feel the need to find a truth which transcends empirical truth.

Saṃbhāramārga is the first stage of the Yogācāra spiritual path, and is concerned with accumulating merit, which serves to purify one's desire, and so pre-
pares one for the further stages of spiritual pro-
gress. By itself, accumulation of merit is not suf-
ficient to reach nirvāṇa, because it operates only on
the level of samyṛtti, but is necessary to put the aspirant in the proper state of mind for reaching the higher stages.

Vijñāna is afflicted by two kinds of obstructions which hide its true nature, which are:  

1. kleśāvaraṇa, ignorance due to the afflictions, and
2. jñeyāvaraṇa, the ignorance which misunderstands the true nature of vijnana, and posits real objects. Accumulation of merit alone cannot remove these obstructions, since their root cause is intellectual. They can only be removed by true knowledge of the nature of things, and thus pūryasambhāra (accumulation of merit) is subsidiary to jñānasambhāra (pursuit of real knowledge), because only true knowledge can dispell the illusions which bind us.  

This knowledge leads to insight into the true nature of things, and is not merely an intellectual knowledge; rather, it involves a complete transformation of one's understanding of reality through the intuitive realization which arises from the awareness that all objects are śūnya.  

The second stage in this process is prayogamārga, the Path of Training, in which the bodhisattva cultivates and deepens his insight that all objects are unreal, to the extent that he ceases to perceive objective dharmas (sarvadharmaṇa na paśyati), and he realizes
the true anture (sūnyatā) of the two kinds of projections of vijnāna, svalakṣaṇas (unique particulars) and sāmānyalakṣaṇas (general characteristics). This is referred to as the usmāgatāvasthā of the disciple, in which he cultivates his awareness of the illusory nature of objects, and he meditates intensely on its ramifications. This is the mūrdhāvasthā, in which he realizes that vijnāna alone is real (cittamātre avatīṣate cittam etad iti prativedhāt), and he also realizes that everything is appearance-only, and nothing is independent of, or external to, vijnāna. Thus the distinction between vijnāna and its objects is overcome (cittam eva sarvāṭhapatribhāsatvam pāsyati), and all that remains in this stage is the idea of vijnāna as knowing subject, which is overcome in the next stage, kṣyāntyāvasthā, in which the subject itself is seen to be unreal, and it is dependent on its objects in order to be constituted as a knowing subject.

This is a difficult realization to attain. It is relatively easy to realize the unreality of objects, but it requires great effort to see the subject also as unreal. This stage begins the true emancipation of the bodhisattva from the false creations of vijnāna, and leads to the next stage, the laukikāgradharmāvasthā, in which the bodhisattva enters the state of ānantarya-
samādhi, a trance state in which vijnāna is no longer perceived as knower because it has been divested of all possible content. In this stage even the awareness of the true nature of vijnāna ceases, since there is nothing existing in opposition to it. To be perceived at all vijnāna must have something standing in opposition to it, and without this both the ideas of objectivity and subjectivity cease.

The next stage is darśana-mārga, the Path of Vision, in which the bodhisattva has an intuition of the highest reality free from the duality of subject and object, and he sees all reality as a pure, undifferentiated Whole free of all dualities and concepts, and he enters into the first bhūmi (stage of development), at which point the ālaya ceases to function, and he realizes that all reality is essentially One, and he acquires the characteristic excellences in attainment of bodhi, such as smṛtyupsthāna (awareness of the inner meaning of the scriptures), etc., and he feels compassion for all suffering, deluded beings, although he has transcended suffering and delusion himself.

The highest stage in bhāvanāmārga, the Path of Concentration, in which he enters the rest of the bhūmis, and he attains to a complete mystical awareness of the true nature of reality (tathata). He
first experiences \textit{samāhita-}jñāna (transic awareness), which is an immediate, direct, incommunicable awareness, and then \textit{prṣṭalabdha-}jñāna, the empirical awareness which is the result of the first intuition. It is a conceptual knowledge, a logical explanation of what had previously been a purely personal experience.\textsuperscript{76} This, unlike the initial, transic realization, can be communicated to others who are still ignorant. The culmination of this process is \textit{vajropama-}samādhi, in which the operation of the ālaya is completely stopped, and the bodhisattva is no longer troubled by any subjective constructions, and he realizes \textit{sarvākār-}ajñātā, the universal consciousness which is no longer limited by particular objects, and he rests in absolute and ultimate reality \textit{(anuttarapada)}, and he works for the salvation of all beings.\textsuperscript{77}

\textbf{The Middle Way}

It is extremely difficult to determine which school of Buddhism comes closest to following the essence of Buddha's teachings, since all admit that he taught different things at different times.\textsuperscript{78} Also, he never wrote anything himself, and the question of which sermons and dialogues were to be accepted as authoritative was a matter of great contention among schools of
Buddhism, each of which had its own idea of which sermons and dialogues were to be accepted as canonical. One of the major motivations, in fact, for writing down his sermons was because disputes had arisen as to Buddha's actual teachings. As a result, each sect remembered and interpreted Buddha's words in such a way that they substantiated its theories. Furthermore, Buddha's speeches were not prepared, and were often answers to questions, and they do seem to have been directed toward his listeners' levels of understanding, as the Madhyamikas assert.

The problem is still further complicated by the idea put forward in the Mahāyāna canons that there is no doctrine which has been taught by Buddha:

Between that night during which the Tathāgata attained to enlightenment and the night during which he will be completely extinguished, in that time not one syllable was spoken by the Tathāgata, and he will not speak a single syllable: the Buddha word is a non-word.

This can mean that there is no certainty that Buddha taught any particular view, or can refer to his unwillingness to discuss unanswerable metaphysical problems (avyākṛta) - a literal interpretation of this statement is certainly not justifiable, since it is clear from the Buddha's dialogues that he did propound a doctrine which aimed at freeing all beings from the suffering round of existence, and Buddha recognized
that there are differences between individuals, and so what leads to liberation for one will not work for another.

Because Buddha was more concerned with leading suffering beings out of bondage rather than propounding a completely consistent doctrine, differences of opinion inevitably arose as to the true import of his teachings. This thesis has examined the interpretations of various Buddhist schools, especially Yogācāra and Mādhyamika, and has focused on the concept of madhyamā pratipad, which is central to Buddha's doctrine. Madhyamā pratipad is the proper way to live, the way in which the Buddha relates to the world, and has been given various meanings at various stages of Buddhist philosophy. It is clearly impossible to give a valid opinion as to which school of Buddhism propounds the "right" understanding, or even which has the "best" understanding, since such an opinion could only represent my subjective biases. This thesis has concentrated primarily on the interpretation of madhyamā pratipad but forth by Yogācāra, and how this was influenced by Mādhyamika philosophy, not with the aim of deciding which is closer to the "true" meaning of madhyamā pratipad, but to examine the bases of the development of the Yogācāra philosophy, and to show that it is
largely a result of a reinterpretation of Mādhyamika and early Buddhist philosophies. We have also seen how the Yogācāra acāryas’ interpretation of madhyamā pratipad differed from the early Buddhists and the Mādhyamikas, without completely rejecting their ideas, but rather took the best insights of both and reworked them into a truly Mahāyāna philosophy. Yogācāra philosophy is designed to lead the maximum number of suffering beings to enlightenment by providing a philosophy which is at the same time a spiritual path, a philosophy which ultimately overcomes philosophizing by leading one to pure nondiscursive awareness of the true nature of reality.

All theories being obviously constructed... Yogācāra is finally as Śūnyavāda as is Nāgārjuna’s Mādhyamika. The system is a system to make an end to systems: it is a therapeutic method rooted in meditation (yoga-acāra) directed at the alleviation of all unnecessary sufferings through the annihilation of mental constructions.

The crucial point at which the Yogācāras differ from the Mādhyamikas is in their interpretations of the concept of śūnyatā. This idea was not new to either Madhyamika or Yogacara, but is found in some of the Nikāyas and Āgamas. An important statement of śūnyatā is found in the Cūlasūṇṇata-sutta (Lesser discourse on Emptiness), in which the Lord Bhagavān ex-
pounds for Ānanda the meditation on emptiness, saying:

It is perceived that when something does not exist there, the latter (the place) is empty with regard to the former. Further it is comprehended that something that remains there does exist as a real existent...emptiness is nonbeing on one hand but there is, on the other, something remaining which, being reality, cannot be negated. Emptiness includes both being and nonbeing, both affirmation and negation... This is the true definition of emptiness... Thus, Ānanda, this comes to be for him a true, not mistaken, utterly purified and incomparably sublime realization of (the concept of) emptiness.

In verse I.1 of the MV Vasubandhu is concerned with the related idea of the connection between abhūtāparikalpa and śūnyatā. The structures of daily life are stated to be "unreal ideas," which are the result of discrimination between, and attachment to, two things, the grasping subject and the thing which is grasped (grāhaka and grāhya), and it is asserted that this duality, which gives rise to conceptualization and discrimination, is not real. Abhūtāparikalpa and the imagination which conceives it are found to be śūnya when seen in their true nature, but the imagination, although it is śūnya, is constantly operative, and so it is in some way a product of śūnyatā, at least on the level of apparent reality.

All entities, therefore, are neither exclusively empty nor exclusively non-empty. This is so because of the existence (of abhūtāparikalpa), because of the non-existence (of its phenomenal creations), and because of the existence (of
śūnyatā). This idea is mādhyamā pratipad.

Vasubandhu comments on this idea:

Therefore the nature of śūnyatā is here expositted in the undistorted truth in the statement: 'It is perceived as it really is that, when anything does not exist in something, the latter is empty with regard to the former; and further it is understood as it really is that, when, in this place something remains, it exists here as a real existent. The expression "something remains" (aviśiṣṭa) shows the divergence of the Yogācāras' interpretation of śūnyatā from that given by the Mādhyamikas. While the latter see śūnyatā as a radical negation of sva-bhāva in all things, the Yogācāra acāryas see it as a negation of designations. What is left over after these are transcended is real, but inexpressible. As MV I.13 states: "Truly, the characteristic of śūnyatā is the non-existence of duality and the existence of non-existence." This idea of the "existence of non-existence" is a special feature of the Yogācāra interpretation of śūnyatā, and was strongly attacked by later Mādhyamikas, who held that śūnyatā is only non-existence, and that the "existence of non-existence" is a patent contradiction. It is not, however, completely foreign to Mahāyāna philosophy, and even in the Prajñāpāramitā literature we see statements such as: "Form is emptiness, and this very emptiness is form." (rūpaṁ śūn-
yatā, śūnyataiva rūpa). 86

The Mādhyamika interpretation of śūnyatā, according to the Yoqcācāras, operates only at the level of paratantra, and is unable to grasp the substratum of reality which is known in awareness of the highest truth. Śūnyatā does not mean non-existence; awareness of śūnyatā is the realization that when all qualities are stripped away and no longer function all that is left is inexpressible. This is the Yoqcācāra doctrine of the trisvabhāva of śūnyatā: (1) abhāva-śūnyatā, śūn-yatā as non-being; (2) tathā-bhāva-śūnyatā, śūnyatā as tathatā, and (3) prakṛti-śūnyatā, or essential śūnyatā. These are directly related to the three respective levels of reality: parikalpa, paratantra, and parinīṣpanna, which represent all states of entities without exception. As Asaṅga states in the Āryadeśaṇāvikhyāpana: "When it is realized that nothing exists here, and yet something of it remains, then the non-duality of sūnyata is explained in accordance with two-fold reasoning." 89

To understand the Yoqcācāra concept of "what remains" it is instructive to look at the Ratnagotra, an examination of the tathāgatagarbha (matrix or womb of the Tathāgata) theory. 90 This is considered by some scholars to be a Yoqcācāra text, since its teaching
bear a strong resemblance to some Yogācāra teachings, and its authorship is generally ascribed to Maitreyanātha, the semi-mythical founder of Yogācāra, according to Tibetan tradition. It is probably not a text written by a Yogācāra author, however, since it differs from Yogācāra philosophy at some crucial points, especially on the question of "what remains," but these differences are helpful in understanding the Yogācāra position regarding the nature of the highest reality.

The Ratnagotra is primarily concerned with the nature of the Tathāgata, and in verse I.154-155 it discusses the "emptiness of the Tathāgata." The Buddha-nature is perfectly pure in its essence, according to the Ratnagotra, and no contaminations or afflictions whatsoever exist in it, nor can any positive attributes be added to it.\(^9\) It is empty with respect to contaminations, but not with regard to Buddha-virtues, which it possesses in incalculable numbers, and these are its essence, all other attributes being merely adventitious afflictions (āqantukakleśa), not essential to the Tathāgata, and should be removed by the practice of meditation.\(^9\)

While the BB and MV assert that qualities of existence and non-existence adhere in one and the same
object, the Ratnagotra asserts that existent qualities are part of the svabhāva of tathāgatagarbha, and what does not exist is not a part of it - "what is not" is affliction, and "what is" is Buddhahood. Thus tathāgatagarbha is not simultaneously being and non-being, but is only pure being. Moreover, "what remains" is understood differently by the Yogācāra acāryas and the Ratnagotra. For Vasubandhu and Asaṅga, what remains is abhūta parikalpa, which, conversely, in its afflicted state is the greatest hindrance to true awareness; while the Ratnagotra contends that the tathāgatagarbha is completely free of all traces of all afflictions whatsoever, and is rather optimistic regarding the possibility of eliminating all afflictions. The Yogācāras, however, think that the basis of afflictions always remains but, once designations have ceased to function their existence cannot be described in any way. The essential nature of reality is empty, because nothing can be attributed to it, but while the tathāgatagarbha is also empty, it is empty only of afflictions - it has innumerable qualities, and is precisely that matrix of perfections which is left over when all afflictions are subtracted. For the Yogācāra acāryas, however, abhūtaparikalpa can only be pure and lucid if it is free of all qualities, positive as well as negative, since
any designation is merely a name, and is artificially added to true reality.

There is, finally, no 'affliction' and 'alleviation' which could be set against each other, either. And there is no detriment in what is termed 'affliction,' nor excellence in what is termed 'alleviation.' Afflictions are a mental construction. For by its radiant nature, the dharma-dhātu, emptiness, is unafflicted. All that had disturbed it came from the constructions which have now been melted into it again.

Thus, in the final analysis, nothing can be authentically asserted of reality, since any such assertion in some way a falsification of the truth of things, including the statement which has just been made. From the standpoint of ultimate awareness, therefore, the only appropriate response to reality is silence, the ineffable silence of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas who directly realize the truth of all reality.
Notes to the Introduction


2. This is a common idea in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, and seems to be based on the idea that the Buddha's first sermon, the Dhammacakkapavatthanasutta, was, as the title indicates, the "First Turning of the Wheel of Dhamma." This is developed in Mahayana literature, for instance in the seventh chapter of the Samdhinirmocanasutra, and in Boston's and Taranatha's Histories of Buddhism (see Boston Vol II, p. 52-4 and Chemillier's Doctrine of Buddhism p. 91-100), which see early Buddhism as the First Swinging, the Mahayana philosophy as represented in the Prajnaparamita literature as the Second, and Yogacara as the Third.

3. Cf. MV IV and V, and the third section of the "Tattvartha" chapter of the BB.


5. For this reason we find that some statements in the MV seem to contradict each other, and many practices outlined in the MV (especially in Chapters II and V) aim at cultivating very different awarenesses in beings with different types of afflictions. Chapter II. 14-17, for instance, gives a description of various practices, as well as their results, and shows how each practice is left behind when its result is achieved.

6. MV IV.1 states: "atmabhinvesava-savstvam cittam tat-pariksayaniroudha-satyam avataraty atmocchedabhayapagamat" "Attachment to self is (only) citta, and by investigation of it (i.e. the self) one enters into the truth of the cessation of suffering (niruddha-satya), because of the disappearance of the fear of the cessation of self (because the self is seen to be only citta)." MV, ed. Gadjin M. Nagao, Tokyo 1964, p. 50, my translation.

7. "Adita tavat skandhas te trividhenarthena veditavyah/ anekatvarthena yat kincid rupam atitanagata-pratyutpannam iti vistaraha/ abhisamksearthena tat sarvam aikadhyan abhisamkshipyeti/ paricchedarthena ca rupadila-kshanasya prthaktya-vyavasthanat/ rasyartho hi skandharthna evam ca loke rasya-artho dhrstata iti/

"Firstly, the skandhas should be known (as having) three different natures. With the nature of separateness every present moment of form is different from past and future moments, and this is also so of the whole assemblage (of skandhas). Thus having gathered all of these together because of the commonality of their efficacies, because of this determination there (appear

(195)
to be) discrimination between parts and the whole, of characteristics, form, etc. (But) the conglomeration of efficacies of the skandhas is thus seen to constitute together an undividable accumulation of various efficacies. MVIII.17, Ibid, p. 45. This is also my translation, as are all translations in this work unless otherwise indicated.

8MV III.16.

9Cf. MV III.17.

From the standpoint of highest truth there are no ultimately valid theories or practices, and there are not even "individuals" who can be afflicted of purified, as MV V.22 states: "na hi pudgalasya saṃkleso na viśuddhir nāpi dharmasya / yas-māṃ na pudgalo 'sti na dharma m yataś ca na kasyacit saṃkleso na vyavadānam ato na saṃklesa-pakṣe kasyacid dhānīḥ na vyavadāna pakṣe kasyacid viśesah /"

"There is neither affliction nor purification for dharmas or pudgalas (collections, which are what are misunderstood to be "individuals"), and because pudgalas and dharmas do not exist there can be neither affliction nor alleviation of anyone at all, and no merit. So there is no real detriment in the afflictions, nor any real benefit in alleviation." Ibid., p. 68.

11This does not mean, however, that one who realizes this should remain silent and not aid other beings in realizing this truth. The Yogacāra is very concerned with helping others to realize the highest truth (paramārthasatya), and so he offers various theories to achieve this end, but remembers that any theory is ultimately superseded by realization of the highest truth: "Therefore from the Scriptures and also from the Tathāgata's supreme lineage of trustworthy successors, one should understand that all dharmas have an inexpressible essential nature. Now, since all dharmas have thus inexpressible essential nature, why is expression applicable at all? Verily, because without expression, the inexpressible true nature could not be told to others, nor heard by others. And if it were neither spoken nor heard, then the inexpressible essential nature could not become known. Therefore, expression is applicable for producing knowledge through hearing." On Knowing Reality, (a translation of the "Tattvārtha" chapter of Asaṅgā's Boddhisattva-Bhūmi), Janice Dean Willis, N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1979, p. 125.

12Thus Asaṅga writes: "What is knowing precisely, in detail, the investigated designations for essential nature? It is that knowing whereby the bodhisattva, with regard to a given thing conceived of as "form," etc., after having investigated its designations for essential nature as designations only, knows and well knows in detail that in designations relating to that given thing there is only the mere semblance of essential nature, and
that in truth essential nature is lacking there. For him, seeing that "essential nature" as but a magical creation, a reflected image, an echo, a hallucination, the moon's reflection in the waters, a dream and an illusion, he knows that this semblance is not made up of that essential nature. This is the third knowing precisely, in detail, which is the sphere of most profound knowledge (ṣaṅgabhīrārtha gocara)." Ibid., p. 137.

Sprung makes a similar statement in his introduction to his translation of the Prasannapadā, where he states: "...every position taken up, every view (drṣṭi) held, entails claims that are either self-contradictory or false in the face of everyday experience, or incompatible with the possibility of enlightenment — a possibility which neither Nāgārjuna nor Candrakīrti ever questions and which, therefore, serves as a devastating condemnation of inadequate philosophy." Mervyn Sprung, Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979, p. 4. T.R.V. Murti makes a similar statement in his Central Philosophy of Buddhism, London: Unwin, 1955, p. 131.

13 As Prasannapadā 1.58.13 states: "And so the endeavor of this first chapter is to establish that things do not really arise by opposing the perverse foisting (adhyāropa) of an essential nature on things. It will be the endeavor of the remaining chapters to invalidate and reject any and all reifying distinctions (viśesya) which are foisted on things. All reifying distinctions such as, 'the one in motion,' 'space to be traversed' and 'movement' do not obtain and it is the purpose of the doctrine of 'dependent origination', i.e., the true way of things, to establish this." Sprung, op. cit., p. 51-2.

15 Cf. MV IV and V, and II.14-17.
16 Willis, op. cit., p. 113.
17 Cf. MV III.16-17.
18 This is especially true of MV chapter IV, which is concerned primarily with meditative trance states, and describes various experiences associated with them and obstructions relating to their attainment.

19 Asaṅga states: "His (i.e., the bodhisattva's) mind abides within, equipoised. And he trains himself in the fixing of his mind, so as to completely purify the Four Sublime Abodes (catur-brāhmavihāra), and...he becomes wise, knowing the Supreme Reality (paramatattvajñā). He trains himself to know the Supreme Reality, so that in the future he will himself, in the Great Vehicle, enter Parinirvāṇa." Willis, op. cit., p. 95.
Cf. Willis p. 72.


Cf. Willis p. 117.

By "subjective idealism" I refer to the doctrine which holds that all perceptions are solely the result of mental activity and have no basis in external reality. Subjective idealists think that there are no things apart from thinking beings, and that the things we believe ourselves to perceive are only the ideas of thinking beings. There is thus no objective world apart from the perceiving mind. As I hope to make clear in this paper, this is not the position Yogācāra upholds, because yogacārinins do assert that there is a given thing (vastu) which gives rise to perceptions, but which is itself free of discriminations (vikalpa).

MV V. 26 states: "bhūtam cittam iti dharmma-samāropānta abhūtam ity apāvadāntaḥ/ tat-paraivarjanārtham madhyamā pratipad yatra na cittam, na cetanā na mano na vijñānam /

"Citta is real (bhūta) is the extreme view of superimposing (citta) on dharmas; and citta is unreal is the extreme view of denial (or negation). The intention of madhyamā pratipad is avoiding these (views), since there is really no "citta," 'cetanā,' (volition), or 'manas' or 'vijñāna' there." Nagao, op. cit., p. 70.


Ibid., p. 17.

For instance, Murti writes: "Vijñānavāda is a niḥsvabhāvatā-vāda, as it rejected the reality of the objective in toto; and in consequence it rejected the duality of subject and object with which consciousness is apparently infected." Murti, op. cit., p. 106.

I think that one reason for the confusion concerning Yogācāra's actual position is the doctrines of some later Yogācāras, such as Dharmapāla (fourth century) and Hsūan-tsang (who translated Dharmapāla's VMś commentary into Chinese as the Cheng wei shih lun, which has been translated into French by le Vallee-Poussin, Paris: 1925-28). While they did propound doctrines which seem to deny the reality of the external object altogether, the earlier Yogācāra acāryas (Vasubandhu, Asaṅga, and Sthiramati, who wrote a commentary on Vasubandhu's KSP, did not.

30 As he states in his introduction, p. vi.

31 Cf. KSP 214.3-5.

32 Cf. TN v. 35-38.

33 Cf. Triṃśikā XVII and XXVII.

34 Viṃśatikā XVI.


36 This will only be a brief outline of key concepts, as this topic will be covered more fully in chapters 4 and 5.


38 Asāṅga states: "Precisely because Suchness is not thoroughly known (aparijñātavat), the eight kinds of discursive thought (vikalpa) arise for immature beings (bāla) and operate so as to create the three bases (trivastu), which further produce the receptible worlds (bhājanaloka) of all sentient beings. The Eight are as follows: (1) discursive thought concerning essential nature; (2) discursive thought concerning particularity; (3) discursive thought concerning grasping whole shapes; (4) discursive thought concerning "I"; (5) discursive thought concerning "mine"; (6) discursive thought concerning the agreeable; (7) discursive thought concerning the disagreeable, and (8) discursive thought contrary to both of these." Willis, op. cit., p. 125-126.

39 Ibid., p. 106.

40 Cf. Willis p. 110.

41 Cf. Willis p. 139-40, and MV III.13-14.

42 Cf. MV I.3 and III.6.

43 Cf. MV III.21.

44 Cf. MV III.17.

45 Cf. MV I.9.

46 Thus in the "constructed nature" (parikalpita, or ordinary reality) designations are taken to be true expressions of
a thing's nature, but are completely overcome in the realization of the Highest Truth: "parikalpitasya svabhāvasya lakṣanām eva
nāsti tīt alakṣanām evāsya nairātmyām paratantrasyaṃstī lakṣanām na
sūtu yathā parikalpyata iti tad-vilakṣanābhy asya lakṣanām nairātmyām
/ parinīpannas tu svabhāvo nairātmyām eveti prakṛtir evāsya
nairātmyām iti/"

"The characteristics of the svabhāva of the constructed
nature themselves do not exist, its absence of self is that it
has no characteristics. The characteristics of paratantra ex-
ist, but not as constructed (by the imagination), so the ab-
sence of self of the characteristics of paratantra is that it
has a characteristic which is different from that. But the
nature of parinīpanna (the fulfilled nature) (is such that)
its absence of self (is seen) in its essential nature, and so
absence of self alone is its true nature." Nagao, op. cit.,
p. 39.

47 Cf. MV II.14-17.
48 Cf. MV III.7.
49 Willis, op. cit., p. 110.
50 Ibid., p. 86-7.
51 Ibid., p. 113.
53 "yathāpadeśam śūnyatā mahatī vidyā sādhyaśārāṇā
bhāvabhāvādigrāhatīraskāreṇa madhyamā pratipadā
prahīṇāram
paramṇa"

Sprung translates: "The absence of being as taught here is
a great esoteric wisdom, and realized in practice and fully
grasped, that is, without recourse to the ideas of existence
and non-existence, but as the middle way (madhyamā
pratipad),
can lead to full enlightenment." Sprung, p. 234.

54 Cf. MV III.7.
55 MV I.1. p. 17 Nagao. I have generally translated abhūta
parikalpita as "constructive ideation," for lack of a better
English equivalent. Parikalpita means "constructed," "deter-
mined," or "illusory"; abhūta means "unreal." In this passage it
seemed awkward to translate this as "unreal (or non-existent)
imagination exists," and so I have translated it as "constructive
ideation exists," which hopefully avoids this difficulty.

56 Asaṅga states: "Now it should be understood that those
eight kinds of errant (mithyā) discursive thought which belong to immature beings and which engender the three bases and cause the continual return to the world, operate through weakness of and non-engagement with, these four kinds of knowing precisely, in detail. Moreover, from errant discursive thought defilement arises; from defilement, circling in samsāra, the consequences of samsāra, i.e., the sufferings of birth, old age, and death.

But whenever the bodhisattva resorts to the four kinds of knowing precisely, in detail, he knows the eight kinds of discursive thought. And because of his right knowledge, in this lifetime there is no generation, now or in the future, of a given thing associated with proliferation which could serve as a mental support and as a foundation for discursive thought. And because discursive thought does not arise, there is no generation in the future of a given thing having that as its support. Thus for him that discursive thought, along with the given thing, ceases (nirodha). This should be understood as the cessation of all proliferation. Therefore, one should understand the complete cessation of proliferation as the bodhisattva's "Parinirvāṇa of the Great Vehicle."

Willis, p. 139-40. Cf also MV II, III, and V.

57 Cf. Willis p. 125.

58 Cf. MV IV.8, V.11. and the exhortation to mindfulness (smṛti) in IV.5, which states: "smṛti ālambane 'sampramōṣaḥ/ samprajñayām smṛty-asampramoṣe sati layauddhātyānubodhaḥ/ anubhuya tad-apagāmyābhisāmskāraṇaḥ tasya layauddhātyasopāśāntau satyāṁ praśaṭha-vāhitā cittasyoṣpekaṁ"

"Mindfulness consists in not losing (concentration) in the meditative object. The state of knowing is a recognition of lassitude or agitation when loss of mindfulness has occurred. The impulse toward removal of them when they have been recognized is a volition, and equanimity of citta is remaining in tranquillity once lassitude and agitation have been put to rest." Naqao, p. 52.

59 The word bodhisattva is an extremely difficult one to render into English, primarily because the concept of bodhisattva has so many ideas associated with it. For the many different ways it has been translated, see Har Dayal, The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature (Delhi: Pottlal Banarsidass, 1932), p. 4-9, where he lists many different translations which have been given, and gives his own translation of "spiritual warrior" based on the Tibetan equivalent of sattva as dpab which means hero or warrior, and is evidently a mistaken translation of the Sanskrit word sakta. I personally find Dayal's arguments very unconvincing,
since all he shows is that the Tibetans thought that sattva was sakta, and although in many cases referring to Tibetan sources can be instructive, in this case it only confuses the issue, since it is unlikely that all the Buddhist writers who used the term bodhisattva were mistaken about the derivation of the word.

60 The pāramitās are the various perfections which the bodhisattva cultivates on his way toward becoming a Tathāgata (fully completed being). They are: dāna (generosity), śīla (morality), ksānti (patience), vīrya (energy), dhyāna (meditation), and prajñā (wisdom). To this list are sometimes added another four: upāya (or upāya-kausalya – expedient action), pranidhāna (resolution), bala (strength), and jñāna (knowledge). Vasubandhu accepts the last four, while Asaṅga, at least in the BB, only mentions the first six (cf. "Tattvārtha" chapter, part I).

61 Cf. Willis p. 87.
62 Cf. Willis p. 89.
Notes to Chapter One

1Cf. Radhakrishnan and Moore, op. cit., p. 274.

2An example of this attitude is found in Majjhima-Nikāya, sutta 72: "The Tathāgata, O Vaccha, is free from all theories; but this, Vaccha, does the Tathāgata know - the nature of form, and how form arises, and how form perishes; the nature of sensation, and how sensation arises and how sensation perishes; the nature of perception, and how perception arises, and how perception perishes...the nature of consciousness, and how consciousness arises, and how consciousness perishes. Therefore I say that the Tathāgata has attained deliverance and is free from attachment, inasmuch as all imaginings, or agitations or proud thoughts concerning an Ego or anything pertaining to an Ego, have perished, have faded away, have ceased, have been given up and relinquished." From Buddhism in Translation, by H.C. Warren, New York: Atheneum, 1972, p. 125.

3As a later section of the same sutta indicates: "Profound, O Vaccha is this doctrine, recondite, and difficult of comprehension, good, excellent, and not to be reached be mere reasoning, subtile, and intelligible only to the wise."

4Quoted on page one of this paper.


6As indicated by the fact that it is quoted in the third part of Asaṅga's Tattvartha chapter of the BB and MV V.22.

7For instance, see Saptasatikā 201-205, Aṣṭasāhasrikā XVIII.348-351, and Pancavimsatisahasrikā 90 and 225-256.

8This idea is expressed in the opening kārikās, which assert the falsity of various metaphysical views concerning the nature of things:

"Neither perishing nor arising in time, neither terminable nor eternal,
Neither self-identical nor variant in form,
neither coming nor going;
Such is the true way of things, the serene coming to rest of the manifold of named things,

(203)
As taught by the perfectly enlightened one whom I honor as the best of teachers."

Sprung, p. 32-33. Cf. also p. 262, 183, and 158.

9 As Kārikā III states:

"No things whatsoever exist, at any time, in any place, having arisen of themselves, from another, from both or without cause."

Sprung, p. 36

10 Dravya, according to the Vaibhāṣikas (the sect of Sautrāntika which Vasubandhu belonged to before his conversion to the Mahāyāna), is a real entity, which is identified as such by: (1) the fact that its characteristic may be recognized by at least one consciousness (cf. Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa I, ad. 10 dl). All actually existing entities possess svalākṣapās, the distinguishing characteristics by which it it identifiable; (2) it must not be able to be further divided (cf. Kośa VI.4).

True entities in the Vaibhāṣika view are thus only the momentary appearances of feelings, psychic formations, conceptions, and consciousness-perceptions. Any physical body or series of perceptions thus cannot be considered to be dravyas, since they are made up of various elements which each have individual characteristics.

Each dravya has its distinctive svabhāva (specific manner of being, or nature) which is perceived by one or more consciousnesses as a distinctive characteristic. A change in characteristic entails a change in things; there are no underlying entities which possess characteristics - things are the characteristics themselves as they are revealed to consciousnesses. In connection with this idea, Vaibhāṣika asserts (as Mādhyamika does also) a distinction between two levels of reality, (1) sāṃvrti-satya, or conventional reality, also sometimes referred to as prajñāpti-satva, the truth of designations, which supposes that verbal designations are actually the same as the objects which they refer to, and (2) paramārtha-satya, the highest truth, which has as its awareness the true svalākṣapās of true dravyas.

It is interesting to note, however, that even as early as the writing of the Kośa, Vasubandhu was moving toward the idea (held by all Yogācāra philosophers) of tri-svabhāva, or three levels of truth (cf. Kośa II, ad. 22).
Vaibhāṣika categorizes all events into 75 basic types of dravyas, each of which always manifests its unique characteristic. Paramārtha-satya, on the other hand, subsumes all dravyas, the momentary entities, into broader categories, in which individual characteristics are no longer apparent. The Bhadanta Vasumitra held that all designations are actually only prajñāpti-sat, but that underlying each designation there is some complex of moments which are really paramārtha-sat, but which can never be perceived in their true state by people who rely solely on discursive thought, and can only be characterized by the most general designations, and one of the "options" given in the Vibhaṣā is that it is possible to hold that there is only one theory regarding conditioned things which is ultimately true, that "All things are empty and devoid of self" (Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques V, p.164.).

Vasubandhu attacked the Vaibhāṣika conception of dravya later because it considered sense-fields to be true dravyas, whereas sense-fields are actually a collection of dravyas, grouped together because they share certain common characteristics (sāmānyavātīśa-laksana). A dravya, according to Vasubandhu, is by definition a unique entity, and thus a collection cannot be a dravya. A somewhat later Vaibhāṣika, Sanghabhadra, rejects the previously mentioned criteria, and holds that the character of a dravya is that it can give rise to a citta, when the citta arises solely as a result of the thing perceived (cf. Nyavānusāra 50). A dravya may differ in bhāyas (specific types), but its general way of being (svabhāva) is of one sort. This appears to contradict the Vibhaṣā, which does not agree to a distinction between essential and secondary characteristics, and which attacks the Bhadanta Dharmatṛata (Vibhaṣā MCB V, p. 24) for propounding this view. It is also rejected by Vasubandhu, who asserts (KSP 15-17) that there is no way to determine which characteristics are primary and which are secondary.

11For the critique of this view, see PP 115-6, p. 92-93 Sprung, and ch. VII, kārika I, which states:

"There is no space which exists prior to its distinguishing characteristic; if it existed prior to its distinguishing characteristic it would follow that it was without character." Sprung, p. 103.

12For the critique of this school, cf. ch. IX,
kārikās 3-4: "If an agent not actual as such gives rise to a product not actual as such then such a product would be uncaused and the agent would be non-causal. In the absence of the causal principle there will be no cause and no effect." Sprung, p.117.

13As PP ch. XIV, kārikā 9 states: "Not dependent on anything other than itself, at peace, not manifested as named things, beyond thought construction, not of varying form - thus the way things are really is spoken of." Sprung, p. 183.

14As Nāgārjuna states in kārikā 24 of the "Nirvāṇa" chapter: "Ultimate beatitude is the coming to rest of all ways of taking things, the repose of named things." Sprung, p. 262.


16The awareness of the true nature of things is reached not by discursive thought, but by direct insight, as kārikā 18 in the "Four Buddhist Truths" chapter states: "We interpret the dependent arising of all things as the absence of being in them. Absence of being is a guiding, not a cognitive, notion, presupposing the everyday. It is itself the middle way." Sprung, p. 238.

17Prapāñca is a difficult concept to render into English. In the early Pāli canon it meant attachment, but in Mahāyāna philosophy, especially in Mādhyaṃika, it refers to named things (as Sprung translates it) or conceptual proliferation, which engenders the seemingly endless procession of names and concomitant things (vastus). On account of prapāñca there is the continued attachment to the world-illusion (which is made up of names, discriminations, judgements, etc.), and because of this reality is never experienced directly as it really is, freed of distorting superimpositions.


19Pratītya samutpāda is the Buddhist doctrine that everything arises in dependence. In Mādhyaṃika thought it is seen as "non-dependent non-origination", as Sprung states (p. 272), and is equated with śūnyatā.

20Cf. the references given in note 5.
For instance, see PP 237-8.

Literally "thatness" or "suchness," this term is identical with सून्यताः and समताः also, and refers to the ultimate state of reality freed of all conceptions and designations, which is invariable and timeless, and does not undergo any change, whether or not it is realized or taught. A being whose awareness is limited to phenomenal reality cannot know the highest truth because all his experiences are confined to the awareness structures of साम्यर्त्ति, and thus are characterized by avidyā. In order to be known, however, the highest truth requires beings to know it. It is the truth, but is not aware of itself as truth, and cannot declare the truth. Only a being who is able to relate to both realms, the relatively real and the truly real, can possibly know the Absolute and reveal it to others. Thus the difference is made between तथताः (the real or absolute truth) and the तथागता, the being who is aware of the truth. Thus the तथागता, though not the absolute truth himself, is a perfect emanation of it and is able to realize fully and reveal perfectly the truth to all beings which are able to grasp it.

One of the three bodies of the Buddha, according to Mahāyāna tradition (the other two are the संभोगकृिय, or enjoyment-body, and निर्माणकृिय, or transformation-body). धर्मकृिय is the Cosmical Body, the essence of all beings.

"The exhaustion, the ceasing to function of all ways of holding to fixed concepts stemming from theories or views (दृष्टि) of any kind whatsoever, is the absence of being in things (सून्यताः)." Sprung, p.150.

My trans. The Sanskrit passage reads: "सून्यताः नास्तिति उभे 'पि अंति / शुद्धि अशुद्धिः इमे 'पि अंति/ तस्राद उभे अंति विवाजयित्वा मध्ये 'पि भौनम ना करोति पादारिका/ मक्कल १३५-६. For a slightly different rendering of this passage, see Sprung p. 108.

Murti, CPB p. 129.

As Candrakīrti's introductory verses state: "In this sense Nāgārjuna, knowing unerringly how to teach transcendent insight, developed this treatise out of compassion and for the enlightenment of others." Sprung p. 32.
28 As kārikā 14 in the "Four Buddhist Truths" chapter states: "All things make sense for him for whom the absence of being makes sense. Nothing makes sense for him for whom the absence of being does not make sense." Sprung, p. 235.

29 As kārikā XIV.4 states: "One who is free of I-ing and mine-ing does not exist factually. Anyone who thinks he sees one free of I-ing and mine-ing does not truly see...From the wasting away of the afflictions and karmic action there is freedom." Sprung, p. 170-71.

30 Pp I.4 states: "The ultimate concern of the treatise is clearly stated to be nirvāṇa; the serene coming to rest of the manifold of all named things (sarvaprapancopasa)ma. Sprung, p. 33.


32 Pr.urti, p. 212.

33 Sprung, p. 235.

34 Cf. Pp I.11: "Nāgarjuna holds that dependent origination is nothing else but the coming to rest of the manifold of named things. When the everyday mind and its contents are no longer active, the subject and object of everyday transactions (vyavahāra) having faded out because the turmoil of origination, decay, and death has been left behind completely, that is final beatitude." Sprung, p. 35.

35 For instance, the idea of Brahman as Saguna, or with attributes, or Iśvara, or God: "Any espousal of God and such ideas is equally unintelligible, because they cannot exist apart from the agreed conceptions used in the theses given by ourselves and our opponents." Sprung, p. 43.

36 This is expressed in several passages in the MhK and Pp, for instance Pp215: "Those who give this account of the co-existence of self and of entities do not discern the truth of the surpassingly deep idea of dependent origination - the way things really are - which is free of both ontology and nihilism and which is known as an idea based on the everyday but which conduces to enlightenment." Sprung, p. 143.

Nihilism, as defined in Webster's New World Dictionary, is "the denial of the existence of any basis for knowledge or truth; or the general rejection of customary beliefs in morality, religion, etc.; or the belief that there is no meaning or purpose in existence." p.961,
Webster's New World Dictionary, Nelson, Foster & Scott, 1970. As has hopefully been indicated in this paper, the Mādhyamika avoids this position, because it does not deny any basis for knowledge or truth, but does deny any languageable basis.

This phrase occurs repeatedly in the kārikās (see note 8 for an example of this), and indicates that the Mādhyamika does claim to know reality as it is, but refuses to verbalize his understanding.


Ibid., verse 73, p. 324.

Ratnāvalī, pt. II, v. 5, states: Therefore, from the metaphysical standpoint this universe transcends both reality and unreality, and so, in truth, it cannot admit of either existence or non-existence. As these passages show, the Mādhyamika idea of "no position" means that it's position is non-verbalizable, not that there is no Mādhyamika position.

This reorientation involves: "the ceasing to function of this continuous round of birth and death, due to its being taken as uncaused or as beyond dependence, that is said to be nirvāṇa." Sprung, p. 255.


Sprung, p. 235.

pp 538 states: "the very coming to rest, the non-functioning of perceptions as signs of all named things, is itself nirvāṇa. And this coming to rest being, by its very nature, in repose, is the ultimate beatitude (Siva). When verbal assertions (vācas) cease, named things are in repose; and the ceasing to function of discursive thought is ultimate beatitude. Again, the coming to rest of named things by the non-functioning of the basic afflictions, so that personal existence ceases, is ultimate beatitude. The coming to rest of named things as a result of abandoning the basic afflictions and hence of totally extirpating innate modes of thought (vāsanā) is ultimate beatitude. Again the coming to rest of named things through not seizing on ob-
jects of knowledge or on knowledge itself, is ultimate beatitude." Sprung, p. 262.

45"The afflictions must afflict someone, but this someone has not proved to exist. Without someone as subject surely the afflictions cannot afflict anyone." Sprung p. 209. Cf. also PP 443, p. 200-1.

46Cf. PP 452, p. 207-8 Sprung.

47PP 255 states: "The one who wisely understands that things are non-things is never obsessed with things. The one who is never obsessed with things attains peace of mind beyond all definition." Sprung, p. 156.

48Cf. kārikā 24 and PP 471 p. 221-2 Sprung.


50The Buddha, the Dharma (the Buddhist Law), and the Saṅgha (the Buddhist order of monks).

51Sprung, p. 236.

52Sprung, p. 236.

53Cf. PP 371: "This holy man is aware of every last happening in the world, he is omniscient and all-seeing; he possesses the knowledge of the inanimate world from the infinity of space to the coursing of the winds and he knows the uttermost limits of the world of beings; he knows incontrovertibly the many kinds of origin, existence, and end, and what is cause, what is effect, what is pleasureable, what is painful." Sprung, p. 181.

54"...unless the everyday world of verbalized transactions (laukika vyavahāra) - that is, the realm of naming and the thing named, knowing and the thing known, and so on - has been accepted as a base (abhyupagamya) it is impossible to point out, or to teach the surpassing sense. And if it is not pointed out, it cannot be comprehended; if the surpassing sense is not realized nirvāna cannot be attained." Sprung, p. 232. Cf. also PP 68, p. 59 Sprung.

55"...what, arising from the optical defect of primal ignorance is in whatever way, taken to be the everyday world of things, becomes, in virtue of going beyond ways of taking things, the world of the wise who are free of the optical defect of primal ignorance." Sprung, p. 156.
56 Cf. Sprung, p. 259.

57 Sprung, p. 262. A similar statement is found in kārikā 19, p. 259 Sprung.

58 The "perfectly realized ones" (Buddhas) have a complete and perfect understanding of all reality at once: "Of what nature is the illustrious one exactly? He comprehends existence and non-existence...From his ultimate grasp of self-existence in the true sense as related to existence and non-existence, as we have related it, only the illustrious one is said to be a comprehender of existence and non-existence." Sprung, p. 159.

59 "The exhaustion (niḥsaranam), the ceasing to function of all ways of holding to fixed concepts stemming from theories or views (dyasti) of any kind whatsoever, is the absence of being in things...we...teach that liberation ensues on desisting from all conceptual thinking whatsoever." Sprung, p. 150.

60 Sprung, p. 239.

61 "The self-existence of things as expounded by the perfectly realized ones, however, is not contrary to reason because of their autonomous, incorrigible, perfect enlightenment about the true nature of all things. Therefore the teaching of the revered Buddhas is valid knowledge (pramāṇa), the wise say, because it is in accord with reason (sopapattika) and free from contradictions. And also because it derives from realized ones who are completely free of any faults. It has authority because it yields the authentic truth of all things; and because it is an authentic guide for those on the way; and because the ordinary man attains nirvāṇa if he bases himself on it." Sprung, p. 158.

62 This is a central idea in Buddhism from it's inception, and constitutes the second and third aryan truths. It is the subject of the Buddha's first sermon, "birth is painful, old age is painful, sickness is painful, death is painful...craving leads to rebirth, combined with pleasure and lust, finding pleasure here and there..." Samyutta-nikaya v. 120: "in Edward J. Thomas, The Life of the Buddha (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1927), p. 79-80. Also p. 72."
A basic premise in the **PP** is that nothing is self-existent, because everything arises dependent on causes and conditions. This is illustrated in chapters VIII and IX, for example. Candrakīrti sums up this idea in his analysis of reciprocal dependence, **PP** 190: "The wise man, seeking freedom for the sake of release from the bonds of birth, ageing and death, having discredited the self-existence of agent subject and his doing would realize that they can be established only in utter dependence on reciprocality. 'All other things' are all those things without exception other than agent subject and his doing and appropriator and what is appropriated, such as, what is born and what gives birth, what moves and movement, what is seen and seeing, the subject of attribution and attributes, what is produced and the producer; and as well whole and part, quality and substance, means of knowledge and object of knowledge." Sprung, p. 124.

"In so far as one recognizes that any origin has its cause, one gets rid of the nihilistic view, and in so far as one understands that there is a destruction of things determined by causes one gets rid of the realistic view." Ratnāvaiś, v. 46, tr. Tucci, op. cit.

Sprung, p 238.

"... a path is by definition unrealized. Why would one realize it a second time? As Nāgārjuna puts it, 'The realizing of a path which exists in itself is not intelligible.'" Sprung, p.241.

As Candrakīrti states in his analysis of self-existence in **PP** XII.

Cf. **karika**s 329-31 and **PP** 510-11 p. 242-3 Sprung.

Cf. **PP** 509 p. 242 Sprung.

Sprung, p. 248.

"**Nirvāna** is said to be what, in its own nature, neither comes to be nor ceases to be; its nature is the coming to repose, the stifling of all named things (**sar-vaprapañçopāsama**)" Sprung, p. 249.

"Even though the true nature (**svabhāva**) of things
has thus been established, there are some who, because their mind's vision has succumbed to the optical defect of ignorance from entanglement in the beginningless cycle of birth and death, view things falsely as existing or not existing and so on. These have fallen away from the true path of seeing things unerringly as not self-existent, the path which leads to nirvāṇa.

Those who see being and non-being in things are of small mind; they do not comprehend the beatific coming to rest of the manifest world." Sprung. p. 107-8.

74 In this paper the term "afflictions" refers to the three kleśas (rāga-dveṣa-moha), and the state of existence in which they are operative is referred to as "afflicted," rather than "defiled," as many scholars (e.g. Conze and Shcherbatsky) have translated it. Any translation necessarily reflects to some extent the personal biases of the translator (Shcherbatsky has been particularly criticized for this), and unfortunately in many cases this leads to distortions in meaning. An example is the word klesa, which does not mean defilement either in its etymological connotations or in the meanings Buddhist philosophers have given to it. Kleśa comes from the root word клиш, which means "to torment, trouble, molest, cause pain, afflict," and a kleśa is "a pain, affliction, anguish." Translating kleśa as "defilement" conjures up distinctively Christian imagery of sin, guilt and judgement which have no place in Buddhism, and which reflect the biases of the translators rather than the actual attitudes of the writers of Buddhist texts, and (along with other misinterpretations) has led many Westerners to view Buddhism as anti-sensual and anti-passion, which is clearly not the case.

The afflictions are certain caitaśikas, attitudes, and emotional predispositions within the cittas, which are the direct cause of suffering. There is considerable difference of opinion as to which mental states should be included among the kleśas, which has also been largely ignored among Western interpreters. The Vibhāṣa, for example, lists moha (delusion), pramāda (carelessness), kauśidya (indolence), asraddhya (lack of confidence in Buddhist teachings and saints) sthāna (sloth), and auddhatya (excitedness) as fundamental afflictions (kleśa-mahabhūmika), the basic afflictions which make all other afflictions possible (cf. Kośa II, ad. 26-280. Although Vasubandhu accepted the Viṣṇukāsā idea that there are six keyśas, later he reduced the number to
three (rāgadvesamoha), and stated that the others were just permutations of these three (cf. Triṃśikā II; also Pañcaskandhakā, which places the number at six: lust, hate, arrogance (mana), nescience, false views (drṣṭi), and constant doubts (vicīlatsa) as the basic afflictions, which he adopts from Asaṅga's Abhidharmasamuccaya, Tokyo vol. 113, p. 237, 7-8).

The afflicted states are definitely negative, since they involve suffering, but are not necessarily unbeneficial (that is, they are not looked upon as morally reprehensible, but only as being a state of affairs characterized by ignorance rather than ethical depravity). There is actually a category of factors which are classed as afflictions, but which are ethically beneficial and produce good results. Furthermore, any afflicted state which has arisen as a retribution is necessarily indeterminate (obstructed-but-indeterminate), since anything which is retributive entails no further retribution.

75 The word "skandha" literally means "shoulder" in Sanskrit, and refers figuratively to the "Bearer of the burden (of the ego)." It is used in Buddhist philosophy to denote the five personality aggregates or psychophysical elements commonly thought of as a "self" or "person." These are samjñā (perception), vedanā (feeling), samskāras (volitional dispositions), vijñāna (consciousness), and rūpa (form).

76 Sprung, p. 234.

77 Cf. Sprung p. 248 and 249.

78 "Those who think in terms of self-existence, other-existence, existence and non-existence do not grasp the truth of Buddha's teaching." Sprung, p. 158.

79 "Nirvāṇa is not ontic, for then it would follow that it was characterized by decay and dissolution. For there is no ontic existent not subject to decay and dissolution." Candrakīrti comments: "A mere termination is not capable of being an ontic existent. As it has been said, 'Nirvāṇa is release from the everyday mind, like the going out of a light.' But it is logically impossible that the going out of a light could be a real thing." Sprung, p. 251.
"Now anyone who is in the grip of misbelief will never comprehend the essential falseness of all putative elements of existence; he persists incorrigibly in the belief that dependent things are self-existent. Being thus incorrigible and being committed to the belief that what is directly given in the form of the putative elements of existence is reality, he carries out actions and he cycles in the birth-death cycle; being rooted in misbelief he will not attain nirvāna." Sprung, p. 46.


Cf. Sprung p. 152.

In the Karmaprajñāpāti, an early Abhidharma text of anonymous origin, is found the similar idea that the attainment of cessation is basically indeterminate, and Vasubandhu also holds that the final cessation of Nirvāṇa is not a real entity, but only the discontinuation of the psycho-physical conflux of the "individual," as the KSP states: "In the same way that final deliverance (mokṣa) is called beneficial because it has the characteristic of assuaging (upāśam) all suffering, but actually is not because it has a non-existent nature as far as being an entity, just so the attainment of cessation is beneficial as far as this is concerned, because it assuages them for some time, but is actually not (beneficial)." (KST 27, p. 338, Fnacker, Vasubandhu)

"If there are no non-devōid entities, that is if there is no non-devoidness, then because it will not be related to its antithesis (pratipakṣa), there will certainly not be any devoidness either, as there is no garland of flowers in the sky. If there is no devoidness of being no entities will exist as the basis for it. This is dead certain." Sprung, p. 149.

Cf. p. 158 Sprung.

Russell expresses a similar view in his Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy (p. 170), where he denies the possibility of non-existent objects, primarily on the grounds that the idea offends against our "robust sense of reality," and the main task of the metaphysician, according to Russell, seems to be to explain away apparent examples of these without committing himself to accepting the possibility of non-existent objects. Lambert and van Fraassen assert a similar idea in their Derivation and Counterexample (California: Dickenson, 1972) where they state: "Free logic validates certain
reasoning containing words such as 'Pegasus.' But it does not follow from this fact that it is committed to a realm of entities among which is included a flying horse. To be sure, one could develop a philosophical semantics for free logic that does recognize a realm of non-actual but possible beings...But one need not develop the semantics that way...In our development, talk about non-existents is just that - "talk" is what is stressed. 'Non-existent' object, for us is just a picturesque way of speaking devoid of any ontological commitment." P. 199-200.

87"When the object of thought is no more there is nothing for language to refer to. The true nature of things neither arises nor perishes, as nirvana does not." P. 177 Sprung. Cf. also p. 206 Sprung.

88"Thus all things pretend to be what they are not because they lack self-existence and because they are unreal. They are like mirages and other illusory appearances of water. The true (satya), however, is what does not pretend to be what it is not; nirvana is the sole instance of this." Sprung, p. 145.

89 Sprung, p. 255.

90"The ontic range of nirvana is the ontic range of the everyday world. There is not even the subtlest difference between the two. This being so, it should be realized that in nirvana there is no extinction of anything whatsoever, nor any cessation of anything whatsoever. Nirvana is of the nature of the utter dissipation of reifying thought (kalpana)." Sprung, p. 249. Cf. also p. 206.

91"This means that if there were something real (vastu) for language to refer to there could be didactic argument. When, however, what language refers to is no more, when there is no object (visaya) for utterances to refer to, then there is no didactic argument by the Buddhas whatever. Why does Nagarjuna say there is nothing for language to refer to? 'Because 'The object of thought is no more.' Object of thought means what thought (citta) has as its object (gocara)...If there were such an object of thought, then, by imputing a specific character to it, speech would be able to function. When, however, no object of thought exists, how can specific character be imputed by which speech would function?" Sprung, p. 178.
"Nirvāṇa is in higher truth absolutely the same as non-arising; in it in higher truth, there is no differentiable factor. Why is that? Because, in higher truth, all elements of existence are absolutely differentiable." Sprung, p. 184. Cf. also note 64.

The coming to rest of the visible world, which is of the nature of beatitude is free of the entire network of conceptual thinking; its very nature is the cessation of knowing and the known; its very nature is the beatitude of the higher truth. Those who, because of weak mind, are rooted in the prejudices of being and non-being, cannot understand a nirvāṇa of the higher truth which does not age or die, which is not of the realm of named-things, and whose quintessence is the absence of both being and non-being (sūnyatā)." Sprung, p. 108.

Cf. PP 134, Sprung 107-8.

"The wise ones do not, in any way, take particular things as having essential natures. But ordinary men, whose thought, because of weak vision, has succumbed to the defect of ignorance, impute an erroneous self-existence to any and all particula:r things and suffer excessively. The wise ones then discourse with them using only such arguments as ordinary men accept." Sprung, p. 51. Cf. also p. 46 Sprung.

Buddhas are to be seen as the truth of things, for they are of the substance of truth (dharma kāya); but the truth is not to be sought intellectually for it is incapable of being known intellectually." Sprung, p. 204.

As Candrakīrti indicates in the opening section of the PP (Cf. Sprung, p. 33).


My understanding of madhyamā pratipad in Mādhyamika, and of Mādhyamika philosophy generally, has been greatly aided by a course and by conversations with Dr. Sprung, especially one on Dec. 9, 1981, in which we discussed the relation of the Bodhisattva to madhyamā pratipad in Mādhyamika.
102 Patnāvalī, op. cit. The Sanskrit text reads: "durgateḥ sugates caṁmat sa rokṣah sadbir ucyate; sahetum uḍayam pasyan nastitam ativartate."
Notes to Chapter Two


2The fact that the Mādhyamikas see their dialectics as being ultimately an expedient device (upāya), whose function is to lead suffering beings to enlightenment, is shown in several passages in the PP, e.g. the following statement by Candrakīrti: "we urge the falsity of things in order to counteract the inveterate commitment of the ordinary man to the reality of his everyday world as 'the' reality. It is definitely not so for the realized wise ones who take nothing at all as either false (mrṣā) or not false (amṛṣā). Furthermore, how could there still be soterically relevant deeds or a birth-death cycle for one who has comprehended the falseness of all the putative elements of existence (dharma)? Such a one does not seize on any putative element whatsoever either as existing or as not existing." Sprung, p. 46.

3"The yoqi, discerning in his wisdom that all basic afflictions and defects whatsoever arise from holding the view that the person is real (satkāvadrṣṭi) and having inseen that the self (ātman) is the central concept of this view, does away with the self. Discerning that the cycle of birth and death springs from holding the view that the person is real, and discerning that the self is the basis of this view that the person is real, the yoqi, through not taking the self as real, abandons the view that the person is real." Sprung, p. 165.


5Cf. kārikā 3, p. 170 Sprung.

6Cf. PP 348, p. 170 Sprung.

7Cf. PP 346, p. 169 Sprung.

8Candrakīrti, quoting the Ratnāvalī, states: "The factors of personal existence arise from the sense of "I" but this "I" is, in truth, false. If the seed of something is false how can the resulting thing itself be true? Having seen that the factors of personal existence are unreal the sense of "I" is expelled. When the sense of "I" has been abandoned the factors of personal existence are no longer possible." P. 169 Sprung.
9 For a critique of this view, see PP 129, p. 103-4 Sprung.

10 For a critique of Sarvāstivāda, see PP 182, p. 117 Sprung.

11 Cf. PP X. "The Self as Subject of Perception."

12 The Mādhyamika method involves using an opponent's premises against him by developing his argument to its absurd conclusion. Any viewpoint, according to the Mādhyamika, when brought to its conclusion, becomes necessarily self-contradictory, and the Mādhyamika dialectic is a series of self-contradictory arguments which accept the opponent's premises (for the purpose of debate) and demonstrate that, even from the opponent's point of view, the argument falls apart from its own inner necessity.

In his CPB Murti states that: "Prasāṅga is not to be understood as an apagogic proof in which we prove an assertion indirectly by disproving the opposite. Prasāṅga is disproof simply, without the least intention to prove any thesis... The reductio ad absurdum of the Mādhyamika does not establish any thesis. It accepts certain terms hypothetically, and by eliciting its implication shows up the inner contradiction which has escaped the notice of the opponent." CPB, p. 131-2.

Thus prasāṅga is pure negation, and, as a purely negative argument, has a low degree of commitment to a thesis. The Mādhyamika simply disagrees with his opponent, and does not put forward any thesis of his own, because in doing so he would be violating a central tenet of Mādhyamika, that the truth of reality is inexpressible in words and concepts. The Sautrāntika-Mādhyamika school, founded by Bhāviveka, however, held that it is permissible from the Mādhyamika point of view to propound a counter-thesis, an idea which was strongly criticized by Candrakīrti (Cf. MMK p. 25, 16, and 8, and Murti, p. 95-7), who has asserted that a consistent Mādhyamika will not advance any thesis.

13 As Sprung states: "every position taken up, every view (drsti) held, entails claims that are either self-contradictory, or false in the face of everyday experience, or incompatible with the possibility of enlightenment - a possibility which neither Nāgārjuna nor Candrakīrti ever questions and which, therefore, serves as a devastating condemnation of inadequate philosophy" Sprung, p. 4.
14. A prasaiya argument in Indian philosophy proceeds by way of negation of the opponent's position, and is contrasted with paryudāsa arguments, which rely on positive statements. An example of a paryudāsa argument which Barlingay gives in *A Modern Introduction to Indian Logic* (New Delhi: National Publishing, 1976, p. 60-61) is "apanditam bhojayet" (unlearned should be fed), a positive statement which asserts a proposition to be true, as opposed to prasaiya-pratīṣedha, which is a simple negative statement denying the truth of an assertion.

The prasaiya method of Pādhyamika rejects the Nyāya conclusion that strictly speaking there are no truly negative propositions because every negative proposition implies the truth of its opposite. Thus, if it is asserted: "X is the case", this eliminates the truth of its opposite, and the statement "X is not the case" implies that its opposite is the case. According to the Nyāya, therefore, any statement of this kind, whether negative or positive, entails commitment to the opposite proposition. Indian logic generally holds that affirmation and negation are mutually exclusive, and yet are so related to each other that one involves the other. The Buddhist logicians, with their theory of apoṣha, also hold this view; as Dharmakīrti states in *Pramāṇa-vārttika-svāvṛtti* II: "na hy anvāyo 'vyāvṛtti mato na apyāna vayino vyāvṛttih" (There can be no affirmation of a theory which does not exclude the other; nor can there be a negation of that which cannot be affirmed). According to this theory, which is fully in accord with the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction, wherein affirmation implies negation, negation presupposes affirmation. Propositions are of two kinds: (1) Positive (vidhi), and (2) negative (nigedha or pratīṣedha). In Indian logic the negative form is also divided into two: (a) simple negative (prasaiya-pratīṣedha), and (b) negation by implication (paryudāsa). If the aforementioned logicians are correct in asserting that all statements are both positive and negative at the same time the different propositional forms would be meaningless. As Kanakagomin explains, however, the Buddhists were actually concerned with the practical importance of propositions:

"kas tarhi vidhi-pratīṣedha-paryudāsavākyānām bhedahrthān bhedaḥ vidhiḥ vyākam hi vākyam vidhiḥ pradhān-yenābhidaya arthād anyavidhānām āha/paryudāsapratipād-akam tu vākyam pratīṣedhāpūrvaṁ anyavidhānām prādhān-yenāḥa ity asty eva viśeṣāḥ iti."

"There is a great difference (between the two kinds
of propositions). (1) A sentence expressing an affirmative (judgement) asserts a positive meaning) primarily and negation of the other (non-\(A\)) by implication (arthat). (2) And a sentence expressing a negative (judgement) asserts a negation primarily and affirmation of the "other" (that is, the positive non-\(A = B\)) by implication. (3) Whereas the sentence expressing "negation by implication" (paryudāsa), following denial (pratīṣedhāpūrvaka = non-\(A = B\)) primarily asserts the presence of the other fact. Thus, indeed, is the distinction (between the three forms of statements." ) Pramāṇa-vārttika-svavṛttika ed. Rahula Sankrtyayana and K. Allahbad, 1943, p. 121.

According to this explanation, (1) a proposition, e.g., "snow is white," is affirmative, where the negation of the other "snow is black" is implied; (2) a proposition, e.g., "snow is not black" is negative where the other affirmative "snow is white" is implied, and (3) there is paryudāsa negation in the statement "the sun rises in the east" because here we primarily assert that the east is the direction in which the sun rises, but we also deny the hypothetical suggestion that the sun rises in another direction.

Thus the Buddhist theory of negation previously mentioned (anupalabdhi) corresponds to simple negation (praśajiva), but entails paryudāsa negation. On the other hand, however, the theory of apoha primarily corresponds to negation by implication and involves simple negation. According to Ratnakīrti, paryudāsa is rooted (niyata) in the immediate knowledge of the object and so it is generally applied to both affirmative and simple negative propositions. This means that logically there can neither be pure affirmation, nor pure negation. According to the Buddhist apohavādins, this is why one does not tie a horse or dog, for example, when asked to tie a cow. This is the basis of our discriminatory behavior in everyday life, and differentiation is the primary factor in all reflective thinking. Thus the Buddhist apohavādins would contend that it is the dialectical negation = apoha, which is manifested in language and logic.

The Mādhyamikas, of course, reject this conclusion, and base their entire method on the idea that a purely negative assertion does not necessarily entail its opposite, and, properly understood, is merely a disagreement, and does not commit the Mādhyamika to accepting any proposition, positive or otherwise.

15 Cf. PP 181, p. 116 Sprung.

17 Sprung, p. 119.
18 PP 192-3.
19 PP 193-4, karikas 3-5.
20 "No one subject exists prior to seeing and other perceiving in general." Sprung, p. 127.
21 Sprung, p. 131.
22 Cf. PP 196.
23 Sprung, p. 131.
24 Cf. PP ch. XI.
25 Sprung, p. 141.
27 "If the self were identical with the factors of personal existence it would itself arise and perish; if it were other than them, it would not be characterizable in their terms." Sprung, p. 166.

28 As Śaṅkara states in his Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya I, adhyāya 1, pāda 4: "the Self cannot be the abode of any action. For an action cannot exist without modifying that in which it abides. But if the Self were modified by an action its non-eternity would result therefrom, and texts such as the following, 'unchangeable he is called,' would thus be stultified; an altogether unacceptable result. Hence it is impossible to assume that any action should abide in the actions abiding in something else as it stands in no relation to that extraneous something." The Vedānta Sūtras of Bādarāyana, tr. George Thibaut (N.Y.: Dover, 1962), p. 33.

29 Sprung, p. 167.
31 Ibid., p. 167.
32 The fact that the self cannot be refuted does not, however, invalidate Candrakīrti's criticism. In cases where something is asserted to exist whose exist-
ence is questionable or unlikely, the burden of proof rests on the person who is asserting its existence. As Russell has rightly pointed out, however, (cf. "On Denoting" (1905) and Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy, op. cit., ch. 16), the proposition 'x exists' is a logically misleading way of indicating something else, i.e., that the description or definition indicated by the term x is instantiated. Thus the proper question is not whether the ātman has the property of existence, but if the ātman has or lacks an instance. Speaking about the "existence" of the "soul" or "God" is a solecism, since existence is not the real issue, but rather whether or not instances can be demonstrated.

Any argument for the existence of the ātman must necessarily be a priori, that is, it must rely on a premise which has a basis which is logically prior to and independent of experience, because its proponents claim that it transcends all possible physical experience. Since the ātman cannot be established on any intersubjectively verifiable grounds, Candrakīrti is well within his rights to dismiss the question entirely, because his opponents who assert its existence are not operating within the parameters of philosophical reasoning, or even common experience.

33 Sprung, p. 169.

34 It has been suggested by some scholars (e.g. Sprung) that the reason why Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti do not specifically refer to the Upaniṣadic and Vedāntic conception of Ātman is because they were not aware of it. This, I think, is hardly a plausible explanation, since there was a great deal of communication of ideas and many philosophical debates on virtually every philosophical subject at the time both Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti wrote, and both were living in monasteries which were near major trade routes, and so it is highly unlikely that they could have remained ignorant of such an important aspect of Vedānta philosophy. Another fact which argues against this idea is the fact that Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti were actively involved in philosophical debates, as is seen by their own writings and other writings of their periods. The most plausible explanation for their silence on the subject of the Upaniṣadic Ātman, in my opinion, is that they realized that a concept which is completely beyond the realm of discursive thought and language cannot be disproved by these means, and so, since there is no way to either
prove or disprove the Atman theory, they remained silent regarding it.

35 Sprung, p. 169.

36 Cf. PP 355.3-357, p. 174-5 Sprung.

37 Sprung, p. 175.

38 Murti, CPB, p. 24.

39 Cf. Sprung p. 119.

40 Sprung, p. 176.

41 Ibid., p. 171.

42 Ibid., p. 178.

43 Cf. Sprung p. 262: "When the illustrious Buddhas are in nirvāṇa, the ultimate beatitude, which is the coming to rest of named things as such, they are like kingly swans in the sky, self-soaring in space or in the nothingness of space on the twin wings of accumulated merit and insight; then, it should be known, that, because they do not perceive objects as signs, no rigid 'Truth' whatsoever either concerning bondage or purification has been taught either among or for any gods or men whatsoever."

44 Sprung, p. 184.


47 Sprung, p. 262.
Notes to Chapter Three

1 "There is no element of existence whatsoever which does not arise dependently; and so there is no element of existence whatsoever which is not devoid of self-existence." P. 239 Sprung.

2 Cf. p. 126-7 Sprung.

3 Cf. P. 238-9 Sprung.

4 Cf. Willis, op. cit., p. 110 and MV 1.4.

5 Cf. Willis p. 137-8 and MV 13.2.

6 As the Vimśatika states: "Thus the various consciousnesses are but transformations. That which discriminates and that which is discriminated are, because of this, both unreal. For this reason, everything is mind-only.

As the result of various ideations which serve as seeds, different transformations take place. The revulsion-energy of these ideations gives rise to all sorts of discriminations." Radhakrishnan and Moore, cp. cit., p. 336.

7 "The supreme truth of all dharmaś is nothing other than the True Norm (tathātā). It is forever true to its nature, which is the true nature of mind-only." Ibid., p. 337.

8 Cf Trimśika XXII.

9 Cf. Willis, p. 113.

10 As Vasubandhu's bhāṣya on MV I.1 indicates: "Abhūta parikalpa is the discrimination of the object grasped and the grasper, and "duality" is also (the discrimination) of grasped and grasper. Śūnyatā is what exists when (the distinction between) object grasped, the grasper, and abhūta parikalpa is abandoned, and so (the distinction) is known as being just abhūta parikalpa."

abhūtaparikalpo grāhyā-grāhaka-vikalpaḥ/ dvayam grāhyam grāhakāḥ ca/ śūnyatā tasyābhūtaparikalpaṃ grāhyā-grāhaka-bhāvena virahitā/ tasyāṃ api sa vidyata ity abhūtaparikalpaḥ/" Naqao, op. cit., p. 18.

11 According to Tibetan tradition Maitreya is the founder of Yogācāra. It is probable that he was an historical figure, according to most scholars, but no-

(226)
thing is actually known for certain about him. He is traditionally held to be the teacher of Āśaṅga and Vasubandhu, but it is uncertain whether he actually composed the verses of the Madhyāntavīkhāga. Scherbatsky thinks that the verses as well as the bhāṣya were composed by Vasubandhu, but my own feeling is that the terse, enigmatic character of the verses, as well as the writing style, definitely set their author apart from the writer of the bhāṣya.

Interestingly, Chinese tradition holds that the founder of Yogācāra was Āśvaghosa, and it attributes the authorship of the Awakening of the Mahayana Faith, which uses the concept of alaṇvijñāna, to Āśvaghosa, who is generally regarded by scholars to have been a patriarch of Mādhyamika but not of Yogācāra. Also, in KST 217.1.2 Sumatiśīla asserts that the passage which he is commenting upon by Vasubandhu is a commentary on an earlier verse by Āśvaghosa, which asserts the existence of the store-consciousness: "In reference to this, it has been said', etc., is that the quoted verses were taught by the Sthāvira Āśvaghosa in reference to this retributory consciousness." (P. 353 Anacker, op. cit.) This statement is interesting not only because Sumatiśīla regards Āśvaghosa's words as authoritative, but also because he asserts that Āśvaghosa taught the existence of the retributory consciousness, which is a Yogācāra, rather than a Mādhyamika, doctrine.

12 Cf. MV I.1 and I.2 and bhāṣya.

13 Cf. MV I.2.

14 "Thus the true nature of things (yathābhūtāma) is seen as sūnya when by this (i.e. sūnya) that is seen as not being there, but still something remains here; and (by seeing) that something exists here the non-contrary (i.e. true) definition of sūnyatā as the true nature of things is born...Everything is not sūnya because sūnya exists, and abhūta parikalpa and is not asūnya because there is no duality of grasper and grasped...Everything which arises in experience is said to be neither sūnya nor asūnya because of the existence of abhūtaparikalpa, because of the non-existence of duality (of grasper and object grasped), and because of the existence of sūnyatā in abhūtaparikalpa and of abhūta parikalpa in sūnyatā. And this is madhyamā pratipad, that everything is neither (completely) sūnya nor (completely) asūnya."

"evam yaś ca yatrā nāsti tat tena sūnyam iti yathābhū-
tam samanupasyati yat punar atrayavistam bhavati tat sad ihasti yathabhutam prajapatity aviparitam sunyata-laksanam udbhavitam bhavati / ... na sunyaṁ sunyataṁ cābhūta-parikalpena ca / na caśūnyam dvayena grahyena grahaṇena ca /" MV I.2 bhasya, p. 18 Nagao.

15 MV bhasya I.2 "evam ayaṁ pāṭhaḥ Prajñāpāramitā-diśv anūlomito bhavati "sarvam idam na sunyaṁ nāpi caśūnyam" /" Nagao, p. 18.

16 Cf. D.T. Suzuki, Studies in the Laṅkāvatārā Sūtra, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1932, p. 170. This sūtra became important to Yogaśāra philosophy, because it states that the world is mind-only (citta-matra), and is often thought to have been written by a Yogaśāra author, but Suzuki disagrees with this idea (p. 54-5).

17 Cf. Willis p. 113.

18 Cf. MV III as an example of this idea.

19 A good example of this is found in Asaṅga's MS, which outlines the stages of the Bodhisattva's development, which culminate in perfect enlightenment (samyaksambodhi): "Les Bodhisattva, dès le début (pratamata eva), par leur adresse (kausalyam niśritya) dans la cause des Dharma (dharma-hetū), doivent acquérir l'adresse dans la production en dépendance.

2. Ensuite, pour arriver à supprimer ces défauts extrêmes (antadoṣa), que sont la surimposition et la négation, ils doivent acquérir l'adresse dans les caractères des dharma produits en dépendance.

3. Les Bodhisattva ainsi exercés doivent pénétrer les caractères qu'ils ont saisis (parigṛhīta); par là, ils libèrent leur pensée (citta) des obstacles (āvarana).

4. Ensuite, après avoir pénétré les caractères du connaissable (jñeyālakṣana), et en s'appuyant sur les six vertus antérieurement pratiquées, ils doivent acquérir la pureté de haute disposition (adhyāsavyavipūḍhi).

5. Ensuite, ayant réparti dans les dix terres (bhumi) les six vertus contenues dans la pureté de haute disposition, ils doivent les cultiver pendant trois périodes incalculables (kalpanīṣamkhya eva).

6. Ensuite, ils doivent remplir à la perfection les trois observances (sikṣā) du Bodhisattva.

9-10. Les ayant remplis, ils doivent arriver au Nirvāṇa qui en est le fruit, et atteindre la suprême
et parfaite illumination (anuttarā samyaksaṁbodhi)."
La Somme Du Grand Vehicule D'Asanga, par Etienne Lamotte


21 A point which will be discussed later in this paper.

22 Cf. KST 19, p. 324 Anacker, op. cit.

23 Cf. MV I.2 and bhāsyā.

24 MV I.4 states: "liberation by the bringing to rest (of vijñāna) is what is desired (by our method). Commentary: If it did not exist then there could be neither bondage nor mokṣa, and this would deny the basic facts of affliction and alleviation."

"tat-kṣayāṁ muktir iṣyate /"
"anyathā na bandho na mokṣāḥ prasidhyed iti sam-kleśa-vyavādānapavāda-doṣaḥ syāt /" Nagao, p. 19.

25 "Vijñāna arises as the appearances of mental constructions (vijñāpti), beings and objects, (but) its objects are non-existent, and in their absence, it also is non existent." p. 18 Nagao.

26 This concern is seen very clearly in the KSP, which is largely concerned with "what remains" in the highest meditative states where all thought-constructs have been purged from vijñāna: "The attainment of the cessation of concepts and feelings occurs dependent upon the attainment of the summit of existence, where there has been a mental attention (manasikāra), associated with tranquillity, directed at (such) cessation. Thus it was said in the Mahākaṇḍasūtra in reference to the attainment of cessation, 'The causes and conditions for the attainment of the sphere without signs (animittasamāpatti) are two Mahākaṇḍha: an absence of mental attention to any signs, and a mental attention to the sphere without signs.' Anacker, p. 127-8.

27 The Yogācāras see awareness of śūnyatā as being the primary means for reaching this realization, and so śūnyatā is equated with true knowledge of the nature of all reality, as MV I. 14 states: "Tathātā, bhūtakoti (reality-limit), the signless (aniritta), paramārtha, and dharmadhātu are, in short, synonyms of śūnyatā." (p. 23 Nagao)
“Even in nirvāṇa with no abode he does not reject or deny anything, and the sūnyatā of this attitude is termed the sūnyatā of non-rejection.”

“nirupadhiśeṣe nirvāṇe ‘pi yaṁ nāvākārati not-
ṣṛjati tasya sūnyatā .anāvakāra-śūnyatety ucyate.”

Nāgoa, p. 25-6.

He sees sūnyatā as signifying “neither a presence nor an absence” (na bhāvo nāpi cābhāvah) because it is “a laksāna (quality) which is neither one with, nor different from, (abhūta parikalpa) (na prthak-
tvaika-laksanam).” p. 23 Nāgoa.

This is a common experience of people on a path to spiritual awareness. At first the world seems to be as it appears, but after a time of examining it seems completely different, but when the final realization is attained one is able to see the world both as it appears and as it truly is. A good description of the revolution the Bodhisattva’s viewpoint undergoes is found in LS X: “Il a pour caractère (laksana) du Dharmakaya des Buddha...Il a pour caractère la révolution du support (āśrayaparāvṛttīlaksana), car, ayant détruit tous les obstacles (āvaraṇa) et la nature dépendante prise dans sa partie souillée (samklesabhāgapatita paratantrasva-
bhāva), il s’est délié de tous les obstacles, s’est assuré la souveraineté sur tous les Dharma, et s’est transformé en la nature dépendante prise dans sa partie pureté.” Lamotte, op. cit., p 268.

“If he does not see the sūnyatā of samsāra and of (the terms) ‘inferior’ and ‘superior’ he would be terrified and would abandon samsāra.” “anavaraghasya hi samsārasya sūnyatām apiṣyaḥ khinnah samsāram pari-
ityajeta/” p. 25 Nāgoa. Cf. also MV I. 21: “Both affliction and its alleviation are produced by sūnyatā, because sūnyatā is (at the heart of) the changing nature of the world. And this insight leads to alleviation, because it brings to rest unreal ideations, fears, sloth, and doubts.”

“yadi dharmāṇam sūnyataḥ āgantukair upaklesair anūtpanne ‘pi pratipakṣe na samkliṣṭā bhavet saṃklesā-
bhāvād ayatnata eva muktāh sarvva-satvā bhaveyyuḥ / athotpanne ‘pi pratipakṣe na viśuddhā bhavet mokṣartham ārambhō nipṣhalo bhavet/” P. 26-7 Nāgoa.

Samkhinirmocanasūtra II. This sūtra may have been written by a Yogācāra author, as is widely supposed. Since it uses many distinctly Yogācāra terms,
such as vijñāptirātratā, ālambana, etc., and propagates doctrines directly in accord with Yogācāra teachings. It was an important scriptural source for Vasubandhu, who quotes it in KSP 32 and 37, and RVB III. This, of course, disproves Lamotte's contention that the KSP was written before Vasubandhu's conversion to Mahāyāna, since the Saṃdhinirrocana is not regarded as authoritative by the Vaibhāṣikas, as it is written by the Mahāyānists. Lamotte bases his contention on the fact that Vasubandhu uses very little distinctively Mahāyāna terms and primarily gives as references texts which the Vaibhāṣikas regard as authoritative. Anacker (p. 246 Vasubandhu op. cit.) theorizes that the reason for this is that Vasubandhu was attempting to convince his former Vaibhāṣika allies on their own terms, and recognized that using Mahāyāna texts and terms to develop his argument would have put them off at the beginning.

33"Il a pour caractère la non-dualité d'existence et de non-existence: (en d'autres termes, il n'est ni existant ni non-existant), car (d'une part) tous les Dharma sont inexistants (niḥsyabhāva) et (d'autre part) la vacuité (Sūnyatā) existe réellement." Lamotte, p. 271.

34"It is the domain and the sphere of cognitive activity that belongs to the Buddha-Bhagavans and bodhisattvas who, having penetrated the non-self of dharmas (dharmanairātmya), and having realized, because of that pure understanding, the inexpressible nature of all dharmas, know the sameness of the essential nature of verbal designation and the non-discursive knowable (nirvikalpañyeva). This is the supreme suchness (tathātā), there being none higher, which is at the extreme limit of the knowable and for which all analyses of the dharmas are accomplished, and which they do not surpass." Willis, p. 79.

Bhaviveka disagrees with this idea, and in the treatise "Jewel in Hand" he states that there is not, as is maintained by the Yogācāras, a Tathātā or Dharmatā, the essential and permanent nature of things - Buddhism, according to Bhaviveka, is alien to every metaphysical viewpoint, and is merely a path leading to final rest by unconscious and objectless contemplation. He further states that the Yogācāra concept of Tathātā is no different from the Upanisadic Ātman, and is just another name for it, as both are real, omnipresent, and eternal.
The pramāṇas are the sources or "proofs" of knowledge in Indian philosophy, and the number which is accepted varies between the different schools. Samkhya-Yoga, for instance, accepts three pramāṇas: (1) Right perception, which is the thinking principle, the mind, which assumes the shapes of its perceptions through the functioning of the senses. The mind has a substance which is transformed by perceptions and which assumes the qualities of what it perceives; (2) Right inference, the function of mind which performs the task of attributing characteristics to the objects that seem to manifest them. Right inference is inference which can be supported by right perceptions; (3) Right testimony is found in the traditional sources of sacred wisdom, e.g., the Vedas, Upanisads, etc., and is based on right understanding of a word or text. It corroborates right perception and inference.

Nyāya accepts four sources of knowledge: (1) pratyakṣa, perception, (2) anumāna (inference), (3) upamāna (analogy), and sabda (credible testimony). Inference, which is for the Nyāya the only reliable means of philosophical knowledge, is of three kinds: (a) purvavat (inference from cause to effect), (b) śeṣavat (inference from effect to cause), and (c) sam-ānyato drṣṭa (reasoning from perception to abstract principle).

Yogācāra generally accepts (1) direct perception, (2) inference, and (3) trustworthy scripture or testimony. Mādhyamika rejects all pramāṇas, since it asserts that any discursive knowledge is eo ipso uncertain, and so there is no way to arrive at true knowledge through logic.

According to Harlingay (A Modern Introduction to Indian Logic) a pramāṇa can mean both a means of knowledge (which cannot be false) and a means of cognition (which can be false). In some cases pramāṇa refers to the means of cognition (true or false), and sometimes refers to true knowledge, and its certain authority or evidence.

Vasubandhu accepts direct perception, inference, and appeal to authoritative scripture, although as the argumentation of the KSP shows, he regards the last as
ancillary to the other two, Sumatiśīla, who comments on the KSP, (and belongs to the post-Dharmakīrti epistemological tradition) accepts only direct perception and inference. Both, however, assert that direct perception is the most reliable of all the means of cognition, although the perceptions of one sense must sometimes be checked against those of another.

Although Vasubandhu was a great logician, he agrees with that the logician's view of reality is limited and is transcended in the ultimate awareness. In the chapter entitled "Realities" (ch. III) in the Nyāya he asserts that arguments based on logical principles have a certain limited validity, but only within the boundaries of the logicians' sphere of inquiry, but, as the Viṃśatikā also states, actual insight into the true nature of reality can never be reached by discursive reasoning alone. This does not mean, however, that Vasubandhu is illogical or anti-logical. His Vādavidhi (a short treatise which outlines rules for philosophical debate according to strictly defined logical criteria) is an important treatise on logic which makes an important contribution to Indian logic in the rules he gives for determining the nature of logical arguments. Although he admits that he is to some extent a tarkika, he states in other works that nyāya is incapable of dealing with ultimate insights: "It (cognition-only) cannot be considered by people like me in all its aspects, because it it not a topic proper to dialectics." (sarvaprakāra tu sa madrasaiś cintayitum na śakyate, tarkaviśayatvāt." Viṃśatikā Nyāya).

Vasubandhu was a great logician who was also aware of dimensions of insight which transcend discursive thought, and in the KSP the word "tarkika" is used almost as a pejorative term for people who are unable to see beyond their own fixed view of reality. This is reminiscent of the Laṅkāvātārasūtra, where tarkikas are constantly criticized, and this same idea is found in Asanga's MS X. As Vasubandhu states in KSP II: "Accordingly, since you dialecticians (tarkikah) do not understand things according to the intent of the scriptures (āgarmathena), your understanding that there is a citta which is a mental consciousness within the states of the attainment of cessation, etc., is thought out in unheedng rashness." Anacker, p. 128. Cf. also MV 2966.
Hīnayāna is actually a pejorative term coined by the Mahāyānists which means "lesser vehicle," implying that the Hīnayānist teachings and spiritual path is designed to only lead a few selfish, reclusive people to nirvāṇa, while Mahāyāna (literally, 'greater vehicle') can lead all suffering beings to nirvāṇa.

The major emphasis of the Hīnayāna (sometimes incorrectly referred to as Theravāda; this is incorrect because Theravāda is only one of the schools referred to as Hīnayāna, the only one which still exists today, and is predominant in southeast Asian countries such as Burma, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, etc.) is on bodhi, or enlightenment, while the Mahāyāna schools emphasize karunā (compassion) for all suffering, deluded beings, and hold that the ideal being is the Bodhisattva, a fully enlightened being who vows to remain in saṃsāra for as long as it takes for all beings to reach enlightenment, and who strives ceaselessly to help them on the way, although he realizes that this will never be completely realized. The Hīnayānists, on the other hand, have the ideal of the Arhat, who strives ceaselessly for his own salvation, and, although they do teach others the spiritual path, the Hīnayānists are primarily concerned with their own individual salvation, at least according to the Mahāyāna view. It is unfortunate that we have no other term for this group, but there is no other term which accurately delineates them.

For a good exegesis of the view of the pacceka-buddha in Pali literature, Cf. The Paccakkabuddha, by Ria Kloppenborg (Leiden: Brill, 1974).

The image of the pratvekabuddha is held up in Mahāyāna literature as a figure of scorn (although, conversely, it is generally admitted that he has reached a high level of spiritual attainment and that giving gifts to pratvekabuddhas yields great merit), especially in sutras like the Viralakīrtinirdesāsūtra, which holds that their understanding is infinitely inferior to that of the great bodhisattvas and the Buddhas (e.g. III.14 and V.19).

It should be stated, however, that in the non-Mahāyāna tradition the "selfishness" of the pratvekabuddhas is nuanced far more than the Mahāyānists would care to admit, and they are seen as being compassionate beings who do care for the welfare of other beings. An example of this is the fact that they leave their
solitary places of residence in order to get food from ordinary beings, not because they need sustenance, but solely in order to provide ordinary beings with an opportunity to gain merit (puñana; Skt.: punya), especially those most in need of it. (Cf. Panorathapūranī I. 185 and I. 56. I. 185 states: "Paccekabuddhas are compassionate towards those who have entered a bad form of existence (duggātanukampaka)." They are often referred to in the Pali writings as "puñana-khetta" Fields of merit) and as "aggadakkhīpeyya" (worthy of the best gifts) because gifts given to such advanced beings yield a great reward of merit.

44 Cf. Willis, p. 76-8.

45 This is the traditional formulation, as found in Samututta-nikāya v.420. Cf. Thomas, op. cit., p.87-8.

46 The eightfold aryan path consists of: (1) right outlook, (2) right resolves, (3) right speech, (4) right actions, (5) right livelihood, (6) right endeavor, (7) right mindfulness, (8) right absorption. Cf. Majjima-Nikāya iii in Further Dialogues of the Buddha, tr. Chalmers, in Sacred Books of the Buddhists (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1927, p. 296-299.

47 "Moreover, what is that reality? The Four Noble Truths, namely: (1) suffering, (2) its origin, (3) its cessation, and (4) the path leading to its cessation. It is that knowledge which arises in those having clear comprehension who, after thorough investigation, arrive at the understanding of the Four Noble Truths. Further, it is the understanding of those truths on the part of those grāvakas and pratyekabuddhas who have apprehended that there are only aggregates (sManḍha-mātrā) (in what is commonly assumed to be a person) and who have not apprehended a self (ātman) as a separate entity apart from the aggregates. By means of insight (prajñā) properly applied to the arising and passing away of all dependently arisen conditioned states, clear vision (darsana) arises from the repetition of the view that 'apart from the aggregates there is no person.'" Willis, p. 77.

48 MV III has a similar statement: "The appearance of self is afflicted thinking arising from the delusion of self, etc. The appearance of ideations is only the six vijnānas, and is not object of them, and from these false appearances arise the appearances of
self and ideations. What arises from this is nothing real." Nagao p. 18-19.

49 Cf. Willis, p. 76-7.

50 As Vasubandhu states in his bhāṣya on the "Srāvakas, etc., (including pratvekabuddhas) entrés dans la vision de la réalité (tattvadarśana), pénètrent seulement l'inexistence-en-soi de l'individu et des Dharma (pudgaladharmanairātmya)... Non-médiocrité dans l'objet à connaître. Chez les Srāvaka, etc., il suffit que le savoir des vérités: vérité sur la douleur, etc., soit né, pour qu'on dise qu'ils ont atteint leur but et fait ce qu'ils avaient à faire (krtaṃkrtya)... Non-médiocrité a l'endroit des êtres (sattva adhikṛtyoparittaviśeṣa). Les Srāvaka, etc., qui recherchent uniquement leur intérêt personnel (svārtha), cultivent avec mèlé le savoir de la suppression (des passions) et de la non-production." Lamotte, p. 255, cf. also Kośa I, p. 82 and IV, p.180.

51 "Quelle différence (viśeṣa) y a-t-il entre les deux savoir des Srāvaka et le savoir des Bodhisattva? On saura que (le savoir des Bodhisattva) se distingue par cinq aspects (akāra): Il se distingue par l'absence de concepts (nirvikalpavīśeṣa), car il ne conçoit (vikalpayata) pas les Dharma: agrégats (skandha), etc. (2) Il se distingue par sa non-médiocrité (aparittaviśeṣa) car, en comprenant à fond (prativedha) la réalité en pénétrant tous les aspects du connaissable et en se référant à tous les êtres (sattva), il n'est pas médiocre. (3) Il se distingue par son instabilité (apratisṭhitaviśeṣa), car il se fixe dans le Nirvāṇa instable (apratisṭhitānirvāṇa). (4) Il se distingue par son infini car il ne s'anéantit pas dans l'Elément-Nirvāṇa-sans-reste. (5) Il se distingue par sa suprématie; car, audessus de lui, il n'y a pas d'autre Véhicule (vāṇa) qui lui soit supérieur. Ici, un stance: Avec la pitié (karuna) pour nature et ses cinq supériorités (viśeṣa) le savoir (des Bodhisattva) est mis en tête des perfections mondiales et supramondaines (laukikā lokottarā saṁpadā)." Lamotte, p. 254-6.

52 This is also stated in some Pāli texts, which admit that although pacceka-buddhas are very wise, they do not gain omniscience, as Buddhas do: "The knowledge of a Srāvaka is deep, but therein is no determination (vavatthāna). And further the knowledge of a pacceka-
buddha is deeper than that, (but) also in that is no determination. And the knowledge of omniscience is deeper than that. And there is no other that is deeper. (Sumahgalavilasinī, Buddhaghoṣa's commentary on the Dīgha-nikāya, I. 100) The Sārattha-ppakasini also expresses this idea: "Sāvakaśaśa attain the knowledge of self-enlightenment, and Buddhas the knowledge of omniscience." (Paramattihajotika II.208)

The knowledge of the Sāvaka (Skt.: Śrāvaka) is superior to that of ordinary beings, who are not able to comprehend the truths which they realize, and similarly sāvakas cannot comprehend the awareness of the pacceka-buddhas, which exceeds their own, but the pacceka-buddhas are equally unable to penetrate the knowledge of the Buddhas, who are the unquestioned highest level of awareness, and whose understanding surpasses all other understandings: "Those pacceka-buddhas, O great king, are self-existent (savarbhū), without a teacher (anācariya), living solitary (ekacārin), resembling the horn of a rhinoceros, in their own province possessing thoughts which are pure and stainless; in their own province these thoughts of them arise lightly and move lightly, (but) in the realm of the omniscient Buddha they arise with difficulty and move sluggishly. Why is this? Because of the purity of their own province and because of the greatness of the province of the omniscient Buddha." (Milindapañho, v. 105).

Because all things are, in highest truth, indistinguishable from one another, and this insight into the true nature of reality is the highest wisdom. Even to attempt to know the phenomenal aspects of all things would only confuse the issue and would lead to attachment to conceptual proliferation (Prapanca), and so Asaṅga states: "Being is whatever is determined to have essential nature soley by virtue of verbal designation (prajñāptivāda svabhāva), and as such is clung to by the worldly for a long time. For ordinary beings, this (notion of being) is the root cause of all discursive thought (vikalpa) and proliferation (prapanca), whether 'form,' 'feeling,' 'ideation,' 'motivation' or 'perception';" Willis, p. 82.

"That insight (prajñā) is the bodhisattva's great means (mahān upāya) for reaching the Incomparable Perfect Enlightenment. And Why? Because of the Bodhisattva's firm conviction in voidness, practicing in these and those births and circling in samsāra for the sake of thoroughly ripening (paripakaya) the Buddhaharmas for himself and other sentient beings, he comes to know samsāra as it really is (vathabhūtam). And moreover, he does not weary his mind with the aspects
(akāra) of impermanence and so forth which pertain to that sārṣāra. Should he not experience the true nature of sārsāra, he would be unable, owing to all the defilements – of lust, hatred and delusion and so forth – to render his mind equable; and not being equable, his defiled mind, circling in sārsāra, would mature neither the Buddhadharma nor the sentient beings."

"In clear understanding the bodhisattva courses, and coursing in this supreme understanding with insight into Suchness, he sees all dharmas as they are really, i.e., as being absolutely the same. And seeing everywhere sameness, his mind likewise, he attains to supreme equanimity." P. 91 Willis.

"Now you should know that that Bodhisattva, because of his long-time engagement with the knowledge of dharma-selflessness, having understood the inexpressibility of all dharmas as they really are, does not at all imagine (kalpayati) any dharma; otherwise he would not (truly) grasp "given thing only" as precisely "Suchness only." It does not occur to him, 'this is the given thing only, and this other, the Suchness only'." Willis, p. 91.

Willis, p. 82.

Willis, p. 85.

In other words, ordinary beings see things in terms of dichotomies like "existent" and "non-existent," and cannot conceive of something which does not fall into these mutually exclusive categories. In this case, dharmas are neither existent non non-existent, yet appear to have both qualities of existence and nonexistence. For instance, they possess efficiency (i.e., they cause us to perceive and react), which is a mark of a real thing, but exist only as ideations. They cannot be said to fall into either class, and so fall outside of what can be conceived by ordinary beings. As Asaṅga states in his exegesis: "How should one understand that there is bondage by virtue of expressions for signs? He (the Buddha) said: 'It should be understood by reasoning and by scripture...If there is no expression, then one cannot take pleasure in a given thing; but if there is accompanying expression, then one takes pleasure in it...Moreover, the one is the birthplace of the other; that is, the thought which gives rise to expression is dependent upon a given thing." Willis, p. 85.
60 Cf. Willis p. 80-1.

61 "Moreover, the given thing, comprised of dharma characteristics, that is completely freed from both 'being' and 'nonbeing' - i.e., from the 'being' and 'nonbeing' described above - is not-two. Now, what is not-two, just that is said to be the incomparable Middle Path (madhyâma-pratipad) which avoids the two extremes; and concerning that reality the knowledge (jñânam) of all the Buddha-Bhagavâna should be understood to be exceedingly pure. Further, it should be understood that that knowledge for the bodhisattva constitutes the Path of Instruction (sikṣa-mârga)." P. 86-7 Willis.

62 Willis, p. 87-90.

63 "On account of his firm conviction in voidness, that bodhisattva, continuously applying himself, is neither frightened by Nirvâna nor does he strive toward Nirvâna. If that bodhisattva should be frightened by Nirvâna, he would not store up his equipment for Nirvâna hereafter; but rather, not seeing the benefits which lie in Nirvâna, owing to fear of it, that bodhisattva would give up the faith and conviction which sees the excellent qualities of that." Willis, p. 89.

64 Willis, p. 89.

65 Vasubandhu expresses a similar idea at the end of ch. II of the MV: "Having first entered into the Path of Vision, in which he gets rid of perverse views, he then enters the Path of Cultivation, where he gets rid of the afflictions. Because of this he can fully practice the pâramitâs, and effect his transformation to complete enlightenment, and along with this comes the ability to completely alleviate the afflictions of others."

66 Willis, p. 91.

67 Cf. Willis p. 91 as an example of this.

68 Cf. Willis p. 89-91.

69 Cf. Willis, p. 93-96.
Asanga repeatedly warns against "closed-fisted teachers" (acāravacāśṭī), who hold back their wisdom from their students. He seems to be particularly directing this charge against the Hinayānists, who place the primary emphasis on personal realization: "Taking recourse in that equanimity, while greatly applying himself toward skill in all the sciences, that bodhisattva does not turn away from his goal because of fatigue, or because of any suffering. Unwearied in body and in mind, he quickly achieves skillfulness in those (sciences), and he reaches the stage of attaining the great power of mindfulness. He is not puffed up by virtue of his skill, nor does he have a teacher's closed-fistedness." P. 92 Willis.

The moral attitude of the Bodhisattva is similar to Kant's moral imperative, which states that one should be good only because it is the right thing to do, and not in view of any reward. "He trains himself in noncraving so that he is able to give to sentient beings his possessions and even his own body. For the sake of sentient beings alone is he restrained, and well restrained, in body and speech. He trains himself in restraint so that he naturally takes no pleasure in sin, and so that he becomes wholesome and good by nature. He is forbearing toward all injury and wrongdoing on the part of others. He trains himself in forbearance so that he has little anger and so that he does no injury to others." Willis, p. 95.


Cf. Dayal p. 178-81.

Cf. Dayal p. 228.

Cf. Dayal p. 153 and MSA 144.

"With the pāramitā of giving the bodhisattva aids others and works for ther and supports them. The meaning of śīla is that he does not do harm to others; ksānti means that he forgives wrongs done to him by others; by means of viṇa he increases his merits; by means of dhyāna he descends and sets things in motion by means of his transcendent faculties, etc.; by means of prajñā he is able to give good advice which delivers others. With the pāramitā of upāya-kauśalya which is the result of the transformation he experiences with mahābodhi, he can make his dāna, etc., unceasing. With the pāramitā of pranichāna he welcomes everything which is favorable to the pāramitās, and so one oper-
ates constantly in dana, etc., strongly desiring the arising of enlightenment in all sentient beings."

Notes to Chapter Four

1As Sprung states in his introduction: "Sūnyatā is not one more theory among the many traditional theories offering an account of the factual world; it implies that such theories are delusive shadow boxing: accounts of what is not there, as if one set out to explain the delusive appearances of the magician's tricks strictly in terms of the delusive appearances themselves. Metaphysicians are, as it were, attempting to give a reasoned account of the emergence of rabbits from empty hats or of coins from nostrils. Mādhyamika is determined to expose the supposed world of fact as a magician's trick and in this way to render all metaphysics ridiculous. They attempt to show that theoretical explanation is founded on the delusive fiction of entities in being affecting each other causally. Nāgārjuna says this sweepingly: 'Sūnyatā is the exhaustion of all views' and adds 'Those for whom Sūnyatā is itself a theory are incurable.'" Sprung, p. 14-15.

2Cf. Willis p. 137.

3Cf. Willis p. 113.

4Although they do of course engage in such disputations, but they state that this type of thing is only relevant to those of inferior understanding, not to advanced yogins. As an example of the primacy of meditation, Vasubandhu states: "By listening attentively by means of prajñā characterized by mental attentiveness there arises development of the constituents of experience. By reflecting intently he (the bodhisattva) enters into the meaning of that which he has heard. By meditation he attains ultimate fulfillment, and completely purifies his entrance into the bhūmis (the levels of development of a bodhisattva)."

5Cf. notes 14 and 20 in the Introduction to this paper.

6Cf. MV IV.8 and V.11.

7Although this formulation is also stated to eventually be only an upāya, but a necessary one, because it motivates ideation-series to strive dillig-
ently for spiritual advancement. Cf. MV Bhasya on III.23.

8 "Whatever is the quintessential nature (dharma) of the elements of existence, that and only that has a self-existent nature (svabhava). And what is self-existent nature? Original, invariable nature (prakrti). What is original, invariable nature? Devoidness of being (sunyatā). And what is devoidness of being? Not being of the nature of substantial thing (naisvabhavya). What is not being of the nature of substantial thing? the way things really are (tathata)." P. 156 Sprung.


10 Cf. Willis, p. 110 and 125.

11 Willis, p. 100.

12 "It (the designation of a thing) is neither the essential nature (svabhava) of that dharma, nor is it wholly other than that. That (essential nature) is neither the sphere of speech nor the object of speech; nor is it altogether different from these. That being the case, the essential nature of dharmas is not found in the way in which it is expressed; but further, neither is absolutely nothing found. Again, the essential nature is absent and yet not absolutely absent." Willis, p. 100-1.

13 "to a single dharma and to a single given thing various men will attach many different designations by virtue of numerous expressions of various kinds. That dharma and that given thing ought to have identity with, be made of, and have the essential nature of some one verbal designation, but not of the other remaining verbal designations. But there being no fixed determination, which of the very many kinds of verbal designation would hold as the correct one? Therefore, the use of any and all verbal designations, however complete or incomplete, for any and all given things does not mean that the latter are identical to, made up of, or receive essential nature through those verbal designations." Willis, p. 102-3.

14 Willis, p. 105.

15 Cf. for instance Willis p. 110 and 137-8.
16 Cf. Willis p. 113 and 106.

17 Cf. MV V.1 and Dhāsya.

18 For instance, in MV III.11, after a lengthy discussion of the Yogācāra doctrine of three natures (trisvabhāva), in which he outlines the various doctrines associated with them and the attainments which their full realization can lead to if properly grasped and applied, Vasubandhu concludes: "Parinispāna (the fulfilled nature) is unconditioned in that it is unchanging perfection; and it is conditioned as those things which constitute the truth of the Path which constitute a lack of perversion, and so are fulfilled because of their non-perversion. (However), the stages which comprise the truth of the Path, and everything which can be known, are conditioned."


19 Cf. Willis p. 106.

20 "Now, to view it in another way, suppose the charmās themselves, of form and so forth...should become the essential nature of their verbal designations...first there would be just the given thing alone, i.e., completely disassociated from names, and only afterward would there be the desire to attach to that given thing a verbal designation. But this would mean that before a verbal designation was attached, at the time just prior to attaching the designation, that very charmā and that very given thing would be without essential nature. But if there were no essential nature, there would be no given thing at all; and hence a designation would not be called for. And since no verbal designation would be attached, the essential nature of the charmā and of the given thing could not be proved." Willis, p. 104.

"Likewise, denying the bare given thing (vastubhāvāmātrīm), which is a universal denial (sāravaināśīka) has fallen away from our Dharma-Vināyaka. I say, then: 'Neither reality nor designation is known when the bare given thing, of form and so forth, is denied. Both these views are incorrect.'" Willis p. 109.

21 Cf. Willis p. 114-5.

22 The word "darsana" (from the root word ḍṛṣṭ, to
see) in Indian philosophy refers to the various schools, primarily the six orthodox schools, viz., Sāṃkhya and Yoga, Nyāya and Vaścīśika, Purva Mīmāṃsā, and Uttara Mīmāṃsā (Vedānta).

23 Vasubandhu was the younger brother of Asaṅga, and according to tradition received his early philosophical training in the Mīnayāna school of Vaścīśika, during which time he composed the Abhīcharma-kāṣaṇa along with a commentary on his own work. The Kāṣaṇa reflects his philosophical uncertainty at that time, because the text contains the finest extant presentation of Vaścīśika doctrine, while the commentary contains a thorough refutation of it. According to legend he was converted to Mahāyāna by his brother Asaṅga, and was so repentant for his earlier calumny of Mahāyāna that he desired to cut out his tongue, but Asaṅga convinced him to use it instead to establish and spread the Mahāyāna doctrine. (Cf. Taranātha's History 130–161, and Bu-ston's History part II.)


25 Willis, p. 110.

26 Cf. Notes 25, 26, and 27 in the introduction to this paper.

27 "sarvābhāve sarva abhāve va naviparitāṃ śuṇyatā-lakṣāṇām / śuṇyatāya evābhāvaprasaadāt / na śuṇyasamjñā asatyāṃ śuṇyatāyaṃ yuyjate / " Pandeya, op. cit, p. 10.

28 "na śuṇyam na api cāśuṇyam tasmāt sarvam vidhī-yate / sattvād asattvād asattvād sattvāccha madhyamā pratipacca sā/

29 "Evar ayad yatra nāsti tat tena śuṇyam iti yathā-bhūtaṃ / sārmanupeśyati yet punar ātravaḥsiṣṭaṃ bhavatī tat sad iha astiti / yathā abhūtaṃ prajānati ty avipar-ītaṃ śuṇyatālakṣānaṃ udbhavitaṃ Lbhavati /"

30 As Willis states in her commentary: "The major thrust of Asaṅga's arguments both here and in the exegesis has been to demonstrate the mutual dependence of names and things. Now, whatever is dependent does not partake of ultimate reality. Hence it is incorrect to assume that one dependent thing (i.e., designation) should exist in its own right.
But āsaṅga simultaneously argues another, more important position here. Namely, he refutes the idea that one can completely deny the vastu. Those who have 'misunderstood' the true purport of the Mahāyāna teaching of sunyaśā suppose that it means the denial of all things, all vastuṣ; but such ones misunderstand what part of the paratantra nature is to be denied and what part is not!" Willis p 111.

31 Cf. note 23 in the Introduction to this paper.

32 Cf. also MV 13.2, KSP 214.3, and MV 1.3 and Bhāṣya

33 Cf. MV 1.3.

34 When a dharma has the name 'form' and so on, whatever the name be, i.e., 'form,' etc., by means of that name the dharmas are referred to with the names 'form,' etc., whether form or feeling and so on, up to nirvāna. But the dharmas having those names 'form,' etc., are themselves not identical with designations 'form,' etc. Nor is there any dharma found outside of those that is identical to 'form,' etc. Again, for those dharmas having the names 'form,' etc., one should understand that what does exist there in the ultimate sense, with an inexpressible meaning, is the true mode (dharma) of essential nature." Willis p 120.

35 Cf. Willis, p. 106 and MV III.

36 Cf. MV 1.4 and III.7.

37 Willis, p. 110.

38 Cf. Willis p. 102-3, and the "Self-Existence" chapter of the PP.

39 Cf. Willis p. 113.

40 "For given things named 'earth,' etc., 'earth' and so on are only nominal designations. For those given things named 'earth,' etc., the idea of the idea of them arises with exaggeration, or the idea of them arises with underestimation. The idea with 'exaggeration' posits the essential nature of the given thing as consisting of that name; and the idea with 'underestimation' posits the destruction of the ultimate basis of the given thing itself. When these two erron-
eous views are abandoned and eliminated, the idea of any meditative base is said to be 'lost'. Willis, p. 123.

41 As the final verses of Vasubandhu's Trisvabhāvanirdeśa state: (35) "By restraining the opposite thought, seeing the vanity of things through the intellect, and by following the three kinds of knowledge (i.e., study, reflection, and meditation), emancipation is attained without any effort. (36) Through the attainment of the state of pure consciousness there is the non-perception of the perceivable; and through the non-perception of the perceivable (i.e. the object) there is the non-acquisition of the mind (i.e. the subject). (37) Through the non-perception of these two, there arises the realization of dharmadhātu, and through the realization of dharmadhātu there occurs the acquisition of 'the supernormal power of destroying ignorance and attaining prosperity (vibutta).' (38) After having 'the supernormal power of destroying ignorance and attaining prosperity' and having (thereby) attained a clear knowledge about oneself and others, the wise man realizes that bodhi which is embodied in three essential forms." Trisvabhāvanirdeśa, tr. and ed. by S. Mukhopadhyaya, India: Visvabharati, 1939, p. 27-8).

42 "The highest truth (paramārthasatya) should be known as existing only because of the one fulfilled nature...It is ultimate as object because it is tathātā, the object of cognition as brought to its highest level. As something obtained (prāpta) it is ultimate, since it is nirvāṇa, the highest object of all action. It is ultimate as a path, because it is that Path which is the ultimate goal of all action.

"paramārtha-satyaṁ / ekaṁ sat parinippanṇā eva svabhāvāc veditavyāṁ /...artha-paramārthas tathātā
paramasya jñānasyārtha iti kṛtvā / prāpti-paramārtho
nirvāṇo paramo 'ṛtha iti kṛtvā / pratipatti-paramārtho
mārgaḥ parame syārtha iti kṛtvā /" Nagao p. 41.

43 Cf. RV 1.4.
44 Willis, p. 113-114.
45 Sections III and IV; cf. NS Tokyo vol. 112, p. 275 also.
46 For instance: "Il (Asaṅga) expose la manière d'entrer (the bhūmis): par quatre examens...et par
quatre savoirs exacts...C'est savoir exactment que la nature propre et les spécifications attribuées au nom ou à la chose sont simplement des désignations, qu'il n'y a pas là d'objet réel qui existe. C'est pourquoi on dit que tout cela est pareillement inexistant. D'abord on découvre que la nature propre et les spécifications, attribuées au nom ou à la chose, ne sont que désignation; ensuite, on sait exactement que tout cela est absolument inexistant. Au moment où on sait exactement que cela n'existe pas, il y a quadruple savoir exact (yathābhūtaparijñāna)."
Lamotte, p. 162.

47 For instance, Viṃśatikā v. 1, 8, and 16.

48 The idea of a seed which has effects latent within it and is nurtured and eventually springs up and actualizes its potentials is a metaphor the Yogācāras use for the result of the karmic potenti-

alities we create as a result of our actions. The metaphor of seeds developing within a psycho-physical series is used to illustrate the continuity of such a series, and, especially in Vasubandhu's philosophy, corresponds to the orthodox Vaibhāṣika concept of the 'prāptis' (transformations within a momentary series of events which link the effects in the future to the actions in the present which produce them); but while Sanghabhadra and the Dipikāra assert that prāptis are real entities which are separate from the series it-

self, it is recognized by Vasubandhu that the term "seed" is only a metaphor for a potential energy within entities which links them indirectly together, and thus constitutes a series which gradually allows them to undergo transformation (cf. Kośa II, ad. 36). When he speaks of "a seed for a dharma" this refers to the effect of a seed which produces a particular dharma, either directly or immediately, through a transformation of its own series. As Kośa V, ad. 1, states, the metaphor of "seed" was chosen because of the inherent power of yeiled rice which is found in a sprout of rice. He emphasizes, however, that "seed" is a mere metaphor to help explain inherent transform-

ations which occur in psycho-physical series'.

This idea, however, is not actually new to Yogā-

cāra philosophy, and is also found in Aucuttara III 404-9, which compares the actualization of beneficial and unbeneficial dharmas within a series to sprouts growing from seeds in the ground. The analogy is es-

pecially helpful for the Yogācāras in maintaining a continuity of actions and their results without re-
sorting to advocating an enduring "soul," and to pro-
pound the idea of an organic, dynamically changing univer-
se.

49 Asnacker, op. cit., p.333.

50 This idea is repeated throughout the IV, e.g. the bhāyās of III.15 and III.23.

51 Nagao, p. 18.

52 Asaṅga echoes this idea in Willis p. 137-8; cf. also MV IV and 13.2.

53 Cf. Willis p. 110.

54 Cf. Vasubandhu's description of "Realities" (tattva) in MV III.

55 This idea of śūnyatā as existent is found primarily in Vasubandhu's writings, especially in MV 13.2. When I first encountered this idea, I was tempted to dismiss it as a paradox or perhaps a mis-
take, since it seems unintelligible how a quality of the true nature of things (śūnyatā) could be held to be existent. I now think, however, that other parts of the IV and Asaṅga's writings shed some light on the apparent paradox. It seems to me that śūnyatā must refer (in this passage at least) to vastus, which are the indeterminate bases of percep-
tion, whose nature is characterized by śūnyatā. Since nothing can be postulated about what gives rise to perceptions, and no descriptions can delineate it, it can only be said to be śūnyatā.

56 Asaṅga, quoting the MSJ, states: "Et voici, tirées du Mahāvānasūtrālaṃkāra (VI, 6-10), d'autres stances sur la pleine compréhension (abhisamaya): ayant accumulé un équipement illimité en savoir et mérité, le Bodhisattva, arrivé par la réflexion a une bonne certitude sur les textes, comprend que l'objet tire son origine de la parole.

Ayant reconnu que les objets ne sont rien que parole, il se fixe dans le Rien que pensée a apparence d'(objet). L'élément fondamental se présent à ses yeux; c'est pourquoi il se libère de la dualité.

Il connaît par son intelligence que ce qui est autre chose que la pensée n'est pas; c'est pourquoi il reconnaît la non-existence de la pensée elle-même. Le sage qui a compris la non-existence de la dualité, se fixe dans l'élément fondamental qui échappe à cette
dualité.
Chez le sage, par la force du savoir sans concept accompagnant l'égalité partout et toujours, le support, amas de fautes semblable à un fourré, est expulsé comme le poison est expulsé par un puissant antidote." Lamotte, p. 177-9.

57 "The object which has been brought to rest is tathatā, because in these are tranquillity, cessation, and the Path; it is this tranquillity by which, having been cultivated, the object which has been brought to rest by tathatā, having thus cultivated the bringing to rest of the object, so one reaches the object of the path, which is tathatā."

"praśamārthaḥ ca tathatā /tatra praśamo nirodho mārggaḥ ca yaś ca praśamo yena ceti kṛtvā praśamārthaḥ tathatāḥ. praśamasya rtha iti kṛtvā tathatāyā mārggām- arbanavat / " Nagao, p. 48.

58 As Śaṅka concludes in his discussion in the previously quoted passage from the PŚ: "Établi dans la bonne loi prescrite par le Tûni, fixant sa pensée dans l'élément-fondamental-racine, comprenant que l'activité de la mémoire n'est rien que concept, le valeureux Bodhisattva atteint rapidement l'autre bord de l'océan des qualités." Lamotte, p. 179.

59 Cf. Vasubandhu's dhāśya on the previously quoted passage, p. 179 Lamotte.

60 Cf. the dhāśya on IV III.15 and III.23.

61 Willis, p. 125.

62 Cf. IV II.

63 Willis, p. 117.

64 Cf. Willis p. 117.

65 "And when he knows Suchness, as it really is, with its inexpressible essential nature, as it really is, this is called 'voidness rightly conceptualized,' and called 'well-discerned right insight.' By this means and others consistent with demonstration-and proof reasoning, he will core to judge that the essential nature of all dharmas is inexpressible." Willis, p. 117.
66 "Madhyama pratipad is the avoidance of saying either that form, etc., and matteriality are other than oneself or that they are one and the same as the self; it is a non-regard of 'self..." Nagao p. 70. Vasubandhu then discusses various views, such as that the self is the same or not the same as materially, that matter is eternal or not eternal, etc., and then concludes: "the middle path has as its aim the avoidance of extreme views."


68 "samjñāram drṣṭyārtham upacārārtham"

69 Cf. Willis, p. 135-6.

70 As Willis states in her commentary: "Coming to know the nature of the name as it really is, i.e., that it is a linguistic unit which facilitates discursive thought and upon which discursive thought operates and proliferates, the bodhisattva recognizes that it is on account of name that conceptualizing is possible, that opinions, attributions, and embellishments arise. Likewise, the bodhisattva recognizes that were it not for names, exaggeration and underestimation could not operate and hence clinging would be forced to cease. Recognizing this as the true nature of name, he is said to know it precisely, in detail." Willis, p. 136-7.

71 Cf. Willis, p. 137.


73 "But whenever the bodhisattva resorts to the four kinds of knowing precisely, in detail, he knows the eight kinds of discursive thought. and because of his right knowledge, in this lifetime, there is no generation, now or in the future, of a given thing associated with proliferation which could serve as a rental support and as a foundation for discursive thought. And because discursive thought does not arise, there is no generation in the future of a given thing having that as its support. Thus for him that discursive thought, along with the given thing, ceases (niruddha). This should be understood as the cessation of all proliferation." Willis, p. 139-40.

74 Cf. also MS III.9-10.
75"Thus that one, with that mastery of power, is best of and incomparable among all beings. And you should understand that the bodhisattva has five superior benefits (anusāsana) which control in all circumstances, namely: (1) he attains supreme peace of mind, because he attains the tranquil stations (vihāraprasāntataya) and not by reason of pacifying defilement; (2) his knowledge and vision with respect to all the sciences are unimpeached, extremely pure, and perfectly clear; (3) he is unwearied by his circling in samsāra for the sake of beings; (4) he understands all the speech with 'veiled intention' (sahāva vacanāni) of the Tathāgatas; and (5) because he is self-reliant, not depending on others, he is not led away from his zealous devotion (adhimukti) to the Great Vehicle." Willis, p. 142.
76Cf. Willis' commentary, p. 142-3.
78Cf. Willis p. 143-4 and MV III.23.
79As we can see by the many perfections and supernormal powers the bodhisattva accumulates in this system, we can see that the bodhisattva as Vasubandhu and Asaṅga conceive him is very advanced on the spiritual path. This is because in Vasubandhu and Asaṅga's writings he has to attain many perfections before he reaches the first bodhisattva bhumi, the third stage, which is referred to as "Prabhakara," or Luminous. Before this, he first experiences bodhicittotpāda, the thought of enlightenment, which gives him great joy at the prospect of his future spiritual destiny (this is bhumi one, called "Pramudita," or Joyful). In the next stage, called "Vimala," ( immaculate) he purifies his conduct in preparation for his advancement, and renounces any attachment to lower paths, especially that of the Hinayānists, and devotes himself completely to the Mahāyāna. In the third stage he begins the actual path the bodhisattva, and cultivates various samādhis and studies the scriptures, and completely purifies his thoughts and attitudes. Only at this stage is he properly designated a "bodhisattva," although he was destined for this goal with the producing of bodhicittotpāda. This contrasts with other Mahāyāna treatises, where beings are referred to as "bodhisattvas" after the arising of bodhicitta, such as in the Viralakśīrṇiperdeśa Sūtra, where we see various levels of spiritual development among bodhisattvas, including some who are just be-
ginning the bodhisattva path.

It is interesting to note in this connection that the traditional sources agree that Āsaṅga himself had reached the level of a third stage bodhisattva (Cf. Taranātha's History of Buddhism In India, tr. A. Chattopadhyaya and Lama Champa, Sīrla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1970, p. 160, and Bu-ston's History, tr. E. Obermiller, Heidelberg, 1931, vol. I, p.140), and Taranātha (p. 160) also states that Āsaṅga successfully accomplished sūryaprabhā-samādhi (sunlight samādhi) under the direction of Maitreya (according to Taranātha's account Maitreya was Vasubandhu's tutelary deity, although this may be a mystification of the historical Maitreya, reputed to be the teacher of both Vasubandhu and Āsaṅga; it is interesting to note also in connection with his instruction leading Āsaṅga to sūryasamādhi that Maitreya's name means "being full of light"), which is said to enable a bodhisattva who practices it to understand everything. Cf. also Dayal, op. cit., p. 270-291 for an in-depth study of various conceptions of the bhūmis.

80 Cf. MVB III.23.
81 Cf. MVB III.15.
82 Pramana-samuccaya 37.2-3.
84 For the importance of śīla for the first bhūmi, see Dayal, p. 284.
85 Cf. Dayal P. 154-5.
86 This is the major aspect of the third bhūmi, in which the bodhisattva seeks to develop and deepen his awareness (Cf. Dayal p. 286-7).
87 Cf. Willis p. 136.
88 "Now it should be understood that those eight kinds of errant discursive thought which belong to immature beings and which engender the three bases and cause the continual return to the world, operate through weakness of, and non-engagerent with, these four kinds of knowing precisely, in detail. Moreover, from errant discursive thought defilement arises; from defilement, circling in samsāra; from circling in samsāra, the consequences of samsāra, e.g., the sufferings
of birth, old age, and death." Willis, p. 139. Cf. also p. 137.

89 Willis, p. 137.

90 As Sthiramati states in his commentary on the BB: "The bodhisattva now searches the character of voidness," which involves "(1) knowing... that all names are avastüka (groundless and without actual referents) and void; (2) knowing... all vastus are without essential nature and void; (3) knowing... all avalaiksanas are without essential nature and are void; and (4) knowing... all dharma arising and ceasing are without essential nature and are void." Willis, p. 135.

91 Cf. Willis, p. 142.

92 Cf. Willis, p. 140.

93 Cf. Willis, p. 140-1.

94 Willis, p. 142.

95 Cf. Willis, p. 142-3.

96 "He (the bodhisattva) realizes that the dharma, with their natures of cause and their natures of fruit which are of inferior and superior nature, are only the concepts of grāhya and grāhaka. The bodhisattva develops the seed of contact with the Dharmadātu, which means that he develops the impression (vāsana) of the great hearing of the Mahāyāna. 'Ending his support': because in penetrating tathatā his thought and his mentations become pure, or because Tathatā itself is pure. 'Assured of all the attributes of a Buddha': the balas, assurances (vaisār-adya) and the other attributes of a Buddha. 'He acquires omniscience': that means immaculate, unassailable awareness of a Buddha." Vasubandhu, in his commentary on Asanga's MS, For the Tibetan, cf. Lamotte, MS, vol. I, p. 53-4.

97 Having produced bodhicittotpada, the bodhisattva makes a pranidhāna (strong determination to carry out one's will, sometimes translated as "promise" or "vow") which strengthens his resolve and helps him to keep sight of his mighty task of bringing all beings to enlightenment. The length of time for which the pranidhāna applies may vary from a few lifetimes (after his enlightenment) to a vow never to stop working in samsāra until all beings have entered nirvāna first (as
Samantabhadra vowed). The earliest formulations of pranidhana were relatively simple, as Dayal indicates (p. 65), and later became increasingly elaborate. There are also cases of very personal types of pranidhanas, such as Ksitigarbha's vow to save the beings reborn in hells after his mother was reborn in one (as seen in The Past Vows of Earth Store Bodhisattva, tr. Bhiksu Heng Ching). For a more complete description of pranidhana, cf. Dayal p. 65-79.

98Cf. MV. III.

99 As in the following verse (the only karika which seems to indicate this idea) "The teaching of the Buddhas is wholly based on there being two truths; that of a personal everyday world and a higher truth which surpasses it." Sprung p. 230.

100 As in PP 371: "This is the teaching of the illustrious Buddhas. It leads men from byways and establishes them on the right way. In the interests of gradual instruction and of adapting to those who are to be led, the teaching is flexible." Sprung, p. 182.

101 As the following verse indicates: "All things make sense for him for whom the absence of being makes sense. Nothing makes sense for him for whom the absence of being does not make sense." sarvam ca yuyjate tasya sunyata yasya yuyjate / sarvam na yuyjate tasya sunyatam yasya na yuyjate // Sprung p. 235.

See also Nagarjuna's Sunyata-sapti: "Since all things are empty of svabhava, they are characterized by pratitya samutpada. The end of the teachings of the unsurpassed Tathagatas of Sunyata is just that. The Buddha Bhagavans name all the things of the world by means of the conventional terms of the world." Tibetan Tripitaka, vol. 156, f. 148b. Cf. also the Riis pa'i roya mtsho, a Tibetan commentary on this work, which is in the same volume.

102 "ity etenarthena skandhadi sujnanam skandhaci-kauśalyam veditavyam /* Nagao p. 48.

103 Cf. MV III.15 and bhāṣya.
Notes to Chapter Five

1 See the Introduction to this study, p. 6-18.

2 See the Introduction, p. 8, and notes 33 and 35 in that section.

3 It is usually summarily dismissed in a manner reminiscent of Śaṅkara's one line denial of Mādhyamika (referred to as Śūnyavāda) in his Brahma-Sūtra-bhāṣya (II ad., 2 pāda, 31), where he simply states that they are not even worth discussing. For an example of this see Willis, p. 113 and MS p. 60 (Levi ed.).

4 See for instance MV III.

5 Cf. MV III.16.

6 This is similar to the Zen story quoted earlier, where mountains must at first be shown to be no longer mountains, but eventually with the state of true awareness one is able to see things as they are.

7 This seems to be the main thrust of the arguments in the VMS, and this idea is also found in some later Yogācāra treatises, such as Dharmakīrti's PV and Prajñākārāgupta's PVA, which will occasionally be referred to in this and the following chapter.

8 Cf. Triśikā XXII.

9 "In both its objective and subjective functions, it (vijñāna) is always associated with touch, volition, feeling, thought, and cognition. But it is always indifferent to its associations." Radhakrishnan and Moore p. 334. Dharmakīrti expresses a similar idea in PV II, 343, where he states that vijñāna is the only reality, and that external forms must be related to it: "dhiyo Nīlādirūpate bahyo 'rtha kiś pramāṇakaḥ dhiyo Nīlādirūpate satasyānubhavaḥ kathām."

10 Cf. MS II and Triśikā.

11 Cf. Triśikā XV.

12 Cf. Triśikā XXII: "The Absolute (vijñāna) and the dependent are neither the same nor different; as in the case of impermanence and permanence, the one can be seen only in the other." Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 336.
"The supreme truth of all dharmas is nothing other than the True Norr (suchness). It is forever true to its nature, which is the true nature of mind-only." Pachakrishnan and 1'oore, p. 337.

14 Kamalasila expresses this idea in his Tattvasām-grahapaññikā: "jjñāna-jñeyayoh parasparam eka eva upā-lāmbo-na-prtag-itī, ya eva jñeyasya sa eva jñānasyeti yāvat /

15 A logical pervasion of X by Y is the invariable concomitance of X with Y such that X (the logically pervaded) can never occur without Y (the logical pervader). This is stated as early as the Nyāya-sūtras, which recognized the necessity for an inference of the type "X must exist because Y exists," and adds that there must also be given an example of a parallel case which illustrates the connection, as in the following statement:

Thesis: There is fire on the mountain (demonstrandum).

Justification: Because it possesses smoke.

Exemplification: In the same way, a fire in a kitchen possesses smoke (parallel instance).

Vasubandhu was one of the first logicians who wrote that a statement of the logical pervasion was a necessary part of the inference process. As Vādavidhi, fragment V states: "The exemplification must take the form of a specific parallel instance 'like a kitchen,' plus the statement of the inseparable connection 'whenever there is smoke, there is fire.' this discovery, which is sometimes wrongly attributed to Dignāga, a student of Vasubandhu's, is an important one for Indian philosophy, as it marks the beginning of formal logic.

Vasubandhu also developed one of the first exact definitions of logical pervasion, which he states requires an inseparable connection (avinābhāva) of the type: 'Whenever X is absent, Y is absent' (Vādavidhi, fragments 1-4). Previous definitions were concerned with regular co-existence (sāhacarya): 'Whenever X is present, Y is present,' but as Barlingay points out (A Modern Introduction to Indian Logic, p. 138ff) these definitions were not able to deal with the principle of implication.

In making an inference, the property designated in the demonstrandum must always be the logical pervader, and the property denoted in the justification must al-
ways be the logical pervader, and the property denoted in the justification must always be the logically pervaded. Thus, according to Vasubandhu's method of formalizing an inference, the fire-smoke argument would be:

**Thesis:** This mountain possesses fire (derostrandum).

**Justification:** Because of its property of possessing smoke.

**Udāharana:** Whatever is smoke-possessing, that is fire-possessing, as a kitchen (parallel instance).

(Cf. also Karl Potter, Presuppositions of India's Philosophies, p. 61). The fact that there are so many facets of Vasubandhu's thought makes it extremely difficult to understand all aspects of this complex thinker's philosophy. He was, among other things, probably the finest exponent of the Vaibhāṣika system (in the Kośa), which he later rejected, a great logician, as is evidenced by his Vādavidhi and portions of the KSP, and a mystical thinker of great insight, as is evidenced by his IV and V'S. The complexity of his thought and its far-ranging concerns led Lamotte, in his Introduction au Karmasiddhiprakarana, to exclaim: "À notre avis Vasubandhu a trop vécu, trop pensé, trop écrit." (Mêlanges Chinois et Bouddhiques IV, p. 178-9.) One scholar, Erich Frauwallner, has even gone so far as to theorize that there were actually two Vasubandhus on the basis of what he sees as "inconsistencies" within Vasubandhu's work and the fact that he had different concerns in his writings. This hardly seems a valid basis for such a statement, however, since a similar analysis would show that there were at least four Platos, and a number of Kants. Cf. Anacker, op. cit., "Introduction".

16 Trīśikā XXII, Padhakrishnan and Moore, p.336. Cf. also PŚa VI.1 and XI.48 and VI.7-8, and FVII.213.


18 Cf. PV II, 368: "sahepalambhiniyamād abheda nīla taddhiyoh" and "sakṛṣa saṁvedyamānasaya niyamena dhiyā sāna / viṣyasya tato 'nyatvam kenākāreṇa sīchyati /"

19 Cf. KSP 19, p. 324-5 Anacker.

20 As found in his Brahmaśtrabhāṣya.

21 Cf. NV I.1-6 and bhāṣya.
22 Cf. *Trīśikā* XVII.


24 As *ṣaṅga* states in *MS* p. 91, in purified *vijñāna* there is no duality: "tātā dvayena grāhya-grāhaka bhāvena nirūpayitur asākyatvāt" - even if one thinks of having purified *vijñāna* one has not gone far enough, because this is an objective thought about *vijñāna*. (MS XI.47-8, *VIS* p. 42-3, Levi ed.) As he also states in *MS* p. 191: "tathātā nimmittaparivarjanam tathate sayam ity api ābhogānimmittaparivarjanāt." Cf. also *VIS* p. 42 and *MS* VI.1 and IX.24.

25 This is similar to Berkeley's idea of *esse est percipi*, but differs from Berkeley in that consciousness for the *Yogācāra* is creative as well as perceptive, and the *Yogācāra* does not think, as Berkeley does, that objects are contained in the mind of God when not perceived by us, but rather that objects pass in and out of our minds according to the creative workings of *vijñāna*.

One of the main points with which *Vasubandhu* closes the *Viṃśatikā* is that a perceived object of sense or cognized object of consciousness is only internal at the moment of apprehension. This, however, is not *Vasubandhu*'s final statement, and cannot be equated with a Berkeleyan idealism, when we examine the *Trīśikā*, which asserts that there is something external which gives rise to perceptions.

26 Cf. *RV* I.2 and *bhāṣya*.

27 All perception is related to a perceiving subject; Cf. *MS* I.53-4 and *Vasubandhu*'s *bhāṣya*.

28 Cf. *Śaṅkara*’s *BSB*, II ad., 2 pāda, 29-31 and *NM* p. 314.


30 "Based on the mind-consciousness the five consciousnesses (of the senses) manifest themselves in concomitance with the objective world. Sometimes the senses manifest themselves together, and sometimes not, just as waves are dependent on the water." *Trīśikā* XV, p. 335 Radhakrishnan and Moore.

31 Cf. *RV* I.12 and *bhāṣya*. 
32 Cf. Trīśikā XVIII and XIX.
33 Trīśikā XVIII, p. 336 Sourcebook. This point will be developed more fully later on in this study.
34 MV I.2 and bhāṣya.
35 MV I.2.
36 MV I.2 and bhāṣya.
37 MV I.2 and bhāṣya.
38 MV I.4 and bhāṣya.
39 MV 38.21-23.
40 Cf. MV V.
41 See his bhāṣya of MV V.1-5.
42 Cf. PP XII, "Śūnyatā" and XIX, "Nirvāṇa."
43 Cf. Trīśikā XXIV and XXV-XXVIII.
45 Cf. MV I.4 and bhāṣya and MV V.
47 Because the fulfilled nature (parinispanna) is beyond all words and conceptualizations (Cf. MV III).
48 Conze, p. 251.
49 Cf. MV I.3 and bhāṣya.
50 Cf. MV III.9 and bhāṣya.
51 Part two of the VMS.
52 Cf. Trīśikā.
53 Dignāga also follows the early Yogācāras on the concept of the nature of the object of perception. The fifth chapter of his Pramāṇasamuccaya states that there is at least a substratum of reality and objects are real, but we cannot perceive their essences. Language does
not describe objects and at best only can classify objects by describing what they are not; speech is essentially linked to imagination, and knowledge derived from words is inferred and carries an interpretation which comes between our perception of the substratum of reality and cognition, and so objects for Dignāga are real, but inexpressible.

54 Cf. MV II.12 bhāṣya.
55 Cf. Triṃśikā 1-3.
56 Cf. MV II.12 bhāṣya.
57 Prakṛti (the supposed material substance from which impressions arise) is known to be Śūnyatā, because it comprises basic non-existence, and also absence of anything (in itself). Bhāṣya: "The characteristic of parikalpita is that it is non-existent because it lacks any prakāra (content) whatsoever, and so is only the emptiness of that. The characteristic of paratantra is that it is not as it seems, but still is not completely non-existent, though empty of any definable characteristic. Śūnyatā is the characteristic of pariṇāpāna, because its very nature (svabhāva) is Śūnyatā, and it is the emptiness of any (semblance of) prakṛti."

"abhava ca ātad-bhavaḥ prakṛtiḥ śūnyatā maṇaḥ/ parikalpita-lakṣaṇam na kenacit prakāraṇādity abhava evaṣya śūnyatā / paratantra-lakṣaṇam tathā nāsti yathā parikalpyate na tu sarvavatā nāsti tasyātad-bhavaḥ / śūnyatā pariṇāpāṇa-lakṣaṇam śūnyatā-smavāvan eveti prakṛtir evaṣya śūnyatā /" Nagao, p. 39.

58 Cf. MV III.
59 Cf. Viṃśatikā II and commentary by Sthiramati; Cf. also MV II, 375 and Berkeley, Three Dialogues, p. 213-4.
60 Cf. MV I.2 and bhāṣya.
61 For Vasubandhu's description of what remains in the highest meditational states, Cf. KSP 23-38.
62 Cf. NK p. 130.
63 For instance, see MV V.
64 Cf. MV III.
65 Cf. Triṃśikā II and commentary.
66 Cf. Mv III.9-11 and bhāṣya.

67 For instance, in Mv V.22 and bhāṣya.


69 Cf. Trīṁśikā.

70 Cf. Trīṁśikā 1-3.

71 Cf. Mv III.


73 Citta is an elusive term which is often translated as thought, mind, intelligence, reason, memory, thinking, reflecting, imagining, etc. In Buddhist psychology it stands for any basic psychological event, whether sensory or non-sensory, and is not merely "thought" or "mind", as it is often rendered, because this overemphasizes the rational aspect of citta. Cuenther holds (Philosophy and Psychology of the Abhidharma, p. 15) that "attitude" is closer to the actual meaning, because it is both sensory and ratiocinative, and is always linked to important events, the caitasikas. Some earlier Abhidharma philosophers, e.g., the Bhadanta Vasumitra, who is quoted in the KSP, hold that the experience of states, where there are neither conceptualizations (samjñā) or feelings (vedanā), can also be reduced to cittas. Others, however, such as Chōsaka, reject this idea, since citta always involves certain caitasikas, two of which must always be conceptualizations and feelings (Chōsaka, Abhidharmamṛta, 66,12; cf. also Vasubandhu's Kṣaṇa II, ad. 44d): Since citta, in Chōsaka's view, has an emotive, as well as an intellectual, side, the terms "thought" or "mind" do not capture the actual intent of the term.
My purpose here is not to propose another translation for citta, but to bring out the difficulties involved in understanding this term, which refers to any basic psychological event, and in Yogācāra philosophy is often used as a synonym for vijñāna, since a citta is a modification of vijñāna. When using this term it is important to remember that it is not merely intellectual processes, but also their concomitant emotions.

74 Cf. PV II. 326-7 and TSI 2025.

75 Cf. Triṃśikā XVII-XXX.

76 Visuddhi-magga, in Radhakrishnan and Moore, p.290.

77 Cf. MV I and bhāṣya.

78 MV I.1 and bhāṣya.

79 As Candrakīrti states in the Madhyamakāvatāra.

80 Cf. MV I.3 and bhāṣya.

81 Cf. Viṃśatikā II and Sthiramati's commentary.

82 See Vasubandhu's discussion of parikalpita in MV III and MSA p. 61.

83 Cf. Triṃśikā 1 and 2 and commentary.

84 Cf. NB IV.2.34, NM p. 545, and NK p, 185.

85 Cf Nyāyasūtra V. ii and 34 and Ślokavārttika by Kumārila, p. 107.

86 As in the opening verses of the Viṃśatikā.

87 Cf. MV V. 22 bhāṣya and PVA p. 23.

88 Cf. MSA p. 60-61 and 191.

89 Cf. Prareyakamalamārtanda, 51.

90 Cf. Viṃśatikā.

91 Except in the higher stages of spiritual development, as explained in the previous chapter, where the bodhisattva gains the ability to constitute reality as he wishes.
Cf. KSP p. 19-22 and TSP I, p. 553.

Cf. TSP I, p. 553.

Cf. KSP 23-28.

Cf. MV V.

Cf. NS v. 11 and 34.

Cf. Triṃśikā 1 and 5.

It should be noted here that Vasubandhu does not seem to be concerned with an argument ending in infinite regress. It is held by him that, quite simply, this is an accurate description of the "way things are", and, as Heidegger states, we are already in the "hermeneutical circle" and must begin our analysis from the condition of being caught up in it since we cannot escape it and gain a totally objective viewpoint on reality. Also, according to the Yogācāras (and Buddhist thought in general) it is useless to speculate on the beginning point (if indeed there is one), since such questions are not conducive to enlightenment.

Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 334.

In MSA XI. 29 Asaṅga states that the whole process of purification and affliction is unreal in the final analysis: "māyārājeva cānyena māyārjñā paraśajñā ye sarvadharra paśyanti nirmāṇa te jñātrajñā." Cf. also MV II.12 and bhāṣya.

Cf. MSA VI And XI.

In Pramāṇasamuccaya I.38b.2-4 Dignāga comments on this same idea: "From the standpoint of tathātā there is no difference at all! (Between the object of consciousness and the perceiving subject), but hampered as we are by the Transcendental Illusion (avidvā), we perceive only a refraction of reality. All that we know is exclusively its indirect appearance as differentiated by the construction of a difference of a subject and an object. Therefore, the differentiation into cognition and its object is made from the empirical (yathā-dṛṣṭam) point of view, but not from the point of view of the Absolute Reality (yathā-tathātām). tr. Th. Shcherbatsky, Buddhist Logic, vol. II, p. 396.
The idea of momentariness was a major issue of dispute between Vasubandhu and the Vaibhaṣikas, as Anacker points out in his article (Philosophy East and West, 1974) entitled "The Solution of the Kṣp". In it he deals with the nature of the dialectics of the Kṣp, where Vasubandhu answers a series of objections, primarily from the Vaibhaṣika school. The most widely accepted theory of momentariness in the Vaibhaṣika school was that propounded by the Bhadanta Vasumitra, who held that the efficient force of present dharmas gives rise to future states (avasthā) of dharmas. A present dharma is momentary, but continuity between moments is maintained because the characteristics of present dharmas are passed on to the future states. Vasubandhu criticizes this idea first in Kośa V, ad. 27, and then later in Kṣp 16-17, first on the grounds that the Vaibhaṣikas hold that there must be a correspondence between everything that exists as an object of consciousness (i.e., in order to exist, a thing must be present as an object, possible or actual, of some consciousness). Vasubandhu points out that in the case of an arhat who has extinguished all outflows the last moments of his life are without any efficacy and so, according to the Vaibhaṣikas own rules, cannot be present (Kṣp 16-17). There is also a problem for the Vaibhaṣikas in the attainment of the highest meditations, where consciousness is completely stopped. Since in these meditations consciousness produces no efficacy states, it is unintelligible how, in the Vaibhaṣika view, consciousness can return again and resume its functioning.

Vasubandhu's own theory to account for this utilizes the metaphor of "seeds" (bīja) produced by a citta series, and which remain latent during the states of mystical absorption, and then begin to bear their fruit in the resumption of the consciousness-series after the meditative state is passed. (Cf also Kośa IX and Kṣp 16, 17, and 20). He then, however, puts forth another theory, that the resumption of psychic states need not be explained by the seed metaphor, but could be accounted for solely by the reawakening of the body, which contains the latent potential (suspended in the highest
meditative states) to begin anew the production of citta series'.

Vasubandhu does not clearly elaborate on this idea in the KP, and mostly refers to the seed-metaphor to explain the re-eruption of consciousness. Asanga asserts a similar idea in his exegesis of the Yogacara-Bhumi, where he holds that the bijas and alaya are necessary to explain the apparent continuity of experience and the continuance of a series after death: "If the alayavijnana is not the foundation of all things then rebirth is impossible. Firstly, abiding is not possible; also, clear abiding is not possible, and the seed (of future activity) itself is not possible; karra is not possible; abiding in non-cognitive stability (samapatti) is not possible; and vijnana's transcendence of death and transference (of vijnana) from one life to another life is not possible." "Dang po hjug pa mi srid pa dang. gsal bar hjug pa mi-sric-pa dang. sa bon nyid mi-srid-pa dang. las mi-srid-pa dang. lus kyi tshor ba mi-srid-pa dang. sams med pa'ih snyoms par hjug pa mi-srid-pa dang. rnam par shes pa'ih chhi-ghpo mi-sric-pa so."

Vinayavasaramaṇih, II.3-2.4.

In Bodhisattvabhumi (I, p. 4, ed. V. Bhattacharya, 1957) part I Asanga also writes about the function of the alaya as the receptacle wherein bijas are stored, matured, and carried over between lives: "All the bijas are appropriated in the locus of the ripening of the collected vipakas (ripening impressions), which is the alayavijnana, the locus of bijas." "sarva-bijakara-asrayapada-tvipakasamghitam alayavijnanaṃ bijaśrayaṃ."

Cf. also Kośa IX for an early formulation of the idea of bijas as a way of maintaining continuity in momentary vijnana-series'. It is interesting to note in this connection that neither Vasubandhu, Asanga, nor the Vaibhasikas ever seem to question the idea of momentariness. It seems to be accepted by all of them as self-evident, which appears to be a common theme in both early Hinayana and Mahayana scholasticism. It is not until the period of the great Buddhist logicians that we see treatises which attempt to defend momentariness (for instance Dharmanirmita's Pramanavarttika, II,421 and Ratnakirti's Kṣanabhaṅgasiddhi).

Vasubandhu also expresses a similar idea in his commentary on the KP, but he adds that although the six vijnanas in the alaya have been going on since beginning-less time, they still need an external stimulus: "de la kun gzhi rnam par shes pa dang bcas pa'lh mig dang gzugs rnam la brten nas rig gi rnam par shes pa 'byang ste." (Tibetan Triпитaka, Vol. 112, p. 275). I would like to express my thanks to James P'ullens for his help in rendering the Tibetan passages.

As we saw in chapter 2 of this study.

See Sprung Ch. XIII.

Cf. MV I.1, I.2 and bhāṣya.

This metaphor is found in *MSA* VI.46, *Trimśikā* XV, and *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* X.56-7.

Vasubandhu's conception of retribution of actions was strongly influenced by his Vaibhāṣika teachers. According to the Viḥāra, the retribution of an act, as Vasumitra stated, occurs when a past action produces a present result, until the efficacy-force it contains is spent. Thus an act projects an effect in the present, although it is itself already past, like ripples spreading out in a clear pool from a stone dropped into the middle, although the stone which began the ripples has already sunk to the bottom and is no longer active. According to the Vaibhāṣikas, who held a theory of momentariness of events, the connection of past acts with present results is explained through the action of "prāptis", which are forces which join separate but related elements.

Vasubandhu objected to the traditional Vaibhāṣika doctrine because it violates the principle of momentariness of all dharmas. If an action occurred in a past moment, and if that moment is truly momentary, there can be no continuity. The Yogācāras, of course, assert the (relative) existence of the ālaya, or "storehouse consciousness," which stores the positive, negative, or neutral energies of actions, and nurtures them until their proper time of retribution arrives.

Th. Shcherbatsky, *Madhyāntavibhāga*, op. cit., p. 132-150. The traditional Buddhist schema of the twelve-fold chain of causation is as follows: (1) avidyā (ignorance), which leads to (2) impressions (samskāras), which gives rise to (3) vijnāna, which conceptualizes reality into (4) nāma-rūpa (name and form), which is revealed by (5) āyatanas (organs of sense), which operate by (6) sparsa (contact), which leads to (7) vedana (sensation), as a result of which we come to see some things as more or less desireable than others, which leads to (8) trsna (thirst) and (9) upādāna (grasping), and the collection of one's various impressions and attitudes come to form the matrix of one's personality or being (10) (bhāva), which leads inexorably to (11) birth (jātī), (12) māraṇa (death), and jara (old age).
**A vipāka** is any retributory force of an ethical nature which is strong enough to yield a result of either suffering or freedom from suffering for the ideation-series which instigated it (Cf. *Kośa* II, 54 c-d). These forces represent the combined and individual aspects of each person's future births, and determine whether they will be favorable or unfavorable, pleasant or unpleasant. This is the theory the Yogacāras use to make sense of retribution of actions (which is absolutely necessary in order for them to be able to explain the need for moral behavior, which all Buddhist schools hold is a prerequisite for spiritual advancement) although they follow the Buddhist doctrine of anatta, that there is no enduring soul. Without the mechanism of the vāsanaś it would be highly problematic for the Yogacāras how there could be any future consequences of present or past actions.

**A pariṇāma** in Yogacāra philosophy is an evolute of vijñāna. As Dharmapāla states in his commentary on the 17th verse of the *Triṃśikā*: "These consciousneses refer to the previously stated three evolving consciousneses and the concomitant psychic activities into the seeing part (daśana-bhāga) and seen part (nimitta-bhāga) is called "evolution" (pariṇāma). The evolved seeing part is called ".perceiver or knower"* because it perceives or knows the seen part. The evolved seen part is called "that to be perceived or known,"** because it is perceived or known by the seeing part. Ch'eng wei shih lun, 7th chuan, Taishō, no. 1585, p.38c.

Thus for Dharmapāla pariṇāma refers to the evolutions of the appearance of seer and seen out of consciousness. This, however, is not the meaning Vasubandhu gives it. Dharmapāla translates vijñānapariṇāma by shih so p'ien, "that which evolves from vijñāna." Sthiramati's exposition is probably more faithful to Vasubandhu's intention. He states that pariṇāma is "being different from the previous state (of consciousness)." (Cf. *Triṃśikā* bhāṣya on v.XVII). The pariṇāma for Sthiramati is the relation of a present moment of vijñāna to its preceeding moment, and is a temporal relationship. It is not the evolution of a bifurcation
of vijñāna, as Dharmapāla maintains, because Vasubandhu states that vijñāna is parināma (and uses the two words as a compound, vijñānaparināma, throughout the KSP), because vijñāna is a constantly changing stream, which is, as Sthiramati suggests, "different" from itself in each succeeding moment. Thus the compound vijñānaparināma (whose use by Vasubandhu is the first such instance in Yogācāra philosophy) refers to a present moment of vijñāna which is different from a previous one. He also equates (Triśikā v. XVII) vijñānaparināma with vikalpa, discursive thought, which disturbs vijñāna and makes it other than what it is essentially, i.e., pure and un-afflicted with vikalpa. Until one ceases producing vikalpa one is is the state of vijñānaparināma, where vijñāna is other than what it is, rather than vijñānaparimātratā, where vikalpa has come to rest. This is referred to as the state of prajñā or nirvikalpa-vijñāna. Cf. Triśikā XVII.

120 KST 33, p. 354-5 Anacker.

121 The fact that the Vyākhyāyukti is cited in this passage is another reason why the KSP must have been written after Vasubandhu's conversion to Mahāyāna, because it is a work by Vasubandhu which is ardently Mahāyānistic in its approach. Cf. notes, ch. three of this study. The Vyākhyāyukti is a work which has been lost in Sanskrit and is preserved only in Tibetan. It seems to be concerned primarily with the classification of the Buddhist scriptures, and was used for this purpose by Bu-ston in the Chos 'kyung, Part I.

122 KSP 37, Anacker p. 135. Vasubandhu is admitting here that the opponent need not necessarily admit the validity of the Sāndhinirmocanasūtra, but the argument nevertheless may have had some weight for the Vaibhāṣikas, who admit the validity of some sūtras which were clearly written after the time of the Buddha's death, and who also admit that some important sūtras are lost. Cf. also MS I.5 and 35 for a similar argument.

123 KST 33, p. 354-5 Anacker.

124 KSP 40, p. 370 Anacker.

125 Cf. KSP 32.

126 KSP and KST, sections 49 (p. 142 Anacker) and 44 (Ibid., p. 389) respectively.
Cf. MV I.9 and bhāśya.

It should be noted that the ālaya is in no way an enduring entity like a soul. As Asanga states in the Abhidharmasamuccaya (Pradhan ed., pp. 11ff.) citta is ālaya, and ālaya is merely a construction and is anitva, duḥkha, and anatma; it is similar to modern psychological theories of the subconsciousness, which acts as a repository for cognitions where mental events are processed.

In KSP 40 Vasubandhu also attacks the idea that the ālaya is the same as a self in the Upaniṣadic sense, since a self which is completely removed from any phenomenal activity could not have any relation to the momentary and changing phenomenal world or any being within it.

Page 24, Lévi ed.

In the VMS (p. 34-5 Lévi ed.) Vasubandhu asserts that there are a total of five states in which the manas does not function. One such state is bhāvāgrasamāpatti, the attainment of the summit of existence, a meditational state which is neither conceptual nor non-conceptual (naivasamānānāmānāyātana), and is the last of the meditational attainments before the attainment of complete cessation, and is so called because it is the ultimate state reached by functioning consciousness. The attainment of cessation is reached only after one has passed through the four lower meditational trances and the four other immaterial attainments. The immaterial attainments are the meditational attainments which one concentrates on of: endless space (ākāsanatāyātana), infinite consciousness (vijñānānānātāyātana), and the stage which is neither conceptual nor non-conceptual (naivasamānānānāmānāyātana). In all these consciousness is no longer operative, and since one of the objects of meditation is to sever afflicted cittas which are retributional, it is asserted that practice of these meditations will eventually sever the ties that bind one to retributional energies. Cf. also KSP 19-22 on the reemergence of citta after the highest meditations.


As KSP 49 indicates: 'Consciousness is manas. It is manas because it produces a sense of ego (manakṛptatvāt) and because it becomes intent on other births
It is instructive to compare Vasubandhu's conception of the alaya to that of Dharmapāla, who states that the function of the alaya is the "evolution" of phenomena, in which the mind or vijñāna, and the concomitant psychic activities, appear in the form of the seer and the seen, and in the Ch'eng wei shih lun, kārika 17, he states that "the perceiver or the knower is the seeing part," and "that to be perceived or known" is the seen part. All the objects, such as trees, mountains, birds, etc., which are considered by an ordinary man really to exist outside of our consciousness are held by Dharmapāla to be not other than the seen part of consciousness. Vijñāna is divided into eight kinds, and the seen part is divided into eight corresponding parts; the eight vijñānas are: (1) caksur-vijñāna (eye-consciousness), (2) śrotra-vijñāna (ear-consciousness), (3) ghrāna-vijñāna (nose-consciousness), (4) jihvā-vijñāna (tongue-consciousness), (5) kāya-vijñāna (body-consciousness), mano-vijñāna (thinking consciousness), (7) manas (subconscious mind), and (8) alaya-vijñāna (storehouse consciousness). Of these, the first five consciousnesses and the thinking consciousness are not born when one is fast asleep, in a faint, or in samādhi. Consequently, their seen parts are not born. Even in these states of mind, however, alaya-vijñāna is born and consequently, its seen part is born. For example, a mountain as the seen part of the thinking consciousness does not exist when one is fast asleep. But the mountain as the seen part of alaya-vijñāna exists even though one is fast asleep. The mountains and rivers which are thought really to exist by the ordinary man are none other than the seen part of alaya-vijñāna.

Vasubandhu, as we have seen, however, (cf. note 107 in this chapter) holds that there must be an external stimulus for the alaya-vijñāna to begin functioning. He sees the alaya as always potentially creative, however, except in the highest stages of spiritual advancement, in which its creative action has been completely stopped, and at which point it is no longer able to create because its action is controlled. It is suspended in some states of ordinary consciousness also, such as deep sleep, in a faint, or in samādhi, but is always again active when the state is passed, because the bijas which were latent spring back into life.
The Ālaya is an important doctrine in the provisional systems of Vasubandhu and Asaṅga for explaining continuity of retribution, etc., between moments of consciousness (especially when it is suspended, as in the highest meditations) and between births. Cf. Viścayasaṃgrahāṇī 2.3-2.4.

This was the explanation of conception current in Sumatisila's time, that it occurs when the menstrual blood of the mother mingles with the sperm of the father and the infusion of a consciousness from a previous life-source. As Caraka states in the Sāṁhitā:

"Conception takes place when sexual intercourse occurs, during the first sixteen days after the completion of the menstrual period (ṛtukāla), between a man whose semen is unaffected by disease, and a woman whose vagina, blood, and uterus have no defects, and when during such intercourse between the two, the semen and blood combined finds its way to the uterus, and life-force enters it due to attachment to existence (on the part of a consciousness previously within another body which has died)," and Caraka also states that the blood of the mother which actually combines with the semen is the same as the menstrual blood: "That ingredient like a seed (the semen) issues out from the body of the man, and entering the uterus by the passage already indicated, comes to mingle with the menstrual blood." Sāṁhitā, "Sāṁrasthānam", ad. 3, v. 3, Rajesvarakatta Sastri ed., p. 851. Cf. Anacker, p. 417-8. This passage and Kośa III, ad. 15 indicate that both Sumatiśīla and Vasubandhu accepted this explanation of the mechanics of conception.

KSP III, 30, p. 347-8 Anacker.

The word vikalpa in Yogācāra refers to discursive, undisciplined thought of all kinds, whether names, images, judgements, or whatever. According to Asaṅga's explication of the Bodhisattvabhūmi (Viścayasaṃgrahāṇī), discursive thought generates both names and things, i.e., both the imputations and their bases. Owing to discursive thought there arises both the parikalpita nature as well as the paratantra nature (vasūtas in this case). Both of these natures are distinguished from parinīpanna, the perfected state. The eight kinds of vikalpa are (1) ṣvabhāva-vikalpa, (2) viśeṣavikalpa, (3) pindagrāhavikalpa, (4) ahamiti-vikalpa, (5) mameti-vikalpa, (6) priya-vikalpa, (7) apiya-vikalpa, and (8) tadubhayaviparītavikalpa.
Radhakrishnan and Moore differ slightly on this, and render the passage thus:

"Thus the various consciousnesses are but transformations. That which discriminates and that which is discriminated are, because of this, both unreal. For this reason, everything is mind-only." p. 336.

Cf. *Triṃśikā*.

"A non-apprehension of objects as separate objects of sense and understanding comes about depending on the apprehension of the idea that everything is cognition-only (vijñaptiratratā). Accordingly, a non-apprehension of "cognition-only" comes about depending on this non-apprehension of objects. And thus it enters into the non-existent character of object grasped and grasper." Anacker, p. 433.


Cf. NV I.6 and bhāṣya.

Cf. NV I.3.

Radhakrishnan and Moore translate this verse:

"Without any grasping and beyond thought is the supramundane wisdom (of bodhisattvahood). Because of the abandonment of the habit-energy of various karmas and the six sense-organs as well as their objects, the revulsion from relative knowledge to perfect wisdom is attained." Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 337.

Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 118.

As *MSA* XVII.32 states: "Knowing all things of samsāra are painful and devoid of self, one possessing the highest wisdom and who has compassion (the bodhisattva) is not afflicted or bound (by samsara)." Vasubandhu comments: "Because he has compassion the bodhisattva is not disturbed by samsāra, and is not wearied (by his activity in) samsāra. For this reason he does not abide in nirvāṇa. Also, because he has the highest wisdom he is not bound by the faults of samsāra. For this reason he does not abide in samsāra."

"apratiṣṭhitā-saṃsāranirvāṇatve stōkānaśaṃsāra-gataṁ saṃgrahāduḥkha-tamakaś caiva nirātmakaś ca / nodvegam āyati na cāpi doṣaiḥ prabhachyate kāruṇiko 'gra-buddhī /" Bhāṣya: "sarvaḥ saṃsāraḥ yathābhūtaḥ pari-jñāya bodhisattvo nodvegam āyati kāruṇikatvāt / na doṣ-
air bādhyate 'grabuddhitvāt / evam (na) nirvāṇe pratisthito bhavati na saṁsāre yathākramam /'

147 Cf. Asaṅga's discussion of samatā-jñāna (MSA IX.70) and Sthiramati's commentary on the Buddhābhūmi-sūtra: "When the non-abiding nirvāṇa is attained, (one sees) that there is no difference between saṁsāra and nirvāṇa. They are seen to be of one taste (ekarasa).
Cf. also MV III. This attitude is very similar to that expressed in the "Nirvāṇa" chapter of the PP.

148 As Asaṅga states in MS II.11.3: "The ideations of manas have the appearance of all the ideas which have arisen from the dharma eye which can envisage the idea of manovijñapti; because mental activity is vi kalpa, which is a concept which includes all ideas, for instance unity, duality, and multiplicity; Yogins desire to comprehend these, and because of these penetrate the emptiness of thought, and this is liberation (from thought)."

149 Cf. MV I.4 and bhāṣya and MSA IX.15 and IX.4.

150 Cf. Yogasūtrasbhāṣya IV.15.

151 MV V.20 and commentary.

152 Cf. Vimsatikā XVII and commentary.

153 Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 336. See also v. VII on how ideations arise.

154 For instance, in MV I.1 and I.12 and bhāṣya.

155 In addition to several previously quoted passages by Asaṅga which assert this idea (see the Introduction to this study), he also states in the Areyadesanāvikhyāpana (Taishō no. 1602, vol. 31, p. 553b): "When (one sees) that in this place nothing exists, but still something of it remains, then non-duality is known, which agrees with the two-fold reasoning."

156 Cf. Śaṅkara's Brahmasūtrasbhāṣya, II ad., 2 pada, 28.

157 Ibid., II ad., 2 pada, 27-29.
158 Cf. IV III and Tr.

159 The parikalpita is the lowest of the three levels of reality, according to Vasubandhu's later philosophy. Although generally translated as "the imaginary," parikalpita means literally the "thoroughly constructed," the apparently fixed, ordered, and real, which deludes consciousness into accepting itself as the only truth, while it is actually a mirage.

160 Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 337, v. XXVII-XXX.
Notes to Chapter Six

1"byo gros chon po hdi ltar bdag nyid kyis yan dag pa ji lta ba bshni du khong du chud pas dbin pahī phyir la sbyod par hgyur ro // nor ba la mtshan ma med par mthod bas rang gi sems snaṅg ba tsam du shugs śing phyir rol gyi snaṅg ba dngos po tang tngos po med pa las rnam par lta ba bzlog ste // rnam par thar pa gsum gys yag / daq pa ji lta ba bshin du khong du chud pahi phyaṅ rgyaṅ śīn tu btab ching yod pa dang m med pahi dongs po rnam par spang pas tngos pahi rang bshin rnam s la soso rang gis rig pahi blos mgon sum du gnas par hgyur ro //" Lañkāvatārasūtra LXIX.7.

I would like to thank Mark Warrick for his help in transliterating this passage into Roman characters.

2Cf. Willis, p. 116.

3Chatterjee, op. cit, p. 15.

4Cf. MV I.4 and bhāṣya.

5Cf. PV p. 218 and MSA p. 60-1 (lévi ed).

6Kośa I.18, tr. Th. Shcherbatsky, Buddhist Logic, p. 350.

7Cf. MV I.3 and bhāṣya.

8MV I.3 and bhāṣya.

9Cf. PV p. 218.

10Cf. Kośa I, 52.15 and KSP 34.

11Chatterjee, p. 65.

12Cf. Jayanta's NM p. 314 (Viazanagaram Sanskrit series) where he states that every form of thought must have a corresponding form in reality.


14Cf. KSP 19, and Kośa IX.

15KSP 19, p. 118 Anacker, op. cit. See also page 218, note 34, for Sumatiśīla's rejection of the realist conception of memory, and the grounds on which both he and Vasubandhu think an adequate theory of memory must be based.

16Cf. Trīśikā.
17Cf. VMS p. 39 and PV II, 358 and 341.


19Cf. PV I.3 and Bhasya and MSA p. 60-61.


Dignāga echoes this idea in Pramāṇasamuccaya 36.4, where he states: "Now let there exist an external object! (Whether it exists or not is irrelevant), because even in that case, even if it really exists, it is (for us really) a definite object only as far as we have had an internal experience of it. Therefore this alone can be rightly deemed to represent the result of our cognition, since it can be distinctly cognized in that form only which is its own definitely settled form. To experience (internally) an (external) object according to its own (external) essence is impossible...our sensations of the same object have different degrees of intensity. We observe, indeed, that different persons can have respecting the same object various sensations, either acute or feeble or otherwise shaped. But the same real object cannot appear in different forms, because it would then be different in itself (it would not be in the same way). (Tr. Shcherbatsky, Buddhist Logic, vol. II, p. 383.)

24Cf. MSA p. 60-1.

25Modern psychology also recognizes this fact, and an interesting recent experiment showed clearly how our minds fill in details in some experiences. A large classroom of students was waiting for the beginning of class, when two men, one apparently chasing the other, ran into the room, and the one in back made a stabbing motion toward the other's back, after which the one in front fell forward as if wounded. They both then jumped up and ran out. The students were asked to describe what they had seen, and the majority of those who thought they had seen the event clearly stated positively that they saw a knife in the stabber's hand, and were able to describe the knife and even draw it, although in most times this experiment (which
the students had no foreknowledge of) was conducted, the stabber had nothing in his hand, and in some times he had a banana in his hand, but the students uniformly saw a knife, because our expectations in such a situation are that if a man is chased, is stabbed and falls forward as if wounded, that a knife is stabbing him, and not a banana or nothing, and so consciousness fills in the missing gaps to make a scene which accords with its expectations of what should occur.

26 Cf. PVA p. 23.

27 Cf. NB IV.34, NH p. 545, NK p. 185, SV (Nirālama-bavāda) 108-II.

28 Cf. Triṁśikā and TSP I, p. 553.

29 Cf. MV I.6-7.

30 Cf. MV I.3 and bhāṣya.


32 Cf. MV I.1 bhāṣya.

33 Cf. KSP 3.

34 The realist is unable to know things in themselves: "na hi dve nile kadācit saṁvedyate, ekaṁ jñāna-pratibimbakam aparam tadarpakam " TSP I, 574. This idea is also found expressed in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason.

35 Cf. MV I.12 bhāṣya and II. 3 bhāṣya.

36 Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 283. Cf. also Carlos Castenada, The Teachings of Don Juan, p. 43, for a very interesting description of an experience which is very similar to the description of reality which Nāgasena gives.

37 Cf. MV I.3 and bhāṣya.

39 Cf. TŚ, 579-83.

40 Cf. KSP 3-4.

41 This argument is developed in KST III.

42 Cf. KSP 3. In his Ālambanaparikṣā Dignāga expresses the similar idea that if all objects were atomic, they should give rise to identical perceptions (Cf. Ālambanaparikṣā IV).

43 "Now is (configuration) to be regarded as a special kind of atom (paramāṇusamghataviṣeṣa), like color, as some special aggregate of atoms, or as some single entity (dravya) pervading the aggregates of color (atoms) etc.? If it were a special kind of atom, "long," "short," etc., would have to be comprised separately in each part of the aggregate (to which it belongs), just as color is. If, on the other hand, it were some special aggregate of atoms, what would be the difference between it and a special aggregate of color-atoms?" KSP 3, Anacker, p. 101.

44 TŚ I, p. 556.


46 Cf. Kośa IV, ad. 3c.

47 Cf. KST IV.

48 Cf. MV I.4 and bhāṣya. Both Āsaṅga (as we saw earlier) and Vasubandhu accept this idea that ordinary beings' and logicians' views are valid within the limits of their viewpoints. For instance, in his bhāṣya on MV III.12, Vasubandhu states that the logicians' words should be accepted within the parameters of what can be dealt with by logic (In this case it means accepting the number of pramāṇas as three) because "they are experts in such matters."

49 Cf. Viścayasaṃgrahāni (Āsaṅga's exegetics of his Bodhisattvabhūmi) 2.3–2.4. It is interesting to note in this connection that Berkeley also states that the belief in a material substance must be given up in order that one not become attached to it, which is similar to several of Vasubandhu's statements to the effect that if one overcomes the belief in a material substance, then attachment to things can be overcome.
50 Cf. MV I.4 and bhāṣya.

51 Cf. PV II.336.

52 See Vasubandhu's answer to the opponent's objection in Viṃśatikā XX.

53 Cf. Viṃśatikā XVI and XVII.

54 Cf. Viṃśatikā XV-XVII.

55 Cf. Nyāyasūtra by Gotama, IV, 11-35 and Ślokavārttika by Kumārila (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, p. 107). Gotama thinks that objects seen in dreams are contents of perception, while Kumārila thinks that they are derived from memory.

56 Cf. Kośa 257.24 - 258.11.

57 Cf. MV III.

58 Cf. Śaṅkara's Brahmasūtrabhāṣya, II ad., 2 pāda, 30 - 31.

59 Cf. MV V.11-18 and bhāṣya.

60 This idea is also found in the Laṅkāvatārarāṣṭra (LXIX.7 - see note at beginning of this chapter) and LXIX.6: "The Buddha said: 'Mahāmati, my teaching of the nature of things according to highest wisdom neither rejects the truth of solitude, nor does it propound the idea of being, but for those beings who because of fear are attached to the appearance of svabhāva of things since beginningless past, I, in order to free them, teach the idea of solitude by making them see the awareness of svabhāva according to highest wisdom. (But), Mahāmati, I do not (truly) teach the view of svabhāva. (For the Tibetan for this passage, see the appendix to Suzuki's translation (Boulder: Prajna Press, 1978); for Suzuki's own translation, which is based primarily on the Chinese, see p.143.) This is my trans. from Tibetan.

61 Cf. MV III, V, and Triśikā.

62 Cf. MV I.3 and bhāṣya.

63 Cf. MV B 50.14-21.

64 Cf. NB IV.2

66 See Kośa 257.16 - 258.1.
67 See Kośa 257.24 - 258.15 and PV II, 388 and 355.
68 Cf. PV II, 326-7 and TS I, 2025.
69 Cf. MSA p. 60-61.
70 Chatterjee, p. 110, The Yogacara Idealism.
72 Cf. TS I, 2025.
73 Cf. MV 1.12 bhāṣya and I.11 bhāṣya.
74 Cf. Triśikā XXV - XXX.
75 Cf. Triśikā XXVIII and MSA p. 60-61.
76 Cf. MSA p. 191.
77 Cf. MV I.6 and bhāṣya.
78 Triśikā XXVIII - XXX.
79 Cf. MSA IX.15-26.
80 As Vasubandhu states in his Vyākhyāyukti: "Para-
ma (highest) is jñāna which transcends the world, and 
because it is the object (ārtha) of this gnosis it is 
paramārtha." Quoted in Grub mtha' chen mo by 'Jam dbang 
bshod pa, Masuri, India, 1962, Nga, 43a. Cf. also 
Triśikā XXX.
81 Cf. Triśikā 1-3.
82 Cf. PV V.
84 Cf. Viśatīkā IX and commentary and MV I.12 
bhāṣya.
85 The Sanskrit text (S. Yamaguchi, Madhyāntavibhāg-
atika de Sthiramati, a critical edition which uses var-
ious sources, with footnotes in French) p. 112, reads: 
"māyādidesaṇa bhūte kalpitam na asti dideṣana / catur 
vidhya viśuddhes tu pariniśpannaḍeṣana / śuddhiḥ prakṛti-
vaimālāyam ālambanaṁ ca mārgata viśuddhānāṁ hi dharmānāṁ 
caturvidhaṛṣṭhatvaṁ /" Yamaguchi differs slightly from
Nagao in this verse, and his version seems to me more probable.

86 Cf. MV I.11 and bhāṣya and II.12 bhāṣya.
87 Cf. MV I.4b and bhāṣya and I.6 bhāṣya.
88 See MV I.6 and bhāṣya.
89 Triśikā XX, Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 336.
90 MV I.3 and bhāṣya.
91 Cf. MV I.6 and bhāṣya.
92 Triśikā XXVII, Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 337.
Notes to Chapter VII

1 See MV III and TN 19-21.

2 See PP 41-44.

3 See PP chapter XIX, "Nirvāṇa."

4 "One who sees all things as arising in dependence, sees ungenerate existence and its origin, its cessation and the path to its cessation as they truly are." Sprung, op.cit., p. 246. See also MV III, MS III, and TN 29-33.

5 "That which appears is paratanta, and the form in which it appears is parikalpa; because paratanta's arising is dependent on causes, and parikalpa is only imagined." TN v. 2: "yat khyāti paratantro 'sau yathā khyāti sa kalpitaḥ / pratyaśādhi-nāvṛttitvāt kalpanāmā- trabhāvataḥ /" "gaṁ snaṁ de ni qzhan dbaṁ yin // ji ltar snaṁ ba kun brtags te / rkyen la hjug paḥi dbaṅ phyir daṅ // brtags paḥi dnos po tsam phir ro /"

6 Among these (three natures) what is that which is appearance? That which is unreal imagination. How does it appear? As the duality of self (and other). What constitutes the non-existence of that (appearance? The (realization of) the non-dual essential nature (dharmatā) among these." TN v. 4: "tatra kim khyāty aśaṭkalpah kathām khyāti dvayaḥmanā / tasya kā nāstītā tena yā tatrādvayadharmatā /" "de la ci snaṅ yod min rtog // ji ltar snaṅ ba gnis dag qis / de yi med ŋid gaṅ de yis // de ru gnis med chos ŋid gaṅ /

Compare this to MSA p. 63: "cittamātrameva dvaya-pratibhasamāśrī ca" grahy-pratibhasam grahakapratibhasam ca"

7 This parallels the Vedānta idea that there are three levels of truth, which it terms vyāvahārika, pratibhasika, and paramarthika. The Vedāntins agree with the Yogācāras that saṁvṛtī must be split into two truths, (1) the vyāvahārika, or empirical reality, which, though ultimately unreal, has a relative reality in that it provides the basis of perceptions, and (2) pratibhasika, level of awareness of illusion, which are both superseded by paramarthika. See also TN v.3-4 and MSA IX.78, p. 48: "yā parikalpithena svabhāvenāvid- yamānataḥ saiva paramā vidyamānataḥ parinīṣpannena svabhāvena / yaś ca sarvathā 'nupalambhaḥ parikalpitasya svabhāvasya sa eva parama upalambhaḥ parinīṣpannasva- bhāvasya /

(283)
"Because it is perceived (as real) by ordinary beings although it is completely non-existent, the svabhāva of parikalpita should be known to be characterized by both existence and non-existence.

Because it is known to exist as illusion, and it does not exist as it appears, paratantra is thus characterized by both existence and non-existence."

"sattvena grhyate yasmād atyantābhāva eva ca / svabhāvaḥ kalpitās tena sadasallakṣāṇo mataḥ // vidyate bhrāntibhāvena yathākhyaṇāṁ nā vidyate' / paratantra yatas tena sadasallakṣapō mataḥ //" "śīn tu med pa ŋid dag ni// gaṅ phyir yod par ḡdzin pa la/de yi(s) kun brtags raṅ bzhin ni//yod dan med paḥi mthsan ŋid ḡdod/ hkrul paḥi dṅos yod pa na//ji bzhin snaṅ ba yod ma yin/ gaṅ phyir gzhan dbaṅ de yis na//yod med mthsan ŋid par ḡdod de/"See also MV I.7 and bhāṣya and MSA p. 58.

Radhakrishnan and Moore, op. cit., p. 336 (Triṃśikā XXI & XXII).

Ibid., verse XVII, p. 336.

See MV I.1-I.2 and bhāṣya, and TN 3-9.

"The absolute sublation of the form of the appearance (of paratantra) should be known as pariniṇāpanna, because in this state it never becomes other than what it is." TN v. 3: "tasya khyātur yathākhyaṇāṁ yā sadāvidyamānatā/jñeyaḥ sa pariniṇāpannāḥ svabhāvo 'nanyathāvataḥ//' "de yi snaṅ ba ji bzhin snaṅ//rtag tu med pa ŋid gaṅ ni/gzhan du mi ḡgyur ŋid phyir-de// yoṅs su grub raṅ bzhin sbya/" See also MV I.12 and MSA p. 149.

"Its (paratantra's) nature exists as characterized by both duality and absence of duality. The svabhāva of pariniṇāpanna therefore is known to be characterized by these two (because the natures of pariniṇāpanna and paratantra are the same).

Because the objects of parikalpita are characterized by duality (of subject and object), but there is in them only one nature of absence (of the subject-object duality), the svabhāva of parikalpa is thought of by ordinary beings as essentially bifurcated." TN v.13-14:

"advayatvena yac cāsti dvyaśābhāva eva ca/svabhāvas tena niṣpannāḥ sadasallakṣāṇo mataḥ//dvaidhyāt kalpitārthasya tadasattvaikabhāvataḥ/svabhāvaḥ kalpito bālair dvyaikatvātmako mataḥ//" "gaṅ gis qgis med ŋid du yod//gəs kyi dṅos po med pa ŋid/de yis yoṅs grub raṅ bzhin ni//yod med mthsan
Briefly, the significance of this graph is as follows: Each level of truth is valid within what its awareness encompasses. Thus the knowledge of parikalpita is valid within its own sphere, but is not applicable to paratantra; and paratantra is valid within its own sphere of understanding and that of parikalpita, but not that of parinispamma; and the awareness of parinispamma encompasses itself and both the others. The dotted lines are meant to signify that ultimately no distinctions are completely valid, because there is no real difference between parikalpaka, paratantra, and parinispamma. All such distinctions are kalpanamatra (merely imaginary).

Because the svabhava of parikalpaka is of the nature of non-existence of duality and also the nature of absence of duality it is known as having the same distinguishing characteristics as parinispamma. Because parinispamma's svabhava is non-dual and because its svabhava is the absence of duality it is cognized as having the same distinguishing characteristics as parikalpaka. Because paratantra does not exist as it appears, and because its svabhava does not exist as it appears it has the same distinguishing characteristics as parinispamma.
las brtags pa yi//mthsan ŋid gzhan min śes par bya/bden min ji ltar snañ gyur pa//de ltar med pañi rañ bzhin pas/gzhan dban śes byañi rañ bzhin las//yoñs grub mthsan ŋid tha dad min/" See also MV III.7 and bhāṣya, and MSA XIII.17: "yathaiva cittre vidhivadvicitte natonna- tam nāsti ca drṣyate 'tha ca/abhūtakalpe 'pi tathaiva sarvathā dvayaṁ sadā nāsti ca drṣyate 'tha ca/"

21 See MV I.4b and bhāṣya and I.12 and bhāṣya.

22 TN 33-4: dvayasyānupalambhena dvayākāro vigacchati/vigamāt tasya niśpanno dvayābhāvo 'dhigamye//has-tino 'nupalambhas ca vigamaś ca tadākṛteḥ/upalambhaś ca kāṣṭhasya māyāyām yugapad yathā//" "glañ po dmigs su med pas na//de yi rnam pa nub ḥgyur te/sīn gi ḥum bu dmigs ḥgyur ba/gsug ma la ni ji bzhin du/'di ltar gnis po mi dmigs thes//gnis su snañ ba nub par ḥgyur/ nub na de yi yoñs scrub pa//gnis dnos med par rtogs par ḥgyur/" See also MV I.14 and Bhāṣya and Laṅkāvatāra-śūtra X.361-364 (Tānṭaṃjo ed.).

23 See MV I.4b and bhāṣya.

24 See MV III.

25 See MV III.23 and TN 22.

26 See MV I.12 and bhāṣya.

27 See MV III.

28 See MV I.14 bhāṣya.

29 "svabhāva is of three natures - among these, in order, are: (1) that characterized by non-existence of (real) objects; (2) that characterized by non-existent objects which arise and perish; and (3) (awareness of the nature of) affliction and alleviation, in : pari-niśpanna." Nagao. p. 39: "trayo hi svabhāva mula-tatvaṁ teṣu yathākramam/asad-artho hy anityārtha/utpāda-vyāṭhanāḥ samalāmalatārthaḥ ca/"

30 See MV I.14 and bhāṣya.

31 See MV III.

"The absence of duality and the presence of this absence is the characteristic of śūnyatā" Bhāṣya: "It is the absence of duality between grasper and the object grasped. And it is also the presence of this absence, and this is the characteristic of śūnyatā. This śūnyatā should be understood as characterized by both absence and a present svabhāva." Nagao, p. 22-3: "dvayaḥbhāvo hy abhāvasya bhāvaḥ śūnyasya lakṣaṇam/" "dvaya-grāhya-grāhakasyābhāva/tyasya cābhāvasya bhāvāḥ śūnyatāyā lakṣaṇam ity abhāva-svabhāva lakṣaṇatvām śūn-yatāyām paridīpitaṃ bhavati/"

This idea is also found in Asaṅga's works. When we see beyond duality to the true nature of something, we perceive śūnyatā, but that does not mean that a thing is totally non-existent, since something of it remains when all qualities and names have been sublated in the highest awareness, but what remains is non-conceptual and unnameable.

34 See MV I.14 bhāṣya.

35 See MV III.

36 Nagao, p. 39: "duḥkham ādāna-lakṣmākhyaṃ sambandhenaṃ mataṃ/" "mūla-tatve yathā-kraṇāṃ duḥkham upādānataḥ pudgala-dharmābhiniveśopādānāt/lakṣaṇatas tri-duḥkhatā-lakṣaṇatvāt/sambandhatas ca duḥkha-sambandhatāt tatraiva mūla-tatve yathākramaṃ veditavyam/"


38 See MV I.4b and bhāṣya and TN 22-31.

39 See TN 33.

40 See MV V.

41 See MV I.4b and bhāṣya.

42 See MV V.
"By non-apprehension of duality the appearance of duality is eradicated; by this eradication the perfected nature is realized as the absence of duality." TN 33: "dvayasyānupalambhena dvayākāro vigacchati/ Vigamāt tasya nispanno dvayābhāvo 'dhigamyate/"
"qlāṅ po dmigs su med pas na//de yi rnam pa nub hgyur te/šiṅ gi dum bu dmigs hgyur ba//sgyu ma la ni ji bzhin du/" See also MSA p. 58.

See MV III.6 and bhāṣya.

This idea is found from the earliest Buddhist writings, such as Dhammapada XXIV ("Tanha"): "The craving of a thoughtless man grows like a creeper. Like a monkey wishing for fruit in a forest he bounds hither and thither (from one life to another).

Whomsoever this fierce craving, full of poison, overcomes in the world, his sorrows increase like the abounding bīrāṇa grass.

He who overcomes in this world this fierce craving, difficult to subdue, sorrows fall off from him like water drops from a lotus leaf." In Radhakrishnan and Moore, p. 318.

The Sanskrit passage in parentheses is from Laṅkāvatārasūtra X.145.

"By being pulled along (karśaṇāt) by the craving is meant (actualizing) those karmas which were not gotten rid of (akṣipta) in previous lives. Constriction (of choices of actions – nibandhana) occurs by appropriating for oneself the arising afflictions, of kāma (lust), etc., of one's consciousness. The state of confronting (the results of one's actions – ābhimukhya) occurs by the arising of production of karma from previous lives, and because of the production of vipākas which will result in (future) confrontation (with their results). Because of this one will experience suffering, rebirth, old age, and death, because the world is afflicted by all of these." Nagao, p. 21: "karśaṇāt tṛṣṇayā karmāṅkṣiptasya punarbhavasya nibandhanād upādānair vijnānasyotpattyanukūleṣu kāmaśīṣu/ābhimukhyād bhave karṣānya karmāṅkaḥ punarbhave vipāka-dānāyābhimukhi-karaṇāt/duḥkhanāj jātyā jāra-maraṇena ca parikliṣṭyate jaqat/"
49 See MV B 41.13 - 41.19.

50 See Ṭrīṃśikā and TN 29-33.

51 See Ṭrīṃśikā and MSA p. 58 and 149, and TN 9.

52 See MV III and TN 36.

53 See MS I and MV V.

54 MSA IX.

55 See TN 34.

56 See MV V and MS X.

57 See MS X.8-9.

58 See MSA IX.

59 This is because most people are content with the empirical illusion, and feel no need to transcend it. A spiritual path is necessary only to those who are dissatisfied with reality as it appears and seek to transcend it.

60 These stages are developed in MSA IX.

61 See MS I & II.

62 See MS III and TN 32-36.

63 See TN 32-36.

64 See MS III.3.

65 See MS III.3.

66 See MS III.3.3-7.

67 See MS III.3.6-7 and TN 29-33.

68 See MV III and MS III.3.5-6.

69 See MS III.3-4 and Ṭrīṃśikā III and XXV-XXX.

70 See Ṭrīṃśikā and TN 33.

71 See MV II.9 bhāṣya and MS III.3.5.
72 "Ainsi ce Bodhisattva, en entrant dans le Rien
qu'idée (vijñaptimatrata), est entré dans les carac-
tères du connaisssable (jñeyalaksana). Par cette entrée,
il est entré dans la (première terre), la Terre Joyeuse
(pramudita), il pénétré bien (supratividhyati) l'éle-
ment fondamental (dharma-datu), il naît dans la famille
des Tathagata (tathagataagotra), il obtient la pensée
d'égalité (samata-citta) à l'endroit de tous les êtres
(sattva), à l'endroit de tous les Bodhisattva et à l'en-
droit de tous les Buddha. Tel est son chemin de vis-
ion (darshanamarga)." Lamotte, op. cit. p. 166-7 (MS
III.11). See also MSA XIV.

73 See MSA III.5-6.

74 The bhūmis, or stages of the bodhisattva's de-
velopment, are common to other schools of Mahāyāna
literature, not just Yogacāra writings, and are found
first in the Prajñāpāramitā literature. The number of
bhūmis differs in the various texts, and in the MSA the
number is given as ten, viz.: (1) pramudita, (2)vimālā,
(3) prabhākarī, (4) arcamatī, (5) sudurīvāya, (6)abhi-
mukhī, (7) durāṅgama, (8) acalā, (9) sadhumati, and
(10) dharma-meghā. The PP puts the number at thirteen,
but the actual number is of little importance, except
perhaps for scholarly debate. The importance of the
discipline of the bhūmis is that it shows that the bodhi-
sattva's progress is a cumulative series of progressive-
ly higher stages of awareness culminating in Buddhahood.

75 See MV III and TN 30.

76 See Obermiller, The Doctrine of the Prajñāpāram-
itā, p. 20.

77 See MV V.28 and bhāṣya.

78 See KSP 37 and KST 37.

79 The question of what scriptures were authoritati-
ve arose almost from the inception of Buddhism. Be-
cause of the lack of ecclesiastical authority and an in-
itial lack of codified collections of texts, and because
many Buddhist communities were completely separated from
each other, differences in doctrine inevitably arose.
The Buddha did, however, provide a guideline which is
generally accepted by both the Hinayāna and Mahāyāna
schools as a means of testing the authority of scrip-
tures: If a man came with something he claimed the Buddha
had said, the community was to compare it with what was
already known to be a part of the Vinaya and accepted
sūtra literature, and if it did not agree with them, it
was to be rejected (Dīgha-Nikāya II, 124). Thus, according to Buddha, it is the spirit, rather than the letter, which counts most, and the Nettipakarana comments on this idea: "With which sūtra should one confront these texts or utterances? With the four Ariyan Truths. With which Vinaya should one compare them? With any Vinaya which leads one away from lust, hate and delusion. With which Dharma should one test them? With the doctrine of pratītya samutpāda (katam-asmin suṭte otāretabbāhi? caṭusu ariyasattesu. katam-asmin vinaye sandassayitabbāni? rāgavinaye dosavinaye mohavinaye. katamiyam dhammatāyam upanikkhipitabbāni? patippasamuppāde. p. 221). Thus even the most tradition-minded of the early Buddhist schools accepted some sūtras which were clearly post-Buddha (e.g. Majjima-Nikāya II, Majjima III, and Anguttara III, 57 ff, composed under King Kūṇḍa), and collections of scriptures were regarded as sūtras in some schools, but not in others (e.g. the Dhammapada and the Jātakas, which were challenged by teachers such as Sudīna Thera as late as the fifth century).

A sūtra which the Mahāyāna thinkers often look to is the Adhyātmatanamocanasūtra, which states that everything which is well-spoken can be said to be spoken by the Buddha, and Sāntideva (Śikṣāsamuccaya B, p. 15, V. p. 12) and Prajñākaramati (Bodhiṣṭāvatāraṇāṇika IX, 43-44, V. p. 205) defend the Mahāyāna sūtras on the grounds that their inspiration and root-purpose is the same as that of the other sūtras. Prajñākaramati further states that, since there are so many differences of opinion among the Hinayānists, there is no certain way to decide which sūtras are to be regarded as śākya, and Haribhadra in his Abhisamayālaṁkārāloka (p.260-61) states that anyone who attempts to do so is to be regarded as a fool.

80 For instance, see Sprung p. 175-6.

81 Laṅkāvatārasūtra, ed. B. Nanjio, Kyoto, 1923, p. 142.

82 The state of being which Buddhism seeks to overcome is admirably expressed by Schopenhauer in The World As Will and Representation, Dover ed. (tr. E.J. Payne), vol. II, p. 356-7:

"Comprehending the great drama of the will-to-live and the characterization of its true nature certainly demands a somewhat more accurate consideration and greater thoroughness than simply disposing of the
world by attributing it to the name of God...Life by no means presents itself as a gift to be enjoyed, but as a task, a drudgery, to be worked through...What is the ultimate aim of it all? To sustain ephemeral and harassed individuals through a short span of time in the most fortunate case with endurable want and comparative painlessness...With this evident want of proportion between the effort and the reward, the will-to-live, taken objectively, appears to us from this point of view as a fool, or taken subjectively, as a delusion. Seized by this, every being works with the utmost exertion of its strength for something that has no value." Schopenhauer was, of course, very influenced by Buddhism, and incorporated many Buddhist insights into his philosophy.

83 See MV I.4 and bhāṣya and MV V.

84 Stefan Anacker, "Vasubandhu's Karmasiddhiprakarana and the Problem of the Highest Meditations," in Philosophy East and West 22, 247-258, J1 1972, p. 258. Louis de la Vallée-Poussin echoes the same thought in an article entitled: "Notes on Śūnyatā and the Middle Path" in Indian Historical Quarterly, vol. IV, 1928, where he writes: "The two great schools of later Buddhism are, therefore, despite the 'rationalistic' character of Mādhyamika and the constructive speculation of Viśṇunāvāda, faithful to the early Indian Yoga as preserved in the Pāli Scriptures." He goes on to state that (p. 167) both recognize that there is an ultimate state of some sort (tathātā for Yogācāra), but that speculation on tathātā is antagonistic to its experience, and that all relative ideas are transcended in ultimate realization.

85 This quote is from "What Remains in Śūnyatā" by Gadjin M. Nagao, in Kiyota, op. cit., p. 67-68.

86 MV I.2 and bhāṣya. The bhāṣya reads: "evam yad yatra nāsti tat tena śūnья iti yathābhūtām samanupaśyati yat punar atra avasīṣṭām bhavati tat sad iha astīti/yathābhūtām Prajañātīti ityaviparītām śūnyatālakṣaṇaṁ udbhāvītāṁ bhavati/"

87 "dvāyaṁbhāvo hy abha avasya bhāvaḥ śūnyasya lakṣaṇam"


90 For a more detailed explication of this theory, as well as a translation of the Ratnagotra, see A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga by Jikido Takasaki, Roma: Instituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1966.

91 "...the Tathāgata and the skandhas are neither different nor not-different from one another. In the same way, the Tathāgata is neither different nor not-different from emancipation. That which is unconditioned goes beyond all idle reasonings. That which goes beyond all idle reasonings, that is the Tathāgata."

"When an insight into the five Dharmas, the three Svabhāvas, and the egolessness of all things is obtained, the Tathāgata-garbha becomes quiescent... Thus (the bodhisattva) establishing himself at the Bodhisattva stage of Acalā, he obtains the paths leading to the happiness of the ten Samādhis. Supported by the Buddhas in Samādhī, observing the truths of the Buddha which go beyond thought and his own original vows, not entering into the happiness of the Samādhi which is the limit of reality, but by means of the self-realization which... belongs to the noble family (of the Tathāgatas), and (also obtains) the knowledge-body created by the will which is removed from the workings of Samādhi. For this reason, Mahāmati, let those Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas who are seeking after the exalted truth effect the purification of the Tathāgata-garbha which is known as Ālayavijñāna." Lāṅkāvatārā-sūtra, tr. D.T. Suzuki, Boulder: Prajña Press, 1978, p. 163-4 and 191-2.

92 According to the Yogācāras, there are both beneficial and non-beneficial klesas, but the Tathāgata eliminates both of them, and thus nothing can be positively asserted about his nature. The three roots of the beneficial are: alobha (non-greed), advesa (freedom from hate), and amoha (freedom from delusion). (See Kosa II, ad. 25-26). These are the mental states which make all other beneficial mental states possible. Even though these klesas are beneficial, they are not ultimate, since they still require an object (for instance, alobha requires objects which it is not attached to); afflictions presuppose the existence of feelings, conceptualizations, and other types of psychic formations because they are based on impulses and vikalpas. There can be no afflictions without an object of consciousness.
Cf. MV III.

See Ratnagotra I.

Stefan Anacker, "The 'Meditational Therapy'" in Kiyota, op. cit., p. 93.

Vasubandhu expresses this thought in the bhāṣya on MV III.10, where he states that all words and designations belong solely to parikalpa, and that even Buddhist scriptures, which point towards parinispanna, must necessarily be presented in terms of parikalpa, and thus represent only conventional truth, although they can lead people toward ultimate truth if properly grasped and applied. Even the words of the Buddha in some way distort ultimate truth, but give people hints of the experience of the dharmadhātu. It should be remembered, however, that both Vasubandhu and Asaṅga think that it is necessary for teachers to present their teachings in terms of conventional truth, otherwise there can be no possibility of teaching others at all. See MV III.10 bhāṣya, p. 41-2 Nagao and part two of "On Knowing Reality."
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

Asanga


La Somme du Grande Vehicule d'Asanga (Paramahayanasamgraha), Louvain: Bureau du Museon, 1938.


Dignaga


Kamalasila

Tattvasamgrahapanjika, Caekawar Oriental Series I, n.d.

Kumarila

Slokavarttika, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1897.

Nagarjuna


Madhyamika Minor Texts. St. Catherines: Brock Univ. This
is an unpublished collection of various minor works collected into one volume. Dr. Mervyn Sprung was kind enough to let me borrow his copy, which very helpful in understanding Madhyamika philosophy, especially because of the translation of the Ratnavali which it contains, as well as a French translation by la Vallee-Poussin of a fragment by Nagarjuna on sunyata and the middle way.


Prajnakaragupta

Pramanavarttikalamkara. ed. P. Sankrtyayana, Patna.

Santaraksita

Tattvasamgraha. 2 vols.: Gaekwar OrientaL Series.

Sankara


Vasubandhu

Abhidharmakosa. tr. Th. Shcherbatsky, in Buddhist Logic, vol. II.


Yogacarabhūmisāstra. ed. V. Bhattacharya (bhumis 1-5 of the Bahubhumikavastu), Calcutta: Univ. of Calcutta, 1957.


Majjima-Nikaya. tr. D. Chalmers, in Further Dialogues of


Secondary Sources


Bhattacharya, Benoyotosh. An Introduction to Buddhist Esotericism.


Ramanan, K.V. *Nagarjuna’s Philosophy*. Putland: Charles
E. Tuttle, 1966.


----The Concept of Buddhist Nirvana. Leningrad: Academy of Sciences of USSR, 1927.


----Philosophy of the Yogacara. Louvain: Museon. 1904.


Journals


Bhandarkar, D.R. "Who Was the Patron of Vasubandhu?" Indian Antiquary 1912, 1-3.


Obermiller, E. "The Term Sunyata in its Different Interpretations" Journal of the Greater Indian Society, 1, 1934 105-117.


Masuda, J. "Origins and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools" Asia Minor, II, 1925.