

Eight Consciousnesses

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The **Eight Consciousnesses** (Skt. *aṣṭa vijñānakāyāḥ*^[1]) is a classification developed in the tradition of the *Yogācāra* school of *Mahayana Buddhism*. They enumerate the five sense consciousnesses, supplemented by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), the **defiled mental consciousness** (*kliṣṭamanovijñāna*^[2]), and finally the fundamental **store-house consciousness**

(*ālayavijñāna*), which is the basis of the other seven.^[3] This eighth consciousness is said to store the impressions (*vāsanāh*) of previous experiences, which form the seeds (*bīja*) of future *karma* in this life and in the next after *rebirth*.

འཇགས་

This article contains [Tibetan script](#).
Without proper [rendering support](#), you may see very small fonts, misplaced vowels or missing conjuncts instead of [Tibetan characters](#).

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The eightfold network of primary consciousnesses

All surviving schools of Buddhist thought accept – “in common” – the existence of the first six primary consciousnesses (Sanskrit: *vi jñāna*, [Tibetan](#):

འཇགས་ཤེས་, [Wylie](#): *rnam-shes*).^[4] The internally coherent *Yogācāra* school associated

with [Maitreya](#), [Asaṅga](#), and [Vasubandhu](#), however, uniquely – or “uncommonly” – also posits the existence of two additional primary consciousnesses, *kliṣṭamanovijñāna* and *ālayavijñāna*, in order to explain the workings of *karma*.^[5] The first six of these primary consciousnesses comprise the five sensory faculties together with mental consciousness, which is counted as the sixth.^[6] According to Gareth Sparham,

The *ālaya-vijñāna* doctrine arose on the Indian subcontinent about one thousand years before Tsong kha pa. It gained its place in a distinctly *Yogācāra* system over a period of some three hundred years stretching from 100 to 400 C.E., culminating in the [Mahāyānasamgraha](#), a short text by Asaṅga (circa 350), setting out a systematic presentation of the *ālaya-vijñāna* doctrine developed over the previous centuries. It is the doctrine found in this text in particular that Tsong kha pa, in his *Ocean of Eloquence*, treats as having been revealed in toto by the Buddha and transmitted to suffering humanity through the *Yogācāra* founding saints (Tib. *shing rta srol byed*): Maitreya[–nātha], Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu.^[5]

While some noteworthy modern scholars of the [Gelug](#) tradition (which was founded by [Tsongkhapa](#)’s reforms to [Atisha](#)’s [Kadam](#) school) assert that the *ālayavijñāna* is posited only in the *Yogācāra* philosophical tenet system, all non-Gelug schools of Tibetan buddhism maintain that the *ālayavijñāna* is accepted by the various [Madhyamaka](#) schools, as well.^[7] The *Yogācāra* eightfold network of primary consciousnesses – [astavijñānāni](#) in Sanskrit (from compounding [asta](#), “eight”, with *vijñānāni*, the plural of *vijñāna* “consciousnesses”), or [Tibetan](#):

རྣམ་ཤེས་ཚྭ་བརྒྱུད་, [Wylie](#): *rnam-shes tshogs-brgyad* – is roughly sketched out in the following table.

The Eightfold Network of Primary Consciousnesses ^[4]							
Subgroups	Name ^[a] of Consciousness ^[b]				Associated Nonstatic Phenomena ^[c] in terms of Three Circles of Action ^[d]		
	English	Sanskrit	Tibetan	Chinese	Physical Form ^[e]	Type of Cognition ^[f]	Cognitive Sensor ^[g]
I. – VI. Each of these Six Common Consciousnesses – referred to in Sanskrit as	I. Eye Consciousness	<i>caṣṭsurvijñāna</i> ^[5]	ཀྱེ་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་ཤེས་, Tibetan མིག་གི་རྣམ་ཤེས་	眼識	Sight(s)	Seeing	Eyes

<i>pravṛttivijñānāni</i>^[15]^[9] – are posited on the basis of valid straightforward cognition,^[11] on any individual practitioner's part, of sensory data input experienced solely by means of their bodily sense faculties. The derivation of this particular dual classification <i>schema</i> for these first six, so-called "common" consciousnesses has its origins in the first four Nikāyas of the Sutta Pitaka – the second division of the Tipitaka in the Pali Canon – as first committed to writing during the Theravada school's fourth council at Sri Lanka in 83 (BCE).^[17] Both individually and collectively: these first six, so-called "common" consciousnesses are posited – in common – by all surviving buddhist tenet systems.			Wylie: <i>mig-gi rnam-shes</i>				
	II. Ear Consciousness	<i>śrotravijñāna</i> ^[5]	འ Tibetan : མྱེད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་ ; Wylie: <i>rna' i rnam-shes</i>	耳識	Sound (s)	Hearing	Ears
	III. Nose Consciousness	<i>ghrāṇavijñāna</i> ^[18]	འ Tibetan : མྱེད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་ ; Wylie: <i>sna' i rnam-shes</i>	鼻識	Smell (s)	Smell	Nose
	IV. Tongue Consciousness	<i>jihvāvijñāna</i> ^[19]	ེ Tibetan : མྱེད་ཀྱི་ཤེས་ ; Wylie: <i>lce' i rnam-shes</i>	舌識	Taste (s)	Taste	Tongue
	V. Body Consciousness	<i>kāyavijñāna</i> ^[20] ₁	ལ Tibetan : ལུས་ཀྱི་ཤེས་ ; Wylie: <i>lce' i rnam-shes</i>	身識	Feeling (s)	Touch	Body

			<i>lus-kyi rnam- shes</i>				
	VI. Mental Conscious- ness ^[k]	<i>manovi jñāna</i> ^[5]	ལྷན་པོ་རྒྱལ་བ་ ཤེས་པ་ <u>Wylie:</u> <i>yid-kyi rnam- shes</i>	意識	Thought t(s)	Ideatio n	Mind
VII. This Seventh Consciousness, posited on the basis of straightforward cognition in combination with inferential cognition, ^[λ] is asserted, uncommonly, in <i>Yogācāra</i> . ^[5]	VII. Deluded awareness ^[μ]	<i>manas</i> , <i>kliṣṭa- manas</i> , ^[5] <i>kliṣṭamanovij ñāna</i> , ^[24] <i>āḍānavi jñāna</i> ^[25]	ལྷན་པོ་རྒྱལ་བ་ ཤེས་པ་ <u>Wylie:</u> <i>nyon- yid rnam- shes</i>	末那 識	Self- graspi ng	Disturb ing emotion or attitud e (Skt.: <i>kleśa</i>) ^[v] 1	Mind
VIII. This Eighth Consciousness, posited on the basis of inferential cognition, is asserted, uncommonly, in <i>Yogācāra</i> . ^[5]	VIII. All- encompass ing foundatio n conscious ness ^[ξ]	<i>ālāyavi jñāna</i> , ^[5] <i>bījavijñāna</i>	ལྷན་པོ་རྒྱལ་བ་ ཤེས་པ་ <u>Wylie:</u> <i>kun- gzhi rnam- shes</i>	藏 識, 種子 識, 阿賴 耶 識, or 本識	Memory	Reflexi ve awarene ss ^[o]	Mind

Origins and development

Early Buddhist Texts (“EBTs”)

The first five sense-consciousnesses along with the sixth consciousness are identified in the Suttapiṭaka, especially the Salayatanavagga subsection of the [Samyuttanikāya](#):

“Monks, I will teach you the All. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak.”

“As you say, lord,” the monks responded.

The Blessed One said, “What is the All? Simply the eye & forms, ear & sounds, nose & aromas, tongue & flavors, body & tactile sensations, intellect & ideas. This, monks, is called the All. [1] Anyone who would say, ‘Repudiating this All, I will describe another,’ if questioned on what exactly might be the grounds for his statement, would be unable to explain, and furthermore, would be put to grief. Why? Because it lies beyond range.”^[28]

Also, the early Buddhist texts speak of [anusayā](#) (Sanskrit: *anuśayāḥ*), the “underlying tendencies” or “latent dispositions” which keep beings caught in the circle of samsara. These potential tendencies are generally seen as unconscious processes which “lie beneath” our everyday consciousness, and according to Waldron “they represent the potential, the tendency, for cognitive and emotional afflictions (Pali: *kilesā*, Sanskrit: *kleśāḥ*) to arise”.^[2]

Sautrāntika and Theravāda theories

The Sautrāntika school of Buddhism, which relied closely on the sutras, developed a theory of seeds (*bīja*, 種子) in the mindstream (*cittasamṭāna*, 心相續,^[29] lit. “mind-character-continuity”) to explain how karma and the latent dispositions continued throughout life and rebirth. This theory later developed into the alayavijñana view.^[30]

The Theravāda theory of the [bhavaṅga](#) may also be a forerunner of the ālāyavijñana theory. [Vasubandhu](#) cites the bhavaṅgavijñāna of the [Sinhalese](#) school (*Tāmrapaṇṇīyanikāya*) as a forerunner of the ālāyavijñāna. The Theravadin theory is also mentioned by Xuánzàng.^[31]

Yogācāra

Main article: [Yogācāra](#)

The texts of the Yogācāra school gives a detailed explanation of the workings of the mind and the way it constructs the reality we experience. It is “meant to be an explanation of experience, rather than a system of ontology”.^[32] The theory of the ālāyavijñana and the other consciousnesses developed out of a need to work out various issues in Buddhist [Abhidharma](#) thought. According to [Lambert Schmithausen](#), the first mention of the concept occurs in the [Yogācārabhūmiśāstra](#), which posits a basal consciousness that contains seeds for future

cognitive processes.^[33] It is also described in the [Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra](#) and in the [Mahāyānasamgraha](#) of [Asaṅga](#).

[Vasubandhu](#) is considered to be the systematizer of Yogācāra thought.^[34] Vasubandhu used the concept of the [six consciousnesses](#), on which he elaborated in the *Triṃśikaikākārikā* (Treatise in Thirty Stanzas).^[35]

Vijñānāni

According to the traditional interpretation, Vasubandhu states that there are eight consciousnesses (*vijñānāni*, singular: *vijñāna*):

- Five sense-consciousnesses,
- Mind (perception),
- Manas (self-consciousness),^[36]
- Storehouse-consciousness.^[37]

According to Kalupahana, this classification of eight consciousnesses is based on a misunderstanding of Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikaikākārikā* by later adherents.^[38]^[note 1]

Ālayavijñāna

The ālayavijñāna (Japanese: 阿頼耶識 *arayashiki*), or the "All-encompassing foundation consciousness",^[7] forms the "base-consciousness" (*mūlavijñāna*) or "causal consciousness". According to the traditional interpretation, the other seven consciousnesses are "evolving" or "transforming" consciousnesses originating in this base-consciousness. The store-house consciousness accumulates all potential energy as seeds (*bīja*) for the mental (*nāma*) and physical (*rūpa*) manifestation of one's existence (*nāmarūpa*). It is the storehouse-consciousness which induces [rebirth](#), causing the origination of a new existence.

Role

The ālayavijñāna is also described in the [Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra](#) as the "mind which has all the seeds" (*sarvabījakam cittaṃ*) which enters the womb and develops based on two forms of appropriation or attachment (*upādāna*); to the material sense faculties, and to predispositions (*vāsanāḥ*) towards conceptual proliferations (*prapañca*).^[39] The *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra* also defines it in varying ways:

This consciousness is also called the appropriating consciousness ("ādana-vijñāna") because the body is grasped and appropriated by it.

It is also called the "ālaya-vijñāna" because it dwells in and attaches to this body in a common destiny ("ekayogakṣema-arthena").

It is also called mind ("citta") because it is heaped up and accumulated by [the six cognitive objects, i.e.:] visual forms, sounds, smells, flavors, tangibles and dharmas. ^[39]

In a seemingly innovative move, the Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra states that the ālayavijñāna is always active subliminally and occurs simultaneously with, "supported by and depending upon" the six sense consciousnesses. ^[3]

According to Asaṅga's [Mahāyānasamgraha](#), the ālayavijñāna is taught by other Buddhist schools by different names. He states that the ālaya is what the [Mahasamghikas](#) call the "root-consciousness" (*mulavijñāna*), what the Mahīśāsakas call "the aggregate which lasts as long as saṃsāra" (*asaṃsārikaskandha*) and what the [Sthaviras](#) call the [bhavaṅga](#). ^[40]

Rebirth and purification

The store-house consciousness receives impressions from all functions of the other consciousnesses, and retains them as potential energy, [bīja](#) or "seeds", for their further manifestations and activities. Since it serves as the container for all experiential impressions it is also called the "seed consciousness" (種子識) or **container consciousness**.

According to Yogācāra teachings, the seeds stored in the store consciousness of sentient beings are not pure. ^[note 2]

The store consciousness, while being originally immaculate in itself, contains a "mysterious mixture of purity and defilement, good and evil". Because of this mixture the transformation of consciousness from defilement to purity can take place and [awakening](#) is possible. ^[41]

Through the process of purification the dharma practitioner can become an [Arhat](#), when the four defilements of the mental functions ^[note 3] of the manas-consciousness are purified. ^[note 4] ^[note 5]

Tathagata-garbha thought

According to the [Laṅkāvatārasūtra](#) and the schools of Chan and Zen Buddhism, the ālayavijñāna is identical with the [tathāgatagarbha](#) ^[note 6], and is fundamentally pure. ^[42] ^[need quotation to verify]

The equation of ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha was contested. It was seen as "something akin to the Hindu notions of *ātman* (permanent, invariant self) and *prakṛti* (primordial substrative nature from which all mental, emotional and physical things evolve)." According to Lusthaus, the critique led by the end of

the eighth century to the rise of the logico-epistemic tradition of Yogācāra and a hybrid school combining *Tathāgatagarbha* thought with basic Yogācāra doctrines.^[43]

The logico-epistemological wing in part sidestepped the critique by using the term *citta-santāna*, "mind-stream", instead of *ālaya-vijñāna*, for what amounted to roughly the same idea. It was easier to deny that a "stream" represented a reified self. On the other hand, the Tathāgatagarbha hybrid school was no stranger to the charge of smuggling notions of selfhood into its doctrines, since, for example, it explicitly defined the *tathāgatagarbha* as "permanent, pleasurable, *self*, and pure (*nitya, sukha, ātman, śuddha*)". Many Tathāgatagarbha texts, in fact, argue for the acceptance of selfhood (*ātman*) as a sign of higher accomplishment. The hybrid school attempted to conflate *tathāgatagarbha* with the *ālaya-vijñāna*.^[43]

Transformations of consciousness

The traditional interpretation of the eight consciousnesses may be discarded on the ground of a reinterpretation of Vasubandhu's works. According to Kalupahana, instead of positing such an consciousnesses, the *Triṃśikaikākārikā* describes the *transformations* of this consciousness:

Taking *vipaka*, *manana* and *viñapti* as three different kinds of functions, rather than characteristics, and understanding *viñāna* itself as a function (*viñānatīti viñānam*), Vasubandhu seems to be avoiding any form of substantialist thinking in relation to consciousness.^[44]

These transformations are threefold:^[44]

Whatever, indeed, is the variety of ideas of self and elements that prevails, it occurs in the transformation of consciousness. Such transformation is threefold, [namely,]^[45]

The first transformation results in the *ālāya*:

the resultant, what is called mentation, as well as the concept of the object. Herein, the consciousness called *ālaya*, with all its seeds, is the resultant.^[46]

The *ālāyavijñāna* therefore is not an eighth consciousness, but the resultant of the transformation of consciousness:

Instead of being a completely distinct category, *ālaya-viñāna* merely represents the normal flow of the stream of consciousness uninterrupted by the appearance of reflective self-awareness. It is no more than the unbroken stream of consciousness called the life-process by the Buddha. It is the cognitive process, containing both emotive and co-native aspects of human experience, but

without the enlarged egoistic emotions and dogmatic graspings characteristic of the next two transformations. ^[38]

The second transformation is *manana*, self-consciousness or "Self-view, self-confusion, self-esteem and self-love". ^[47] According to the Lankavatara and later interpreters it is the seventh consciousness. ^[48] It is "thinking" about the various perceptions occurring in the stream of consciousness". ^[48] The alaya is defiled by this self-interest;

[I]t can be purified by adopting a non-substantialist (*anatman*) perspective and thereby allowing the *alaya*-part (i.e. attachment) to dissipate, leaving consciousness or the function of being intact. ^[47]

The third transformation is *viṣayaviññapti*, the "concept of the object". ^[49] In this transformation the *concept* of objects is created. By creating these concepts human beings become "susceptible to grasping after the object": ^[49]

Vasubandhu is critical of the third transformation, not because it relates to the conception of an object, but because it generates grasping after a "real object" (*sad artha*), even when it is no more than a conception (*viññapti*) that combines experience and reflection. ^[50]

A similar perspective is give by [Walpola Rahula](#). According to Walpola Rahula, all the elements of the Yogācāra storehouse-consciousness are already found in the Pāli Canon. ^[51] He writes that the three layers of the mind (*citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna*) as presented by Asaṅga are also mentioned in the Pāli Canon:

Thus we can see that 'Vijñāna' represents the simple reaction or response of the sense organs when they come in contact with external objects. This is the uppermost or superficial aspect or layer of the 'Vijñāna-skandha'. 'Manas' represents the aspect of its mental functioning, thinking, reasoning, conceiving ideas, etc. 'Citta' which is here called 'Ālayaviññāna', represents the deepest, finest and subtlest aspect or layer of the Aggregate of consciousness. It contains all the traces or impressions of the past actions and all good and bad future possibilities. ^[52]

Understanding in Buddhist Tradition

China

Fǎzàng and Huayan

According to Thomas McEvilley, although Vasubandhu had postulated numerous ālāya-vijñāna-s, a separate one for each individual person in the parakalpita, ^[note 2] this multiplicity was later eliminated in the [Fa Hsiang](#) and

[Huayan](#) metaphysics.^[note 7] These schools inculcated instead the doctrine of a single universal and eternal ālaya-vijñāna. This exalted enstatement of the ālayavijñāna is described in the Fa Hsiang as "primordial unity".^[53]

Thomas McEvilley further argues that the presentation of the three natures by Vasubandhu is consistent with the Neo-platonist views of [Plotinus](#) and his universal 'One', 'Mind', and 'Soul'.^[54]

Chán

A core teaching of Chan/Zen Buddhism describes the transformation of the Eight Consciousnesses into the [Four Wisdoms](#).^[note 8] In this teaching, Buddhist practice is to turn the light of awareness around, from misconceptions regarding the nature of reality as being external, to kenshō, "directly see one's own nature".^[citation needed] Thus the Eighth Consciousness is transformed into the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom, the Seventh Consciousness into the Equality (Universal Nature) Wisdom, the Sixth Consciousness into the Profound Observing Wisdom, and First to Fifth Consciousnesses into the All Performing (Perfection of Action) Wisdom.

Korea

The [Interpenetration](#) (通達) and [Essence-Function](#) (體用) of [Wonhyo](#) (元曉) is described in the [Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith](#) (大乘起信論, *Mahāyānaśraddhotpādaśāstra*, AMF in the excerpt below):

The author of the *AMF* was deeply concerned with the question of the respective origins of ignorance and enlightenment. If enlightenment is originally existent, how do we become submerged in ignorance? If ignorance is originally existent, how is it possible to overcome it? And finally, at the most basic level of mind, the *ālaya* consciousness (藏識), is there originally purity or taint? The *AMF* dealt with these questions in a systematic and thorough fashion, working through the Yogacāra concept of the *ālaya* consciousness. The technical term used in the *AMF* which functions as a metaphorical synonym for interpenetration is "permeation" or "perfumation (薰)," referring to the fact that defilement (煩惱) "perfumes" suchness (眞如), and suchness perfumes defilement, depending on the current condition of the mind.^[57]

See also

- [Brahmavihara](#)
- [Doctrine of Consciousness-Only](#)
- [Mindstream](#)
- [Thirty Verses on Consciousness-only](#)
- [Three kinds of objects](#)

- [Anatta in the Tathagatagarbha Sutras](#)

Notes

1.

- Kalupahana: "The above explanation of *alaya-vijnana* makes it very different from that found in the *Lankavatara*. The latter assumes *alaya* to be the eight consciousness, giving the impression that it represents a totally distinct category. Vasubandhu does not refer to it as the eight, even though his later disciples like Sthiramati and Hsuan Tsang constantly refer to it as such".^[38]
 - • Each being has his own one and only, formless and no-place-to-abide store-house consciousness. Our "being" is created by our own store-consciousness, according to the karma seeds stored in it. In "coming and going" we definitely do not own the "no-coming and no-going" store-house consciousness, rather we are owned by it. Just as a human image shown in a monitor can never be described as lasting for any instant, since "he" is just the production of electron currents of data stored and flow from the hard disk of the computer, so do seed-currents drain from the store-consciousness, never last from one moment to the next.
 - • the mental functions (心所法),: self-delusion (我癡), self-view (我見), egotism (我慢), and self-love (我愛)
 - • By then the polluted mental functions of the first six consciousnesses would have been cleansed. The seventh or the manas-consciousness determines whether or not the seeds and the content drain from the alaya-vijnana breaks through, becoming a "function" to be perceived by us in the mental or physical world.
 - • In contrast to an Arhat, a Buddha is one with all his seeds stored in the eighth Seed consciousness. Cleansed and substituted, bad for good, one for one, his polluted-seeds-containing eighth consciousness (Alaya Consciousness) becomes an all-seeds-purified eighth consciousness (Pure consciousness 無垢識), and he becomes a Buddha.
 - • The womb or matrix of the Thus-come-one, the Buddha
 - • See also [Buddha-nature#Popularisation in Chinese Buddhism](#)
8. • It is found in Chapter 7 of the [Platform Sutra](#) of the Sixth Ancestor Zen Master [Huineng](#) and other Zen masters, such as [Hakuin Ekaku](#), in his work titled *Keiso Dokuqi*,^[55] and [Xuyun](#), in his work titled *Daily Lectures at Two Ch'an Weeks*, Week 1, Fourth Day.^[56]

Definitions

1.

- Sanskrit [nama](#) = [Tibetan](#): མིང་, [Wylie](#): *ming* = English "name".^[8]

- • Sanskrit *viññāna* = [Tibetan](#): རྣམ་ཤེས་, [Wylie](#): *rnam-shes* = English "consciousness".^[9]
- • Sanskrit *anitya* = [Tibetan](#): མི་རྟག་པ་, [Wylie](#): *mi-rtag-pa* = English "nonstatic phenomenon".^[10]
- • [Tibetan](#): འཁོར་ལོ་གསུམ་, [Wylie](#): *khor-lo gsum* = English "three circles" of action.^[11]
- • Sanskrit *rupa* = [Tibetan](#): གཟུགས་, [Wylie](#): *gzugs* = English "form(s) of physical phenomena".^[12]
- • [Tibetan](#): ཤེས་པ་, [Wylie](#): *shes-pa* = English "cognition".^[13]
- • Sanskrit *indriya* = [Tibetan](#): དབང་པོ་, [Wylie](#): *dbang-po* = English "cognitive sensor".^[14]
- • Sanskrit *pravṛtti-viññāna* refers to the first six consciousnesses which derive from direct sensory (including mental) cognition.^{[5]:11}
- • Sanskrit *pratyakshapramana* = [Tibetan](#): མངོན་སུམ་ཚད་མ་, [Wylie](#): *mngon-sum tshad-ma* = English "valid straightforward cognition".^[16]
- • Sanskrit *mano-viññāna* = [Tibetan](#): ཡིད་ཀྱི་རྣམ་ཤེས་, [Wylie](#): *yid-kyi rnam-shes* = English "mental consciousness".^[21]
- • Sanskrit *anumana* = [Tibetan](#): རྗེས་དཔག་, [Wylie](#): *rjes-dpag* = English "inferential cognition".^[22]
- • [Tibetan](#): ཉོན་ཡིད་, [Wylie](#): *nyon-yid* = English "deluded awareness".^[23]
- • Sanskrit *klesha* = [Tibetan](#): ཉོན་མོངས་, [Wylie](#): *nyon-mongs* = English "disturbing emotion or attitude"^[26] - also called "moving mind", or [mind monkey](#), in some Chinese and Japanese schools.
- • Sanskrit *ālayaviññāna* (from compounding *ālaya* - "abode" or dwelling", with *viññāna*, or "consciousness") = [Tibetan](#): ཀུན་གཞི་རྣམ་ཤེས་, [Wylie](#): *kun-gzhi rnam-shes* = Chinese 阿賴耶識 = English "All-encompassing foundation consciousness"^[7] = Japanese: [arayashiki](#).

15. • [Tibetan](#): རང་རིག་, [Wylie](#): *rang-rig* = English "reflexive awareness"^[27] in non-[Gelug](#) presentations of [Sautrantika](#) and [Chittamatra](#) tenet systems.

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1.

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- • Waldron, William S. The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijñana in the context of Indian Buddhist Thought. Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism, 2003, page 33.
- • Waldron, William S. The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijñana in the context of Indian Buddhist Thought. Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism, 2003, page 97
- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"Mind and Mental Factors: the Fifty-one Types of Subsidiary Awareness"*](#). Berlin, Germany; June 2002; revised July, 2006: Study Buddhism. Retrieved 4 June 2016. Unlike the Western view of consciousness as a general faculty that can be aware of all sensory and mental objects, Buddhism differentiates six types of consciousness, each of which is specific to one sensory field or to the mental field. A primary consciousness cognizes merely the essential nature (ngo-bo) of an object, which means the category of phenomenon to which something belongs. For example, eye consciousness cognizes a sight as merely a sight. The Chittamatra schools add two more types of primary consciousness to make their list of an eightfold network of primary consciousnesses (rnam-shes tshogs-brgyad): deluded awareness (nyon-yid), alayavijñana (kun-gzhi rnam-shes, all-encompassing foundation consciousness, storehouse consciousness). Alayavijñana is an individual consciousness, not a universal one, underlying all moments of cognition. It cognizes the same objects as the cognitions it underlies, but is a nondetermining cognition of what appears to it (snang-la ma-nges-pa, inattentive cognition) and lacks clarity of its objects. It carries karmic legacies (sa-bon) and the mental impressions of memories, in the sense that both are nonstatic abstractions imputed on the alayavijñana. The continuity of an individual alayavijñana ceases with the attainment of enlightenment.
- • Gareth Sparham, translator; Shotaro Iida; Tsoñ-kha-pa Blo-bzañ-grags-pa 1357 - 1419 (1993). "Introduction". [*Yid dañ kun gźi'i dka' ba'i gnas rgya cher 'grel pa legs par bśad pa'i legs par bśad pa'i rgya mdzo: Ocean of Eloquence: Tsong kha pa's Commentary on the Yogācāra Doctrine of Mind*](#) (alk. paper) (in English and Tibetan) (1st ed.). Albany, NY, United States: State University of New York Press (SUNY). ISBN 0-7914-1479-5. Retrieved 6 February 2013.
- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"English Glossary of Buddhist Terms"*](#). Primary Consciousness. Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 14 February 2013. Within a cognition of an object, the awareness of merely the essential nature of the object that the cognition focuses on. Primary consciousness has the identity-nature of being an individualizing awareness.
- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"English Glossart of Buddhist Terms: 'All-encompassing Foundation Consciousness'"*](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. An unspecified, nonobstructive, individual consciousness that underlies all cognition, cognizes the same objects as the cognitions it underlies, but is a nondetermining cognition of what appears to it and lacks

clarity of its objects. It carries the karmic legacies of karma and the mental impressions of memories, in the sense that they are imputed on it. It is also translated as 'foundation consciousness' and, by some translators, as 'storehouse consciousness.' According to Gelug, asserted only by the Chittamatra system; according to non-Gelug, asserted by both the Chittamatra and Madhyamaka systems.

- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Name'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 7 February 2013. A combination of sounds that are assigned a meaning.
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Consciousness'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. A class of ways of being aware of something that cognizes merely the essential nature of its object, such as its being a sight, a sound, a mental object, etc. Consciousness may be either sensory or mental, and there are either six or eight types. The term has nothing to do with the Western concept of conscious versus unconscious.
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Nonstatic Phenomenon'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 7 February 2013. Phenomena that are affected and supported by causes and circumstances and, consequently, change from moment to moment, and which produce effects. Their streams of continuity may have a beginning and an end, a beginning and no end, no beginning but an end, or no beginning and no end. Some translators render the term as 'impermanent phenomena.' They include forms of physical phenomena, ways of being aware of something, and noncongruent affecting variables, which are neither of the two.
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Three Circles'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 7 February 2013. Three aspects of an action that are all equally void of true existence: (1) the individual performing the action, (2) the object upon or toward which the action is committed, and (3) the action itself. Occasionally, as in the case of the action of giving, the object may refer to the object given. The existence of each of these is established dependently on the others. Sometimes translated as 'the three spheres' of an action.
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Forms of Physical Phenomena'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. Nonstatic phenomena that can either (1) transform into another form of physical phenomenon when two or more of them come into contact with each other, such as water and earth which can transform into mud, or (2) be known as what they are by analyzing their directional parts, such as the sight of a vase seen in a dream. Forms of physical phenomena include the nonstatic phenomena of forms and eye sensors, sounds and ear sensors, smells and nose sensors, tastes and tongue sensors, physical sensations and body sensors, and forms of physical phenomena included only among cognitive stimulators that are all phenomena. Equivalent to the aggregate of forms of physical phenomena.
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Cognition'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. (1) The act of cognizing or knowing something, but without necessarily knowing what it is or

what it means. It may be either valid or invalid, conceptual or nonconceptual . This is the most general term for knowing something. (2) The 'package' of a primary consciousness, its accompanying mental factors (subsidiary awarenesses), and the cognitive object shared by all of them. According to some systems, a cognition also includes reflexive awareness.

- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Cognitive Sensor'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. The dominating condition that determines the type of cognition a way of being aware of something is. In the case of the five types of sensory cognition, it is the photosensitive cells of the eyes, the sound-sensitive cells of the ears, the smell-sensitive cells of the nose, the taste-sensitive cells of the tongue, and the physical-sensation-sensitive cells of the body. In the case of mental cognition, it is the immediately preceding moment of cognition. Some translators render the term as 'sense power.'
- • Delhey, Martin (2016). ["The Indian Yogācāra Master Sthiramati and His Views on the Ālayavijñāna Concept"](#). Academy of Buddhist Studies, Dongguk University. 26.2: 11 - 35. - via Academia.edu From page 18: "aṣṭau vijñānāni vijñānaskandhaḥ: ṣaṭ pravṛttivijñānāni, ālayavijñānaṃ, kliṣṭaṃ ca manaḥ" rendered as "the personality constituent consciousness consists of the eight forms of consciousness: the six manifest forms of mind, the ālayavijñāna and the defiled mind"
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Valid Straightforward Cognition'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 7 February 2013. Straightforward cognition that is nonfallacious. See: straightforward cognition.
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["A Brief History of Buddhism in India before the Thirteenth-Century Invasions"](#). Berlin, Germany; January, 2002; revised April, 2007: Study Buddhism. Retrieved 4 June 2016. The Theravada and Sarvastivada Schools each held their own fourth councils. The Theravada School held its fourth council in 83 BCE in Sri Lanka. In the face of various groups having splintered off from Theravada over differences in interpretation of Buddha words (sic.), Maharakkhita and five hundred Theravada elders met to recite and write down Buddha's words in order to preserve their authenticity. This was the first time Buddha's teachings were put into written form and, in this case, they were rendered into the Pali language. This version of The Three Basket-like Collections, The Tipitaka, is commonly known as The Pali Canon. The other Hinayana Schools, however, continued to transmit the teachings in oral form.
- • Muller, Charles (31 January 2003). ["Digital Dictionary of Buddhism - 鼻識"](#). DDB. Retrieved 29 March 2018. ^[dead link]
- • Muller, Charles (11 May 2002). ["Digital Dictionary of Buddhism - 舌識"](#). DDB. ^[permanent dead link]
- • Muller, Charles (13 June 2002). ["Digital Dictionary of Buddhism - 身識"](#). DDB. ^[permanent dead link]
- • Berzin, Alexander. ["English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Mental Consciousness'"](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 7 February 2013. A primary consciousness that can take any existent phenomenon as its

object and which relies on merely the previous moment of cognition as its dominating condition and not on any physical sensors.

- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Inferential Cognition'"*](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 7 February 2013. A valid conceptual way of cognizing an obscure object through reliance on a correct line of reasoning as its basis.
- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Deluded Awareness'"*](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. A primary consciousness that is aimed at the *alayavijñana* in the Chittamatra system, or at the *alaya* for habits in the dzogchen system, and grasps at it to be the 'me' to be refuted.
- • Muller, Charles (15 September 1997). [*"Digital Dictionary of Buddhism - 八識"*](#). DDB. [\[permanent dead link\]](#)
- • Muller, Charles (15 September 1997). [*"Digital Dictionary of Buddhism - 阿陀那識"*](#) Rendered here according to Dilun 地論宗 and Shelun 攝論宗 schools mentioned in citation. [\[permanent dead link\]](#)
- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Disturbing Emotion or Attitude'"*](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. A subsidiary awareness (mental factor) that, when it arises, causes oneself to lose peace of mind and incapacitates oneself so that one loses self-control. An indication that one is experiencing a disturbing emotion or attitude is that it makes oneself and/or others feel uncomfortable. Some translators render this term as 'afflictive emotions' or 'emotional afflictions.'
- • Berzin, Alexander. [*"English Glossary of Buddhist Terms: 'Reflexive Awareness'"*](#). Berlin, Germany: The Berzin Archives. Retrieved 6 February 2013. (1) The cognitive faculty within a cognition, asserted in the Sautrantika and Chittamatra tenet systems, that takes as its cognitive object the consciousness within the cognition that it is part of. It also cognizes the validity or invalidity of the cognition that it is part of, and accounts for the ability to recall the cognition. (2) In the non-Gelug schools, this cognitive faculty becomes reflexive deep awareness — that part of an *arya's* nonconceptual cognition of voidness that cognizes the two truths of that nonconceptual cognition.
- • [*"Sabba Sutta: The All"*](#). www.accesstoinsight.org.
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External links

- [Alayavijnana - Storehouse Consciousness](#), [Walpola Rahula](#), not dated; quotes the [Pali Canon](#)'s use of *alaya* and compares the Mahayana *asrayaparavrtti* and *bijaparavrtti* with [Nikaya Buddhism](#)'s *alayamugghata*, the "uprooting of *alaya*, and *khinabija*, one whose "seeds of defilement are destroyed".
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