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Dependent Origination

A comparative Study on the Epistemology of Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra Schools

By

Sylvie To Lu

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
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Abstract

This dissertation is a comparative study on the epistemology of the Buddhist schools of Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra in terms of Dependent Origination (*Pratītyasamutpāda*), the Buddhist doctrine of causation and a key doctrine in all schools of Buddhism. There are several attributes that contribute to a school's epistemological stance, such as: view of reality that influences the epistemological interpretation; dharma taxonomy that reflects the epistemological analysis; and the causal model that redefines dependent origination in cognition. Seeds and repository consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*) are critical in the cognitive process in Yogācāra. Both Sautrāntika of Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra hold the *sākāra-jñāna-vāda* view of cognition considering perception to be mediated by a representational form (*ākāra*). The dissertation identifies these six attributes as epistemological aspects for evaluation and the differences between the two schools as listed in the table below will be examined in comparison.

	Sarvāstivāda	Yogācāra
View of reality	Realism	Idealism
Dharma taxonomy	Analyzed by <i>skandhas</i>	Analyzed by consciousness
Epistemological model	"When this exists, that comes to be"	Evolving consciousness
Seed-theory (karma)	Seeds and base consciousness	Seeds and repository consciousness
Dependent Origination	Causes and conditions	repository consciousness (<i>ālaya-vijñāna</i>)
Ākaras	<i>Prajñā/ caitasika</i>	The mode of activity of the <i>ālaya-vijñāna</i>

The outcome of this comparative study shows that idealism and the shift from skandha to consciousness in the analysis in Yogācāra redefined Buddhist epistemology, and Sautrāntika of Sarvāstivāda plays an important role in this transition.

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Abbreviations

Kośa	Abhidharmakośabhāṣya (Commentary on the Treasury of Abhidharma)
MVŚ	Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā
CWSL	Cheng Wei-shih Lun: Doctrine of Consciousness
MPs	Mahā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra
MSG	Mahāyānasamgraha (the Mahāyāna Compendium/Summary)
MMK	Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (Verses <i>on the Middle Way</i>)
SMC	Samdhinirmocana-Sūtra (A Profound Discourse on Complete Meanings, Insight, and Transcendental Meditation)
SN	Samyutta Nikāya (Connected Discourses on Causation)
PPs	Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya (Prajñāpāramitā Heart Sūtras)
T	The Taishō Tripiṭaka
Triṃśikā	Triṃśikā-vijñaptimātratā (The Thirty Verses on Consciousness Only)
Viṃśatikā	Viṃśatikāvijñaptimātratāsiddhiḥ (The Treatise in Twenty Verses on Consciousness Only)

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abbreviations.....	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Introduction:	1
1. Methodology	4
Chapter 1: Dharma Theory	5
Chapter 2: Epistemology in Sarvāstivāda	8
2.1 Realism in Sarvāstivāda	10
2.2 Seeds Theory and Base Consciousness	12
2.2.1 Seeds Theory.....	12
2.2.2 Base Consciousness	17
2.3 Dharma Taxonomy.....	18
2.4 Epistemological Model	25
2.4.1 The Cognitive Process.....	26
2.5 Ākāra.....	30
2.6 Dependent Origination – Causes and Conditions	32
Chapter 3: Epistemology in Yogācāra	38
3.1 Yogācāra Idealism.....	40
3.2 Seeds Theory and Repository Consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna)	43
3.2.1 Seeds Theory	43
3.2.2 Ālaya-vijñāna and the associated consciousnesses	46
3.2.3 The Three Natures of Existence.....	51
3.2.4 The Three Non-Natures of Non-existence	52
3.3 Dharma Taxonomy.....	55
3.4 Epistemological Model	58
3.5 Ākāra.....	63
3.6 Dependent Origination – ālaya-vijñāna	65
Conclusion	70
Bibliography.....	72

Introduction

Dependent Origination (*Pratītyasamutpāda*) is the Buddhist doctrine of causation and a key doctrine in all schools of Buddhism. The term 'Dependent co-arising' first appeared in the Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation sūtra), in which the Buddha explained the process of dependent co-arising as a chain of cause and effect that creates the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth in a sequential causal pattern. The theory of Dependent Origination follows the causal model of "When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises," (SN 12.61), with ignorance as the primordial cause of existence. The doctrine was later called Twelve Links dependent origination, as the Buddha's elucidation of the second Noble Truth, the cause of human suffering, in his first sermon of 'the Turning of the Wheel', the teaching of the Four Noble Truth that he delivered to his five fellow-ascetics after his enlightenment. The First Truth identifies suffering as the intrinsic nature of existence; birth is suffering, sickness is suffering, old age is suffering, death is suffering, feeling is suffering, separation is suffering, etc.... (Gethin 59). The Second Truth identifies its causes from ignorance, craving and attachment to the origination of suffering. The Third and Fourth Truths are methods and soteriological paths to leaving suffering and to attain enlightenment. To understand the immediate concern of the predicament of existential suffering, Abhidharma scholars systemized the Buddha's teachings and tackled on how cognitive and psychological events are constructed and rise dependently in terms of dharmas in early Buddhism.

Like most schools in early Buddhism, Sarvāstivāda, one of the most influential and important schools in Abhidharma Buddhism, holds a realistic view of reality which influenced the school's epistemological theories. Etymologically, "Sarvāstivāda" in Sanskrit literally means "everything

exists." Within its framework, all dharmas are said to have intrinsic natures that manifest through causes and conditions. Epistemologically, all dharmas are cognizable and external objects are real and can be perceived directly (except the Sautrāntika school). Furthermore, Sarvāstivādins believe that dharmas exist in the past, present, and future, known as the "three times". The Sautrāntikas' Seeds (*bījas*) Theory and the Mahāsāṃghika's concept of base consciousness laid the groundwork for the future development of the seeds and repository consciousness in Yogācāra school. (Cox 1995, 94-95)

On the contrary, Yogācāra is an idealistic school based upon the *Cittamātra* (Mind-only) philosophy, focusing on the nature of consciousness and the working of the mind. The school refuted Sarvāstivāda's realism that all things exist, arguing that all phenomena arise dependently are unreal and unsubstantial. Yogācāra is also known as consciousness-only school (*Vijñānaptimātra*), holding both the inner and outer worlds are mere ideation; only consciousness alone is real, and the external objects are projections of the consciousness. The introduction of the Eight Consciousnesses doctrine, the seed theory and the *ālaya-vijñāna* dependent origination restructured the epistemological model. This model resolves issues of continuity from cognitive activities to reincarnated rebirth.

Holding opposing philosophical positions that differ in their views on reality, both schools hold different epistemological views. The combination of Seeds theory and the concept of base consciousness (or repository consciousness in Yogācāra), however, is the common denominator of both schools. These developing concepts were in a fledging stage for Sautrāntikas at that time but were fully elaborated and developed as one of the pillars of Yogācāra school.

Therefore, Sarvāstivāda's epistemology is mainly an analysis of the conscious mind based on skandhas, and Yogācāra has shifted to the analysis of consciousnesses.

Basically, cognition is merely a mental process of cognizing either internal or external objects to understand our internal and external worlds from the knowledge acquired. From a Buddhist perspective, cognition itself is a larger context of dependent origination. The dependent arising of cognitive activities marks the entry into the conditioned reality that divide what is self and non-self, subject and object, and this and that, etc... in a dualistic way of thinking. What contributes to the cognitive process are subjected to different epistemological interpretations from different schools. Nevertheless, both Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra agree on that the causality carries on in the cognitive process.

This dissertation focuses mainly on the epistemology of both schools. There are several attributes that contribute to a school's epistemological stance, such as: view of reality that influences the epistemological interpretation; dharma taxonomy that reflects the epistemological analysis; and the causal model that redefines dependent origination in cognition. Seeds and repository consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*) are critical in the cognitive process in Yogācāra. Both Sautrāntika and Yogācāra hold the *sākāra-jnana-vāda* view of cognition considering perception to be mediated by a representational form (*ākāra*). The dissertation identifies these six attributes as epistemological aspects for evaluation and the differences between the two schools as listed in the table below will be examined in comparison.

	Sarvāstivāda	Yogācāra
View of reality	Realism	Idealism
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The outcome of this comparative study shows that idealism and the shift from Skandha to consciousness in the analysis in Yogācāra redefined Buddhist epistemology, and Sautrāntika of Sarvāstivāda plays an important role in this transition.

Methodology

The methodology in this dissertation is a blend of philosophical and comparative analyses. The philosophical analysis will examine the philosophy that influence both schools of Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra in their epistemological interpretations in terms of dependent origination. By juxtaposing both schools of Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra, the dissertation is comparative in nature. The focus is not just finding their similarities and differences, but to show how epistemological theories evolve from Sarvāstivāda to the Yogācāra.

There are three main chapters in this dissertation. Before delving into the main subjects of comparison, the concept of dharma will be introduced and its semantic change in the epistemological sense will be discussed in chapter one. Subsequently, chapter two will focus on the epistemology of Sarvāstivāda and chapter three of Yogācāra school. These two chapters are structured based on the epistemological attributes listed in the table above. The sequence of the chapters is arranged chronologically from early Buddhism (Sarvāstivāda) to Mahayana Buddhism (Yogācāra).

Chapter One

Dharma Theory

Dharmas are considered elements of physical and mental phenomena for both Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra schools and building blocks of the whole conscious experience. According to Karunadasa, the dharma theory from Abhidharma is an additional analysis to the following five modes of analysis of the empirical experiences when in contact with the external world. The analyses include:

1. The two main components of mental and corporeal (nama and rupa) aspects of the existence
2. The five skandhas
3. The six *dhatus*
4. The twelve *ayatanas* (the avenues of sense-perception and mental cognition)
5. The analysis on the eighteen dhatus (elements)

These five analyses were established to prove the non-self theory that there is no self in the human body, nor within the five skandhas; consciousness is but mental phenomenon which comes into being because of certain conditions. For instance, *rūpa* (the material body) is analyzed into four elements of earth, water, fire and air. The Skandhas were analyzed into six dhatus (realms of experience) which further analyzed into twelve *ayatanas*. Eighteen *dhatus* were broken down into six sense objects (sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations, and thoughts), the six sense organs to receive stimulation from them, and the six consciousnesses (mental capacity) necessary to create perception. (Karunadasa 9-10)

In the third council two hundred years after the Buddha's *Parinibbana*, Abhidharma emerged as a philosophical system on the exegesis of the Buddha's teaching predicated on its own dharma theory. It is a dharma-analysis, an addition to the five modes of analyses, that focuses on the

true nature of existence as apprehended by the conscious mind. (Karunadasa 10) The dharma theory holds that the phenomena of empirical experience are made up of number of elementary constituents called dharmas (Karunadasa 7).

Dharma in the sutras usually refers to truth, teaching, good behavior, or natural law. In Nikaya Sutta, dharma can refer to both the content of the Buddha's teaching and texts that contain the Buddha's teaching. In the early sutras, the term dharma means closer to truth since the Buddha's teachings reveal the truth of suffering and its dependent arising and the path to cessation. From there, dharma in its etymological sense becomes 'the nature of everything whose nature is to rise, is to cease.' (Gethin dhamma 517) Dharma is then understood as some kinds of 'law of the universe' and is referred to as things arise in dependence upon other things. (Gethin dhamma 519)

In *Abhidharma*, dharmas are not teaching, truth or natural laws. They refer to factor, element, constituent, phenomenon, event, datum, property, quality, fundamental existent, reality (Cox 543). Dharmas become elements or constituents of the whole of conscious experience, phenomena, events and reality in its analysis of human consciousness that constitutes to human suffering. In *Abhidharma*, conditioned dharmas are subject to the causal law of dependent arising as the truth of the nature of conscious experience and reality.

Different dharma taxonomies were established to classify and to analyze the conscious experience in different schools. Mental dharma is analyzed in the context of Skandhas in Sarvāstivāda *Abhidharma*. *Citta* in Sarvāstivāda is classified as a separate dharma category belonging to the consciousness Skandha. In terms of the epistemological analysis, dharmas are

anything cognizable which are irreducible data of empirical experience and mental factors (*caitasikas*) in Sarvāstivāda. (Karunadasa 28) With its eight-consciousnesses doctrine, Yogācāra's dharma taxonomy focuses on consciousness classification and their mental functions. The epistemic dharma associated with human cognition of both schools will be identified from their dharma taxonomy and discussed separately in the subsequent two chapters.

Chapter Two

Epistemology in Sarvāstivāda

	Sarvāstivāda (Chapter 2)	Yogācāra (Chapter 3)
View of reality	2.1 Realism	3.1 Idealism
Seed-theory (karma)	2.2 Seeds and base consciousness	3.2 Seeds and repository consciousness
Dharma taxonomy	2.3 Analyzed by <i>Skandhas</i>	3.3 Analyzed by consciousness
Epistemological model	2.4 “When this exists, that comes to be”	3.4 Eight consciousnesses and Evolving consciousnesses
<i>Ākara</i>	2.5 <i>prajñā/caitasika</i>	3.5 the mode of activity of the <i>ālaya-vijñāna</i>
Dependent Origination	2.6 Causes and conditions	3.6 <i>ālaya-vijñāna</i>

The doctrine of Twelve Links outlines the dependent arising of the coming existence of a sentient human being, and implicitly holds that life is impermanent, subjected to suffering, and empty of self. According to Buddhist epistemology, mental events are dharmas dependently arising in the similar causal principle. That is, in the act of knowing, the mind gives rise of a series of causally related mental moments when contacting with objects from experiences through the six senses. As a mental moment, a perception is causally conditioned by the previous mental moment. In a perception, however, not only the previous mental moment but also the perceived object is contributing causally to the occurrence of the perception. (Dunne Buddhist epistemology)

Mental dharmas arising from these cognitive activities render the psychological events in the conscious mind. Abhidharma Buddhism systemized the Buddha’s teachings, and its analysis focuses on the nature and function of this conscious mind, referring the conscious reality by the three synonymous terms *citta*, *manas* and *vijñāna*. The mind is called *citta* because it accumulates, *manas* because it thinks, and *vijñāna* because it cognizes¹. Since the Buddha explicitly stated that the mind or consciousness is no more than an empirical or functional reality

¹ There are various functional distinctions of these three terms. In Kośa, *citta* accumulated with the pure and impure elements; *manas* functions as the supporting basis; *vijñāna* is supported by *manas* for its arising.

that results from an assemblage of conditions, the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas held that it is a real entity. (Dharmajoti 239) Sarvāstivāda is one of the early Abhidharma schools known as a school of causality (*Hetuvada*). The school emphasizes on the causation and conditionality of all mental and physical dharmas arising dependently and held that all dharmas exist in the “three times” of past, present and future.

Abhidharma, the third of the three parts of *Tripitaka*, are composed by early Buddhist schools on analyzing the actualities behind the cognitive and psychological experience of the conscious mind. Among the Abhidharma Schools, only Abhidharmas of the Sarvāstivādins and of the Theravadins have survived as complete collections, and each consists of seven books with commentaries.

Founded by Katyayaniputra, Sarvāstivāda is one of the early Abhidharma schools branched out from Sthaviravada, which is one of the two schools formed at the Buddhist Council of Pataliputra in 247 BCE after the Buddha’s Parinirvana. The *Sarvāstivāda* Abhidharma cannon consists of seven books:

1. Representation of Collectively Sanctioned Doctrines (*Saṅgīti-paryāya*) by Mahākauṣṭhila.
2. doctrine-skandha (Dharma-skandha) by Śāriputra.
3. Treatise of Conventional Designations (*Prajñapti-śāstra*) by Mahā-maudgalyāyana.
4. Consciousness-collection (*Vijñāna-kāya*) by Devaśarman.
5. Element-collection (*Dhātu-kāya*) by Pūrṇa.
6. Treatise on the Topical Categories (*Prakaraṇa-pāda*) by Vasumitra.
7. Jñāna-prasthāna by Kātyāyanīputra.

The first three books belong to the earliest period and the rest was compiled in the later period.

Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośabhāṣya was a last addition as a separate treatise to the cannon of Sarvāstivada Abhidharma before he was converted to a Mahayanist.

2.1 Realism in Sarvāstivāda

Sarvāstivāda advocates realism in epistemology. They hold the dualistic view that mental and physical dharmas are independent of each other, and they are considered real with their intrinsic nature. Saṃghabhadra states that “the characteristic of an existent can serve as an object producing cognition (*buddhi*)” (Dharmajoti 302). Being an existent with intrinsic nature the perceptual object is both cognizable and a cognizer. In a perceptual experience, whether sensory or mental, the perceptual object is the object out there existing at that moment when the association consciousness arises (Dharmajoti 275). According to Saṃghabhadra, object is perceived by sensory consciousness directly as a whole entity of physical assemblage of atoms, and very single atom is real.

Direct perception (*Pratyakṣa*) is the immediate and non-conceptual form of cognition. This form of perception refers to the knowledge gained through direct sensory experience; it does not involve any inferential process or conceptual overlay. It is pure, direct, and unmediated. In the direct perception, sensory consciousness cognizes only the intrinsic characteristics of the object, and the mind consciousness judges (or investigates) and conceptualizes with semantic and linguistic designation (Dharmajoti 276). The mind consciousness at this point is inferring, not in a direct perception. Inference refers to knowledge gained through reasoning and logical deduction. Direct perception and inference (*anumāna*) are forms of the theory of *pramāṇa*, the means of obtaining valid knowledge. The *pramāṇa* tradition founded by Dignāga of the Yogācāra systemized this epistemological framework, and its analysis delved deeply into the nature of these means of knowledge.

There is a different take on realism between Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika within the *Sarvāstivāda* tradition. Vaibhāṣikas uphold the theory of direct realism. For them, external objects are independent dharmas which can be directly known through direct perception. The objects exist whether they are perceived or not. A certain object or a sound exist even though it is not seen or heard. It is not known because it is not directly perceived. The Sautrāntikas, on the other hand, hold a critical realism in epistemology. They shared the Vaibhāṣika's belief that external objects are dharmas of real existents but rejected the idea that unperceived phenomena have real and independent existence. For them, the only thing that exist are perceived directly by senses and inferred logically, and the perceived reality is a constructed reality. The Sautrāntikas' take on critical realism lays the foundation for the future development of the Yogācāra's idealism.

There is also a discrepancy between Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika on their interpretation of direct perception. To the Vaibhāṣikas direct perception happens when perceptual cognition, the external object and the cognizing consciousness occur simultaneously. The Sautrāntikas, on the other hand, argued that the external object, the cognizer and the cognition are all distinct and the object cannot be known in a direct perception at the moment of cognition. The moment of existence of the object and the moment of the cognition of the object cannot simultaneously occur because every existence precedes its cognition. The object of knowledge exists independently of the cognizing consciousness, and it ceases to exist in the next moment. In reconciling the doctrine of momentariness with that of continuity in delayed moment, the Sautrāntika posited a representative theory of perception (*sākāravāda*), arguing that perceptual cognition takes place via representational forms (*ākāras*). Before an object ceases to exist, it

leaves out its impression which is an exact copy of the original. The consciousness perpetually apprehends the impression that it infers of the original in self-cognition. So, only the impression is perceived, not the object. (Bhatt 5) This epistemological viewpoint claims that *ākāras* belong to the resultant cognition, not external phenomena. (Shi Yuanxin 6) This representative theory of perception is called *sākāra-jnana-vāda* and fully developed in Yogācāra to implement its idealistic view of consciousness-only philosophy and its epistemological model of evolving consciousness in the cognitive process.

2.2 Seeds Theory and Base Consciousness

2.2.1 Seeds theory

If the Sautrāntika's representative theory of perception resolved the delayed moment in cognition in terms of 'three times' in continuity (the momentariness of dharmas), its Seeds Theory attempted to establish the karmic continuity in terms of causal efficacy in 'three times'. That is to say, the efficacy of the causal power differs in three different stages of time. A past dharma is defined by its no-longer efficacious causal power, a present dharma by its efficacious causal power and a future dharma by its not yet efficacious causal power (Jiang 28). For the Vaibhāṣikas, this efficacy is determined by the function of the 'possession' (*Prāpti*) (Jiang 31). Possession is a momentary factor binding a now past moment to the life-stream. It is karmic and continually reproduces itself in the next moment. This possession is either good (*kusala*), bad (*akusala*) or indeterminate (*avyakṛta*) in nature, and is considered as substantial existent. It is not responsible for the arising or disappearing of activity itself. To connect a past moment to

the life-stream, the concept of 'possession' of possession' (*praptiprapti*), which arises together with the primary possession, is introduced. (Dessein 19)

In MVŚ, the Sautrāntikas denied the plausibility for the concept of 'possession'. The Sautrāntikas recognize only two moments of a dharma, nascent (*utpada*) and cessant (*vyaya*) and reject the static moment (*sthiti-ksana*) (Kalupahana 1976,151). This means that a dharma perishes instantaneously the very moment it comes into being, without lasting even a moment. This is clearly a sharp departure from the Sarvāstivāda position that things in all three stages of time exist. For the Sautrāntikas, it is impossible that the possession has its influence on the present that connects the past moment to the present moment of the life-stream. (Dessein 20)

They refuted Vaibhāṣikas' argument that things exist in all 'three times' with co-existent cause as the causal force for continuity in two succeeding moments and argued that a dharma perishes instantaneously, and the continuity is only a temporal continuum without two successive moments related to each other. To reconcile the conflict between momentariness and continuity, they established the causal relationship between preceding and succeeding moments with the theory of seeds (*bīja*) as karmic causation for their theory of continuity. (Jiang 33-34)

The Seeds Theory was first proposed by Kumāralāta (3rd century CE), founder of the Sautrāntika school, who was also a Dārṣṭāntika². He attempted to use the seed analogy to explain the process of latent karmic force which can transform karma into mental and physical dharmas in

² 經部譬喻師- The Sarvāstivādins sometimes referred themselves as of the *Dārṣṭāntika* school, meaning "those who utilize the method of examples".

the process of retribution, just like seeds sprouting into plants and capable to bear fruits.

According to Dārṣṭāntikas, seeds consist of the following characteristics:

1. Continuity: seeds continue to exist until they are mature and ready to sprout.
2. Transformation: seeds are active and transforming in successive continuity.
3. Fruition: in the last stage of transformation, seeds self-bear their own fruits. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 129)

The latent karmic force is the energy that nourishes the seeds and keeping them active. When the conditions are met, the maturation of the seeds will lead to the manifestation of both physical and mental phenomena.

One of the Dārṣṭāntika's doctrines is the seeds perfuming³ or suffusion. Dārṣṭāntikas believed that the continuity from one moment to the next moment in the stream of consciousness depends on the karmic function of the seeds. When karma dependently arising from seeds and before it is exhausting and perishing, the seeds apply their function of suffusion to produce the retributive fruit in the next moment. (Shi Yingshun 549-552) The suffusion entails a seed-state like *sakti*, a capacity of the *namarupa* (the psycho-physical) that has arisen from past *klesas* and that generates future *klesas*, as a dynamic and transformative force. (park 419)

In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Vasubandhu elaborated on Dārṣṭāntikas' three characteristics of seed. He described seeds as "the complex of the five skandhas, capable of generating a result, either immediately or mediately, by means of the *pariṇāma-viśeṣa* of its series." (Poussin, vol 1.1 211) In terms of continuity, the five skandhas are emphasized here as being causally responsible for the past dharmas created and for being capable to generate present and future

³ Literally translated from Chinese as 熏習.

dharmas as a series of uninterrupted *saṃskāras* in the mind-stream. Each series of *saṃskāras* evolve and transform (*pariṇāma*) momentarily and as a result producing result.

Seeds are said to be able to produce *kleśa* (defilement), just as they can produce consciousness and perception in a person in the same causal principle. The following passage from Kośa lists the sleep and awakened states of seeds and their causal potentiality:

Kāmarāgānuśaya means "anuśaya of Kāmarāga", But the anuśaya is neither associated with the mind, nor disassociated from it: for it is not a separate thing (dravya). What is called anuśaya is the kleśa itself in a state of sleep, whereas the paryavasthāva is the kleśa in an awakened state. The sleeping kleśa is the non-manifested kleśa, in the state of being a seed; the awakened kleśa is the manifested kleśa, the kleśa in action. And by "seed" one should understand a certain capacity to produce the kleśa, a power belonging to the person engendered by the previous kleśa. (Kośa vol 3.3, 770)

This is to note that for Sautrāntikas, the seed of the *kleśa* is the prāpti or possession of this *kleśa* for the Vaibhāṣikas. For Sarvāstivādins, the *anuśaya* of a *kleśa*, for example sensual desire, is the *kleśa* itself. (Kośa Vol. 3, 869n4)

Anuśaya refers to the latent, non-manifested afflictions in a seed-like state in the seed. *Kleśas* are mental states that cloud the mind, such as afflictions and defilements, and they will manifest in unwholesome actions. In Kośa, Vasubandhu explained *Kleśa* as "a seed, a *naga*, a root, a tree, a husk of grain."⁴ In parallel to the Vaibhāṣikas' theory of 'possession' seeds can be classified into wholesome (*kusala*), unwholesome (*akusala*) or indeterminate (*avyakṛta*).

Wholesome and unwholesome seeds will give rise to retributive causes, while indeterminate seeds will not, because they are karmically weak and will not grow to fruition. This seed-fruit

⁴ Kośa – 36b-d. from poussin vol. 2, p.437

analogy implies the latent capacity of *kleśas* that can arise as a cause to produce an effect as karmic retribution like a seed sprouting into stalk, leave, etc... The Sautrāntikas differentiated two kinds of *kleśa* in two different states: *anuśaya* in the sleeping latent state and *paryavasthāva* in the awakened manifest state. The seed itself has the capacity to produce *kleśa* in a person, just like rice seed when manifests can give rise of rice stalk and eventually rice. So, seeds have a capacity, not an efficacy or an actualized event.

Vaibhāṣikas rejected the theory of seeds and favored their theory of *Prāpti*. They argued that a person cannot be endowed with both *kusala* and *akusala* in one moment since they are *samprayukta* dharmas. But *Prāpti* being *viprayukta* can co-exist and thus cause the rise of *kusala* and *akusala* dharmas. (Jani 245) The Sautrāntikas refuted the co-existence cause in possessions and asserted that *kusala-citta* can arise only out of its seeds (Jani 246).

According to the Sautrāntika's Seeds Theory, the causal efficacy starts when seeds mature as a dependent origination leading to a process of karmic maturation. Seeds in *anuśaya* state then become awaken into a *paryavasthava* state going through a transformation stage. Hyōdō identified two types of cause and effect in seeds: the homogeneous causation (*sabhagaḥetu*) and the heterogeneous causation as in karmic retribution (*vipāka*). The homogeneous causation (*sabhagaḥetu*) is exemplified in the on-going reproduction of defilement such as rice produces rice and so on. The heterogeneous causation is for *saṃtati-pariṇāma-viśeṣa* which is a series of mental or physical events arise from karmic retribution. (Park 235) Karmic elements produced by past karma are conceived of as evolving through the mental-physical series of a sentient being and acting as the primary cause (*hetupratyaya*) in karmic retribution (Park 168). Mental events are karmic elements arise dependently upon the preceding moment in terms of

causes and conditions, and cognition can be said as the homogeneous causation in the manifesting state (*paryavasthava*).

The Sautrāntikas' Seeds Theory presents an important perspective on the latent potentialities in the arising of different physical and mental phenomena in terms of dependent origination. The theory greatly influences the later development of the Yogācāra Seeds theory.

2.2.2 Base Consciousness

Sarvāstivāda faced a dilemma in their analysis of conscious experience by Skandhas and *caitasikas* in terms of reincarnation. Since Skandhas are conditioned dharmas, they are subjected to rise and perish. Hence, they cannot be transmigrated from one life to the next. To resolve this problem, the Sautrāntikas came up with two sets of Skandhas (the functional and the base Skandhas). The five Skandhas are functional Skandhas for present life which are impermanent. The base Skandha is permanent as a storehouse of memories and karmas which can be transmigrate from one life to another. The Mahīśāsakāh also posited the three types of Skandhas in three different stages of existence:

1. momentary Skandhas (*kṣanikaskandha*)⁵
2. Skandhas that last for a lifetime (*janmiskandha*)⁶
3. the Skandha that lasts for all saṃsāra (*āsaṃsārikaskandha*)⁷ (Mahāyānasamgraha 49)

Mahīśāsakāh believe that dharmas rise and perish momentarily, and the causal force from one moment to the next extends the continuity for 'momentary Skandhas' in the 'Skandhas that last for a lifetime'. These two types of Skandha cannot be transmigrated to the next life. However,

⁵ 一念蘊

⁶ 一期蘊

⁷ 窮生死蘊

the ‘Skandha that lasts for all of *saṃsāras*’ are capable to be transmigrated from one life to the next, which has the parallel connotation of the ‘base skandha’ of the Sautrāntikas. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 120) In Mahāyānasamgraha, Asaṅga referred this Skandha to the repository consciousness of the Yogācāra.

Mahāyānasamghika is the first school to postulate the concept of ‘base consciousness’ to replace Sautrāntikas’ base Skandha. They later included the ‘upholding consciousness’⁸ (*samgraha vijñāna*), whose functions are to hold and to impregnate the previous moment’s content. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 124-125). Mahāyānasamghika’s base consciousnesses and the Sautrāntika’s theory of seeds have foreshadowed the later development of the theory of seeds and *ālaya* consciousnesses in Yogācāra. Even though both Sautrāntika and Mahāyānasamgraha schools have developed new ways of thinking to resolve issues on karmic transmigration in reincarnation, in general, the Sarvāstivāda school still focus on understanding the conscious mind through the analysis of Skandhas. This is reflected on their dharmas taxonomy and in their epistemological interpretation.

2.3 Dharma Taxonomy

Upholding its realistic view, Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma analyzes the complexity of human experiences based on a list of seventy-five classes of dharmas, of each sustains its intrinsic nature with a unique force that contribute to the human experience. For instance, “matter” (*rūpa*) is a physical dharma having the specific characteristic of resistance (*sapratighatva*) or visibility (*sanidarśanatva*), and its sustaining force keeps the physical dharma unchanged before

⁸ 攝識

it lasts. Each mental dharma with its specific characteristic contributes various mental ‘experience’. For instance, the specific characteristic of ‘understanding’ (*prajñā*) dharma is ‘discernment’, which is a mental force in any cognitive activity. (Dharmajoti enclyc. entry 10)

The Sarvāstivāda analysis is based on the Buddha’s doctrine of five skandhas, of which constitute the totality of phenomenal existence.

1. *rūpa* (form/matter)
2. *vedanā* (sensation/feeling)
3. *saṃjñā* (ideation/perception)
4. *saṃskāra* (conditionings/ mental activity or formations)
5. *Vijñāna* (consciousness/ discernment)

The analysis is an examination of the five skandhas and their associated dharmas to understand the objective actualities that lie behind the mental constructs. For this reason, the Sarvāstivādins established their dharmas taxonomy based on the five skandhas in five categories. From the five skandhas they further classified dharmas into dharmas of twelve *āyatanas* and eighteen *dhātus* (see table 2.1, diagrams 2.2 and 2.3). In the beginning, dharmas were classified into ninety-eight in the first book (Dharma-skandha) of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma (Dharmajoti 28) but were trimmed down to seventy-five classes of dharmas in five categories in the book of *Prakaraṇa-pāda* of Abhidharmaprakaraṇa-śāstra by Vasumitra (Dharmajoti 44). The following is the seventy-five dharmas classified by five skandhas:

Table 2.1 - Five Skandhas Classification in Sarvāstivāda dharma taxonomy

The Five Skandhas	Number of dharmas	Dharmas description
Rūpa (form or matter)	11	5 sense faculties, five sensory objects, 1 non-information or non-revealing) <i>avijñāpti</i>
Vedanā (Feeling)	1	1 <i>vedanā</i> as a <i>citta</i>
saṃjñā (thought)	1	1 <i>saṃjñā</i> as a <i>citta</i>
saṃskāra (mental Formation)	44	44 <i>saṃprayukta-saṃskāra</i> excluding <i>vedanā</i> , <i>saṃjñā</i> <i>cittas</i> – conjoined dharmas
	14	1 <i>viprayukta-saṃskāra</i> – disjointed dharmas
Vijñāna (consciousness)	1	1 mind <i>citta</i>

The five skandhas are considered conditioned (*saṃskṛta*) dharmas. In Kośa, they are defined as impure dharmas with outflow and the unconditioned dharmas the pure dharmas without outflow. The impure conditioned dharmas constitute these five *upādāna*-skandhas; they are created dependently on causes and conditions, and exist in three times (past, present and future). (Kośa, vol 1.1 7a-d) *Rūpa* skandha includes five sense organs, five objects, and one *avijñapti*. The five sense faculties and five sensory objects have their own associated *āyatanas* and *dhatus*. *Avijñapti* is a special type of *rūpa*, which is non-resistant and not perceptible to the senses. It comes into existence in dependence on the force of a *cetanā*, a *viññaptikarma* and a set of *mahābhūtas*⁹. *Avijñapti* arises continuously in every moment as *avijñapti*-karma, interacting with the person's mental series and modifying the resultant status of the karma until the time of retribution or the person's death. (Dharmajoti encyclopedia entry 12-13) *Vedana*-skandha is the threefold mode of feeling or experiencing sensation, which is painful, pleasant or neither-painful-nor-pleasant. *Samjñā*-skandha consist of the grasping of characteristics, such as perceiving different colors, shape, sizes, good or bad, ect... *saṃskāra*-skandha are mental dharmas, including *saṃprayukta-saṃskaras* (conjoined with thought dharmas) and *Viprayukta-saṃskāra* (disjoined from thought dharmas). The *saṃprayukta-saṃskāras* are mental dharmas that conjoin *cittas* and/or *caitasikas*. *Viprayukta-saṃskāra* dharmas are unique in Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma. Possession (*prāpti*) that the Vaibhāṣikas

⁹ "avijñapti-rūpa." Tibetan Buddhist Encyclopedia.

<https://www.tibetanbuddhistencyclopedia.com/en/index.php?title=Avij%C3%B1apti%C2%B7r%C5%ABpa>. Web 14 January 2025.

posited is one of the dharmas under this category. It is a force that links a dharma to a particular series, which together cause a so-called conditioned dharma to be impermanent momentary (*kṣaṇika*) (Dharmajoti 44)

Citta in Sarvāstivāda is a separate category belonging to the consciousness Skandha. *Caitasikas* is a category with Skandhas of sensation or feeling (*vedana*), perception (*smjṇa*), and mental activity or formation (*samskara*). The *saṃskāra*-skandha includes the conjoined (*saṃprayukta*) dharmas, as well as the disjoined (*viprayukta*) dharmas. Sarvāstivādins distinguished *citta* as a separate entity from *caitasikas* because they have different functions to perform. *Citta* is, as Dharmajoti explained, “the general discernment or apprehension with respect to each individual object. This discernment is the mere grasping of the object itself, without apprehending any of its particularities.”, while *caitasika*, on the other hand, “apprehends the particularities of the object.” (Dharmajoti 257-258)

The ten universal dharmas are the first ten of the forty-four *saṃprayukta caitasikas*, and they form the epistemic base for the arising of other thirty-four psychological *saṃprayukta caitasikas* and fourteen *Viprayukta caitasikas*. They include:

1. sensation (*Vedana*)
2. Volition (*cetana*)
3. Ideation/perception (*saṃjṇa*)
4. Desire/inclination (*chanda*)
5. Contact (*sparsa*)
6. Understanding (*prajṇa*)
7. Mindfulness (*smṛti*)
8. Mental application/attention (*manaskara*)
9. Determination (*abhimoksa/abhimukti*)
10. Mental concentration (*Samadhi*)

The ten universal *caitasikas* are also called “great *bhumi*” dharmas. *Bhumi* here means “the sphere of movement” of a dharma to which it belongs to. They are always conascent with any *citta* in every moment of thought. *Cittas* cannot arise by itself, but only dependently arising together with *caitasikas* as conjunction in the mental process simultaneously, including the cognitive process. (Dhammajoti 246) Among the ten universal *caitasikas*, sensory perception functions as the bare, generic awareness of the sense data, while *Prajñā* and *saṃjñā* are the main power supply for examination/deliberation (*abhinirūpaṇā*) and recollection (*anusmaraṇa*). The two *caitasikas* are sine qua non for a discriminative cognition (*vikalpa*), and hence the possibility of inferential knowledge. (Dhammajoti 300) *Saṃjñā* is the cause of *vitarka*, and *vitarka* is in turn the cause for the arising of a sensory consciousness. (Dhammajoti 301)

All the seventy-five dharmas are considered substantially real which influenced and reflected in the Sarvāstitva’s epistemological model.

2.2 - Sarvāstivāda 75 Dharmas - correlation between the 5 categories with 5 skandhas, 12 āyatanas and 18 dhātus

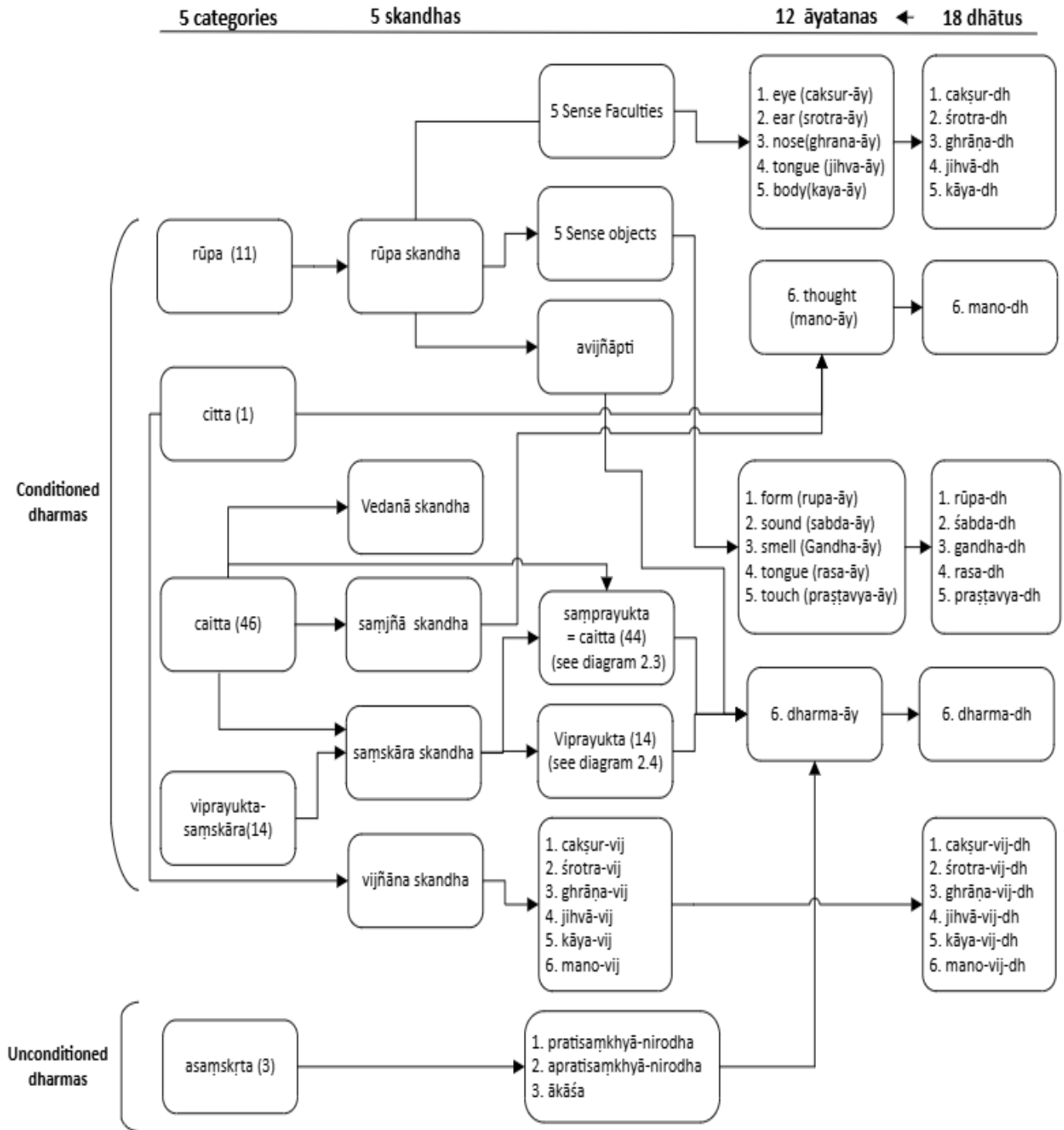


Diagram Text Abbreviation

āy = āyatana

dh = dhātu

vij = vijñāna

vij-dh = vijñāna-dhātu

Diagram 2.3. 46 Citta-samprayukta saṃskāra dharma (thought-concomitants)

Universal dharma (Mahabhūmika)			Skillful Universal dharma (Kusala-mahabhūmika)			Universal dharma of defilement (Klesa-mahabhūmika)		
1	sensation	vedanā	1	faith	śraddhā	1	delusion	moha
2	ideation	saṃjñā	2	diligence	apramāda	2	Non-diligence	pramāda
3	volition	cetana	3	calm	praśrabdi	3	slakness	kauśīdya
4	contact	sparśa	4	equalimity	upekṣā	4	Lack of faith	āśraddhya
5	wish	chanda	5	modesty	hrī	5	torpor	styāna
6	intellect	prajñā	6	shame	apatrāpya	6	restlessness	auddhatya
7	mindfulness	smṛti	7	Non-greed	alobha			
8	attention	manaskāra	8	non-ihatred	adveṣa			
9	determination	adhimokṣa	9	harmlessness	avihiṃsā			
10	concentration	saṃādhi	10	vigor	vīrya			

Unskillful universal dharma (Akusala-mahabhūmika)			Defilements of restricted scope (parittaklesa-bhūmika)			Indeterminate dharma (Aniyata-bhūmika)		
1	non-modesty	āhrīkyā	1	anger	krodha	1	repentance	kaukrītya
2	shamelessness	anapatrāpya	2	enmity	upanāha	2	drowsiness	middha
			3	dissimulation	śāṭhya	3	reflection	vitarka
			4	jealousy	īrṣyā	4	investigation	vicāra
			5	depraved opinionatedness	pradāśa	5	greed	rāga
			6	concealment	mrakṣa	6	hostility	pratigha
			7	avarice	mātsarya	7	conceit	māna
			8	deceit	māyā	8	doubt	vicikitsā
			9	pride	māda			
			10	harmfulness	vihiṃsā			

Diagram 2.4. 14 citta-viprayukta saṃskāra dharma (conditionings disjoined from thought)

Conditionings disjoined from thought (cittaviprayukta saṃskara)		
1	acquisition	prāpti
2	non-acquisition	aprāpti
3	group homogeneity	nikāyasabhāga
4	ideationlessness	āsaṃjñika
5	ideationless attainment	āsaṃjñi-samāpatti
6	cessation attainment	nirodha-samāpatti
7	Life/vital faculty	jīvitendriya
8	Birth/ production-characteristic	jāti-lakṣaṇa
9	duration-characteristic	sthiti-lakṣaṇa
10	deterioration-characteristic	jarā-lakṣaṇa
11	impermanence-characteristic	anityatā-lakṣaṇa
12	Name/word	nāma-kāya
13	phrases	pada-kāya
14	syllables	vyañjana-kāya

2.4 Epistemological Model

The epistemological model of the Sarvāstivāda is an intricate system established on the ontological principle that all dharmas exist, the concept of *pramāṇa* and the causal theory of dependent arising. Some Sarvāstivādin argued that conditioned dharmas are real for they consist of its intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*). (Dhammajoti 74). The intrinsic nature persists throughout the three times (past, present and future), even though it is impermanent, but the past dharmas influence the present dharmas and the present dharmas influence the future dharmas in a causal principle. Only the unconditioned dharmas, transcending the temporal process, are permanent (Dhammajoti 133). Does *svabhāva* change in the temporal process? There were views that *svabhāva* remains unchanged tri-temporally. Some argued that it undergoes change as *bhava* (part of *svabhāva*), a mental superimposition, from arising to cessation. (Dhammajoti 137) The Theravadins denied the existence of the past and future dharmas, claiming that only the present dharmas exist.

The system of *pramāṇa* is structured into two epistemological levels: Direct Perception (*Pratyaksha*) and Inference (*Anumana*). Direct Perception is the sensory perception; it is knowledge gained through direct sensory experience, which is the immediate and non-conceptual phenomena as they appear to the senses. Inference is the mental Perception, referring to knowledge gained through reasoning and logical deduction. It is the perception that arises from the mind and gives rise to mental phenomena such as thoughts and emotions. Yogic Perception is a form of perception attained through meditation. Direct Perception and inference are immediate and unmediated form of empirical cognition, while *Yogi* perception is a spiritual and beyond sensory phenomena.

2.4.1 The cognitive process

From the Sarvāstivāda's epistemological interpretation, cognition is a form of direct perception with *cittas* and the mental factors as agents for its arising. A *citta* serves as a condition for the arising of the succeeding *citta* that gives way and elicits the arising of the next *citta* in the series of continuity (Dharmajoti 196). The terms *citta*, *manas* and *viññāna* share the same meaning, but with different functions. *Citta* is the mind that accumulates such as pure and impure dharmas; *manas* functions as the supporting basis while *viññāna* is supported by *manas* (Dharmajoti 239). Mental factors or concomitants known as *caitasikas* each of which is a distinct real entity making a unique contribution to the perceptual process (Dharmajoti 196-241). *Cittas* are primary mental states. They are the foundational elements of cognitive process and the core of mental activities. *Caitasikas* are accompanying mental factors that influence the primary mental states. They are further classified into universal mental factors and occasional mental factors.

In a direct perception, the cognitive process is sensory. Saṃghabhadra argues that a sensory consciousness takes a physical agglomeration of atoms as its object. What is directly perceived is just these assembled atoms since single atom cannot be directly perceived. The single atom cannot serve as the perceived object neither. Hence, conceptual objects (or objects of cognition) arise based on the ultimately real, and this ultimately real atom is the intrinsic characteristic of matter (the visibles, etc.). (Dharmajoti 227-228)

Predicated on the doctrine of "all dharmas exist" with their intrinsic nature as real existents, dharmas constitute objects of cognition (*viññeya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*). The cognitive object that is apprehended is a knowable (*viññeya*), and through knowledge all dharmas are known. In

MVŚ, Venerable Parsava explained knowledge, cognitive objects and their relationship in the following:

Knowledge is so called because it knows.

A dharma which is an object of [cognitive] activity, a cognitive object or object domain that is apprehended is called a knowable.

Knowledge and the knowable are established in mutual relation to each other; hence there is no knowledge that does not know the knowable, nor is there any knowable that is not known by a knowledge. (qtd from Dhammajoti 278)

That is, all dharmas as real existents are knowable and cognizable. All dharmas are known through the knowledges (*jñāna*) in accordance with the associated objects, and all dharmas are cognized through the consciousness in accordance with the associated objects, such as visual consciousness cognizes the visibles, olfactory consciousness cognizes smells, Gustatory consciousness cognizes tastes, bodily consciousness cognizes tangibles and mental consciousness cognizes dharmas. The knowables and cognizables as the real existents imply an ontological status of the cognized objects in the Sarvāstivāda's epistemological model. (Dhammajoti 278-279)

What connect the knowables and the cognizables are streams of *citta* (thought), *manas* (mind) and the six consciousnesses (*viññāna*), and together they constitute to the mental reality. *Citta*, *manas* and *viññāna* function together as one mental activity with different functions. *Citta* accumulates, while *manas* is thinking and *viññāna* is cognizing. (Dhammajoti 239) The threesome forms the epistemological foundation of the conscious mind for the experience of the external world.

Cittas do not arise alone. In a cognitive process when a thought arises, the ten universal *caitasikas* act as two distinct forces and operate together in the cognition. Sensation, volition and desire *caitasikas* are major forces to power this cognitive process. Sensation *caitasika* enables the threefold experience of pleasurable, unpleasurable, or neutral feelings to occur when faculties contact with sense or mental objects and the associated consciousnesses. The volition *caitasikas* are mental factors that move the mind toward the object. The volition mental factors generate karma since volition determines the actions to be taken from the cognitive process. Desire or inclination *caitasika* are one of the six occasional mental factors in Theravada Abhidharma, but it is a universal *caitasika* for the Sarvāstivādins. The desire mental factor is the desire for action in acquiring skillful or unskillful dharmas. Skillful dharmas are moral dharmas such as knowledge of the origin of suffering, the cessation and the path that leads to Nirvana (Dhammajoti 277), while unskillful dharmas are worldly dharmas of the conditioned reality (Dhammajoti 45).

When an external object impinges on one of the sense faculties, the sense faculty, the object and associated consciousness converge and give rise to the contact *caitasika*. The *manaskara* mental application *caitasika* alerts the volition *citta* and directs it to move toward the object. Ideas and concepts are formed with *caitasika* which also grasps the object and causes the rise of *prajna caitasika* for reasoning and investigation. Views are created in the *prajñā caitasikas* whether they are right or false views in the perceptual process. Like *prajñā caitasika*, the *smṛti* mindfulness *caitasika* plays an important role in conceptual discrimination. The determination *caitasika* makes the mind determine or ascertain to the object being cognized. The concentration *caitasika* enables the *citta* remain focused on an object. (Dhammajoti 246-251)

As one of the universal *caitasikas*, *Prajñā* (understanding) is the heart of the cognitive process with different modes of operations. Its discernment/examination of dharmas as knowledge occurs in all mental states. For the Sarvāstivādins, knowledge is not the same as consciousness. In the conditioned conventional reality, knowledge is a with-outflow understanding that repeatedly discerns the cognitive object. On the unconditioned level, knowledge is not an outflow. When *prajñā* displays its judgemental nature, it is called a view. A view is non-epistemic, but accounts for the function of seeing, judging, firm attachment and penetrating the objects of perception. (Dhammajoti 284)

Diagram 2.4. Sarvāstivāda's Cognitive Process



The Sarvāstivādins had been debating among themselves what sees that constitutes to acquire knowledge of the external world. The answer to this epistemological question has been diverse among them. Venerable Dharmatrāta held that visual consciousness sees, Venerable Ghosaka held that 'understanding' dharma conjoined with visual consciousness sees, while Dārṣṭāntikas believed that the complex of *citta-caittasikas* sees. Saṃghabhadra of the Vaibhāṣika firmly defended the eye sensory organ as the epistemic instrument with seeing function. From the process of dependent origination, the eye exercises the seeing function, but visual consciousness causes the seeing. They maintained that eye sees, and consciousness cognizes. (Dhammajoti 296-299) In Kośa, Vasubandhu refuted the Vaibhāṣika's theory and argued that *ākāra* (representation or image of the object) is the agent of seeing.

It is said in the sutra, ‘consciousness cognizes’. Herein what does consciousness do?

It does nothing ... Although doing nothing, consciousness is said to cognize because of the obtaining of itself resembling [the object] ... What is its resemblance [with the object]? This consists in having the form or aspect of that object]. (qtd from Dhammajoti 300)

Vasubandhu took the Sautrāntika’s concept on representation theory to argue that consciousness cannot cognize and considered *ākāra* as the agent of perception, and being cognized.

Both Sautrāntika and Yogācāra believe that perceptual cognition take place via representational forms (*ākāra*) from a *sākāravāda* epistemological view. The Nyāya of Sarvāstivāda, on the other hand, holds that cognition can access objects directly without being mediated by *ākāras* (*nirākāravāda*). (Westhoff Yogācāra 173-174)

2.5 Ākāra

Ākāra refers to images of external object reflected in consciousness. The Sanskrit term *ākāra* literally means shape, appearance or image. In his first sermon the Buddha explained the Four Noble Truths of suffering in twelve modes (*ākāras*). Theravada did not have an epistemological connotation for the term and considered the twelve *ākāras* to be the twelve ways to know the Noble Truths for liberation. The Sarvāstivāda’s sixteen *ākāras* contemplation model is close to the twelve *ākāras* concept since they share similar patterns, terminology and so on, as Zhao considered (Zhao 35).

There is a semantic change of the term *ākāra* when Śrīlāta introduced the *Sautrāntika* theory of perception. This doctrine was later described as *sākāra-jñāna-vāda* (representation theory) with “*sākāra*” as appearance and “*jñāna*” as consciousness, holding that sensory and mind

consciousness arise with a representational form. The theory asserts that a dharma (phenomenon) to serve as an *ālambana-pratyaya* (object support condition) must consist of the following two conditions:

1. It must contribute to the causal efficacy for the generation of the consciousness.
2. the consciousness must arise having a representational form of it.

That is, in the cognitive process, the external object (*ālambana*) can be directly experienced by the arising consciousnesses in the second mind-moment as a *pratyakṣa* (the knowledge that arises from the contact of the object) experience that causes the appearance of the cognitive object (*ākāra*) of consciousness. (Dharmajoti 2007, 171) In simpler terms, the external object leaves an impression or a representational form within the mind. Sāvarstivāda claimed that for the arising of cognition, mental images of external objects (*ākāra*) manifest in *caitasikas* as the cognizers, and the external objects as cognized. (Chen Yibiao)

The school claims that *prajñā caitasika* is real with intrinsic value, arising with examining function (Chen Yibiao). In MVŚ, the concept of “*ākāra* is *prajñā*” is ubiquitous, and both *Prajñā* and *ākāra* are defined as investigative operation regarding the perceptual object (Dharmajoti 315).

Vaibhāṣika interpreted *ākāra* as a single mental function (*caitasika*) of *prajñā*, and view *ākāra* as a perceptual image constructed by the mind, intrinsically tied to *prajñā*. *Ākāra* hence becomes the *prajñā caitasika* and cognizer that can cognize the external object directly.

Vasubandhu of Sautrāntika critically examined the Sāvarstivāda representation theory and refuted the concept of “*ākāra* is *prajñā*”. First, he redefined *ākāra* as the 'object-grasping-mode' (*ālambana-grahana-prakāra*) of all *citta-caitasikas*. *Ākāra* is no longer one single *prajñā caitasika*, instead, it is applicable to all *cittas* and *caitasikas*. Secondly, he referred *ākāra* to a

prajñā activity to a mode or way (*prakāra*). In the formal definition, *ākāra* is the *prakāra* of all *citta-caitasikas*. (Fei Zhao 66-69) *Sakaras* are identified as *caitasikas* that grasp the objects one by one separately in the cognition (Shi Yuaxin 4). *Ākāra* arises from *sākāra* grasping the object with *prakāra* on classifying the objects such as classification of different colors and shapes, (Shi Yuaxin 5) and being cognized by other *citta-caitasikas*. In Chapter 3, a comparison of the role of *ākāra* in cognition for Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika and Yogācāra are illustrated in three separate diagrams. (see diagrams 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4)

2.6 Dependent Origination – Causes and Conditions

Causality is a central criterion for the rise of mental reality. For Sarvāstivāda, dharmas are ultimately real with intrinsic nature. This unique intrinsic characteristic of dharmas may be perceived directly through the five senses. Since all dharmas are ultimately real, it is argued that *caitasikas* (thought concomitants) must exist as real entities contributing necessarily to the empirical experience, such as *vedanā* causes sensation, *saṃjñā* causes ideation, *smṛti* causes recollection, etc. (Dhammajoti 164) As discussed earlier, all conditioned dharmas being real with intrinsic nature are knowables and cognizables, and they epistemically contribute to the arising of all mental phenomena through conditions and causes. The four conditions (*pratyaya*), the six causes (*hetu*) subsumed the major causal forces in conditioned dharmas, and five fruits (*phala*) are results from the causality. Causes are classified into:

1. Efficient Cause (*Kāraṇa-Hetu*)
2. Homogeneous Cause (*Sabhāga-Hetu*)
3. Universal Cause (*Sarvatraga-Hetu*)
4. Retributive Cause (*Vipāka-Hetu*)
5. Co-existent Cause (*Sahabhū-Hetu*)
6. Conjoined Cause (*Samprayuktaka-Hetu*)

Efficient cause is the generic type of cause that directly or indirectly contributes to the arising of another dharma (Dhammajoti 168). It is the direct cause that produces a specific effect. For instance, conditioned by the eye, visual consciousness dependently arises; this is an efficient cause.

Homogeneous cause is the cause that produces similar effects and maintains the continuity in a series of phenomena. That means, the moral species of the succeeding effect is the same as that of the preceding cause. For example, if a series of continuous thought is skillful, then the effect will be skillful.

Universal cause is considered a subset of homogeneous causes, which generate defiled dharmas and suffering. They permeate all phenomena, such as ignorance leading to various forms of suffering.

Universal and similar causes are overlapping categories, but there are similar causes that are not universal causes, and vice versa. Vibhajjavādins hold that ignorance, craving, view, conceit and thought (*citta*) are universal causes while Dārṣṭāntikas hold that the two defilements of ignorance (*avidyā*) and craving (*tṛṣṇā*) are universal.

Retribution cause is the karmic cause that produce specific results based on past actions, often linked to karma. Neutral dharmas are not retributive causes, because they are weak (Kośa II.54). To the Darstantikas, volition is the only Skandha contributing to the retribution cause and fruits. The Mahasamghikas argued that retribution cause and fruits are confined in thought and thought concomitants. However, the Sarvāstivāda holds that all conditioned, not only thought and thought concomitants, all five skandhas including *rūpa*, conditionings of both conjoined and disjointed thoughts, contribute to retribution cause.

The concept of co-existent cause emphasizes that conditions do not exist in isolation but are interdependent and co-arise, each influencing and being influenced by the others. In MVŚ, co-existent cause means conditioned dharmas are not mutually separated and they share the same effect. (Dhammajoti 174)

Conjoined cause is considered a subset of the co-existent cause. It exerts a dominating influence over the arising of phenomena. Thought (*citta*) and thought concomitants (*caitesikas*) are a conjoined cause in the cognate activities. The conjoined *citta* and *caitesikas* arise simultaneously to become mutually conjoined causes (*samprayuktaka-hetu*) to one another; they either arise all together, or none of them can come into existence at all. The following excerpt from MVŚ explains the nature of the conjoined cause:

Question: What are the conjoined causes?

Answer: Dharmas that are thought and thought concomitants.

Question: Why are thought and the thought-concomitants mutually conjoined causes to one another?

Answer: Because they are reciprocally causes, arisen through their mutual strength, mutually induced, mutually nourished, mutually strengthened, mutually dependent. (qtd. from Dhammajoti 176)

In Kośa, Vasubhandu agreed with the conjoined cause as the supporting basis of thought and thought concomitants. For instance, the visual faculty of a given moment and the thought concomitants of the visual faculty together as a conjoined cause give rise to the visual consciousness. He also equated conjoined cause to co-existence cause, but the difference is that co-existent cause is the cause being reciprocal in effects while conjoined cause is the cause of engaging the same activities. (Dhammajoti 176)

The Sarvāstivādins took co-existent cause as the doctrine of simultaneous causation to support their doctrine of direct perception. For them, the external objects are real existents that the five

senses perceive them directly. For instance, within a single moment of visual perception, the visual faculty, the object and the corresponding visual consciousness all arise simultaneously, functioning as a co-existent cause.

Four types of conditions supplement different types of cause and contribute to the arising of mental phenomena:

1. Condition of Causes (*Hetu-pratyaya*)
2. Condition of Immediate Proximity (*Samanantara-pratyaya*)
3. Condition of Object (*Ālambana-Pratyaya*)
4. Condition of Dominance (*Adhipati-Pratyaya*)

Condition qua causes is the direct cause in producing an effect, like seeds that give rise to plants. The cause functions as a condition. Except the efficient cause, the other five causes are conditions qua cause. Condition of Immediate Proximity refers to the continuity or immediate succession of moments, ensuring the seamless flow of mental processes. A *citta* serving as a condition for the arising of the succeeding *citta* or *caitasika* is an example of this condition.

(Dharmajoti 196)

Condition qua Object is the object of perception that conditions the arising of mental states; without an object, cognition cannot arise by itself. Saṃghabhadra called the condition qua object the totality of dharmas, because thought and thought concomitants hold onto the cognitive objects for their arising. (Dharmajoti 198-199) In the cognitive process, Sarvāstivāda considered the external object the force affecting the manner of cognition that may lead to the generation of defilement. (Dharmajoti 275)

Condition of dominance is a generic condition corresponding to efficient cause. Whatever serves a condition either directly or indirectly is condition of dominance. These conditions

serve as dominant factors that influence the arising of dharmas, such as the environment or supportive conditions.

These conditions do not constitute the essence of the resultant phenomena, but they serve as the requisite supports that enable the manifestation of experiences leading to a variety of experiential fruits (*phala*) as the outcomes or results of the conditioned processes.

Sarvāstivāda identifies five types of experiential fruits (*phala*) that arise from these conditions:

1. *Vipāka-phala* (Resultant Fruits)
2. *Vivarta-phala* (Transformational Fruits)
3. *Pravṛtti-phala* (Active Fruits)
4. *Niṣyanda-phala* (Cumulative Fruits)
5. *Vipaśyanā-phala* (Insightful Fruits)

Resultant Fruits are the outcomes that manifest as the direct results of karmic deeds done in the past. Transformational Fruits pertain to the transformation of the mental states and the subsequent changes in perception and experience. Active Fruits refer to the active engagement in further actions that are influenced by past conditions, leading to new cycles of cause and effect. Cumulative Fruits are the cumulative results that accrue over time, shaped by the continuity of one's actions and mental processes. Insightful Fruits arise from the deep insight and understanding gained through meditative practice.

In a direct perception (*pratyakṣa*), the sensory consciousness cognizes only the intrinsic characteristic of the external object. Saṃghabhadra argues that homogeneous cause (*sahabhū-hetu*) obtains in the sensory perception. The sensory faculty and the object perform like the conjoined *causes* with the sensory consciousness as the *effect* (fruit) to arise not only simultaneity but take the same object as perceptual object. Whereas the mental consciousness

pertains to the domain of inference (*anumāna*) with its ability of abstraction can cognize the common characteristic in the direct perception. (Dharmajoti 313)

Chapter Three

Epistemology in Yogācāra

	Sarvāstivāda (Chapter 2)	Yogācāra (Chapter 3)
View of reality	2.1 Realism	3.1 Idealism
Seed-theory (karma)	2.2 Seeds and base consciousness	3.2 Seeds and repository consciousness
Dharma taxonomy	2.3 Analyzed by <i>Skandhas</i>	3.3 Analyzed by consciousness
Epistemological model	2.4 “When this exists, that comes to be”	3.4 Eight consciousnesses and Evolving consciousnesses
<i>Ākara</i>	2.5 <i>prajñā/caitasika</i>	3.5 the mode of activity of the <i>ālaya-vijñāna</i>
Dependent Origination	2.6 Causes and conditions	3.6 <i>ālaya-vijñāna</i>

Asaṅga and Vasubandhu founded the Yogācāra school in the 4th century CE, which is the praxis tradition based upon the *Cittamātra* (Mind-only) philosophy. It is also known as *Vijñānaptimātra* (consciousness-only) school because *Vijñānaptimātra* is the main teaching upholding the idealistic doctrine that nothing outside of the mind exist. The key concepts in Yogācāra school are the notions of consciousness-only (*vijñānaptimātra*), three natures (*trisvabhāva*), the theory of eight consciousnesses with the introduction of mana and alaya consciousnesses. The school emphasizes the role of consciousness in the experience of reality, positing that all phenomena are manifestations of the mind. The school also inherits the concept of emptiness from the Mādhyamaka school but refutes Nagarjuna’s negative dialectics on the empty nature of all phenomena and adopts a philosophical positivism with the synthesis of the Sautrāntika and Vijñāna schools (Bhatt 8).

Legend has it that Maitreya Bodhisattva, who is said to be the future Buddha of the *Sahā* world, was the one who passed on the teaching of *Cittamātra* to Asaṅga in the *Tuṣita* Heaven during a visit in his *Samādhi* (Williams 86). Asaṅga compiled Maitreya’s teachings into five Śāstras:

1. *Abhisamayālaṅkāra*– ‘The Ornament for the Realizations’.
2. *Madhyāntavibhāga-kārikā*– ‘The Discrimination of Middle from Extremes’.
3. *Dharma-dharmatā-vibhāga* – ‘The Discrimination of dharmas from their True Nature’.
4. *Mahāyāna-sūtrālamkāra-kārikā* – ‘The Ornament of the Mahāyāna Setras’.
5. *Ratnagotravibhāga* - a treatise on the *Tathagatagarbha* or Buddha-nature doctrines. (Williams 87)

Yogācāra school takes root in these Śāstras and three other Mahayana sutras:

1. *Ārya-saṃdhi-nirmocana Sūtra* (*Noble Sūtra of the Explanation of the Profound Secrets*)
2. The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (Discourse of the Descent into *Laṅkā*)
3. The *Avatamsaka Sūtra* (the *Flower Ornament Scripture*). (Shi Ruyuan Analysis 36)

Both *Ārya-saṃdhi-nirmocana* and *Laṅkāvatāra* Sūtras are two major Sūtras that explicate the concepts of *Ālaya-vijñāna* (repository consciousness) and the Three Natures (the empty natures). The *Avatamsaka* Sūtra is an important scripture on the metaphysical cosmology.

Nevertheless, all three Sūtras uphold an idealistic view of the conventional world, and that is all phenomena are manifestations of the mind; they are phenomenal illusions. In the *Avatamsaka* Sūtra, it goes like the following:

*If people wish to understand
All Buddhas of the three periods of time,
They should contemplate the nature of
the Dharma Realm.
Everything is made from the mind alone.*

Under the influence of his brother Asaṅga, Vasubandhu was converted to Mahayana from the Sarvāstivāda tradition. He systematized the philosophical views of the Yogācāra School and designated the school as a consciousness-only school (*Vijñānaptimātra*), arguing both the inner and outer worlds are mere ideation; only consciousness alone is real, and the external objects are projections of the consciousness. (Bhatt 7)

3.1 Yogācāra Idealism

Yogācāra holds an idealistic view in epistemology. In the first verse of *Viṃśatikā*, Vasubandhu quoted the passage from the *Avatamsaka* sutra, “the three realms are mind only”, to support his idealistic position of “the three realms are consciousness only.” He deconstructed the mind into thought, consciousness and perception, saying that “they are the same with different names”¹⁰. Mind and thought function together with mental activities in the cognitive process, and the external objects of perception are not associated with consciousness. His form of idealism denies the real existence of the external world and objects, a realistic stance held by the Sarvāstivāda school.

In CWSL, Master Xuan Zang used the dream analogy to illustrate that the external objects are the results of ‘fictitious constructions.’ He said,

“That of a man in a dream, who, under the influence of that dream, in which his mind produces what seem to be external objects of all sorts, believes that these images are real external objects.”

According to Xuan Zang, the external objects are ‘fictitious constructions’, only the projections of the mind, and the internal consciousness is responsible for the appearance of external objects. (CWSL 13). Similarly, in the cognitive process, he credited *mānas* consciousness (*mānas-vijñāna*) for creating the internal objects (*ākāras*), and “through its discrimination, erroneously creates the notion of externality.” It is the *mānas-vijñāna* that creates the sense of externality, and the perceived objects do not necessary exist externally. (Jiang 94) To Xuan Zang, internal representations within the realm of consciousness are necessary components of

¹⁰ T1590.1: 心、意、識、了，名之差別。

all experiences, not the external physical objects. (Jiang 62) Tao Jiang called Xuan Zhang's idealism "qualified metaphysical idealism." His reasoning is that the perception of an external world does not warrant the existence of the same external world. Since the existence of the external world is not confirmed nor denied (qualified), therefore, consciousness becomes the world of experience. Consciousness, in terms of metaphysical idealism, is then the world from a monistic view of epistemological interpretation. (Jiang 61-62)

In *Viṃśatikā*, Vasubandhu established hypothetical objections from the realists and addressed them with his reasonings to defend his idealistic view. One of the objections as the verse says,

If consciousness without real objects of perception,
The restriction (*niyama*) of place and time,
The nonrestriction of mental continuity (*samtana*),
And function would not be established. (*Viṃśatikā* 391)

The objection raises the question of conditionality of the external objects. Without this condition of a real external object, how do we perceive time and place (space) and how do we manage our mental continuity? Vasubandhu used different realms of reality to counter the realists' theory of a real external object: the human dream state, the ghost and hell realms. What we see in dreams such as village, garden and people, he explained, are not real objects of perception external to consciousness. In an awoken state, they do not exist and are not restricted in time and place neither. Due to their karmic retribution, hungry ghosts in their realm see rivers filled with pus when we see water in the human realm. Similarly, a pot of ghee that we see, they may see a pot of excrement. This scenario shows that there are no real objects of perception apart from consciousness; what these beings see are manifestations from their consciousness in different realms. Apparently, karma is the condition of the manifestations

which shows the non-restriction of mental continuities. Due to their past karma, sentient beings who were born in hell suffer inflictions from infernal guardians, dogs, crows, iron mountains, etc., which are also manifestations from their consciousnesses. To Vasubandhu, they are not real objects externally to inflict suffering, but the manifestations from the consciousness. From these three scenarios Vasubandhu attempted to reason that the perceived mental events or phenomena are karmic in nature, and they do not exist outside of consciousness.

Vasubandhu elaborated his idealistic views in the *Triṃśikā*. He started the verse with “Concepts of Atman and dharmas do not imply the existence of a real Atman and real dharmas, but are merely fictitious constructions,” and argued that they are all mental representations (*akaras*) based on manifestation and transformation of consciousness. In *Yogācāra*, mental phenomena manifest as mental representations from karmic seeds in *Ālaya-vijñāna* in the process of consciousness transformation. According to Vasubandhu, the six consciousnesses manifest themselves in perception and the object of perception as conditioned dharmas. The reasoning for his idealistic view states in the sastra is, “Because of this, Atman and dharmas do not exist. For this reason, all is mere consciousness.” (CWSL 503)

As discussed in chapter two, Sautrāntika and Yogācāra have taken the *sākāra-jñānavāda* approach that they consider perception to be mediated by a representational form, while Sarvāstivāda has taken the *nirākāravāda* approach holding that cognition can access objects directly without form. In Yogācāra, the substantiality of *ākāra* further determines the

representation theory of *sākāra-jñānavāda*¹¹ or of *Nirākāra-jñānavāda*.¹² The primary distinction between *Sākāra-jñānavāda* and *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* in Yogācāra lies in the epistemological stance on the substantiality of the mental representations (*ākāras*). With the introduction of the *bhagas* in perception, there have been debates whether the *darśana-bhaga* and *nimitta-bhaga* arise with ‘Other-dependent’ (*paratantra-svabhāva*) of *mana-vijñāna* or the imagined nature (*parikalpita-svabhāva*) of the *indriyas* and *mano-vijñānas*. *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* is a form of idealism that upholds the concept of the unsubstantiality of the two *bhagas* for they arise as imagined knowledge in cognition. *Sākāra-jñānavāda*, on the other hand, is a form of idealism that considers the two *bhagas* substantial and they arise from the other-dependent of the cogitation. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 27-28)

3.2 Seeds Theory and repository consciousness (*ālaya-vijñāna*)

3.2.1 Yogācāra’s Seeds Theory

Yogācāra’s Seeds Theory is an extension of the Sautrāntika’s Seeds Theory, with a hermeneutic shift from Skandhas to consciousnesses. As discussed in chapter two, Vasubandhu in the *Kośa* referred seeds to *Nāmarūpa*, the psycho-physical organism of the five Skandhas. They are a stream of uninterrupted *saṃskāras* (or Skandha dharmas), evolving and transforming momentarily in a sequential causal manner. Seeds in Yogācāra are parts of the *ālaya-vijñāna*, not Skandhas; they have their substance in consciousness, and hence they are designated by the term consciousness (CWSL 531). Seeds refer to the karmic imprints left from past actions and experiences in the *ālaya-vijñāna*, with a latent potentials or predispositions, capable of

¹¹ 有相唯識

¹² 無相唯識

giving rise of mental and physical phenomena when conditions are met. Seeds in *ālaya-vijñāna* with help of *pratayas* (conditioning factors), each transforms itself and manifest changes in variegated ways to the point of its maturity, based on the karmic retribution in the process of consciousness evolution.

There are several theories regarding the origin of seeds. One theory asserts that all seeds are natural born in *ālaya-vijñāna*. Another theory claims that all seeds are born as the result of perfuming. The third theory held by Dharmapāla holds that there are two kinds of seeds: some are inborn existed innately in *ālaya-vijñāna* and some seeds are created by perfuming. (CWSL LXI-LXII) The perfumable is consciousness in which seeds can be created or nourished, while the perfumer is the dharma that creates or nourishes seeds. Nevertheless, there is a unified consent on the following six characteristics of seeds listed in the CWSL:

1. Seeds are momentary.
2. Seeds are simultaneous with their fruit.
3. Seeds form a continuous series.
4. Seeds must belong to a definite moral species.
5. Seeds depend on a group of conditions.
6. Seeds 'lead' to their own fruit.

These six characteristics belong only to the powers or potentialities of *ālaya-vijñāna*, not the manifestation of consciousness. (CWSL 127-129)

Ālaya-vijñāna is also identified as 'seed-consciousness' (*bīja-vijñāna*) in Mahāyānasamgraha¹³ since it carries with all the *bījas*, both mundane (impure) and supramundane (pure) *bījas*.

(CWSL 185) The mundane seeds are the karmic imprints left from past actions and experiences. They are defilements that give rise to mental and physical phenomena in the perpetual cycles

¹³ T1594: 由攝藏諸法，一切種子識，故名阿賴耶

of birth and death. The supramundane seeds are imprints that can lead to enlightenment for ending the cycle of birth and death. *Ālaya-vijñāna* produce all pure and impure dharmas from the impure and pure seeds. The consciousness interacts with these impure dharmas as cause and effect (CWSL 533) in terms of *ālaya-vijñāna* dependent origination¹⁴. Nevertheless, Sautrāntika has not yet posited anything which can uphold seeds like the ‘upholding’ and ‘base’ consciousnesses that the Mahāyānaśāstra has postulated. The Yogācāra refined the Sautrāntika’s Seeds Theory and brought forward the concepts of these two consciousnesses from Mahāyānaśāstra into the Yogācāra’s Seeds Theory. The *manas* and *ālaya* consciousnesses were introduced in Mahayana scriptures especially in the sutras of *Ārya-saṃdhi-nirmocana* and the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*.

The Seeds theory generally attempted to address and to solve the diachronic (continuity of karmic force) and the synchronic (correlation of latent tendencies with the manifest mind continuum) issues, as Park argued (Park 44). The terms diachronic and synchronic were first introduced by William Waldron who identified the diachronic and synchronic analyses in the Abhidharma. The Synchronic analysis dissects mental experience into discrete and momentary elements to understand the internal relationships between these momentary processes; and the diachronic analysis focuses on the continuity of each moment and its causal efficacy in the mind-stream. (Waldron 7) Waldron stated that the Sautrāntika’s Seeds theory is solely diachronic since the *anuśaya* (the latent disposition) is real existents, neither associated and nor disassociated with the mind (Waldron 11). Park also concurred with Waldron, saying the Dārṣṭāntika’s notion of seeds is mainly bound by the diachronic concern with how karmic forces

¹⁴ 阿賴耶識緣起

can be linearly maintained throughout the extended period of maturation (Park 44). The shift from the analysis of Skandhas to consciousness and the concept of subliminal impressions (*vasana*) make Yogācāra's Seeds theory both diachronic and synchronic. The theory focuses not only on the flow of karma in the mind-stream (diachronic), but also on how the past karma influences throughout the consciousness evolution interacting with the *ālaya* consciousness in the cognitive process (synchronic).

3.2.2 *Ālaya-vijñāna* and the associated consciousnesses

Ālaya-vijñāna (storehouse consciousness) is one of the key concepts in Yogācāra. The school holds an idealistic view of reality which suggests that there is no existence of the external reality, and considers consciousness being the world. Without the external reality, knowledge is acquired through self-cognition. *Ālaya-vijñāna* hence becomes the epistemic source where karmic seeds are stored, where consciousnesses evolve interacting with seeds in self-cognition, and where the other seven consciousness arise from the seeds. *Ālaya-vijñāna* is capable of transformation and manifestation with three characteristics:

1. It is passive in terms of being 'perfumed' by defiled dharmas of *samkasa*.
2. It is active in terms of creating dharmas in the seeds and store the seeds (*bījas*) in it.
3. *Manas-vijñāna* attaches itself to *ālaya-vijñāna* as to its 'self'.

Along with the three-natures and three-non-natures theories, the doctrine of *Ālaya-vijñāna* encapsulates the epistemological, ontological and phenomenological aspects of the conscious mind. In *Viṃśatikā*, a consciousness typology is established to illustrate the relationship among these eight consciousnesses, classifying them into three levels of transformative capability¹⁵ or evolving consciousness (*Parināma*):

¹⁵ 三種能變

1. First level: *Ālaya-vijñāna*
2. Second level: *māna-vijñāna*
3. Third level: the five sensory and mind consciousnesses.

Ālaya-vijñāna is the fundamental layer of consciousness, a grounding substratum that consists of seeds, and whose seeds mature at varying times into fruits as retribution. Seeds are series of dispositions or subliminal impressions (*vāsanās*). They manifest as the representations in five sensory and mental cognitions (Garfield 81).

Ālaya-vijñāna has been often interpreted as the notion of the unconscious in modern scholarship on Buddhism. Jiang's argument is that the concept of *Ālaya-vijñāna* in Xuan Zang's Yogācāra¹⁶ is a Buddhist phenomenology of the unconscious, formulated to account for the karmic continuity of the deluded existence as an analysis of the subliminal mental activity. (Jiang 4-6) His point is plausible on the incompatibility between *Ālaya-vijñāna* and the term 'unconscious' in modern psychology. For instance, for Freud, the unconscious is the land of desires and chaos, and any order would come from the external world, and for Jung, the unconscious accounts for both chaotic desires and the possibility of spiritual transformation. (Jiang 234)

In CWSL, *Ālaya-vijñāna* is defined as the repository where karmic seeds are stored, nourished, matured and transformed. Seeds may contain desires and chaos elements that the Buddhists refer to as *kleśa*. Interacting with *ālaya-vijñāna* the seeds transform and give rise of mental phenomena in retribution. One of the characteristics of *ālaya-vijñāna* is its perpetual evolution like a torrent (CWSL 103). The manifestations of this torrential-like stream of consciousness could be the unconsciousness that Jung posited, but not *ālaya-vijñāna*. In Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra,

¹⁶ Tao Jiang referred the Yogācāra school as Xuan Zang's Yogācāra since he used Xuan Zang's CWSL.

Ālaya-vijñāna has been associated with *Tathāgatagarbha* (Buddha nature). With this Buddha nature, *ālaya-vijñāna* is the ground that supports practitioners to bring all discernible activities of consciousness to a halt during deep meditative states (Jiang 234). For this reason, there is unlikely any parallel between the concept of unconscious from Freud and Jung and of the *ālaya-vijñāna*.

Tao Jiang also argued that Yogācāra philosophy is a form of Husserl's transcendental phenomenology with the intentional structure of the impure consciousness grounded in *ālaya-vijñāna*. Transcendental phenomenology focuses on the study of human experience and the structure of consciousness. The consciousness structure in Husserl's transcendental phenomenology includes intentionality and immanent temporality. Intentionality goes through three stages (intentionality as simply reference to an object, as correlation between noesis and noema, and as constitution) in the cognitive experience. Intentionality is the directedness, aboutness, or reference of mental states. Intentionality is sometimes seen as equivalent to what is called "mental representation". ("transcendental phenomenology" Stanford encyclopedia) I align these three stages with the three levels of evolving consciousness in cognition from Yogācāra, which include *ālaya-vijñāna*, *māna-vijñāna* and the five sensory and the mind consciousnesses respectively, to do a comparative study.

In the first stage of intentionality in Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, *epoche* as a phenomenological reduction transforms an empirically transcendent object into an immanent object. This immanent object correlates with the presentational act of consciousness. In Husserl's terminology, within brackets, transcendence is transformed into the *noematic* correlated of the noetic act. intentionality is reformulated as the correlation between the

intentional act and the intentional object, or *noesis* and *noema*. Because of the *epoche*, consciousness is stripped of its mundane nature. Only when the natural attitude is bracketed and suspended can the intentional nature of consciousness be revealed, free from the causal explanation of consciousness when it is deemed as part of the world. This is roughly Husserl's transcendental consciousness. The second stage is the of intentionality as correlation between *noesis* and *noema*. *Noetic-noematic* schema represents the connection between an individual and the world. '*noesis*' refers to the act of consciousness itself, like the process of perceiving such as feeling, thinking, remembering, or judging ...", while '*noema*' refers to the object as it is intended by that act of consciousness. It is through the *noema* that the intentional act is related to its intended object. This stage is the cognitive process with subject-object oriented analysis. The third stage is the constitution from the correlation between *noesis* and *noema*. It is the conceptualization of intentionality. Under this constitution, an empirical object is transformed into a meaning when the natural attitude is stripped away by *epoche*.

These three stages share some similarities with the three natures of Yogācāra in corresponding to the three levels of consciousness evolution. The first stage is with the True nature without any conceptualization; the second stage is the other-dependent nature, and the last stage is the imagined nature. The Three natures of Yogācāra will be discussed in next section.

Consciousness in Husserl's transcendental phenomenology is established on subject-object relationship. The transcendental ego represents the subject, and the object is the external world. What connects the transcendental ego with the external world is the directness of consciousness from the transcendental ego (Jiang 212). Husserl's transcendental phenomenology can refer to a form of transcendental realism. Yogācāra, on the other hand,

with idealism as its epistemological interpretation, *ākaras* are internal objects arise from the sensory consciousnesses which arise from the *ālaya-vijñāna*.

In Yogācāra's transcendental phenomenology, *ālaya-vijñāna* is the consciousness structured in multi-dimensions such that different realms of existence arise from this core of non-existence.

ālaya-vijñāna is the intemporal and spaceless consciousness and seeds (analogically) arising from this substratum of consciousness are conditioned and manifested in different realms.

Each realm consists of the three natures of existence with *ālaya-vijñāna* as the substratum of consciousness. According to Nagao, these three natures make up the world as one and the same, not separately. There may be different worlds such as the world of human beings, the world of animals or heavens, but the three natures are the same. These three natures are the substratum of any of the manifestation of these worlds. It is the mind that brings about the arising of each of these different worlds. (Nagao 62)

Ālaya-vijñāna is both the cause and the effect in the principle of dependent origination. In terms of effect, *ālaya-vijñāna* is the fruit (*phala*) of seeds of past actions etc., from either good or bad deeds done in the past. The fruits assume many forms of existence and the entry into different realms of existence for reincarnation. In terms of cause, *ālaya-vijñāna* is called 'seed consciousness'. It is capable of holding firmly and retaining the *bījas* of all dharmas, without allowing them to be lost. (CWSL 105-106)

Māna-vijñāna is less discussed in modern scholarship on Buddhism but is well scrutinized in Triṃśikā and Xuan Zang's CWSL. The *māna-vijñāna* is the consciousness that cogitates in the process of the evolving consciousness. It manifests itself, with the *ālaya-vijñāna* as its basis and

support, and takes that consciousness as its object generating a sense of 'self'. The five sensory and mind consciousnesses perceive and discriminate between objects. The five sensory consciousnesses manifest themselves in accordance with various causes and conditions. the sixth consciousness (*mano-vijñāna*) always manifests itself. The six consciousnesses manifest themselves through a cognitive process in what seem to be two divisions: 1. Perception (*darśana-bhaga*) and 2. the object of perception (*nimitta-bhaga*). (Wei Tat *Triṃśikā*) This model is the basic epistemological model of the Yogācāra school.

3.2.3 The Three Natures of Existence

The doctrinal Three Natures theory endows the basic epistemological model with the ontological status. Thus, the *ālaya-vijñāna* is identified as consummated nature (*pariṇipanna-svabhāva*), the *māna-vijñāna* as other-dependent nature (*paratantra-svabhāva*) and the other six consciousnesses as imagined nature (*parikalpita-svabhāva*). *Svabhāva* means 'self-nature' or 'self-reality' or 'self-substance' in some form of knowledge. The imagined nature is the first form of knowledge referring to the 'constructed' or 'imagined' mental phenomena. The nature is dualistic in terms of reality, and it is structured in the form of dharmas that are perceived as object and subject such as mental and physical dharmas, this and that, self and others, etc....

This is where conceptualization, ideation and discrimination take place with the mechanisms of linguistic actualization. It is where constructed nature appears when they are only perception, as the *Mahāyānasamgraha* and its commentaries explained (Williams 83). The perception and the perceived object form the realm of subject-object duality. The dualistic reality is said to be wrongly perceived as real with permanent essences. They are mere illusions and *empty* of essences. (Harvey 135) The imagined objects have, therefore, no objective reality. (CWSL 623)

The 'other-dependent' nature is the level of relative reality in the form of the flow of changing mental phenomena, arising dependently on one another according to the principle of dependent origination. (Harvey 135) It is a process that generates the subject/object duality in the imagined nature in terms of mental phenomena. The 'other-dependent' nature is also empty of an inherent 'nature'.

The consummated nature is the 'suchness' or 'Thusness' nature, the true nature of all mental phenomena which can be discovered in meditation (Williams 91). This level of nature is completely free of all false imagination and attachment (Nagao 63); it is the complete absence of dependent nature and conceptualization, which is known as enlightenment (Williams 91). It is also in this level of nature that something remains as the "existence of non-existence". In Chinese Buddhism it is known as "Truly empty [hence] unfathomable existence."¹⁷ (Nagao 54).

3.2.4 The Three Non-Natures of Non-existence

The Three Non-Natures of Non-existence are established to reveal the empty nature of the three natures of existence mentioned earlier. The term 'non-nature' refers to the unsubstantial nature of the phenomenal experiences perceived from the sensory and mind consciousnesses, and mental dharmas generated from *māna-vijñāna*, for they lack self-nature (*svabhāva*). The concept of Emptiness has been the central doctrine in Buddhism since its inception. In early Buddhism, emptiness refers to *anattā* (empty of self), a meditative place or empty states of meditative experiences and practices (Mun-keat 9-10). It is also described as the practice of concentration and awareness to attain enlightenment and to leave the existential suffering of

¹⁷ 真空妙有

the samsara. There is a semantic change of the term ‘emptiness’ in *Mādhyamaka* and *Yogācāra* of Mahayana.

Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) is the central doctrine of the *Mādhyamaka*. Nāgārjuna, founder of the *Mādhyamaka* school, summed up his concept of emptiness in verse 18 in MMK,

That which is dependent origination,
Is explained to be emptiness.
That being a dependent designation,
Is itself the middle way.

That is, emptiness is the result of dependent origination. It is a relative emptiness since the conditioned reality arise dependently from the Absolute reality that creates the Two Truths reality. To illustrate this relativity of all existences, the four paradoxical groups of negations, “neither production nor extinction, neither externalism nor annihilationism, neither unity nor diversity, and neither coming nor going”¹⁸ (MMK 1.1) is established. These negations can be referenced in the *Prajñāpāramitā Heart Sūtras*, “all dharmas have the marks of emptiness: neither production nor extinction; neither defiled nor pure; neither increasing nor diminishing,”¹⁹ or from the Great *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* emptiness is described as, “neither production nor extinction, neither defiled nor pure, neither externalism nor annihilationism, neither unity nor diversity, neither coming nor going, and neither increasing nor diminishing.”²⁰

While emptiness is the relative non-existence from paradoxical negations in *Mādhyamaka*, the connotation of emptiness in the three ‘non-natures’ theory emphasizes on the unsubstantiality of all mental phenomena, the process of dependent origination and the non-dualistic nature of

¹⁸ T1564.1: “不生亦不滅 不常亦不斷 不一亦不異 不來亦不出”

¹⁹ T0251: “舍利子，是諸法空相：不生、不滅；不垢、不淨；不增、不減”

²⁰ T0220.296: “…不生不滅、不染不淨、不常不斷、不一不異、不來不去、不入不出、不增不減。”

ālaya-vijñāna. First, phenomenal manifestations from sensory and mind consciousnesses with imagine nature are products from imagination (Triṃśikā cxxxv); they are unsubstantial as the flowers in the air (SMC 45). Secondly, cogitation with other-dependent nature is illusory since it is the result of discrimination (Triṃśikā cxxxv). The arising and diminishing of the cognitive process is based on the causes and conditions. When the causes and conditions are absence, the process ends. Finally, *ālaya-vijñāna* is the Absolute reality when all seeds are dormant; it is the pure form of consciousness. When thoughts arise from *ālaya-vijñāna*, it is a conscious reality interacting with the internal and external worlds.

The following table is a glance of the relationship among the eight consciousnesses in terms of and their nature, knowledge and consciousness evolution (*parinama*).

Table 3.1 – Eight Consciousnesses

	Ālaya-vijñāna	Māna-vijñāna	Five sensory and the mind consciousnesses
Type of pariṇāma	Maturation of seeds	Cogitation	Phenomenal manifestation
Three natures of existence	Consummated nature	Other-dependent nature	Imagined nature
Three natures of Non-existence	Non-existence as regards of Supreme Truth	non-existence as regards dependent origination from discrimination	non-existence of characteristics from imagination
Dharma empty/existence	Both empty and existence	Empty	empty
Knowledge	Perfect True Knowledge	Analytical knowledge	Imagined knowledge
Dharma of moral species	non-defiled-non-defined	Defiled-non-defined	Good, bad, and neither good nor bad

3.3 Dharma Taxonomy in Yogācāra

Consciousness-only (vijñaptimātra) is the core philosophy in Yogacara emphasizing the role of consciousness in shaping the reality. To Yogacaras, consciousness is the building blocks of the experiential reality. They restructured the one-dimensional Abhidharma's epistemological model into a multi-layers model, with store consciousness (*ālāya-vijñāna*) as the fundamental layer of consciousness that gives rise of other seven consciousnesses. To accommodate this change, Vasubandhu expanded the seventy-five dharmas from the Sarvāstivada school to one hundred dharmas and reclassified the world of existence into five categories in his *Mahāyāna-śatadharma-prakāśamukha-śāstra* (The Sastra on The Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas):

1. Eight Mind Dharmas
2. Fifty-one Mental Functions Dharmas
3. Eleven Form Dharmas
4. Twenty-four Activities Dharmas Not Interactive with the Mind
5. Six Unconditioned Dharmas

The eight consciousnesses from the *citta-dharma* category, the eleven form dharmas and the four general mental functions of the *caitasika-dharma* category constitute to the basis of the conscious mind where cognition takes place. The eight consciousnesses include:

- *Pravṛtti-vijñānas* - five sensory consciousnesses of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body.
- *Mano-vijñāna* - the 6th consciousness as the conscious mind.
- *Manas-vijñāna* - the 7th consciousness of subconscious mind.
- *Ālāya-vijñāna* - the eighth consciousness of the repository consciousnesses.

The first five sensory consciousnesses arise accordingly when senses contact with the external objects to start the cognitive process. The sixth consciousness provides knowledge of the external world. According to the Lankavatara Sutra, the five sensory consciousnesses are

perceiving consciousnesses, the 6th and 7th consciousnesses are object-projecting consciousnesses which are karmic in nature, and the eighth consciousness is the true consciousness or the repository consciousnesses where karmic seeds are stored. Habit-energy from the ripen seeds in the eighth consciousness is the cause of the arising of the form dharmas and other seven consciousnesses in a dependent relationship, such as consciousnesses depend on the physical sensory faculties of eye, ear, nose, tongue and body to exist. What support the process of dependent arising, and the continuity of the process are the projections of the objects of consciousness perceived by the mind (Red Pine 79).

Diagram 3.1 - Eight Consciousnesses

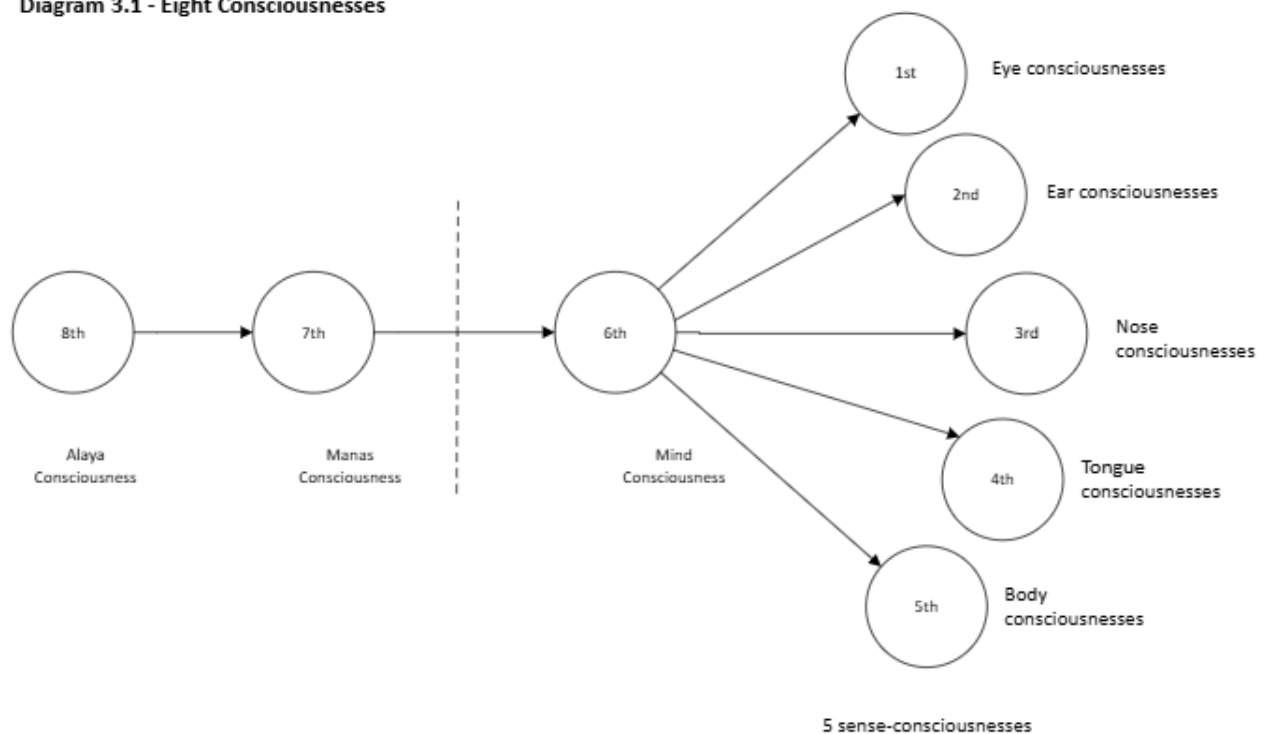


Table 3.2 – Yogacara's 100 dharmas

I. The Eight Consciousnesses Citta-dharma		
1	Seeing-consciousness	cakṣur-vijñāna
2	Hearing-consciousness	śrotra-vijñāna
3	Smelling-consciousness	ghrāṇa-vijñāna
4	Tasting-consciousness	jihvā-vijñāna
5	kinetic consciousness	kāya-vijñāna
6	Empiric-consciousness	mano-vijñāna
7	Focusing	manas
8	Warehouse consciousness	ālaya-vijñāna

II. Mental Associates caitta, caitasika-dharma/ Citta-samprayukta-dharma		
A. Always-active Sarvatraga		
9	Sensory contact	sparśa
10	Pleasure/pain/neutral	vedanā
11	Volition	cetanā
12	Associative-thinking	saṃjñā
13	Attention	manaskāra
B. Specific Vīṇiyata		
14	Desire	chanda
15	Confident Resolve	adhimokṣa
16	Memory/mindfulness	smṛti
17	Meditative concentration	saṃādhi
18	Discernment	prajñā
C. Advantageous Kuśala		
19	Faith/trust	śraddhā
20	[inner] Shame	hrī
21	Embarrassment	apatrāpya
22	Lack of Greed	alobha
23	Lack of Hatred	adveṣa
24	Lack of Misconception	amoha
25	Vigor	vīrya
26	Serenity	praśrabdhi
27	Carefulness	apramāda
28	Equanimity	upekṣa
29	Non-harmfulness	ahiṃsā
D. Mental Disturbances Kleśa		
30	Appropriational intent	raga
31	Aversion	pratigha
32	Stupidity	mūḍhi
33	Arrogance	māna
34	Doubt	vicikitsā
35	Perspectivalty	drṣṭi

E. Secondary Mental Disturbances.Upakleśa		
36	Anger	krodha
37	Enmity	upanāha
38	Resist recognizing own faults	mrakṣa
39	[verbal] maliciousness	pradāsa
40	Envy	īrasyā
41	Selfishness	mātsarya
42	Deceit	māyā
43	Guile	śāṭhya
44	Harmfulness	vihiṃsā
45	Conceit	māda
46	Shamelessness	āhrīkya
47	Non-embarrassment	anapatrāpya
48	Restlessness	auddhatya
49	Mental fogginess	styāna
50	Lack of Faith/trust	āśraddhya
51	Lethargic negligence	kausīdya
52	Carelessness	pramāda
53	Forgetfulness	muṣṭitasmr̥tītā
54	Distraction	vikṣepa
55	Lack of [self]Awareness	asamprajanya
F. Indeterminate Aniyata		
56	Remorse	kaukr̥tya
57	Torpor	middha
58	Initial mental application	vitarka
59	[subsequent] Discursive Thought	vicāra

III. Form Rūpa-dharma		
60	Eye	cakṣus
61	Ear	śrotra
62	Nose	ghrāṇa
63	Tongue	jihvā
64	Body	kāya
65	[visible] form	rūpa
66	Sound	śabda
67	Smell	gandha
68	Taste	rasa
69	Touch	spraṣṭavya
70	'Formal' Thought-objects	dharmāyatānikāni rūpāni

Table 3.2 – Yogacara’s 100 dharmas (continue...)

IV. Embodied-conditioning Not Directly [perceived] by Citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma		
71	(karmic) Accrual	prāpti
72	Life-force	jīvitendriya
73	Commonalities by species	nikāya-sabhāga
74	Differentiation of species	visabhāga
75	Attainment of Thoughtlessness	asaṃjñi-samāpatti
76	Attainment of Cessation	nirodha-samāpatti
77	[realm of] Thoughtless [beings]	āsaṃjñika
78	'Name' body	nāma-kāya
79	'Predicate' body	pada-kāya
80	'Utterance' body	vyañjana-kāya
81	Birth/arising	jāti
82	Continuity/abiding	sthiti
83	Aging/decaying	jarā
84	Impermanence	anityatā
85	Systematic Operation	pravṛtti
86	Determinant (karmic) Differences	pratiniyama
87	Unifying	yoga

88	Speed	jāva
89	Seriality	anukrama
90	Area (space)	deśa
91	Time	kāla
92	Number/ calculation	saṃkhyā
93	Synthesis	sāmagrī
94	Otherwiseness	anyathātva

V. Unconditioned Dharmas Asaṃskṛta-dharmas		
95	Spatiality	ākāśa
96	Cessation through Understanding	pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha
97	Cessation without Understanding	apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha
98	'Motionless' Cessation	āniñjya
99	Cessation of Associative thinking and Pleasure/pain	saṃjñā-vedayita-nirodha
100	Ipseity	tathatā

100 Dharmas : <http://www.acmuller.net/yogacara/outlines/100dharmas.html>

3.4 Epistemological Model

The Yogācāra epistemological model is a sophisticated framework centered on the concept of *vijñāna-pariṇāma*, or transformation of consciousness. The term *pariṇāma* is the Sanskrit word for 'evolution', 'transformation' or 'manifestation'. *Vijñāna-pariṇāma* refers to the internal consciousness that produces manifestations of the 'self' and the dharmas of the external world (CWSL 505). It encapsulates the dynamic and transformative nature of consciousness. In the sphere of *Vijñānapṛthivī* (consciousness-only), the term '*vijñāna*' refers to the consciousness

capable to evolve and manifest as the cognizer. In all the manifestations, *vijñapti* is the cognitive representation being cognizable. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 24n4)

The concept of *vijñāna-parinama* is unique in Yogācāra. The term of *pariṇāma* can be found from very early times in various Buddhist texts, but the compound word *Vijñāna-pariṇāma* cannot be found in either Maitreya's or Asaṅga's thoughts. Therefore, Vasubandhu was the one who invented this compound term (Ueda 157) and developed its philosophy. In Vasubandhu's seminal work, *Triṃśikā* (Thirty Verses), he elucidated the concept of *vijñāna-pariṇāma* as the evolution of consciousness (or consciousness transformation). According to Vasubandhu, there are three distinct levels of this evolutionary process within the eight consciousnesses:

1. *Ālaya-vijñāna* – the maturation of previous actions or karmas from seeds at various times.
2. *Manas-vijñāna* – the consciousness that cogitates
3. *Indriya-vijñāna* and *mano-vijñāna* - evolving consciousness that perceives and discriminates between spheres of objects.

The term 'evolving' is applied to the eight consciousnesses because they are all capable of evolving into two functional divisions (*bhāgas*): the perceived division (*nimitta-bhaga*) with image and perception and the perceiving division (*darśana-bhaga*)^{21 22} of the object perceived. The perceiving division manifested is termed 'discrimination' (*vikalpa*), because it apprehends the perceived division. The perceived division manifested is termed 'that which is discriminated', because it is apprehended by the perceiving division. (CWSL 503)

²¹ Shi Ruyuan translated 見分 to svābhāsas. In the CWSL English version, Wei Tat translated 見分 to darśana-bhaga.

²² 見分. This is also called 能緣 (the subject which cognizes the object).

Corresponding to their associated consciousness, *darśana-bhaga* as cognizer and *nimitta-bhaga*²³ as cognized arise from each of these consciousness transformations. During the cognitive process, *darśana-bhaga* is the cognitive function such as seeing the form of an object, and *nimitta-bhaga* is the seen aspect of the cognition. *Nimitta-bhaga* generally means 'object of perception', and it also refers to *ākāras*, the image or representations in the mind that arise through the interactions of consciousness.

The first consciousness transformation starts from the *ālaya-vijñāna*, the foundational ground where seeds mature. These karmic seeds are accumulated through intentional actions and experiences of the past, and they ripen into future experiences and forms of existence, shaping the individual's continuous cycle of rebirth and current conscious experiences. The *darśana-bhaga* and *nimitta-bhaga* arise from *ālaya-vijñāna* are extremely subtle that considered inconceivable and ineffable.

The second evolving consciousness is the *mana-vijñāna*. This evolving consciousness manifests itself with the *ālaya-vijñāna* as its basis and support and takes that consciousness as its object. *mana-vijñāna* produces its own *nimitta-bhaga* and *darśana-bhaga*, and at the same time *darśana-bhaga* takes *nimitta-bhaga* as its 'self'. The *mana-vijñāna* has the nature and character of cogitation or intellection. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 291-292)

The third consciousness transformation involves six consciousnesses with *nimitta-bhaga* and *darśana-bhaga* arising from the associated consciousness. In contact with the external objects, *nimitta-bhaga* of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch arise from the five sensory

²³ Shi Ruyuan translated 相分 to *viṣayābhāsas* in his work. It is called *nimitta-bhaga* in CWSL translated by Wei Tat.

consciousnesses accordingly, and perception arises from the sense-centre consciousness (*manas-vijñāna*) coordinating the percepts derived from the five senses. (CWSL 343)

As discussed in chapter two, Sautrāntika and Yogācāra have taken the *sākāra-jñānavāda* approach that they consider perception to be mediated by a representational form, while Sarvāstivāda has taken the *nirākāravāda* approach holding that cognition can access objects directly without form. In Yogācāra, the substantiality of *bhagas* further determines the representation theory of *sākāra-jñānavāda*²⁴ or of *Nirākāra-jñānavāda*,²⁵ and the primary distinction between the theories of *Sākāra-jñānavāda* and *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* in Yogācāra lies in the epistemological stance on the substantiality of the *bhagas*.

With the introduction of the *bhagas* in perception, there have been debates whether the *darśana-bhaga* and *nimitta-bhaga* arise with ‘Other-dependent’ (*paratantra-svabhāva*) of *mana-vijñāna* or the imagined nature (*parikalpita-svabhāva*) of the *indriyas* and *mano-vijñānas*. *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* is a form of idealism that upholds the concept of the unsubstantiality of the two *bhagas* for they arise and manifest into imagined knowledge in cognition. *Sākāra-jñānavāda*, on the other hand, is a form of idealism that considers the two *bhagas* substantial and they arise with the other-dependent knowledge in cogitation. (Shi Ruyuan Synopsis 27-28)

In the three levels of consciousness manifestation, the classification of *Sākāra-jñānavāda* and *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* based on the substantiality of *bhagas* has led to four different views by Sthiramati, Nanda, Dignana and Dharmapāla²⁶. Sthiramati believed *darśana-bhaga* and

²⁴ 有相唯識

²⁵ 無相唯識

²⁶ . 識所變現之四家之說: 難、陳、護, 一、二、三、四。

nimitta-bhaga arise with imagined consciousness in the cognitive transformation, which are considered unsubstantial, but consciousness of both *bhagas* are substantial and real; his view is *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* and dubbed ‘Single *Bhaga*’²⁷ because since the consciousness of the *bhagas* are real, scholars considered the consciousness itself the single *svasamvitti-bhaga*²⁸ that gives rise to the other two *bhagas* (Shi Ruyuan Analysis 23). Asaṅga took the similar *Nirākāra-jñānavāda* view claiming *darśana-bhaga* and *nimitta-bhaga* are other-dependent consciousnesses arising from *bijas*, but they fall into the imagined realm in cognition (Shi Ruyuan Analysis 27-28). Nanda’s view is *Sākāra-jñānavāda* since from his view, the “two *bhagas*”²⁹ arise from the ‘other-dependent’ nature. Dignāna added the third *bhaga* (*svasamvitti-bhaga*) into the cognitive structure. Like Sthiramati’s view, *darśana-bhaga* and *nimitta-bhaga* arise from the *svasamvitti-bhaga* in the associated consciousness, and all “three *bhagas*” are substantial and real. Dharmapāla extended Dignāna’s “three *Bhagas*”³⁰ theory to “four *bhagas*”³¹ theory by adding *svasamvitti-samvitti-bhaga* (self-corroboratory aspect) into the cognitive structure; the *svasamvitti-bhaga* arises from the *svasamvitti-samvitti-bhaga*, which is characterized by the quality of direct or sense inference (CWSL 143). The theories of Dignāna and Dharmapāla are considered *Sākāra-jñānavāda*.

Among the four *bhagas*, the *nimitta-bhaga* and *darśana-bhaga* are external such as mental image formed from taking the perceived object, i.e., the mental vision. Both *svasamvitti-bhaga* and *svasamvitti-samvitti-bhaga* are internal. The *svasamvitti-bhaga* added in the cognitive structure

²⁷ 安慧一分說

²⁸ 自証分

²⁹ 難陀二分說

³⁰ 陳那三分說

³¹ 護法四分說

by Dignāga can take both the *darśana-bhaga* and the *svasamvitti-samvitti-bhaga* as its objects. However, the *svasamvitti-samvitti-bhaga* can only take *svasamvitti-bhaga* as its object. (CWSL 143)

3.5 Ākāra

Ālaya-vijñāna plays a significant role in the arising of *ākāras* in cognition. In CWSL, Vasubandhu referred *ākāra* to the 'mode of activity' of *ālaya-vijñāna* in perception or discrimination (*vijnapti*), and the object of perception (*alambana*) of the *ālaya-vijñāna* to its 'place' (*sthana*) and 'what it holds and receives' (*upadi*). *Sthana* is the receptacle world, a place that supports all living beings. *Upadi* include the *bijas* in terms of its perfuming influence (*Vasana*), image (*nimitta*), name (*nama*) and discriminating influence (*vikalpavāsana*) in mental activities, and the body with its sense organs as the physical support. Both the *upadi* and the *sthana* are the objects of perception of the *Ālaya-vijñāna*, not the external object since external object is not real and unsubstantial. (CWSL 137)

As discussed in the 'Yogācāra epistemological model' section, *nimitta-bhaga* and *Darśana-bhaga* dependently arise from the evolving consciousness. Two kinds of manifestation are identified from the evolving consciousness:

- manifestation produced by causes and conditions - The dharmas which result from this manifestation necessarily possess reality and activity.
- manifestation produced by an act of attention and ideation (*vikalpa* and *manaskera*) - result from the second are simply object of perception or awareness.

In the first consciousness evolution, the maturing consciousness from causes and conditions develops into what appears to be a receptacle world, colour, etc. The *Vipaka-vijñāna*, by the force of the maturing of its common *bijas* manifests itself as the visible bodily basis (for the

sense faculties). In the second and third consciousness evolutions, the sensory and mind consciousnesses perceive and discriminate between spheres of objects. For Yogācāra, since external objects are non-existent, the object of consciousness such as the mental image is the *nimitta-bhaga*, while the activity mode (*ākāra*) of consciousness such as the act of consciousness that perceives the image is the *Darsana-bhaga*. In the process of transformation, the ‘image’ aspect (*nimitta-bhaga*) of dharmas developed themselves to find its external object (*ālambana*) with its mode of activity (*ākāra*). The ‘perception’ aspect, the *Darśana-bhaga* of the *Ālaya-vijñāna* developed through vijñapti establishing the relation between perception and its object from the maturing consciousness (*vipaka-vijñāna*). With *svasamvitti-bhaga*, fruit of the act of perception, the knowledge or self-awareness that perception of the image takes place. (CWSL 139-141) The mental object is hence linguistically endowed with names from verbal knowledge.

The following three figures illustrate the structure of cognition with *ākāra* mediation in three different schools:

Diagram 3.2 - Sarvāstivāda



Diagram 3.3 - Sautrāntika

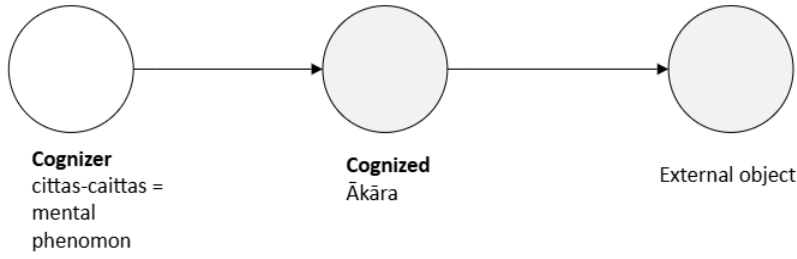
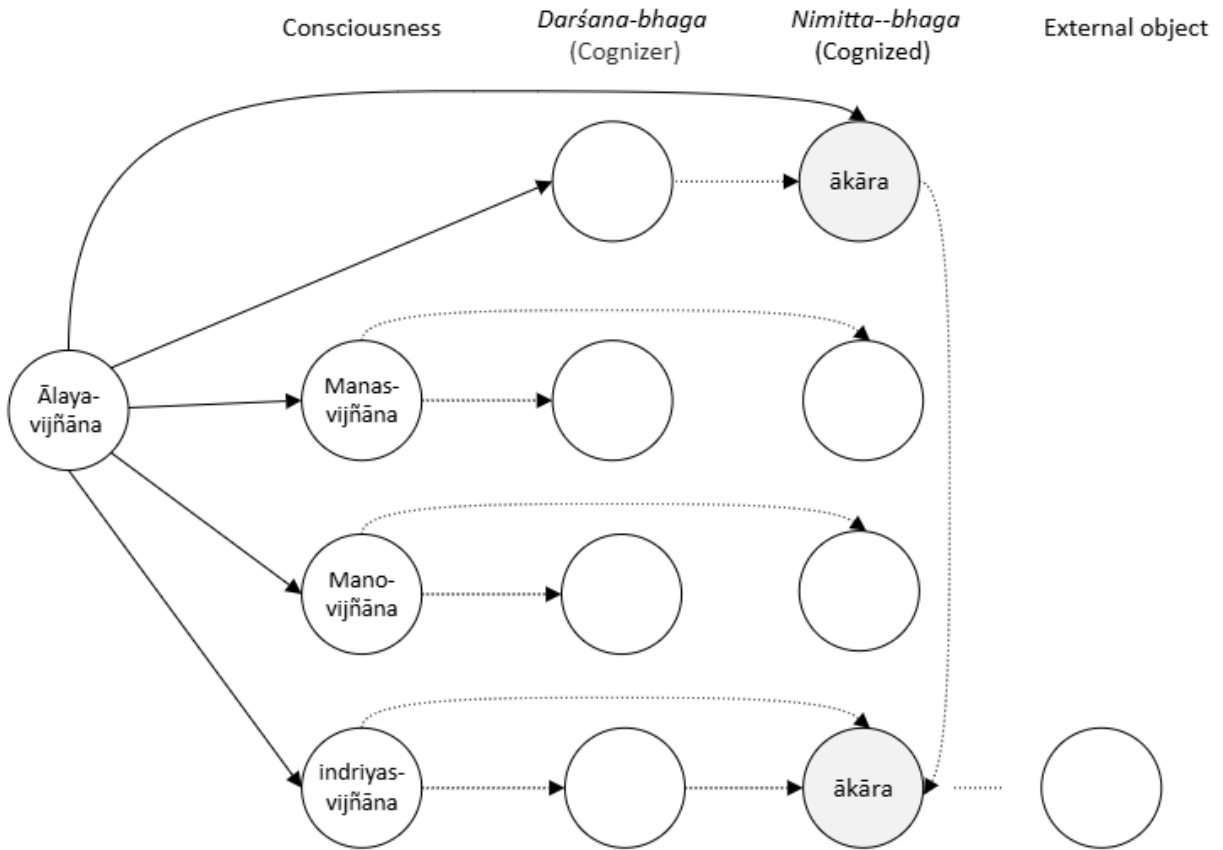


Diagram 3.4 - Yogācāra



3.6 Ālaya-vijñāna Dependent Origination

The concept of *ālaya-vijñāna* dependent origination is an important Yogācāra doctrine on resolving the karmic transmigration in the process of reincarnation and redefining the epistemic soteriology. In terms of reincarnation, the Sarvastivādins have been debating on how karma is

transmigrated from one life to the next in continuity without a 'self'. Base Skandha and base consciousness (similar concept of the *ālaya-vijñāna*) have been postulated as the agents for the continuity in reincarnation. Their theories were sketchy in the early debates. In Yogācāra, with the eight-consciousnesses doctrine the concept of *ālaya-vijñāna* is fully developed as the core foundation for dependent arising of all dharmas and for the reincarnation in *saṃsāra* and liberation to end suffering.

The all dharmas dependent origination can be classified into external and internal *ālaya-vijñāna* dependent originations. The external dependent origination includes consciousness evolutions that manifest myriads of dharma such as from atoms to the rivers to the mountains, etc. as the objective external objects. The internal dependent origination is the *ālaya-vijñāna* evolution that gives arise of individual sentient being in different realms based on the karmic seeds planted or perfumed in the past. The arising of the human five skandhas form an individual with a subjective self while the five senses are stimuli to interact with the objective external world. (Fa Fang 102-103) Cognition is a dependent arising as consciousness evolution within the conscious mind with which knowledge is acquired through senses.

According to Yogācāra, habit perfuming is the cause of *ālaya-vijñāna* dependent origination. Without the habit perfuming, there will be no seed produced in the *ālaya-vijñāna*, and there will be no consciousness evolution and manifestation. The whole process of perfuming is a karmic process that creates and nourishes seeds. As said in CWSL,

“The perfumable is that consciousness in which *bījas* can be created or nourished. The perfumer is that dharma which creates or nourishes *bījas*. Given the 'perfumable' and a 'perfumer', there is 'perfuming' (*vasana*), i.e., creation or nourishment of *bījas*.” (CWSL 129-130)

Besides the habit perfuming, for consciousness evolution from seeds to manifest requires conditions for the causality to happen. The four conditions are the like of Sarvāstivāda's four conditions:

1. Condition qua cause
2. equal-immediate condition
3. condition qua object
4. condition of dominance.

Epistemologically, as in the Sarvāstivādin tradition, the four conditions (*pratyaya*) and the six causes (*hetu*), because of the intrinsic natures, the conditioned dharmas of the sensory and the mind consciousnesses, (discussed in chapter 2) are considered the major causal forces that bring about the cognitive activities in interacting with the internal or external epistemic objects (Dharmajoti 191). The first five causes constitute the condition qua cause and efficient cause constitutes the other three conditions (equal-immediate condition, condition qua object and condition of dominance). The condition qua cause in Sarvāstivāda can be comparable to the seed of the *ālaya-vijñāna* in Yogācāra (Dharmajoti 196). In the case of visual cognition, the assembled causes and conditions give rise to the visual consciousness in Sarvāstivāda. Unlike the Sarvāstivāda, in Yogācāra visual consciousness is a conceptual consciousness which is like a wave in movement from the ocean where ocean water presents the *ālaya-vijñāna*. The epistemic objects are causes like wind blowing onto the water causing waves of conceptual consciousness. As in the case of visual consciousness, the same applies to hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and mind consciousnesses.

Like the Theravada school, Sarvāstivāda follows the causal model of "When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises," in continuing but discrete moments running in one direction, while Yogācāra's causal model is dynamic as the karmic object-projecting

consciousnesses interacting with the repository consciousness in both ways, as the Lankavatara sutra states that,

“If the intrinsic aspect of our repository consciousness and the unfolding aspect of consciousness were separate, the repository consciousness could not be its cause.” (Red Pine p.80)

According to the Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra the three natures in association with the evolving consciousness is possible to arise from the *ālaya-vijñāna* of the consummated nature during a single moment simultaneously. Since the three natures evolve simultaneously in the five consciousnesses, then mental consciousness will be of the same nature as the associated consciousness when the object is cognized. All mental phenomena arising from *ālaya-vijñāna* consist of both imagined and other-dependent natures from the perceived and object-projecting consciousnesses. The five sensory consciousnesses manifest themselves from *ālaya-vijñāna* in accordance with various causes and conditions in the evolution of consciousness. The mind consciousness always manifests itself. (Three Texts 156-157) The other-dependent nature aligns with the principle of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), which signifies the interdependent origination of the mental phenomena in cognition with causes and conditions.

One of the characteristics of seeds is the dependency on different kinds of causes and conditions that enable the producing of visual and other kinds of consciousness.

Therefore, the perceived, object-projecting and repository consciousnesses function as one in a cyclical and dynamic environment of the conscious mind. Perceiving consciousness functions like a clear mirror in which mental representations appear, and they are the result of imperceptible habit-energy and transformations as the recipient of karma. The object-

projecting consciousness is the result of grasping different phenomena and creating karma. The 7th consciousness (*manas- vijñāna*) of the object-projecting consciousness mistakenly conceives itself as a self and generates a split between the self as the subject and the various other phenomena as objects and takes over the first six types of consciousnesses (Westerhoff Golden Age 180). The dichotomic and dualistic concepts of subject and object are characteristics of the conditioned process of dependent arising, which Yogācāra school considers the erroneous or invalid knowledge. (Westerhoff Golden Age 180).

Cognition at the perceived consciousness level projects false concepts onto reality. In Mahāyānasamgraha, Asaṅga called this mental manifestation (or evolving consciousness) the entry into the realm of 'Concept-only' (*vijñaptimātratā*). This is the realm of duality pertaining to image and vision, sound and hearing, ect., appearing in a dichotomic reality of object and subject of consciousness that arise simultaneously. These images and sounds are illusions and conceptually fabricated without any essence or self-nature. It is akin to seeing a rope as a snake in the dark. (MSG 221) According to Yogācāra, these mental phenomena are misapprehended due to ignorance and erroneous mental constructs and are marks of existence attached to terminologies linguistically and semantically.

Conclusion

The outcome of this study has shown that knowledge acquired from cognition is the result of the self-creation of mental dharmas in a chain of causal processes of dependent origination. However, the causal model of both schools of Sarvāstivāda and Yogācāra differed based on the influence of the school's view of reality and the epistemological model which built upon their unique dharma taxonomies. The Sarvāstivāda's causal model, "When this exists, that comes to be", is static and linear in the premise that all dharmas are real existents being cognizers and cognizables at the same time with intrinsic values. Cognition is a stream of self-producing *cittas* and *caitasikas* as a stream of consciousness in discrete moments, powered by different types of causes and conditions. Its objects are substantial and real as the *cittas* and *caitasikas* themselves.

Their epistemological analysis of Sarvāstivāda focused on the objective actualities of the dharmas that lie behind the conceptual constructs in the cognitive process. Therefore, mental dharmas of mind (*citta*) and its mental factors (*caitasikas*) were analyzed, investigated, and systematized. However, according to the Sautrāntika, there are several issues in this model in terms of continuity, whether it is the continuity in the theory of momentariness in cognition or the continuity in the theory of reincarnation. The emergence of Sautrāntika was a critique of the Sarvāstivāda school on these issues. The Seeds theory from the Sautrāntika and the concept of base consciousness from Mahāsāṃghika are antidotes to these shortcomings that foreshadowed the development of Yogācāra school. Apparently, with the advent of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the first century CE, Mahāyāna scriptures have augmented to the rise of the Yogācāra school.

Yogācāra school established a consciousness-based epistemological system that was built upon these Mahāyāna scriptures. Yogācāra investigated the mind in terms of consciousness instead of *cittas* and *caitasikas*. *Ālay-vijñāna* is the fundamental layer of all other seven consciousnesses. The eight consciousnesses doctrine and its epistemological model redefined the causal principle in the Yogācāra epistemology. Holding the idealistic view of reality that nothing outside of the mind exist, the 7th consciousness (*mānas-vijñāna*) is credited for creating the internal objects (*ākāras*), images of the external objects in the cognitive process. The three levels of *vijñāna-pariṇāma* (consciousness evolution) in cognition align with the three natures, and the three non-natures indicate that the three natures are unsubstantiated. During the cognitive process, associated consciousness evolves into two functional divisions (*bhāgas*): the perceived division (*nimitta-bhāga*) with image, and perception with the perceiving division (*darśana-bhāga*) of the object perceived. *Darśana-bhāga* is the cognizer and *nimitta-bhāga* is the cognized and the *ākāra* in Yogacara. These two *bhāgas* are self-created during the consciousness transformation.

In the Yogācāra's causal model, unlike the static and linear Sarvāstivāda causal model, the karmic object-projecting consciousnesses interact with the *Ālay-vijñāna* in both ways. The perceived, object-projecting (as *nimitta-bhāga* and *darśana-bhāga*) and *Ālay-vijñāna* function as one in a cyclical and dynamic environment of the conscious mind. In this case Yogācāra's epistemological model is also a self-learning model.

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