STORIE-CONSCIOUSNESS

(ALAYA-VIJNANA)

A Grand Concept of the Yogacara Buddhists

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Mind has three designations: citta, manas and vijnana, which indicate one and the same thing (r. Panavastakta, p. 36). Some authors distinguish as follows: what is past is manas, what is to come is citta and what is present is vijnana. They are further explained. It is called citta considering its movement to a distant past; it is manas considering its previous movement and it is vijnana considering its tendency to rehash (r. RdD). A similar distinction is admitted by the Yogacaras: citta is Alavavijnana; Manas is kliśta manas (defiled mind) as well as the mind of immediate past moment; vijnana is what cognizes the object in the present moment (Yogacarabhumis, p. 41). The Sarvastivadins too say that the immediate past moment of consciousness is manas, i.e. ruma indriya, and vijnana is what cognizes its each object

(विज्ञान प्रतिविज्ञान), vijnanam prativijnaptith -Kosa, I. 16).

According to the Satadharmiyamoksha citta is classified into eight as follows: five sense-consciousness as related to five senses: eye, ear, nose, tongue and body, the sixth: manovijnana, Seventh: Kota manovijnana and the eighth: Alavavijnana (r. Panavastakta, Appendix. 49-50). The first six are admitted also by all early Buddhists. The last two are added by the Yogacaras. Tokakusu explains the last three types thus: sense-center, individualizing thought-center of Egyption, and store-center of ideation (Essentials, p. 33).

Alaya, store-consciousness is the seed-bed of all that exists. Every seed lies in the store-consciousness and when it sprouts out into object world c reflection returns as a new seed. This new seed lies latent in it and gets manifest when the seed becomes matured under favourable conditions (Ibid). The Yogacarabhumis comments: Defiled mind is always centre of delusion, egotism, arrogance and self-love (स्वदेशा अरिन्देशा स्व-सत्ता), avidya atmadhatu sarinana trna). The store-consciousness serves as seat of seeds, abode of all
ideations, and is counted resultant and a new birth-taking factor (संतोषधर्मान्याविदत्वादिभिर्युक्तां किं तदनेन दृष्टिप्राप्तयोः).


According to the Abhidharmasutra all elements are deposited (as seeds) in store-consciousness and the latter again in the former: thus they both go on as mutual causes and effects (M. Vibh. Tika, 28).

This means that the mind reaches out into outer world and perceiving the objects put new ideas into the mind-store. Again these new ideas-seeds sprout out to react still newer seeds. Thus the seeds are accumulated and stored there. The old seeds and new ones are mutually depending and form ever-rotating cycle (cp. Takakuva, Essential, p. 37). This explanation comes into conflict with the established tenet of the school (Siddhanta), according to which store-consciousness is only productive cause of all other active consciousnesses (pravritti-vijñana) which are called collectively 'enjoyable' (upabhoga). All the impure elements are stored in it by way of effects and the store-consciousness is related to them by way of efficient cause. It is indeterminate (ayuktra) as either good or bad, because it is essentially resultant of acts of previous life (vipaka). It accumulates all impressions of the effects which result from the acts of previous life and are flowing spontaneously therefrom (vipaka-niyamihpala) because it serves as the final cause of the good and the bad elements (Kasela-ahala-dharmadhipayata). Hence it is the efficient cause of all active impure elements as well as the final cause of all active consciousness-bodies (M. Vibh. Tika, p. 27-28).

Vaisheshika who places that the entire universe of the subjective and objective elements is mere transformation of one consciousness (vijñana-parināma) brings it under three heads: 1) one resultant consciousness, 2) one thinking mind and 3) Six types of consciousness representing their respective objects, visible matter, etc. Commenting on the first, Resultant consciousness Vaisheshika says:

"It is the resultant and root of all seeds" (विपक्ष नागाधिकतम् विपक्ष विशेषीकम्). It is abode of all seeds of defiling elements; hence it is termed storing centre (alaya). Or all elements are stored in it by way of effects (karya-bhava) and again the storing centre is stored in every element by way of cause (karana-bhava). It is a resultant effect since it is produced in the form of different sentient beings in different
realms of existence as a result of good and bad acts of previous life. (see Trumiska, ver. 2).

Vasubandhu in his Karmasiddhi (Et. lamotte's Flux-ch Translation in Melanges Chinois Et. Budzhiq. Vol. IV, further remarks: It is
called Adana-vijñana as it assumes the body; it is Alaya-vijñana as all
seeds of dharms are stored in it; it is Vyaya-vijñana as it is a retribution
of the acts of previous... (p. 103).

It is named Bhavangajijñana in the scripture of the Tamrapanita
school, Madavijñana in the scripture of the Mahayangika school and
Asamprajña-śāndhā in the scripture of the Mahayāna school. (p. 106).
Note: Other two skandhas of the Mahāyāna are Kāmika-śāndhā and

Alayavijñana’s object and aspect or form (labamana-śkara) are
imperceptible. In the cessation trance (nirvāṇa-śamapatti) there is
one consciousness whose object and aspect are difficult to understand;
likewise the object and aspect of Alaya too. It comes under Vijnana-
pudāsanskāra. But the sutra speaks of the six consciousness-bodies
alone and not of the Alayavijñana (separately). Why so? The intention
of Buddha is explained in the Sandhinirvāṇa-sūtra: believing that they
(ignorant) would imagine that the Alayavijñana is the soul, I have not
revealed it to the ignorant people (p. 106-7). Sandhinirvāṇa-sūtras,
stanza cited, p. 103. n. 108.

आलयविज्ञान शरीर दूरो अंगों यथा दर्शन वह अत्यन्त अवश्य नह;
विनय एतो भिष्म न भक्ति महेन दशस तत्त्वविश्वेश्वरः।
Adavajñana gābhiras sukso agho yatha varattī Suryavibhūnas eso
mayi an prkṣāsā mahāvīra atma parīkṣāpyayat/aśpa. Truin.
bhū, p. 34 with slight variation in the second line.

Why do they think so? Because this consciousness is beginningless
(amudikākha) and continues to the end of Śmaśāna; because it is very
subtle in its aspect, it does not change. Six consciousness-bodies are
gross in their support-object, aspect and model (alambana, abāra,
vīsna) and easier to recognize; since they are associated with passions,
kleśa and praśūñakāra, countereacting path and they are brought under
sankless and svavādu, “polulation” and “purification” they are in
the nature of result-consciousness. By this reasoning one will understand
that there exists one causal consciousness (bhu-vijnana). The sutra does not speak of this consciousness because it is different from the six ones. That is the intention of the sutra for not speaking of the Alaya-consciousness. Thuswise we explain why the sutras of other schools speak of only six consciousness-bodies as Bhavangvijnana... etc...
(p. 108).

Vasubandhu pleads that there will be no harm in accepting one person having two consciousnesses together: (i) cause-consciousness and (ii) result-consciousness supporting each other. For, the retribution-consciousness (bhu-vijnana) is perfumed by the active consciousness (pravritti). When they exist in two persons there is no such mutual relationship. Therefore we do not have any difficulty in this proposition (p. 109). Ref. also Trimśika, ver. 15.

We may note here that the position is quite different with the Satyastiddhi. According to this school one person can have only one mind at a time. The presence of two minds at a time involves two persons. This situation has been necessitated for the school on account of its refusing to support the Svaśāntivadins' tenet of sampratyoga, association of thoughts (v. hs. 65-76).

We understand further that the problem of store-consciousness has also been discussed by Vasubandhu in his comment on the Daśabhūmi-Sutra wherein this consciousness has ultimately been linked up with the Matrix of Tathagata as its interior source. The well-known Aṣṭamakā School of Buddhism (which is founded on the Gandavyūha Sutra) has sprung up absorbing much of the traditions and interpretations laid down in the Daśabhūmi-Sutra and the comment thereon by Vasubandhu (Essentials, p. 110-11).

The Yogacara Idealists propounded the store-consciousness as repository of seeds of the active mind and mental states. We should remember that this parent consciousness itself polluted and impermanent, and hence it cannot serve our urge for the spiritual goal which may act as a guiding principle in our life purpose. Some sort of this rational thinking must have led the later Idealists to postulate the theory of causation by Dharmadharma, Foundation of Elements which is a universal principle present in every individual; it is also termed Tathagata-garba (v. Discussion on this topic in my bud. Idealism).
Let us take note of Takakusu’s observation on the causation-theory of the later Idealists: The theory of causation by Dharmadhatu is the climax of all causation theories; it is actually the conclusion of the theory of causal origination as it is the universal causation and it is already within the theory of universal immanence, pantheism, cosmotheism or whatever it may be called. (Essentials, p. 113). The causation theory was first expressed by action-cause, since the action originates in ideation the theory was in the second stage expressed by the ideation-store; the latter again was in the third stage expressed as originated in the Matrix of Tathgata, Tathagatagarbha (cp. Ibii).

The above process of thinking is truly a climax in the development of Buddhist thought. The theory of causation by the sole action-influence was pleased by the early Buddhists with a view to saving an absurd situation arising out of their no-soul doctrine. The Brahmanical system pleads for the soul as a spark of divine power implying thereby the presence of God in every individual. Since God is dethroned in Buddhism the soul is also likewise dropped. Thus the doctrine of immanence (antaryami-vada) that has been emphasized in the Brahmanical and other religious scriptures was not favoured in the early stage of Buddhism. Now we find a revival in Mahayana Buddhism of the doctrine of immanence in the form of Dharmadhatu or Tathagata-garbha which is a reverse mode of store-consciousness (v. Ratnagota for detailed elucidation of the Garbha-theory).

The transcendental knowledge which comes in the possession of a Yogi at the final stage of his spiritual endeavour has been designated by Vasubandhu as Dharmakaya, Anuruddhabhu, Anaya-paravrtti. Vasubandhu speaks of it as अन्यपरस्पर भेद, Anaya-paravrtti, because a metamorphosis of Anaya-store-consciousness is effected into a non-dual knowledge (which is the same as Dharmakaya) as a result of dispelling the biotic forces of dualism which are active from immemorial says (his Trimstika, ver. 29-30 with Bhaya of Shravakati).

Vajra-Samadhi calls it Amala-jnana, immaculate knowledge. Since this knowledge flushes up transplanting the polluted store-consciousness it has been considered a ninth pure knowledge in the Vajra-Samadhi (v.Lie beamish, Tung pao, XLIV p.399). The relationship between these two knowledges, may either be identity or diversity. The identity view is perhaps favoured by Vasubandhu and his school because the transcendental knowledge is not counted as the ninth in the early
texts of the school whereas the diversity view is endorsed in the V. samañña. There is possibly a third view viz. the view of indescribability which may also be the opinion of Varendhū (v. kiaTrimśika, vr. 92.)

The nomenclature ‘store-consciousness’, ‘Alaya-vijñana’ is not quite popular with the logical school of Dignaga, though the school advocates strongly in favor of the idealistic outlook of the universe, Dignaga, for example, after proving the impossibility of external objects existing either in an atomic form or aggregate form elucidates in fine how to account for our manifold experiences of things in the outside-world. He says: it is the object of our knowledge which exist internally in the knowledge itself as knowable aspects and this knowable aspect appears to us as though it exists externally (v. Alun. porika, ver.6). Here in this context Dignaga is not enthusiastic to speak of the nomenclature of Alaya-vijñana, though his commentator, Vinudakī makes good the lapses (v. the forthcoming publication of this comment from TS. version). Dignaga’s reluctance might be prompted by the adverse comment from the opposite camp like the Madhyayakas and others. A similar situation may also account for the Laskarūtre Sūtra’s cautious approach to the Yogacara’s eight-fold division of consciousness. The Sūtra, though gapped under the Yogacara classic is leaned towards the Pratīyārambhā doctrine as is evident from its solemn declaration that the said eight types of consciousness are not at all transformations of one basic mind. They are indistinguishable like the ocean and its waves, hence they are of one and the same trait:

अमृतप्रकाशायमध्ये न मवा गच्छ यथापदातीत्
उपेक्षे पराज्ञानां व पवित्र भौतिकमये।
भिक्षु तथा विद्यते: भिक्षुधर्मो न भवते॥

(cp. Tucci’s paper, BQ. IV. 545, f).

The great champion of the Madhyayaka school, Candraskirti comments: The advocate of the store-consciousness pleads that it is the seat of the seeds of all active consciousnesses and it produces the appearance of the world. This advocate resembles the Brahmāntul system pleading for God as a creator of the universe. One difference between them is that God is viewed permanent and the Alaya impermanent but in other respects they differ not much. (v. ny Sanskrit text, Mathū. Avataś, Ch. VI. p.27).
The same accusation has been levelled by Acarya Bhuvaniveka in his Kasatara-sutra. If Dharma-kaya, Norm-body which is characterized by the Yogacara as Asaya-paramartha, metamorphosis of the store-consciousness be admitted in an existing self-being, then it is hardly distinguishable from the soul, Atman of the Sthranakarana system because the soul also is described in their scripture as something existent, but beyond the reach by word and mind (v. My skt. text, p. 75-6).

Going back still earlier we have the Svetasuddhi hurling strictures on such theories as: The concepts of Purusa (or Padgita) and Asaya are all wrong views. This tense remark reveals that this author is inclined to bring them under the category of a perverted notion (v. ch. 152).

It appears that the Asaya-doctrine does not appeal so much to the Tibetan mystics as the doctrine of Sunyata does. The Tibetan Yogi Milarepa bears witness to this own surmise.

The following statements about him may be noted here: "He was master architect, well-versed in the exposition of the science of the Clear Void Mind, wherein all forms and substances have their cause and origin" (Tibet's Great Yogi, Milarepa, W.Y. Evans-Wentz, p. 36). "He was a most learned professor in the Science of the Mind". (p. 38, pass. 2).

It is reported that Milarepa himself uttered the following: As the mere name of food does not satisfy the appetite of the hungry person, but he must eat food, so, also a man who would learn about the Voidness of Thought, must meditate so as to realize it. In short, submission to the contemplation of voidness of Equilibrium, of the Indescribable, of the Incognizable forms the four different stages of the Four Degrees of Initiation graduated steps in the ultimate goal of the mystic Vajra-yana, (pp.142-143).

To what particular doctrine of Mahayana Sect he belongs? Milarepa replied: It was the highest creed of Mahayana, it was called the Path of Total Self-Abnegation, for the purpose of attaining Buddhahood in one life-time (p. 186). I was perfectly convinced that the real source of both Samswa and Nirvana lay in the Voidness (of the Supra-mundane Mind). (p. 209). Noteworthy is the saying uttered on the occasion of his entering into Final Nirvana:
That which is of the nature of the uncreated, the Dhāraṇī-dhātu, the unborn, the Voidness, the Sunyata hath no beginning nor end in everworse to be, E'en birth and death are of the nature of the Voidness. Such being the Real Truth, avoid doubts and misgiving about is (p. 288).

Sunyata, Void or Voidness in the above passages conveys the idea of an absolute and unqualified voidness which approaches nearer to the Madhyamika’s conception of the term than to the Yogacara’s positive one, Cfr. Notes on pp. 37. n.5, 285.n.3, 288.n.3, etc.

Here we may incidentally take note of an interesting piece of truth a common creed of the Yogacara Buddhists that is vouchsafed by Milarepa in the saying: “I understand that all sentient beings possess a ray of the Eternal and that we must work for their salvation and development” (p. 85). This confession seems to be an echo of the Garbha theory of the Yogacara.

Et. Lamotte has drawn our attention to the fact that the term alaya can be traced to Pali canonical sources in the passages: अलाययं भूतानि प्रवृत्ति, alayarana kho punyam pada alayarata alayamidita, “people are delighted in alaya, engrossed in alaya and joyous in alaya” (Ref. Dīgh.3.p.36,3.37,35; Mājulīma I, 167, 32, Sānyutta I, p.136,11: Anguttara II, p.131,30; Mahāvastu III, p.314,3). But its sense is panvamaguna, five objects of five senses according to comment on Dīgh. later the Vijñānavadins found in the passage a justification of their theory of Alayavijñana, psychological basis of the school. He further remarks that the Vaisālakirti still ignores the Vijñānavadin (Et. Lamotte op. cit. p. 246, n.4). Refer to Majh.1.190 speaking of the Alaya in parallel with धार्मिक (wisdom), अनुयाय (pursuit) and so on. The renowned Buddhist poet Avaghoṣa still ignores the later technical sense of the term in this line:

कथाकृतविद्वान आलिङ्गादि किल्ले पुजये रातिः

Loke, snin alayaname nivṛttiṣ ti darlabha rath.

The taste towards the retreat is very rare in this world which is engrossed in enjoying the sensual pleasures, alaya. Sundarananda, XII, 22
Some Brahanical Parallels

The advocate of transformation-theory (parvamadha) on the Brahmanical side is the Sankhya philosopher. His eight rudimentary elements are comparable with the Vijanavitam’s groups of eight consciousnesses. The Sankhya’s eight rudiments are: Pradhana or Aryakta, shankara, buddhi and five great elements (r. Bud. caiva, XII, 18, Canka. Saritra ch. i and Gita, XIII, 9). The classical Sankhya replaced the five great elements by their corresponding five subtle ones. A parallel development is also noticeable in the Satya-Siddhi (Ch. 16). The Bhagvat Gita in an earlier Chap. VII, 4 declares that the Nature, Prakrti is distinguished into eight: Five great elements, mind, manas, intellect, buddhi and individuality, shankara. The polluted mind of the Vijanavitam may be compared with shankara because both are sources of the I-notion, the Gita’s mind with manas-consciousness and buddhi with mana-vijana. Cankā assigns to Buddhi the function of I-notion from which state are produced the great elements. The mind, manas as producer of the world has been stated in the Mndakya Upanisad (1.1.8) according to the interpretation of Sri Sankara (r. his bhṣya). This is probably only the passage which mentions the mind as the source of other elements, earth, etc. Let it be noted however that the mind, in turn, is a product of the personal Brahman called Prana, breath.

It has been previously stated that citta, manas and vijana signify one and the same thing for the Buddhists. The Tattvivyata Upanishad (II.4) mentions manas and vijana as distinct elements (cp. Kāli, III, 1.3) and Sankara takes vijana for buddhi (r. his bhṣya). The classical definition of manas and buddhi is that the former is characterized as designating (saṅkalpa) and the latter as deciding (vyavahara). (r. Sankha’s Karika, 27, 27) and also accepted by Sankara (r. Tatt. Bhṣya, II, 3.4., and Gita, II, 41,44.) There are certain contexts where Sankara is obliged to identify vijana and manas (Tatt. II, 6 Bhṣya) and jnaa and buddhi as one element (r. katho, III, 1.13, bhṣa.).

The Pranapaniśad, while explaining “Sarva” “all” enumerates four distinct states: manas, mind, buddhi, intellect, shanka, individuality and citta, spirit together with their respective objects : manasvya, buddhavya, shankaravya and cetayavya. The last element in this group of “all” is prana indicating thereby that it is the source as well as the binding factor of the entire group. Incidentally we may note here that this “Sarva” may correspond roughly with the Buddhistic “Sarva” which covers the entire universe grouped into twelve cases.
According to the reformed school of Buddhism, viz. Satyayuddha one mind element alone is substantial and all other mental phenomena are only its different moods and nominal but not substantial. This school thus draws under one element all other mental states against sixty by the Sarvastivadin as separate substantial elements. The Vijnanaadin do not dispute with the Sarvastivadin and accept their entire list (v. Trisika and Satadhara. In my Panavasthaka, App. I). They both differ each other, however in their ontological outlook, i.e. one is Idealist and the other Realist. Sri Sankara once is inclined to deny distinction between manas and buddhi (v. Kena Up, 1.1.5: यन्नमसा न अम्मे, Yan manasa na amme... manas includes also buddhi; his authority for this opinion is the Chandog- yopanisad (I, 5,3) which declares: सत्त्वा विज्ञानाश्यामाः वंच्य अवैयूप्तिति; अतुः स्वयं: ऋषिसिद्धिः सत्वात् एत। Kamas sankalpo vicitrita svadha araddha dharthi adhurah dibh dhitiyata sat savam mana eva (v. his bhasya).

Antahkarana, inner organ is a collective term favoured by the Vedanta for different mental faculties: citta, manas, vijñana and buddhi, etc. Another collective term generally found in the Upaniṣads is Sattva having the same idea (v. Svet. Up. III. 12). A favourite expression in the Upaniṣads is Visuddhasattva to convey the idea that the person of purified mind or some inner faculty becomes fit to realize his own self, atman, Brahmā (v. Mundaka III, 1.8.10, and III, 2.6, etc.). Sattva is a Sankhya terminology for buddhi, intellect according to Čārāka (v. my paper on Sankhya, Bharatiya Vidya, 1937, p. 190).

May we suggest therefore that this old idea of mind or intellect is intended in the term "Bodhi-Sattva", (Bodhi-minded) and "Mahasat- tva" (great-minded)?

One more interesting topic I would like to discuss in this context. The early Buddhists conceive that each sense consciousness has its own basis, viz. the eye for the visual conscious, the ear for auditory one...
and so on. What is the basis for the mind, a sixth organ? The Sarvastivadin answers that mind’s just previous moment serves as the basis for the sub-equent thought moment. But the early Theravadin would not agree with this because a basis according to them ought to be of the material character. Hence they postulate Hadayavatā, the heart-substance as the mind’s basis. It is further claimed that this postulation has been made in accordance with a popular belief. (op. Compendium, p.279). Now wherefrom does this popular belief come? We have an interesting narrative in the Sūtras.

The Atman, enunciated narrates the process of the world-creation as follows:- There was in the beginning one Atman alone, and no other thing there was active (mitra). He thought: I shall create the world. He accordingly created these worlds: Ārūdhā, Māricīr, Mira and Ap. Ārūdhā world is what is the above the heaven, Eyyuloka and also a foundation of the latter. Beneath the heaven is Anteriksha, that is the world of Māricīr. Ārūdhā-rays of the Sun, beneath the Māricīr is the earth known as Mira: beneath the earth is Ap-water.

Then the Atman thought: I shall create the Lokapalas, guardians of the world; then he drew out the Purusa from the waters and other great elements and shaped him (with head and other parts) He heated him (by his tapas); of the Purusa so heated the mouth burst like an egg; from the mouth came out) speech and Apī, fire, nose bursting breath; and the wind came out; the eyeballs bursting came out Āyātra, eye and therefrom Aditya (Sun), the ears bursting (came out) the ear-organ and therefore quarters; the skin bursting hairs and therefrom plants and trees came out: the heart-bursting manas, mind and therefore from the moon came out: .......

When the created gods requested the Atman to provide them with their own dwelling places, the Purusa was finally presented before them. They being pleased entered into their places as per His Order:

Apī becoming speech entered in the mouth, the wind becoming breath entered in the nose, Aditya becoming the eye entered in the eye-ball. Āyātra becoming the ear entered in the ear-holes, Āsadhī and Vanaśpiti becoming hairs entered in the skin. Candrasas becoming manas, mind entered in the heart.......(6.1 and 2)

The above narrative makes obvious that each sense-organ has its own basis as well as its presiding diety and thus the mind has the heart as its basis and the moon as its presiding diety.

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The same Upanishad declares on another occasion that the heart and the mind are identical: \textit{Tad eko khyāyam sat mana eva.} (III, 1,2). It is further stated that all the mental states such as Samjñāna, viṣjñāna and prajñāna and others were all one and the same. This point goes quite in agreement with the Satyasiddhi’s contention of one mind becoming into several mental states.

Note 1 (p.6). This interpretation is quite compatible with a transformation-theorist, \textit{Parinama-vidin} who is generally counted as \textit{Sat-karṣa-vidin}, an upholder of the imperceptible presence of the effect in the cause. Thus when the effect is present in the cause, \textit{viveka} also may be the case, i.e. the cause may be present in the effect. So this interpretation of \textit{Alaya} is very convincing.

Note 2 (p.10). For the transformation-theorist the relation between the cause and the effect may be both: identity and indescribability. \textit{Vivekānta} accordingly says \textit{Paravesa} is neither different from nor identical with \textit{Parinipam} (ver.22). The Advaita-Vedantins would also countenance the same view, cf my paper on Gauḍapāda in the Bulletin, Vol VIII, 1, p.33 f.

Note 3 (p.16). This world of men is termed here \textit{Mara (मर)}). The Buddhists call it \textit{Maru (मरु)}, i.e. the world belonging to the god of death.