Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma
Sarvāstivāda
Abhidharma

Bhikkhu KL Dhammjoti 法光

The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong
2015
### CONTENTS

**Preface**  
Preface

**Abbreviations**

**Chapter 1 Abhidhama—Its Origin, Meaning and Function**  
1. Origin of the *abhidhama*  
2. Definitions of *abhidhama*  
3. The soteriological function of the *abhidhama*

**Chapter 2 The Ābhidharmika (Ābhidhārmika) – Standpoint, Scope and Methodology**  
1. Fundamental standpoint of the Ābhidharmikas  
2. Arguments for Abhidharma being *buddha-vacana*  
3. Scope of study of the Ābhidharmikas  
4. Ābhidharmika methodology for *dharma-pravicaya*

**Chapter 3 The Sarvāstivāda School and Its Notion of the Real**  
1. History of the Sarvāstivāda  
2. Sarvāstivāda vs. Vibhajyavāda  
3. Proof of the thesis of *sarvāstitva* in VKŚ, MVŚ and AKB  
4. Sautrāntika critique of the epistemological argument  
5. Notion of the real/existent  
6. The various components of the Sarvāstivāda school

**Chapter 4 The Abhidharmacāritra**  
1. Seven canonical treatises  
2. Development of the Sarvāstivāda manuals  
3. The various components of the Sarvāstivāda school

**Chapter 5 Sarvāstitva and Temporality**  
1. The big debate  
2. Time and temporality
5.3. The four main theories of the Sarvāstivāda 133
5.4. Comments on the four theories and Frauwallner’s observations 135
5.5. The Vaibhāṣika theory of kārita 141
5.6. Saṃghabhadra’s theory — an innovation? 147
5.7. Bhāva, svabhāva and the dharma 150

Chapter 6 Theory of Causality I: The Six Causes 161
6.1. The 6 hetu-s, 4 pratyaya-s and 5 phala-s — their correlation 161
6.2. Special importance of the doctrine of causality for the Sarvāstivāda 164
6.3. Definitions of the six causes 168
6.4. Saṃghabhadra’s defense of simultaneous causation 178
6.5. Explanations in the Yogācāra system 179
6.6. Summary of the notion of the co-existent cause given in the various sources 181
6.7. Doctrinal importance of the co-existent cause for the Sarvāstivāda 182
6.8. Conclusion 186

Chapter 7 Theory of Causality II
The Four Conditions and the Five Fruits 191
7.1. Doctrine of the four conditions (pratyaya) 191
7.2. Differences between a cause and a condition 200
7.3. Five fruits (phala) 202
7.4. The ‘grasping’ and ‘giving’ of a fruit 208

Chapter 8 The Category of Matter (rūpa) 213
8.1. General nature and definition of rūpa 213
8.2. Primary and derived matter 219
8.3. ‘Atomic’ theory 226

Chapter 9 The Categories of Thought and Thought-concomitants (citta-caitta) 239
9.1. Definitions of citta, manas and viññāna 239
9.2. Thought-concomitants (caittala/caitasika) 241
9.3. Development of the theory of caittasa 241
9.4. Sarvāstivāda doctrine of conjunction (samprayoga) 254
9.5. Dārśāntika and Sautrāntika Doctrine of successive arising 255
9.6. Difference in functionality between citta and caitta-s 257
9.7. Difference between the first five and the sixth consciousnesses 260
9.8. Original nature of thought 262
Chapter 10  Theories of Knowledge 273
10.1. Sarvāstivāda realism: From epistemology to ontology 274
10.2. Various modes of operation of prajñā 279
10.3. Reflexive knowledge and omniscience (sarvajñā) 286
10.4. Prajñā of the Buddha and the two yāna-s 289
10.5. Instrument of perception 295
10.6. Important Sarvāstivāda thought-concomitants involved in discriminative cognition 300
10.8. Ontological status of the objects of knowledge 302
10.8. Direct perception, ākāra, sākāra-vijñānavāda, nirākāra-jñānavāda and the Sarvāstivāda 304

Chapter 11  The Category of the Conditionings Disjoined from Thought (citta-viprayuktasaṃskāra) 323
11.1. Doctrinal evolution of the category 323
11.2. Definition of conditionings disjoined from thought in later texts 330
11.3. Classic list in AKB 331

Chapter 12  Defilements 361
12.1. The goal of spiritual praxis and the abandonment of defilement 362
12.2. Kleśa and anusāya as the generic terms for defilement 365
12.3. Other doctrinal terms denoting defilements 375
12.4. Defilements as the root of existence 370
12.5. Ābhidharmika investigation of defilements 372
12.6. Classification of defilements 374
12.7. Relationship between defilements and the mind 381
12.8. Operation of the defilements 384
12.9. Abandonment of defilements 388
12.10. Traces (vāsanā) of the defilements and distinction between the wisdom of a Buddha and of an arhat 402

Chapter 13  The Doctrine of Karma 415
13.1. Meaning and general nature of karma 415
13.2. Classification of karma 420
13.3. Informative (vijñāpti) and non-informative (avijñāpti) karma 421
13.4. Definition and intrinsic nature of informative and non-informative karma 423
13.5. Non-information as restraint, non-restraint and neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint 430
13.6. Paths of karma (karma-patha) 434
13.7. Rationale for the doctrine of non-informative karma 435
13.8. Role of the non-informative in the process of karmic retribution 438
Chapter 14 *Karma and the Nature of its Retribution* 459
14.1. Karmic retribution as a Middle Way doctrine 459
14.2. Six causes affecting the gravity of a *karma* 459
14.3. Determinate and indeterminate *karma* 461
14.4. A *karma* that has been done, and one that has been accumulated 463
14.5. Projecting and completing *karma*-s 468
14.6. *Karma* in terms of *pratītya-samutpāda* 469
14.7. *Past karma* of the *arhat*-s and the Buddha 475
14.8. Man’s *karma* and his environment, and collective *karma* 477

Chapter 15 *The Path of Spiritual Progress* 485
15.1. Doctrine of gradual enlightenment 485
15.2. Preliminaries for the preparatory stage 487
15.3. Different stages of the path 493
15.4. Direct realization (*abhisamaya*), path of vision (*darśana-mārga*) and stream entry (*srotāpatti*) 509
15.5. Non-retrogressibility of stream-entry 519
15.6. Path of cultivation (*bhāvanā-mārga*) 519
15.7. Attainment of the four fruits of the spiritual life 521
15.8. Out-of-sequence attainments 522
15.9. Retrogressibility of an *arhat* 523

Chapter 16 *The Unconditioned (asaṃskṛta) Dharma*-s 531
16.1. Three unconditioned *dharma*-s of the Sarvāstivāda 531
16.2. Cessation through deliberation 535
16.3. Cessation independent of deliberation 547
16.4. Space 554

Select Bibliography 565

Glossary 581

Index 621
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

As stated in my preface to the first edition published in 2002, this book was originally intended as an outline of the Sarvāstivāda doctrines. It mainly grew out of the outlines and notes that I have given in the past years to my students at the Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya. Some of these outlines were also distributed to students at the Department of Religious Studies, University of Calgary when I served there as the Numata Professor of Buddhist Thought in winter, 2002. In response to the need of my students, I had also been elaborating on different parts of these outlines and notes at different times. The result was this book which now comes to be entitled “Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma”.

Chapter Five on “Sarvāstitva and temporality” was adapted from an essay of mine which was first included in the appendix of my Entrance to the Supreme Doctrine (Colombo, 1998) as “The Theory of Sarvāstitva”, and subsequently slightly revised and published as “Sarvāstitva and Temporality: The Vaibhāṣika Defence” in the Journal of the Postgraduate of Pali and Buddhist Studies, vol. I, 1999.

If some chapters appear more terse and succinct compared to others, it was because the original outlines were used at different times with somewhat different emphases for the different classes, and were not planned as a single project from the beginning. I would have liked to postpone and elaborate further on these outlines in the little leisure that I have, to improve on the material presented herein. However, in view of the fact that there is hardly any book available in English dealing comprehensively with the doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda, I have decided to bring out this publication at this juncture, in spite of its many imperfections. I look forward to the not too distant future when I shall be able to find sufficient time to offer a more carefully revised edition for the students of Abhidharma who I hope will find this book useful for their studies. In the past several years of my teaching, I have also discussed various Abhidharma controversies; and some of these discussions have been published in academic journals. It is my belief that these controversies can offer us much insight into the abhidharma thought system as a whole, and help us importantly to gain a proper perspective of the development in Buddhist thought in general – the period of the Abhidharma schools being one of the most creative phases of this development in India. I have, however, with one or two limited exception, refrained from incorporating these discussions into this book as most of them are rather lengthy. It is my intention to have them summarized and integrated in a book form to be published as a sequel to the present book on another occasion.
I suggest that this book be used together with my *Entrance to the Supreme Doctrine* to which I have referred quite frequently. However, readers should take note that I have in this present publication changed some of my earlier rendering of the Sanskrit technical terms; a notable example is ‘activity’ (作用 zuo yong) for *kārita* and function (功能 gong neng) for *vṛtti*, *vyāpāra*, etc.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to Professor Y. Karunadasa for his constant encouragement to my Abhidharma studies, and moral support in my times of difficulties in Sri Lanka. I am also grateful to Venerable Bhiksunī Chun Yi for spending several sleepless night carefully going through the entire proof of this book excepting the last chapter; to Venerable Dhammapāla for proof-reading part of the book; and to Venerable Bangladesh Bhaddiya Tanchangya for generating the index, and checking through again part of the final proof. Venerable Bangladesh Assaji Tanchangya and Mr. W. Sugath Chandra must also be thanked for helping at the final stage of the preparatory work.

In this second edition, I have added a chapter (10) on the theories of knowledge of the Sarvāstivāda and the Sautrāntika. Some minor adjustments have also been made in a few places. I must thank my disciples, Ven. Bhaddiya Tanchangya, Ven. Dhammadīpa (Joyadip Tanchangya) and Ven. Dhammarakkhita Barua, for their devoted effort in proof-reading and generating the index of this new edition.

KL Dhammajoti (法光)
22nd July 2004, Mulleriyawa
This edition is a substantial revision of the second edition published in 2004. I have elaborated on numerous points in the chapters, and incorporated relevant material from several papers I have published in the journals. In addition, I have prepared a glossary of the Sanskrit terms occurring in the book, which may otherwise scare away those readers unfamiliar with the Sanskrit language. The whole revision process, however, was constrained within the time frame of a little over two months during this summer vacation, and there is no doubt further revision and addition to be desired.

I believe that this edition is stylistically much more presentable and free from typological and English errors compared to the previous two editions. This is largely due to the tireless proofreading effort — with numerous suggestions and criticism — of Venerable Gelong Lodrö Sangpo and Gelongma Mige Chödrön, both members of the Chökyi Gyatso Translation Committee at the Gampo Abbey Monastery. I must therefore record my deep appreciation for these two venerables. Whatever stylistic imperfection still remains is due to my own obstinacy and oversight.

My special thanks are also due to my student, Liza Cheung, for her equally tireless effort in the proofreading process. At the Centre, she has been overseeing the various aspects of the whole revision process, working from early morning till late night. She was also responsible for extracting the Sanskrit terms for inclusion in the glossary. My thanks are also due to my students, Ven Huifeng, Alan Mok and Aosi Mak; the former two, especially for the difficult task of generating the index, the latter, especially for drawing and revising the charts throughout the whole book. Other students who had helped in one respect or another of the publication projects include Sandra Lam, Ven. Chandaratana, Ven. Zhen Jue and Francis Kwan. I am also grateful to Sandra for looking after me in various ways, in spite of her engagement with our Abhidharma Dictionary project. My thanks are also due to Professor CF Lee, Ven. Dr. Jing Yin, Ven. Hin Hung and other members of the Li Chong Yuet Ming Buddhist Studies Fund of the Li Ka Shing Foundation, for accepting this book as the first English book of the publication series of the Centre of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong.

Finally, and most importantly, I’d like to express my deep gratitude for Venerable Dr. Yin Shun and Professor Y. Karunadasa for encouraging me to embark on my Abhidharma studies, and the profound inspiration that I have derived from them.

KL Dhammajoti (法光)
August 2007, Hong Kong
PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

In this edition, I have done some revision on most of the chapters. I have also taken the opportunity to correct numerous typological errors, and emend some stylistic and translation inconsistencies. The glossary has also been considerably expanded.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Lisa Cheung, Aosi Mak, Paul Law, Venerable Zhen Jue, Mei Ling Fok and Venerable Chandaratana, for their devoted help in the proof-reading process. Lisa, Paul and Aosi, in particular, have sacrificed much of their valuable time and energy to look after the various stages of the publication work. My thanks are also due to Venerable Lodrö Sangpo, of the Gampo Abbey Monastery, Canada, for providing us with a partial list of errata on the previous edition.

I would also like here to gratefully acknowledge the financial sponsorship of the Li Chong Yuet Ming Buddhist Studies Fund of the Li Ka Shing Foundation for the publication of this new edition.

KL Dhammajoti 法光
July 2009, Hong Kong
PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION

The fourth edition has been out of print for several years. In this edition, I have made some revision in a few places. There are several other places where I would have wanted to do some substantial revision, but must postpone the plan until another occasion when I can find more free time for it.

I am grateful to my pupil Venerable Dhammarakkhita Barua (Sree Dharma Rakkhit Sraman) for his devoted effort in attending to all the editorial and proof-reading work, from the beginning to the end. My pupil, Venerable Jnan Nanda must also be thanked for his help in the last part of the proof-reading and indexing work.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the Glorious Sun Charity Group, Hong Kong (旭日慈善基金), for sponsoring the research and publication projects of our Buddha-dharma Centre of Hong Kong.

KL Dhammajoti
December, 2015.
SARVASTIVADA ABHIDHARMA
### ABBREVIATIONS

**Note:**

(i) All references of Chinese Tripiṭaka texts are to the Taishō edition, unless otherwise stated.

(ii) All references of Pāli texts are to the PTS edition, unless otherwise stated.

(iii) All references of Pāli ṭīkā and anuṭīkā are those of the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana edition of the Tipiṭaka published electronically by the Vipassanā Research Institute, Dhammagiri, Maharashtra, India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Aṅguttara Nikāya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>Abhidharmadīpa (with Vibhāṣaprabhāvṛtī)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AH</td>
<td>*Abhidharma-hṛdaya (T no. 1550).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHS</td>
<td>*Abhidharma-hṛdaya Sātra (T no. 1551).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKB</td>
<td>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKB(C)</td>
<td>Chinese tr. of AKB by Xuan Zang (T no. 1558).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKB(E)</td>
<td>English tr. of AKB(F).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKB(F)</td>
<td>L’Abhidharmakośa de Vāsūbandhu, by La Vallée Poussin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AmRŚ</td>
<td>*Abhidharmāmṛta-rasa-śāstra. Chinese tr. (Translator unknown), (T no 1553).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avatāra</td>
<td>*Abhidharmāvatāra by Skandhila.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avatāra(T)</td>
<td>Tibetan tr. of Avatāra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSOAS</td>
<td>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dīgha Nikāya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DhsA</td>
<td>Dhammasaṅgani Aṭṭhakathā ( = Atthasālinī).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DKŚ</td>
<td>*Dhātu-kāya-śāstra, 阿毗達磨界身足論 (T no. 1540).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSŚ</td>
<td>*Dharma-skandha-śāstra, 阿毗達磨法藴足論 (T no. 1537).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance</td>
<td>Dhammadjoti, KL, Entrance into the Supreme Doctrine. 2nd revised edition (Hong Kong, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HVy</td>
<td>*Abhidharma-hṛdaya-vyākhyā (T no. 1552).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAKB</td>
<td>Index to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHQ</td>
<td>Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JCBSSL Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka.

JPŚ Jñānaprasthāna-sāstra, 阿毗達磨發智論 (T no. 1544).

JRAS Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

Kvū Kathāvaththu.

M Majjhima Nikāya.

MA Majjhimanikāya Atṭhakathā.

MCB Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques, l’Institute Bege des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, Bruxelles.

MPPU *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa, 大智度論 (T no. 1509).

MVŚ *Abhidharma-mahā-vibhāṣā, 阿毗達磨大毗婆沙論 (T no. 1545).

Ny *Abhidharma-nyāyānusāra, 阿毗達磨順正理論 (T no. 1562).

Perception Dhammajoti, KL, Abhidharma Doctrine and Controversy on Perception. 3rd revised edition (Hong Kong, 2008).

PJŚ Prajñapti-sāstra, 施設論 (T no. 1538).

PrŚ Abhidharmaprakaraṇa-sāstra, 阿毗達磨品類足論 (T no. 1542).

PTS The Pāli Text Society, London.

PVV Pañcavastuka-vibhāṣā-sāstra (T no. 1555).

S Saṃyutta Nikāya.

SĀ Saṃyuktāgama, 難阿含 (T no. 98).

SatŚ *Satyasiddhi-sāstra, 成實論, Chinese tr. by Kumārajīva.

SDS Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha.

SgPŚ Abhidharma-saṅgīti-paryāya-sāstra, 阿毗達磨異門足論 (T no. 1536).

Siddhi(C) *Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi, 成唯識論, compiled by Xuan Zang (T no. 1585).


Siddhi(S) Sanskrit text of Sthiramati’s Triṃśikā Vijñaptimātratā (-siddhi) (= Siddhi).

Siddhi(T) Sun cu pa’i ’grel pa (Tibetan version of Sthiramati’s Triṃśikābhaṣya). Ed., Teramoto, E (Kyoto, 1932).

SPrŚ *Abhidharma-samaya-pradīpikā-sūtra, 阿毗達磨顯宗論 (T no. 1563).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UdA</td>
<td>Udāna Aṭṭhakathā (Paramatthadīpanī).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vīṃś</td>
<td>Vīṃśatikā Viṃśaptimātratāsiddhi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VKŚ</td>
<td>Abhidharma-vijñāna-kāya-śāstra, 阿毘達磨識身足論 (T no. 1539).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YBŚ</td>
<td>V. Bhattacharya (ed), The Yogācārabhūmi of Ācārya Asaṅga.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Abhidharma
Its Origin, Meaning and Function

1.1. Origin of the abhidharma
1.1.1. Origin according to tradition
1.1.2. Historical origin
1.2. Definitions of abhidharma
1.3. The soteriological function of the abhidharma

1.1. Origin of the abhidharma
1.1.1. Origin according to tradition

Traditionally, the abhidharma-piṭaka is given as the last of the tripiṭakas whose order is: vinaya, sūtra, abhidharma — or sūtra, vinaya, abhidharma in the northern tradition. This very probably reflects the historical fact that the abhidharma texts were evolved and compiled as a piṭaka later than the other two. This same fact is also discernible in the ancient triple designations given to the specialists of the Buddhist Canon — vinaya-dhara, sūtra-dhara, mātrkā-dhara. Significantly, the third term in the list has, instead of abhidharma, the term mārkā (Pāli: mātikā), meaning a matrix in the form of a list summarily enumerating topics to be elaborated upon. This suggests that at the earlier stage, the study of these mārkā-s had served as a major basis for the development of the abhidharma-piṭaka. (See below).

It is possible that most of the so-called Hīnayāna schools in India possessed their own sets of tripiṭaka. Unfortunately, most of these tripiṭaka texts are no longer extant. As far as the canonical abhidharma texts are concerned, we are now in possession of only two complete sets: the seven texts of the Theravāda preserved in Pāli, and the seven Sarvāstivāda texts in Chinese translation. Of the latter, however, the Prajñāpīti-śāstra (PjŚ) is only a partial translation; a fuller version is preserved in the Tibetan (see infra, § 4.1.1.3). It is in the abhidharma treatises — comprising commentaries, sub-commentaries and compendia besides the canonical texts — that these Hīnayāna schools gradually defined and articulated their distinctive doctrinal positions. While it is a fact that the extant vinaya- and sūtra-piṭaka-s can no longer claim to be the pristine words of the Buddha, much as we would like, the sectarian coloring within these two collections are by and large marginal compared to that in the abhidharma texts — a well-known fact borne out by comparative studies of the extant Pāli nikāya and the Chinese āgama texts.
According to the Theravāda tradition, Śāriputra transmitted the *abhidhamma* to the disciples. All of the seven canonical *abhidhamma* texts are said to be by the Buddha, the first *ābhidhammika*.¹ The Buddha first taught it to the gods in the Thirty-three (tāva-tiṃsa)-Heaven; and it was studied and transmitted through Śāriputra by a succession of teachers.²

The Sarvāstivāda tradition, on the other hand, accepts that their canonical *abhidharma* works were compiled by the disciples. Nevertheless, like the Theravāda, it too maintains that the Buddha is the real author; the compilers simply gathered up and re-arranged His dispersed teachings:

> Without the exposition of the *abhidharma*, the pupil is unable to examine the dharma-s. However, it was spoken by the Fortunate One in a dispersed manner. The Venerable Kātyāyanīputra and others, having collected it, established it [as the *abhidharma*] — just as the Venerable Dharmatrāta made the *Udāna-varga* [by collecting the scattered sayings of the Buddha].³

The *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* (MVŚ) likewise speaks of Kātyāyanīputra compiling what the Buddha had spoken in the *sūtra*-s. It further declares:

> The *abhidharma* was originally the words of the Buddha; it is only the compilation of the Venerable [Kātyāyanīputra]. Moreover, whether they are the Buddha’s or the disciples’ words, [so long as] they do not contradict dharmatā, the Bhagavat allowed all of them to be studied (lit: upheld) by the bhikṣu-s. Accordingly, the Venerable made the compilation from what he had heard from the line of tradition or from his examination through the power of his resolution-knowledge (*praṇidhi-jñāna*).

The 5th century C.E. orthodox Vaibhāṣika master, Saṃghabhadra, speaks in the same vein:

> …the Buddha first expounded the *abhidharma* Himself. Without the Buddha’s exposition, the great disciples, Śāriputra and others, would not have been capable of the proper investigation into the characteristics of the dharma-s. … [The compilation of the Buddha’s dispersed *abhidharma* teachings] by Venerable Kātyāyanīputra and others … was like the collective compilation (*saṃgīti*) of the *vinaya* and the *sūtras* by the Venerable Mahākāśyapa and others. The two *piṭakas*, *sūtra* and *vinaya*, were compiled in accordance with the words; it was only the *abhidharma-piṭaka* that was compiled in accordance with the meanings. … The compilation of the *abhidharma* in accordance with the Buddha’s noble teachings was permitted by the Buddha and can therefore be called the Buddha’s words.⁴
1. ABHIDHARMA – ITS ORIGIN, MEANING AND FUNCTION

1.1.2. Historical origin

In all probability, the abhidharma has its origin in the sūtra-s. However, the term abhidharma — although occurring, often alongside abhivinaya, in the sūtra-s — does not refer to the abhidharma texts constituting the third piṭaka, for in the sūtra-s the meaning of abhidharma seems to be ‘about the dhamma’, or ‘the profound doctrines’ (of the Buddha).

The following types of sūtra-s are particularly noteworthy as having features which contributed to the development of the abhidhamma/abhidharma in the later specialized sense, all aiming at unfolding and clarifying the Buddha’s profound teachings:

(a) Those featuring abhidharma-kathā — a solemn dialogue between two bhikṣu-s concerning the spiritual path; others listening are not permitted to interrupt. An example is the Mahāgosiṅga-sutta. Sāriputta asks Ānanda, Anuruddha, Revata, Mahā Kassapa and finally Mahā Moggallāna in turn what kind of bhikkhu could enhance the brilliance of the Gosīṅga-sālavana-dāya which is delightful in the moon-lit night. Moggallāna replies: “Here, friend Sāriputta, two bhikkhu-s engage in an abhidhamma-kathā, and each, being questioned by the other, answers without floundering, and their discussion proceeds in accordance with the Dhamma. Such kind of bhikkhu-s could illuminate this Gosīṅga-sālavana-dāya.” The 6th century Theravāda commentator, Buddhaghoṣa, in fact, links dhammakathika with abhidhamma. (Atthasālinī, 25)

(b) Those featuring vedalla (Skt. vaidalya): Derived from √dal meaning to ‘crack’/‘open’, this feature signifies the extensive unraveling of the profound doctrinal meanings that have been hidden. In form, it consists of a question and answer session on doctrinal matters with a scope apparently broader than that in abhidhamma-kathā — either between the Buddha and the fourfold disciples (with others listening) or among the disciples themselves. Vedalla-kathā is also sometimes juxtaposed to abhidhamma-kathā; e.g., the Mahā-vedalla-sutta where Mahākoṭṭhita questions and Sāriputta answers; the Cūḷavedalla-sutta where Visākhā questions, Dhammadinnā answers.

In the Theravāda classificatory scheme of the Buddha’s nine-fold teachings (navaṅga-satthu-sāsana), vedalla occurs as the last member, which may suggest that it came to be incorporated into the scheme at the time of the evolution of abhidharma into the genre of which it was considered to correspond. Both the Sarvāstivāda and the Yogācāra equate it with vaitulya and vaipulya. Saṅghabhadra’s explanation is as follows:
Vaipulya refers to the extensive analytical clarification of dharma-s by means of logical reasoning (*yukti, *nyāya); for, all dharma-s have numerous natures and characteristics which cannot be analytically clarified without extensive discussion. It is also known as extensive bursting (廣破; vaidalya < vi + ṇdal), for this extensive discussion is capable of bursting the extremely strong darkness of nescience (ajñāna). It is also known as unmatchability (無比; vaitulya < vi + ṇtul), for this extensive discussion has subtle and profound principles which cannot be matched.9

The same equation of the three terms is also seen in the Abhidharmasamuccaya (under Dharma-viniścaya) and its bhāṣya which noteworthy gives a Mahāyānic stress in this context, speaking of them as being synonyms for Mahāyāna.10 It may well be that by Asaṅga's time, if not earlier, this had become a common northern Buddhist tradition.11

(c) Those featuring the vibhaṅga (‘analysis/exposition’) style — a brief, summarized teaching is elaborated by the Buddha or a competent disciple. The vibhaṅga methodology, however, is to be understood as originally representing a distinctive characteristic of the Buddha's teachings, and not just a feature characterizing an exposition on the brief teachings. The two terms, abhidharma and abhivinaya (‘concerning the dharma’, ‘concerning the vinaya’), often juxtaposed in the sūtra-s, are indicative of the earliest development. The significance of being the elaboration on brief teachings, however, came to predominate at least by the time of formation of the nikāya/āgama collections. In the Madhyamāgama, we find some 35 sūtra-s grouped as *vibhaṅga recitations (分別誦). Likewise, there are some 12 sutta-s grouped under the Pāli Vibhaṅga-vagga. Like vedalla, then, it also came to signify the explication of the profound meanings intended in the Buddha's words, and the vibhaṅga method is to effect this through an analytical elaboration. Such a development was obviously connected with the emergence of the abhidharmas. Indeed, the earliest abhidharma texts, such as the Dharma-skandha-śāstra, exhibit the feature of being a technical commentary on the sūtra-s, and one of the early Pāli canonical abhidhamma texts is noticeably named a Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa.

(d) Those featuring mātrkā/mātikā — originally meaning a matrix or list of headings purporting to systematically summarize the Buddha's teaching (see above), e.g., the list of 37 doctrinal topics often known as bodhipaksya-dharma12 — four smṛtyupasthāna-s, four samyak pradhāna-s, four rddhipāda-s, five indriya-s, five bala-s, seven bodhyaṅga-s, eight āryaśāṅgika-mārga-s. In the Kinti-sutta13 these are given as the dhamma taught by the Buddha who has realized them directly (ye vo mayā dhammā abhiññā desitā), and the bhikkhu-s
are exhorted to train themselves in them concordantly. It is noteworthy that, in this context, the term abhidhamma occurs: *tesaṅ ca vo bhikkhave samaggānam ... sikkhatam, siyamsu dve bhikkhū abhidhamme nānāvādā...* (“O bhikkhu-s, while you are training concordantly..., two bhikkhu-s might dispute as regards the abhidhamma...”). The same list of 37 are given in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* as a summary of the Dhamma taught by the Buddha throughout His whole career. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKB) refers to them as constituting the Buddha’s Saddharma pertaining to realization (*adhigama*); that pertaining to teaching (*āgama*; lit. ‘tradition’) is said to comprise the *sūtra*, *vinaya* and *abhidharma*. In the northern tradition, however, it came to include as well the fundamental *abhidhara* texts and the truthful abhidhamic commentaries on the Buddha’s words. (See below).

This feature represents a tendency toward organization and systematization which is the essential characteristic of *abhidharma*. Many scholars believe that *abhidharma* evolved from mātrkā. We mentioned above (§ 1.1.1) the canonical triplet, *vinaya-dhara*—*sūtra-dhara*—mātrkā-dhara. In the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣa* (fully compiled around mid 2nd century C.E.) of the Sarvāstivāda, we actually find mātrkā-dhara replaced by *abhidhara-dhara* in the Vinaya version cited therein. As a matter of fact, the whole of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* may be considered as a mātrkā, which in the Sarvāstivāda evolved into a fundamental *abhidhara* text entitled the *Saṅgīti-paryāya*. It is noteworthy that, as late as the 5th century C.E., we find Saṁghabhadra mentioning mātrkā unambiguously as being synonymous with *abhidhara* and *upadeśa* (see below), and cites as mātrkā the early Sarvāstivāda canonical texts: the *Saṅgītiparyāya*, the *Dharma-skandha* and the *Prajñapti-śāstra*. Similarly, in explaining the abhidhara-piṭaka, the Mūla-sarvāstivāda-vinaya-kṣudraka-vastu also says, “the four *smṛtyupasthāna*-s, the four *samyak-prahāṇa*-s, ... the *Dharma-saṃgīti* (= SgPŚ), the *Dharma-skandha* — these are collectively known as mātrkā-s”. The *Aśokāvadāna*, too, speaks of the mātrkā-piṭaka, giving similar contents.

We find similar reference of Abhidharma as mātrkā among the earliest textual material of the Yogācāra. Thus, in the Śrutamayī-bhūmi of the Basic Section (本地分), “mātrkā” is clearly mentioned in lieu of “abhidharmab” as the third of the Tripiṭaka:

> What is the distinctive definition of the designation (*prajñapti-vyavasthāna*; *gdags pa rnam par gzhag pa*; 施設建立) of the *vastu* (constituent topics)?
There are three types of *vastu* that subsume the totality of the Buddha’s verbal teachings: 1, *sūtra-vastu*; 2, *vinaya-vastu*; 3, *mātṛka-vastu*.

The Xian-yang Sheng-jiao Lun (T no. 1602) ascribed to Asaṅga, on the three areas of the “system of instigative instruction” (教導理趣; bshad pa’i tshul; samādāpana-naya), explains that “the area subsumed under *mātṛkā* comprises the seventeen basic bhūmi-s and the four saṃgrahaṇī-s (i.e., the whole of the Yogācārabhūmi(-śāstra)).”

(e) Those featuring *upadeśa* — an expository or exegetical discourse. This is explained by Saṃghabhadra as follows, equating it with *mātṛkā* and *abhidharma*:

*Upadeśa* refers to the non-erroneous (aparyasta, aviparīta) revealing, answering of objections and ascertainement, of the preceding [eleven] members. According to some, *upadeśa* also refers to analytical explanations, in accordance with reasoning, given by those who have seen the truth of the profound meanings of the *sūtra*-s, or by other wise ones. It is none other than what is called *mātṛkā*, for, when the meaning of other *sūtra*-s is to be explained, this serves as the *mātṛkā*. It is also called *abhidharma*, on account of its being face to face (abhi) with the characteristics of dharmanas, and of its being a non-erroneous unraveling of the characteristics of dharma-s.

The Yogācāra tradition also equates likewise:

What is *upadeśa*? It refers to all the *mātṛkā*-s, abhidharma-s. The investigation into the profound *sūtra-piṭaka* and the proclamation of all the essential tenets of the *sūtra*-s — this is known as *upadeśa*.

The above-cited Sarvāsivāda explanations by Saṃghabhadra on *upadeśa* and its relation to *mātṛkā* are also reflected in the Yogācāra Xian-yang Sheng-liao Lun:

*upadeśa* refers to the *mātṛkā*-s subsumed in the *sūtra*-s. For instance, all the nītārtha-sūtra-s are called *mātṛkā*; viz, the elaborate expositions provided by the Tathāgata himself on the characteristics of dharma-s (諸法體相; *dharma-lakṣaṇa*). Furthermore,*mātṛkā* also refers to the non-erroneous (aviparyasta) revelations (teachings) of the characteristics of dharma-s by those disciples who have gained insight into the noble track (已見聖跡; *drṣṭa-pada*), basing on their own realization. *mātra* is also called abhidharma. ... All the other expositions of the meanings of the *sūtra*-s on the basis of this *mātṛkā* also receive the name, *upadeśa.*
1. Abhidharma – Its Origin, Meaning and Function

Such equation points clearly to the definite connection that this last member (aṅga) of the dvādaśāṅga has with the evolution of the abhidharma. The 12 aṅga-s, as given by Saṃghabhadra, are: 1. sūtra, 2. geya, 3. vyākaraṇa, 4. gāthā, 5. udāna, 6. nidāna, 7. avadāna, 8. itivṛttaka/ityuktaka, 9. jātaka, 10. vaipula/vaitulya (which also seems to be connected with vaidalya = Pāli vedalla), 11. adbhuta-dharma, 12. upadeśa. As we have seen above, Saṃghabhadra asserts that upadeśa is the non‑erroneous revealing, unraveling of difficulties and ascertainment, of the meaning of all the preceding 11 parts of the dvādaśāṅga. This is in fact a Sarvāstivāda description of the nature and function of abhidharma.

Saṃghabhadra's assertion of upadeśa being the true criterion for the Buddha’s words (buddha-vacana) is quite in line with the definition in MVŚ:

What is upadeśa (議論)? It refers to those teachings within the sūtra-s which serve as criteria for the black-teachings (黑說), the great-teachings (大說), etc.

Furthermore, it is as in the case where once the Buddha, having briefly expounded on a sūtra, entered into his room remaining silent for a long time, [whereupon] the great disciples assembled together, each explaining the Buddha’s words with different words and meanings.

In brief, three basic meanings of upadeśa are discernible in the northern tradition:

(i) Those teachings within the sūtra-piṭaka, given by the Buddha Himself, which serve to ascertain what may or may not be accepted as the Buddha’s true teachings. In Saṃghabhadra’s terms, they are represented by the last of the Buddha’s twelve-fold teachings, serving to ascertain the authenticity of all the other aṅga-s as buddha-vacana.

(ii) The collective elaborate discussion by the great disciples on the brief discourses of the Buddha.

(iii) Since, as Saṃghabhadra states, upadeśa also refers to truthful expositions by “those who have seen the truth” of the sūtra-s or “other wise ones”, it can then subsume not only the canonical abhidharma texts but also certain authoritative post-canonical commentaries satisfying the Sarvāstivādin conditions.
1.2. Definitions of *abhidharma*

In the Pāli tradition, two main meanings are given: (i) supplementary (*atireka*) doctrines, (ii) special/superior (*visesa*/*visiṭṭha*) doctrines.\(^{30}\) There are also other meanings, notably ‘supreme (*uttama*) doctrines’.\(^{31}\) These meanings are based on the interpretation of the prefix, *abhi*, as ‘supreme’ or ‘excellent’, and of *dhamma* as ‘doctrine’. The other interpretation of *abhi*, which seems to be historically earlier,\(^{32}\) is ‘pertaining to’, or ‘facing/envisaging’; *abhidhamma* accordingly means ‘pertaining to the doctrine’ or ‘concerning the doctrine’.

In the northern tradition, the second foregoing interpretation is the predominant one, and Xuanzang consistently renders *abhidharma* as ‘facing/envisaging *dharma*’ (對法). However, the two components, ‘facing/pertaining’ and ‘*dharma*’, are further elaborated differently. Thus, MVŚ gives numerous explanatory definitions of the term *abhidharma* as follows:

(I) According to the Ābhidharmikas (*Ābhidhārmikas*), it is so called because (1) it can properly and utterly determine (*vi-niś-√ci*) the characteristics of all *dharma*-s; (2) it can properly examine and penetrate the *dharma*-s, (3) it can directly realize (*abhi-sam-√i*) and realize (*sākṣāt-√kr*) with regard to all *dharma*-s; (4) it can get to the very bottom of the profound nature of *dharma*-s; (5) through it, the wisdom-eye of the noble ones comes to be purified; (6) it is only through it that the nature of the *dharma*-s, subtle from beginningless time, comes to be revealed; (7) what it expounds is not contradictory to the nature of the *dharma*-s — one who is extremely well-versed with regard to the specific and common characteristics in the *abhidharma* cannot be faulted in any way and made to contradict the nature of the *dharma*-s; (8) it can refute and defeat all the heretical views.

(II) According to the Venerable Vasumitra, it is so called because (9) it can always ascertain the nature of the *dharma*-s given in the *sūtra*-s; (10) it can properly understand the nature of the twelve-link conditioned co-arising (*pratītya-samutpāda*); (11) it can directly realize the *dharma*-s of the four noble truths; (12) it skillfully expounds on the practice of the noble eightfold path; (13) it can realize *nirvāṇa*; (14) it repeatedly analyses the *dharma*-s from innumerable doctrinal perspectives.

(III) According to the Bhadanta (Dharmatrāta), it is so called because (15) — by means of words, phrases and sentences — it systematically compiles, organizes and analyses the
dharmas pertaining to defilement, purification, bondage, liberation, and to the saṃsāric process (pravṛtti) and its cessation (nivṛtti).

(IV) According to Venerable Parśva, because (16) it is the final, judgmental, absolute and non-erroneous prajñā.

(V) According to Venerable Ghoṣaka, because (17) it can properly explain, to a seeker of liberation engaged in the proper practice, what he has not understood: “this is duḥkha; this is the cause of duḥkha; this is the cessation of duḥkha; this is the path leading to the cessation; this is the preparatory path (prayoga-mārga); this is the unhindered path (ānantarya-mārga); this is the path of liberation (vimokṣa-mārga); this is the path of progress/advancement/distinction (viśeṣa-mārga);33 this is the path of the candidate (pratipanna); this is the acquisition of the spiritual fruit.”

(VI) According to the Dharmaguptas, because this dharma is predominant.

(VII) According to the Mahīśāsakas, because (18) prajñā can illuminate the dharma-s.

(VIII) According to the Dārṣṭāntikas, because (19) it is next to nirvāṇa, the supreme among all dharma-s.

(IX) According to the Grammarians (Śābdika, Śābdavāda), because (20) it can abandon the fetters, bondages, proclivities, secondary defilements and envelopments; and it can ascertain the aggregates (skandha), abodes (āyatana), elements (dhātu), conditioned co-arising (pratītya-samutpāda), truths (satya), foods (āhāra), spiritual fruits (śrāmanya-phala), factors conducive to enlightenment (bodhipakṣya-dharma), etc. — a means to abandon, and bhi means to ascertain.

(X) According to Venerable Buddhapālita, because (21) the prefix abhi means ‘face to face’, and this dharma can induce all the skillful dharma-s — the bodhi-pakṣya-dharma-s, etc. — to appear face to face.

(XI) According to Venerable Buddhadeva, because (22) abhi means ‘predominant’, and this dharma is predominant.

(XII) According to Vāmalabdha, because (23) abhi means ‘veneration’, and this dharma is honorable and venerable.34

Among the various meanings given above, some are more or less overlapping, and some find correspondence in the Theravāda. They may be subsumed into two broad senses: (i) that of clear, decisive discernment and ascertainment; (ii) that of being direct, face to face.35 The first, while
bringing out the characteristic concern of abhidharma articulated by the Ābhidharmika (/Ābhidhārmika) tradition, emphasizes its intellectual function; the second, the spiritual or soteriological function. In these explanations, dharma is explicitly interpreted as either the fundamental constituents of existence or as nirvāṇa qua the supreme Dharma, and implicitly, in some cases, as doctrine.

Unlike in later texts (e.g., AKB. See below), there is no explicit definition on dharma as such in the canonical abhidharma texts or MVŚ. Nevertheless, the notion of a dharma being a unique existent possessing a non-changing intrinsic nature is certainly attested at least in JPŚ and MVŚ. The latter speaks of “dharma-s each abiding in its intrinsic nature” and, “the essential nature of a dharma does not change throughout time.”

JPŚ states:

... dharma-s are determined with respect to nature and characteristic ... Dharma-s are determined, without being co-mingled. They abide in their intrinsic natures, and do not relinquish their intrinsic natures.

Both aspects — the traditional understanding of abhi as ‘excellent’ (eulogistic) and ‘pertaining’, on the one hand, and the essential characteristic of the ābhidharmic exegesis, on the other — are brought out in the following definition of Saṅghabhadra:

All the most excellent discourses associated with adhiśīla are called abhvīnaya, as they are capable of being face to face with the vinaya. All the profound exegetical discourses (論道) associated with the characteristics of dharma-s are called abhidharma, as they are capable of being face to face with the nature and characteristics of dharma-s. Or rather, the sūtra-s are called dharma; the [abhidharma] treatises, being capable of directly (face to face) discerning their meanings, are called abhidharma.

We know that adhi-śīla means both “higher sīla” and “pertaining/relating to sīla”. Thus, the prefix, abhi-, in abhvīnaya and abhidharma—like the prefix, adhi- in adhiśīla — connotes both senses of “excellent/higher” and “pertaining to”. Additionally, abhi- in the two terms is also said to signify face-to-face (decisive) discernment, thus further bringing out the exegetical and spiritual significance of the “abhidharma”. AKB explains this term as follows:

A dharma is so called because it sustains its own characteristic. This dharma faces (abhi) toward the dharma in the highest sense, i.e., nirvāṇa, or toward the characteristics of dharma-s, thus it is abhidharma.
Abhidharma in the highest, real, sense is none other than the pure prajñā defined as the discernment of dharma-s (dharma-pravicaya). In keeping with the Ābhidharmika definition of abhidharma which we have seen in MVŚ (supra, § 1.2.(1)), Samghabhadra, in this connection, distinctively spells out the sense of abhi as signifying abhisamaya, ‘direct realization’:

Now, why is it that only the outflow-free prajñā alone is called abhidharma? Because, when the characteristics of dharma-s have been directly realized (現觀; abhi-sam-√i) through it, one will no longer be deluded [therein].

Secondarily or conventionally, abhidharma also refers to the without-outflow (sāsrava) prajñā — derived from listening, reflection and cultivation (śruta-cintā-bhāvanā-mayī prajñā) or innately acquired (upapattipratilambhikā) — which helps to bring about the pure (i.e., outflow-free) prajñā. The abhidharma śāstra-s, too, inasmuch as they serve as a means or as requisites (saṃbhāra) to its acquisition, are also to be considered as abhidharma.

The nature and characteristics of the abhidharma are distinguished from those of the other two piṭaka-s as follows: (See also §1.3 below)

The Sūtra is the emanation (niṣyanda) of the Buddha’s power (bala), for none can refute the doctrines therein.

The Vinaya is the emanation of great compassion (mahā-karuṇā), for it advocates morality (śīla) for the salvation of those in the unfortunate planes of existence (durgāti).

The Abhidharma is the emanation of fearlessness, for it properly establishes the true characteristics of dharma-s, answering questions and ascertaining fearlessly.

In terms of scope of discourse:

The Sūtra comprises various miscellaneous discourses; the Vinaya deals with the training factors (śikṣā-pada); the Abhidharma investigates into the intrinsic and common characteristics of dharma-s.

In terms of stage (avasthā) of discourse:

The Sūtra discourses are in respect of the stage of the beginners (ādhikarmika). The Vinaya discourses are in respect of the stage of the adepts (kṛta-parijaya). The Abhidharma discourses are in respect of the stage of complete mastery (atikrānta-manaskāra: One who ‘has transcended mental application/effort’).
1.3. The soteriological function of the abhidharma

The above discussion (§ 1.1.2, § 1.2) should suffice to indicate that abhidharma originated with a spiritual motivation: It developed in the process of the disciples desiring to properly, fully, and systematically understand the profound teachings of the Buddha. Among the tenets listed in the *Samayabhedoparacanā-cakra* as being commonly held by all Sarvāstivādins, one states that “the noble eightfold path constitutes the True Dharma-wheel (dharma-cakra)”; another, that “not all sūtra-s spoken by the Buddha have their meanings fully drawn out (nītārtha).”

Taken together, these tenets amount to a statement of the Ābhidharmika position that the Abhidharma, which is the absolute, true teaching of the Buddha, constitutes the true spiritual praxis taught by the Buddha for the realization of Nirvāṇa — the noble eightfold path.

In AKB (ca. 5th century C.E.) and abhidharma works subsequent to it, we can still clearly discern the firm conviction in the soteriological function of abhidharma. Thus, in AKB the Ābhidharmika declares that abhidharma has been taught by the Buddha because it is the only excellent means for the appeasement of defilements enabling worldlings to get out of samsāra:

> Since apart from the discernment of dharma-s (= prajñā = abhidharma), there is no excellent means for the appeasement of the defilements; And it is on account of the defilements that beings wander in the existence-ocean. For this reason, therefore, it is said, the [abhidharma] is taught by the Master.

The importance of the discernment of dharma-s has in fact already been emphasized in the Sūtra among the earliest Buddhist teachings on spiritual praxis: It is the second member of the seven “factors conducive to enlightenment” (bodhyaṅga; Pāli: bojjhaṅga), to be cultivated immediately after one has acquired mindfulness (smṛti) which is the first member.

The Ābhidharmika distinction in terms of the functions of the three piṭaka-s is also indicative of the spiritual function of the abhidharma: The sūtra-piṭaka is taught so that those who have not planted the skilful roots (kuśala-mūla) and become delighted therein will plant them and be delighted; the vinaya, so that those who have planted and become delighted in the skilful roots will mature their series, practicing what should be practiced; the abhidharma, so that those who have so matured and practiced will have the proper means to be enlightened and liberated.
Intellectual studies and Ābhidharmika analysis must serve the sole purpose of spiritual realization. This soteriological function is also brought out in the following explanation in MVŚ regarding the practitioners of insight meditation (vipaśyanā-bhāvanā):

Those who mostly cultivate the requisites (sambhāra) of insight are those who, at the stage of preparatory effort, always delight in studying and reflecting on the tripaṭaka. They repeatedly examine the specific and general characteristics of all dharma-s [— topics of fundamental importance for abhidharma]. When they enter into the noble path, they are called the vipaśyanā-type of practitioners (vipaśyanā-carita).

The same text further explains the ultimate purpose of abhidharmic analysis which is to proceed from our deluded state and reach absolute quiescence through a gradual progression from intellectual to spiritual insight:

One wishing to examine all dharma-s should first examine their subsumption (saṃgraha) in terms of intrinsic nature.

What are the benefits and merits to be derived from the examination of the subsumption in terms of the intrinsic nature of dharma-s?

It removes the notions of Self and unity and trains in the notion of dharma-s … which intensify defilements…. When the notions of Self and unity are removed, one is then able to gain the insight that material dharma-s … will soon be dispersed and immaterial dharma-s … will soon perish. …

In this way, one will come to acquire the seeds similar to the gateway of liberation of emptiness (śūnyatā).

Examining that conditioned dharma-s are empty and not-Self, one will come to be deeply averse to samsāra, thus further acquiring the seeds similar to the gateway of liberation of the signless (ānimitta).

Not delighting in samsāra, one then comes to take deep delight in nirvāṇa, thus further acquiring the seeds similar to the gateway of liberation of non-aspiring (apraṇihita).

With regard to these three samādhi-s [of liberation], one generates the medium with the support of the lower, and the higher with the support of the medium, bringing forth prajñā, becoming detached from the triple spheres, attaining perfect enlightenment and realizing absolute quiescence.
NOTES

1 DhsA, 17.
2 DhsA, 3, 5, 21.
3 AKB, 3: na hi vinābhidharmopadeśena śiṣṭyāḥ śaktō dharmān pravicetum iti | sa tu prakīrṇa ukto bhagavataḥ | bhadantakātyāyanipratraprabhṛtibhiḥ piṇḍikṛtya sthāpitō bhadanta-dharmatātodāna-vargēya-karāṇavat |
4 Ny, 779c.
5 M, i, 212 ff.
6 E.g., A, ii, 107.
7 M, i, 293 ff.
8 M, i, 299 ff.
9 T 29, 595a–b.
10 AsmB, 96: vaipulyaṃ vaidalyaṃ vaityalyaṃ ity ete mahāyānasya pariṣṭhābhikā | kad etat saptavidha mahātva-yogān mahātva-yānam ity ucyate | saptavidha mahātvaṃ ālaṁbhana mahātvaṃ … pratipatti mahātvaṃ … jñāna mahātvaṃ … virya-mahātvaṃ … upāyakauśalya mahaṭṭhaṃ … prāpti mahātvaṃ … karma-mahātvaṃ …
12 MVŚ, 496, equates bodhi here with the knowledge of exhaustion (kṣaya-jñāna) and the knowledge of non-arising (anutpāda-jñāna).
13 M, ii, 238 f.
14 AKB, 459. Also cf. MVŚ, 917c, where the Saddharma is subdivided into the conventional and the absolute (paramārtha) ones. The former comprises the verbal teachings of the tripitaka; the latter is the noble path, i.e., the outflow-free indriya, bala, bodhyaṅga and the mārgāṅga.
15 MVŚ, 546a.
16 T 24, 408b.
17 T 50, 113c.
18 YBŚ, T30, 345a27–29.
20 See also *Satyasiddhi-śāstra, T 32, 245b.
21 T 29, 595b.
22 T 30, 419a.
23 T31, no. 1602, 538c19–539a1.
24 Ny, 595a–b.
25 This enumeration agrees with that in MVŚ, 2a.
26 默 in MVŚ. But as Yin Shun (Study, 24) points out, it clearly is an error for 黑.
27 MVŚ, 660b.
29 See also, Dhammajoti, KL, op. cit., 113 ff.
30 DhsA, 2: kenāṭṭhena abhidhammo dhammātiureka-dhamma-visesaṭṭhena atireka-visesaṭṭhadipako hi ettha abhisaddo ||
1. ABHIDHARMA – ITS ORIGIN, MEANING AND FUNCTION

31 Aṅguttara-nikāya Aṭṭhakathā, iii, 271.
33 For these paths, see infra, § 15.
34 MVŚ, 4a–c.
35 Cf. Study, 38.
36 T27, 42b.
37 T27, 105c.
38 T26, 923c.
39 Ny, 330b: 所有最勝上尸羅相應論道，以能現對毘奈耶故，名阿毘毘奈耶。所有甚深諸法性相應論道，以能現對法性相故，名阿毘達磨。或諸契經名為達磨；論能現前決擇其義，名阿毘達磨。別解脫本名毘奈耶律；唯現前廣辯緣起，名阿毘毘奈耶。
40 TA(U-J), 139, states more specifically that the dharma-s here exclude ākāśa and apratisāṃkhyā-nirodha.
41 AKB, 2: svalaksana-dhāranād dharmah | tad ayam paramārtha-dharmam vā nirvānam dharmalaṅkāṇam vā praty abhimukho dharmā ity abhidharmah |
42 Ny, 329b.
43 MVŚ, 3b–4a. AKB, 2: yāpi ca śrutā-cintā-bhāvanā-mayī sāsravā praṇā upapattipratilambhikā ca sānusārā | yac ca śāstram asyāḥ prāptyartham anāsravāyāḥ praṇāyāḥ tad api tatsambhārabhāvād abhidharma ity ucyate |
44 MVŚ, 1c–2a.
45 MVŚ, 1c; Ny, 595b.
46 T49, 16c.
47 AKB, 2: dharmānāṃ pravicayam antarena nāsti kleśānāṃ yata upaśāntaye ‘bhupāyāḥ | kleśaiś ca bhramati bhavārṇave tra lokas taddhetor ata uditaḥ kilaiśa śāstrā |
48 MVŚ, 2a; Ny, 595b.
49 MVŚ, 148b.
50 MVŚ, 307a.
2. The Ābhidharmika (/Ābhidhārmika) 
Standpoint, Scope And Methodology

2.1. Fundamental standpoint of the Ābhidharmikas

Succinctly, an Ābhidharmika is one who specializes in the abhidharma and takes the abhidharma as the final authority. For him, the abhidharma is definitive (lākṣāṇika) and represents the true intention of the Buddha, taught at the level of absolute truth (paramārtha-satya), with fully drawn out meanings (nītārtha). In contrast, the sūtra-s are implicit (ābhiprāyika) and do not represent the Buddha’s true intention.\(^1\) They generally represent the expedient (aupacārika) teachings whose meanings are yet to be fully drawn out (neyārtha).\(^2\)
This fundamental standpoint may be contrasted with that of the Sautrāntika, a school that was evolved from the Dārṣtāntika and which came into prominence in the process of constantly repudiating and criticizing the Ābhidharmikas. A Sautrāntika takes the sūtra-s as the final authority and rejects the abhidharma texts as representing the Buddha’s teachings. For him, abhidharma refers only to certain types of sūtra-s characterized by the concern with properly determining the meaning (arthaviniścaya) of what the Buddha has taught.3

AKB represents the standpoint of the Vaibhāṣika Ābhidharmikas, the most established Ābhidharmikas, as follows: “Without the expositions in the abhidharma, a student is unable to discern the dharma.”4

In exact contrast to this, the author of Arthaviniścaya-sūtra-nibandhana, who often favors the Sautrāntika standpoint, states, as if correcting the Vaibhāṣika claim: “Without the expositions in the sūtra-s, the student is unable to discern the dharma.”5

Contradicting the Vaibhāṣika, the Sautrāntika master, Sthavira Śrīlāta, asserts:

Those noble teachings elaborated by the Buddha Himself are called nītārtha-sūtra-s; all the other sūtra-s are said to be neyārtha.6

Besides the Sautrāntika, there are other schools, particularly those belonging to the Mahāsāṃghika lineage, which also contradict the Vaibhāṣika standpoint. For the Mahāsāṃghika, “all the sūtra-s discoursed by the Buddha are nītārtha”.7

However, while upholding the supreme authority of the Sūtra, the Sautrāntika-Dārṣtāntikas who are engaged in the Abhidharma controversies with the Ābhidharmikas also at times resort to the distinction between nītārtha and neyārtha sūtra-s. One of their eminent leaders, Śrīlāta, claims that those sūtra-s wherein the Buddha himself first highlights a topic and then proceeds to elaborate are nītārtha; all the other sūtra-s are neyārtha.8 Saṃghabhadra rejects this claim, citing sūtra-s which are considered as nītārtha even when they lack the said feature. He ridicules Śrīlāta:

Thus not comprehending the distinctive features of the nītārtha and neyārtha sūtra-s, he claims: “We take the Sūtra as the authority (sūtra-prāmāṇīkāḥ)”. This is extremely illogical. It is for this reason that their school of school has been repeatedly ridiculed by us Vaibhāṣikas. In this context, the Sūtrakāra (i.e., Vasubandhu) makes this pretentious assertion: “The Sautrāntika
masters state thus.” Are they here making their own assertion or is it the intention of the sūtra? If it is [supposed to be] the intention of the sūtra, then [I must say that] the sūtra does not intend thus. ...

2.2. Arguments for Abhidharma being buddha-vacana

It is important for all Buddhist schools to establish that their teachings are genuine buddha-vacana (‘words of the Buddha’). For the Ābhidharmikas, the abhidharma doctrines are not speculative philosophy or intellectual inventions; they are the buddha-vacana par excellence. Their opponents, the Sautrāntikas, repudiate this claim. Saṃghabhadra analyses the Sautrāntika disagreement as being threefold:

(a) They were said to be composed by Kātyāyanīputra and others.
(b) The Buddha never mentioned that abhidharma is a reliance (pratiśaraṇa).
(c) The tenets of the different abhidharma schools vary.

Saṃghabhadra replies:

a. As the abhidharma [texts] were compiled by the great disciples on the basis of the Buddha’s teaching, they are approved by the Buddha; they are also buddha-vacana. As they are in accord with the knowledge which knows fully (pari-√jñā) the causes and effects of defilement and purification, they are like the sūtra-s. If what has been approved by the Buddha is not called buddha-vacana, then innumerable sūtra-s would have to be abandoned!

b. If you say that what the Buddha has not mentioned as a pratiśaraṇa is not buddha-vacana, then the vinaya would not be buddha-vacana. … Moreover, the abhidharma should definitely be accepted as sūtraviśeṣa, and thus constituting a pratiśaraṇa. Or, it should be the case that the gāthā-s, etc., do not constitute pratiśaraṇa, for the Buddha only exhorted us to take the sūtra-s as pratiśaraṇa…. Furthermore, when the Buddha exhorted Ānanda to take the sūtra-s as pratiśaraṇa, He was in actual fact exhorting him to take the abhidharma as pratiśaraṇa; for the latter is the authority (pramāṇa) of the sūtra-s, hence it is the sūtra-pramāṇa, that is, it comprises the definitive meanings of the sūtra-s; for the abhidharma can ascertain as to which sūtra-s are nītārtha, which ones are neyārtha. The name, ‘abhidharma’, can subsume all words which do not contradict any of the noble doctrines; based on this principle, it is known as a nītārtha-sūtra. Whatever contradicts this principle is said to be neyārtha.
c. As to your assertion that the abhidharma is not buddha-vacana on account of the fact that the tenets of the different abhidharma schools vary — in that case, the same should apply to the sūtra-s, for differences in wording and meaning do exist in the extant sūtra-s of the various schools; on account of these differences, their tenets become different.

Thus, as Saṃghabhadra argues, the abhidharma is not only sūtra in the highest sense, it is the ultimate criterion or authority for ascertaining the genuine sūtra-s (sūtra-pramāṇa). (Cf. nature and function of upadeśa as abhidharma — § 1.1.2.e). In that sense, the Ābhidharmikas would argue, it is they themselves who properly take the sūtra-s as the final authority. The claim that the abhidharma represents the real words of the Buddha is also reflected in Saṃghabhadra’s definition of sūtra as the first of the dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana (= buddha-vacana):

By sūtra is meant that which subsumes and contains all the words which accord with the firm principles of both the saṃvṛti- and paramārtha-satya-s. Sūtra-s in this sense are either discoursed by the Buddha or the disciples, for [the latter] discoursed because [the content was] approved by the Buddha.12

2.3. Scope of study of the Ābhidharmikas

Like the Theravādins, the Sarvāstivādins too claim that the Buddha Himself was the supreme Ābhidharmika.13 One way to define an Ābhidharmika is to locate his scope of study. MVŚ speaks of the scope of the abhidharma-piṭaka as follows:

The meanings of the abhidharma-piṭaka should be understood by means of 14 things: (1-6) the six causes (hetu), (7-10) the four conditions (pratyaya), (11) subsumption/inclusion (saṃgraha), (12) conjunction (samprayoga), (13) endowment (samanvāgama), (14) non-endowment (asamanvāgama). Those who, by means of these 14 things, understand the abhidharma unerringly, are called Ābhidharmikas, not [those who] merely recite and memorize the words.

Other masters say that the meanings of the abhidharma-piṭaka should be understood by means of seven things: (1) skillfulness with regard to causes (hetu-kauśalya), (2) skillfulness with regard to conditions (pratyaya-kauśalya), (3) skillfulness with regard to intrinsic characteristic (śvalakṣaṇa-kauśalya), (4) skillfulness with regard to common characteristic (sāmānyalakṣaṇa-kauśalya), (5) skillfulness with regard to subsumption and non-subsumption (saṃgraha-asamgraha-kauśalya), (6) skillfulness with regard to conjunction and disjunction (samprayoga-
vprayoga-kauśalya\), (7) skillfulness with regard to endowment and non-endowment (samanvāgama-asamanvāgama-kauśalya). Those who, by means of these seven things understand the abhidharma unerringly, are called Ābhidharmikas, not [those who] merely recite and memorize the words.\textsuperscript{14}

Skandhila’s *Abhidharmāvatāra (T no. 1554) too explains the caitasika prajñā as “the examination (upalakṣaṇa), as the case may be, of the following eight kinds of dharma-s: subsumption, conjunction, endowment, cause, condition, fruit, intrinsic characteristic, common characteristic.”\textsuperscript{15} Since abhidharma in the highest sense is none other than the pure (amalā) prajñā, this definition too constitutes a statement of the scope of abhidharma itself and hence a definition of an Ābhidharmika. In brief then, an Ābhidharmika as a specialist is one devoted to the study of these doctrinal categories.

Among these topics, some, like intrinsic characteristic and common characteristic, are used in conjunction with the application of Ābhidharmika methodological devices (more in § 2.4) for Abhidharma investigation, while others — like subsumption and conjunction — themselves constitute methodological devices of fundamental importance. For instance, the application of subsumption is indispensable for the study of the intrinsic nature/intrinsic characteristic of all dharma-s and of conjunction among thought and thought-concomitants.

2.3.1. Intrinsic/unique characteristic (svalakṣaṇa)

By determining the intrinsic or unique characteristic of each constituent in the complex of human experience, sensory and suprasensory, and of the whole universe — either through direct experience or inference — a list of discrete, real, entities (dravyā) called dharma-s is derived.

A dharma is defined as that which holds its intrinsic characteristic (svalaksana-dhāranād dharmaḥ — § 1.2). The intrinsic characteristic of the dharma called rūpa, for example, is the susceptibility of being molested (rūpyate), obstructability and visibility; that of another dharma called vedanā is sensation, etc. And for a dharma to be a dharma, its intrinsic characteristic must be sustainable throughout time: A rūpa remains as a rūpa irrespective of its various modalities. It can never be transformed into another different dharma (such as vedanā). Thus, a uniquely characterizable entity is a uniquely real (in the absolute sense) entity, having a unique intrinsic nature (svabhāva): “To be existent as an absolute entity is to be existent as an intrinsic characteristic (paramārthaena sat svalaksanena sad ityarthāḥ).”\textsuperscript{16}
As MVŚ explains, this is on account of the fact that “the entity itself is [its] characteristic, and the characteristic is the entity itself; for it is the case for all dharma-s that the characteristic cannot be predicated apart from the dharma itself.”\textsuperscript{17} This is no doubt quite in keeping with the fundamental Buddhist stance which consistently rejects any substance-attribute dichotomy. By accounting for the svalakṣaṇa of a dharma — its phenomenologically cognizable aspect — its very ontological existence as a svabhāva/dravya is established. Ultimately these two are one.\textsuperscript{18}

The general Sarvāstivāda tradition recognizes a list of 75 dharma-s (see infra).

2.3.2. Common characteristic (sāmānya-lakṣaṇa)

MVŚ\textsuperscript{19} distinguishes intrinsic characteristic from common characteristic as follows:

The analysis of the characteristic (lakṣaṇa) of a single entity is an analysis of intrinsic characteristic. The analysis of the characteristic of numerous entities [collectively] is an analysis of common characteristic.

Furthermore, the analysis of an individual aggregate (skandha), etc, is an analysis of intrinsic characteristic. The analysis of two, three aggregates, etc, is an analysis of common characteristic.

Elsewhere in MVŚ, the distinction between the two characteristics is also stated thus

The intrinsic nature (svabhāva) of a dharma is the intrinsic characteristic of a dharma. Homogeneity in nature is common characteristic.\textsuperscript{20}

Thus, all rūpa-s, vedanā-s, saṃjñā-s, etc., have the nature of being impermanent. This impermanent nature is a common characteristic.

Whereas a sensory consciousness cognizes only the intrinsic characteristic of a dharma, the mental consciousness with its ability of abstraction can cognize the common characteristic. Thus, the latter pertains to the domain of inference (anumāna), the former, to direct perception (pratyakṣa).

However, distinguishing the understanding (prajñā) that examines intrinsic characteristic from that which examines common characteristic, MVŚ also states:
Furthermore, the understanding derived from listening (śrūta-mayī) and reflection (cintā-mayī) mostly analyze intrinsic characteristics. The understanding derived from cultivation (bhāvanā-mayī) mostly analyze common characteristics.

The understanding not subsumed under the 16 modes of understanding (cf. infra, § 15.3.2.1) mostly analyzes intrinsic characteristics; the understanding subsumed under the 16 modes of understanding analyzes only common characteristics.

Furthermore, the understanding that apprehends (行; √car, lit: ‘courses’) the [four] truths mostly analyses intrinsic characteristics; the understanding at the time of direct realization (abhisamaya) analyses only common characteristics.21

These statements are to be understood as follows: The 16 modes of understanding (ākāra) are those pertaining to the four noble truths (four each): unsatisfactoriness, impermanent, etc., for the truth of unsatisfactoriness, etc. (§ 15.3.2.1). These are no doubt the common characteristics of dharma-s. But they are the non-erroneous universal characteristics (principles) discernible only by spiritual vision as direct perception *par excellence* in the process of direct realization. (cf. § 10.8.8).

As regards the three types of with-outflow understanding: that derived from listening is essentially of an intellectual nature and that from reflection involves meditative praxis; only those of an ārya backed by true spiritual vision (the so called “subsequently obtained knowledge”, prṣṭhalabdha-jñāna) can truly discern the common characteristics constituting the 16 universal principles — hence “mostly analyze intrinsic characteristics”. On the other hand, that derived from cultivation contemplates precisely on the 16 principles (modes of activities) pertaining to the four noble truths.22

2.3.2.1. Relativity of the notion of intrinsic and common characteristics

Of all the Ābhidharmika studies, the examination of intrinsic characteristic and common characteristic may be considered as the most important. In fact, MVŚ goes so far as to declare that “abhidharma is [precisely] the analysis of the intrinsic characteristics and common characteristics of dharma-s”.23 It appears that at first, the Ābhidharmika analysis of intrinsic characteristics was that of the individual doctrinal topics found in the sūtra-s — skandha, āyatana, dhātu, satya, indriya, etc. Later, various taxonomical topics were utilized for the analysis in terms of common characteristics.
In this connection, the relativity as regards the notions of intrinsic characteristic and common characteristic is to be noted. Thus, among various rūpa-s — different colors, different shapes — there is the common nature of being resistant and subject to deterioration. Accordingly, this intrinsic characteristic of a rūpa is distinct from a vedanā, etc. But, at the same time, it is also the common characteristic of these various types of rūpa-s. Similarly, the Great Element, Earth (prthivī), is both an intrinsic characteristic and a common characteristic — it is said to be an intrinsic characteristic in contrast to the other three Great Elements; and a common characteristic, since all Earth Elements have the characteristic of firmness. In this way, MVŚ declares, “there are infinite distinctions [that can be made] between intrinsic characteristic and common characteristic”.24

The Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas distinguish two kinds of intrinsic characteristic: The first, dravya-svalakṣaṇa, is the intrinsic characteristic of the dharma as a unique entity in itself; for instance, that of a particular color, say, blue. The second, āyatana-svalakṣaṇa, refers to the intrinsic characteristic of the dharma as a member of a unique class — an āyatana — of which it is a member; for instance, the particular blue color as a unique class of dharma-s known as “visibles” (rūpa), i.e., the rūpa-āyatana. We can see from this example that, in this context, the āyatana-svalakṣaṇa is, in a sense, a common characteristic in relation to the dravya-svalakṣaṇa. It is for this reason that MVŚ states:

From the point of view of dravya-svalakṣaṇa, the five sensory consciousnesses (pañca-vijñāna-kāya) also take common characteristic as their cognitive object (ālambana). But from the point of view of āyatana-svalakṣaṇa, the five sensory consciousnesses take intrinsic characteristic alone as their object.25

It is probably in consideration of the relativity in the notions of the intrinsic characteristic and common characteristic of a given dharma that the Sarvāstivāda master, Skandhila, prefers to speak in terms of different degrees of common characteristic only, giving a threefold classification of the characteristics of dharma-s — (i) specifically common, (ii) partially common, (iii) universally-common.26 These three characteristics represent three ascending degrees of generality or universality. The examples he gives make this point evident: (i) an example of the specifically-common characteristic is the rūpaṇa (frūpaṇā) of all rūpa-s; (ii) examples of the partially-common characteristic are anityatā and duḥkhatā; (iii) examples of the universally-common characteristic are nairātmya and śūnyatā.
2.3.3. Subsumption/inclusion (samgraha)

The term samgraha means ‘subsumption’, ‘inclusion’, ‘holding together’, etc. This represents an important methodological device through which the Ābhidharmikas arrive at a final list of unique dharma-s. MVŚ, disputing the view that dharma-s having different intrinsic natures — “other-nature (para-bhāva) as opposed to intrinsic nature — are mutually subsumable, declares that “all dharma-s are subsumable with respect to intrinsic nature.” This subsumption vis-à-vis intrinsic nature is explained as follows:

Because, vis-à-vis intrinsic nature, an intrinsic nature is existent, real, apperceivable (upa-√labh); hence it is called samgraha. Because, vis-à-vis intrinsic nature, an intrinsic nature is not different, not external, not separated, not distinct, not empty; hence it is called samgraha. ... When dharma-s are subsumed vis-à-vis intrinsic nature, it is unlike the case of taking up food with the hand or that of nipping a garment with the fingers. Rather, each of them sustains itself so as not to be disintegrated; hence it is called samgraha. It is named samgraha in the sense of sustaining. Hence, samgraha in the absolute sense (paramārtha) is subsumption of intrinsic nature alone.28

Vasubandhu elaborates on the Sarvāstivāda position that subsumption is vis-à-vis intrinsic nature only:

This is because a dharma is distinct from an other-nature (i.e. from that which is not itself). Therefore it is not reasonable that it is subsumed by that from which it is distinct. For instance, the visual faculty (cakṣur-indriya) is subsumed under the matter-aggregate, by the visual abode (cakṣur-āyatana) and the visual element (cakṣur-dhātu), and the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin. This is because they constitute its intrinsic nature. It is not [subsumed under] the other aggregates, etc, for it is distinct in nature from them.29

Put differently, the study of subsumption in terms of intrinsic nature is none other than the study of the intrinsic characteristics of all dharma-s. This analysis may be made between one single dharma and another dharma, or between one dharma and several other dharma-s, or between one category of dharma-s and another category, or between one category and several other categories.

However, this should not be understood as an ambiguous application of the term intrinsic nature — to both individual dharma-s and categorical groups of dharma. Although the method of subsumption does serve to
discriminate the different categorical-types, its fundamental function is
to investigate into the essential or intrinsic nature of a given group of
forces (phenomenal or unconditioned) which though having the same
intrinsic nature are experienced by us in diverse modes or forms. This
is the essential meaning of “subsumption in respect of intrinsic nature”.

Furthermore, when Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma states that the intrinsic
nature of the three periods of time is the conditioned dharma-s (e.g.,
MVŚ, 393c), it does not mean that a time period is a real entity (dharma)
in itself possessing a unique intrinsic nature, or that it has multiple
intrinsic natures (those of the conditioned dharma-s). It means: in its
essential nature, time does not exist (is nothing) apart from the activities
of the conditioned dharma-s themselves. This kind of question and
answer serves to determine the true essential nature and characteristic
of a given experiential datum — and this is the primary function of
subsumption. This form of investigation is in fact seen frequently in
MVŚ. As another example: to the question, “what is the intrinsic nature
of these four topsy-turvi-ness (taking the impermanent as permanent,
etc.)?”, the answer is, “they have view as their intrinsic nature.”\(^{30}\)

The Sarvāstivādin conception of both the phenomenal existence and
the domain of the unconditioned (asamskrta) is a pluralistic one in
each case. There are innumerable real entities — dharma-s — in either
domain. The uniquely characterized types are designated by different
names, often on account of the fact that the Buddha Himself speaks of
the same thing or phenomenon in different terms.

Thus, from the Ābidharmika perspective, the dharma ‘understanding’
(prajñā) subsumes what are given as various synonymous terms in the
sūtra-s: light (āloka), illumination (prabhā), faculty of understanding
(prajñā-indriya), power of understanding (prajñā-bala), discernment of
dharma-s (dharma-pravicaya), etc. Through the process of samgraha,
then, they can reduce all of them to one unique dharma, with the
realization that they are all just different modalities of the same category
dharma. The Ābidharmikas in fact arrive at further modalities of
prajñā such as knowledge (jñāna), receptivity (ksānti), view (drṣṭi), non-
defiled ignorance (akliṣṭājñāna), etc. In brief, two entities having two
distinctly different svabhāva/svalakṣaṇa are established as two distinct
dharma-s since each dharma is unique. The abhidharmic classification
of these dharma-s into skandha, āyatana and dhātu (see below) is an
application of this methodology of samgraha in respect to svabhāva/
svalakṣaṇa.
2.3.4. Association/conjunction (saṃprayoga)

Conjunction is another important methodological device for abhidharma studies, employed in the mental domain. The understanding of mental processes is of paramount importance for the Buddhist practitioners, Ābhidharmikas included. Through the investigation of saṃprayoga, the Ābhidharmikas derive an understanding of which mental factors are conascent, and which factors affect the mind and other thought concomitants, and in what ways. In other words, it is an investigation into the dynamic interaction among simultaneously existing mental elements.

The Sarvāstivāda eventually arrived at a set of five conditions — a fivefold sameness or equality (pañca-samatā) — for the mental constituents said to be in conjunction [by the Sarvāstivāda/Vaibhāṣika]:

1. they must be supported by the same sense organ (āśraya-samatā);
2. they must take the same object (ālambana-samatā);
3. they must have the same mode of understanding (ākāra-samatā);
4. they must be simultaneous (kāla-samatā);
5. they must, in each case, be of a singular substance (dravya-samatā): only one sensation (vedanā), one ideation (saṃjñā), etc., is conjoined in one citta, though there can be various types of sensation and ideation.

2.3.5. Cause (hetu), condition (pratyaya) and fruit (phala)

All dharma-s in phenomenal existence are pratītya-samutpanna — dependently originated from an assemblage of conditions. In this respect, they are often called samskṛta-s, ‘the compounded/conditioned’.

In the Sarvāstivāda conception, dharma-s are distinct ontological entities which, in their intrinsic nature, abide throughout time, totally unrelated to one another and totally devoid of any activities. Given such a theory, it is of fundamental importance that the school has an articulated causal doctrine capable of accounting for the arising of dharma-s as phenomena and their dynamic inter-relatedness in accordance with the Buddha’s teaching of pratītya-samutpāda. Moreover, for the establishment of each of the dharma-s as a real entity, a conditioning force (samskāra), its causal function in each case must be demonstrated. It is probably for this reason that the Sarvāstivāda was also known as Hetuvāda — a school specifically concerned with the theory of causation. In this connection, we may also note that in the definition of an Ābhidharmika quoted above from MVŚ (§ 2.3), hetu/hetu-kauśalya and pratyaya/pratyaya-kauśalya top the lists in each case.
The Sarvāstivādins eventually articulated a doctrine of four conditions, six causes and five fruits (see infra, § 6 and § 7). Significant portions of the Sarvāstivāda canonical abhidharma treatises are devoted specifically to these topics. Thus, the Vijñāna-kāya-śāstra discusses the four conditions (pratyaya) at length; the Jñāna-prasthāna-śāstra expounds on the six causes; the chapter ‘On sanmāra, etc.’ of the Prakaraṇa-pāda-śāstra contains a total of 20 doctrinal perspectives connected with hetu-pratyaya. (See infra, § 4.1.2 ff)

2.3.6. Endowment (samanvāgama), non-endowment (samanvāgama)

Acquisition (prāpti) became a topic of increasing importance in the establishment and defense of the thesis of sarvāstitva. A dharma — e.g., a defilement like rāga — though past, can continue to belong to a personal stream (santāna) by virtue of the fact that a corresponding force — in nature neither material nor mental (cf. infra, § 11.3.1), i.e., its prāpti — continues to link it to the person. When the defilement is abandoned (prahīna), it is not that the defilement (a dharma) loses any existential status — dharma-s are existent always (sarvadā asti). What happens is that its prāpti is rendered inoperative and, at the same time its corresponding non-acquisition (aprāpti), another force also neither material nor mental, comes into play, continuously preventing it from being associated with the person.

Endowment (samanvāgama) seems to be a relatively late doctrinal concern (that is, late compared to the other topics above). But at least by the time of MVŚ, the doctrine had already been well articulated. When a person first acquires a dharma, he is said to have the prāpti of that dharma. Having acquired the dharma, when he continues to possess it, he is said to have the endowment of that dharma. Thus, what is samanvāgata (endowed) is prāpta (acquired); but not vice versa, as what is acquired may be lost subsequently.

2.4. Ābhidharmika methodology for dharma-pravicaya

As we have seen, abhidharma in the real sense is amalā prajñā, and prajñā is dharmapravicaya — discernment or examination of dharma-s (supra, § 1.2). For the Ābhidharmikas, it is only by a thorough and systematic examination of the true nature of all dharma-s that the true import of the Buddha’s Dharma can be ascertained and liberation assured. MVŚ remarks that doctrines such as the ninety-eight proclivities (anuṣaya) innovated in the canonical texts are intended to repudiate the rigid attitude of those “śramaṇa-s who are attached to the letters” (著文沙門):
Question: Why is the exposition of the ninety-eight proclivities made [in the Jñānapratīṣṭhāna]?

Answer: This is the intention of the author of the treatise. The author composed this treatise in accordance with his own intention, which does not contradict the characteristics of dharma; he therefore should not be blamed. Moreover, it was in order to repudiate the intention of the śramaṇa-s who are attached to the letters: There are śramaṇa-s who are attached to the letters; they would never dare to suggest anything outside what the sutra-s state. They assert: ‘Who has wisdom that surpasses the Buddha’s? The Buddha only speaks of seven types of proclivity. Why are they forcibly increased to ninety-eight?’ In order to repudiate their intention, the seven proclivities are elaborated into ninety-eight types.\textsuperscript{33}

The Jñāna-pratīṣṭhāna-śāstra quotes the following stanza to emphasize the fundamental importance of examining the dharma-s:

The forest is the sphere (gati) proper to the beasts; the sky is the sphere proper to the birds; nirvāṇa is the sphere proper to the noble ones; distinction is the sphere proper to the dharma-s.\textsuperscript{34}

MVŚ\textsuperscript{35} comments:

With regard to the sutra-s, one should skillfully distinguish between the explicit (nītārtha) and implicit (neyārtha) [teachings]. … The wise should skillfully distinguish the meanings in the sutra-s and not simply explain in the manner that the words are uttered [therein]. If one simply explains in the manner that the words are uttered, one will create contradictions among the noble teachings and also give rise to topsy-turvy attachment in one’s own mind.

This just-mentioned principle is apparently put into practice without apologies by the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas. Here we may illustrate this with the example of their doctrine on the life-principle (āyus) which they identify with the category known as jīvitendriya. The Sarvāstivāda doctrine is that this viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma operates on both material as well as mental dharma-s. A sentient being in a thoughtless (acittaka) state of meditation (see infra, § 11.3.3) is alive thanks to the function of this force, despite the absence of all mental activities. The Vibhajyavāda, however, asserts that āyus is cittānuvartin; i.e., it operates necessarily with thought. They cite the sutra which speaks of āyus, ūṣman and vijñāna as always going together. The Sarvāstivāda, of course, cannot deny the statement in the sutra. Instead, they argue that the statement must be properly discerned and not taken literally:
If these three dharma-s necessarily go together, there ought to be āṣaman in the ārūpya-dhātu, and [likewise] the manifestation of viññāna in the ideationless meditational state, etc. If this were to be conceded, the noble teachings and logical reasoning will be contradicted. Hence, one must not take the literal meanings of the statement rigidly. One must understand that the statement here refers to the possible case when it speaks of the going together [of the three].\textsuperscript{36}

It is in accordance with the aforementioned principle that the Ābhidharmikas proceeded to systematize and classify the Buddha’s discourses. In this process, they created many new doctrinal categories which they believed to be doctrinally justifiable and eventually finalized a list of the ultimate reals — the unique dharma-s. The methodological devices we have discussed above (§§ 2.3.3, 2.3.4), are used by the Ābhidharmikas to study the dynamic interaction among them. We will examine below some of the other more important methodological devices employing these Abhidharma doctrinal categories — some taken over from the sūtra-s — which serve as doctrinal perspectives (paryāya) with which they study and classify these dharma-s so derived.

2.4.1. Taxonomy of aggregate (skandha), abode/entrance (āyatana), element (dhātu)

At first, the taxonomies of the five-aggregate, twelve-abode and eighteen-element were taken over from the sūtra-s by the Ābhidharmikas for the examination of dharma-s in terms of svabhāva, by applying the methodological device of saṃgraha. The five-skandha taxonomy is seen in the earlier canonical abhidharma texts such as the *Dharma-skandha-śāstra (DSS), the Prakaraṇaśāstra (PrŚ), and also later texts which conform to the sūtra tradition, such as the *Abhidharmāmṛta-rasa-śāstra (AmRŚ). In the post-AKB works such as the Abhidharmadīpa (ADV) and the Abhidharmāvatāra (Avatāra), the three asaṃskṛta-s are added to form the apparently more popular eight-category (padārtha) scheme.\textsuperscript{37}

2.4.1.1. The five aggregates (skandha) constitute the totality of phenomenal existence: 1. rūpa (matter), 2. vedanā (sensation/feeling), 3. saṃjñā (ideation), 4. saṃskāra (conditionings), 5. viññāna (consciousness). The analysis in terms of the five skandha-s is often employed in the sūtra-s to explain the Buddhist doctrine of no-Self (nairātmya). This fundamental Buddhist doctrine continues to be the central concern of abhidharma, and accordingly, the five-skandha scheme continues to be an important Ābhidharmika taxonomy.
2. The Ābhidharmika – Standpoint, Scope and Methodology

Skandha is explained as ‘heap’ (rāśī): Each of these five forms a heap of its own category which may be past, present or future. The import of this taxonomy is the emphasis that phenomena are all dependently arisen, without any ontological status; they are all reducible to these five skandha-s which alone are the ultimate reals forming the basis of our conceptual superimposition.

The saṃskāra-skandha includes the conjoined (samprayukta) dharma-s, i.e., caitta-s, as well as the disjoined (viprayukta) dharma-s. The rūpa-skandha includes a peculiar matter called avijñapti (infra, § 13.4.2) and special types of subtle matter such as those of the sensory faculties called ‘clear matter’ (rūpa-prasāda) and that of a being in the intermediate existence (antarābhava).

In the abhidharma conception, all dharma-s are conditioning forces (saṃskṛta). These forces themselves are conditioned; hence the term is also synonymous with “the conditioned” (saṃskṛta). This is quite in keeping with the notion in early Buddhism which declares that “all saṃskāra-s are impermanent” (sarve saṃskārā anityāḥ). However, in the five-skandha scheme, the saṃskāra-skandha refers to all other dharma-s excluding the other four skandha-s.38 This taxonomy does not include the unconditioned dharma-s, as the latter, being beyond space and time, do not form such heaps.

### Five skandha-s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skandha</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rūpa</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vedanā</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saṃjñā</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saṃskāra</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vijñāna</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 72 dharma-s

2.4.1.2. The 12 abodes (āyatana) comprise the six sense faculties (indriya) — eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind; and the six corresponding objects — the visible, sound, smell, taste and the tangible. The meaning of
āyatana is ‘gate of arising’ (āyadvāra): They are the gateways through which the citta and the caitta-s originate. That is to say, they serve the functions of being the supporting basis (āśraya, i.e., the faculties) and the perceptual objects (ālambana) — the two requisites — for the arising of consciousness (vijñāna) and the mental factors associated with it. In abhidharma, as in early Buddhism, citta, manas and vijñāna refer to the same reality, though with different functional stresses.

Āyatana is etymologically explained in AKB as “that which extends the arising of citta-caitta-s” (cittacaittānām āyāṃ tanvantīti āyatanāni). MVŚ provides more elaboration on this meaning:

The meaning of āyatana is ‘gate of arising’: Just as various things arise within a city on account of which the bodies of sentient beings are nourished, so, within the supporting bases (āśraya) and object-supports (ālambana) — [the two constituent components of the āyatana-s] — various citta-caitta-dharma-s arise on account of which the defiled and pure serial continuities (santati) are nourished.

12 āyatana-s

1. eye (cakṣus) 7. visible (rūpa)
2. ear (śrotra) 8. sound (śabda)
3. nose (ghrāṇa) 9. smell (gandha)
4. tongue (jihvā) 10. taste (rasa)
5. body (kāya) 11. tangible (spraṣṭavya)
6. mind (manas) 12. mental objects (dharma) (64)  

\{ caitta (46)  
 viprayukta-samskāra (14)  
avijñapti (1)  
 asamskrta (3) \}

The Sautrāntika objects to the doctrine that dharma-s exist tri-temporarily. For them, sarvāstivāda can only be accepted in the sense given in the sūtra: ‘All’ refers to the 12 āyatana-s. Nothing exists outside what is empirically verifiable through the six senses. It must, however, be noted that the orthodox Sarvāstivādin Saṃghabhadra sees no difficulty in accepting this sūtra statement. For him, the 12 āyatana-s indeed subsume all the dharma-s recognized by the Sarvāstivāda. In fact, all dharma-s, including the asamskrta-s, are ālambana-s — objects contributing to the arising of consciousness and its associated caittas-s in a cognitive process. Even nirvāṇa is verifiable — by the saints.
2.4.1.3. **The 18 elements** (*dhātu*) comprise the six sense faculties, the six corresponding objects and the six corresponding consciousnesses. MVŚ enumerates the following senses of *dhātu*:

1. **Family/kin/species** (*gotra*) — like the different species of metals, gold, iron, etc, in a mountain.

2. **Cluster/lump** (段; *kavaḍa?*) — like a cluster of timbers etc arranged in a certain order resulting in what is called a mansion, a house, etc.

3. **Part/constituent** (分; *bhāga?*) — like the 18 parts of a human body.

4. **Piece/division** (片) — like the 18 pieces/divisions of a human body.

5. **Dissimilar** — the eye-element is dissimilar to the other elements in a human; etc.

6. **Demarcation/boundary** — the demarcation of the eye-element is distinct from the other 17 elements.

7. **Distinctive cause** — that by virtue of which there is the eye-element is a cause distinctively for the eye-element alone, and not for other elements.

8. **Running** (√*dhāv*) — these elements run around *saṃsāra*

9. **Sustaining/holding** (√*dhā*) — these elements each holds or sustains its own intrinsic nature.

10. **Nourishing** (√*dhā*) — they nourish other entities.

The last three meanings are attributed to the grammarians (*śābdika*). In AKB, Vasubandhu gives the meanings of *dhātu* as species/family and as causal origin.⁴⁴

2.4.1.3.1. In this scheme, the mano-*dhātu* is not an entity ontologically distinct from the mind itself. It is simply the mind in a preceding moment of the series serving as the ‘similar and immediate condition’ (*samanantara-pratyaya*) for the arising of the succeeding moment.

As for the *dharma-*dhātu*, MVŚ gives the following definition:

*What is dharma-*dhātu? Dharma-s that have been, are being, and will be cognized by the mind are called dharma-*dhātu*. ‘Those that have been cognized by the mind’ refers to the dharma-*dhātu* that has been cognized by the past mind. ‘Those that are being
cognized by the mind’ refers to the *dharmadhātu* that is being cognized by the present mind. ‘Those that will be cognized by the mind’ refers to *dharmadhātu* that will be cognized by the future mind.\(^{45}\)

The same definition is also found in the earlier PrŚ.\(^{46}\) Accordingly, as far as the definition goes, *dharmadhātu* clearly refers to the tritemporal mental objects, and these should include all possible “categories” of *dharma*-s. This is explicitly indicated in the following passage from VKŚ which specifies the objects of each type of consciousness. In the description, the objects of mental consciousness clearly amount to all possible types of *dharma*-s — all the types of *dharma*-s constituting the 12 āyatana-s:

There is the group of six consciousnesses: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, bodily and mental.

What does visual consciousness cognize? Visual consciousness cognizes the visibles.

What does it not cognize? The [remaining] 11 āyatana-s.

[Likewise for the next four consciousnesses] …

What does mental consciousness cognize? Mental consciousness cognizes: eye, visibles and visual consciousness; ear, sounds and auditory consciousness; nose, odors and olfactory consciousness; tongue, tastes and gustatory consciousness; body, tangibles and bodily consciousness; mind, *dharma*-s (mental objects) and mental consciousness. …

There are 12 abodes (āyatana): the eye-abode, the visible-abode, […] *dharma*-abode.

By how many consciousnesses is the eye-abode cognized? …

By how many consciousnesses is the *dharma*-abode cognized? The visible abode is cognized by two consciousnesses: visual and mental consciousnesses. [Likewise up to] the tangible-abode is cognized by two consciousnesses: bodily and mental consciousnesses. The remaining seven abodes are cognized by mental consciousness alone.\(^{47}\)

Since the *dharmāyatana* in the 12-āyatana scheme corresponds to the *dharma-dhātu* in the 18-dhātu scheme, the above passage has also specified the nature and scope of the *dharmāyatana*. It is clear that the objects of mental consciousness include even the mind, objects of the mind, and mental consciousness. As for thought, it is true that the present thought cannot know itself or its concomitants and co-existents (such as the co-existent conditionings disjoined from thoughts). But it
can know past and future thoughts and other’s thoughts/the thought of others, etc. As for rūpa, the subtle rūpa of the faculties and the non-information matter (avijñapti) can, in fact, be cognized only by thought.

We must remember that originally in the sūtra-s, the 18-dhātu taxonomy was a pragmatic classificatory scheme, mainly employed to underscore the Buddha’s no-Self doctrine. This scheme was intended to show the correlation between the six faculties of a human being with their corresponding objects and the consciousnesses generated. It is essentially an epistemological consideration without any explicit ontological commitment. In this scheme, dharma-dhātu corresponded to the objects of the mind and mental consciousness just as the visibles corresponded to those of the eye and visual consciousness. When this scheme (together with those of the skandha- and āyatana-taxonomies) came to be adopted as a methodology of dharma-pravicaya, what is the Abhidharmic principle that it was made to represent? We have seen above that it is essentially a method for the understanding of dharma-s in terms of their intrinsic characteristics. In the words of MVŚ, “these 18 dhātu-s are established on the basis of (intrinsic) characteristic”.

While the Abhidharmic application of the scheme too — in keeping with the characteristically Buddhist emphasis — is also primarily from an epistemological perspective, the consideration in terms of intrinsic characteristic would mean, among other things, that the specific items assigned to each of the 18 dhātu-s must represent ultimate real existents (i.e., dharma-s in the proper Abhidharmic sense). Accordingly, even though the mind can think of all kinds of things, the dharma-dhātu cannot be said to comprise objects that are relatively real. This is clear from the items enumerated in VKŚ and PrŚ as objects cognized by mental consciousness (eye … mental consciousness).

In this context, MVŚ elaborates further on the principles involved in the dhātu taxonomy:

How are the 18 dhātu-s established?

The 18 are established on the basis of three things: 1. the supporting basis, 2. that which is supported, 3. the objects (viṣaya). On the basis of being supporting bases, the eye element up to the mind element are established as the six internal elements. On the basis of being the supported, the visual consciousness element up to the mental consciousness element are established as the six consciousness elements. On the basis of being objects, the matter element up to the dharma element (dharma-dhātu) are established as the six external elements.
The two explanations above on dharmadhātu — from VKŚ and MVŚ — may be said to be still in keeping with the sūtra-s. Both speak of dharmadhātu as referring to objects of the mind and mental consciousness.

But when we examine further the Vaibhāṣika position, at least starting from JPŚ, we find that the content of dharmadhātu refers not to mental objects per se, but specifically to “seven dharma-s”:

Herein, we have analyzed the essential nature of the three aggregates, i.e., sensation, ideation and the conditionings. They should also be established as āyatana-s and dhātu-s. That is, these three aggregates, together with the non-information matter and the three unconditioned — these seven dharma-s — are established as dharmāyatana in the āyatana scheme and dharmadhātu in the dhātu scheme.

2.4.1.3.2. Incongruities concerning the Sarvāstivāda explanations on dharmāyatana/dharmadhātu

The foregoing discussions should suffice to highlight certain incongruities in the Sarvāstivāda position concerning the dharmāyatana/dharmadhātu. While on the one hand, influenced by the intention in the sūtra, the Sarvāstivādins speak of the ‘mental objects’, as including all possible types of dharma-s, at the same time they would not state that dharmadhātu subsumes the “totality” of real existents — even though some Sarvāstivāda masters apparently maintain precisely that.

One reason for this is that the Vaibhāṣikas must maintain their ontology which includes dharma-s other than those seven mental objects specified by the tradition as being dharmadhātu, as real existents.

Another reason is that, since PrŚ, the five-group taxonomy was gradually becoming the standard classification of dharma-s better suited for subsuming the totality of dharma-s among which the avijñapti rūpa and the three unconditioned had come to be decisively upheld by the orthodox Vaibhāṣikas as being an integral part. The older classification in terms of skandha, āyatana and dhātu must now be reformulated to incorporate all these dharma-s and to correlate them with the new taxonomy as a whole.

Saṃghabhadra, repudiating the Sautrāntika master Śrīlāta’s position that all dharma-s are subsumed under the dharmāyatana in-as-much as all dharma-s are the domain of activity of the mind, argues as follows:
If this is the case, then only one single [āyatana] — dharmāyatana — ought to be established, since all dharma-s without exception would be the objects of the mind.\textsuperscript{54}

In this connection, JPŚ\textsuperscript{55} (likewise the first chapter of AKB) states that the totality of dharma-s is subsumed by one aggregate (i.e., rūpa-skandha), one abode (i.e., mana-āyatana) and one element (i.e., dharma-dhātu).\textsuperscript{56} MVŚ, citing this statement, goes on to explain as follows:

Why is that? The totality of dharma-s is comprised of the five categories (pañca-vastu): matter, thought, thought-concomitant, conditionings disjoined from thought, and the unconditioned. The rūpa-skandha (matter-aggregate) subsumes matter; the manāyatana (mind-abode) subsumes thought; the dharmāyatana subsumes all the rest. Thus, the totality of dharma-s comes to be subsumed.

Furthermore, all dharma-s are comprised of the 18 dhātu-s. Among them, the rūpa-skandha subsumes the ten rūpa-dhātu-s; the manāyatana subsumes the seven citta-dhātu-s; the dharma-dhātu subsumes the dharma-dhātu. Thus, the totality of dharma-s comes to be subsumed.

Furthermore, all dharma-s are included in the aggregates, elements and abodes, and these three are mutually subsumed: the rūpa-skandha subsumes the ten matter-elements, the ten matter-abodes, and one part of the dharma-element and dharma-abode; the manāyatana subsumes the seven thought-elements and the consciousness-aggregate; the dharma-dhātu subsumes the dharma-abode, the aggregates of sensation, ideation and the conditionings, and one part of the matter-aggregate. Thus, these three subsume the totality of dharma-s.\textsuperscript{57}

But apparently, even Saṃghabhadra, while upholding the same orthodox Vaibhāṣika position, ostensibly under the shadow of the sūtra tradition, at times speaks of the dharmāyatana explicitly as the cognitive objects corresponding to mental consciousness:

The totality of dharma-s is just the twelve āyatana-s, i.e., the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory and mental consciousness, with their corresponding cognitive objects, the visibles, sound, odors, tastes tangibles and dharma-s.\textsuperscript{58}

In this same context, it is noteworthy that he states, just as MVŚ does, that the condition qua objects (see § 7.1.3) comprises the totality of dharma-s. This means, among other things, that all dharma-s can serve as the cognitive objects of the mental consciousness.
Another incongruity concerns the case of the faculties. According to the Ābhidharmikas, these faculties are objects cognized exclusively by mental consciousness — the first five sensory faculties, determined to be a subtle form of matter, are said to be invisible to the eye. Yet they are not subsumed as part of the dharmāyatana and dharmādhātu. The reason for this, however, is not far to seek. In keeping with the classification in the sūtra, the six faculties must be retained as the corresponding supporting bases (āśraya) of the six types of consciousness generated by the six corresponding types of object. This means that the dharma-s, constituting the dharmāyatana and dharmādhātu, must not be conmingled with the five sensory faculties or the mental faculty (the mind). The five sensory faculties must be retained as five of the ten traditional subdivisions of matter. The mental faculty likewise has to be separated from the mental objects. The result is that the dharma-dhātu then came to subsume all the remaining dharma-s qua mental objects excluding the five sensory objects, the six faculties and the six consciousnesses. It must of course further take in the non-information matter, the conditionings disjoined from thought and the three unconditioned which were newly established as real entities by the orthodoxy.
Correlation between the 5 Categories, 5 skandha-s, 12 āyatana-s and 18 dhātu-s

Diagram Text Abbreviations
sk = skandha  āy = āyatana  dh = dhātu
vij = vijñāna  vij-dh = vijñāna-dhātu

2.4.14. on the reality of skandha, āyatana and dhātu
Of the three — skandha, āyatana and dhātu — the Vaibhāśikas regard all as real. The Sautrāntikas argue that skandha-s are unreal as the
term signifies a heap. As for the āyatana, some Sautrāntikas, as well as Vasubandhu, the Kośakāra, accept them as real.

But for Śrīlāta, they too are unreal. This, however, is not a new proposition, as the Samayabhedoparacana also records the Prajñaptivāda view that “the 12 āyatana-s are not real”.59 Śrīlāta’s contention is that neither a visual faculty nor an object can function as such (as āśraya and ālambana respectively) in the cognitive process except as a conglomeration of atoms. In fact, each individual atom is devoid of the function of seeing, and a conglomeration of them is likewise devoid of such a function, as in the case of a group of blind men who cannot see. The dhātu-s alone, he declares, are real,60 in the sense of being causally efficacious factors of existence (dharma-s) existing only in the present moment of a dharma-series. In this sense, as Samghabhadra argues, dhātu would have essentially the same significance as the Sautrāntika notion of seeds (bīja),61 the causal efficacy that is passed down in the series from moment to moment. This significance is brought out well by the doctrine of the anudhātu or *pūrvānudhātu (随界，舊隨界), proposed by Śrīlāta. This is a version of the bīja doctrine of the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas. The component, *pūrva- (‘previous’, ‘former’), is intended to convey the sense that various causal efficacies have been from the past accompanying or following (anu-) the human serial continuity. It is these causal efficacies — these (anu-)dhātu — which alone are real.

Samghabhadra, however, points out the difficulty in the bīja doctrine, since the Sautrāntikas do not consider bīja — though real as a causal efficacy — as being an ontological entity. This causal efficacy — the dharma — is said to be neither identical with nor different from the serial continuity itself, and the serial continuity is considered unreal (a mere concept); and yet, at the culminating moment of the serial transmission of the causal efficacy, it is acknowledged as being productive of a fruit!62

2.4.2. Five-group taxonomy

Starting from the Pañcavastuka of Vasumitra’s PrŚ, the five-group classification into rūpa, citta, caitta-s, viprayukta-samskāra-s and asamskṛta-s came into vogue. Group IV, the conditionings disjoined from thought, represents a distinctive doctrinal development in Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, not to be found in the Theravāda.
2. The Ābhidharmika – Standpoint, Scope and Methodology

The Five-group-seventy-five-dharma classification of the Sarvāstivāda

I. rūpa (matter, 11)
1. cakṣur-indriya (visual faculty) 6. rūpa-artha (visual object)
2. śrotra-indriya (auditory fac) 7. śabda-artha (auditory obj)
3. ghrāṇa-indriya (olfactory fac) 8. gandha-artha (olfactory obj)
4. jihvā-indriya (gustatory fac) 9. rasa-artha (gustatory obj)
5. kāya-indriya (tangible fac) 10. spraṣṭavya-artha (tangible obj)
11. avijñapti-rūpa (non-informative matter)

II. citta (thought)

III. caitasika dharma-s (thought-concomitants, 46)

1) mahābhūmika dharma-s (universal dharma-s, 10)
1. vedanā (sensation) 6. prajñā (understanding)
2. cetanā (volition) 7. smṛti (mindfulness)
3. saṃjñā (ideation) 8. manaskāra (mental application)
4. chanda (predilection) 9. adhimokṣa (resolve/determination)
5. sparśa (contact) 10. samādhi (concentration)

2) kuśala-mahābhūmika dharma-s (skillful universal dharma-s, 10)
1. śraddhā (faith) 6. apatrāpya (shame)
2. apramāda (diligence) 7. alobha (non-greed)
3. praśrabdhi (calm) 8. adveṣa (non-hatred)
4. upaeksā (equanimity) 9. avihimsā (harmlessness)
5. hrī (modesty) 10. vīrya (vigor)

3) kleśa-mahābhūmika dharma-s (universal dharma-s of defilement, 6)
1. moha (delusion) 4. āśraddhya (lack of faith)
2. pramāda (non-diligence) 5. styāna (torpor)
3. kauśīdya (slackness) 6. auddhatya (restlessness)

4) akuśala-mahābhūmika dharma-s (unskillful universal dharma-s, 2)
1. āhrīkya (non-modesty) 2. anapatrāpya (shamelessness)
5) *parītakleśa-bhūmika dharma*-s (Defilements of restricted scope 10)

| 1. | krodha (anger)       | 6. | mrakṣa (concealment) |
| 2. | upanāha (enmity)     | 7. | mātsarya (avarice)   |
| 3. | sāṭhya (dissimulation) | 8. | māyā (deceptiveness) |
| 4. | īrṣyā (jealousy)     | 9. | mada (pride)         |
| 5. | pradāśa (depraved opinionedness) | 10. | vihiṃsā (harmfulness) |

6) *aniyata dharma*-s (indeterminate *dharma*-s, 8)

| 1. | kaukṛtya (remorse)  | 5. | rāga (greed)        |
| 2. | middha (sleep)      | 6. | pratigha (hostility) |
| 3. | vitarka (reasoning) | 7. | māna (conceit)      |
| 4. | vicāra (investigation) | 8. | vicikitsā (doubt)   |

IV. *cittaviprayukta saṃskāra dharma*-s
(conditionings disjoined from thought, 14)

| 1. | prāpti (acquisition) |
| 2. | aprāpti (non-acquisition) |
| 3. | nikāyasabhāga (group homogeneity) |
| 4. | āsaṃjñi (ideationlessness) |
| 5. | āsaṃjñi-samāpatti (ideationless attainment) |
| 6. | nirodha-samāpatti (cessation attainment) |
| 7. | jīvitendriya (vital faculty) |
| 8. | jāti-lakṣaṇa (production-characteristic) |
| 9. | sthiti-lakṣaṇa (duration-characteristic) |
| 10. | jarā-lakṣaṇa (deterioration-characteristic) |
| 11. | anityatā-lakṣaṇa (impermanence-characteristic) |
| 12. | nāma-kāya (words) |
| 13. | pada-kāya (phrases) |
| 14. | vyaijana-kāya (syllables) |

V. *asaṃskṛta dharma*-s (unconditioned *dharma*-s, 3)

| 1. | ākāśa (space) |
| 2. | pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha (cessation through deliberation) |
| 3. | apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha (cessation independent of deliberation) |

2.4.3. Doctrinal perspectives

The examination of *dharma*-s is also commonly made through various doctrinal perspectives — taxonomical categories in the form of dyads, triads, etc. Some of these were taken over from the *sūtra*-s, others innovated by the Ābhidharmikas. The methodological devices described
above are applied in juxtaposition with these categories. This method of taxonomical investigation is essentially the dharmapracicaya in terms of sāmānya-lakṣaṇa. It is already evident among the oldest of the extant abhidharma texts such as the *Śāriputra-abhidharma, and was undoubtedly instrumental in bringing about a characteristically abhidharmic feature of these texts marking an important development in abhidharma methodology.

The investigation may be done with regard to all dharma-s, e.g.:

“How many are visible (sanidarsana)? How many are invisible (anidarsana)?” — a dyad.

“How many are skillful (kuṣala)? How many are unskillful (akuṣala)? How many are non-defined (avyākṛta)?” — a triad.

It may also be done with one particular doctrinal category as the focus — a methodology which is essentially one of collecting scattered data and their analysis. Thus, in the chapter on karma in the *Śāriputra-abhidharma, the various types of karma mentioned in the sūtra-s — from the group of two karma-s to the group of 40 karma-s — are incrementally classified.

The following are among the most important doctrinal perspectives employed by the Abhidharmikas:

1. saṃskṛta, asaṃskṛta;
2. kuśala, akuśala, avyākṛta;
3. sāsrava, anāsrava;
4. darśana-heya, bhāvanā-heya, aheya.

The discussion of these major topics, with their various subdivisions, cover the whole scope of abhidharma analysis.

### 2.4.3.1. Saṃskṛta (conditioned), asaṃskṛta (unconditioned)

MVŚ gives various distinctions between the saṃskṛta- and asaṃskṛta-dharma-s, the first of which — the most comprehensive one — is as follows:

A dharma is said to be conditioned if it has arising and ceasing, cause and effect, and acquires the characteristics of the conditioned.

A dharma is said to be unconditioned if it has no arising and ceasing, no cause and effect, and acquires the characteristics of the unconditioned.
It is explained that the conditioned dharma-s have causes and conditions because they are weak in nature and must therefore depend on causes and conditions for their activities. The unconditioned dharma-s, on the other hand, are strong and therefore not dependent on them. Moreover, the unconditioned dharma-s have no activities at all, hence no use of causes and conditions.⁶⁵

AKB defines saṃskṛta as follows: “Conditioned — because they are made (kṛta) by conditions co-existing in assemblage — there is nothing that is produced by a single condition.”⁶⁶ What is conditioned is what is dependently originated (pratītya-samutpānna) and characterized by the four characteristics of the conditioned (saṃskṛta-lakṣāṇāni: jāti, sthiti, jarā/anyathātva, anityatā/vyaya). These four — each a distinct force — are real entities belonging to the class of viprayukta-saṃskāra which together cause a so-called conditioned dharma to be impermanent, nay, momentary (kṣanīka). (See infra, § 11.3.5).

All of the five skandha-s are conditioned. In terms of the five-group (pañca-vastu) classification, they comprise: rūpa-s, citta, caūta-s, viprayukta-saṃskāra-s and asaṃskṛta-s. This fivefold taxonomy was first articulated by Vasumitra in the Pañca-vastuka of his Abhidharma-prakaraṇa-śāstra.

The unconditioned dharma-s are permanent, non-arising, non-ceasing — totally beyond the temporal process. They comprise three types of dharma-s: (i) pratisamkhya-nirodha — cessation obtained through discriminative effort; (ii) apratisamkhya-nirodha — cessation obtained without any selective effort, but simply due to the deficiency in the conditions for arising; (these cessations also serve as real obstructive forces making it impossible for the dharma-s concerned to arise again); and (iii) ākāśa — not to be confounded with ākāśa-dhātu which is empty space that is visible in between objects occupying space — that by virtue of which things can be accommodated and have their activities in space. (Cf. infra, § 16).

2.4.3.2 Kuśala (wholesome/skillful), akuśala (unwholesome/unskillful), avyākṛta (non-defined)

This classification concerns the moral causal order. MVŚ explains the triad as follows:

A dharma which is to be subsumed as being skillful, which effects a desirable fruit, and which is by nature secure (kṣema) is said to be kuśala. … Some say: A dharma which can produce
the germs of a desirable existence and of liberation is said to be 

\textit{kuśala}.

A \textit{dharma} which cannot produce the germs of a desirable 

existence and of liberation is said to be \textit{akuśala}.

That which is opposed to these two classes is said to be \textit{avyākṛta}.\textsuperscript{67}

Various additional definitions are given elsewhere in MVŚ: A skillful \textit{dharma} is that which is sustained by skillfulness, which induces the sprouts of desirable existence and liberation, which causes rebirth in the desirable plane of existence (\textit{sugati}), which pertains to regression (\textit{nivṛtti}) from \textit{samsāra}, etc. Those which are opposed in nature to these are unskillful; those which are neither are non-defined.\textsuperscript{68} Samghabhadra explains thus: A non-defined \textit{dharma} is that which cannot be defined as being either skillful or unskillful, its nature being indistinct. A \textit{dharma} is said to be (morally) defined (\textit{vyākṛta}) if it is praise-worthy or contemptible, and definable as pertaining to the ‘black’ or ‘white’ (i.e., good or bad) species. A skillful \textit{dharma} is that which is opposed to the unskillful, or that which sustains or is sustained by understanding (\textit{prajñā}), or that which brings about the auspicious. The opposite to this is unskillful.\textsuperscript{69} Of the 18 \textit{dhātu}-s, 10 can be skillful, unskillful or non-defined — the 7 mental \textit{dhātu}-s, \textit{rūpa}-, \textit{śabda}-, and \textit{dharma}-\textit{dhātu}-s. The remaining 8 are non-defined.

2.4.3.2.1. \textit{Dharma}-s are said to be skillful/wholesome in four ways:

(i) absolutely (\textit{paramārthatas}) — this refers to \textit{nirvāṇa} which completely transcends \textit{duḥkha};

(ii) in their intrinsic nature (\textit{svabhāvatas}) — this refers to moral shame (\textit{hrī}) and moral fear (\textit{apatrāpya}) and the three roots of skillfulness (\textit{kuśala-mūla}-s);

(iii) through conjunction (\textit{saṃprayogatas}) — this refers to mental factors which become skillful through conjunctions with the \textit{dharma}-s which are skillful in their intrinsic nature;

(iv) through their originating cause (\textit{samutthānatas}) — this refers to bodily and vocal \textit{karma}-s, and to the \textit{citta-viprayuktasamskāra}-s which become skillful through their originating cause.\textsuperscript{70}

Samghabhadra gives an additional explanation on \textit{nirvāṇa} as \textit{paramārthataḥ kuśala}: it is \textit{parama} because it is supreme and without an equal. It is an \textit{artha} because it exists as a real entity. Hence it is
paramārtha. It is kuśala in the sense of being secure, for it is kuśala and permanent (nitya). In the MVŚ, this fourfold distinction is attributed to Venerable Vāspa.

According to the Vibhajyavādins, knowledge (jñāna) is skillful in its intrinsic nature; consciousness (vijñāna) is skillful through conjunction with knowledge; the bodily and vocal karma-s and the disjoined conditionings — jāti, etc., prāpti, the asamjñī- and nirodha-samāpatti-s — originated by it, are skillful through origination; nirvāṇa is absolutely skillful.

2.4.3.2.2. Likewise, dharma-s are said to be unskillful in the same four ways:

(i) saṃsāra is unskillful absolutely;

(ii) moral shamelessness (āhrīkya) and moral fearlessness (anapatrāpya) and the three roots of unskillfulness are unskillful in their intrinsic nature;

(iii) the mental factors conjoined with the previous [i.e., (ii)] are unskillful through conjunction;

(iv) the bodily and vocal karma-s and the disjoined conditionings originated by the same are unskillful through their originating causes.

According to the Vibhajyavādins: (i) is saṃsāra; (ii) is delusion (moha); (iii) is consciousness conjoined with delusion; (iv) are the disjoined conditionings originated by the same.

2.4.3.2.3. The non-defined dharma-s are further divisible as being (i) veiled-non-defined (nivṛta-avyākṛta) and (ii) non-veiled-non-defined (anivṛta-avyākṛta).

(i) A veiled-non-defined dharma, being weak in nature, is that which, though incapable of inducing an undesirable fruit, is nevertheless obstructive to the arising of the outflow-free understanding or the noble path. This fact of obstructiveness of the defiled dharma-s is what is meant by its being ‘veiled’. An example of this is the ‘Self-view’, satkāya-drṣṭi, which is a defiled prajñā. MVŚ explains why satkāya-drṣṭi is not unskillful, but non-defined (i.e., veiled-non-defined):
Question: Why is satkāya-dṛṣṭi non-defined?

Answer: That dharma which is, in its intrinsic nature, moral shamelessness (āhriṣṭya) and moral fearlessness (anapatrāpya), which is conjoined with moral shamelessness and moral fearlessness, and which is the emanation (nisyanda) of moral shamelessness and moral fearlessness — that is unskillful. Satkāya-dṛṣṭi is not moral shamelessness or moral fearlessness in its intrinsic nature, not conjoined with moral shamelessness and moral fearlessness, not an emanation from moral shamelessness and moral fearlessness; hence it is not unskillful.

Furthermore, this Self-view is not always (ekamśena) of evil intention (āśaya-vipanna), hence not unskillful. It is not always of evil intention because it is not conjoined with moral shamelessness and moral fearlessness.

Furthermore, it is because this view is not opposed to the practice of giving and ethical conduct (dāna-śīla-aviruddha). One who is attached to the Self holds thus: “By giving, I shall become rich and happy; by observing ethical rules, I shall be reborn in heaven; by practicing meditation, I shall be liberated.” Hence it is non-defined.

Furthermore, this Self-view is merely a delusion with regard to a person’s own Self; it is not an oppression of others; hence non-defined …

Furthermore, this Self-view does not have a retribution-fruit (vipāka-phala); hence non-defined …

However, the Dārṣṭāntikas deny this veiled-non-defined category of dharma-s.76

(ii) A non-veiled-non-defiled dharma is that which is neither capable of inducing a retribution-fruit — desirable or undesirable — nor obstructing the arising of the noble path. Examples of this category are: the knowledge (a prajñā) of a particular art and craft (śailpasthānika), or the mind associated with a supernormal power (abhiṣṭa-phala) or with deportment (īryāpatha). (a) Karmic retribution and (b) physical matter — rūpa, gandha, rasa and spraṣṭavya — are also anivṛta-avyākṛta. The latter are in fact avyākṛta in their intrinsic nature (svabhāvatās). The two asamskrta-s — apratisamkhyā-nirodha and ākāśa — which are non-defined absolutely (paramārthato’vyākṛta), also belong to this category. The following chart summarizes the whole classification:
2.4.3.3. With-outflow (sāsrava) and outflow-free (anāsrava)

‘Outflow’ (āsrava; lit.: ‘flowing out/toward’) is a synonym for defilement (kleśa). Avatāra:

The outflows are so named because they keep (āsayanti) beings for a long time in the three spheres of existence, [thus] hindering their progress toward liberation. Or, because they cause beings to flow around (āsravanti) from the highest plane of existence (bhavāgra) to [the lowest], the Avīci hell. Or, because they incessantly discharge (√kṣar) inexhaustible impurities through the six wound-like entrances [— the six sense faculties —] of beings (ṣaḍbhīr āyatanavranaiḥ).

A with-outflow (sāsrava) dharma is one that accords with this nature of the outflow. Even acts which are skillful may also be withoutflow. For instance, one may practice generosity in the hope of having a favorable rebirth in the future. Thus the scope of the with-outflow is greater than that of the unskillful.

AKB discusses this classification with respect to the four noble truths and explains the meaning of “with-outflow”:

A with-outflow (sāsrava) dharma is one that accords with this nature of the outflow. Even acts which are skillful may also be withoutflow. For instance, one may practice generosity in the hope of having a favorable rebirth in the future. Thus the scope of the with-outflow is greater than that of the unskillful.

A with-outflow (sāsrava) dharma is one that accords with this nature of the outflow. Even acts which are skillful may also be withoutflow. For instance, one may practice generosity in the hope of having a favorable rebirth in the future. Thus the scope of the with-outflow is greater than that of the unskillful.

AKB discusses this classification with respect to the four noble truths and explains the meaning of “with-outflow”:

Dharma-s are either with-outflow or outflow-free. The conditioned, with the exception of the noble path, are withoutflow, for therein the outflows grow concordantly (sam-anu-√śī; 等隨). It is true that the outflows are born taking the nirodha- and mārga-satya as objects, but they do not grow concordantly therein; thus it does not follow that the two are of the nature of being with-outflow.

Thus, although an outflow-free dharma may serve as an object for a defilement (for instance, a false view may arise with regard to the noble path), it does not accord with or conduce to the growth of the defilement; or — more in conformity with the Sanskrit anu-√śī — it does not adhere therein.
The notion of “with-outflow” and “outflow-free” seen in AKB must have been articulated at a fairly early stage of development, most probably even before the common era. MVŚ already interprets in similar terms. Its antiquity is also suggested by the fact that various essentially similar interpretations are attributed to the ancient masters, Pārśva, Dharmatāta, Ghoṣaka and Vasumitra:

The outflow-free dharma-s are all not bases conducive to the growth of the proclivities (anuṣāya, a synonym for defilement. Cf. infra, § 12.2). Why? Those dharma-s which are the bases for the Self-view, for topsy-turvi-ness (viparyāsa), for the proclivities; which are the foot-hold for greed, hatred and ignorance; which are tainted, soiled and turbid — they accord with the growth of the proclivities. The outflow-free dharma-s not being so do not accord with the growth of the proclivities. ... According to Venerable Pārśva ... According to the Bhadānta, ... According Ghoṣaka, ... The Venerable Vasumitra explains thus: when a proclivity arises having a with-outflow dharma as its cognitive object, the proclivity grows/waxes gradually. This is like the case of a man looking at the moon which helps the growth of his visual faculty. Thus, the with-outflow dharma-s accord with the growth of the proclivities. When a proclivity arises having an outflow-free dharma as its cognitive object, the proclivity wanes gradually. This is like the case of a man looking at the sun, which damages his visual faculty. Thus, the outflow-free dharma-s do not accord with the growth of the proclivities.\(^{81}\)

A defilement can grow concordantly with the conascent defiled thought and thought-concomitants associated with it, through the fact of being conjoined with them (samprayogato 'nuśete; 相應隨增). It can also grow concordantly by taking a with-outflow cognitive object (ālambanato 'nuśete; 所緣隨增). (See infra, § 12.8.2).

2.4.3.4. Darśana-heya (abandonable by vision), bhāvanā-heya (abandonable by cultivation), aheya (not to be abandoned)

The first two categories pertain to the with-outflow dharma-s; the third, to outflow-free dharma-s.

The darśana-heya dharma-s are the defilements abandonable by vision into the four noble truths. The bhāvanā-heya dharma-s are those defilements abandonable by the path of cultivation which may be mundane (laukika; i.e., with-outflow) or supramudane lokottara; i.e., outflow-free). (See infra, § 15.3). The third category refers to the outflow-free dharma-s — they are not to be abandoned.
Among the with-outflow dharma-s, the kuśala and avyākṛta ones, not being defilements, are not really abandonable in the proper sense. However, when the defilement which takes a kuśala or an avyākṛta dharma as its object is destroyed, this dharma is said to be abandoned (tadālambana-kleśa-prahāṇāt); for at that time the dharma comes to be disconnected. In fact, having been ‘abandoned’, a kuśala dharma can still re-arise. Thus, this is not a case of abandonment in terms of the dharma’s intrinsic nature (svabhāva-prahāṇa).\(^\text{82}\)

### 2.4.3.5. Other taxonomical categories

There are various other such taxonomical categories employed as doctrinal perspectives. AKB discusses the 18 dhātu-s in terms of a total of 22 such doctrinal perspectives.\(^\text{83}\) The more important among these other perspectives are: rūpin (material), arūpin (immaterial); sanidarśana (‘visible’), anidarśana (‘not visible’); sapratigha (‘resistant’), apratigha (‘non-resistant’); sālambana (which take objects), anālambana (which do not take objects); ādhyātmika (internal), bāhya (external); indriya (of the nature of a faculty), nendriya (not of the nature of a faculty); śaikṣa (‘pertaining to the trainee’), aśaikṣa (‘pertaining to the non-trainee’), naiva-śaikṣa-naśaikṣa (pertaining neither to the trainee nor the non-trainee); kāmāvacara-pratisaṃyukta (pertaining to the sphere of sensuality), rūpāvacara-pratisaṃyukta (pertaining to the fine-material sphere), ārūpyāvacara-pratisaṃyukta (pertaining to the immaterial sphere), apratisaṃyukta (not pertaining to any sphere); etc.

### 2.4.4. Method of catechism

In the oldest canonical abhidharma texts, such as the Sarvāstivādin Dharma-skandha-śāstra (DSŚ) and the Theravādin Vibhaṅgappakarāna, the simpler method of defining a doctrinal category by answering a question constitutes a dominant feature. In DSŚ, the series of questions and answers is usually preceded by a brief sūtra quotation of each important doctrinal term which is then commented on in the form of question and answer in the abhidharmic style. This is an analysis of intrinsic nature with a methodology derived from a combination of the catechetical format of the sūtric abhidhamma-kathā, vedalla-kathā and uddesa-vibhaṅga; e.g., DSŚ.\(^\text{84}\)

What is cakṣur-indriya?

The cakṣus which has seen, is seeing, and will see rūpa; as well as its facsimile (tatsabhāga). Further, the ādhipateya of cakṣus induces cakṣur-vijñāna which has cognized (vi-√jñā), is cognizing and will cognize rūpa — [this cakṣus] and its facsimile are the cakṣur-indriya....
Abhidharmic analysis based on the catechetical format came to be highly developed in JPŚ (see below), and is fully utilized in MVŚ which purports to comment on JPŚ. Even in the later commentaries such as AKB, analysis in terms of various doctrinal perspectives using such catechetical format continues to be heavily relied on. Often, a question may lead to another which again leads to others (called anuṣaṅga/prasaṅga).

Another important methodology adopted in the abhidharma texts is that of answering a propositional question in alternatives (pāda):

The simplest is an answer in either “yes” (evam) or “no” (na evam) to the question: “Is $p$ true?”. This is called an evam-pādaka, e.g.: Question: “Those dharma-s which are conjoined with the vigor Enlightenment-factor (bodhyaṅga), are they also conjoined with Proper Exertion (samyak-pradhāna)?” Answer: “Yes (or ‘It is so’).” This is a straightforward type of answer. In this example, it is clear that the vigor Enlightenment-factor is none other than the Exertion. The answer, although simple, helps to systematize and organize knowledge.

The question may also be in the form: “If $p$ is true, is $q$ also true?”. The answer then may be either: “$p$ is true, but not $q$” — a pūrva-pādaka (an answer which affirms only the former part of the question); or “$q$ is true, but not $p$” — a paścāt-pādaka (an answer which affirms only the latter part of the question).

This same question may have an answer in four alternatives, a tetralemma (catuṣ-koṭi):

(i) $p$ is true, not $q$
(ii) $q$ is true, not $p$
(iii) both $p$ and $q$ are true
(iv) neither $p$ nor $q$ is true

An example of such a tetralemma regarding the question, “Is all faith (śraddhā) affection (premā)?”, is as follows:

(i) There is faith which is not affection — faith having duḥkha- and samudaya-satya as objects.

(ii) There is affection which is not faith — the defiled affection.

(iii) There is faith which is also affection — faith having nirodha- and mārga-satya as objects.
(iv) There are dharma-s which are neither faith nor affection — the other dharma-s.\textsuperscript{86}

A very rigorous system of catechetical investigation into the relationship viś-ā- viś several dharma-s was innovated in JPŚ, and elaborated upon in MVŚ. For a given set of dharma-s, A, B, C, D, E, etc., this method examines the relationship first between A and B, A and C, A and D, A and E …; next, that between B and C, B and D, B and E, … . This is the simplest operation, called a “single-fold operation” (一行). It is so called because it is a straight-forward analysis of the relationship among several distinct dharma-s without bringing into consideration the factor of temporality (past, present, future). When the temporal factor is taken into consideration, the investigation becomes more complicated, and assumes the form of a past A in relation to past A (same dharma, but in different temporal periods), etc; or in an even more involved manner: a present A in relation to a past B, or to a past B and a past C; etc. (different dharma-s in relation to different dharma-s in different temporal periods). It is also applied in DKŚ.\textsuperscript{87} The whole process can be a rather complex one.\textsuperscript{88} The following is a partial illustration of an investigation into interrelation among members of a group of nine fetters (saṃyojana): A = lust, B = hostility, C = conceit, D = ignorance, E = view, F = irrational adherence, G = doubt, H = jealousy, I = avarice. For reason of space, I shall illustrate from JPŚ, only the two simpler types of operation: the “single-fold operation” and the “six-pass operation” (六歴; with details of only the first few cases).\textsuperscript{89}

1. The “single-fold operation” (no time factor involved)

   (i) Wherein there is lust, is there also hostility? (A \( \supset \) B ?)

   Wherein there is the hostility fetter, there is necessarily the lust fetter. There can be the lust fetter without the hostility fetter: With regard to dharma-s of the fine material and non-material spheres, there can be the lust fetter yet to be abandoned.

   (ii) Wherein there is the lust fetter, is there also the conceit fetter? (A \( \supset \) C ?)

   Yes.

   If there is the conceit fetter, is there also the lust fetter? (C \( \supset \) A ?)

   Yes.

   (iii) Wherein there is the lust fetter, is there also the ignorance fetter? (A \( \supset \) D?)
Wherein there is the lust fetter, there is necessarily the ignorance fetter. There can be the ignorance fetter without the lust fetter: [In the process of direct realization of the four truths] (cf. infra, § 15.4), when the knowledge of unsatisfactoriness has arisen and the knowledge of origin has not arisen, with regard to dharma-s abandonable by vision, there is the ignorance fetter abandonable by the vision of origin yet to be abandoned.

(iv) Wherein there is the lust fetter, is there also the view fetter? (A ⊃ E ?)

There is a tetra-lemma:

(a) A.~E:

When the knowledge of origin has arisen and the knowledge of cessation has not arisen, there is still lust with regard to the dharma-s not conjoined with the view fetter abandonable by the vision of cessation and of the path, and with regard to dharma-s abandonable by cultivation.

When the knowledge of cessation has arisen and the knowledge of the path has not arisen, there is still lust with regard to dharma-s not conjoined with the view fetter abandonable by the vision of the path, and with regard to dharma-s abandonable by cultivation.

In the case of the Buddha's disciples who have perfected views (具見, dṛṣṭi-sampanna), the lust fetter is still not abandoned with regard to dharma-s abandonable by cultivation.

(b) E.~A

When the knowledge of unsatisfactoriness has arisen and the knowledge of origin has not arisen, there is still view fetter to be abandoned by the vision of origin with regard to the dharma-s abandonable by the vision of unsatisfactoriness.

(c) A.E

For those [ordinary worldlings] who are bound by all bonds (sakala-bandhana; i.e., who have not yet abandoned any defilements through the mundane path), both the fetters exist with regard to dharma-s abandonable by cultivation.

When the knowledge of unsatisfactoriness has arisen and the knowledge of origin has not arisen, there exist both the fetters with regard to dharma-s abandonable by the vision of origin, cessation and the path, and to those abandonable through cultivation.
When the knowledge of origin has arisen and the knowledge of cessation has not arisen, there exist both the fetters with regard to dharma-s conjoined with the view fetters abandonable by the vision of cessation and of the path.

When the knowledge of cessation has arisen and the knowledge of the path has not arisen, there exist both the fetters with regard to dharma-s conjoined with the view fetter abandonable by the vision of the path.

(d) ~A,~E

When the knowledge of origin has arisen and the knowledge of cessation has not arisen, neither of the two fetters exist with regard to dharma-s abandonable by the vision of unsatisfactoriness and of origin.

When the knowledge of cessation has arisen and the knowledge of the path has not arisen, neither of the two fetters exist with regard to dharma-s abandonable by the vision of unsatisfactoriness, of origin and of cessation.

In the case of the Buddha’s disciples who have perfected views, neither of the fetters exist with regard to dharma-s abandonable by vision.

In the case of those who have been freed from sensuality (vītarāga), neither of the fetters exist with regard to the dharma-s pertaining to the sensuality sphere.

In the case of those who have been freed from attachment to materiality sphere, neither of the fetters exist with regard to the dharma-s pertaining to the sensuality and fine-materiality spheres.

In the case of those who have been freed from attachment to non-materiality sphere, neither of the fetters exist with regard to the dharma-s pertaining to all the three spheres.

(v) The relation with the doubt fetter (A ⊃ G ?) is the same as that with the view fetter.

(vi) Wherein there is the lust fetter, is there also the fetter of irrational adherence? (A ⊃ F ?)

There is a tetra-lemma:

(a) A,~F ...  (b) F,~A ...  (c) A,F ...  (d) ~A,~F ... (Similar type of consideration as in the tetralemma of (iv) above)

(vii) Wherein there is the lust fetter, is there also the jealousy fetter? (A ⊃ H ?)
Wherein there is the jealousy fetter, there is necessarily the lust fetter. There can be the lust fetter without the jealousy fetter: The lust fetter still exists with regard to dharma-s pertaining to the sensuality sphere which are abandonable by vision and to dharma-s pertaining to the fine-materiality and non-materiality spheres.

(viii) The relation with the avarice fetter. (A ⊃ I ?) is the same as with the jealousy fetter.

As with the lust fetter, the same “single-fold operation” is to be applied for the conceit fetter in relation to the members succeeding it. (C ⊃ D ?; etc.)

Wherein there is the hostility fetter, is there also the conceit fetter? (B ⊃ C ?)

...

Wherein there is the hostility fetter, is there also the ignorance fetter? (B ⊃ D ?)

...

Wherein there is the hostility fetter, is there also the view fetter? (B ⊃ E ?)

There is a tetralemma: ...

The relation with the doubt fetter. (B ⊃ G ?) is the same as with the view fetter.

Wherein there is the hostility fetter, is there also the fetter of irrational adherence? (B ⊃ F ?)

There is a tetralemma: ...

Wherein there is the hostility fetter, is there also the jealousy fetter? (B ⊃ H ?)

...

The relation with the avarice fetter (B ⊃ I ?) is the same as with the jealousy fetter.

Wherein there is the ignorance fetter, is there also the view fetter? (D ⊃ E ?)

...

The relation with the doubt fetter. (D ⊃ G ?) is the same as with the view fetter.

Wherein there is the ignorance fetter, is there also the fetter of irrational adherence? (D ⊃ F ?)
... Wherein there is the ignorance fetter, is there also the jealousy fetter? (D ⊃ H ?)

...

The relation with the avarice fetter (D ⊃ I ?) is the same as with the jealousy fetter.

Wherein there is the view fetter, is there also the fetter of irrational adherence? (E ⊃ F ?)

...

Wherein there is the view fetter, is there also the doubt fetter? (E ⊃ G ?)

There is a tetralemma: ...

Wherein there is the view fetter, is there also the jealousy fetter? (E ⊃ H ?)

There is a tetralemma. ...

The relation with the avarice fetter (E ⊃ I ?) is the same as with the jealousy fetter.

As with the view fetter, the same “single-fold operation” is to be applied for the doubt fetter in relation to the members succeeding it. (G ⊃ H ?; etc.)

Wherein there is the fetter of irrational adherence, is there also the doubt fetter? (F ⊃ G ?)

...

Wherein there is the fetter of irrational adherence, is there also the jealousy fetter? (F ⊃ H ?)

There is a tetralemma. ...

The relation with the avarice fetter (F ⊃ I ?) is the same as with the jealousy fetter.

Wherein there is the jealousy fetter, is there also the avarice fetter? (H ⊃ I ?)

...

(2) The “six-pass operation” (歷六 A given dharma in one temporal period in relation to the same dharma in another temporal period)
Wherein there is a past lust fetter, is there also a future one?

Yes.

If there is a future one, is there also a past one (/Is one also fettered by a past lust)?

There is, if a previously arisen one has not been abandoned. If there has not been a previously arisen one, or if a previously arisen one has been abandoned, then there is no [past lust] (/he is not fettered by a past lust).

Wherein there is a past lust fetter, is there also a present one?

...

Wherein there is a future lust fetter, is there also a present one?

...

Example involving a given fetter pertaining to more than one temporal period

Wherein there is a present lust fetter, are there also a past and a future one?

There is necessarily a future one (/He is necessarily fettered by a future one). He is fettered by a past one if, having been arisen, it has not been abandoned. He is not fettered [by a past lust], if it has not been previously arisen, or having been arisen it has been abandoned.

If there are a past and a future one, is there also a present one?

There are, if they manifest in the present.

Example involving a given fetter pertaining to one temporal period in relation to another fetter pertaining to the same temporal period

Wherein there is a past lust fetter, is there also a past hostility fetter?

There is, if it has previously arisen and has not yet been abandoned. There is no [past hostility] (/He is not fettered by a past hostility) if it has not previously arisen, or if having arisen it has been abandoned.

If there is a past hostility fetter, is there also a past lust fetter?

He is fettered [by a past lust], if it has arisen previously and has not been abandoned. He is not [so] fettered, if it has not arisen previously, or having arisen it has been abandoned.
Example involving a given fetter pertaining to one temporal period in relation to another fetter pertaining to a different temporal period

Wherein there is a past lust fetter, is there also a future hostility fetter?

[There is,] if it has not yet been abandoned.

If there is a future hostility fetter, is there also a past lust fetter?

He is fettered [by a past lust], if it has arisen previously and has not been abandoned. He is not [so] fettered, if it has not arisen previously, or having arisen it has been abandoned.

The above illustration, though a partial one, should suffice to demonstrate the Ābhidharmikas’ extremely rigorous and thorough methodology of analyzing the nature of dharma-s through different forms of catechism. MVŚ highlights the importance of such catechetical methodology for abhidharma:

What is a pūrva-pādaka? What is a paścāt-pādaka? What is an evam-pādaka (如是句)? What is a naivam-pādaka (不如是句 “not thus”)? Nothing can match abhidharma in its ability to enlighten sentient beings with regard to such objects of knowledge. (MVŚ, 2c).

For the Ābhidharmikas, by investigating a given dharma by means of such methodological devices and doctrinal perspectives, its nature and characteristic comes to be fully and accurately determined. Thus, the dharma, consciousness (vijñāna), can be so determined to be: conditioned (saṃskṛta), non-material (arūpin), invisible (anirdarśana), non-resistant (apratigha); either with outflow (sāsrava) or outflow-free (anāsrava); either morally skillful, unskillful or non-defined either past, present, or future; etc.
2. The Ābhidharmika – Standpoint, Scope and Methodology

NOTES

1. Cf. AKB, 133: abhiprāyikaḥ sūtre lākṣaṇiko 'bhidharmah |
2. Samghabhadrā (Ny, 708b–c): “The noble teachings are in brief of two types: from the point of view of being nītārtha or neyārtha, of being relative or non-relative, of being expositions of the conventional or absolute truth, of being discourses that accord with one’s own intention or with others’, of being categorizable as dharma-characteristic or as dharma-instruction ... In order to benefit beings to be converted (vineya) the Bhagavat first considers the place, time and the type of recipient (indriya; ‘faculty’) and teaches a certain doctrine accordingly.”
3. Vy, 11: kah sauśrūṣṭikārthah | ye sūtra-prāmāṇikā na śāstra-prāmāṇikāḥ ... sūtra-viśeṣa eva hy arthaviniścayādayo 'bhidharmā-samjñāḥ | Cf. AKB, 146: sūtra-pramānākah vayaṃ naśāstra-pramānākāḥ |
4. AKB, 3: na hi vinā abhidharmopadeśena śiṣyāḥ śakto dharmān pravicetum |
5. Arthaviniścaya-sūtra-nibandhana: na hi vinā sūtropadeśena śiṣyāḥ śakto dharmān pravicetum |

This contrast is pointed out by Samtani, NH, in his edition of the Arthaviniścaya-sūtra and its Commentary (nibandhana) (Patna, 1971), 140 f., in a discussion on the Sautrāntika leaning of the commentator.
6. Ny, 495b.
7. T 49, 16c.
8. Ny, 495b.
9. Ny, 495c. This is good evidence that Śrīlāta, mostly called a Dārṣṭānika master in the Ny, is within the Sautrāntika school of thought.
10. Ny, 329c.
13. MVŚ, 542c.
14. MVŚ, 116b.
15. Entrance, § 4.5.8
16. Vy, 889 f.
18. MVŚ, 196c.
19. MVŚ, 217a.
20. MVŚ, 179b, 196c, etc.
22. These contemplations are practised at the stage of progress called “the stage pertaining to penetration (nirvedhabhāgīya)”. Cf. infra, § 15.3.2.
23. MVŚ, 1c.
24. MVŚ, 405c.
25. MVŚ, 65a.
27. MVŚ, 306b–c.
28. MVŚ, 308a.
29. AKB, 12: viyukto hi parabhāvena dharmah | tasmāt na yena viyuktas
tenaiva samgrhīto yuyjate | tadyathā caṣṣur-indriyam rūpaskandhena
cakṣurāyatanadhātubhyām ca duḥkhasamudayasatyābhyaṃ ca samgrhītam |
tatsvabhāvatvāt | nānyaiḥ skandhādibhis tadbhāva-viyuktatvāt |

30 MVŚ, 537a.
31 Cf. MVŚ, 105c, 108c, 283b, 396a, etc.
32 T 49, 15b.
33 MVŚ, 259b20–26.
34 For the various versions of this stanza, see La Vallée Poussin, L de (1930), ‘Documents d’Abhidharma’, 249, n. 1.
35 MVŚ, 145c.
36 MVŚ, 770c–771a; cf. infra, § 1.3.4.
37 Cf. Entrance, 3 ff.
38 Cf. AKB, 10.
39 AKB, 13.
40 AKB, loc. cit.
41 MVŚ, 379a. Some 14 meanings for āyatana are given herein.
42 AKB, 301. Cf. S, iv, 13; M, i, 3; Mahāniddesa, 133: sabbaṃ vuccati
dvādasāyatanāni.
43 Ny, 477b.
44 AKB, 13.; Ny, 343c (which indicates a preference for the meaning of gotra); SPrŚ, 782a.
45 MVŚ, 370c.
46 T 26, 699a.
47 VKŚ, T 26, 546c.
48 Cf. AKB, i, under stanza 48. SPrŚ, 823b: “The six faculties are the exclusive objects of mental consciousness”. Also, Ny, 377a: “Among the 18 dhātu-s, the five dhātu-s, visibles, etc, … each is cognized by two among the six consciousnesses. By this, it is known that the remaining 13 dhātu-s are all
cognized by mental consciousness alone, as they are not the objects of the five
sensory consciousnesses.”

The Theravāda in fact speaks of them as dhammāyatana-rūpa-s. See Karunadasa,
Y, BAM, 35.
49 MVŚ, 367b.
50 MVŚ, 367b.
51 JPŚ does not enumerate the seven, but the implication in the assertion “one
skandha, one āyatana and one dhātu” is clear enough.
52 MVŚ, 985b; AKB 11; Ny, 342a.
53 MVŚ, 370c; 有餘師說，法界總攝一切法盡. MVŚ, 985b; … 或說法處攝一切法.
We may also note that the Basic Section of the YBS too acknowledges that “the
dharmadhātu is to be regarded as being singular in the sense of being the activity
domain of the mind, or as being twofold, … or as being tenfold”. (T30, 293c).
54 Ny, 344b.
55 T 26, 1027b.
56 MVŚ, 987b.
57 MVŚ, 987b.
58 Ny, 447b.
2. The Ābhidharmika – Standpoint, Scope and Methodology

59 T 49, 16a.
60 Ny, 350c.
61 Ny, 398b. Also cf. MVŚ, 367c (種種因義). In Sthiramati’s commentary on the Abhidharma-samuccaya, dhātu is explicitly glossed as bīja (T 31, no. 1606, 704b: 一切法種子義).
62 Ny, 633a; TSP, 509.
63 Cf. Study, 73 ff., for a good discussion of this feature in this text.
64 MVŚ, 392c–395a.
65 MVŚ, 711a–b – various other explanations are also given.
66 MVŚ, 741a.
67 MVŚ, 263a–c, 740c–741a.
68 Ny, 348c.
69 Cf. AKB, 202.
70 SPrŚ, 863c–864a.
71 MVŚ, 263a, 741a.
72 MVŚ, 263b, 741a.
73 MVŚ, 815c: “It is said to be veiled on account of its obstructing the noble path and the preparatory efforts (prayoga).” Also cf. Ny, 959c.
74 MVŚ, 259c–260a.
75 MVŚ, 269c
76 Entrance § 4.5.34.4
78 Cf. Entrance, 92 & note AKB(E), 133, n. 19.
79 AKB, 3: sāsravānāsravā dharmāḥ | saṃskṛtā mārgavarjītāḥ sāsravāḥ | āsravās teṣu yasmāt samanuśerate || kāmaṃ nirodhamārga-satyālambanā apy āsravā upajāyante na tv anuśerate taretī na tayoḥ sāsravātvasaṅgāh ||
80 MVŚ, 444c–445a.
81 Cf. AKB, 236.
82 AKB, 18 ff.
83 DSŚ, 498b.
84 Cf. MVŚ, 550b.
85 Cf. AKB, 60.
86 DKŚ, 624b.
87 Cf. Study, 203.
88 JPŚ, 933c–938c; MVŚ, 188a ff.
3. The Sarvāstivāda School and Its Notion of the Real

3.1. History of the Sarvāstivāda

Although it is difficult to speak of the exact date of the ‘founding’ of the Sarvāstivāda school, its presence, as well as that of its rival — the Vibhajyavāda lineage — in the time of Emperor Aśoka is beyond doubt. Since Aśoka’s reign is around 268–232 B.C.E., this means that at least by the middle of the 3rd century B.C.E., it had already developed into a distinct school. Vasumitra’s *Samayabhedoparacaṇacakra, a Sarvāstivāda treatise, places the school’s establishment at the beginning of the third century after the Buddha’s demise:

The Sthaviravāda remained united for a certain period of time. At the beginning of the 3rd century, there arose some disputes, and it split into two schools: 1. the Sarvāstivāda, also called Hetuvāda; 2. the original Sthaviravāda which [then] changed its name to the Haimavāda.¹

Emperor Aśoka’s ascendance to the throne is established as around 270 B.C.E. Accordingly, if we follow the Sarvāstivāda tradition itself which gives this date as 116 years (or a hundred odd years)² after the Buddha’s parinirvāṇa, the date given by *Samayabhedoparacaṇa-cakra for the establishment of Sarvāstivāda would be around the first part of 2nd century B.C.E. This tallies with the date of Kātyānīputra (ca. 150 B.C.E.) who is credited by tradition with the effective founding of the school.³ The
earliest inscriptive evidence, however, was the Mathurā Lion Capitol which dates from the beginning of the first century C.E. This inscription mentions the giving of alms and donation of monasteries by the wife of the mahākṣatrapa Rājuvula to the Sarvāstivāda community. His son, Šoḍāsa, is also recorded as having given lands to two Sarvāstivādin monks, Ārya Buddhadeva and Bhikṣu Buddhila.  

It appears that the Sarvāstivāda as well as its rival camp, the Vibhajyavāda, at first maintained its position as the orthodox Sthaviravāda. At this initial stage, the term ‘Sarvāstivāda’ was perhaps not specifically insisted upon. In Devaśarman’s/Devakṣema’s Vijñānakāya-śāstra (VKŚ), one of the seven canonical Sarvāstivāda texts, the author established — for the first time in explicit terms — the sarvāstitva standpoint against the Vibhajyavādins represented by a certain Maudgalyāyana. If this person could be identified with the Moggaliputta-tissa who was said to have presided over the Third Council of the Theravāda in Aśoka’s time and who compiled the Kathāvatthupakaraṇa, then the Chinese tradition transmitted by Xuan Zang that Devaśarman lived within 100 years after the Buddha’s demise would seem credible. This identification is tempting when we consider the fact that the controversy that the author deals with after having established his thesis sarvāstitva against Maudgalyāyana, corresponds to the very first controversy taken up in Moggaliputta-tissa’s Kathāvatthupakaraṇa, and even some of the phrases in both texts on this controversy bear much resemblance. The fact, however, that this text exhibits highly developed polemics betraying considerable influence from JPŚ has prevented Yin Shun from accepting the above-mentioned tradition from Xuan Zang; Yin Shun proposed instead that it was composed in the early part of the 1st century C.E. However, this fact could well have been the result of subsequent revision; it may also be in part a reflection of the author’s intellectual acumen. La Vallée Poussin opined that it was composed after the Pāli Kathāvatthu.

The Sarvāstivāda remained the most powerful and influential school in north-western India from around the beginning of the Common Era to about the 7th century C.E., initially established in Mathurā and expanding in the north where Kāśmīra became its center of orthodoxy. With its highly developed abhidharma doctrines, it was the leading abhidharma school capable of repudiating the emerging Mahāyāna philosophy as well as the pro-Mahāyāna tenets upheld by other schools of Nikāya (i.e., non-Mahāyāna) Buddhism. Around the 6th or 7th century C.E., its leading position seemed to have been eventually replaced by the Sāṃmitīya which had a well developed doctrine of karma.
It is noteworthy that in VKŚ, the Sarvāstivādins never call themselves as such. When arguing against the Vibhajyavādins, they refer to themselves as the Yukta-vādins (應理論者); against the Pudgalavādins, as the Śūnyatā-vādins (性空論者). It was perhaps later, in the course of doctrinal confrontation with rival schools and being hard pressed to articulate their position, that the term “Sarvāstivāda” came distinctly to be insisted upon. The traditional term, Yuktāvādin/Yuktavāda, continued to be employed frequently in MVŚ. It was used by the orthodox Sarvāstivādins in even the 5th century C.E. In MVŚ, in such a context where the Sarvāstivāda standpoint is contrasted with that of another school, the Vibhajyavādins are often ridiculed as not conforming to logic and as being “the fruit of nescience (ajñāna), of darkness (andha-kāra-phala?), of ignorance (avidyā), of not applying effort diligently”.

By around the earlier part of the 2nd century C.E., the Sarvāstivādins seemed to have more or less determined what they considered to be distinctively orthodox Sarvāstivāda doctrines in contradistinction to the other contemporary schools. This is represented by the encyclopedic compilation of the Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā, the ‘Great Commentary’ by the Sarvāstivāda orthodoxy in Kāśmīra (see below). Subsequently, however, within the broad Sarvāstivāda lineage itself, there still appeared to be disagreement concerning many of these doctrines. This fact is reflected in the post-MVŚ works, such as the *Satyasiddhi-śāstra (成實論), the *Abhidharmahṛdaya (T no. 1550) and its commentaries (T no. 1551, no. 1552), AKB and its commentaries, ADV and *Nyāyānusāra (Ny).

In the introductory section of the 5th century C.E. *Samayapradīpika (顯宗論) (SprŚ), the staunch Vaibhāṣika, Samghabhadra, in an attempt to establish the Buddha’s omniscience, cites the Sarvāstivāda version of the Saṅgīti-sūtra (集法契經) where the Buddha is supposed to have predicted that there will be contentious views within the Buddhist movement after Him. These views are not to be found in the extant Chinese Āgama or Pāli version of the sūtra, but they are doctrinal positions considered heterodox by the Vaibhāṣikas, and their contraries would ipso facto represent the orthodox Sarvāstivāda positions as held at the time. Many of these sectarian views, said to have been predicted by the Buddha himself, are disputed at length in AKB and Ny. They are enumerated as follows:

(1) It is only in the vajropama-samādhi that defilements can be eradicated all at once.
(2) Pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha and nirvāṇa are two distinct entities.
(3) The conditionings disjoined from thought are not real entities.
(4) Vijñapti karma-s do not exist, not to speak of avijñapti karma-s.

(5) All rūpa-dharma-s are comprised of the Great Elements (mahābhūta).

(6) The homogeneous cause (sabhāga-hetu) consists in the preceding being similar to the succeeding.

(7) The rūpāyatana comprises color (varṇa-rūpa) alone.

(8) The spraṣṭavyāyatana comprises the Great Elements alone.

(9) Only the tangible āyatana-s are obstructive (sapratigha).

(10) The spraṣṭavyāyatana and the kāyāyatana are obstructive.

(11) Only the five external āyatana-s are obstructive.

(12) It is visual consciousness that sees.

(13) It is the assemblage that sees.

(14) The mano-dhātu and the dharma-dhātu may be both permanent and impermanent.²²

(15) Rūpa-dharma-s do not perish momentarily.

(16) There exist conditionings disjoined from mind which abide for some time.

(17) Citta exists in the ideationless and cessation meditations.

(18) The immediate conditions (samanantara-pratyaya) apply to rūpa-dharma-s as well.

(19) No rūpa-dharma-s can be homogeneous cause.

(20) Retribution-born (vipākaja) rūpa can resume after having been cut off.

(21) Prātimokṣa-śīla can also be acquired by animals, preta-s and deva-s.

(22) Relinking (pratisamdhī, at the time of rebirth) can take place even when the citta is undefiled.

(23) All relinking is due to craving and hatred.

(24) Restraint (saṃvara) and non-restraint (asaṃvara) can be undertaken either partially or fully.

(25) The gravest evil karma (ānantarya) can exist among animals and preta-s.

(26) Defilements can be abandoned by both the ānantarya- and vimukti-mārga-s.
(27) All skillful with-outflow prajñā conjoined with mental consciousness (manovijñāna-samprayuktā kuśala-sāsravaprajñā) is not views (dṛṣṭi).
(28) Satkāya-dṛṣṭi and antagrāha-dṛṣṭi are unskillful and take objects pertaining to other spheres (anya-dhātv-ālambana).
(29) All defilements are unskillful.
(30) There exists no pleasurable or neutral sensation.
(31) Only neutral sensation does not exist.
(32) Rūpa-s exist in ārūpya-dhātu.
(33) All those falling from the ideationless heaven are reborn in the evil planes of existence (durgati).
(34) There is no untimely death for any sentient being.
(35) All outflow-free prajñā is of the nature of knowledge (jñāna) and view.
(36) [The dharma-s] are to be asserted separately: past and future [dharma-s] do not exist; all exist in the present.13
(37) Matter and thought cannot become co-existent causes (sahabhū-hetu).
(38) At the kalala stage of development the embryo is already in possession of all the material faculties.
(39) All those who have acquired the mūrdhan dharma-s are not susceptible to rebirth in the evil planes of existence.
(40) All skillful and evil karma-s are capable of being transformed and ceasing.
(41) The unconditioned dharma-s do not exist as real entities.
(42) The mundane paths of praxis do not eradicate defilements.
(43) The vow-knowledge, the non-dispute, the non-obstruction and the [threefold] double samādhi can arise only in Jambudvīpa.
(44) The citta and caitta-s can also take non-existent objects (asad-ālambana).

3.2. Sarvāstivāda vs. Vibhajyavāda

In spite of various doctrinal disagreements — some of considerable importance — the various subgroups within the Sarvāstivāda school were united in their central tenet of Sarvāstivāda. It seems to have been a genuine belief on the part of the Sarvāstivāda that “sarvam asti” was what the Buddha Himself had taught. It became a problem — philosophically — only when they came to be questioned by their
opponents as to the exact implication of their doctrine of sarvāstitva. As noted above, even after they had eventually articulated this doctrinal position sufficiently to be established as a distinct school, they seemed to have continued to assume the position of the orthodox Sthaviravāda.

The working out of the implication of this thesis was still visible even as late as the time of Ny. The whole confrontation came to be zeroed in/focused on the dispute between Sarvāstivāda versus Vibhajyavāda. We are dealing here, in this context, with these two opposing theses and not with the issue of identification of the two broad sectarian lineages. As for the identity of the Vibhajyavādins in MVŚ, Yìn Shun has made an excellent investigation. According to him:

The Vibhajyavādins in the Mahāvibhāṣā were the continental schools generally referred to as the Vibhajyavāda comprising the Mahīśāsaka, the Dharmagupta, and the Kāśyapīya which prevailed in the Kāśmīra region, particularly with the Mahīśāsaka as the main stream.14

In AKB, the main opponents of the Sarvāstivādins, the Sautrāntikas, belonging to the Vibhajyavāda camp, propose that the Sarvāstivādin way of understanding sarvāstitva is not the only possible one. Indeed, they consider it to be a bad interpretation of the notion. For the Sautrāntikas, one could say ‘all exists’ only in the following manner: Past dharma-s have existed; future dharma-s will come into existence; present dharma-s are existing. Alternatively, one could also say ‘all exists’ in the sense in which the sūtra15 expresses itself: Everything that is within the range of perception — within the 12 āyatana-s (and nothing more) — can legitimately be said to exist.

In this work, the Sarvāstivāda is represented by Vasubandhu as defining their position as follows:

Those who hold ‘all exists’ — the past, the present and the future — belong to the Sarvāstivāda. Those, on the other hand, who hold that some exist, viz., the present and the past karma that has not given fruit but not those that have given fruit or the future, are followers of the Vibhajyavāda.16

In Saṃghabhadra’s Ny, a post-AKB polemic in defense of the Vaibhāṣika orthodoxy, an additional requirement for the definition is noticeable:

It is only those who believe in the real existence of the three periods of time, as discussed above, as well as of the three kinds of the unconditioned, who can be considered as belonging to the Sarvāstivāda.17
This same requirement is also found in ADV:\textsuperscript{18}

Sarvāstivāda is so called because it accepts [the reality of] the three periods of time, distinguished on account of activity, and the three reals [— the three unconditioned]...

The additional requirement seems to confirm our suggestion that even as late as the time of Ny, the orthodox Sarvāstivādins were still struggling to define themselves. According to the *Samayabhedoparacaṇacakra*, most of the early Buddhist sects had accepted the doctrine of sarvāstitva, even though they seem to have disputed endlessly on what it really meant for them in each case. It seems possible that even as late as the time of AKB and Ny, there were still some Buddhists, both within and without the broad Sarvāstivāda lineage — including some sections of the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntika — who would accept the doctrine in a revised or different version from that adopted by the orthodox Vaibhāṣikas. It is perhaps because of this that Saṃghabhadra felt it necessary to dissociate the Vaibhāṣikas distinctly from the others whom he could not accept as real Sarvāstivādins in any sense. In Ny, he names them as follows:

Pudgalavādins, called by him “the Superimposers or Additionists (Samāropavādins)” on account of their acceptance of the reality of the pudgala in addition to that of the dharma-s in the three times;

Vibhajyavādins who accept the existence of only the present and the past karma that has not given fruit;

Kṣanikavādins who accept only the reality of the 12 āyatana-s of the present kṣaṇa;

Prajñaptivādins who deny the reality of even the dharma-s of the present;

Vaināśikas who hold that all dharma-s are without svabhāva, like empty flowers.

The Sautrāntikas, here referred to as the Kṣanikavādins, are singled out by Saṃghabhadra who denies that they qualify as Sarvāstivādins, for their view “differs from the Vaināśikas by just a mere kṣaṇa!”\textsuperscript{19}

3.3. Proof of the thesis of sarvāstitva in VKŚ, MVŚ and AKB\textsuperscript{20}

3.3.1. Arguments in VKŚ

In VKŚ, the author establishes the thesis of tri-temporal existence on the basis of four fundamental principles commonly and tacitly assumed by
the Ābhidharmikas — partly on the authority of the sūtra-s and partly from among accepted abhidharma tenets:

(i) Two thoughts cannot be conascent, and a thought or thought-concomitant cannot know itself (cf. infra, § 9.4): It is said in the sūtra that a person can observe the craving in his mind, etc. When one is making the observation, the observing thought and the craving (i.e., the thought having the craving) observed cannot be simultaneous, nor can the present thought know itself. The craving observed then must be either past or future. Hence past and future dharma-s must be existent.

(ii) Karma and its retribution (vipāka) cannot be simultaneous (cf. infra, § 7.3.5): the fact that a karma which has become past can give rise to its retribution later proves the existence of the former as a past dharma, i.e., an existent in its past mode.

(iii) The Buddha has taught that consciousness necessarily has an object (ālambana): since we can have consciousness of what is past and future, past and future dharma-s must be existent.21

(iv) One can be endowed with (samanvāgata) dharma-s which do not arise presently: It is taught in the sūtra that someone in nirodha-samāpatti wherein no mental activity arises is still endowed with mental qualities such as moderateness in wishes (alpecchatā), shamefulness (lajjā), etc.; likewise, a trainee (saikṣa) is still endowed with the five spiritual faculties — faith, vigor, etc. — even when he has an enwrapped or defiled mind. Accordingly, those which are not present but can still be possessed must be existing as past or future dharma-s.22

3.3.2. Arguments in MVŚ

The arguments for the tri-temporal existence of dharma-s are put forth to refute “those who are deluded with regard to the intrinsic nature of the three times (adhvēn) — denying the past and the future, and holding that what exists in the present are the unconditioned dharma-s”.

The first argument employs the Sarvāstivāda notion of endowment (samanavāgama), a notion that suggests some doctrinal development: One is ‘endowed’ with a dharma when one, having acquired it, continues to possess it. When a dharma has not been acquired and one continues in the state of not possessing it, there is the ‘non-endowment’ of this dharma. For the Sarvāstivāda, this human experience presupposes the existence of past and future dharma-s. The other arguments employ
systematic logical disputation coupled with an appeal to scriptural authority.

a. If past and future are non-existent, there would not be endowment and non-endowment of these dharma-s, just as there is no endowment and non-endowment of a second head, a third hand, etc., which are non-existent. Since there are in fact the endowment and non-endowment, it is known that past and future are existent.

b. The person who denies the past and the future must say in which temporal period the fruit of a present retribution-cause exists — past, present or future. If he says “past”, then the past exists; if he says “future”, then the future exists; if he says “present”, then it amounts to the proposition that a retribution cause and its fruit exist simultaneously, which contradicts scriptural statements. If he says “Its fruit is not within the three periods of time”, then he is proposing that there is no fruit, since a retribution fruit is not unconditioned (asamskṛta). And if there is no fruit, then there would be no cause either.

Likewise, if the retribution fruit exists in the present, then he must say in which temporal period that corresponding cause occurs — past, present or future. If he says “past”, then the past exists; if he says “future”, then the future exists; if he says “present”, then it amounts to the proposition that a retribution cause and its fruit exist simultaneously, which contradicts scriptural statements. If he says “Its cause is not within the three periods of time”, then he is proposing that there is no cause, since a retribution cause is not unconditioned (asamskṛta). And if there is no cause, then there would be no fruit either.

c. If the past and the future were non-existent, then there would not be the facts of ‘leaving home’ (pravrajyā) and receiving ‘higher ordination’, in accordance with the stanza below:

If one holds that the past does not exist, there would not be past Buddhas.

If there were no past Buddhas, there would not be leaving Home and receiving Higher Ordination.

d. If the past and the future were non-existent, then it must be that Saṅgha members practice false speech while possessing proper knowledge, in accordance with the stanza below:
If [a Saṅgha member] holds that the past is non-existent and yet speaks of his [ordination] age,
He would be increasing, day by day, [both] his proper knowledge and false speech.

e. The non-existence of the past and future implies that the present likewise does not exist, since the present is designated in relation to the past and future. The three times not existing, the conditioned would not exist. The conditioned not existing, the unconditioned too would not exist since the latter is established in relation to the former. The conditioned and the unconditioned both not existing, then there would not be any *dharma* whatsoever, which entails that there is no liberation and *nirvāṇa* — a serious false view!

### 3.3.3. Arguments in AKB

The argument put forth by the Sarvāstivāda in AKB, by way of both scriptural authority (*āgama* — a. and b.) and logical reasoning (*yukti* — c. and d.), are essentially similar:

a. For, it has been said by the Buddha: “O bhikṣu-s, if past *rūpa* did not exist, the learned noble disciple could not have become disgusted with regard to the past *rūpa*. It is because past *rūpa* exists that the learned noble disciple becomes disgusted with regard to the past *rūpa*. If future *rūpa* did not exist, the learned noble disciple could not have become free from delight with regard to the future *rūpa*. It is because future *rūpa* exists that…”

b. It has been said by the Buddha, “Conditioned by the two [— sense organ and the object —], there is the arising of consciousness…”

c. Consciousness arises when there is an object, not when there is no object. This is a fixed principle. If past and future [*dharma*-s] were non-existent, there would be a consciousness having a non-existent object. Hence, in the absence of an object, consciousness itself would not exist.

d. If past [*dharma*-s] were non-existent, how could there be in the future the fruit of pure or impure *karma*? For it is not the case that at the time of the arising of the fruit a present retribution-cause exists!
3.4. Sautrāntika critique of the epistemological argument

The logical argument for the two requisites for the arising of consciousness — object and sense faculty — is in conformity with what the Vaibhāṣika cites in b as the scriptural authority. The Vaibhāṣika insists on these twofold requisites. Accordingly, if past and future dharma-s are non-existent, then mental consciousness of them would not arise, since one of the requisites (object) is lacking. But this contradicts experience: We do have cognition (buddhi) of them, which proves that they are real.

The Sautrāntika does not accept that a buddhi must have a corresponding existent object. For him, objects of cognition can be either existent or non-existent. But even when an object is non-existent, the principle (niyama) of the two requisites is not violated. Sthavira Śrīlāta, a prominent Sautrāntika leader in Saṃghabhadra’s time, explains:

This follows in accordance with the principle of inferring from a succession of causes and effects. How?

It is after having grasped a present [object] that [the mind] can swiftly infer to and fro: It can infer that such and such an effect is produced by a past cause of such and such a kind. This cause in turn arose from such and such a cause, and so on, correspondingly up to the remote [past]. It is completely from a process of inference that one has the vivid perception [of a past object] as if it were present (如現證得).

Or, [the mind] infers that such and such a kind of cause in the present moment can produce such and such a kind of effect in the future. This effect in turn will induce the arising of such and such an effect, [in this way] correspondingly up to the remote [future]. …

Although at this stage the object does not exist, it does not mean that the jñāna is without the two requisites… This is because causes and conditions exist in the particular series, at the time when a particular knowledge qua cause (hetu-jñāna) arises. That is: In the past there arose such a jñāna; through a causal transmission, a jñāna having such and such a form is produced in the present moment. Since the present jñāna has the past jñāna as its cause, this present jñāna arises with an understanding that is like the previous one, having the very past object (viṣaya) as its present ālambana. However, that ālambana does not exist now. Yet, although non-existent now, it nevertheless serves as the ālambana. Hence one cannot say [such and such a cognition] is devoid of the two requisites. [The same applies to the jñāna of a future object]. …28
The Sautrāntika explains that he does not in fact object to the proposition of “All exists” (sarvam asti), provided it is properly understood in accordance with the sūtra statement:

O brahmins, ‘all exists’ means no more than the 12 āyatana-s.²⁹

Or rather, one should say: past is that which was existent; future is that which, given its cause, will exist — past and future ‘exist’ in this sense, not in the sense that the present dharma-s exist as real entities.³⁰ This amounts to defining the characteristic of the existent (sallakṣaṇa) as ‘having arisen and not yet ceased’. Samghabhadra objects to such a notion of sallakṣaṇa which, for him, amounts to the a priori assumption that the past and the future do not exist:

Their proposition is invalid, for what has arisen and not yet ceased is just another name for the present. [And] to say that the present time is sallakṣaṇa is to say that the past and the future are non-existent: One should further herein question: Why does sallakṣaṇa pertain to the present and not the other [times]?³¹

3.5. Notion of the real/existent

But just what precisely do the Sarvāstivādins mean when they insist that a dharma which has become past or one which has not yet arisen in the present is real/existent? The articulate theory of sarvāstivāda will be discussed in chapter 5. Here we will first examine their notion of an existent, beginning with MVŚ.

3.5.1. Opinions of the various ancient masters in MVŚ

In the two logical arguments above, the criterion for reality is clearly causal efficacy. MVŚ informs us of various views on what existent/real. The most notable and representative view of the Sarvāstivāda is that what is real is what abides uniquely in its intrinsic nature: What is real is what has a svabhāva. Among the various synonyms of svabhāva is the term avayava, ‘part’.³² A ‘part’ here refers to the smallest possible unit which cannot be further analyzed; it is the ultimate real. Whatever can be further analyzed either physically or mentally — a composite (e.g., a person) — is ‘having a part’ (sāvayava); it is a relative real, superimposed on the ultimate reals (e.g., the five skandha-s). This also means that what is real or what exists truly is what exists from the highest or ultimate standpoint (paramārtha-sat), as opposed to what exists relatively/conventionally (samvr̥ti-sat). MVŚ informs us of various Abhidharmika notions of the existent:
Regarding the existents, some say they are of two kinds: 1. Existents as real entities (dravyataḥ sat) — the skandha, āyatana, etc.; 2. Existents as concepts (prajñaptitāḥ sat) — male, female, etc.

Some say they are of three kinds: 1. What exists relatively — a given thing exists relatively to this but does not exist relatively to that; 2. What exists by virtue of an assemblage — a given thing exists here but does not exist there; 3. What exists at some given time — a given thing exists at this time but does not exist at another time.

Some say they are of five kinds: 1. what exists in name [only] — a tortoise’s hair, a hare’s horn, a garland of empty flowers, etc.; 2. what exists as a real entity (dravyato’sti) — all dharma-s each of which is abiding in its own-nature (svabhāva); 3. what exists conventionally — a vase, garment, vehicle, army, forest, house, etc.; 4. what exists as an assemblage — a pudgala is designated with regard to an assemblage of the skandha-s; 5. what exists relatively — ‘this shore’ [exists relatively to] ‘that shore’, a ‘long thing’ [exists relatively to] a ‘short thing’, etc. 33

MVŚ also distinguishes that which pertains to the relative truth and that which pertains to the absolute truth, with regard to the four noble truths. It enumerates various opinions on this. The position of the compilers is: the particularities of the four truths pertain to the relative truth. I.e., the various conventional things referred to, pertaining to each truth — all the conventional things like “male”, “female”, “vase”, “garment” etc. come under the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin; the Buddha speaks of cessation as being like “the other shore”, and the path as being like a raft or like a ladder, etc. The 16 outflow-free modes of understanding (ākāra) 34 pertain to the absolute truth; i.e., that which pertains to the absolute truth are the universal principles underlying the conventional particularities, directly comprehended (abhi-sam-ādi) by the ārya-s — that which is directly seen by them as being universally true. 35 (Cf. supra, § 2.3.2). This early notion in MVŚ of the absolute truth as being that directly realized by an ārya is noteworthy: it is quite in keeping with the fundamental soteriological concern of abhidharma. Samghabhadra too, emphasizes that it is the common characteristics of dharma-s (the 16 ākāra-s) directly perceived by the realization-knowledge that constitute “true direct perception” (真現量. See § 10.8.8) — that truly pertain to the absolute truth.

The following discussion in MVŚ on the relationship between the conventional truth and the absolute truth shows that while these two
truths as discoursed/uttered by the Buddha are to be upheld as being two perspectives of understanding, in reality — from the ontological perspective — there is ultimately only one truth, the absolute truth:

Question: Is the fact of conventionality (世俗性; *saṃvṛtitva?) in the conventional [truth] existent from the standpoint of the absolute truth or is it non-existent from the standpoint of the absolute truth? ....

Answer: It should be said that the fact of conventionality in the conventional [truth] is existent from the standpoint of the absolute truth. If the fact of conventionality in the conventional [truth] is/ would be non-existent from the standpoint of the absolute truth, then the Buddha’s discourse on the two truths would be false. ....

Question: If so, there should be only one truth, the absolute truth.

Answer: There indeed is only one truth, the absolute truth.

Question: If so, why are two truths established?

Answer: The two truths are established in terms of difference in perspective (差別緣; ‘different reasons’), not in terms of real entities (實事): In terms of real entities, there is only one truth, the absolute truth; in terms of difference in perspective, two types [of truth] are established. The absolute truth is not established from the same perspective from which the conventional truth is established. The conventional truth is not established from the same perspective as the absolute truth. ....

Question: Is it also possible to designate the conventional and the absolute as being each distinct, without the two being mingled?

Answer: It can also be so designated. How is this? According to Venerable Vasumitra: The word (nāma;名) that reveals is conventional; the dharma that is revealed is absolute. He states further: that which accords with conventional usage is conventional; that which accords with what the Āryas say is absolute. According to the Bhadanta: The speech generated from a thought that is not untrue, speaking of things like sentient beings, vase, garment, etc., is conventional truth. The speech generated from a thought that is not untrue, speaking of principles such as conditioned co-arising, etc., is absolute truth. ....

3.5.2. Relative/conventional and absolute truths as postulated in AKB

The distinction between relative and absolute truths is explained in AKB as follows:
That, the cognition (buddhi) of which does not arise when it is broken into parts (avayavaśo bhinne), is conventionally existent; for instance, a pot. For therein, when it is broken into pieces, the cognition of a pot does not arise. And therein, when the [constituent] dharma-s [of a thing] are mentally removed (apohya), the cognition of it does not arise — that too is to be understood as a conventionally existent; for instance water. For therein, when the dharma, rūpa, etc., are removed mentally, the cognition of water does not arise.

A conventional notion (saṃvṛti-saṃjñā) is made with regard to those very things. Thus, those saying that a pot or water exists by virtue of convention speak truly and not falsely; thus this is conventional truth (saṃvṛtisatya).

Absolute truth (paramārthasatya) is other than this. Therein, even when [a thing] has been broken, the cognition of it definitely arises and likewise, even when its [constituent] dharma-s are removed mentally — that is [to be understood as] an absolute existent (paramārthasat). For instance rūpa: for, therein, when the thing is broken into the atoms (paramāṇuśaḥ), and when the [constituent] dharma-s taste, etc., have been removed mentally, the cognition of the intrinsic nature of rūpa definitely arises. Vedanā, etc., are also to be seen in the same way. This is called absolute truth as the existence is in the absolute sense (etat paramārthena bhāvāt paramārthasatyamiti).

Vasubandhu also informs us of the view of the ancient masters (pūrvācārya) which, like the distinction made by MVŚ compilers with regard to the four noble truths (§ 3.5.1), has an epistemological basis: Absolute truth is that which accords with the manner in which a thing is perceived by supramundane knowledge (lokottara-jñāna) or the proper mundane knowledge (laukikajñāna) acquired subsequently (prṣtalabhdha) to the supramundane knowledge. Conventional truth is that which accords with the manner in which a thing is perceived by any other — defiled or non-defiled — type of knowledge. Judging by Yaśomitra, these ancient masters would seem to be the masters of meditation, the Yogācāras, who speak of three kinds of reals — absolutely real, conventionally real and real as a thing in itself (dravya-sat). The last refers to what is real in terms of being an entity and in terms of its specific characteristic (dravyataḥ sva-laksanataḥ sad dravya-sad iti).

Samghabhadra comments on the above exposition, and also refers to MVŚ discussion cited above (§ 3.5.4):

Just as rūpa etc is broken into small parts, gradually disintegrating up to the atoms, or when taste, etc are removed by means of
a distinguished understanding (viśiṣṭa-prajñā), that cognition (buddhi) of rūpa etc exists as it has always been. Likewise is vedanā etc, which, though without smaller parts, ... can be broken down through understanding up to a moment ... that cognition of vedanā etc exists just as it has always been. This exists truly, hence called parama-artha (‘absolute object’); for it exists throughout time in itself. It is from the paramārtha point of view that rūpa etc are said to exist. It is real, not unreal; this is called paramārtha-satya, for it is said to exist in accordance with the perspective of paramārtha. Hence, all the four noble truths are subsumed as paramārtha, for the cognition is not relinquished when it is being analyzed into smaller parts.

The conventional truths are [truths] from the perspective of the absolute (依勝義理), is conventionality (‘convention itself’; 世俗自體) an existent or a non-existent? If it is an existent, then there should be only one truth; if it is a non-existent, truth should not be two-fold.

It must decidedly be said to be existent, for the Venerable Vasumitra says that conventional truth is the word for a non-topsy-turvy signified (arthā; 義. From § 3.5.1 above, artha here refers to the dharma). The signified that is revealed through the word is the paramārtha-satya — we have earlier analyzed word to be a real entity.

Has it not been said that truth should be one?

In actual fact, this should be so, for what is empty from the absolute perspective (勝義空; *paramārthena śūnya) cannot be called truth.

Then why are two [truths] designated?

It is with regard to a certain perspective within the absolute that the conventional is designated; it is not on account of a difference in substance. Why? Word is basis for speech, for it is of the nature of being what is propagated in conformity with conventional sentiments. From this perspective, it should be stated thus: What is samvṛti is necessarily paramārtha. There are some paramārtha which are not samvṛti (what is paramārtha may not be samvṛti) — i.e. the remaining truly existent artha excluding only word. On the very basis of paramārtha being existent artha, from a certain perspective it is called conventional truth, and from a certain perspective it is called absolute truth. That is: what is apprehended generally, without discrimination, as a unified is called conventional truth. What is apprehended specifically, with discrimination, be it a species or an entity, is called absolute truth. For instance, within a body of with-outflow
things, the object (artha; 義) apprehended as effect is called the truth of unsatisfactoriness; the object apprehended as cause is the truth of origin.41 Or for instance, [within] a body of thought and thought-concomitants, some may constitute all the six causes and the four conditions (cf. chapters 6 and 7). Accordingly, there is no contradiction in the truths expounded by the Great Sage (maharṣi; i.e., the Buddha) — as for instance, he says that there is only one truth and no a second, or that there is only one path and no other paths.

Saṃghabhadra’s comments above may be said to be more explicitly a Sarvāstivāda perspective. The word parama-artha in Sanskrit can be interpreted as “absolute/highest sense” (taking artha to mean “meaning”), or as “absolute/highest object” (taking artha to mean “object”). Saṃghabhadra’s explanations convey both perspectives. When he says that rūpa, etc., is parama-artha because it exists truly as it has always been as an entity (in itself) throughout times — future, present and past (“如本恆存”; and “此真實有，故名勝義”) — he is particularly emphasizing the notion of “the absolute object” and the doctrine of tri-temporal existence — a dharma existing truly from the absolute/highest standpoint, in its non-changing intrinsic nature (svabhāva). When he says that “what is empty from the absolute perspective cannot be called truth”, the Sarvāstivada standpoint is equally explicit: a truth cannot be a non-existent (empty); it necessarily exists truly as an intrinsic nature.

3.5.3. Saṃghabhadra’s characterization of the existent

In his defense of the existence of past and future dharma-s, Saṃghabhadra develops the epistemological argument of the real/existent. At the outset, he articulately defines an “existent”: An existent is that which is capable of serving as an object-domain for generating a cognition. A conceptual existent, such as a person, is real/existent, albeit relatively, because it has the five aggregates — which are absolute existents — as its basis, and is thus capable generating the cognition of a person in us. In fact, the conceptualized is necessarily based on some existent(s), absolute or relative. Conceptualization cannot even occur without any existent cognitive object:

The characteristic of a real existent is that it serves as an object-domain for generating cognition (覺, buddhi).

This is divisible into two: What exists truly (dravyato’sti) and what exists conceptually (prajñaptito’sti), the two being designated on the basis of conventional truth and absolute truth. If, with regard to a thing, a cognition (buddhi) is produced without depending
on anything else, this thing exists truly — e.g., rūpa, vedanā, etc. If it depends on other things to produce a cognition, then it exists conceptually/relatively — e.g., a vase, army, etc.

Those that exist truly are further divisible into two: Those that have only their essential natures (svabhāva/svarūpa) and those that, [in addition,] have activities (kāritra). Those that have activities are again of two types: with or without function (sāmarthya/vyāpara/śakti) ... Those that exist relatively are also of two types: having existence on the basis of something real or on something relative, like a vase and an army, respectively.42

3.5.3.1. Past and future dharmas are not merely designations (prajñāpiti)
The Vibhajyavādins, of whom the Sautrāntikas are vehement representatives, maintain that only the present is real; but the totally unreal past and future objects can also be cognized by consciousness. The so-called past and future are in fact merely designations imposed on the present.43 Saṃghabhadra repudiates this, defending the thesis of tri-temporal existence:

Let us consider our proposition above that both real [or absolute] existents and relative existents can give rise to cognition. Now since past and future cognitive objects (ālambana) can also give rise to cognition, are the past and future dharmas real or relative existents? Some assert that they are merely relative existents. Their assertion is untrue, for the following reasons:

[i] That on which the unreal dharmas are based does not exist in the past and the future. If they say that the present constitutes their basis, this is also illogical, for they are not mutually dependent: Without depending on the present, there can also arise consciousnesses having the past and the future as objects. I have explained earlier that if buddhi arises with regard to something [whose existence] depends on other things, then that thing has a relative existence.

[ii] Moreover, it is observed in the world that when that on which a relative existent depends is fully exhausted, [the cognition of] this relative existent no longer arises — ... such as a person (pudgala), a vase, ..., etc. On the other hand, it is observed that when the present dharmas are completely exhausted, the past and the future can still be designated (prajñāpyante)...

[iii] Moreover, it is observed that that on which a relatively real depends and the relatively real are not mutually exclusive. [Now,] when conditioned dharmas proceed in time, the past and
the future do not co-exist. How can the past and the future be relatively established on the basis of the present? Hence, the past and the future are not mere relative existents.

[iv] Moreover, it has never been observed that in a before-after sequence, a real can turn into an unreal, and an unreal can turn into a real. Thus, [logically,] if one holds that the future is a mere relative existent, one should concede that the present too is unreal. Or, if one concedes that the present exists truly, one should concede that the past too is real and not unreal. …

[v] Moreover, the unreal cannot be objects of the noble paths (ārya-mārga) —relative existents such as the person, vase, garment, etc., are not the objects [of cognition] of the noble paths. But the noble paths do have the past and future conditioned dharmas as their objects as well. If it were otherwise, the past and future conditioned dharmas would not be understood by the receptivities (ksānti) and knowledges (jñāna) in direct realization (abhisamaya).

[vi] Moreover, at the time of direct realization, if one does not concede that past and future vedanā, etc., serve as its objects, then those dharmas such as vedanā, etc., within the person [i.e., the meditator] will never be objects of the direct realization, because they hold that it cannot have past and future objects, and because no two vedanā-s, etc., can arise simultaneously. Should this be the case, then the noble paths cannot fully understand (pari-jñā) the conditioned dharmas — which contradicts the sūtra which says: ‘If one has not mastered, has not understood even a single dharma, I say that one cannot make an end of suffering’ (cf. nāham eka-dharmam apy anabhijñāya aparijñāya duḥkhasyānta-kriyāṃ vadāmi). Hence the noble paths necessarily have the past and the future [dharmas] as their objects. Just as a consideration of the knowables proves that merely relatively existent past and future dharmas cannot become objects of knowledge (jñeya); just so, from various other considerations — of the abandonables and the realizables — one can prove, in each case, that the past and the future cannot be mere relative existents, for unreal dharmas cannot be abandoned, etc.

[vii] Moreover, the unreal [which depends on the real for its designation] and the real [on which the unreal is based] cannot be said definitely to be either identical or different…. The past, future and present times being different in their sequential positions, how can one say that the two times — past and future — are merely relative existents without their own essential natures and are [mere] designations on the basis of the present?
Thus their propositions, being contradictory to logic and disagreeing with the Noble Words, are totally unacceptable.44

3.5.3.2. Distinction among past, present and future dharma-s as existents

Samghabhadra further explains that, following the Ābhidharmikas, the definite existence of the past and the future should be properly understood as follows:

On account of the fact of causality, and of defilement and freedom from defilement, their essential natures being not unreal, they are said to exist truly (dravyataḥ sat), [but] not in the same manner that the present [dharma-s] are said to exist truly: The past and the future are not absolute non-existents like a mare's horn, a sky-flower (kha-puspa), etc., nor are they merely relative existents like a vase, a garment, an army, a forest, a chariot, a room, a pudgala, etc., nor are they real existents in the manner of the present. Why? Neither absolute non-existents like a mare's horn or a sky-flower (*kha-puspa), etc., nor relative existents like a vase, a garment, an army, a forest, a chariot, a room, a pudgala, etc., can be said to have the nature of causality, etc. Moreover, what has ceased and what has not arisen cannot be said to have real existence in the same manner as the present.45

If a past or a future dharma exists truly, how can we talk about it as being past or future? Samghabhadra replies:

It has been universally established (prasiddha — established for both parties involved in the debate) that a given real existent can have diverse modes of existence. The Sarvāstivādin can equally question you: “If both the past and the future are non-existent, how can one say ‘this has gone’, ‘this is to come’?” On the basis of an essentially existent dharma, the Always-exist school can establish the variation in the modes of existence on account of the variation in the essential nature and the different causes and conditions [that obtain]. For those who assert that the past and the future are devoid of essential nature, they cannot speak in terms of variation in essential nature and in the causes and conditions — the past and the future being definitely non-existent. How can they distinguish past and future times?46 (For further discussion on the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of temporality, see § 5.3 ff)

3.5.3.3. Cognitive distinctiveness of the reals/existents

In Samghabhadra’s characterization of the existent above, there is an emphasis on cognitive distinctiveness with regard to existent objects:
3. The Sarvāstivāda School and Its Notion of the Real

...the eye sees only forms, the ear hears only sounds, etc. A particular form is seen in its particularity, a particular sound is heard in its particularity, etc. This fact of distinctive cognition in each case is due to the distinctiveness in the object itself. It is a mark of the object's reality. The fact that a real object can be cognized in a unique way is due to the efficacy of its unique intrinsic characteristic (svalakṣaṇa) which is intrinsic to it as a real. A non-existent, being without an intrinsic characteristic, can never give rise to cognition. In other words, the possibility of a cognition necessarily implies the true ontological status of the object cognized. For this reason, Saṃghabhadra's argument may be characterized as epistemic-ontologic. Saṃghabhadra elucidates this notion as follows:

Cognition (buddhi) is with respect to the cognized, for cognition can only be accomplished where a cognizable exists. That is to say, a cognition is so called only when its object (viṣaya) can be apperceived (upa-√labh). If the apperceived does not exist, of what is that which apperceives? (i.e., it is an apperception of what?). Moreover, the intrinsic nature of consciousness is the discerning of an object; if the object of consciousness does not exist, what does consciousness discern? Hence, the consciousness of a non-existent object conceded by the [Sautrāntika] ought not to be called consciousness, since there is nothing to discern. A non-existent is an absolute non-entity and necessarily without (lit., 'going beyond' — 越) an intrinsic characteristic and common characteristics (sāmānya-lakṣaṇa), what is it that is said to be the object of cognition or consciousness? Should one say that non-existence itself is the object of consciousness — no, for a consciousness necessarily has an object. That is: All mental elements (citta-caitta-dharma-s) have intrinsic and common characteristics as their objects; it is not the case that an absolutely non-existent dharma arises as an object. 47

The author of ADV expresses an essentially similar notion:

An objective entity having a unique form established by its intrinsic nature, whose distinctive characteristic is observed by an error-free observation of dharma-s, is said to be a real/existent entity. 48

Saṃghabhadra further articulates on the real. It is characterized by its possession of efficacy which affects the way we perceive it:

In our cognition of rūpa, it is only if the objects are true existents that there comes to be the possible difference between a correct
and incorrect cognition on account of the difference in regard to
the [state of] the faculty, light, remoteness, nearness and location,
etc.\textsuperscript{49}

We may also compare this to the logician Dharmakīrti’s definition
of the absolutely real: The object of direct perception (\textit{pratyākṣa})
is the intrinsic characteristic (\textit{svalakṣaṇa} = particular) — a unique essence/
entity (\textit{tattva}), the point-instant of efficiency capable of affecting our
sensibility (\textit{artha-kriyā-samartha}):

The object of that [— direct perception —] is the specific
characteristic. That of which there is a variation in the cognitive
image on account of [its] nearness or remoteness, is the specific
characteristic. That alone is the absolutely real, for a [real] entity
(\textit{vastu}) is characterized by its efficacy for a purposive action.\textsuperscript{50}

\section*{3.6. The various components of the Sarvāstivāda school}

In the narrower sense, as found in MVŚ, the Ābhidharmikas often refer
to ‘the Sarvāstivāda theoreticians’. Sometimes, ‘Sarvāstivāda theoreticians’
is even used in specific reference to the Kaśmīrian Vaibhāṣikas. Thus,
whereas MVŚ ascribes the proposition that the \textit{rūpa-dharma}-s also have
homogeneous causes (\textit{sabhāga-hetu}. See \textit{infra}, § 6.3.2), to ‘the masters
of Kaśmīra’,\textsuperscript{51} the older version of this work\textsuperscript{52} ascribes it to simply ‘the
Ābhidharmikas’ (阿毗曇人).\textsuperscript{53} The ‘old Ābhidharmikas’ are occasionally
mentioned. But if the Ābhidharmikas constituted the mainstream of
the Sarvāstivāda, they did not exhaust the totality of the school. In the
time of MVŚ, the early Dārṣṭāntikas who were the \textit{sūtradhara}-s, with
Dharmatrāta and Buddhadeva as the most eminent, also constituted a
school of thought within the fold of the Sarvāstivāda. Even subsequent
to MVŚ, the Dārṣṭāntika leader, Kumāralāta, who was instrumental
in the evolution of the Dārṣṭāntika into the Sautrāntika, was known to
subscribe to the view of tri-temporal existence.\textsuperscript{54}

In MVŚ, the Dārṣṭāntikas are never referred to as the Sautrāntikas,
although by the time of AKB, the two appellations were seen to be used
interchangeably. The *Samayabhedoparacāna-cakra never mentions
the Dārṣṭāntikas as among the so-called 18 sects, and the Sautrāntika
is noticeably enumerated at the very end of the list of the Sthaviravāda
lineage. This suggests that the Dārṣṭāntika as a school or a movement
evolved gradually into the Sautrāntika, some time after the compilation
of MVŚ. The early Dārṣṭāntika masters were known for their active effort
in popularizing the Buddha’s teachings, employing poetry and possibly
other literary devices in the world in the process, and were particularly
skilled in utilizing similes and allegories in demonstrating the Buddhist doctrines. It was most probably for this reason that they came to be known as the Dārṣṭāntikas. They were also noted as meditators and proponents of meditation.\textsuperscript{55} At the same time, we see in MVŚ some of their masters — such as Dharmatrāta and Buddhadeva — as being engaged in controverting the Ābhidharmika doctrines. It is therefore conceivable that, broadly speaking, there existed two sections of the early Dārṣṭāntikas — one more pre-occupied with popular preaching and meditation, the other with doctrinal disputation. It was probably from the latter section that the Sautrāntika evolved. In this process of disputation, they also seem to have contributed to the development of Buddhist logic, as the Vaibhāṣikas, themselves proud of being in conformity to logic, spoke of the Sautrāntikas as being arrogant in their logical skill (tarkābhimāna).\textsuperscript{56}

Professor Przyluski, however, proposed that the two appellations, Dārṣṭāntika and Sautrāntika, referred to the same group of people — the former used derogatively by their opponents, and the latter used by the Sautrāntikas to refer to themselves.\textsuperscript{57} La Vallée Poussin endorses Przyluskis view, quoting one passage from MVŚ in which the Sarvāstivādins condemn the Dārṣṭāntikas for employing worldly examples to support their theory against the Ābhidharmikas whose theory is said to be the noble doctrine (ārya-dharma).\textsuperscript{58} Katō also endorses Przyluski’s view.\textsuperscript{59} However, Przyluski’s confounding drṣṭa with drṣṭi in this context, along with his assertion that Buddhist sūtra-s were considered to be the Buddha’s revelation, has been convincingly repudiated by Jayatilleke.\textsuperscript{60} Moreover, we must take note of the fact that even in such a disputatious context, the Sarvāstivādins referred to them as “the Venerable/Honorable Dārṣṭāntikas (譬喻尊者)— which is hardly humiliating. Dharmatrāta was apparently so highly revered that he was simply referred to as the Bhadanta (大德). Moreover, the Dārṣṭāntikas were not the only ones condemned for “relying on conventional parlance in the world” (依世俗言論). Others, like the Mahāsāṃghika\textsuperscript{62} and the Vibhajyavādins\textsuperscript{63} too, were condemned in exactly the same way:

… If so, how is the simile given by the Mahāsāṃghika to be explained (nīyate)?

Answer: It need not be explained, for that is not subsumed under the sūtra, vinaya and abhidharma. Moreover, one cannot employ an example (drṣṭānta) visible in the world to repudiate the noble Dharma, for the noble Dharma and the conventional Dharma are different.
Accordingly, in such a context, we have evidence only that the Sarvāstivādins objected to the manner in which worldly similes are used to controvert the Ābhidhmika doctrines — whether they are used by the Dārṣṭāntikas or others.\(^{64}\)

From the beginning, divergent viewpoints within the school were found and even tolerated — as long as they did not directly contravene the thesis of Sarvāstivāda. To take just a few examples: Dharmatrāta, Buddhadeva, Vasumitra and Ghoṣaka, — the so called ‘four great Ābhidhmikas of the Sarvāstivāda’ — each offered a different explanation as to how, given the theory that a dharma exists as an everlasting dravya, the difference in the three periods of time can be accounted for (see infra, § 5.2). Ghoṣaka also did not completely go along with the orthodox Ābhidhmikas in asserting that the totality of the abhidharma is buddha-vacana. To him, “all abhidharma is explanations on the sūtra-s. Such and such an exposition is made on account of such and such a sūtra; whatever is not said in the sūtra-s must be removed”.\(^{65}\) With regard to the thought-concomitants, we find Buddhadeva and the Dārṣṭāntikas denying their reality apart from thought.\(^{66}\) Dharmatrāta held that all thought-concomitants are subsumable under volition (cetanā);\(^{67}\) while others acknowledged the real existence of the thought-concomitants apart from thought. With regard to the three unconditioned, Buddhadeva\(^{68}\) and others acknowledged their reality; Dharmatrāta held that Space (ākāśa) is unreal,\(^{69}\) and the Dārṣṭāntikas denied the reality of all the three.\(^{70}\)

But since the compilation of JPŚ, the Kāśmīrian Sarvāstivādins upheld the supreme authority of JPŚ system and raised this work to the status of being the Buddha’s words.\(^{71}\) As time went on, they assumed the position of orthodoxy and became increasingly dogmatic and intolerant toward all other views not compatible with JPŚ system. Partly to consolidate their position as the orthodox Sarvāstivādins, they eventually compiled the encyclopedic MVŚ which purports to be a commentary on JPŚ. In it, besides their own views, those of the following Sarvāstivāda schools of thought were also cited and usually criticized and rejected: The Dārṣṭāntikas, the western masters (pāścātya; also called ‘the Venerables of the west’ 西方尊者; and ‘the western śramaṇa-s’), the foreign masters (bahirdeśaka; also called ‘the masters outside Kaśmīra’, and the ‘Gāndhārian masters’). Even the so-called ‘old Kāśmīrian masters’\(^{72}\) were not spared.

Subsequent to the compilation of MVŚ, the orthodox Kāśmīrians who based themselves on it were known as the Vaibhāṣikas. We must bear
in mind, however, that the views accepted by the Vaibhāṣikas were not necessarily proposed by themselves for the first time. Many of them must have been the achievement of the great Sarvāstivāda masters up to the time of the compilation of MVŚ. The term “Vaibhāṣikas” eventually came to connote the orthodox Sarvāstivādins, based mainly — but not exclusively — in Kāśmīra. It is important to realize that not all of them necessarily subscribed to each and every view sanctioned by MVŚ compilers. Moreover, the evolving nature of the Vaibhāṣika views must be recognized as well.

This dogmaticism and intolerance of the Vaibhāṣikas inevitably brought about a reaction from the other Sarvāstivādins. On the one hand, it resulted in the split of the Sarvāstivāda school into two major camps — the eastern one representing the Kāśmīri school and the western one representing the Gāndhāri school — although it would seem that not all Kāśmīri Ābhidharmikas were as orthodox or dogmatic as the professed Vaibhāṣikas. On the other hand, it compelled the sūtra-centered Dārṣṭāntikas to co-operate with other holders of heterodox views, including the Mahāyāna Śūnyatāvādins, prevailing around the first and second centuries C.E., and finally to change over to the ‘present-only-exist’ standpoint. In this connection, it may be noted that in his *Nyāyānusāra, Samghabhadra repeatedly accuses the Sautrāntika of siding with the followers of the ‘sky-flower’ (空花; ākāśa-puṣpa) doctrine — apparently referring to the Śūnyatā-vāda prevailing at the time — in obstinately denying the svabhāva of all dharma-s.74 It was in this process that, a section among their radicals, the Dārṣṭāntika, eventually evolved into the Sautrāntika.

Although the appellations ‘Gāndhāri masters’, ‘western masters’ and ‘foreign masters’ may suggest a considerable difference in the geographical locations of these masters, in actual fact, they refer mainly to the Sarvāstivāda masters west of Kāśmīra — the western masters — of Gāndhāra and Parthia, with Gāndhāra as the center. In AKB,75 Vasubandhu speaks of the Kāśmīrians and the western masters where MVŚ76 has “masters of this country” (此國諸師) and “foreign masters” (外國諸師), respectively. In many places in MVŚ, a certain view said to be held by one of these groups is also said, in the same context or elsewhere, to be held by another.77 However, we do come across one instance78 in MVŚ where the ‘foreign masters’ hold a slightly different view from the ‘western masters’. It is with regard to the number of rūpa heavens: The Vaibhāṣikas say 16;79 the western masters, 17;80 the foreign masters, who hold that there are nine distinct abodes in rūpadhātu,81 18.82 Also, where MVŚ83 ascribes the view that rūpa-s have no
sabhāga-hetu to ‘the foreign masters’, the Old MVŚ\(^{84}\) ascribes it to ‘the Dārṣṭāntikas’. This may then suggest that the term “foreign masters” possibly has a broader connotation than the term “western masters”. We must, of course, also allow for the possibility of individual differences in views even among the so-called western masters or foreign masters themselves.

The western masters too studied JPŚ, although with a more critical attitude than the Kāśmīrians. They too, being Sarvāstivādin Ābhidharmikas, were not really opposed to the Kāśmīrians in a sectarian sense. The MVŚ compilers held them in considerable regard, calling them ‘the honored ones of the west’.\(^{85}\) Yin Shun observes that “the doctrines of the western school are mostly the orthodox views of MVŚ and were absorbed in this work. The views of the western masters, foreign masters and Gāndhārian masters pointed out specifically in MVŚ, are but a small number of heterodox views.”\(^{86}\)

But the work which most deeply influenced the basic attitude of these western masters was PrŚ whose importance for the Sarvāstivādins was next only to JPŚ. A new trend of development was inherited from the tradition of PrŚ, tending toward organization, the essential and conciseness. It is for this reason that many views found in PrŚ, such as ‘four non-defined roots’ (avyākṛta-mūla),\(^{87}\) ‘four meanings of anuśaya’,\(^{88}\) etc., were often attributed by the Vaibhāṣikas to the western or foreign masters.
NOTES

1. T 49, 15b.
2. T 49, no. 2033, 20a; no. 2031, 15a.
3. Cf. T 45, 9b.
5. T no. 1821, 8c.
7. La Vallée Poussin (1925b), 344 f.
8. See Lü Cheng, 2367 ff.
9. E.g., MVŚ, 138c ff., 169a–171b, 222a–222c, 308b, etc.
11. E.g., MVŚ, 313a, 358a, etc.
12. 意界法界俱常非常。
13. 無有去來，一切現在；別別而說。
15. Cf. sabba-sutta in *Saññutta-nikāya*.
16. AKB, 296: ye hi sarvamastītī vadanti atītam anāgataṃ pratyutpannam ca te sarvāstivādāḥ | ye tu kecid asti yat pratyutpannam adatta-phalam cātītam karma kimcin nāsti yad datta-phalam atītam anāgataṃ ceti vibhajya vadanti te vibhajyādvinaḥ |
17. Ny, 630c.
18. ADV, 259: icchaty adhva-trayāṃ yasmāt kṛtyataś ca dhruva-trayāṃ | sarvāstivāda ity uktas tasmād… ||
19. Ny, 630c–631a. A similar distinction between the Sarvāstivāda and other schools is also made in the ADV, 257 f.
20. AKB, 295 f.
21. Maudgalyāyana, however, maintains that one can be conscious of non-existent objects.
22. VKŚ, 531a–537a.
23. The *Dhammapada* stanza corresponding to *Dhammapada*, 71, *Udānavarga*, IX, 17 and the Chinese version of *Udānavarga* (T 212), 671b, etc.
24. AKB, 295: utkāṃ hi bhagavatā tītām ced bhikṣavo rūpam nābhaviṣyan na śrutavān ārya-śrāvako ’tīte rūpe napeko ’bhaviṣyat | yasmāttarhāṣṭyatātām rūpam tasmāc chruṭavān ārya-śrāvako ’tīte rūpe napeko ’bhavati | anāgataṃ ced rūpam nābhaviṣyat na śrutavān ārya-śrāvako nāgataṃ rūpam nābhyanandisyat | yasmāttarhāṣṭyanāgataṃ rūpam… |
25. AKB, 295: dvayam pratītya vijñānasutotpāda ityuktaṃ | The relevant sūtra passage is cited in AKB, 146: caksuḥ pratītya rūpāṃ cotpadyate caksurviśnānaṃ | trayāṇām samānātām sparśāḥ | sahajataḥ vedanā saññānaḥ cetaneti | Cf. Ś, ii, 72: cakkhuṃ ca paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkhuṣṭaḥ | tinnāṃ saṅgati phasso | phassapaccaya dhamma | vedanāpaccayā tathā… | M, i, 111 ff. has, after vedanā, “yam vedeti ’tām saññāṇāti ’yam saññāṇāti ’tām vitakketi… |”. Only in *Peṭakopadesa*, 89, is the word sahajataḥ found: cakkhuṃ ca paṭicca rūpe ca uppajjati cakkhuṣṭaḥ | tathā sahajatāḥ vedanā saññānaḥ phasso manasikāro ete te dhammā
eka-lakkhāṇā uppāda-lakkhanena || SĀ, 72c, 87c: 縁眼色, 生眼識, 事和合觸, 僅生受想思)

26 AKB, 295: yadi cātītānāgataṃ na syād asadālambanaṃ vijñānāṃ syāt | tato vijñānān eva na syād alambanābhāvāt |

27 AKB, 295 f.: yadi cātītam na syāt śubhāśubhasya karanam phalam āyatām katham syāt | na hi phalotpattikāle varitamāno vipāka-hetur asūtī |

28 Ny, 628c–629a. Katō J unfortunately misunderstands this important phrase, phrase 智緣非有, 亦二決定, the ‘two’ as referring to the past and the future (Katō J, op. cit., 289, 291).

29 AKB, 301: evam tu sādhuḥ bhavati | yathā sūtraḥ sarvam astīty uktam tathā vadati | ...

30 AKB, 299: atītām tu yad bhūtapūrvam | anāgataṃ yatsati hetau bhaviṣyati | evam ca kṛtvā śūty ucyate na tu punar dravyatāḥ |

31 Ny, 621c.

32 MVŚ, 4a.

33 MVŚ, 42a–b. This notion of the relatively or conventionally real versus the absolutely real continued to be found in the post-AKB Vy: samvrṭi-saḍ iti samvyavahāreṇa saḥ paramārtha-saḍ iti paramārthena saḥ svalaksanena saḍ ity arthah || (Vy, 521). Note that samvrṭi corresponds to Pāli sammuti (<√man, changed phonetically(?)) to √vr). In the process of sanskritization →sam-vṛti. Later Sanskrit grammarians came to derive it from √vr. Already in MVŚ (548b), we are told that the Grammarians (śābdika) take this to be from √vr, ‘to cover’: “This samvrṭi-saṭya is concealed by ajiñāna, like that which is inside a vessel is concealed/covered by the vessel.” The Sanskrit Buddhist tradition generally interprets it in terms of sam + vrṭ/vṛ.

34 Four for each truth — for duḥkha-saṭya: duḥkhata, śūnyatā, anityatā, anātmatā/nairātmya; etc. See infra, § 15.2.2.1.

35 MVŚ, 399c–400a.

36 MVŚ, 400a–b.

37 Cf. Samghabhadrā’s explanation that the two truths are really two aspects of the one, absolute, truth, Ny, 666a ff.

38 AKB, 334.

39 AKB, 334: yathā lokottarena jñānena grhyate tatprṣṭhalaḥdhena vā laukikena tathā paramārtha-saṭyam | yathā anyena tathā samvrṭi-saṭyam iti pūrvācāryāḥ |

40 Vy, 542.

41 According to the Sarvāstivāda, the truth of unsatisfactoriness is the five aggregates constituting the body in its effect aspect; the truth of origin is the same in its cause aspect.

42 Ny, 621c–622a. Samghabhadrā’s definition of the real may be said to be based on § 3.3.2 b & c.

43 Cf. ADV, 278 (vide, ADV, Introduction, 125): atra pratyaṭvatiṣṭhante dārstāntikāḥ | na brāhmaḥ sarvathaḥḥitam na vidyate | kiṃ tarhi | dravyātmanā na vidyate, prajñaṭy-ātmanā tu sad iti |

44 Ny, 624c ff.

45 Ny, 625a10–18.

46 Ny, 625b6–10.

47 Ny, 622b19–27.
3. THE SARVĀSTIVĀDA SCHOOL AND ITS NOTION OF THE REAL

ADV, 264: yasya khalv arthavastunah svabhāvasiddha-svarūpasyāviparītākārayā
dharmopakalāsanāyā paricchinmaṃ lakṣaṇam upalakṣyate tat sadravyam ity
ucyate |

Nyāyabindu, 12–15: tasya [pratyaksasya] visayah svalaṃkānaṃ | yasyārthasya
sannidhānaṃ sannidhābhāhyāṃ jñānapratibhāsahastādstrāsatvalaṃkānaṃ | tad eva
paramārthasat | arthakriyāsāmarthyalakānasatvādavastunah || Cf. Saṭīkaṃ
Nyāyabinduprakaraṇam, 12 f.; also cf. Th. Stcherbatsky’s translation in his
Buddhist Logic II, 33 ff.

MVŚ, 88a.

Old MVŚ, 72c.

Old MVŚ, 72c.

Cf. ADV, 277.

Cf. Study, 365 ff.

See Singh, A, The Heart of Buddhist Philosophy – Dīnāgā and Dharmakīrti
(Colombo, 1995), 22 ff.

Przyluski, J, ‘Dārṣṭāntika, Sautrāntika and Sarvāstivādin’, in the IHQ, vol. XVI,
2, 1940, 246 ff.

AKB(E), Introduction, 36; MVŚ, 782b.

Katō J, Kyōryōbu no Kenkyū, 73 f.


E.g., MVŚ, 105a.

E.g., MVŚ, 43c.

E.g., MVŚ, 312b, 357a–b.

See Dhammajoti, KL, ‘Sarvāstivāda, Dārṣṭāntika, Sautrāntika and Yogācāra —

MVŚ, 326b.

MVŚ, 8c, 661c, 730a, etc.

MVŚ, 8c.

MVŚ, 662a.

MVŚ, 388c.

MVŚ, 161a.

MVŚ, 1a.

Other schools of thought outside the Sarvāstivāda cited in MVŚ include:
the Vibhajavāda, Mahāsāṃghika, Dharmagupta, Mahīśāsaka, Kāśyapiya,
Vāśiputriya, Sthaviravāda, etc. The views of the following individual ācārya-s
are also cited: Buddharaṃśa, Jivala, Ghoṣa-varman, Kṣemadatta, Vāspa,
Vāmalabdhā, Saṅghavasu, Dharadatta, Dharmanandin and Pūrṇayaśas.

We also find the appellations ‘the old Ābhidharmikas’ and ‘the old foreign
masters’. In this connection, we must bear in mind that the doctrines of the
Vaibhāṣikas and the western masters, etc., were constantly evolving, and
that, therefore, “MVŚ views” and “Vaibhāṣika” do not always have the same
connotation. See also Entrance, Introduction, § II.

E.g., Ny, 432b.

AKB, 28.

MVŚ, 368a.
See examples quoted in Study, 306.


AKB, 111; Ny, 475a.

MVŚ, 85b.

MVŚ, 784b.

From Ny, 457a, we learn that the Sautrāntika master Śrīlāta also holds that there are 18 rūpa heavens.

MVŚ, 87c.

Old MVŚ, 72c.

This regard was also given to ‘the Venerable Dārṣṭāntikas’ (譬喻尊者), although not to the Vibhajyavādins.

Study, 310.

PrŚ, 693a; AKB, 291 f.; ADV, 246 f.; Ny, 618b–c.

PrŚ, 702a. Out of the four meanings given in our text, the Vaibhāṣika (MVŚ, 257a) gives only three for the meaning of the term anuśaya, i.e., without that of anu-śañj. The explanation in terms of four meanings is attributed to the foreign masters (ibid., 257b).
4. The Abhidharma Treatises of the Sārvāstivāda

4.1. Seven canonical treatises

4.1.1. Treatises of the earliest period
- Dharmaskandha-śāstra (DSŚ)
- Saṅgītiparyāya-śāstra (SgPŚ)
- Prajñapti-śāstra (PjŚ)

4.1.2. Later, more developed texts
- Vijñānakāya-śāstra (VKŚ)
- Jñānaprasthāna-śāstra (JPŚ)
- Prakaraṇapāda-śāstra (PrŚ)
- Dhātukāya-śāstra (DKŚ)

4.2. Development of the Sārvāstivāda manuals
- Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā (MVŚ)

4.1. Seven canonical treatises

The seven abhidharma works that came to be recognized as canonical treatises of the school are: 1. Dharmaskandha, 2. Saṅgītiparyāya, 3. Prajñapti, 4. Vijñānakāya, 5. Prakaraṇa, 6. Dhātukāya, 7. Jñānaprasthāna. Yaśomitra mentions JPŚ as the body, in relation to the other six as its feet, enumerating in the following order: “The śāstra is JPŚ; it is like a body having six feet — PrŚ, VKŚ, DSŚ, PjŚ, DKŚ, SgPŚ.”¹ In a similar manner, Pu Guang explains:

The earlier six treatises have less doctrinal topics; it is JPŚ that contains the most extensive doctrinal perspectives. Accordingly, the abhidharma masters of later time spoke of the six as the feet and of JPŚ as the body.²

The tradition that six of these texts constituted a group in contrast to JPŚ, appears to have existed at least by around the early part of the 3rd century C.E., as attested in the *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa (MPPU):

Question: The Aṣṭagranthaka (= JPŚ), the six-membered abhidharma, etc., whence were they?

Answer: In the Buddha’s time, the Dharma was non-erroneous. After the Buddha’s demise, at the time of the first recitation (saṅgīti), [the Dharma] was just as when the Buddha was alive. In the subsequent century, at the time of King Aśoka, … there arose the names of the different schools. Henceforth, through a succession, it came to the time of a brahmin religieux from the
clan of Kātyāyanīputra. He was intelligent and of sharp faculty and had read the whole *Tripitaka* and the scriptures belonging to both the Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions. Desiring to understand the Buddha’s words, he composed the *Jñānaprasthāna* comprising eight chapters (*grantha*). ... Subsequently, the disciples composed the *Vibhāṣā* ([Great-] Commentary) for the sake of those who could not fully understand the eight chapters.³

In addition to authorship, Pu Guang further provides the size and the relative chronology of these seven treatises:

Śāriputra composed the *Saṃgīti-paryāya* comprising 12,000 verses; the shorter version comprised 8,000 verses. Mahā-maudgalyāyana composed the *Dharma-skandha-pāda-śāstra*, comprising 6,000 verses. Mahā-kātyāyana composed the *Prajñāpti-pāda-śāstra*, comprising 18,000 verses. The aforementioned three *śāstra*-s were composed in the Buddha’s time. In the middle of the first century after the Buddha’s demise, Devaśarman composed the *Vijñānakāya-pāda-śāstra*, comprising 7,000 verses. Coming to the beginning of the 3rd century [after the Buddha’s demise], Vasumitra composed the *Prakaraṇa-pāda-śāstra*, comprising 6,000 verses. He further composed the *Dhātu-kāya-pāda-śāstra*, whose longer version comprised 6,000 verses and shorter version comprised 700 verses.⁴

However, it is more reasonable to understand that these texts must have evolved as separate treatises, some being revised by several editors as a result of mutual influence; and it must have taken considerable time for the school to finally adopt this set of seven texts as their distinctive canonical *abhidharma*. It is possible that this canonical set came to be fixed sometime after MVŚ, completed around the middle of 2nd century C.E. PjŚ was probably incorporated as a canonical text around the time of MVŚ (see below). In any case, MVŚ does not mention the set of seven. In spite of the fact that it holds JPŚ as the supreme authority, it never speaks of JPŚ as the ‘body’ and quotes from only five of the other six *śāstra*-s — except for DKŚ. The reference to JPŚ as the ‘body’ in comparison to the other six treatises was probably the result of the Vaibhāṣika bias. The Tibetan tradition enumerates the seven texts in a different order: 1. DSŚ, 2. PjŚ, 3. DKŚ, 4. VKŚ, 5. JPŚ, 6. PrŚ, 7. SgPŚ.⁵ MPPU also speaks of “the body and meaning of *abhidharma*” (阿毘曇身及義) as one type of *abhidharma* and the “six-part [abhidharma]” as another.⁶ Elsewhere, it also mentions the *ṣaṭpāda-abhidharma*.⁷

Given the scarcity of historical data and the fact that all seven texts seem to have been revised and interpolated subsequent to their original compilation, we must be content with only a relative chronology.
Most scholars have attempted to classify these texts into three periods: early, middle and late; but their criteria are divergent.

Thus, Erich Frauwallner classified PrŚ and JPŚ as the most recent of the three periods. While observing that PrŚ is not a systematic compilation and "consists of a number of sections, all virtually independent of each other and complete in themselves", he stated that its author, Vasumitra, "makes a purely outward attempt to unite in one work all the most important achievements that had been made up to his time". And this must have been his main reason for classifying it as one of the two most recent ones. However, this assumption of all the sections as being authored by Vasumitra alone is questionable (see below). As to JPŚ — as the perceptive Yin Shun quite rightly remarks — its time of compilation cannot be too late considering the fact that it was this text which fundamentally established the definitive doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda school.

Moreover, the question as to which text(s) had been borrowed or been influenced by which other text(s) — and also vis-à-vis two given texts, which had first influenced which — is disputable.

Furthermore, we cannot simply assume that a text showing more systematic or developed doctrines is necessarily later than one which shows otherwise — the difference as regards caliber and intellectual gift, personal views, etc., of the authors must be taken into consideration. An example of the developed Sarvāstivāda tenets is the three asamskrta-s; yet it is noteworthy that whereas all the three are mentioned in DSŚ, only two are mentioned in JPŚ (see below).

Finally, even the three treatises — DSŚ, SgPŚ and PjŚ, commonly held to be the earliest — show clear signs of influence from PrŚ and JPŚ in their extant versions, and to that extent cannot be regarded as the earlier sources for these two treatises in pure and simple terms. It is more likely that all seven texts, before their being properly incorporated as the Sarvāstivāda canonical texts, i.e., 'sarvāstivādized', had derived material from ancient sources of abhidharma investigation common to all schools. Accordingly, the periodization of the relatively more developed texts must in part remain a subjective one. This being the case, we prefer to classify the seven treatises more simply into two broad groups:

I. the three texts concerning which we have more objective grounds to classify them as the earliest — and this is more or less a consensus of opinions among most scholars;
II. the other treatises which exhibit a more developed nature or which can be determined otherwise as being subsequent to the earliest three.

4.1.1. Treatises of the earliest period

Of the seven canonical texts, DSŚ, SgPŚ and PjŚ belong to this period. They all exhibit features similar to the ‘abhidharmic’ discourses in the sūtra-piṭaka (see supra, § 1.1.2), and generally show little organization and doctrinal articulation. There is also the absence of explicit definition or establishment of the thesis of sarvāstiva. Furthermore, these three texts are noticeably attributed by tradition to the immediate disciples of the Buddha. We may note here that the Sarvāstivāda tradition enumerates these three texts by name together as part of the abhidharma-piṭaka (see below § 4.1.1.2).

4.1.1.1. Dharmaskandha-śāstra (DSŚ)

According to the Chinese tradition, this śāstra, translated in full by Xuanzang (T no. 1537), was authored by Maudgalyāyana, but the Sanskrit and Tibetan traditions¹¹ ascribe it to Śāriputra. Sanskrit fragments exist, totaling 22 numbered folios. DSŚ begins with a mātrkā — given as a summary (uddāna) — of the topics to be discussed. These topics are then taken up and commented upon one by one, sequentially. In each exposition, a sūtra passage precedes the item-wise commentary. The following is an example from “the chapter on the noble truths”:¹²

At one time, the Bhagavat was residing in Vārāṇasī (Banāras) at the Deer-park of Ṛṣipatana. At that time, the Bhagavat told the bhikṣu-s: “This is the noble truth of unsatisfactoriness (duḥkha). If one applies the mind properly to such dharma unheard of before, there will definitely arise [in him] the eye, knowledge, wisdom (vidyā), discernment (buddhi). This is the noble truth of the origination of unsatisfactorines. … With regard to these four noble truths, because I have made the threefold turning with the twelve aspects, … . At that time, Mahābrahma, having heard about this, rejoiced in it. …”

Herein it relates the event of the turning of the Dharmacakra. It is thus named the Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra. At that time, the five bhikṣu-s and the 80,000 devaputra-s, having heard the discourse, rejoiced in it and accepted it with faith.

(Immediately after the sūtra quotation, the commentary follows:) What is the noble truth of unsatisfactoriness? Birth is
unsatisfactory … In brief, the whole of the five aggregates of grasping is unsatisfactory.

What is birth-unsatisfactoriness? …

For what reason is birth said to be unsatisfactory? …

What is old-age-unsatisfactoriness? …

(After commenting on each of the key terms concerning the first truth described in the sūtra passage, it goes on to expound on the other three truths in a similar manner.)

The doctrinal topics discussed in the 21 chapters of this text are divisible into the following three sections:


II. 1. kṣudra-vastuka

III. 1. indriya, 2. āyatana, 3. skandha, 4. bahu-dhātu, 5. pratīya-samutpāda

The following features are noticeable:

(a) The topics discussed are those concerning spiritual praxis (I.) and doctrinal concepts which are the concern of the sūtra-s (III.). The emphasis on praxis is discernible from the fact that the treatise begins with a discussion on the practice of the five precepts (pañca-śīla) and ten skillful paths of action (kuśala-karmapatha), followed by the factors leading to stream-entry (śrotaāpatti), faith (prasāda), spiritual fruits (śrāmanya-phala), etc. Under the section on stream-entry, it attempts to map out the path of spiritual progress, and summarizes as follows:

[One must begin by attending and honoring the True Men (satpuruṣa).] If one is able to attend and honor the True Men, one can then listen to the True Dharma. Having listened to the True Dharma, one is then able to comprehend properly (yonīśas) its profound meaning. Having properly comprehended its profound meaning, one can then proceed to practice the dharmānudharma-s. Having vigorously practiced the dharmānudharma-s, one is then able to enter into the perfection (samyaktvāvakrāntī), [i.e., attain stream entry].13
(b) All commentaries are based on a specific sūtra passage, exhibiting the vibhaṅga style in the sūtra-piṭaka. (See e.g., quote above).

(c) Its classification of dharma-s is in terms of āyatana, skandha and (bahu-)dhātu, the discussion of each of which forms a separate chapter (i.e., chapter 18, 19, 20). But it is in the Skandha chapter that we see the explicit enumeration of all the conditioned dharma-s of the Sarvāstivāda under the five skandha-s, as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rūpa-skandha} & \quad \text{— rūpa, comprising the 4 Great Elements and the Derived Matter} \\
\text{vedanā-skandha} & \quad \text{— vedanā, subdivided into various types} \\
\text{saṃjñā-skandha} & \quad \text{— saṃjñā (briefly mentioned as to be understood similarly as the case of vedanā)} \\
\text{saṃskāra-skandha} & \quad \text{conjoined: cetanā, etc. up to all jñāna, drṣṭi and abhisamaya} \\
\text{saṃskāra-skandha} & \quad \text{disjoined: prāpti, etc. up to vyañjana-kāya} \\
\text{vijñāna-skandha} & \quad \text{— vijñāna (briefly mentioned as to be understood similarly as the case of vedanā)} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(d) There is little organization and systematization of its discussions.

(e) Although there is no attempt at establishing the thesis of sarvāstitva, its implication is sufficiently clear — all analysis is in terms of the past, the present, the future. Thus, cakṣur-indriya is explained as the cakṣus “which has seen, is seeing and will see rūpa, and the non-participating (tat-sabhāga) cakṣus”; etc.

(f) It enumerates the eye of intermediate existence (antarā-bhava) — a distinct doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda.

(g) In its discussion on rūpa, the avijñāpī is not mentioned.

(h) Some relatively advanced doctrinal concepts — such as that of the 98 anuśaya-s innovated by JPŚ and the classification of citta-caitta-s, viprayukta-saṃskāra-s and asaṃskṛta-s found in PrŚ — are included in this text. All the three asaṃskṛta-s are mentioned. Explanations on the four śrāmanya-phala-s also seem to have been taken from PjŚ.

These features suggest that DSŚ represents the most archaic type of abhidharma of the Sarvāstivāda, still visibly under the influence of...
the abhidharmic sūtra-s. The omission of avijñapti-rūpa suggests that the text probably belongs to the period before this topic came to be hotly debated among the abhidharma schools. However, (h) suggests that the present version must have been revised subsequently under the influence of the two most esteemed canonical texts — JPŚ and PrŚ — and perhaps some other pāda treatises subsequent to it.

4.1.1.2. Saṃgītiparyāya-śāstra (SgPŚ)

The Chinese translation (T no. 1536) by Xuanzang gives Śāriputra as its author, but the Sanskrit and Tibetan tradition ascribe it to Mahākauṣṭhila. Only some fragments in Sanskrit exist. The text is a commentary on the Saṃgīti-sūtra (T no. 9, Dīgha-nikāya, no. 33) which is essentially a mātrkā purporting to collect scattered teachings of the Buddha, presented in an enumerative format. SgPŚ follows this format. As commentarial explanations presumably must have accompanied such concise, enumerated doctrinal topics from the Buddha’s time, SgPŚ — as a direct commentary on the Saṃgīti-sūtra to whose format it is confined — can be conceived as representing the result of the earliest abhidharma development contemporaneous with the sūtra-piṭaka. Yin Shun, on the following three grounds, concludes that SgPŚ must have been composed subsequent to DSŚ:

(i) There are numerous places where the explanations are explicitly said to be “as explained in the Dharmaskandha-śāstra”20. There are also some explanations — such as that on the three ākuśala-vitarka-s21 — which in content are the same as those in DSŚ.

(ii) SgPŚ is based on the Saṃgītiparyāya-sūtra of the Dīrghāgama, yet like DSŚ, it also adopts the doctrine of 62 dhātu-s found in the Bahudhātuka-sūtra of the Madhyamāgama (T 1, no. 26).

(iii) This śāstra refers to variant explanations — “some say” (有說), “some explained thus” (有作是說)23 — suggesting that at the time of its compilation, abhidharma doctrines were gradually entering the stage of divergent views developed by the various abhidharma schools.

One might also consider the use of dyads and triads and the tetralemma analysis as further suggesting a relatively developed abhidharma methodology. However, such features may also have been accrued as a result of revision of the text over time. Moreover, it is to be noted in this connection that in speaking of the mātrkā (= abhidharma), Saṃghabhadrā enumerates these three texts in the following order: SgPŚ.
Likewise in the *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-vinaya-kṣudraka-vastu* and the *Aśokāvadāna* (see supra, § 1.1.2.d). This order of enumeration may well hint at the Sarvāstivāda tradition of the relative chronology of the three texts.

4.1.1.3. *Prajñapti-śāstra* (PjŚ)

Pu Guang groups this text together with SgPŚ and DSŚ as being compositions in the time of the Buddha. He ascribes this text, said to comprise 18,000 stanzas, to Mahā-kātyāyana (see above, § 4.1), whereas MPPU, as well as the Sanskrit and Tibetan, to Mahā-maudgalyāyana.

This is the only canonical text not translated by Xuanzang. The Chinese translation (T no. 1538) made in the early part of the 11th century by Fa-hu (Dharmarakṣita) and Wei-jing is a partial one, containing the chapter known as *kāraṇa-prajñapti*.

The Chinese translation mentions in an embedded note that the first part is named *Loka-prajñapti*, the original Sanskrit of which is not extant. MPPU records a tradition that the third part of the six-part (= six-feet) *abhidharma*, entitled *Loka-prajñapti* (= PjŚ), comprises eight chapters. It seems, therefore, possible that the extant Tibetan version, comprising *Loka-prajñapti* (*’jig rten bshag pa*), *Kāraṇa-prajñapti* (*rgyu gdags pa*) and *Karma-prajñapti* (*las gdags pa*), is also only a partial translation.

The *Aśokāvadāna* explains the *mātrkā-piṭaka* (= *abhidharma-piṭaka*) as comprising:

> the four *sṃṛtyupasthāna*-s … prāṇidhi-jñāna-sāmādhi, the one-incremental (*ekottara*) *dharma*-s, the hundred-and-eight defilements, the explanation (*jñāna*) of the world, the explanation of the fetters, the explanation of *karma*, the explanations of *samādhi*, *prajñā*, etc.”

Saṃghabhadra gives a similar description of *mātrkā*:

> As the Venerable Mahākāśyapa says: “What does *mātrkā* refer to? The four *sṃṛtyupasthāna*-s, etc up to the noble eight-fold path, … as well as the *Saṅgīti-paryāya*, *Dharma-skandha* and *Prajñapti]-śāstra*. All such like are collectively known as *mātrkā*.”

Comparing the above two descriptions and taking into consideration the information gathered from MPPU, Yin Shun concludes that originally PjŚ must have taken the first chapter — its main doctrinal concern — as the general title, and that *Loka-prajñapti*, *Kāraṇa-prajñapti*,
4. The Abhidharma Treatises of the Sarvastivāda

*Karma-prajñapti*, *Samyojana-prajñapti*, *Samādhi-prajñapti* and *Prajñā-prajñapti* must have constituted some of its eight chapter titles.\(^{31}\) Concerning its original title, it may be further noted that the older Chinese version of the Vibhāṣā (T28, no. 1546) quotes this treatise as (*Loka-prajñapti-sūtra*) twice,\(^{32}\) besides the title (*Prajāpti-śāstra*).\(^{33}\)

PjŚ is quoted 135 times in MVŚ. The content of these quotations pertains mostly to cosmological doctrines, supernormal powers and — particularly — *karma* doctrines. This is in keeping with the general characteristics of the Dīrghāgama which, according to the Sarvāstivādin tradition, is meant for the proselytizers\(^{34}\) and aims at meeting the needs of the popular mentality. Some scholars believe that it most likely derived its sources from the *shi-ji-jing* (T no. 30, 西記經; ‘Explanation of the World’ = *Loka-prajñapti-sūtra*)\(^{35}\) of the Dīrghāgama and the *Li-shi-a-pi-tan-lun* (T no. 1644) which deal with Buddhist cosmology. Yin Shun, however, opines that it developed its doctrines from the various ancient *sūtra* sources dealing with cosmological topics which constituted a common doctrinal concern among the various Buddhist schools at the time; and depending on the school, such expositions came to be variously compiled, either as a *sūtra* or a *śāstra*. He points out, for instance, that the Theravāda too also discusses similar cosmological topics even though it does not possess a *sūtra* corresponding to the Chinese *shi-ji-jing*.\(^{36}\)

It appears that, besides the Sarvāstivāda, other schools/lineages such as the Vibhajyavāda and Vātsiputriya too held PjŚ in high esteem. The following discussion in MVŚ is cited by Yin Shun as an indication of this:\(^{37}\)

> The Vātsiputriyas and the Vibhajyavādins intend to claim that sound is a retribution fruit (from *karma*).

**Question:** On the basis of what authority (*pramāṇa*) do they make such a claim?

**Answer:** On the basis of the noble words. As the *Prajñapti-śāstra* says: … On the basis of this explanation, they hold that sound is a retribution fruit.

There are also places in MVŚ where the explanations given by PjŚ were accepted with difficulty or rejected, which again suggests that the text did not belong exclusively to the Sarvāstivāda. One such rejection concerns the nature of ignorance (*avidyā*):

> The *Prajñapti-śāstra* states: “What is ignorance? All the past defilements.” It should not state so. Stating so would amount to
the abandoning of intrinsic nature. Rather, it should state: "What is ignorance? It is the stage of the past defilement."  

Yin Shun believes that it was subsequent to MVŚ that the text came to be recognized as one of the six pāda-śāstra-s of the Sarvāstivāda school. 

In brief, like DSŚ and SgPŚ, PjŚ is also characterized by its simple and fairly loosely structured exposition based on sūtra passages. This, coupled with the fact the traditions of Sarvāstivāda texts (Aśokāvadāna, Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya and Ny) and of Xuanzang (through Pu Guang) agree in grouping the three texts together, suggests that PjŚ, like the other two texts, can be counted among the early canonical Abhidharma texts. However, unlike DSŚ and SgPŚ, it does not so much exegetically expand on the terms and concepts of the sūtra passages quoted, as utilizing them as a basis for the discussion on various doctrinal concerns that were being developed at the time. A clear example of this feature is in the Karma-prajñapti which uses the Saṅcentanīya-sūtra as the basis for discussing the developing karma doctrines. 

4.1.2. Later, more developed texts

In contrast to the above three treatises, the remaining four are clearly more developed in terms of organization and doctrinal concepts. Moreover, some divergence notwithstanding, they all contain sectarian doctrines which can be regarded as specifically Sarvāstivādin. In addition, as regards authorship, all traditions agree in ascribing them to the abhidharma masters subsequent to the Buddha’s time. The following enumeration reflects only a probable relative chronological of these four treatises.

4.1.2.1. Vijñānakāya-śāstra (VKŚ)

The Chinese translation gives its author as 提婆設摩 which agrees with the Sanskrit tradition — Devaśarman. According to Pu Guang, he lived about 100 years from the Buddha’s demise, which seems credible (see supra, § 3.1). Doctrinally, this is a highly esteemed Sarvāstivāda text, quoted 39 times by MVŚ. It is in this text that, for the first time, the fundamental thesis of sarvāstitva was explicitly upheld against the Vibhajyavādins. The whole text consists of six skandhaka-s, the discussions being centered around the six consciousnesses:

I. Maudgalyāyana-skandhaka
II. Pudgala-skandhaka: refutation of pudgalavāda
III. *Hetu-pratayya-skandhaka*
IV. *Ālambana-pratayya-skandhaka*
V. *Kṣudraka-(or Samkīrṇa-)pratayya-skandhaka*
VI. *Śamanvāgama-skandhaka*

In repudiating the Vibhajyavādins’ present-only-exist standpoint, we see the distinct employment of logical apparatus similar to that found in the Pāli *Kathāvatthu.*

I. *Maudgalyāyana-skandhaka* is the refutation of Śramana Maudgalyāyana’s assertion that “the past and future do not exist; the present and the unconditioned exist.” Devaśarman’s arguments here have been discussed above (§ 3.3.1). The only argument given by Maudgalyāyana in its defense is that there can be a thought (*citta*) without an object, so that the past and future, though non-existent, can serve as object of cognition.⁴²

II. The *Pudgala-skandhaka* refutes the Pudgalavādins (Vātsīputrīya and Sāmmitīya) who assert: “In the true and absolute sense the pudgala is perceivable (*upalabhyate*), realizable (*sākṣātkriyate*), exists (*現有*; *samvidyate/vidyamāna/drṣyate?*) and is well observed (*等有*; *saṃdṛṣyate*?).”⁴³ Hence there is definitely the *pudgala.* This phraseology is comparable to that in *Kathāvatthu* in a similar refutation of the *puggala*: *sacikaṭṭha-paramaṭṭhena puggalo upalabbhati.* The following is an illustration of the author’s method of refutation with the first part of his argument:

1. The Pudgalavādin’s proposition stated: In the true and absolute sense the *pudgala* is perceivable, realizable, exists and is well observed. (= *p*)

2. Śūnyatāvādin (= Sarvāstivādin) seeks confirmation with his opponent as to the latter’s acceptance of the *sūtra* statements: Would you say that the *sūtra* has properly taught that the five *gati*-s — *naraka*, etc. — are definitively established without confusion, that each *gati* exists distinctly? (= *s*)

3. Pudgalavādin: Yes.

4. Śūnyatāvādin seeks further confirmation: Would you say that there is someone (i.e., your *pudgala*) who dies in the infernal plane of existence (*naraka-gati*) and is reborn into the plane of existence of the animals (*tiryag-gati*)? (= *p 1*)

5. Pudgalavādin: Yes.
6. Śūnyatāvādin: Recognize your defeat (汝聽墮負 — cf. Kathāvatthu: ājānāhi niggahāṃ)! For: \( s \supset \sim p \), and \( p \supset \sim s \).

7. Pudgalavādin: We confirm \( p \).

8. Śūnyatāvādin: Would you say that it is the very same person (彼即是彼; \( sa eva saḥ \)) — the one who dies and the one who is reborn? \( (= p 2) \)

9. Pudgalavādin: No. \( (\sim p 2) \)

10. Śūnyatāvādin: Recognize your defeat! For: \( p \supset \sim p 2; \sim p 2 \supset \sim p \).

11. Śūnyatāvādin: Would you say that it is a different person in each case?

12. Pudgalavādin: It is different \( (= p 3) \) (given as an anticipated answer).

13. Śūnyatāvādin: Would you say that the infernal being is annihilated and a different being is born as an animal? \( (= p 4) \)

14. Pudgalavādin: No. \( (\sim p 4) \)

15. Śūnyatāvādin: Recognize your defeat! For: \( p 3 \supset p 4; \sim p 4 \supset \sim p 3 \).

16. Pudgalavādin: It is ineffable as to whether they are different or the same \( (= p 5) \) (given as an anticipated answer).

17. Śūnyatāvādin: Would you say that the same ineffability as regards identity or difference applies to the person in your \( p 1 \) as well? \( (= p 6) \)

18. Pudgalavādin: No. \( (\sim p 6) \)

19. Śūnyatāvādin: Recognize your defeat! For: \( p 5 \supset p 6; \sim p 6 \supset \sim p 5 \).

The whole argument can be summarized as follows: \( p \supset q; \sim q, \text{ therefore } \sim p \). Here, \( p \) is the opponent’s proposition; \( q \) is its logical implications which are contradictory to either śūtra teachings or logic. Note that \( p 2 \) above is śvāśvata-vāda and that \( p 3 \) is uccheda-vāda, both contradicting the Buddha’s teachings.

Another example of such contradictory implication is in regard to the question whether the retribution of pleasurable and unpleasurable experiences are self-caused. The Śūnyatāvādin argues that the opponent’s thesis of a real person necessarily implies either that they are self-caused
(svayaṃ-krta) or other-caused (para-krta). Both options, however, are extremes rejected by the sūtra-s, one implying ṣvāśvata-vāda, the other, ucceda-vāda.\(^{44}\) The pudgala is also refuted on the ground that it is not among the objects of cognition of the six consciousnesses as taught by the Buddha — rūpa, śabda, etc. Neither can there be a seventh consciousness of which it is the object.\(^{45}\)

III.–V. Skandhaka-s III to V deal with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the four prayāya-s focusing on the six consciousnesses:

III. Hetu-skandhaka discusses hetu-pratyaya;
IV. Ālambana-skandhaka discusses ālambana-pratyaya;
V. Samkīrṇa-skandhaka discusses samanantara-pratyaya and adhipati-pratyaya.

VI. The Samanvāgama-skandhaka discusses samanvāgama and asamanvāgama — a topic which is to gain central importance in the Sarvāstivāda soteriology.

4.1.2.2. Jñānaprasthāna-śāstra (JPŚ)

The fundamental importance of this treatise is clear from the fact that the Sarvāstivāda tradition came to uphold this as the ‘body’ of their canonical abhidharma, in contrast to the six ‘feet’, although this does not necessarily in a straightforward manner imply that JPŚ was a later compilation deriving its sources from the ‘feet’ texts (see above § 4.1). The definitive, encyclopedic *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā purports to be its commentary.

Two Chinese translations of JPŚ are extant; one by Xuanzang (T no. 1544) comprising 20 fascicles, and an earlier one translated in 383 C.E. by Samghadeva, Zhu-fo-nien and Dharmapriya under the title of *Aṣṭa-skandhaka-(/Aṣṭa-granthaka-)śāstra (T no. 1543) comprising 30 fascicles. This treatise is unanimously ascribed by all traditions to Kātyāyanīputra.

As to the date of the author, Collett Cox mentioned MPPU as suggesting that he lived 100 years after the Buddha.\(^{46}\) However, what MPPU actually says there is that 100 years after the Buddha’s demise, there arose doctrinal disputes among the great masters giving rise to distinctly named schools. “Henceforth, through a succession, it came to [the time of] a brahmin religieux from the clan of Kātyāyana (= Kātyāyanīputra) … who composed the Jñānaprasthāna-sūtra in eight skandhaka-s”\(^{47}\) (see above § 4.1). According to the *Samayabheda-упараачанacakra,
the Sarvāstivāda split from the original Sthaviravāda lineage at the beginning of the 3rd century after the Buddha (see above). If we take this to be the time when JPŚ effectively established the Sarvāstivāda as a distinct school, then this is also the period to which Kātyāyanīputra belonged. The tradition originating from Xuanzang also assigned him to the 3rd century after the Buddha.48 So did Ji Zang’s 三論玄義.49 We believe Yin Shun is right that since JPŚ decisively established the fundamental doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda, the date of its compilation cannot be too late. Xuanzang’s tradition placing Kātyāyanīputra in the 3rd century after the Buddha seems reasonable, and this would — according to the Sarvāstivāda tradition (see above, § 3.1) — place him around 150 B.C.E. Paramārtha’s Biography of Vasubandhu places him in the 5th century after the Buddha’s demise,50 which seems to be a confounding with the time of the compilation of MVŚ.51

MVŚ explains the meaning of the title of this treatise, giving two interpretations of prasthāna: (i) ‘setting out’ or ‘initiating’ or ‘starting point’, (ii) ‘base’ or ‘foot-hold’:

**Question:** Why is this treatise called jñāna-prasthāna?

**Answer:** All knowledges in the absolute sense (paramārtha-jñāna) set out from here; this is the starting point. Hence it is called jñāna-prasthāna.

Furthermore, this treatise should be called *The foot-hold of knowledge* — all the knowledges in the absolute sense have this as their foundation; they are established on this. Hence it is called *The foot-hold of knowledge*.

Furthermore, this [treatise] is most capable of initiating the mighty knowledges; as the mighty knowledges have this as their object (ālambana), it is called jñāna-prasthāna.

Furthermore, it is called jñāna-prasthāna because, depending on this, the knowledges reach the other shore (i.e., become perfected); there is none that can match this in setting forth the sva-lakṣaṇa and sāmānya-lakṣaṇa of all dharma-s.

Furthermore, it is called jñāna-prasthāna because all knowledges — whether mundane (laukika) or transcendental (lokottara) — are dependent on this as their origin; it is the wonderful gate of the knowledges.52

The whole treatise is divided into eight major chapters called skandhaka-s, each with several sections called āśvāsa 納息 — called varga (跋渠) in the *Aṣṭa-skandhaka*. Each of these sections is made up of several doctrinal topics (章), each of which is then discussed in terms
of various doctrinal perspectives (पञ्च). Thus, the whole treatise consists of 4 strata:

I. doctrinal topics;
II. doctrinal perspectives in terms of which a topic is analyzed;
III. a section comprising the various doctrinal topics;
IV. a skandhaka (chapter) comprising the various sections.


The eight chapters are as follows: (1) Samkīrṇaka, with eight sections; (2) Samyojana, with four sections; (3) Jñāna, with five sections; (4) Karman, with five sections; (5) Mahābhūta, with four sections; (6) Indriya, with seven sections; (7) Samādhi, with five sections; (8) Drṣṭi, with six sections.

As to its order of presentation, which begins with the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ (laukikāgra-dharma), i.e., the first section of the Samkīrṇaka-skandhaka, MVŚ cites divergent interpretations given by the various masters. The first few interpretations agree that there was no particular consideration of the order on the part of the author.53 This seems to echo the general view of the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas, stated at the beginning of MVŚ, that “one should seek the true nature and characteristics of dharma-s within the abhidharma, not the order [of presentation] or the introductions (nidāna)”.54

The doctrinal topics which are enumerated, constituting an attribute- mātrkā, are said to be established with the sūtra-s as the basis, for the treatises have the explanations of the sūtra-s as their purpose.55 MVŚ explains the rationale for this sub-structure of doctrinal topics being followed by doctrinal perspectives, as follows:

Question: Why are the doctrinal topics first set up here?
Answer: In order to elucidate the doctrinal perspectives. If the doctrinal topics are not set up, the doctrinal perspectives cannot be elucidated — like a painter not being able to paint space with color. …

Moreover, if the doctrinal topics are not set up, it is a void and nothing can be asked — there must be a basis on which to ask a question. …

Moreover, it is like the case of the Buddha explaining the Dharma — first outlining, then explaining: He first outlines, “the
six dhātu-s, the six spraṣṭavya-āyatana-s..., these are said to be a sentient being”. Then he further explains: “These are called the six dhātu-s ..., these are called...”\(^56\)

This exegetical sub-structure may be illustrated with the topic of the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’. This is discussed in terms of seven doctrinal perspectives — each in the form of a question, followed by answer(s) and explanations:

(1) “What are the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’?”

(2) “Why are they called the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’?”

(3) “Are the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ to be said to pertain to the sphere of sensuality (kāmadhātu-pratisaṃyukt), to the sphere of fine-materiality (rūpadhātu-pratisaṃyukt), or to the sphere of immateriality (ārūpyadhātu-pratisaṃyukt)?”

(4) “Are the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ to be said to be savitarka-savicāra, avitarka-savicāra or avitarkaavicāra?”

(5) “Are the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ to be said to be conjoined with (saṃprayukta) the sukhendriya, prītīndriya, or upekṣendriya?”

(6) “Are the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ to be said to consist of one thought moment (citta) or many thought moments?”

(7) “Are the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ to be said to be susceptible to retrogression or not susceptible to retrogression?”\(^57\)

The five categories of dharma-s recognized as the ultimate reals in the Sarvāstivāda system — rūpa, citta, caitasika, citta-viprayuktasamskāra, and asamskṛta — are already clearly enumerated in JPŚ,\(^58\) although not yet properly schematized as a taxonomical doctrine as in PrŚ:

As to rūpa, there is a whole mahābhūta-skandha elaborately discussing the mahābhūta-s and the bhautika-rūpa-s. There is a whole section on avijñapti under the Karma-skandhaka, with clear notions of saṃvara, asaṃvara, naiva-saṃvara-nāsaṃvara, prātimokṣa-saṃvara, etc.\(^59\)

As to citta, various considerations of its nature are made, some of which are likely to have influenced the other canonical treatises, either by way of being inherited or by way of influencing their subsequent stage
of revision. The following are some examples from the *Saṃkīrṇaka* chapter:

Is there a single consciousness which apprehends all dharma-s? No.

But if this consciousness generates [the understanding] that all dharma-s are without Self, what does this consciousness not cognize? It does not cognize itself and those dharma-s conjoined with it and co-existent with it.

Are there two citta-s which are mutually a cause to each other? No. Because no two citta-s can arise simultaneously in a given person (pudgala)…

Why is it that no two citta-s arise simultaneously in any given person? Because there is no second equal-immediate condition (see § 7.1.2) and because the citta-s of a sentient being arise one after another.

But if no pudgala exists and there is no preceding citta that goes to the succeeding citta, how can it be possible for one to recollect what one has done previously? By virtue of the force of repeated practice, a sentient being acquires a particular knowledge of homogeneity with regard to a dharma and comes to be able to know in a corresponding way in accordance with what he has experienced. …

As to the caitasika-s, the ten which are later to be known as the mahā-bhūmika-s are clearly grouped together in the discussion on samprayuktaka-hetu as follows: vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā, sparśa, manaskāra, chanda, adhimokṣa, smṛti, samādhi, prajñā.

As to the citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra-s, there is the mention of prāpti, the saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s, nikāya-sabhaṅgatā, prthogjanatva, jīvitendriya, etc. The distinction between acquisition/non-acquisition (prāpti/uprāpti) and endowment/non-endowment (samanvāgama/asamanvāgama) is made — samanvāgama is the non-loss of what has been acquired (prāpta); asamanvāgama is the not having acquired or the loss of what has been acquired. (See infra, § 11.3.1.1). As an example:

Those who have not cut off their roots of skillfulness (kuśala-mūla) are endowed with the five [spiritual] faculties, faith, etc., and those who have cut off their roots of skillfulness are not endowed with them. Those who have acquired and not lost the three outflow-free faculties are endowed with them; those who have not yet acquired or have lost [them] are not endowed with them.
As to the unconditioned dharma-s only pratisamkhya-nirodha and apratisamkhya-nirodha are mentioned;\(^65\) ākāśa is noteworthy absent — possibly suggesting that JPŚ was compiled earlier than PrŚ in which this third asamskṛta is clearly mentioned and defined. (See below).

An important innovation is the theory of the six causes — samprayukta-hetu, sahabhū-hetu, sabhāga-hetu, sarvatraga-hetu, vipāka-hetu, kāraṇa-hetu. (See infra, § 6).\(^66\) In regard to vipāka-hetu, the authors give a very comprehensive definition, bringing into its scope all the five conditioned skandha-s constituting the four categories — rūpa (bodily and vocal karma-s), citta, caitasika and citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra.\(^67\) (See infra, § 6.3.4).

JPŚ also develops a very rigorous methodology, essentially based on catechism, of exhaustively analyzing the interrelationship among a given group of dharma-s. (See § 2.4.4 for an illustration).

4.1.2.3. Prakaraṇa-śāstra (PrŚ)

All traditions unanimously ascribe this text to Vasumitra. Besides Xuanzang’s translation (T no. 1542; translated in 660 C.E.) comprising 18 fascicles, there is an earlier Chinese translation in 12 fascicles (T no. 1541), made by Guṇabhadra and Bodhiyaśas from 435–443 C.E. Its first chapter on the five classes of dharma-s seem to have enjoyed considerable popularity in China. It was translated as an independent text by An Shi-gao in one fascicle around 148 C.E. (T no. 1557), and later in the Tang Dynasty by Fa-cheng (T no. 1556). There is also a commentary on this first chapter, entitled *Pañca-vastuka-vibhāṣā* (T no. 1555) ascribed to Dharmatrāta, translated by Xuanzang.

PrŚ consists of eight chapters:

1. ‘On the five groups’ (*Pāñcavastuka*)
2. ‘On the knowledges’ (*Jñāna-nirdeśa*)
3. ‘On the entrances’ (*Āyatana-nirdeśa*)
4. ‘On the seven groups’ (*Saptavastuka*)
5. ‘On the proclivities’ (*Anuśaya-nirdeśa*)
6. ‘On subsumption, etc.’ (*Saṃgrahādi-nirdeśa*)
7. ‘Thousand-questions’ (*Sahasra-praśnaka*)
8. ‘On ascertainment’ (*Viniścaya-nirdeśa*)

Frauwallner remarks that PrŚ is a compilation of virtually independent and self-contained sections (see above, § 4.1), although he also takes note of the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-śāstra* (MPPU) which records an opinion
which — enumerating PrŚ as the first of the ‘six part’ abhidharma —
states that of its eight chapters four are authored by Vasumitra and the
other four by Kaśmīrian arhat-s.68 Frauwallner conjectures that chapters
1, 2, 3 and 8 are later additions, while 4–7 represent the earlier part.69
Yin Shun, too, on the basis of this tradition in MPPU and an analysis of
its contents, ascertains that PrŚ is indeed divisible into the following
two groups:

I. four chapters which are essentially a reworking of ancient
treatises — 4, 6, 7, 8;

II. four chapters which are a revision of ancient doctrines with
innovations — 1, 2, 3, 5.70

As an example of the first group, let us look at the 4th chapter,
the Saptavastuka. Yin Shun thinks that the sapta-vastu-s three dharma-s,
i.e., skandha, dhātu, and āyatana, and four dharma-s, i.e., vedanā, samjñā,
saṃskāra and vijnāna,71 have their source in the ancient treatises:

The Saptavastuka’s enumeration of all the saṃskṛta-dharma-s in the
five-skandha scheme seems to be an inheritance from DSŚ (see above
§ 4.1.1.1). Likewise its discussion of what are subsumed (saṃgrhiṭa) and
what are not, and also what are conjoined (saṃprayukta) and
what are not — all in terms of skandha, dhātu, āyatana — can
be seen as an inheritance from an ancient source based on the sūtra-s.
In its discussion of the caitasika-dharma-s, the following classes are
enumerated: ten mahā-bhūmika-s; ten kuśala-mahā-bhūmika-s; ten
kleśa-mahā-bhūmika-s; ten parītta-kleśa-mahā-bhūmika-s; five kleśa-s;
five sansparśa-s; five drṣṭi-s; five indriya-s, five dharma-s — eight
classes totaling 65 dharma-s. However, the ten kuśala-mahā-bhūmika-s
are not mentioned in the older translation and could have been added
from MVŚ.72 Although Yin Shun places this text under the first
group, such classification of mental elements represents an important
innovative step in psychological analysis. According to some scholars,
this chapter is a reworking of the first part of the Dhātu-kāya.73 Its five-
skandha scheme of enumeration seems to have had some definite and
continued influence on some orthodox Sarvāstivādins even posterior to
AKB, such as Skandhila and the author of ADV. Both masters subsumed
all dharma-s under the aṣṭa-pādārtha scheme — five skandha-s
comprising all the saṃskṛta-dharma-s plus three asaṃskṛta-s.74

As an example of the second group, let us look at the 5th chapter, On the proclivities, which is the most rigorous chapter of the whole treatise.
On the basis of the 98 proclivities established in JPŚ, it discusses them
in terms of seven doctrinal perspectives given as dyads, triads and
pentads — e.g.: how many pertain to the kāma-dhātu, to rūpa-dhātu, to ārūpya-dhātu; how many are duḥkha-darśana-heya, samudaya-darśana-heya, nirodha-darśana-heya, mārga-darśana-heya, bhāvanā-heya; etc. Incorporated in this are the definition of proclivities and the mutual subsumption between the 98 proclivities and the seven and 12 proclivities. The 98 proclivities are also discussed in terms of the mode of their adherence and growth (anuśayana) — through taking an object (ālambanataḥ) and through conjunction (saṃprayogataḥ).  

Another example of the reworking of earlier abhidharma texts is the 6th chapter, On subsumption, etc. This chapter begins by enumerating a total of 182 doctrinal perspectives: 5 of one-perspective, 103 of two-perspectives, 31 of three-perspectives, 21 of four-perspectives, 5 of five-perspectives, 2 of six-perspectives, 3 of seven-perspectives, 3 of eight-perspectives, 2 of nine-perspectives, 1 of ten-perspectives, 1 of eleven-perspectives, 1 of twelve-perspectives, 1 of eighteen-perspectives, 1 of twenty-two-perspectives and 1 of ninety-eight-perspectives. This is followed by an item-wise explanation. The enumeration constitutes a miscellaneous mātṛkā after the fashion of the early abhidharma:

There are [five categories of dharma-s comprising a single perspective—] jñeya-dharma-s, viñjeya-dharma-s, …

[There are 103 categories of dharma-s comprising two perspectives—] rūpi-dharma-s, arūpi-dharma-s; sanirdarśana-dharma-s, anirdarśana-dharma-s; sapratigha-dharma-s, apratigha-dharma-s; …

[There are 31 categories of dharma-s comprising three perspectives—] kuśala-dharma-s, akuśala-dharma-s, avyākṛta-dharma-s; āsiṃka-dharma-s, aṃśiṃka-dharma-s, naiva-āsiṃka-dharma-s, darśana-heya-dharma-s, bhāvanā-heya-dharma-s, aheya-dharma-s; …

As Frauwallner points out, this procedure is the same as that in the 3rd and 4th chapters of the Dhammasaṅgani. The enumeration shows that the triads (103) and dyads (31), comprising as they do the largest numbers of categories, provide the core of the attribute-mātṛkā. Another noteworthy point is that among the enumerated doctrinal perspectives, some 20 pertain to hetu-pratyaya-s, indicating the emerging emphasis by the early Sarvāstivādins on this topic. This includes: citta-hetuka, acittta-hetuka; karma-hetuka, akarma-hetuka; saṃskṛta-hetuka, asaṃskṛta-hetuka; pratītya-samutpanna, aparatītya-samutpanna; hetu, na hetu; etc. This inheritance from archaic abhidharma is then appended with a new Ābhidharmika analysis: These enumerated categories are: (i) subsumed
under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s; (ii) known by how many jñāna-s; (iii) cognized by how many types of vijñāna; (iv) adhered to by how many anuśaya-s?

The most important innovation is made by Vasumitra in the Pañcavastuka (chapter 1) which systematizes all dharma-s into five categories — rūpa, citta, caitasika, citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra and asaṃskṛta — already established in outline in JPŚ (see above § 4.1.2.2). The three asaṃskṛta-s are mentioned and defined. This fivefold classification was to become the standard classification by later Sarvāstivādins in particular and by the northern abhidharma tradition in general. The manner in which the caitasika-dharma-s are enumerated in this chapter suggests an implicit taxonomical consideration influenced by the sūtra-s and represents the early stage of the development of the theory of caitasika in which no explicit grouping was done. (See infra, § 9.3.2). It also initiated a tendency toward succinctness and organization (see below).

Collett Cox comments that “the *Mahāvibhāṣā occasionally opts for interpretation of the Prakaraṇa, which is declared to be explicit, not in need of further interpretation (nītārtha), over that of Jñānaprasthāna, which is declared to be implicit and in need of clarification (neyārtha)” and gives an example in the discussion on vipāka-hetu. However, this does not seem to suffice as an example of MVŚ’s preference of an interpretation of PrŚ over that of JPŚ. In those instances, MVŚ is simply stating the difference in the two interpretations given in different perspectives — one from the nītārtha view-point, the other, neyārtha. As a matter of fact, shortly before this, in the same discussion on vipāka-hetu, the statement in PrŚ that jīvitendriya is a karmic retribution is said to be implicit and based on conventional usage — in contrast with that in JPŚ. Nevertheless, it is certain that the compilers of MVŚ held PrŚ in high esteem as a doctrinal authority second only to JPŚ, quoting it by name some 100 times. This frequency is next only to that of PjŚ. However, the esteem accorded to a text by MVŚ cannot be judged by the frequency of its quotation alone. In the case of PjŚ, it is quoted many times, partly because such topics as the cosmology and supernormal phenomena, etc., were a reflection of popular demand and concern at the time. Moreover, sometimes PrŚ — and for that matter the other pāda texts — is apparently quoted by some un-named party which sees some contradiction between the interpretation given by JPŚ or certain masters on the one hand, and that of PrŚ on the other hand. As we have mentioned just above, PrŚ sets the trend of development in abhidharma toward organization and succinctness, leading to the development of manuals culminating in AKB. Both doctrinally and in terms of this
tendency toward succinctness, PrŚ is of especial importance for the so-called western or outside masters. (See § 3.6).

The following statements in MVŚ in a discussion on the ordinary-worldling nature (prthagianatva) suggest that even at the time of the compilation of MVŚ, the relative chronology of JPŚ and PrŚ had not been properly ascertained:

Question: Why is it that this original treatise (JPŚ) speaks of the ordinary-worldling nature, and not the ordinary-worldling dharma, whereas PrŚ speaks of the ordinary-worldling dharma and not the ordinary-worldling nature?

Answer: ... The ordinary-worldling nature excels, not the ordinary-worldling dharma; this original treatise speaks in terms of that which excels. Since this original treatise has already spoken of the ordinary-worldling nature, PrŚ does not mention it again. Since this original treatise has not spoken of the ordinary-worldling dharma, PrŚ mentions the ordinary-worldling dharma. This shows that that [PrŚ] was composed later than this [JPŚ].

According to some: since that [Prakaraṇa] treatise has already spoken of the ordinary-worldling dharma, this treatise (JPŚ) does not mention it again. Since that treatise has not spoken of the ordinary-worldling nature, this treatise mentions it. This shows that that [PrŚ] was composed earlier than this [JPŚ].

4.1.2.4. Dhātukāya-śāstra (DKŚ)

The only extant Chinese translation (T no. 1540) in three fascicles by Xuanzang ascribes this to Vasumitra. The Sanskrit and Tibetan tradition, however, give its author as Pūrṇa.

DKŚ consists of two parts:

(i) The first, called The fundamental section (本事分), enumerates mental elements which are divisible into 2 groups:

(a) ten mahā-bhūmika-s — vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā, sparśa, manaskāra, chanda, adhimokṣa/adhimukti, smṛti, samādhi, prajñā; ten kleśa-mahā-bhūmika-s — āśraddhya, kauśīdya, muṣita-smṛti, vikṣepa, avidyā, asamprajanya, ayonīso-manaskāra, mithyādhimokṣa, auddhatya, pramāda; ten parītta-kleśa-bhūmika-s — krodha, upanāha, mrakṣa, pradāśa, īrṣyā, mātsarya, māyā, sāṭhya, mada, vihiṃsā;

(b) six vijñāna-kāya-s, six sparśa-kāya-s, six vedanā-kāya-s, six saṃjñā-kāya-s, six saṃcetanā-kāya-s, six tṛṣṇā-kāya-s.
Group (a) pertains to the classification of the caitasika-s. The correspondence between this enumeration and that in the Saptavastuka of PrŚ has been noted by many. (See above § 4.1.2.3). However, the beginning part of the Saptavastuka — 18 dhātu-s, 12 āyatana-s, five skandha-s, five upādāna-skandha-s, six dhātu-s is absent in DKŚ list. So are the ten kuśala-mahābhūmika-s. As this category is also absent in the older translation of PrŚ, Yin Shun suggests that it was inserted from MVŚ. The enumeration in the Saptavastuka of the 18 dhātu-s is obviously gathered from the ancient sūtra-s. Its absence in DKŚ therefore could well signal that this text is chronologically later than PrŚ, probably representing a more conscious effort to move away from the sūtra taxonomy. The fact that DKŚ is not quoted even once in MVŚ which enumerates the very same three classes of mahābhūmika-s might also suggest that it was composed after MVŚ. However, it must also be noted that the classification of caitasika-s in MVŚ is apparently more developed, enumerating additionally the ten kuśala-mahā-bhūmika-s, the five akuśala-mahā-bhūmika-s, the three nivṛtāvyākṛta-mahā-bhūmika-s, the ten anivṛtāvyākṛta-mahā-bhūmika-s. On this basis, Yin Shun believes that it was composed before MVŚ.

(ii) The second part of DKŚ is called Analysis (*Vibhaṅga). It analyses the mental elements given in the first part employing the taxonomical devices of (a) conjunction (saṃprayoga) and (b) subsumption (saṃgraha):

(a) The analysis of conjunction is applied in relation to the vedanendriya, vijñāna-kāya, āhrikya and anapatrāpya: how many elements in the list are conjoined or not conjoined with these four?

(b) The analysis of subsumption is applied in relation to the dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s. The elements in the list — starting with vedanā and saṃjñā — are considered in turn in the following manner: under how many dhātu-s, etc., are the elements conjoined with one given member of the list and not conjoined with another subsumed? Thus, the first consideration is applied to those elements which are “conjoined with vedanā and not conjoined with saṃjñā”:

(1) “Those conjoined with vedanā” — the citta-caitta-dharma-s — are subsumed under how many of the 18 dhātu-s, 12 āyatana-s and five skandha-s? Answer: Eight dhātu-s, two āyatana-s and three skandha-s.
(2) “Those not conjoined with saṃjñā” — saṃjñā itself, rūpa-s, asaṃskṛta-s and citta-viprayuktā-saṃskāra-s — are subsumed under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s? Answer: 11 dhātu-s, 11 āyatana-s and three skandha-s.

Next, the same consideration applied to those which are conjoined with saṃjñā and not conjoined with vedanā. Such an analysis — called a “one-row” (一行) analysis — operates as follows: Given, say four members A, B, C, D, the analysis is first made between A and B, then A and C, then A and D; next between B and C, B and D; next between C and D.

The summary verse (uddāna) at the beginning of this second part states that there are in all 88 ways (門) of examining — three with respect to conjunction, 85 with respect to subsumption, but only 16 ways are actually shown.

Various scholars have also noted the unmistakable relationship between DKŚ and the Pāli Dhātu-kathā. The similarities are particularly conspicuous in the second part of DKŚ. Frauwallner observes that in many points, PrŚ corresponds to the Pāli Dhātu-kathā rather than to DKŚ. He summarizes the relationship between the Dhātu-kathā, DKŚ and the Saptavastuka of PrŚ as follows:

Compared to the Dhātukāya, the Prakaraṇa further developed the doctrine contained in its first part... The second part was left largely unchanged. By contrast, the second part was reworked in the Dhātukāya, namely, after the work had been incorporated into the Prakaraṇa.

However, he also points out an important difference: the mātrkā of the Dhātu-kathā and that of DKŚ are completely different. The former is based on the mātrkā of the Vibhaṅga, while the latter is not a mātrkā of the early type. This means that the similarity observed in the two works could also simply be the result of employing the same method of writing. However, Frauwallner thinks it more likely that both are derived from a common ancestor.

4.2. Development of the Sarvāstivāda manuals

4.2.1. Abhidharma-mahāvibhaṣā (MVŚ)

Subsequent to the definitive establishment of the Sarvāstivāda abhidharma doctrines by JPŚ, there followed active and creative study,
discussion, elaboration and systematization of these doctrines, the result of which was the compilation by the Kāśmīrian Sarvāstivādins of MVŚ mention of which has been made above at various places. Xuanzang tells us that MVŚ was compiled at the so-called ‘Third Council’ sponsored by King Kaniṣka of Gāndhāra. He asserts the same thing in the epilogue to his translation of MVŚ. But modern researchers have noted that Kaniṣka is referred to in MVŚ as a past king of Gāndhāra. Their view is that MVŚ was compiled by the followers of the Kātyāyanīputra tradition. This view is supported by a statement in MPPU.

MVŚ is now extant in three Chinese translations only. The earliest translation (T 28, no. 1547), now surviving in 14 fascicles (卷), was first made in 383 C.E. by Saṃghabhūti. Samghadeva revised it, producing the extant version in around 389 C.E. The second translation, originally comprising 100 fascicles but now surviving in 60 fascicles, was made by Buddhavarman from 425 C.E. to 427 C.E. The third and most complete one, comprising 200 fascicles, was made by Xuanzang from 656 C.E. to 659 C.E. The fact that the contents in the corresponding sections of these three versions often disagree to varying degrees suggests that their Sanskrit originals were probably different, and that there must have been a process of revision and emendation subsequent to the initial compilation, possibly spanning over a century. The orthodox Kāśmīrian Sarvāstivādins who upheld the supreme authority of MVŚ came to be known as the ‘Vaibhāṣikas’, an adjective derived from Vibhāṣā (see supra, § 3.6).

Purporting to be the Great Commentary on JPŚ, it structurally follows the same sequence of the eight major chapters of the latter (see § 4.1.2.2), with an additional introductory chapter. In this gigantic work — encyclopedic in scope — are found not only JPŚ viewpoints upheld by its compilers as orthodox, but also the heterodox views of the other Sarvāstivāda ācārya-s, as well as those held by other early Buddhist schools and independent masters. Accordingly, it is a work of great importance, indispensable for the understanding of not only the orthodox Sarvāstivāda doctrines, but also of the historical development of all the contemporary schools, containing as it does a wealth of material largely unavailable elsewhere. The doctrinal positions and interpretations by the so-called “four great ācārya-s of the Sarvāstivāda” — Vasumitra, Dharmatrāta, Buddhadeva and Ghoṣaka — are frequently given side by side. Among them, those of Vasumitra are generally upheld as being the best and most acceptable. Other masters mentioned in MVŚ include: Pārśva (who, according to Xuanzang, initially proposed the project of
Besides new doctrinal categories and developed arguments, we can also see in MVŚ the employment of articulate logical tools and format.\(^96\) Even a brief survey indicates a definite logical methodology emerging on the part of the Ābhidharmikas during the 1\(^{st}\) and 2\(^{nd}\) century C.E. The conscious logical analysis of a debate made by the compilers may be said to represent more evolved and formalized techniques and procedures of debate than what is discernible in the earlier abhidharma texts such as VKŚ. The specific mention of logical treatises, some definite methods of refutation, and the three acceptable pramāṇa-s (pratyākṣa, anumāna and āptāgama) contrasting with the pre-Dignāga logical texts which acknowledged various and generally a greater number of pramāṇa-s, are to be noted. In addition, there is the recognition, albeit rather indirect, of the important logical function of drṣṭānta. There is also evidence of a clear understanding in this period of the nature of pratyākṣa and anumāna, despite the absence of any explicit definition. Such definitions, however, need not be expected in an abhidharma commentary which is not primarily a logical treatise. The lack of indication of the knowledge of such important concepts as the trairūpya doctrine for a valid reason (hetu), however, suggests possibly an earlier stage of development in Buddhist logic than that represented in such early texts as the Fang Bian Xing Lun.\(^97\)

At several places, the compilers analyze in detail the debates given in JPŚ between the Vibhajyavādins (Vv) and the Yukta-vādins (Yv = Sarvāstivādins), ending with the declaration of the latter’s victory. We will illustrate one such analysis below on the proposition (p) by Yv that craving for non-existence \((vibha-tṛṣṇā = vt)\) — defined as the craving for the impermanence of the triple sphere \((traidhātuki anityatā)\),\(^98\) i.e., samsāric existence — is abandonable by repeated cultivation \((bhāvanā-heya = bhā-h)\) alone and not by insight into the four noble truths \((darśana-heya)\):\(^99\)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JPŚ</th>
<th>Comments by MVŚ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1.</strong></td>
<td><strong>A1.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Vv:] Do you assert that vt is bhā-h, and that the stream-entrants have not abandoned it (p)?</td>
<td>Question by Vv to confirm the Yv’s proposition (p). Yv affirms indicating conformity of p to the sūtra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Yv:] Yes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2.</strong></td>
<td><strong>A2.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Vv:] What do you concede: Does a stream-entrant generate the thought, “Isn’t it bliss if I’m annihilated, non-existent, after death?” (q)</td>
<td>Vv inserts this implication (q) intended to show that p contradicts the correct doctrines. Yv counteracts the question, indicating no contradiction in p.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Yv:] No.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Vv:] Why doesn’t a stream-entrant generate this craving?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Yv:] Because he sees the [true] nature of dharma-s — he sees the cause-effect serial continuity of the dharma-s, hence does not crave for annihilation … (other explanations given).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A3.</strong></td>
<td><strong>A3.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Vv:] Accept our thesis: If vt is bhā-h alone and a stream-entrant has not abandoned this craving (i.e., p), you ought to say that he generates such a thought (p ⊃ q). [Conversely,] if he does not generate such a thought, you ought not to assert that vt is bhā-h alone and a stream-entrant has not abandoned this craving (~q ⊃ ~p). Such an assertion is not logical (不應理; na yuktam) in either case.</td>
<td>Vv poses 2 conversely related objections — the first accords with p but is contradictory to doctrine (順宗違義); the second accords with doctrine but is contradictory to p (順義違宗). Hence conclude: “…not logical in either case”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Yv:] Our school does not assert that all not yet abandoned [defilements] necessarily arise; for some that are not yet abandoned do not arise, and some which have been abandoned may arise. If it is the case that all those that are not yet abandoned necessarily arise, then there would be no liberation and exit. This is because dharma-s that are not yet abandoned are infinite; if they [necessarily] arise, when can their arising be exhausted?</td>
<td>Yv explains his position (showing that p is not contradicted).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B1.

**[Yv:]** Do you also assert that the craving for the retribution (vipāka) of naraka, tiryaic and preta is bhā-h alone, [and] that the stream-entrants have not abandoned this craving (r)?

**[Vv:]** Yes.

### B2.

**[Yv:]** What do you concede: Does a stream-entrant generate the thought, “I shall become the dragon king or the Yama king and govern the sentient beings in the naraka realm” (s)?

**[Vv:]** No.

**[Yv:]** Why doesn’t a stream-entrant generate this craving?”

**[Vv:]** Because that gati pertains to the prthajjana. An ārya [— as is a stream-entrant] — has [proper] jñāna [and does not aspire for it] … (other explanations given).

**[Yv:]** Is it the case that an ārya does not generate craving for any of the durgati whatsoever?

**[Vv:]** Although the ārya-s have no craving for being born there, they do have craving for objects of enjoyment (bhoga) [therein]…. [Also,] they generate a thought of craving (= attachment) on hearing that their parent, etc., fall into such durgati-s.

### B3.

**[Yv:]** Accept our thesis: If r, then you ought to say that he generates such a thought (i.e., $r \supset s$ ). [Conversely,] if he does not generate such a thought, you should not assert r (i.e., $\sim s \supset \sim r$ ). Such an assertion is not logical in either case.

**[Yv:]** Yv poses two conversely related objections — the first accords with r but is contradictory to doctrine; the second accords with doctrine but is contradictory to r. Hence conclude: “…not logical in either case”.

---

**Next,** Yv counteracts the objections using the second method of refutation in the sūtra-s [mentioned above].

**B1.** Question by Yv to confirm the Vv’s proposition (r).

**Answer by Vv to show the necessity of the truth concerning what is asked.**
But JPŚ and MVŚ, magnificent as they are, lack sufficient unity and systematization as a whole. Besides, MVŚ contains frequent digressions from the main point under discussion and thus adds to the complication and confusion for beginners. In fact MVŚ itself, at the outset, states: “One should seek, in the abhidharma, the true characteristics of dharma-s and not the order [of presentation] or the introductions (nidāna). There is no fault if [a doctrine is presented] earlier or later, or without a nidāna.” This nature of the abhidharma works is contrasted with that of the sūtra and the vinaya which are said to be concerned with order of presentation and nidāna respectively. Thus, within such an abhidharma tradition, and further restricted by the absolute authority of the form and content of JPŚ, there was little possibility for any major advance in genuine doctrinal development and especially in the systematization of the Sarvāstivāda doctrines.

4.2.2. Development of the more concise manuals

Nevertheless, such a state of affairs eventually brought about a significant reaction from some of the more progressive doctors of the Sarvāstivāda, and this led to a new line of development. These doctors deviated to varying degrees from the Kāśmīrian orthodoxy — known after MVŚ as the Vaibhāṣika — and began to compose manuals aimed at being concise, lucid and systematic.

The earliest of such manuals that we possess in Chinese is AmRŚ by a certain Ghoṣaka, which effectively serves as an introduction to JPŚ and MVŚ. Its Chinese translation comprises 16 short chapters in two fascicles. There is clear evidence that while AmRŚ derives its material from JPŚ, MVŚ, PrŚ and other sources, it is basically inclined toward PrŚ and the Gāndhāra school. As Bhadanta Ghoṣaka, one of the “four great Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas”, was pre-MVŚ, the author of AmRŚ must be a different Ghoṣaka whose date is probably not far from the completion of MVŚ. The title itself “Amṛṭa(-rasa)” suggests also a practical purport: At the end of the chapter on dhyāna, there is a description of the meditational practices, with aṣucyanusmṛti and ānāpānasmṛti as the foundation, which are said to lead to “the end of suffering”. It states that “there are two paths which lead to nirvāṇa — (i) the contemplation of the impurity of the body; (ii) the mindfulness of breathing…” Thus, we may say that there is, in AmRŚ, an emphasis on the need to return from purely scholastic discussion to the aim of realizing nirvāṇa (amṛṭa).
After AmRŚ, this emphasis on practice and realization seemed to have been lost. But the new development of a liberal attitude in regard to the selection of material with the emphasis on organization and conciseness was continued in a series of manuals, in which a given manual partly inherited the form and content of the preceding one and readjusted it with new addition of materials. The following is a list of these manuals extant in Chinese translation:

1. *Abhidharmāmṛta(-rasa)-śāstra* (T no. 1553), by Ghoṣaka, 2 fasc., translator unknown.
2. *Abhidharmahṛdaya* (T no. 1550) by Dharmaśrī, 4 fasc., tr. by Saṅghadeva *et al*.
3. *Abhidharmahṛdaya-sūtra* (? T no. 1551) by Upaśānta, 2 fasc., tr. by Narendrayaśas.
4. *Abhidharmahṛdayavyākhyā* (? T no. 1552), by Dharmatrāta, 11 fasc., tr. by Sanghabhūti.
5. Abhidharmakośa-mūla-kārikā (T no. 1560) by Vasubandhu, 1 fasc., tr. by Xuanzang.
6. Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam (T no. 1558) by Vasubandhu, 30 fasc., tr. by Xuanzang; (there is also an earlier translation by Paramārtha: T no. 1559).
8. *Abhidharma-nyāyānusāra* (T no. 1562) by Saṃghabhadra, 80 fasc., tr. by Xuanzang.
9. *Abhidharma-samayapradīpikā* (T no. 1563) by Saṃghabhadra, 40 fasc., tr. by Xuanzang.
10. *Abhidharmāvatāra* (T no. 1554) by Skandhila, 2 fasc., tr. by Xuanzang.

The next manual to appear after the AmRŚ was the *Abhidharmahrdaya* by Dharmaśrī (or Dharmaśreṣṭhī), around 200 C.E. It was basically a re-organization of AmRŚ, with revision and addition. Its chief contribution lies in the composition of summary verses (probably added after the original prose text) which expound the *abhidharma* doctrines succinctly and serve as a great aid to memorization. Doctrinally, it not only sympathizes with the Gāndhārian views and other heterodox Sarvāstivādin views, but even adopts some of those held by the Vibhajyavādins. In this respect, it may be regarded as the predecessor of AKB.
As a result of its summary verses, the *Abhidharmahṛdaya* became very popular as a beginners' manual and triggered off several works of a similar nature purporting to be commentaries on it. The most important of these is the *Abhidharmahṛdayavāyākyā* (雜阿毗曇心論) by Dharmatrāta, which revised and supplemented the *Abhidharmahṛdaya*, with the intention of bringing the latter back in line with the orthodox Vaibhāṣika (Kāśmīrian) view points, while being also tolerant toward certain heterodox views. This work shows considerable development in the Sarvāstivāda doctrines and has attained greater precision in definition. Many scholars believe that it is the immediate source of the monumental AKB.

AKB represents the culmination of this new development. Known in India also as “The Treatise of Intelligence” (聰明論), it excels all the others in respect to organization, scope, and presentation of arguments, and is a treasure-house of all the essential doctrines that the early schools had hitherto developed. Besides the two Chinese translations listed above, AKB is also extant in a Tibetan translation by Jinamitra and dPal brtsegs, entitled *Chos mngon pa’i mdzod kyi bshad pa* (Peking ed., no. 5591). Most scholars opine that Vasubandhu bases his work on the *Abhidharma-hṛdaya-vāyākyā* (or *Abhidharma-hṛdaya-bhāṣya*; T no. 1552). But it is undoubtedly a great improvement in terms of content over the latter, and Vasubandhu would have derived its additional material from other major abhidharma treatises, particularly MVŚ. AKB consists of the following nine chapters:

1. Dhātu-nirdeśa,
2. Indriya-nirdeśa,
3. Loka-nirdeśa,
4. Karma-nirdeśa,
5. Anuśaya-nirdeśa,
6. Mārga-pudgala-nirdeśa,
7. Jñāna-nirdeśa,
8. Samādhi-nirdeśa

However, whereas the first eight chapters contain stanzas (kārikā) on which the bhāṣya comments, the 9th chapter is purely in prose. Moreover, at the end of the 8th chapter, the author states: “This abhidharma established in accordance with the principles of Kāśmīrian Vaibhāṣikas has for the most part been expounded by me…” Accordingly it would
appear that the 9th chapter was originally an independent work which subsequently came to be appended to AKB. In this work, Vasubandhu provides full opportunity for the Sautrāntikas and other schools to argue against the Vaibhāśikas. His own standpoint is, for the most part, that of the Sautrāntika, and he often gives little chance for the Vaibhāśikas to answer their opponents. But he at times does not hesitate to express his own views which happen to contradict those of the Sautrāntika. One well-known example of his deviation from the latter’s position is his view that āyatana-s too, besides the dhātu-s, are real — contradicting the Sautrāntika stand that the dhātu-s alone are real, not the skandha-s or the āyatana-s.111 Another example is with regard to the interpretation on the Buddha’s teaching of the principle of conditionality: “this being that comes to be, from the arising of this, that arises”. Saṃghabhadra remarks that the masters of the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntika school give various interpretations which are refuted by Vasubandhu.112 According to Saṃghabhadra,113 the masters whose teachings Vasubandhu accepts are the ancient masters (pūrvācārya). Indeed, in AKB, Vasubandhu often gives them the final say in an Abhidharma controversy — e.g., that on the question of the re-emergence of thought and thought-concomitants after the cessation meditation (nīrodha-samāpatti).

In reaction to this, Saṃghabhadra spent 12 years in composing the *Nyāyānusāra to dispute with the Kośakāra, leveling his criticisms chiefly against the contemporary Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntika leader Sthavira Śrīlāta and his pupil Rāma. Saṃghabhadra also composed SPṛŚ (roughly half the size of Ny in Chinese translation) which consists mainly of the expository part, sans disputation, of Ny. In this work, he occasionally replaces or modifies a stanza given in AKB in case he thinks it goes against the Vaibhāśika tenets. An example of this is the definition of avijñapti given in the 4th chapter (see infra, § 13.4.2). Saṃghabhadra is very articulate in his exposition of the controversial doctrines and notions of the Vaibhāśikas, so much so that many scholars regard his interpretations as ‘neo-Sarvāstivāda’. However, while there are certainly developed interpretations and articulations in Ny and SPṛŚ, the term ‘neo-Sarvāstivāda’, if applied in a generalized manner, would seem rather unjustified.114 But the label, “neo-Sarvāstivāda”, is by no means a modern one. Xuanzang’s students in the period of the Tang Dynasty are already known to have started using it. A case in point is Saṃghabhadra’s explanation of the operation of the four characteristics of the conditioned dharma-s (saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa). (See infra, §11.3.5.1)

There is a partially preserved Sanskrit work, the Abhidharma-dīpa-prabhā-vṛtti (= ADV),115 which is also an apologia for the Vaibhāśika
orthodoxy against the Kośakāra. Its author holds many views identical with those of Saṃghabhadra and is conjectured by Jaini PS to be his pupil Vimalamitra.\textsuperscript{116} Professor J. W. de Jong, however, has pointed out that he could be the śāstra master Iśvara.\textsuperscript{117}

Thus we witness during this period the most acute controversy between the Sarvāstivādin on the one hand and the Sautrāntika and others on the other. But with all these involved and subtle controversies comprising the greater part of these works, their pragmatic value as beginners’ manuals decreases drastically. As Skandhila puts it, “the terms and meanings in the abhidharma, [are as bewildering as] a dense forest (gahana)”, and beginners are apt to feel bewildered and lost. Moreover, such controversies did much damage to the Ābhidharmika tradition as a whole, especially at a time when this tradition was being greatly threatened by the challenge of both the Sautrāntikas and the Mahāyānists. It was with such considerations in mind, and perhaps also with the hope of bringing together the eastern and western camps to face this challenge, that Skandhila composed his \textit{Abhidharmāvatāra}, aiming at beginners. In a scheme of eight padārtha-s – five skandha-s and three asamskrta-s – he succinctly summarizes practically all the fundamental doctrines of the Sarvāstivāda. It is noteworthy that most of his definitions on the citta-caitta-s and the viprayukta-samskāra-s are strikingly similar to and, often enough, virtually identical with those given in ADV. Throughout this short treatise, the author shows no hostility toward other Sarvāstivādin views differing from his own, although he does make one critical allusion to the Sautrāntika.\textsuperscript{118} Indeed in much of the treatise, particularly the sections on the viprayukta-samskāra-s and the asamskrta-s, we sense a definite concern of the author to defend the Sarvāstivāda against the Sautrāntika. Most probably, the author was a Kāśmīrian Vaibhāṣika who nevertheless shares certain views with the western/foreign masters.\textsuperscript{119}
NOTES

1 Vy, 9.
2 T 41, 8c.
3 T 25, 70a.
4 T 41, 8b–c.
5 Bu-ston, History of Buddhism. Tr. by Obermiller, E (Heidelberg, 1931–1932), I; 49.
6 MPPU, 70b.
7 MPPU, 752b. If these pieces of information in MPPU are to be considered as interpolations by the translator, Kumārajīva, as some scholars opine (e.g., Lamotte, E; cf. Lamotte (1970), 203 f.), then we must count the colophon — dated 379 C.E. and appended to the 24th fascicle of the older translation of JPŚ — as the earliest mention of the set of seven texts, with the *Aṣṭa-skandhaka (= JPŚ) as the body and the others as the six feet. (T no. 1543, 887a).
8 Frauwallner, 14.
9 Study, 115. See below.
10 See Study, 179 f.
11 Vy, 11; Bu-ston, I, 49.
12 DSŚ, 479b–482a.
13 DSŚ, 459c
14 Cf. Study, 125 ff.
15 DSŚ, 504c, 501a, etc.
16 See 131 f.; MVŚ, 337c.
17 See Study, 131 f.
18 Vy, 11; Bu-ston, loc. cit.
19 Study, 134 f.
20 SgPŚ, 369c, 370a, 378b, 378c, 384a, 388a, 400b, 430b, 441a — in all, some 14 occurrences.
21 SgPŚ, 377b–378a.
22 SgPŚ, 379a, 380c, 383c, 426a, 426b, 430b, 443c.
23 SgPŚ, 387c.
24 T 29, 330b.
25 T41, 8b–c.
26 T 25, 70a, Vy, 11.
27 T 26, 514a.
28 Peking no. 5587–5589.
29 T 50, 113c.
30 Ny, 330b.
31 Study, 138 f.
32 T28, no. 1546, 45c, 47b.
33 T28, 137b, 137c.
4. The Abhidharma Treatises of the Sārvastivāda

MPPU, 70a, in a note speaks here of the Lou-tan-jing, 楼炭經. The Sanskrit could be *lokotthāna-sūtra or *loka-sthāna-sūtra — cf. the title given in MPPU as 分別世處, where '處' could possibly translate sthāna.

Study, 140 f.

Cf. MVŚ, 336c–337a, 612c. See Study, 143.

MVŚ, 119a.

Study, 144.


Vy, 11.

VKŚ, 535a.

Cf. MVŚ, 4c.

MVŚ, 5b–7b. A rationalization of the order is attempted by some masters who assert that, in the reverse order, it first discusses the pure and then the defiled dharma-s of an ordinary worldling (prthagjana). Thus it begins with the 'supreme worldly dharma-s' the critical stage at which one will transit from being an ordinary worldling to being an ārya. This is arrived at by abandoning the defilements — hence the second chapter on the fetters; etc. (MVŚ, 7a–b).
Under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s is it subsumed?

(2) The dharma-s subsumed under the cakṣur-dhātu — under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s are they subsumed?

(3) The dharma-s not subsumed under the cakṣur-dhātu — under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s are they subsumed?

(4) The dharma-s subsumed, and those not subsumed, under the cakṣur-dhātu — under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s are they subsumed?

(5) The dharma-s other than those subsumed under the cakṣur-dhātu — under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s are they subsumed?

(6) The dharma-s other than those not subsumed under the cakṣur-dhātu — under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s are they subsumed?

(7) The dharma-s other than those subsumed, and those not subsumed under the cakṣur-dhātu — under how many dhātu-s, āyatana-s and skandha-s are they subsumed? (T 26, 701c ff.)

Could this seven-way investigation which comes at the beginning of the chapter, be the reason for naming the chapter as Saptavastu?
4. The Abhidharma Treatises of the Sarvastivāda

93 E.g., see the four explanations offered by them on sarvāstitva discussed infra, § 5.2.
94 T 51, 886c.
95 See Study, chapter seven, 305 ff., for an excellent discussion on the various masters figuring in MVŚ.
96 For the logical notions and disputation in the text, cf. Dhammajoti, KL, ‘Logic in the Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā’, in the JCBSSL, vol. II, 180ff. See also the logical arguments for sarvāstitva discussed in supra, § 3.3.1.
97 Cf. Dhammajoti, KL, op. cit.
99 MVŚ, 138c–139c; the whole debate is further continued in a similar manner until the Yuktavādins are finally considered as having fully defeated the Vibhajyavādins (140a). See other similar analyses in 113c f., 169a–171b, 222a–222c, 612c–613a.
100 MVŚ, 1c.
102 Study, 486.
103 AmRŚ, 975b.
104 AmRŚ, loc. cit. Cf. also MVŚ, 662c, which speaks of these two meditations as “the true amṛta-dvāra for the entry into the buddha-dharma”.
105 Cf. Study, 493 ff.
106 Cf. Study, 520 ff.
107 E.g., Kimura T, A Study of the Abhidharma Śāstras, (1922), 259–324; IAKB, xxx; etc.
108 According to Pu Guang (T 41, 1a).
109 See IAKB, xxx.
110 AKB, 459.
111 AKB, 14.
112 Ny, 482c: 上座徒黨, 有釋 … 有釋 … 經主已破。… 上座復言 … 經主難言 …
113 Ny, 483a: 又經主述自軌範師釋 … 故知經主所稟諸師…
114 See Entrance, 10 f. also infra, § 5.
116 Ibid., 132 f. But elsewhere (EnB, vol. 1 fas. 1, 57), Jaini says, “We therefore can ascribe this work either to Samghabhadra, or to one of his disciples, particularly Vimalamitra”.
118 T no. 1554, 984b.
119 For a discussion of his date and personal affiliation, see Entrance, 50 ff.
5. Sarvāstitva and Temporality

5.1. The big debate

The Sarvāstivādin theory of sarvāstitva is often interpreted — both by their ancient opponents and many modern scholars — as a far cry from mainstream Buddhism. For some, it comes very close to the Sāmkhya doctrine of parināma. Among the extant Sarvāstivāda abhidharma texts, it is in the Vijñānakāśya-śāstra that we first come across a controversy on it. (In the Pāli, it is already debated elaborately in the Kathāvatthu). But it is only in the much later texts, like AKB and Ny, that we find an articulated definition offered by the Sarvāstivāda themselves. All said and done, sarvāstitva must imply the continuous existence of an essence in some sense. But just precisely in what sense, was something that the Ābhidharmikā Buddhists — Sarvāstivādins themselves included — were unable to specify. For the Sarvāstivādins, the failure to do so is not to be considered a fault on their part. It is on account of the profound nature of dharma-s which, in the final analysis, transcends human conceptualization.

Once this metaphysical notion, however elusive, of an underlying essence of phenomena came to be emphasized, the debates — as to its truth or otherwise, and as to its precise implications — continued endlessly. It was to leave a lasting influence on the subsequent development of Buddhist thought. Thus, partly on account of this influence, the Vātsīputrīyas came to formulate the doctrine of the pudgala, and the Mahāyāna (mainly Yogācāra) continued to speculate, giving rise to the rich philosophy of viññaptimātratā and tathāgata-garbha. From the sources that we have examined, however, one thing seems sufficiently clear: The svabhāva of a dharma, even from the orthodox Vaibhāṣika standpoint, is not as immutable as is conceived by many scholars.

In these debates, we see the Ābhidharmikas — including the self-professed sūtra-based Sautrāntikas — utilizing logic as a tool to the utmost. At the end of the day, the Vaibhāṣikas had to be content with
a form of identity-in-difference (bhedābhedā) logic. In the depths of their hearts, however, it would seem that it is their religious insight and intuition — even if they happen to defy Aristotelian logic — that must be upheld at all cost.

In this chapter, we will attempt to see the extent to which the Vaibhāṣikas can articulate conceptually this doctrine of sarvāstitva. Our main primary sources are MVŚ and Saṃghabhadra’s *Nyāyānusāra. The latter represents the most rigorous defense of the thesis and the former is, among other things, useful in helping us to better understand the development of this doctrine in the proper historical perspective and to ascertain whether — as claimed by many modern scholars — Saṃghabhadra’s defense can justifiably be called ‘neo-Sarvāstivāda’.¹

5.2. Time and temporality

When the Sarvāstivāda asserts that the three periods of time exist (asti), what it actually means is that “dharma-s” in the three periods of time exist. For the Sarvāstivāda, time is none other than the activity of dharma-s, and temporality is superimposed by us on these activities. This is in fact the general Buddhist tradition since the Buddha’s time. MVŚ, however, records an exceptional view, said to be held by the “Dārṣṭāntika-Vibhajyavādins”, that impermanent dharma-s course in permanent time:

The “Dārṣṭāntika-Vibhajyavādins” (譬喻者分別論師) maintain that time (adhvan) and the conditioning forces (saṃskāra) are distinct entities. Time is a permanent entity; the conditioning forces are impermanent entities.² When the conditioning forces are coursing in time, they are like the fruits in a vessel, coming out from this vessel and turning into that vessel. … Likewise the conditioning forces: they enter into the present time from the future time, and enter into the past time from the present time.

To repudiate the “Dārṣṭāntika-Vibhajyavādins” proposition, it is shown [here] that time and the conditioning forces are not different in intrinsic nature.³

It is not clear whether the term “Dārṣṭāntika-Vibhajyavādins” (譬喻者分別論師) in the above passage, which we have rendered here as a compound, stands for ‘the Dārṣṭāntikas who are Vibhajyavādins’, or ‘Dārṣṭāntikas and Vibhajyavādins’, i.e., as a karmadhāraya (descriptive compound) or a dvandva (co-ordinative compound). Yin Shun takes it in the former sense, although he thinks that the Dārṣṭāntikas referred to here probably represent only a section of those who were beginning to
merge with the Vibhajyavādins. However, we must note that in the older translation of the *Mahāvibhāṣā* (T no. 1546), the term here is simply Dārṣṭāntikas (譬喻者). More importantly, however, in this context, the Vibhāṣā compilers begin by citing the *Jñānaprasthāna* that “there are three [categories] of dharma-s, viz, past, present and future”; it is only after quoting the above passage that they say:

Furthermore, [another reason why the *Jñānaprasthāna* presents this topic is that] there are some [i.e., a second group of people] who are deluded with regard to the intrinsic nature (svabhāva) of [the dharma-s] of the three times, denying the existence of the past and future [dharma-s], and who maintain that the present [dharma-s] are unconditioned. To repudiate their proposition, it is shown [here] that the characteristic and intrinsic natures of the past and future [dharma-s] exist truly, and that the present [dharma-s] are conditioned. Why? If the past and future [dharma-s] were non-existent... (loc. cit.)

It is, therefore, clear that concerning the Dārṣṭāntika view, the point to be refuted is the independent existence of time. The impermanence of the svabhāva of conditioned dharma-s is no problem at all for the Sarvāstivādins, the Dārṣṭāntikas included. The intrinsic nature of a dharma, although existing throughout time (sarvadā asti), is not permanent; only the unconditioned dharma-s, transcending the temporal process, are permanent (nitya). It is only the second group of people (probably the Mahāsāmghika) who are to be refuted concerning the unreality of the tri-temporal dharma-s. The same view of this second group is refuted elsewhere several more times, and in each case the Vibhāṣā compilers argue for the reality of the tri-temporal existence of dharma-s. In the two occurrences of this view in the older version of the Vibhāṣā, the compilers’ argument is also unambiguously against the unreality of the past and future dharma-s.

### 5.3. The four main theories of the Sarvāstivāda

The major question the Sarvāstivādins must answer is: Given the thesis that all dharma-s in the three periods of time equally exist, how do the Sarvāstivādins differentiate — how can they account for our experience of the difference — as regards ‘past dharma-s’, ‘present dharma-s’ and ‘future dharma-s’? Each of the ‘Four Great Ācārya-s’ of the Sarvāstivāda offers an explanation. We now quote the relevant passage in the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā*:

The Venerable Dharmatrāta says that there is change in mode of being (bhāva-anything). The Venerable Ghoṣaka says that
there is change in characteristic (lakṣaṇa-anyathātva). The Venerable Vasumitra says that there is change in state (avasthā-anyathātva). The Venerable Buddhadeva says that there is change in [temporal] relativity (anyathā-anyathātva).

The advocate of difference in mode of being says that when dharma-s operate (pra-√vṛt) in time, they change on account of their modes of being (bhāva); there is no change in substance. This is like the case of breaking up a golden vessel to produce another thing — there is just a change in shape, not in varṇa-rūpa. It is also like milk, etc., turning into curds, etc. — just the taste, digestibility, etc., are given up, not the varṇa-rūpa. Similarly, when dharma-s enter into the present from the future, although they give up their future mode of existence and acquire their present mode of existence, they neither lose nor acquire their substantial essence (AKB: dravya-bhāva). Likewise, when they enter the past from the present, although they give up the present mode of existence and acquire the past mode of existence, they neither give up nor acquire their substantial nature.

The advocate of difference in characteristic says that when dharma-s operate in time, they change on account of characteristic (lakṣaṇa); there is no change in substance. A dharma in each of the temporal periods has three temporal characteristics; when one [temporal] characteristic is conjoined, the other two are not severed. This is like the case of a man being attached to one particular woman — he is not said to be detached from other women. Similarly, when dharma-s abide in the past, they are being conjoined with the past characteristic but are not said to be severed from the characteristics of the other two temporal characteristics. When they abide in the future, they are being conjoined with the future characteristic but are not said to be severed from the characteristics of the other two temporal characteristics. When they abide in the present, they are being conjoined with the present characteristic, but are not said to be severed from the characteristics of the other two temporal characteristics.

The advocate of difference in state says that when dharma-s operate in time, they change on account of state (avasthā); there is no change in substance. This is like the case of moving a token [into different positions]. When placed in the position (avasthā) of ones, it is signified as one; placed in the position of tens, ten; placed in the position of hundreds, hundred. While there is change in the positions into which it is moved, there is no change in its substance. Similarly, when dharma-s pass through the three temporal states, although they acquire three different names, they do not change in substance.
In the theory proposed by this master, there is no confusion as regards substance, for the three periods are differentiated on the basis of activity (kāritra).

The advocate of difference in [temporal] relativity says that when dharma-s operate in time, they are predicated differently [as future, present, or past], relative to that which precedes and that which follows (cf. AKB: pūrvāparamapeksyānyo'nya ucyate avasthāntarato na dravyāntarataḥ); there is no change in substance. This is like the case of one and the same woman who is called ‘daughter’ relative to her mother, and ‘mother’ relative to her daughter. Similarly, dharma-s are called ‘past’ relative to the succeeding ones, ‘future’ relative to the preceding ones, ‘present’ relative to both.

5.4. Comments on the four theories and Frauwallner’s observations

As regards the above four theories, Professor Erich Frauwallner believes that their order of presentation represents the actual chronological order of the development of the theories of sarvāstivāda, each subsequent one attempting to avoid the mistakes in the earlier explanation. He asserts further that Vasumitra’s theory as given above in fact is an equation, on the part of the Sarvāstivāda masters, of two originally different theories, by two different Vasumitras:

The older Vasumitra proposed, as did the other three great ācārya-s mentioned above, that dharma-s migrate through the different stages of time, which was very similar to the subsequent theory of eternal time (kāla) proposed by certain Dārṣṭāntika-Vibhajyavādins, but without the latter’s acknowledgement of the eternality of time. When the theory of eternal time was introduced into the Sarvāstivāda system due to foreign influences, it was soon rejected by the Vaibhāṣikas who then sought to explain the difference between the times solely in terms of the kāritra of dharma-s as proposed by another Vasumitra. The older “Vasumitra’s doctrine, which assumes the migration of things through the stages of time, is, although it does not have a concept of time, closely related to the doctrine of the Dārṣṭāntika and Vibhajyavādin, whereas the doctrine of efficacy, which does not recognize stages of time and denies migration through them, is no less opposed to it than to the doctrine of the Dārṣṭāntika. Indeed, the relationship between them is almost that of thesis and antithesis.”

5.4.1. As regards Frauwallner’s assumption of the chronological order of the development of these theories, we may concede its possibility
considering, among other things, the conspicuous fact that Vasumitra’s theory, although fully approved and adopted by the Vaibhāṣika, is not enumerated as the first. However, we should observe that the earliest extant source of the four theories is probably the *Vasumitra-
samghṛhīta-śāstra* by a certain Vasumitra of ca. 1st century C.E. This work predates MVŚ and is very likely to have been consulted by the compilers of the latter. According to Watanabe Baiyū, the author of this work enumerates four theories in the following order: 1. *avasthā* (起); 2. *laksana* (相); 3. *bhāva* (事); 4. *apekṣā* (因緣) — corresponding, though in a different order — to the four theories related by MVŚ. The passage in question (punctuations ours) is as follows:


Unfortunately, its Chinese translation by Saṃghabhūti (384 C.E.) is not sufficiently clear for an absolutely definite identification of the theories briefly described therein with those of the four ācārya-s. Nevertheless, it is fairly evident that Watanabe has misinterpreted the passage. First, clearly, “或起不起” (“may or may not arise”) — identified by Watanabe as the first, equating “arise” with *avasthā* — cannot be one of the theories. The author is just explaining here how we can experience the *saṃskṛta-dharma-s* — how we know them as phenomenal existents in the different times — given that they abide in their intrinsic nature in the three times. The answer is that “they may or may not arise”: When they arise in the present moment, they are cognized as present; in the past and future times, they do not arise. Immediately after this, he introduces the four theories (underlined by us) with the phrase “此之謂也” (“the explanation for this is”). This same phrase occurs again in the elaboration of the 4th theory which is not accounted for by Watanabe.

Judging by the context and style of rendering of the translator, we believe that, very probably, the four theories enumerated herein are, in the order of their enumeration (“punctuated” by the phrase “或作是說”): (1) *lakṣana-anyathātva* of Ghoṣaka; (2) *bhāva-anyathātva* of Dharmatrāta; (3) *anyathā-anyathātva* of Buddhadeva; (4) *avasthā-anyathātva* of Vasumitra. In any case, the first theory does not seem to be that of Dharmatrāta. This observation would contradict Frauwallner’s assumption of the chronological order. The fact that all extant accounts subsequent to MVŚ agree with the latter’s order of
5. Sarvāstivāda and Temporality

Enumeration may simply mean that AKB was influenced by the authority of MVŚ as representative of the Vaibhāṣika orthodoxy; and Ny, ADV, the Tattvasamgraha-panjikā (TSP), etc., in turn, are either commentaries on AKB or were influenced by it.

This also means that Dharmatrāta’s theory was not the first — and least satisfactory — attempt, as Frauwallner’s observation\textsuperscript{15} implies. It seems quite clear to us that Dharmatrāta, as much as the other three ācārya-s, is concerned to show the integrity of the dharma’s svabhāva/dravya, despite Frauwallner’s assertion that Dharmatrāta’s explanation “was soon abandoned because no one wanted to accept a change of this type in the essence of things”.\textsuperscript{16} It is probable that there had been different Vaibhāṣika masters, responding variously to the four theories, although all indications are that Vasumitra’s theory in terms of kāritra is the favored one. In MVŚ, only Vasumitra’s theory is fully approved of. Dharmatrāta’s theory is the last of the remaining three to be criticized, in the following words:

\begin{quote}
What is the so-called bhāva apart from the svabhāva of the dharma? Thus, [this theory] too is unreasonable. When sanskṛta-dharma-s arrive at the present time from the future adhva, their anterior bhāva should cease; when they arrive at the past time from the present adhva, the posterior bhāva should arise: There is arising of the past and ceasing of the future — how can this accord with logic?
\end{quote}

This, however, is unfair; for Dharmatrāta, bhāva is not meant to have any ontological status. It is our mental superimposition on the empirical aspect of the dharma as it is exposed to our experience: it is as arbitrary as the designation — in Vasumitra’s theory — of the different positions into which the token is moved.

Vasubandhu criticizes this theory even more severely, branding it a Sāṃkhya theory of pariṇāma.\textsuperscript{17} However, it is even more unfair, as the theory does not suggest a unitary eternal substance that manifests through transformation, as the Sāṃkhya theory does.\textsuperscript{18} As a matter of fact, in the two older translations of the Vibhāṣā, no criticism of Dharmatrāta’s theory is to be found and, in the oldest translation, only Buddhadeva’s theory is criticized in general terms as being the most confusing designation of adhva. Moreover, in spite of the critical comment in MVŚ, made in the context of contrasting Vasumitra’s explanations with the other three, the compilers of MVŚ did not seem to have treated Dharmatrāta’s view as being on a par with the pariṇāma theory of the Sāṃkhya.\textsuperscript{19} (See translation of the passage below).
We will return to this important passage later. For the time being, it may be observed that here Dharmatrita is quoted alongside Vasumitra — whose views the orthodox compilers revere most. The fact that both their views are not criticized implies that the compilers do not consider the two interpretations of parināma as contradictory.

Saṃghabhadra objects to Vasubandhu's criticism of Dharmatrita's theory, maintaining that this theory is in part the same as Vasumitra's. As a matter of fact, Saṃghabhadra utilizes this theory as an indispensable tool for the Vaibhāṣika defense. In AKB, the Sautrāntika ridicules the Vaibhāṣika position that the svabhāva of a dharma exists at all times but at the same time its bhāva is not permanent. Samghabhadra defends this position, rather than objecting to any misrepresentation of the Vaibhāṣika doctrine on Vasubandhu's part — as he does in many other places. This may suggest that between the time of MVŚ and AKB, Dharmatrita's bhāvānyathāta theory could have been accepted by the Vaibhāṣika along with Vasumitra's theory in terms of kāritra. In Saṃghabhadra's defense here, he actually utilizes both theories:

The intrinsic nature of a dharma remains always; its bhāva changes: When a samskṛta-dharma traverses in adhvan, it gives rise to its kāritra in accordance with the prayaya-s, without abandoning its intrinsic nature; immediately after this, the kāritra produced ceases. Hence it is said that the svabhāva exists always and yet it is not permanent, since its bhāva changes.

Elsewhere, he states in similar terms:

There is no change in essential nature, but it is not the case that the bhāva of dharma-s do not vary. The essential nature and the bhāva are neither different nor identical. Thus, the svalaṅkaṇa (= svabhāva) of a samskṛta-dharma remains at all times, while its special kāritra arises and ceases. (For further details, see below).

As evidence for his assertion that the second Vasumitra who proposes the kāritra theory — unlike the earlier Vasumitra — does not teach migration of dharma-s in time, Frauwallner cites the following MVŚ passage:

[Questioner:] … Thus the Venerable Vasumitra says: ‘The samskāra-s have no coming, nor do they have going: being momentary in nature, they do not stay either.’ Now, since the samskāra-s do not have any characteristics of coming and going, etc., how is the differentiation of the three adhvanah to be established?
Answer: The differentiation of the three *adhvanah* is established in terms of *kārita*. It is on this very basis that they are said to have migration: That is, when a *samskṛta-dharma* has not yet exercised its *kārita*, it is said to be future; when it is exercising its *kārita*, it is said to be present; when its *kārita* has ceased, it is said to be past. …

But Frauwallner does not account for the sentence: “It is on this very basis that they are said to have migration.” In any case, even without this sentence (which does not occur in the two older translations), one cannot claim to have sufficient reason here for asserting that this supposedly second Vasumitra does not allow any sense of migration of the *dharma*. Besides, we must remember that the whole concern of all these Sarvāstivāda ācārya-s is precisely to account for our empirical experience of the activities of *dharma*-s, i.e., of their “passage” in time, given that their essential identities never change. By the same token, the supposedly “older Vasumitra” too surely does not preach migration in a literal sense. His example of the different designations that a token acquires in accordance with the different significations that one assigns to a given position, clearly shows that his *avasthā* is intended to be relative notions: They are distinctions that we superimpose in our perception, even though, of course, this perceptual experience is not without an objective aspect in the causal process: The distinctions are made possible by virtue of the *kārita* of the *dharma*.

There are other places in MVŚ where Vasumitra is represented as speaking in terms of migration. Thus, on the three *samskṛta-lakṣaṇa*-s, he explains:

> *Jāti* causes *dharma*-s to enter from the future into the present …
> *jarā* and *anityatā* cause *dharma*-s to enter from the present into the past.

Elsewhere, the compilers of MVŚ explain that one can equally speak of change or non-change of *samskṛta-dharma*-s. One can say that they do not undergo change — which entails, among other things, that they do not “migrate” — from the point of view that *dharma*-s always remain unchanged in their individual essential nature. One can also say that they undergo change, from the point of view that they arise when potency is acquired and cease when potency is lost. MVŚ further explains:

> There are two kinds of change — that of essential nature, and that of *kārita*. From the viewpoint of essential nature, one should say that *samskāra*-s do not change, there being no variation in their essential nature. From the point of view of *kārita*, one should
say that saṃskāra-s do change: when a dharma is in the future it has not yet acquired its kāritra; when it reaches the present, it acquires its kāritra; when it has entered into the past, its kāritra has already ceased; hence there is change…

Neither is it necessarily true, as Frauwallner claims, that Buddhadeva’s explanation, enumerated last in MVŚ, is a subsequent attempt to avoid the philosophical difficulties entailed in the other three. The dates of all four ācārya-s are still unsettled, and Frauwallner himself does not offer any suggestion in this regard.

Furthermore, we disagree with Frauwallner that “finally, the last two teachers, Vasumitra and Buddhadeva, avoided not only anything that touched on the essence of things itself, but moreover derived the difference of things in the different stages of time exclusively from external connections” (italics ours). The contrast is perhaps overdone. In Buddhadeva’s example, the designations of “mother” and “daughter”, while being our superimposition, is nevertheless not purely subjective. We perceive a mother or a daughter because of the different functions — biological or otherwise — in the respective cases. Moreover, the MVŚ compilers themselves also do not seem to hesitate in explaining temporality in terms of relativity:

The conditioned dharma-s are designated as being future in relation to the past and the present. They are not designated as being future in relation to the future, for a fourth time period (adhvan) does not exist. They are designated as being past in relation to the future and the present. They are not designated as being past in relation to the past, for a fourth time period does not exist. They are designated as being present in relation to the past and the future. They are not designated as being present in relation to the present, for a fourth time period does not exist.

In the case of Ghoṣaka’s lakṣaṇānyathātva, as Yin Shun has pointed out, his time-characteristics are quite comparable with the Vaibhāṣika doctrine of the saṃskṛta-laksana-s and should, therefore, have been acceptable in principle to the Vaibhāṣikas. These time-characteristics are the temporal modes of a dharma, and in this respect similar to Dharmatrāta’s ‘mode of being’. In both cases, the characteristic or mode is neither identical with nor different from the dharma itself. But whereas a mode of being is either taken up or relinquished as the dharma courses in time, the time-characteristics are always with the dharma entity, though one among them comes into play at a given temporal period. In the Sarvāstivāda system, a conditioned dharma possesses the
three *samskṛta-lakṣaṇa*-s in every moment, yet it is argued that since they do not exercise their function all at once, it does not amount to the absurdity that a *dharma* arises, deteriorates and vanishes at the same time. Accordingly, Ghoṣaka’s time-characteristics too need not be considered to result in temporal confusion.

In brief, we may conclude from MVŚ account that, some differences in matters of details and expressions not-withstanding, all four theories in fact agree on the following points:

1. The substantial nature of a *dharma* remains unchanged.
2. Temporal distinctions are superimposed by us in our experience of the *dharma*-s appearing in the phenomenal world.
3. All explain this distinction by means of an aspect of the *dharma* which does not have any reality in itself apart from the *dharma*.

Accordingly, we can neither go along with Frauwallner that “the relationship between [the two explanations by the two supposedly different Vasumiträs] is almost that of thesis and antithesis”; nor that the four theories in the order and manner in which they are enumerated in MVŚ represent the actual historical sequence of development of the theory of *sarvāstivāda*, one superceding another.

5.5. The Vaibhāṣika theory of *kāritra*

Following Vasumitra’s theory, the Vaibhāṣika argues that a *dharma* is present when it exercises its *kāritra*, future when its *kāritra* is not yet exercised, past when it has been exercised. But this leads to some philosophical difficulties both as regards the exact nature and ontological status of *kāritra* as causal *kāritra* as well as its relationship with the *dharma* itself. Many modern scholars assert that, confronted with the Sautrāntika criticism, Saṃghabhadra innovated a “neo-Vaibhāṣika” (or “neo-Sarvāstivāda”) doctrine of *kāritra*. To determine the extent to which one can justifiably call Saṃghabhadra’s explanations an innovation, let us begin by examining what he actually has to say in this regard. Below we present some of the major points of controversy in this connection between the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika. The dialogue given herein is, on the whole, a more or less literal translation from passages in Ny:

Sautrāntika’s objection: If *kāritra* is the determining characteristic for the differentiation of past, present and future *dharma*-s, then [you have such problems as the following]:

1. A present but ‘non-participating facsimile’ eye (*tatsabhāga-cakṣus*) such as an eye in darkness, etc.
which does not exercise its kāritra of seeing, cannot be called present.

2. If you say that such an eye nevertheless has the kāritra of both phala-pratigrahaṇa (acquiring causal efficiency for an effect) and phala-dāna (being productive of an effect), then you have to admit that a past homogeneous cause (sabhāga-hetu), etc., being capable of phala-dāna, has kāritra. This means that it is demi-present.

Samghabhadra's reply: The potencies (śakti) of dharma-s are of two kinds, activity (kāritra) and efficacy/function/capability/capacity (sāmarthya/vṛtti/vyāpāra). It is only the activity of inducing or projecting a dharma's own fruit (phalākṣepa = phala-pratigrahaṇa/phala-parigrahaṇa) that is called kāritra. This does not exhaust the set of efficacies of a given dharma; it also has efficacies that are not kāritra. Thus, in darkness, the eye's efficacy of seeing rūpa is impaired by darkness. But its kāritra of inducing a fruit is not impaired, so that even in darkness, the eye can induce the production of itself [in the next moment]. This kāritra always exists in the present moment; for it is solely on the basis of kāritra that the present is established [i.e., designated]. Those [dharma-s which have arisen and] whose kāritra-s have ceased, do not become asamskrta-s.33 [As for] their capability to contribute causally (能為因性)34 to the arising of a different entity (於餘性生; dngos po gzhan skyes pa la), this is not kāritra, but efficacy, because it is only at the present moment that a dharma can induce a fruit, because an asamskrta cannot induce its own fruit, and because it is only the inducing of a dharma's own fruit that is called kāritra. Thus, the fact that the Sūtrakāra (i.e., Vasubandhu) in his explanation includes the efficacy of phala-dāna as kāritra as well, this is very much because he has not properly understood the abhidharma tenets! For, although a past cause can produce a fruit (phala-dāna), it does not have kāritra and hence there is no confusion (saṃkara) of the times.35

Sautrāntika: If a dharma is always existent in its essential nature, it should be able to exercise its kāritra at all times — what obstruction is there so that this dharma-substance can only exercise its kāritra at the present and not other times: There being no difference as regards a dharma’s essential nature in the three periods of time, what prevents it from remaining in one identical empirical nature/modality/form (bhāva) at all times?

Samghabhadra: There are ample examples in the world where, for a given substance, there exist various forms or modalities. Thus, there are feelings (vedanā) which are pleasant, unpleasant and neutral; fires which appear as straw-fire, husk-fire, wood-fire, etc.
Sautrāntika: [I may phrase my objection this way:] In our school, we hold that when the necessary conditions obtain, conditioning forces arise not having existed previously. But these conditions are various and at times they assemble together and at other times do not. Accordingly, dharma-s do not keep arising eternally. On the other hand, your school concedes that conditioning forces and the various conditions are ever present substantially. As you do not admit that dharma-s come into existence without any pre-existence, what can prevent them from being always present?

Saṃghabhadra: As we have argued before, an identical substance can manifest in different forms/modes — this point is sufficient to counteract your objection. Should you be obstinate, let me ask you a counter-question: In your doctrine of santati-parināma (progressive change of a series), it is conceded that the conditioning forces (samskāra) and their causal conditions become different from moment to moment, even though there is no difference in essential nature between the preceding and the succeeding ones. Now, there being no modification in their causal conditions in the preceding and succeeding moments, what prevents them from arising identical from moment to moment?

That is, the conditioning forces of the previous moment arise at the same time as their conditions and, without diminution in their essential nature, cease together with the conditions. It is by the force of this cause that the fruit is produced in the subsequent moment: It should not be different in form/species from the previous cause, since the two kinds of generative conditions, of the same species or not of the same species, are not differentiated between the preceding and succeeding moments. What condition is there then that constitutes an obstruction causing the modification in the two moments? If you assert that this is so by virtue of the nature (dharmatā) of the conditioned dharma-s, then why don’t you concede the same with regard to the kāритra of a dharma?

Sautrāntika: You concede that the conditions are always existent. Accordingly, the kāритra produced should also be always existent.

Saṃghabhadra: This objection is not reasonable. For even though there is always the assemblage of conditions, it is observed that sometimes a fruit does not result from the conditions. This is like the case of [your doctrine of] impregnation or the case of the eye, etc.: You do not concede that a fruit arises from a cause that has ceased, after a time interval. The different bija-s induced by various causes exist at the same time within a santati, and yet their fruits do not co-arise at all times. … Now, since at all
times all the causes exist, what prevents the various fruits from co-arising always? … Again, although the conditions for the eye, etc., are always present, yet visual consciousness, etc., do not always arise.

Sautrāntika: According to our school, a series undergoes a progressive transformation and can only give rise to a fruit when some specific conditions obtain.

Samghabhadra: Then you should also concede the same in the case of kārita. A dharma can have the capacity for inducing or projecting (ā-√kṣip) a fruit only in dependence on the forces of various conditions — which may be simultaneous or otherwise, pertaining to its own species or otherwise. This capacity is called kārita.

As a matter of fact, I am not clear as to what you mean by the term kārita in your objection. [Let me define:] kārita is the special capacity that is produced when the assemblage of conditions obtains for a given future dharma. That very dharma having the kārita is said to be present. When the kārita ceases, it is said to be past. It is not the case that in the previous and subsequent moments there is any difference in the dharma’s essential nature.

The kārita of a dharma is neither identical with it nor different from it. The former arises in dependence on conditions and exists for only one moment (present) while the latter persists through time. This is much like the case of the series of a dharma: A series consists of the non-interrupted arising of a dharma from moment to moment. This series is not different from the dharma itself, being without an essential nature other than that of the dharma. It is also not identical with the dharma itself, lest there be a series which consists of just one moment. Neither can we say that it is non-existent since it is observed to produce some effect. Likewise, the distinctive kārita at the present moment is neither different from the dharma, as it does not have an essential nature apart from the dharma, nor is it identical with the dharma, as there are times when only the essential nature exists without kārita. Nor can we say that it is non-existent, for when the kārita has arisen, it can project a phala. The following stanza [summarizes] this:

The santati has no distinct essence,
[But] a distinct effect is conceded;
Kārita is to be understood likewise.
Thus, [with it] the times are established.
We can [also] find examples in [the notions of] cause-effect relationship, of conjunction, and of the purity of citta, etc. Hence, although in the past, present and future, a dharma’s essential nature is the same, its modes of being (bhāva) are different. Accordingly, we have established the distinction of the three times [on the basis of kārita].

We may summarize the important points made by Samghabhadra in the above dispute as follows:

1. Samghabhadra is very articulate in contrasting the term kārita with the other terms expressing the various other types of causal functions or potencies of a dharma. These latter terms include vyāpāra, kriyā, vṛtti, sāmarthya, śakti, etc. In the Ny, in a similar contrasting context, Xuanzang also very consistently renders kārita as zuō yòng (作用) and as distinct from gōng nèng (功能) used for the terms denoting activities other than kārita.

It is important to observe, however, that in other contexts, both in AKB(C) and MVŚ, he is unfortunately not so consistent. Thus, comparing his AKB(C) and Ny with AKB, Vy and TSP, it can be seen that his rendering of gōng nèng corresponds to prabhāva, vṛtti, sāmarthya, śakti, and vyāpāra. The last one can be adduced from TSP:38 darśanādilakṣaṇo vyāpārah, in comparison to 见色功能 in Ny;39 and the rest from AKB and AKB(C). However, he also renders vyāpāra as zuō yòng.40 Also, in MVŚ,41 we have “…The tatsabhāga-cakṣus … [at the present moment], although without the zuō yòng of rūpa-darśanādi, definitely has the zuō yòng of phalākṣepa.” (Note the two zuō yòng).

2. kārita is defined as a dharma’s capability of inducing the production of its own next moment. This is called phala-graṇaṇa/phalākṣepa. However, elsewhere42 Samghabhadra also claims that although kārita is in actual fact confined to phalākṣepa alone, sometimes when the abhidharma śāstra-s are referring to a function (e.g., that of jāti) that serves as a proximate condition, the term kārita is also used expediently.43

3. All dharma-s at the present moment have the activity of phalākṣepa. Hence kārita uniquely defines presentness, and it is in terms of kārita that the differentiation of the three times can be properly defined.

4. This same temporal differentiation can be explained in other words: Each dharma is in a different avasthā (following Vasumitra) or bhāva
(following Dharmatrāta) — future, present or past — depending on the presence or otherwise of kāritra. For Saṃghabhadra, avasthānyathātvā and bhāvānyathātvā are the same as far as this point is concerned.

5. A dharma acquires its mode as present when the necessary assemblage of various conditions obtains — which may be simultaneous with its arising or otherwise, belonging to its own series or otherwise.\(^44\) When this takes place, and only when this takes place, it becomes endowed with its kāritra. In its past and future modes, only its intrinsic nature exists, devoid of kāritra. Nevertheless, it can still contribute causally to the actual production of some other dharma-s. This latter potency is not called an activity but rather a function or capacity or efficacy.

6. kāritra — likewise bhāva — is neither different from nor completely identical with the svabhāva/dravya of a dharma.

In addition to what can be gathered from the above dispute, there are other important doctrinal points made by Saṃghabhadra elsewhere in his exposition on kāritra. These are:

7. As Frauwallner\(^45\) has pointed out, Saṃghabhadra explains explicitly kāritra in terms of the theory of hetu-pratyaya:

If a samskrta dharma serves as a cause for the projection of its own fruit, it is said to be [exercising its] kāritra. If it serves as a condition assisting [in the producing of the fruit of] a different [series], it is said to be [exercising its] efficacy/function (功能) … All present [dharma-s] can serve as cause for the projection of their own fruits. [But] not all present [dharma-s] can serve as auxiliary conditions for [dharma-s] belonging to a different species: The cakṣus in darkness or one whose function has been impaired cannot serve as a condition that assists the arising of visual consciousness. The kāritra [of the cakṣus], on the other hand, is not impaired by darkness, as it can, without fail, serve as the cause for the projection of the future cakṣus. Hence, there is a difference between kāritra and efficacy. However, with regard to the production of a fruit within the series of its own species, there is a projecting power which may or may not be definite; it is called a kāritra as well as an efficacy. If [a power], with regard to the production of the fruit within a series of a different species, can serve only as a condition assisting its arising — this is an efficacy, not a kāritra.\(^46\) (See also the following point).
8. In Samghabhadra’s kārita theory, the four *samskṛta-lakṣaṇa*-s also play an important role. He defines these lakṣaṇa-s in terms of a dharma’s svaphalākṣepa-kārita. We may say that according to Samghabhadra, the four lakṣaṇa-s together completely ensure that kārita can arise and, indeed, arise for just one kṣaṇa. This implies that they too — together with kārita — are indispensable for the establishment of the difference of the three times:

Although the *samskrta-dharma*-s are assisted by various external causes and conditions, they must be assisted internally by *jāti, sthiti, jarā* and *anityatā* as proximate causes, before they can traverse through time. …

Efficacy (功能) refers to the function of serving as a direct condition…

The efficacy of *jāti* is its capability to serve as the direct (sāksāti) condition (親緣) enabling [a dharma] to give rise to its kārita of projecting its own fruit…

The efficacy of *sthiti* is its capability to serve as the direct condition enabling a dharma to stay temporarily and to project its own fruit…

The efficacy of *jarā* is its capability to serve as the direct condition for impairing a dharma’s kārita of projecting its own fruit…

The efficacy of *anityatā* is its capability to serve as the direct condition for destroying a dharma’s kārita of projecting its own fruit.

5.6. Samghabhadra’s theory — an innovation?

Having examined the important features of Samghabhadra’s kārita theory, we will now attempt to determine — within the limit of the data accessible to us — the extent to which we may consider it an innovation.

Collett Cox,⁴⁹ observing that MVŚ uses the term *zuo yong* where, in the same context, Samghabhadra clearly uses *sāmarthya*, concludes:

This would suggest that the *Mahāvibhāṣā* does not recognize the clear distinction between kārita and sāmarthya proposed by Samghabhadra.

But this conclusion seems to have betted too much on Xuanzang’s consistency in rendering these terms (see § 5.5, summary-point 1). Moreover, if what Samghabhadra claims is true that the masters before him sometimes used the term kārita expediently (see above, § 5.5, summary-point 2), we may consider the possibility that the two
contrasting causal functions had already been taught by at least some of the Sarvāstivāda masters at an earlier stage, even though the usage of these terms had not been strictly observed. Besides, there are actually several places in MVŚ⁵⁰ where zuo yong and gong neng are used side by side in the same context, although we often cannot be too certain as to the degree of contrast or the exact distinction intended. Thus, on the question as to why dharma-s do not arise and cease constantly, there being always the assemblage of causes and conditions — a question similar to one of the Sautrāntika’s objections in AKB and Ny (see preceding section above) — MVŚ cites the explanations given by various masters, and Buddhadeva’s explanation is:

_Dharma-s should have their zuo yong for arising and ceasing only once in each. It would be useless if they arise repeatedly and cease repeatedly._ …

**Question:** When the causes and conditions assemble for the arising of dharma-s, are the gong neng-s many or one? …

**Answer:** One can say they are many or that they are one. … The gong neng of the causes and conditions can be considered as one in-as-much as they together enable the dharma-s to give rise to their zuo yong…⁵¹

Another instance, with regard to past and future anuśaya-s:

Given that past and future anuśaya-s have no zuo yong, how can they be said to adhere and grow (anuśerate)?

**Answer:** Because they can give rise to the prāpti [of the present anuśaya] which manifests at the present moment. This is like the case that, although fire does not manifest at the present moment, yet it can give rise to smoke. The Venerable Ghoṣaka explains thus: ‘Although they do not have the zuo yong of grasping the objects, yet, with regard to the ālambana and the samprayukta dharma-s, they have the gong neng of bondage just like [when they are] present. Hence these [past and future] anuśaya-s can be said to adhere and grow.⁵²

Regarding the relationship between the kārita of a dharma and its svabhāva, as Frauwallner⁵³ has shown, MVŚ already explained in the same manner as Saṃghabhadra: “It cannot be said categorically that⁵⁴ they are identical or different.”

Frauwallner rightly observes that this important passage is not found in the two earlier Chinese versions of the Mahāvibhaṣā and is therefore possibly a later addition⁵⁵ — made somewhere after the two earlier recensions. Frauwallner proposes that in the final stage of development
of the kāritra doctrine before Saṃghabhadra, kāritra came to be equated with bhāva, and Saṃghabhadra took over from here. However, from Saṃghabhadra's own exposition, it can be seen that the absence or presence of kāritra in fact constitutes a different bhāva in each case. No equation is asserted by him here.

In another instance, MVŚ also speaks of the avasthā and the essential nature (體) of a dharma as being neither identical nor different:

The avasthā and the essential nature [of a fruit] are neither identical nor different. Whereas its essential nature exists at all times (sarvadā asti), its avasthā does not (na sarvadā).

The doctrine that the kāritra of phalākṣepa (= phala-pratigrahana) uniquely defines the present in contradistinction to the past and future times is also already found in MVŚ.

Question: A tatsabhāga-cakṣus, etc., at the present moment have no activity of seeing, etc. They should therefore not be present.

Answer: Although they do not have the activities of seeing, etc., they definitely have the phala-pratigrahaṇa-kāritra, for they are the sabhāga-hetu for the future dharma-s: all samkrta-dharma-s at the present moment can serve as hetu for the pratigrahaṇa of nisyanda-phala. As this phala-pratigrahaṇa-kāritra applies to all the present dharma-s, without any confusion (saṃkara), it is used as the basis for the establishment of the differentiation of past, present and future.

This important passage too is missing in the two earlier versions of the Mahāvibhaṣā and so was likewise possibly added after these two earlier recensions and before MVŚ. Moreover, the doctrine that phala-grahana of all the six hetu-s in each case takes place solely at the present moment is also found in MVŚ.

Saṃghabhadra protests very confidently that the Ābhidharmikas do not teach that the kāritra includes phaladāna. (See above, § 5.5). He also protests similarly elsewhere that the Vaibhāṣika never taught that kāritra has temporal distinction. Kāritra in fact comes into being not having been, and vanishes in a single moment of the present. Another equally confident protest is that the Sautrāntika bases his criticism on the wrong assumption that the Vaibhāṣika teaches that the past and the future exist in the same manner as the present. In fact, he says, this is a misrepresentation of the Vaibhāṣika position which is that the dharma exists with a different bhāva in each of the three times. (See above, § 5.5, summary-point 3).
Based on the representation of Vaibhāṣika views by Vasubandhu, Yaśomitra, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla — all notably Sautrāntikas or pro-Sautrāntika — some scholars seem to claim all too readily that the Vaibhāṣika views underwent radical transformation under the pressure of the Sautrāntika criticism. While understandably this could well be true in some cases, we must not ignore these unambiguous and confident protests by Saṃghabhadra in arriving at our conclusions. Thus, like Frauwallner, Tatia also expounds the theory of sarvāstivāda in a manner that clearly suggests that kāritra included phaladāna and phalākṣepa, a theory that was then revised by Saṃghabhadra to include only the latter. His exposition similarly suggests that the Vaibhāṣika taught the temporality of kāritra. Unlike the case of Frauwallner’s investigation, however, Tatia’s also does not have the merit of having consulted the Chinese and Tibetan sources.

Saṃghabhadra’s explanation of the saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s in terms of a dharma’s phalākṣepa-kāritra is already attested — once again — in the following MVŚ passage which, moreover, provides early evidence that the kāritra theory has already been explicitly linked with that of cause-effect:

By the force of sthiti-lakṣaṇa, the saṃskāra-s — having arisen — are capable of grasping their own fruit (this is phala-grahana = phalākṣepa), and of grasping the ālambana. By the force of jarā and anityatā, there is no further activity after one kṣaṇa. If sthiti-lakṣaṇa were non-existent, there should not be the cause-effect series of the saṃskāra-s, and the citta-caitta-dharma-s should not have any ālambana.

All this taken into consideration, we must dissent here from others who are fond of labeling Saṃghabhadra’s explanations on kāritra as a neo-Sarvāstivāda/neo-Vaibhāṣika doctrine. To us, Saṃghabhadra’s contribution to the Sarvāstivāda theory of kāritra consists essentially in his more articulate presentation and greater consistency in the use of terminologies. He has fine-tuned the theory considerably but this does not amount to a novel interpretation, since practically all the important doctrinal propositions he made in this connection were already found in the time of MVŚ or earlier.

5.7. Bhāva, svabhāva and the dharma

5.7.1. We saw above (§ 5.3, § 5.4) that each of the four main theories stresses that, throughout the three periods of time, the dravya (= svabhāva) remains unchanged. This is sarvāstivāda or sarvāstītva in a nutshell:
But just precisely what is meant by a dharma’s intrinsic nature “not changing”? One thing is certain that the theory does not amount to the Sāṃkhya doctrine of parināma. Even Vasubandhu, the arch-critic of the Vaibhāṣika, does not allege.

But then, MVŚ seems to be obscure and even contradictory at times on this fundamental question. The following passage is a good illustration. On the one hand, it says that the essential nature does not undergo change (see quotation in § 5.4 above); on the other, that when dharma-s undergo transformation — and hence are impermanent — it is their very essential nature that is involved in the transformation:

Question: Why are rūpa-s and citta-s, etc., impermanent?
Answer: [Since] they are subject to parināma and do not remain the same, how could they be considered to abide permanently?

Question: When it is held that their essential natures arise and cease, how do you know that the parināma is not the concealing and manifesting [of these essential natures]?

The Venerable Vasumitra explains thus: If their parināma is merely on account of concealing and manifesting, then a baby in the embryo would have its stages of childhood, youth, middle age and old age, all arising at once. Yet [the fact is that] they arise sequentially. Thus we know that it is not on account of the concealing and manifesting of the entities themselves (體 — svarūpa/svabhāva?) that there is parināma. …

The Bhadanta [Dharmatrāta] explains: It is seen in the world that when conditions assemble, a dharma arises; when conditions are not in concord, a dharma is destroyed. It is not the case that that which conceals and manifests has such a difference (viśeṣa). Thus we know that the parināma is not on account of the concealing and manifesting [of the entity itself]. It is only on account of the essential mode’s arising and ceasing. Furthermore, when a dharma is undergoing parināma, its previous and subsequent modes (相 — ākāra/ākṛti/bhāva?) are different and hence the entity itself should also be different, since the mode and the entity itself are the same. [On the other hand,] if a dharma abides permanently, then even though there is differentiation in stage (avasthā) — those of concealing and manifesting — there is no difference in its mode. Thus we know that in the parināma, the entity itself arises and ceases.

Prima facie, this passage may seem to utterly contradict the fundamental Sarvāstivāda standpoint that essential natures never change! But it actually provides us with important clues for an answer to the question
we have just raised — nay, for an understanding of the very theory of sarvāstitva: not only does it show that this theory differs from the Sāṃkhya concept of parināma, it also spells out explicitly that, although the svabhāvadravya is said to be sarvadā asti, this does not entail that it is immutable or even permanent, for a dharma’s mode of existence and its essential nature are not different, so that when the former is undergoing transformation, so is its svabhāva. This, however need not be — and should not be — a contradiction to what MVŚ says elsewhere that “from the view-point of essential nature, one should say that sanskāra-s do not change” (see above, § 5.3). The same entity, not a different one, remains throughout the times. In this sense there is no change in svabhāva or svalakṣaṇa — no anyathātva of substance. At the same time, a dharma keeps having a different mode of being and each mode is actually a new — but not different in terms of essence — dharma. In this sense there is change or transformation of essential nature — a change, nevertheless, which does not entail the result of an ontologically different substance. To take Dharmatrāta’s examples: When the same piece of gold is transformed into different entities — a golden bowl, cup, etc. — each time a brand new ‘thing’ or ‘entity’ results but the essential nature of this selfsame piece of gold which is involved in the process of transformation remains the same, i.e., the svabhāva/svalakṣaṇa/svarūpa/dravya remains the same in this process of change.

Saṃghabhadra’s refutation of the identification of sarvāstitva with the Sāṃkhya theory of parināma is even more articulate:

[This allegation] is untenable, for [the Sāṃkhya] holds that the effect is none other than the cause transformed, and that the effect again will vanish, turning back into the essential nature. The essential nature of the past, future and present is one identical substance. [On the other hand,] in our school, there is no confounding (samkara) of times (adhvān):

[i] activity (kāritra) exists only in the present moment; this [present] position (avasthā) definitely is not subsumable by the [other] two times;

[ii] cause and effect are completely distinct and there is no mutual operation;

[iii] dharma-s, once they have ceased, do not arise again;

[iv] the effect does not vanish and turn back into the essential nature;

[v] causes have no beginning;
5.7.2. In regard to the Sarvāstivāda position that a dharma can exist in different modes without losing its svabhāva, Saṃghabhadra illustrates as follows: The svabhāva of all vedanā-s is sensation, yet we can speak of various types of sensations — pleasurable, etc. The various organs — visual, auditory, etc., within the same personal series (santati), are all of the essential nature of prasāda rūpa; yet among them there are different modes of existence, i.e., there are the different functions of seeing, hearing, etc. “Now, herein, it is not the case that since the function is different from the existence, that there can be the difference in the functions of seeing, hearing, etc. Rather, the very function of seeing, etc., is none other than the existence of the eye, etc. On account of the difference in function, there is definitely the difference in the mode of existence… Since it is observed that there are dharma-s that co-exist as essential substances and whose essential characteristics do not differ but that [nevertheless] have different modes of existence, we know that when dharma-s traverse the three times, their modes of existence vary while their essential characteristics do not change.”

Like the compilers of MVŚ, Saṃghabhadra also insists on the impermanence of svabhāva. But in the light of the above MVŚ passages, we can now see that this is not really that innovative either. Saṃghabhadra argues as follows:

[Svabhāva is not permanent, for] whatever is permanent does not go through time. Neither should [the Stḥavira Śrīlāta] say ‘svabhāva remains constant (性恆住),’ for we concede that the bhāva (有性) of an existent in the past, present and future varies.

… [Our explanations] also have properly refuted the objection that [our theory of sarvāstītva] implies the permanence of [a dharma’s] essential nature, for, while the essential nature remains always [the same], its avasthā differs [in the stages of time] since there is change. This difference of avasthā is produced on account of conditions and necessarily stays no more than one kṣaṇa. Accordingly, the essential nature of the dharma too is impermanent, since it is not distinct from the difference [that arises in it]. [But] it is only in an existent dharma that changes
can obtain; there cannot be change in a non-existent. In this way, therefore, we have properly established the times.\textsuperscript{70}

Our examination above leads us to the belief that for the Vaibhāṣikas, the svabhāva–bhāva relationship is not one of essence and attribute/quality — contrary to the representation made by the Sautrāntikas and some modern scholars. It may be true to say that Samghabhadra clarifies this point better than the MVŚ compilers: a svabhāva always exists in a specific bhāva; it cannot be (√bhū) other than in a particular mode of being (bhāva) which can be infinitely various\textsuperscript{71} — but this is no innovative proposition, being part of Dharmatrāta’s bhāva-anyathātva theory. And accordingly, the two are neither identical with nor different from each other.

From the point of view of their opponents, however, if a new bhāva implies a new entity, it should follow that an ontologically different entity results. The Vaibhāṣikas, while at the depth of their hearts unafraid of logical contradictions when it comes to the fundamental level of things, would not consider here that their position is untenable.\textsuperscript{72} They appeal to a fundamental notion accepted by all Buddhist schools: the identity in difference of a series (santāna). The logical incongruity will dissolve — at least for the Buddhists — when a dharma is seen as manifesting in ever renewing forms constituting a series. A dharma-series (dharma-santāna) is not statically identical at any time; yet it retains an overall individuality or integrity. It is dynamically identical. One cannot step into the same river twice; but at the same time, one river is distinct from another. And this dynamic identity or distinctiveness is by virtue of the dharma’s svabhāva — a dharma-series has no svabhāva other than that of the dharma (cf. supra, § 5.5). It is in this sense that the svabhāva too may be said to undergo change — and hence be impermanent — even though ontologically it never becomes a totally different substance. As a matter of fact, the identity-in-difference (bhedābheda) relationship obtaining between svabhāva and bhāva/kāritra — indeed their whole thesis of sarvāstitva — can never make sense if the Vaibhāṣika conception of dharma is taken as one of static identity! From the standpoint of Aristotelian logic, of course, “not totally different” hardly suffices to establish that the “same” dharma continues to exist. This is the limit of the bhedābheda logic viewed from the Aristotelian standpoint.

If this way of understanding sarvāstitva represents a compromise on the Vaibhāṣika part on the reality of a dharma, it should be remembered that any bhedābheda relationship is an “intrinsic compromise” of essential reality in ontological terms. But from the Vaibhāṣika standpoint,
this does not so much represent an intentional, last resort, compromise, as a statement of fact. Both the Sautrāntikas and the Vaibhāṣikas would consider a series as a mental superimposition. But for the former, it has no ontological status whatsoever (Saṃghabhadra\textsuperscript{73} points out their fallacy — see supra, § 5.5). For the latter, it has a relative reality inasmuch as it is based on the ever-existent dharma manifesting in new forms from moment to moment.

Saṃghabhadra goes so far as to claim that it is in fact only sarvāstitva so understood that is logically compatible with the central Buddhist doctrine of impermanence: A dharma undergoes transformation in its essential nature, yet without entailing a different substance.

[For,] if the essential substance becomes different, an [ontologically] distinct dharma would result; then it ought not to be impermanent, there being no transformation in essence involved. That is: if one holds only that [a dharma] exists in the present time and [regards] past or future [dharma-s] as non-existent essentially, then it should follow that all sanskāra-dharma-s are permanent in nature, there being no transformation involved. ... An existent and a non-existent have their respective fixed natures; there is no transformation [possible]: transformation is not possible because they hold that only the momentary present dharma-s exist. Past and future dharma-s being completely without any essential nature, how can one speak of transformation of non-existent dharma-s? Thus, one is unable to say that all sanskāra-s are impermanent. One cannot argue that transformation consists of a non-existent being transformed into an existent, or an existent into a non-existent for existence (astitva) and non-existence (nāstitva) are not mutually accomplishing in their essence, since an existent and a non-existent are essentially contradictory to each other. ... If one concedes that past and future [dharma-s] are both existent and non-existent, [then a dharma], from being non-existent in [the sense of] not having yet arisen, can arise and become existent, and, from being existent [in the sense of] having arisen, can cease and become non-existent. This non-existence in the past and future and the existence in the present are in both cases not fixed, so that there is possibility of variation. The existence in the past and the future is the same as that in the present; there is no change in all the periods of time. It is on account of the fact that the essential nature [always] exists and the kāritra may or may not exist, that one can speak of a conditioned (sanskrita) having difference in state. Hence it is only the school which asserts the existence [of the essential nature] in the three periods of time that can speak of change with regard to a given dharma.\textsuperscript{74}
The answer to the question that we raised at the beginning of this section now emerges more clearly: When the Vaibhāṣika says that there is no change in a dharma’s svabhāva or dravya when it “traverses” in time, they mean that its integrity — its svalaksana (= svabhāva) — is untouched, and the essential nature does not change from being an existent into a non-existent (sarvadā asti). It is not that this essential nature is — mysteriously, as it were — totally uninvolved in the temporal process: It is sarvadā asti and yet anitya; non-temporal, i.e., not temporal in the usual sense of the term and yet not atemporal, i.e., not totally transcending the temporal process. If this answer sounds ambiguous, it is on account of the fundamental ambiguity or elusiveness that is necessarily implied in the bhedābheda relationship that obtains between the svabhāva of a dharma on the one hand, and its kāritra and bhāva on the other. But then, for the Vaibhāṣika, and, for that matter, for all ‘religious philosophers’, such fundamental ambiguity — wholly or partly derived from a long tradition of experience and/or contemplation — must come first, before logic, even if the Ābhidharmikas at the same time find the logical tools indispensable for the defense of their religious insight and convictions.
NOTES

1 For the discussion on the definition of Sarvāstivāda, see supra, § 3.2.
2 世體是常, 行體無常. But T no. 1546 has simply: 世是常, 行無常.
3 MVŚ, 393a; also, 700a.
4 Study, 303.
5 T 26, no. 1546, 293c.
6 T 27, 1003c–1004a; T 29, 630b.
7 T 27, 65b, 85b, 116b, 190a, 479a, 796a–b, 919b, 919b–c; also cf. 74b.
8 MVŚ, 396a–b. For the corresponding Sanskrit passages, see AKB, 296 f.
9 Frauwallner, 188 ff.
10 Frauwallner seems to understand, in this context, that the Dārṣṭāntika and Vībhajyavāda were different from the Sarvāstivāda (op. cit., 191). But as we have noted above (§ 5.2), in the older version of MVŚ, this theory is said to be held by “the Dārṣṭāntikas”.
11 T no. 1549, 724b.
12 See Study, 382 ff.
13 Watanabe Baiyū, Ubu abidatsuma ron no kenkyū (Tokyo, 1954), 186 f.
14 Yin Shun (Study, 303) ascribes these different explanations to their advocates somewhat differently.
15 Frauwallner, 188 f.
16 Frauwallner, 205 f.
17 AKB, 297.
18 However, we do find in MVŚ (201c–202a) some masters who speak of milk turning into curd as an exemplification of the Sāṃkhya doctrine.
19 MVŚ, 1003c–1004a.
20 Ny, 631b.
21 AKB, 298: svabhāvaḥ sarvadā cāsti bhāvo nityaśca neṣyate |
23 Ny, 632c.
24 MVŚ, 393c.
25 MVŚ, 121b.
26 MVŚ, 200a–b.
27 MVŚ, loc. cit.
28 In one place (Tāranātha, 15) the comparatively late tradition of Tibet gives the chronological placing: Dharmatrāta → Vasumitra → Ghoṣaka → Buddhadeva. In another place (ibid., 103), Dharmatrāta → Ghoṣaka → Vasumitra → Buddhadeva. But this second order is very likely influenced by the order of enumeration of their theories in MVŚ. Yin Shun (op. cit., 268, 271, 274, 285) gives the following dates:
Dharmatrāta — around the end of 2nd century B.C.E., contemporary or slightly earlier than Vasumitra;
Buddhadeva — 10 B.C.E.–10 C.E., junior contemporary of Dharmatrāta;
Vasumitra — 100 B.C.E., after Kātyāyanīputra (but MVŚ, 231c, is divided as to whether his PrŚ precedes JPŚ or otherwise);
Ghoṣaka — between 1st and 2nd century C.E., considerably later than Vasumitra.

30 MVŚ, 394b. See also *Study*, 300 f.
31 *Study*, 297 ff.
32 Cf. Ny, 631c–633b. I have given here a more or less literal translation from the Chinese, with only slight paraphrasing.
33 Cf. Ny, 410b: “A [dharma] whose kāritra has ceased, relinquishes only its presentness; the dharma’s essential nature remains.”
34 Cf. Tibetan in *Tattvārthā*: rgyur gyur pa ’di dag gi nus pa nyid.
35 Cf. Ny, 409c f. We have translated this passage very literally in view of its importance. Frauwallner is not sure of a sentence here, and accordingly his rendering in this place seems unintelligible. Cf. Sthiramatī’s *Tattvārthā*: gang yang ’gags pa skyes pa ’dus byas kyi chos rams kyi mthu’i khyad par dngos po gzhan skyes pa la rgyur gyur pa ’di dag gi nus pa nyid bya ba ma yin pa da ltar ba’i gnas skabs kho na ’phangs pa’i phyir ’dus ma byas rams kyi s ’bras bu ’phen pa mi ’thad pa’i phyir ro ’bras bu ’phen pa’i bya ba ma yin no
36 Cf. TSP, 509: na kāritram dharmād anyat, tadyatīrekena svabhāvānupalabdheh | nā’pi dharmamātram, svabhāvāśītvepi kadācid abhāvāt | na ca na viśeṣaḥ, kāritrasya prāgabhāvāt
37 Cf. TSP, loc. cit.: santatikāryaṃ ceṣṭaṃ, na vidyate sāpi santatiḥ kācit | tadvad avagaccha yuktyā kāritrenāḥ dhvasamsiddham ||
38 TSP, 506.
39 Ny, 631c.
40 Cf. AKB(C), 11b: 無作用 which translates nirvyāpāra in AKB, 31.
41 MVŚ, 393c — see quotation below.
42 Ny, 410a.
43 Also cf. Ny, 450b: “...It is not the case that there can be kāritra in the past [when the corresponding retribution fruit is presently arising]. The term kāritra [which is employed in this case] is intended to mean a function.”
44 Ny, 632b.
45 *Frauwallner*, 199 ff.
46 Ny, 409c f. (also cf. *ibid.*, 409a–b, and MVŚ, 393c which is quoted above). Contra Frauwallner’s translation which is very misleading: “If this acts as a cause, it produces its effect. If it acts as a condition, it fosters a difference of property (bhāva).” (*Frauwallner*, 201)
47 Ny, 409a–b
48 SPrŚ, 809b–c; also cf. Ny, 409a–c.
49 *Cox C*, *Disputed Dharmas: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence* (Tokyo, 1995), 157, n. 75.
50 E.g., MVŚ, 105a, 113b, 200a–b, 480a–b.
51 MVŚ, 105a.
52 MVŚ, 113a–b.
53 *Frauwallner*, 197 f.
54 Contra Frauwallner: “with any certainty that” — which is misleading.
55 *Frauwallner*, 199. Frauwallner concedes that it is older than Vasubandhu.
56 MVŚ, 87b.
5. Sarvāstivāda and Temporality

57 MVŚ, 393c–394a.
58 MVŚ, 108c. An alternative opinion as regards the kāraṇa–hetu is also given here. This is refuted in the Ny. MVŚ (89b) — as well as the two earlier recensions — already contains the Vaibhāṣika rule that there must first be phalagrahaṇa before there can be phaladāna: The fruit must first be causally determined or “effectualized” before it can actually be produced.
59 Ny, 632b–c; contra Tatia, 104.
60 Ny, 631a, 635a.
61 Tatia, 100–102.
62 Ibid., 104.
63 MVŚ, 201c.
64 MVŚ, 1003c–1004a.
65 Cf. Ny, 632c: “Although a dharma’s essential nature remains, when specific conditions obtain, or by virtue of the nature of things (dharmatā), a distinctive kāritra arises not having been, and returns nowhere after having existed. The dharma’s essential nature is just as before, its svalakṣaṇa remaining always.”
66 Ny, 635a.
67 Ny, 625a.
68 According to the immediate context, this 性 seems to be the same as 自性 — svabhāva. La Vallée Poussin (1936–1937) takes this to be bhāva (“Sarvāstivāda”, 84).
69 Ny, 630b.
70 Ny, 633a.
71 Ny, 633c.
72 In AKB, 301, Vasubandhu represents the Vaibhāṣika as finally exclaiming that the nature of dharma (dharmatā) is profound and beyond intellectual comprehension. Saṃghabhadra (Ny, 634c–635a) protests that this is a distortion: “These are not the words of the true Vaibhāṣikas.” He further claims that he has properly refuted all the objections raised by Vasubandhu (Ny, 635a).
73 Ny, 633a.
74 Ny, 410c.
6. Theory of Causality I

The Six Causes

6.1. The 6 causes (hetu), 4 conditions (pratyaya) and 5 fruits (phala)—their correlation

6.2. Special importance of the doctrine of causality for the Sarvāstivāda

6.2.1. Dharma-s as causal forces

6.2.2. Dharma-s as factors of phenomenal existence arisen through causes

6.3. Definitions of the six causes

6.3.1. Efficient cause (kāraṇa-hetu)

6.3.2. Homogeneous cause (sabhāga-hetu)

6.3.3. Universal cause (sarvatraga-hetu)

6.3.4. Retribution cause (vipāka-hetu)

6.3.5. Co-existent cause (sa'habhū-hetu)

6.3.6. Conjoined cause (samprayuktaka-hetu)

   6.3.6.1. Distinction between the conjoined and co-existent causes

6.4. Saṃghabhadra’s defense of simultaneous causation

6.5. Explanations in the Yogācāra system

6.6. Summary of the notion of the co-existent cause given in the various sources

6.7. Doctrinal importance of the co-existent cause for the Sarvāstivāda

   6.7.1. Co-existent cause and Sarvāstivāda realism

   6.7.2. Co-existent cause as the only valid paradigm for causation

6.8. Conclusion

6.1. The 6 causes (hetu), 4 conditions (pratyaya) and 5 fruits (phala) — their correlation

The investigation of causes, conditions and their effects constitutes one of the special topics of concern of the Ābhidharmikas (supra, § 2.3.5). In the Sarvāstivāda theory of causality, two doctrinal schemes are employed: that of the four conditions (pratyaya) and that of the six causes (hetu). Saṃghabhadra¹ maintains that the doctrine of the four conditions is found in the sūtra-s of their school. As for the six causes, he says that they were once in their Ekottarāgama, although no longer extant. He quotes sūtra passages to show that indications of the six causes are scattered in the various sūtra-s.

For instance, when the sūtra says, “conditioned by the eye and visual forms, visual consciousness arises (cakṣuḥ pratītya rūpāṇi cotpadyate caksurviṇāṇam)” — such statements are intended to indicate the doctrine of efficient cause (kāraṇa-hetu) which is established in respect of the non-obstruction of dharma-s in the arising of other dharma-s (諸法於他有能作義，由生無障; jananāvighna-bhāvena).
When the sūtra says, “the coming together of the three is contact; born together are sensation, ideation and volition”; etc — such statements are intended to indicate the co-existent cause sahaḫū-hetu which is established in the respect of co-existent dharma-s sharing an activity by mutually operating in concordance (同作一事，由互隨轉; anyonyānuparivartanaikakṛtyārthena).

When the sūtra says, “this person is endowed with skillful as well as unskillful dharma-s … And there is the accompanying skillful root which has not been cut off (隨俱行善根未斷; anusahagataṃ kuśalamūlam asamucchinnam), due to which there will arise in him another skillful root from this skillful root. [In this way, this person in the future will be of the nature of purity]”; etc — such statements are intended to indicate the homogeneous cause (sahāga-hetu) which is established among the past and present dharma-s in respect of their bringing forth their own fruits (由牽自果; svaphalanirvartanārthena).

When the sūtra says, “that which one cognizes that one understands”; etc — such statements are intended to indicate the conjoined cause (saṃprayuktaka-hetu) which is established in respect of the conjoined thought and thought-concomitants sharing the same cognitive object and activity (同作一事，共取一境; ek'ālambanakṛtyārthena).

When the sūtra says, “as a result of the false view, whatever bodily karma of a person, or whatever vocal karma, or whatever volition (mental karma), or whatever aspirations, is from that view (of the nature of that view); and whatever conditionings [of his] are of that type. These dharma are all conducive to non-desirableness, non-pleasant-ness, non-loveliness, non-agreeableness. [Why? Because his view, i.e., false view, is evil]” — such statements are intended to indicate the universal cause (sarvatraga-hetu) which is established in respect of its generating the continuance of defiled dharma-s of a similar or dissimilar type. (於同異類諸染污法，由能引起故; sabhāgavibhāga-kliṣṭadharma-prabandha-janakārthena).

When the sūtra says, “When they are arisen (reborn) there, they experience the retribution of [karma] that has been done here, which is skillful and with-outflow, derived from cultivation”; etc — such statements are intended to indicate the retribution cause (vipāka-hetu) which is established in respect of its (an unskillful or a skillful but without-outflow dharma) projecting a fruit which is different in moral nature (一切不善善有漏法，由招異類故; visadrśaphal'ākṣepakatvena).

162
MVŚ³ likewise states that the sūtra-s speak only of the four conditions, not the six causes. But it also quotes the opinions of other masters — one identical with Saṃghabhadra’s — which the compilers do not repudiate. Accordingly, the doctrine of the four conditions most probably preceded that of the six causes. At any rate, the latter are already mentioned in the Jñānaprasthāna.⁴ The six causes, the four conditions, and their corresponding fruits are correlated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4 pratyaya-s</th>
<th>6 hetu-s</th>
<th>5 phala-s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hetu-pratyaya</td>
<td>sahabhū-hetu</td>
<td>puruṣakāra-phala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>samprayuktaka-hetu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sabhāga-hetu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sarvatraga-hetu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vipāka-hetu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samanantara-pratyaya</td>
<td></td>
<td>niśyanda-phala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ālambana-pratyaya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adhipati-pratyaya</td>
<td>kāraṇa-hetu</td>
<td>| adhipati-phala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>visaṃyoga-phala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | | (not a fruit of any of the 6 causes)

It can be noticed from the above chart that the samanantara-pratyaya and the ālambana-pratyaya have no correlatives among the six causes. This suggests that the doctrine of the four conditions has a wider scope than that of the six causes.

This raises an interesting question: What is the doctrinal need and significance in the subsequent elaboration of the hetu-pratyaya (condition qua cause) into the five causes? We will show that this elaboration serves, on the one hand, to explain the dynamic arising and interaction of the distinct dharma-s that are totally unrelated in their intrinsic nature, and, on the other, to corroborate fundamentally their central doctrine of sarvāstitva. Moreover, in the latter context, the co-existent cause is doctrinally of fundamental importance for the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of causality. For this reason, this category, together with its subset, the conjoined cause, will be dealt with in comparatively greater details below.
6.2. The special importance of the doctrine of causality for the Sarvāstivāda

According to Vasumitra’s *Samaya-bhedoparacaṇa-cakra, the Sarvāstivāda school was also known as the Hetuvāda (‘the school that expounds the causes’). While no explanation whatsoever of this latter name is given in the treatise itself, we surmise that it was very probably derived from the special importance that the school attaches to the doctrine of causes: Real, existent dharma-s are real forces; at the same time, their arising into the phenomenal world — out of their intrinsic natures as it were — is totally dependent on specific causes.

6.2.1. Dharma-s as causal forces

At the outset, we must realize that for the Sarvāstivāda, causal efficacy is the central criterion for the reality/existence (astitva) of a dharma. How do the Sarvāstivādins arrive at a definite list of dharma-s which they claim to be real/existent throughout the three periods of time? As we have seen (§ 1.2), a dharma — an ultimate real — is that which sustains its unique characteristic. When such a unique characteristic is found, it is to be known that a specific or unique intrinsic nature exists correspondingly, i.e., a dharma as a real distinct entity (dravyāntara) is discovered, and it is to be added to the recognized list of dharma-s.

The existence of such a unique characteristic may be perceived directly through the senses, as in the case of the objects of the five senses. Where direct sensory perception is not possible, the Sarvāstivādins argue for the existence of a dharma from the observation or mental analysis of the unique causal contribution that it makes in the occurrence of a given event in space-time. Thus, it is argued, the thought-concomitants must exist as real entities, for each of them contributes uniquely and necessarily to our empirical experience: vedanā enables sensation, samjñā enables ideation, smṛti enables recollection, etc. Likewise, the disjoined conditionings are also real entities on account of their being real causal forces: jāti, sthiti, jarā/anityatā and vyaya are the sine qua non that together cause a conditioned dharma to be momentary; acquisition (prāpti) is a force/cause for effecting the specific connection between a dharma and a sentient continuum; etc.

A dharma then is a real on account of it being a real force — of having a causal efficacy — in other words, on account of it being a cause. It is for this reason that dharma-s are also called saṃskāra-s — conditioning forces. Failure to prove an alleged existent’s causal efficacy is tantamount to failure to prove its very existence/reality. Accordingly, if saṃskāra-
The causes, the path and ‘conditioned co-arising’ … completely subsume the totality of the dhātu, āyatana and skandha dharma-s. … The causes, the path and ‘conditioned co-arising’ all refer to the six causes, because they are all synonyms of hetu. According to some, the causes refer to the totality of conditioned dharma-s, as is stated in PrŚ: “What are the hetu dharma-s? All the conditioned dharma-s."

Similarly, the reality of the four causal conditions must be upheld. The Dārṣṭāntika masters in MVŚ deny them, asserting that they are no more than conventional terms designated by the various masters. The compilers repudiate this assertion:

If the conditions (lit.: the fact of the conditions, 諸緣性; pratayyatā) are not real existents, then all dharma-s are not real existents, since the causes and conditions subsume all dharma-s.

In the same text, a question is asked:

Are those four Great Elements which have not yet arisen also [mutually] co-existent causes?

Answer: They are also co-existent causes because they fall under the category of cause and because they have the cause-characteristic (hetu-lakṣana).

The MVŚ compilers here endorse the view that all the Great Elements, whether arisen or not, are reciprocally co-existent causes and quote in support the PrŚ which states “What are the dharma-s arisen through causes? Answer: All conditioned dharma-s.” This implies that the causal nature is intrinsic to the dharma-s themselves. In a similar vein, Samghabhadra explains that the retribution cause exists in the future period as well:

… Although there is necessarily a before-after in the case of a retribution cause, this cause is not established from the viewpoint of this before-after [sequence]: … A specific karma cause effects a corresponding retribution — this nature (lakṣana) can be said to exist in the future period as well, and thus [this cause] can also be established in the future period. However, from the viewpoint of the nature of a dharma, one speaks of the future [period] anticipatively: such a cause arises before and such an
effect arises after; at the stage when the cause has arisen, the posteriority of the effect comes to be established. It is only then that one can speak of a real before-after. It is not the case that there exists any real before-after at the stage when [the dharma-s] are not yet arisen. That the causes can be said to exist in the future period is on account of the fact that these causes are not established in dependence on [their] coursing through time, like the case of the co-existent and conjoined causes, etc. [The necessarily conascent dharma-s function as co-existent causes to one another in the future period, i.e., at the time when they are co-arising].\(^9\) (See also, infra, § 5.5,5).

Likewise, Samghabhadra asserts that the nature of ālambana-pratyaya being objects of perception is determined — even though they are not being perceived.\(^10\) The ālambana-pratyaya comprises the totality of dharma-s — past, present, future, as well as the asaṃskṛta-s.\(^11\) In fact, the Sarvāstivādins argue they are real because they can function as objects for the generation of cognition. Indeed, it is this causal efficacy that constitutes the very mark of the existent (sal-lakṣaṇa).\(^12\) All existent dharma-s have such an efficacy, but only the present dharma-s have kāritra which is the efficacy of projecting their own fruits. (supra, §§ 3.5.3, 5.5)

The same principle applies even in the case of the unconditioned dharma-s. Although “the way of establishing causes and effects among the conditioned is not applicable to the case of the unconditioned”\(^13\) in-as-much as the latter transcend space-time and therefore are not directly involved in the cause-effect processes in phenomenal existence, they can, nevertheless, be regarded as causes in the sense that they too function as objects of thought. Samghabhadra also argues that the fact that a saint (ārya) in his direct realization (abhisamaya) sees truly all the four truths — including the unconditioned dharma called cessation through deliberation (pratisamkhya-nirodha) — proves the reality of the latter: it has the efficacy of causing the arising of the practitioner’s prajñā that perceives it.\(^14\) Moreover, they are dynamic forces. Thus, the cessation through deliberation acts to ensure that the acquisition of the defilements so abandoned will absolutely no longer be able to arise.\(^15\) The causal efficacy of nirvāṇa is also inferable from the fact that it can have an impact on the mental stream of receptive beings so that they give rise to delight in nirvāṇa and disgust towards samsāra.\(^16\) (See infra, §16.2.1).
6.2.2. Dharma-s as factors of phenomenal existence arisen through causes

The special emphasis on hetu on the part of the Sarvāstivādins is also to be understood as their concern to prove the realities of the tri-temporal dharma-s by working out a causal doctrine that suffices to account for their arising and dynamic interaction in phenomenal existence. Not only must dharma-s as real existents in each case be causally efficacious — hence called conditioning forces — as we have seen above, but as phenomena arisen through causes — hence said to be conditioned (saṃskṛta) — their arising (and ceasing) must also in each case be causally accounted for. As stated in AKB:

That which exists as a real entity necessarily has a cause; or it ought to be an unconditioned.17

Thus, “all exists” (sarvam asti) necessarily implies that all is caused, and for this, the Sarvāstivādins find support in the Buddha’s statement:

No conditioned dharma is accomplished without causes. This is like the case of a feeble patient who cannot get up by himself. From this perspective, a stanza states:

“None can be accomplished without causes. That all results causes is taught by the Buddha....”18

In the Sarvāstivāda perspective, all dharma-s have been always existing. As a matter of fact, time is an abstraction on our part derived from their activities.19 A dharma exists throughout time and yet is not permanent as it “courses in time” (adhvan-saṃcāra). But as MVŚ explains, “conditioned dharma-s are weak in their intrinsic nature, they can accomplish their activities only through mutual dependence” (cf. infra. § 2.4.3.1):

We declare that the causes have the activities as their fruits, not the entities in themselves (svabhāva/dravya). We further declare that the effects have the activities as their causes, not the entities in themselves. The entities in themselves are without transformation throughout time, being neither causes nor effects.20

Moreover,

the tri-temporal dharma-s exist throughout time as entities in themselves; there is neither increase nor decrease. It is only on the basis of their activities that they are said to exist or not exist [as phenomena].21
But, in turn, their activities necessarily depend on causes and conditions:\(^{22}\)

Being feeble in their intrinsic natures, they have no sovereignty \((aśvarya)\). They are dependent on others, they are without their own activity and are unable to do as they wish.\(^{23}\)

Indeed, given the Sarvāstivāda theory of the unique entities being absolutely isolated from one another in their intrinsic natures, without a proper theory of causality which can account for the arising of and dynamic interplay among them, the Sarvāstivādins would utterly fail to present any version of the central Buddhist teaching of ‘conditioned co-arising’. It may be noted in this context that in his *Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā*, Nāgārjuna proves the non-arising \((anutpāda)\) of dharma-s precisely by refuting each of the four conditions acknowledged by the Sarvāstivādins.

In brief, this aspect of a dharma’s very arising being conditioned by causes and conditions can be discerned in the other major doctrinal term used to describe the factors of phenomenal existence — *saṃskṛta* (see supra, § 2.4.3.1). If all dharma-s cannot arise except through causes, then the real existence of any given dharma must be accounted for by finding its causes of one category or another. Besides, it is only by accounting for its intrinsic characteristic — its phenomenologically cognizable aspect manifested through causes — that its very existence as a real entity can be established. Ultimately, the intrinsic characteristic and the intrinsic nature of a dharma are one.\(^{24}\) Saṃghabhadra in fact argues for the reality of nirvāṇa via the experienciability of its lakṣaṇa: “…the *lakṣaṇa* is none other than the *dravya*. Now, since nirvāṇa has the *lakṣaṇa* of being cessation (*nirodha*), calm (*śānta*) etc., it is established that it exists as a real entity (*dravya*)”.\(^{25}\) (See infra, § 16.3.1).

### 6.3. Definitions of the six causes

#### 6.3.1. Efficient cause (*kāraṇa-hetu*)

This is the most comprehensive or generic type of cause: It is any dharma that either directly or indirectly — by not hindering — contributes to the arising of another dharma. “A conditioned dharma has all dharma-s, excepting itself, as its efficient cause, for, as regards its arising, [these dharma-s] abide in the state of non-obstructiveness.”\(^{26}\) MVŚ explains this category as follows:

What is the efficient cause?

Answer: Conditioned by eye and a visible, visual consciousness arises. This visual consciousness has as its efficient cause the
eye, the visible, the dharma-s conjoined with it, the dharma-s co-existent with it, as well as the ear, sound, auditory consciousness, ... the mental organ (manas), the mental objects (dharma), mental consciousness, [i.e.,] all the dharma-s which are material, immaterial, visible, invisible, resistant, non-resistant, without-outflow, outflow-free, conditioned, unconditioned, etc. — all dharma-s excepting itself. ... Efficient (kāraṇa) means ‘being non-obstructive’, ‘accomplishing something’ (有所办).27

The unconditioned dharma-s are not effects of any of the six causes, being outside the temporal process altogether. However, inasmuch as they do not hinder the arising of other dharma-s, they may be regarded as efficient causes. This position, however, is rejected by the Sautrāntikas.28 In fact, the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntika master, Śrīlāta, denies the existence of the efficient cause altogether.29

6.3.2. Homogeneous cause (sabhāga-hetu)

An exemplification of this cause is the homogeneous causality in which the moral species of the succeeding effect is the same as that of the preceding cause. Thus, in the serial continuity of a thought represented by c1 → c2 → c3, if c1 is skillful, it functions as the homogeneous cause to generate c2 as the effect, which is also skillful; c2 in turn functions as a homogeneous cause to generate c3, which is again skillful. According to the Sarvāstivādins, this type of causality obtains in the case of a mental series, and among physical matter. However, both the ‘western masters’ and the Dārṣṭāntikas deny that rūpa-dharma-s can have a homogeneous cause.30 There are, in fact, other disagreements among the various Sarvāstivāda masters in terms of details concerning the nature and scope of this causal category.31

AKB explains this cause as follows:

The similar dharma-s are the homogeneous causes of dharma-s similar [to them], for e.g., the five skandha-s which are skillful, are [the homogeneous causes] of the five skillful skandha-s, among themselves. Likewise the defiled and the non-defined five skandha-s, [in each case, among themselves]...

[But] dharma-s belonging to a given category [such as defilements abandonable by vision (darśanaheya)]32 and to a given stage [such as the sensual sphere] are [homogeneous causes] only of those belonging to their own category and stage. ...  

[Moreover, only] a previously arisen [similar dharma] is the homogeneous cause of a subsequent [dharma], arisen or not arisen. The future [dharma-s] are not homogeneous causes.33
In this context, Vasubandhu also records other views on the nature and scope of this cause:

According to other masters: [Concerning the non-defiled non-defined aggregates —] non-defined matter is [the homogeneous cause] of [the non-defined] five [skandha-s]; but the other four [skandha-s] are not [the homogeneous cause] of matter. This is because [the matter aggregate] is inferior [in nature] to the other aggregates.

[According to some other masters:] In a given group-homogeneity (i.e. within the same sentient being), kalāla is [the homogeneous cause] of the ten states comprising kalāla, etc. The arbuda [state], etc., [each] successively decreasing by one, are [the homogeneous cause of from nine to one] of [the states comprising] arbuda, etc. [This is because a later state can serve only as a condition (not as a cause; cf. § 7.2) with regard to the earlier states].

[The Dārśāntikas] deny that matter is the homogeneous cause of matter. …

Saṃghabhadra cites, as scriptural evidence of this cause, the following passages:

“This person is endowed with skillful and unskillful dharma-s. It should be known that in this pudgala, the skillful dharma-s vanish and the unskillful dharma-s appear; but there exists an accompanying (隨俱行; anusahagata) root of skillful (kuśala-mūla) which has not been cut off (asumucchinnā). On account of its not having been cut off, there is still the possibility of the arising of another root of skillfulness from this root of skillfulness.”

“The inclination of a bhikṣu’s mind is towards that about which he frequently thinks.”

“With ignorance (avidyā) as cause, he generates defilements; with understanding (vidyā) as cause, he is freed from the defilements…”

Having cited the above passage, Saṃghabhadra then explains as follows:

The past and present homogeneous dharma-s, on account of their inducing their own fruits, are established as homogeneous causes.

In Saṃghabhadra’s commentary on AKB explanations that we have quoted above, he does not seem to have any objections to Vasubandhu’s
explanations. Like Vasubandhu, he also cites the same views of the different masters on the scope of this cause.

In fact, he records two more (loc. cit.):

(1) Concerning the non-defiled non-defined five skandha-s, some masters maintain that five are the fruits of four (i.e., four are the homogeneous cause of five); [that is,] matter — being inferior in strength (勢力劣故) — is [only] the homogeneous cause of the four other aggregates.44

(2) According to some masters: matter on the one hand, and the four other aggregates on the other, are not mutually homogeneous cause. This is because matter is “inferior and of a different species (from the four mental aggregates)” (劣異類故).

This suggests that there were various interpretations in the Sarvāstivāda system on this cause, which were mostly tolerated. Of these views, Saṃghabhadra in fact criticizes only the last two cited above: the one related to the embryonic series and the Dārṣṭāntika view that there is no homogeneous cause among the rūpa-s.45

At the beginning of the entire discussion in this context, he defines this cause in the following words:

Those that can nourish and produce the emanation (niṣyanda) fruits, whether remote or near, are called homogeneous causes. It is to be understood that this cause obtains in the case of similar dharma-s with regard to similar dharma-s, not with regard to those of a different species.46

6.3.3. Universal cause (sarvatraga-hetu)

Like the homogeneous cause, this cause as well generates an emanation fruit. From this perspective, the universal cause might be considered as in some sense a subset of the homogeneous causes, pertaining to the defiled dharma-s alone. There is homogeneity between this cause and its effect in terms of stage (sense sphere, etc.) and of moral species (both are defiled).

However, as the following passage shows, it is to be made a cause distinct from the homogeneous cause because there is no necessary homogeneity in terms of category of abandonability47 (nikāya/prakāra — see § 12.6.2):

The universal dharma-s arisen previously and belonging to a given stage are the universal causes of later defiled dharma-s
belonging to their own stage. … On account of their being a cause applicable to all defiled dharma-s, they are established [as a cause] separate from the homogeneous causes and [also] because they are the cause of [defiled dharma-s] belonging to other categories as well, for, through their power, defilements belonging to categories different from theirs are produced. 48

MVŚ 49 enumerates different opinions as to which defilements constitute the universal causes:

Some hold that all defilements are universal.

Some hold that the defilements of the five categories of abandonability are all universal.

Some hold that all the defilements abandonable by vision into unsatisfactoriness and its origin are universal.

Some hold that the defilements found in all the three spheres of existence are all universal.

Some hold that the defilements common to all the five categories of abandonability are universal, namely, ignorance, craving, hatred and conceit.

The Dārṣṭāntikas hold that the two defilements, i.e., ignorance (avidyā) and craving (trṣnā), are universal. Their explanation is as follows: “The root of conditioned co-arising is said to be universal; ignorance is the root of the earlier part (pūrvānta-koṭī) of conditioned co-arising, and existence-craving (bhava-trṣnā) is the root of the later part (aparānta-koṭī) of conditioned co-arising. Thus, they are universal.”

The Vibhajyavādins hold that five are universal: ignorance, craving, view, conceit and thought (citta).

The Vaibhāṣika view is that three are universal: doubt (vicikitsā), view and ignorance, which are abandonable by vision into unsatisfactoriness, the cause of unsatisfactoriness, together with their conjoined and co-existent dharma-s. 50

Yin Shun suggests that the doctrine of the five universal causes proposed by the Vibhajyavādins could be the forerunner of the Yogācāra doctrine of the manas vijñāna (the 7th consciousness). This is because the universal causes are intended as the causes that universally generate defilements and duḥkha. In this set of five, the four defilements — ignorance,
craving, view and conceit — constantly accompany thought. This implies that all beings constantly possess a subtle thought accompanied by the four defilements, which is coming close to the doctrine of manas later developed in the Yogācāra.\(^5\)

### 6.3.4. Retribution cause (vipāka-hetu)

This is the karmic cause. That is to say, it leads to a desirable or undesirable karmic retribution. AKB explains the nature of this cause:

The unskillful and skillful dharma-s are the retribution causes, as they are of the nature of retribution.

Why do the neutral dharma-s not bring about retribution? Because they are weak, like rotten seeds.

Why not the outflow-free [dharma-s]? Because they are not moistened by craving, like unmoistened intact seeds.

[Why not those not belonging to any sphere?] Because, not belonging to any sphere, what kind of sphere-specific (pratisamyukta — bound [to a sphere]) retribution could they bring about?\(^52\)

According to the Dārṣṭāntikas in MVŚ, “there is no retribution cause apart from volition (cetanā), and no retribution fruit apart from sensation (vedanā)”. According to others, such as the Mahāsāṃghikas, retribution causes and fruits are confined to thought and the thought-concomitants. Against these opinions, the Sarvāstivāda holds that retribution causes and fruits comprise all five skandha-s, that is, not only thought and the thought-concomitants but also the matter accompanying (arising with) matter (cittānuvṛttaka-rūpa) and the conditionings disjoined from thought — the ideationless attainment (asaṃjñī-samāpatti), the cessation attainment (nirodha-samāpatti), all acquisitions that are which are unskilful and those that are skilful but with-outflow (kuśala-sāsrava), and the accompanying characteristics of the conditioned (samskṛta-lakṣaṇa) — can constitute retribution causes.\(^53\) The retributive rūpa-s are the bodily and vocal karma — both informative (vijñapti) and non-informative (avijñapti) (see infra, § 13.4). The ideationless attainment can effect the asamjñīka, that is, it can result in an existence in the ideationless realm. However, the vital faculty (jīvitendriya), the group-homogeneity (nikāya-sabhāga) and the five material faculties pertaining therein are not its retributions, but those of the karma in the fourth dhyāna. Similarly, the cessation attainment can effect the four skandha-s of the sphere of neither ideation-nor-non-ideation (naiva-saṃjñā-nāsaṃjñā-āyatana) — excepting the vital faculty and the
group-homogeneity therein which are exclusively karmic fruits — as its retributions. Acquisition can effect the following as retributions: (a) matter — visual objects, sound, smell, taste; (b) thought and thought-concomitants — the three types of sensation (pleasant, unpleasant, neutral; (c) conditionings disjoined from thought — acquisition and the four characteristics of the conditioned.

Vipāka-hetu (‘retribution-cause’) can be taken either as a genitive determinative compound (tatpurusa): vipākasya hetuḥ, i.e., the vipāka is the result of the process vi-śpac, or as a descriptive compound (karmadhāraya): vipāka eva hetuḥ: the retribution itself is the cause, i.e., the vipāka is that which is ripened (vipacyate).

According to the Vaibhāṣikas: vi (‘different’) means visadṛśa (‘dissimilar’) — a vipāka is a pāka (‘maturation’) dissimilar from its cause. A retribution cause is never neutral, whereas its fruit is always neutral. Samghabhadrā explains that vipāka may refer to either the cause or effect aspect of the process of maturation:

What is called vipāka may refer to a maturation (pāka) separate from the cause or distinct from the cause — these two [explanations] pertain to the effect [aspect]. Or rather, it may refer to the fact that the karma that has been done, on reaching the stage of the acquisition of the fruit, can be transformed into being capable of maturing — this [explanation] pertains to the cause [aspect of the process].

6.3.5. Co-existent cause (sahabhū-hetu)

This is a new causal category innovated by the Sarvāstivāda. As we shall see (§§ 6.6 ff.), it is of central importance in the causal theory of the school. It became an indispensable doctrinal tool for the Yogācāra theory of cognition only (vijñaptimātratā) (§ 6.5).

MVŚ: Question: What is the intrinsic nature of the co-existent cause? Answer: All the conditioned dharma-s… Question: What is the meaning of ‘co-existent’ (sahabhū)? Answer: ‘Co-existent’ means [i] ‘not mutually separated (avinā-bhāva’), [ii] ‘sharing the same effect’, [iii] ‘mutually accordant with one another’. This co-existent cause is definitely found in the three periods of times and produces the virile effect (puruṣakāra-phala).

AKB: The co-existent [causes] are those that are reciprocally [virile] effects… For example: the four Great Elements are co-existent [causes] mutually among themselves; so also, thought and the dharma-s that are thought-accompaniments (cittānuvarttin);
so also the [four] characteristics of the conditioned and the characterized (lakṣya) [conditioned dharma]. In this way, the whole of the conditioned, where applicable (i.e., where a mutual causal relationship obtains) are co-existent causes. (Vasubandhu adds:) It is to be added that without being effects to each other, a dharma is the co-existent cause of its secondary characteristics (anulaksana) but not vice versa. ... [The case of the co-existent cause] is like the staying in position of three sticks through their mutual strength/support — this establishes the causal relationship (hetuphalabhāva) of the co-existents.\textsuperscript{61}

\textbf{Ny:} The co-existent [causes] are those that are reciprocally virile effects, on account of the fact that they can arise by virtue of mutual support ... For example: the four Great Elements are co-existent cause mutually among themselves, ... for it is only when the four different kinds of Great Elements assemble together that they can be efficacious in producing the derived matter (upādāya rūpa); so also thought and the dharma-s which are thought-accompaniments; so also the [four] characteristics of the conditioned and the characterized [conditioned dharma]. In this way, the whole of the conditioned, where applicable (i.e., where a mutual causal relationship obtains) are co-existent causes. (The italicized words are those also found in AKB). Herein, the scope of the characteristics of the causes [as described by Vasubandhu] is too narrow — the thought-accompaniments and the characteristics [of the conditioned] should in each case be mentioned as co-existent causes amongst themselves. Thus, he should not have said that only those that are reciprocally the effect of one another are co-existent causes. A dharma and its secondary characteristics are not reciprocally effects, yet it is a [co-existent-]cause of the latter [although the latter are not its co-existent cause], ... Therefore, the characteristics [of this cause] should be explained thus: Those conditioned dharma-s that share the same effect can [also] be considered as co-existent causes; there is no fault [in explaining thus], as it is so explained in the fundamental treatises (mūla-śāstra)...\textsuperscript{62}

\textbf{Avatāra:} The conditioned dharma-s that are fruits of one another or that together bring about a common fruit are named co-existent causes.\textsuperscript{63}

\section*{6.3.6. Conjoined cause (saṃprayuktaka-hetu)}

This cause pertains to the domain of the citta-caitta-dharma-s. Essentially, it may be considered to be a subset of the co-existent cause.

\textbf{MVŚ:} Question: What are the conjoined causes? Answer: Dharma-s 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. This is like two bundles of straw which stay in position through mutual dependence. [Likewise,] when many ropes are combined, a huge log can be dragged; and many people can cross a big river by joining hands together. Because conditioned dharma-s are weak in their intrinsic nature, they can accomplish their activities only through mutual dependence. If we were to ask sensation: ‘Without ideation, can you [alone] sense/experience an object?’ The answer would be: ‘No.’ The same questions [and answers] apply to the other thoughts and thought concomitants as well.

AKB: The thought and thought-concomitants whose supporting basis is the same are conjoined causes to one another… Thus, the supporting basis of visual consciousness, which is the visual faculty of a given moment, is the very same supporting basis of the [thought-concomitants, i.e.,] sensation, etc., conjoined with it…

Ny: This [conjoined] cause is established because thought and thought concomitants, being conjoined, accomplish the same deed by grasping the same object.

Avatāra: The thought and thought-concomitants that are mutually conjoined with one another and that apprehend a common object are called conjoined causes.

6.3.6.1. The distinction between the conjoined and co‑existent causes

MVŚ: Question: What is the difference between the conjoined and the co‑existent causes? Some say that there is no difference, as in one [and the same] moment, the sensation and ideation, etc., are both types of causes. Therefore, in this regard, one should say thus: Whichever are conjoined causes are also co‑existent causes; some co‑existent causes exist which are not conjoined causes, viz., the disjoined co‑existent causes. Thus there are differences between the two causes… [Their differences]: conjoined causes have the sense of companionship; co‑existent causes have the sense of having a common fruit. The first means having the same supporting basis, mode of understanding and object. The second means having the same production (jāti), deterioration (jarā), duration (sthiti), impermanence (anityatā), fruit, emanation and retribution. The first is like holding a stick; the second is like performing an action having held the stick. The first is like [a group of people] joining hands together; the second
is like crossing a torrent having held hands together. The first means mutually accordant with one another; the second means not being mutually apart.\textsuperscript{68}

ACK: Whatever is a conjoined cause is also a co-existent cause. In what sense then is it a co-existent cause and in what sense is it a conjoined cause? It is a co-existent cause in the sense of reciprocally being effects, like the case of fellow merchants traversing a road through their mutual strength. It is a conjoined cause in the sense of conjunction in terms of the fivefold equality,\textsuperscript{69} like the case of these very merchants being engaged in the same activities of eating and drinking, etc.; even if one is lacking, they are not conjoined together.\textsuperscript{70}

Ny: What is the difference between these two causes, i.e., the co-existent and the conjoined? To begin with, dharma-s that are conjoined causes are also co-existent causes. There exist dharma-s that are co-existent causes but not conjoined causes — viz., the [thought-]accompanying matter; jāti, etc.; the Great Elements. If a conjoined cause is also a co-existent cause, what, in this case, is the difference in significance between these two causes? It is not the case that the conjoined causes are none other than the co-existent causes, for these two causes differ in their significance. However, in the case where one and the same dharma is a conjoined cause as well as a co-existent cause, this is the difference in significance: conjoined causes signify ‘not mutually apart’; co-existent causes signify ‘having the same fruit’. Again, having the same production (jāti), duration (sthiti), etc., by virtue of the mutual strength — these are co-existent causes; grasping the same object by virtue of the mutual strength — these are conjoined causes. According to some masters: On account of the meaning of being reciprocally fruits, the co-existent causes are established; this is like the case of fellow merchants who, mutually supported, traverse a risky road together. On account of the meaning of the fivefold equality, the conjoined cause is established; this is like those same fellow merchants having the same experience, same activities of eating, etc. Herein, they are not conjoined even when one is missing, and thus is the fact of their being reciprocally causes universally established.\textsuperscript{71}

Avatāra: The distinction between the conjoined cause and the co-existent cause [may be illustrated] by the example of a caravan of merchants: The merchants, by rendering mutual assistance to one another, are able to pass through a risky road — this is co-existent cause. They consume the same food and drinks — this is conjoined cause.\textsuperscript{72}
6.4. Samghabhadra’s defense of simultaneous causation

Of all the six causes, the co-existent cause is the most controversial. The case of this co-existent cause is the co-existent causality which best exemplifies what we may call, for want of a better English term, ‘simultaneous causality’ (see below, §§ 6.7.1, 6.7.2). Samghabhadra defends at great length the doctrine of simultaneous causation, as represented by this cause, against the Sautrāntika, giving several explanations which are more articulate comparatively to those found in the earlier texts. An additional simile of the lamp in relation to its light is also given as an illustration of this category. He begins his arguments with an examination of the nature of causality, invoking the Buddha’s succinct statement of the principle of conditionality:

This being, that exists. From the arising of this, that arises (asmin satī’ daṃ bhavati | asyo ’tpādād idam utpadyate).

Samghabhadra explains:

Contrary to this are non-existence, non-arising. This is the general characteristic of causality. In [the Buddha’s statement above], the first [sentence] illustrates the case of the conascent (sahaja, sahajāta) cause; the second further illustrates that of the previously-arisen (agraja, pūrvaja) cause.

In insisting that the co-existent cause should also include the meaning of ‘sharing the same effect’ besides that of ‘being mutually effects’, Samghabhadra really has done no more than to keep in line with MVŚ orthodoxy (cf. second meaning in § 6.3.5). Skandhila’s *Abhidharmāvatāra, another post-AKB Vaibhāṣika/Sarvāstivāda work, also mentions these two meanings explicitly:

The conditioned dharma-s which are effects of one another or which together bring about a common effect are named co-existent causes — e.g., the Great Elements; the [conditioned dharma-s which are] characterized and the [four] conditioned characteristics; the thought and the thought-accompaniments. These are [in each case co-existent causes] for one another.

Samghabhadra further articulates that in fact there are only three situations where such a simultaneous causality obtains:

We do not concede that cause-effect relationship obtains reciprocally in all cases of the conascent: … It obtains only [i] among those that share the same effect; or [ii] that are reciprocally effects; or [iii] where by the force of this, that dharma can arise. Such conascent [dharma-s] have a cause-effect relationship, [i.e., are co-existent causes].
The third case is consistent with the definition of the virile effect — the effect corresponding to the co-existent cause (see *infra*, § 7.3.2.1). More generally:

… whatever are necessarily conascent, are necessarily cause one to another. … although [dharma-s] may share the same cause of arising, those that are not reciprocally cause to one another do not necessarily arise together. [Conversely,] those that are necessarily conascent definitely arise with one another as reciprocal causes [exercising their causal functions at the time of their arising]. Accordingly, the conascent causes (including co-existent and conjoined causes) are universally established.\(^{77}\)

This proposition may be seen as corresponding to the sense of necessary inseparability of dharma-s which are reciprocally co-existent causes given in MVŚ (*supra*, § 6.3.5). This criterion, said to be laid down by the ancient logicians, representing the principle of inductive reasoning, is also invoked by the Vaibhāṣikas in AKB in their dispute with the Sautrāntikas:

For, according to the Logicians, this is the characteristic of a cause-effect [relationship]: When A exists or does not exist, B necessarily exists or does not exist; then A is the cause and B the effect (*etad dhi hetuhetumato lakṣaṇam ācaksate haitukāh | yasya bhāvabhāvayoh yasya bhāvabhāvau niyamatah sa hetur itaro hetumān iti*). Now in the case of the co-existent dharma-s, when one exists, all exist; when one does not exist, all do not exist. Thus, they are in a mutual cause-effect relationship.\(^{78}\)

### 6.5. Explanations in the Yogācāra system

It is interesting to note that whereas the Sautrāntika — one of the precursors of the Mahāyāna Yogācāra — vehemently refuted the Vaibhāṣika doctrine of the co-existent causes, the Yogācāra takes it over together with its subset, the conjoined cause, without hesitation (see below, § 6.7.2). Thus, the *Abhidharma-samuccaya* of Asaṅga (traditionally the older brother of the author of AKB) includes the notion under pratyaya-s which function by way of assistance/companionship (*sahāyatah*) and of common action (*sampratipattitah*):\(^{79}\)

How [are pratyaya-s] by reason of companionship? Those dharma-s that arise in co-existence (*sahābhāvena*) not with any one of them lacking (*nānyatamavaikalyena*), such as the Elements (*bhūta*) and those derived from the Elements (*bhautika*). How are they by reason of common action? Those dharma-s that, being in co-existence, act together (*sampratipadyante*) on the object.
Sthiramati\(^80\) comments as follows:

The four Great Elements and rūpa-s, etc., derived from the Elements exist where possible, but not necessarily in all conglomerations. Thus, where [such a conglomeration] exists, it arises as a whole without [the members] being separated from one another. By way of the necessity of companionship, the co-existent cause is established. The mention of the Elements and those derived from the Elements is to be understood as a mere example; thought and the thought-concomitants [are also to be subsumed under this category] on account of their mutual inseparability.

[Question:] If so, there ought not to be the separate establishment of the conjoined cause since thought and the thought-concomitants are included under the co-existent causes.

[Answer:] Although this is so, nevertheless [it is separately established] on account of a different signification: Those dharma-s that act on an object [necessarily] in co-existence and not with any one member lacking are established as conjoined causes by reason of their common action — not merely on account of their co-existence — as in the case of thought and the thought-concomitants.

In the *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha*, Asaṅga explains the ālaya-vijñāna and the bīja being mutually in a simultaneous causal relationship, giving the same examples as the Vaibhāṣikas.\(^81\) For the Yogācāra, simultaneous causation is causality in the true sense:

The ālaya-vijñāna and those defiled dharma-s are simultaneously cause to each other. How can [such a simultaneous causation] be observed? This is like the simultaneous arising of a flame and the burning of the wick being mutually [caused]. It is also like reed-bundles which, mutually supporting one another, [stand up] simultaneously without collapsing. The principle herein of mutual causation is to be understood likewise. Just as the ālaya-vijñāna serves as the cause for the defiled dharma-s, those defiled dharma-s likewise serve as the cause for the ālaya-vijñāna. It is only on such a basis [of simultaneous causation] that the hetu-pratyaya-s are established, for [apart from this], the other hetu-pratyaya-s are not apperceived (na upalabhyante).

In their commentaries on the above passage, both Vasubandhu\(^82\) and Asvabhāva\(^83\) state explicitly that this simultaneous causation refers to the co-existent cause. In the Chinese version of the Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi,\(^84\) Dharmapāla also quotes the same passage in support of his view that there are also bīja-s which are newly engendered by the repeated
perfuming (vāsanā) of the actual dharma. The same text,\textsuperscript{85} again using the same similes, remarks further:

The perfuming engenders the bīja; the bīja gives rise to manifestation (samudācāra), [namely, the actual dharma] — in the manner that a co-existent cause produces a virile fruit. The anterior bīja successively engenders a posterior bīja of the same species — in the manner that a homogeneous cause induces an emanation fruit. These two types [of causal processes] constitute causality (hetu-pratayatā). Apart from these, other dharma-s are not hetu-pratayya-s: If they happen to be called hetu-pratayya-s, one should understand them as metaphorical expressions.

6.6. **Summary of the notion of the co-existent cause given in the various sources**

The definitions and examples given in the above sources (§ 6.3.5–6.3.6.1) are not always entirely distinct. Some are more or less identical, and sometimes what one source gives as examples of the co-existent cause, another would include under the conjoined cause. The variety in these descriptions suggests that there had been some effort on the part of the Sarvāstivādins to integrate various explanations passed down in their tradition over time. On the other hand, the near identical definitions seen in many cases, from sources stretching over several centuries (from MVŚ to Ny), also indicate that the notions of the co-existent and conjoined causes must have been fairly well delineated and understood in their tradition. We may broadly classify these definitions or descriptions of the essential characteristics of co-existent/conjoined causes into three:

1. In the sense that the conascent dharma-s are reciprocally causes, reciprocally (virile) effects,\textsuperscript{86} mutually induced, arisen through mutual strength, necessarily conascent, etc. The very existence of one is necessarily dependent on the other.

2. In the sense that the conascent dharma-s are mutually dependent and suitably coordinated and strengthened to give rise to a common effect or accomplish a common causal event simultaneous to them.

3. In the sense that between the two conascent dharma-s, one is arisen necessarily through the strength of the other. Necessarily conascent dharma-s function as co-existent causes at the time of the arising of the dharma, i.e., in the future period. Thus, “all conditioned dharma-s have production (jāti) [— which

\[181\]
exercises its function at the time when a dharma is arising], etc., as their co-existent causes”.

The former two senses may be said to be more specific to this causal category, attested in all the sources we have examined. The third, a more general sense, is logically deduced and made explicit by Saṃghabhadra.

The Yogācārins inherited the doctrine of simultaneous causation, even though, holding the standpoint of ‘present only exist’ as they do — as opposed to the tri-temporal existence — they must relegate the functioning of this causal principle exclusively to the present period of time.

6.7. The doctrinal importance of the co-existent cause for the Sarvāstivāda

6.7.1. The co-existent cause and Sarvāstivāda realism

The doctrine of simultaneous causation lends support to the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of direct perception which, in turn, again reinforced their doctrine of pluralistic realism. This is in contrast to the Sautrāntika theory of indirect perception which contributed in an importantly way to the idealistic Yogācāra theory of vijñaptimātratā. In spite of the fact that Vasubandhu appears to be on the whole in favour of many of the Sautrāntika views expressed in his AKB, as far as his discussion on the citta-caitta dharma-s is concerned, he generally follows the Vaibhāṣika exposition with little repudiation. In particular, we can discern no objection to the doctrine of the simultaneous arising of these citta-caitta-s. Saṃghabhadra too states that Vasubandhu has indicated no resistance to the sahabhū-hetu doctrine:

The doctrine of the sahabhū-hetu has been previously established.
In that connection, the Sūtrakāra (Vasubandhu) has not refused to acknowledge it.

For the Sarvāstivādins, one can be absolutely certain about the existence of external objects because our five senses directly perceive them. Thus, within a single moment of visual perception, the visual faculty, the object and the corresponding visual consciousness all arise simultaneously. All three function as co-existent causes. This is, in fact, one of Saṃghabhadra’s arguments for the co-existent cause:

It contradicts the principle of ‘conditioned co-arising’ [to hold that there are no conascent causes]. Thus the sūtra says, ‘Conditioned by the visual faculty and the visual object, there
arises visual consciousness.’ [If the visual faculty, the visual object and the visual consciousness were not simultaneous,] then the visual faculty and visual object produced in the preceding moment ought not to be the supporting basis and the perceptual object, [respectively,] for the visual consciousness of the succeeding moment, since, [in that case, the latter] exists and [the former are] non-existent. One cannot call an absolute non-existent (atyantābhāva) a supporting basis or a perceptual object. The same would apply here: At the time when the visual consciousness arises, the visual faculty and the visual object have already ceased. This would mean that without any conditions assisting, the visual consciousness arises by itself! This is due to the fact that non-existent dharma-s cannot serve as supporting basis, and that visual consciousness can take only a present object. If the visual faculty, the visual object and the visual consciousness do not arise simultaneously, it would entail that the visual faculty and visual objects do not serve as conditions for visual consciousness. Or, the auditory faculty and sound, etc., would also serve as conditions for visual consciousness, being equally unrelated to visual consciousness.89

But more importantly, this doctrine is indispensable for the fundamental thesis of sarvāstitva. Of the four major arguments put forward for the thesis — (a) uktatvāt, (b) dvayāt, (c) sadviṣayāt, (d) phalāt90 — the first is simply an inference from the Buddha’s mention of past and future objects. (c) and (d) are the only two logical arguments (yuktitaḥ), and (b) essentially has the same stress as (c), supported by the Buddha’s own statement. (c) argues that since the object of any perception must be existent, the fact that the mind can think of past and future objects then proves the reality/existence of past and future dharma-s. (d) argues that past dharma-s must exist since a past karma is causally efficacious in generating a present vipāka. Now it must be noted that these two logical arguments cannot stand unless the simultaneous causality — in the sense that the cause and the effect must be existent at the same time — as exemplified by the sahabhū-hetu is conceded: Both require that the cause and the effect exist simultaneously. But it should be borne in mind that, in the Sarvāstivāda, “existing simultaneously” does not necessarily mean “arising simultaneously”. When the cause and the effect do arise simultaneously — i.e., co-exist (saha-bhū) in the present moment — we have the case of the sahabhū-hetu (see § 6.7.2).

6.7.2. The co-existent cause as the only valid paradigm for causation
In Samghabhadra’s argument above, the visual organ and object (causes) must be conascent with the visual perception (effect). A non-existent
cause cannot be efficacious. In this case, all the three must exist at the present moment.

In general, if $A$ causes $B$, both $A$ and $B$ must be existent at the same temporal instance — although they may belong to different time periods with respect to their own temporal frames of reference. That is: $A$ may be past or present or future, and $B$ may also be past or present or future — but they must co-exist, although not necessarily be conascent. To borrow Dharmatrāta’s terminology, they are both existent, but not necessarily of the same ‘mode of existence’ ($bhāva$); or in Ghoṣaka’s terminology, they do not necessarily have the same ‘time-characteristic’ (cf. § 5.2). Where $A$ and $B$ are necessarily conascent, i.e., both existing at the same present moment, we have the category known as the co-existent cause. In fact, in the Sarvāstivāda conception, all dharma-s in their essential nature have always been existent; it is only a matter of inducing their arising through causes and conditions. This is the fundamental principle underlining the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of causality (§ 6.2.2). Past and future dharma-s are also endowed with efficacies including that of actually giving an effect, although it is only a present dharma that has kāritra — the efficacy of establishing the specific causal relationship with the dharma to be produced as its effect.

We saw above that in arguing that the retribution fruit exists in the future period as well, Saṃghabhadra states that the establishment of dharma-s as causes is not dependent on their ‘coursing in time’, giving the examples of the co-existent and conjoined causes (supra, § 6.2.1). In that context, a question is raised: “Is it not the case that the establishment of the co-existent cause is relative to the middle time period (adhvan) [i.e., the present period]?” In the following reply, Saṃghabhadra makes an important clarification on the notion of the co-existent cause:

This objection is unreasonable, for [such an establishment] is an implicit one (neyārtha) — [properly speaking,] the co-existent causes are so called on account of their existing at the same time (俱時有故); the meaning is that they are reciprocally cause and effect.\footnote{91}

Now, since for the Sarvāstivādins both the cause and the effect necessarily exist simultaneously, Saṃghabhadra’s explanation here amounts to stating that in the final analysis, the co-existent cause is simply a special case of simultaneous causation obtaining among the necessarily conascent dharma-s. The co-existent cause then actually exemplifies the general case of simultaneous causation in which a distinct $A$ generates a distinct $B$ — both existing simultaneously. This fact can also be seen
in the definition of the virile effect, the effect of the co-existent cause, which is essentially a general statement of causality:

That [conditioned dharma (B)], which is born from the force of another (A), is the fruit [of that force (A) — a fruit] born of a virile action.92

The above consideration may also be stated in the following manner:

Whenever an effect B arises by the force of A, both A and B must be existent in that same instant of time.

When both are “present” relative to the temporal frame of reference of the person experiencing B, we have the typical case of the co-existent cause whose nature satisfies the threefold condition specified by Saṃghabhadra (§ 6.4).

When, relative to this time frame, A is past and B is present, we have the cases of the other types of cause. For instance, if A is a strong volition, either skillful and unskillful, which has come into existence at least several moments earlier—and is still existent at this present moment—and B is a certain factor, morally neutral, of the person’s state of existence, then we have the case of a retribution cause generating a retribution fruit.

From this consideration, it is no wonder that the Vaibhāṣikas exerted great effort in defending the validity of this causal category. Failure in this respect is tantamount to failure in establishing the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of causality as a whole — which, in an important way, is tantamount to failure in establishing the thesis of sarvāstitva.

The case of a homogeneous cause generating an emanation fruit as its own next moment of existence is an exception, as it involves not two ontologically distinct entities but simply the arising of a different instance of the given entity itself in the next moment of its series. In this connection, it may be noted that Siddhi (C) in fact singles out the two types of causes—co-existent cause and homogeneous cause—as the only two true cases of causality (§ 6.5).

More strictly, the Yogācāra, inheriting the Sarvāstivāda position as regards causality, states explicitly that there is no other real causality outside that represented by the co-existent and conjoined causes (the homogeneous cause being treated as an exception).
6.8. Conclusion

The Sarvāstivāda is also known as the Hetuvāda probably owing to their special concern with the theory of causality. On the one hand, real entities (dharma-s) — the unconditioned being no exception — must be shown to be causal forces. On the other, the arising of and dynamic interplay among the conditioned dharma-s in phenomenal existence must be accounted for by an articulate theory of causes.

It is possible that the six-hetu doctrine was articulated in addition to the earlier four-pratyaya doctrine mainly because of the need to highlight the co-existent cause which exemplifies the school's fundamental principle of causality that cause and effect necessarily exist simultaneously, even though their modes (bhāva) of existence may differ — either past, present or future. Moreover, it corroborates importantly the thesis of sarvāstitva.

In the more specific or narrower sense, the co-existent causal relationship obtains where dharma-s are either reciprocally cause and effect to one another or together bring about a common effect. More generally, all necessarily conascent dharma-s are co-existent causes. For the Yogācārins who hold the ‘present only exists’ standpoint, this causal category becomes all the more important for their theory of perfuming. Accordingly, the sahabhūhetu-puruṣakāraphala causation came to be more explicitly emphasized by them as causality par excellence.
NOTES

1  Ny, 416b–c.
2  Yaśomitra (Vy, 188 f) cites these assertion of Samghabhadra without mentioning his name, but attributing them to the Vaiśeṣikas.
3  MVŚ, 79a–c.
4  T 26, 773a, 920c–921a.
5  T 49, 15b.
6  MVŚ, 979c.
7  MVŚ, 680c.
8  MVŚ, 82a.
9  Ny, 444a–444b.
10 Ny, 448b.
11 Ny, 447b.
12 Ny, 621c–622a.
13 Ny, 429a.
14 Ny, 432a.
16 Ny, 431c.
17 See AKB(C), T 29, 152c. The context here is the refutation of reality of the pudgala proposed by the Vātisputriya.
18 Ny, 440a28–b1.
19 MVŚ, 393c.
20 Ibid., 105c.
21 Ibid., 396a.
22 Ibid., 108c.
23 Ibid., 283b.
24 MVŚ, 196c.
25 Ny, 432b.
26 AKB, 82: saṃskṛtasya hi dharmasya svabhāvavardhijāh sarvadhmāḥ kāraṇahetuḥ | utpādam prāṭi (note error in Pradhan’s text) ativighnabhāvavasthānāt ||
27 MVŚ, 104a. Samghabhadra (Ny, 416c) quotes the same sūtra passage here to show that the kāraṇa-hetu is taught by the Buddha in the sūtra.
28 Cf. AKB, 91.
29 Ny, 442a–b.
30 MVŚ, 682c — no reason given for the denial.
31 See AKB, 85.
32 For the five categories of defilements, see infra, § 12.6.2.
33 AKB, 85: sadṛśa dharmāḥ sadṛśānāṃ dharmāṇāṃ sabhāgahetus tadyathā kuśalaḥ paścaścakandhāḥ kuśalānāṃ anyonyaṃ… | svanīkāyabhuvah svo nikāyo bhāṣca eṣāṃ ta ime svanīkāyabhuvah… pūrvotpannah paścimānāṃ utpānānuṭpānānāṃ sabhāgahetuḥ | anāgatā naiva sabhāgahetuḥ |
34 Following Samghabhadra (Ny, 422a).
Following Saṃghbadra (Ny, 422a): 有餘師言...

The ten states in the development starting from the embryo to the post-embryo existence are: kalala, arbuda, peśin, ghana, praśākhā, bāla, kumāra, yuvān, madhya and vrādha. (AKB, 130)

This reason is given in Ny, 422a.

Ny, 422a: “According to the Dārṣṭāntikas: rūpa-s definitely do not have homogeneous causes; they are produced merely by virtue of the assemblage of causal conditions.”

Cf. AKB, 85: ye tu rūpaṃ rūpasya necchanti sabhāgahe tum …

Ny, 416c.

This passage is quoted in AKB(F), vol. I, 245, n. 4. La Vallée Poussin also gives the corresponding Pāli version: Aṅguttara, iii, 315. See tr., in § 6.1, of the same passage in Ny, 416.

於彼彼多隨尋伺，即於彼彼心多趣入 … Cf. M, i, 115: yaṃ yad eva … bhikkhu bahulaṃ anuvitakketi anuvicāre ti tathā tathā nati hoti cetaso…

Ny, 416c.

This view is not given in AKB, but it is recorded in AKB(C)

Ny, 422a.

AKB, 65: yadi sarvatragahetor api samānaṃ phalam kasmān na sabhāgahe tor evesyate | yasmāt bhūmītaḥ kliṣṭatayā cāsyā sādṛṣyaṃ na tu prakāratah |

AKB, 89: svabhūmikāḥ pūrvotpannāḥ sarvatragā dharmāḥ paścimānām kliṣṭānām dharmanām sarvatraga-hetuh | … kliṣṭadharma-sāmānyakāraṇatvenāyam sabhāgahe tum prthak vyavasthāpyate | nikāyāntaryānām api hetutvād eṣām hi prabhāvenānyaikāyikā api kleśā upajāyante |

MVŚ, 90c.

Cf. also Ny, 416c.

ISVm, 106 f.

AKB, 89: akusālaḥ kuśalāsravaśca dharmā vipākahetuh | vipākadharmatvāt | kasmādavyākṛta dharmā vipākam na nirvartayanti | durbalatvāt | pūtibijavat kasmānānāsravāḥ | tṛṣṇābhīṣyanditavāt | anabhiṣyanitasārabijavat | apratisamyuktaḥ hi kim pratisamyuktam vipākam abhiniirvartayeyuḥ | Also cf. MVŚ, 98b-c.

MVŚ, 96a–c.

Also cf. MVŚ, 615a–b.

MVŚ, 97a, 263c; for the meaning of savipāka, see MVŚ, 98c.

Ny, 427b.

AKB, 89; MVŚ, 264b, 741c, etc.


MVŚ, 85b.

In Xuanzang’s translation of both AKB (T 29, 30b) and Ny, the word purusakāra-phala is found. Paramārtha’s translation (T 29, 188b) agrees with the Sanskrit which has only phala.

AKB, 83–85: sahabhūr ye mithahphalāḥ | …yathā | catvāri mahābhūtany anyonyam sahabhūhetuh | cittam cittānuvarttinām dharmanām te’pi tasya | samskṛtalaksanānī lakṣasya so’pi te’sam | evam krtvā sarvameva samskṛtam sahabhūhetuḥ yathāyogam | vināpi cānyonyaphalatvena.
6. Theory of Causality I – The Six Causes

dharmo’nulakṣānānāṃ sahabhūhetur na tāni tasyety upasamkhyaūtavyam …
tridāndānyonabālayāvasthānavat … sahabhuvām hetuphalabhāvāh sidhyati

Ny, 417c.

Entrance, 121, § 5x.1.2.

MVŚ, 80a–b.

AKB, 88: samāna āśrayo yeṣām te cittacaittāh anyonyām samprayuktakata
hetuḥ | … tadyathā ya eva caṣkurindriyakṣaṇaḥ caṣkurvigajñānasyāśrayaḥ sa eva
tatsamprayuktānāṃ vedanādīnāṃ eva … ||

Ibid., 416c.

Entrance, 121.

MVŚ, 88b.

The fivefold sameness or equality (pañcadhā samatā) — for the mental
constituents to be said to be in conjunction — are: 1. they must be supported
by the same sense organ (āśraya-samatā); 2. they must take the same object
(ālambana-samatā); 3. they must have the same mode of activity (ākāra-samatā);
4. they must be simultaneous (kāla-samatā); 5. they must in each case be of a
singular substance (dravya-samatā): in one citta is conjoined one vedanā, one
samjñā, etc. (cf. AKB, 62; also cf. Entrance, 81, and note 301).

AKB, 88: yah samprayuktakahetuh sahabhūheturapi saḥ
atha kenārthena sahabhūhetuḥkenasamprayuktakahetuh anonyaphalārthenasadhabhūhetuḥ sahasārthikānāṃ samānānnapānādiparibhogakriyāprayogavat ekenāpi hi vinā sarvena na samprayujyante ||

Ny, 425c.

Entrance, 121.

Ny, 417c–421c.

We have discussed the controversy in Ny in detail in “The Sarvāstivāda Doctrine
of Simultaneous Causality” (Numata Yehan Lecture on Buddhist Thoughts,
University of Calgary, 2000. This was also subsequently published in Journal of
Buddhist Studies, Vol. I, Colombo, 2003, 17 ff.). In this lecture we have given a
detailed refutation of Kenneth K. Tanaka’s claim that the sahabhū-hetu does not
constitute a case of causation and that it “is not responsible for the production
dharmas” (cf. Kenneth K. Tanaka, “Simultaneous Relation (Sahabhū-hetu):
A Study in Buddhist Theory of Causation”, in Journal of the International
Association of Buddhist Studies, Vol. 8, No. 1, 91–111).

Cf. Entrance, 121.

Ny, 419c.

Ny, 420b.

AKB, 84.

Abhidharmasamuccaya, ed. Pradhan, P (Santiniketan, 1950), 28 f.

Abhidharma-samuccaya-bhāṣya, ed. Tatia, N (Patna, 1976), 37. According to
the Tibetan tradition (Tāranātha), Shirimati studied both the Abhidharmakośa-
Śūrya and the Abhidharma-samuccaya under Vasubandhu.
85 Ibid., 10a7–10: 能熏生種，種起現行；如俱有因得士用果。種子前後，自類相生；
如同類因引等流果。此二於果，是因緣性。除此，餘法皆非因緣。設名因緣，應知
假說。
86 AKB, 96; also see Vy, 225.
87 MVŚ, 82a–82b.
88 Ny, 496a28–29.
89 Ibid., 420c–421a.
90 AKB, 295 f.; also cf. supra, § 3.3.1.
91 Ny, 444b.
92 AKB, 96. Samghabhadra (Ny, 436a) comments “Herein, puruṣa-kāra, puruṣa-
bala, puruṣa-sāmarthya, puruṣa-śakti — all these have the same meaning: As the
efficacies (gong-neng) of dharma-s are like virile actions, they called virile action
(puruṣakāra); just as a strong man is called a lion because he is like a lion.”
7. Theory of Causality II

The Four Conditions and the Five Fruits

7.1. Doctrine of the four conditions (pratyaya)

7.1.1. Condition qua cause (hetu-pratyaya)
7.1.2. Equal-immediate condition (samanantara-pratyaya)
7.1.3. Condition qua object (ālambana-pratyaya)
7.1.4. Condition of dominance (adhipati-pratyaya)
7.1.5. A single dharma may function as all four conditions

7.2. Differences between a cause and a condition

7.3. Five fruits (phala)

7.3.1. Disconnection fruit (visānyoga-phala)
7.3.2. Manly or virile fruit (puruṣakāra-phala)
    7.3.2.1. Definition of virile fruit
    7.3.2.2. Four types of virile fruit
    7.3.2.3. Virile action refers to the efficacy (功能) of a dharma
    7.3.2.4. Examples of virile fruits
7.3.3. Fruit of dominance (adhipati-phala)
7.3.4. Emanation fruit (niṣyanda-phala)
7.3.5. Retribution fruit (vipāka-phala)

7.4. The ‘grasping’ and ‘giving’ of a fruit

7.1. Doctrine of the four conditions (pratyaya)

As we have noted above (supra, § 6.1), the doctrine of the four conditions preceded that of the six causes. The Sarvāstivāda asserts that the former were taught by the Buddha in the sūtra-piṭaka. Samghabhadra states that the efficacies of the conditions are in fact infinite, for the arising of dharma-s depends on the assemblage of numerous conditions, but that the Buddha mentioned only four in brief.¹ Among the extant Sarvāstivāda texts, it is in Devaśarman’s Vijñānakāya (ca. 1st C.E.) that we first come across an elaborative exposition of the four conditions.² In a typically Abhidharmic manner, the conditions are discussed in relation to the six consciousnesses:

There is the group (kāya) of six consciousnesses: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, bodily and mental consciousnesses. Visual consciousness has four conditions: 1. condition qua cause (hetu-pratyaya), 2. equal-immediate condition (samanantara-pratyaya), 3. condition qua object (ālambana-pratyaya), 4. condition of dominance (adhipati-pratyaya).
Which are [its] conditions qua cause? Those dharma-s that are co-existent and conjoined with it.

Which are [its] equal-immediate conditions? Those thought and thought-concomitant dharma-s immediately after (samanantaram) which such a visual consciousness has arisen (utpanna) [or] will arise (utpatsyate).

What are [its] conditions qua objects? All the visibles.

What are [its] conditions of dominance? All the dharma-s other than itself.

These are said to be the four conditions for visual consciousness.

Whose condition qua cause is such a visual consciousness? Those dharma-s that are co-existent and which are conjoined with it.

Whose equal-immediate condition [is it]? Those thought and thought-concomitant dharma-s that have arisen or will arise immediately after the visual consciousness.

Whose condition qua object [is it]? Those thought and thought-concomitants that take this [visual consciousness] as object.

Whose condition of dominance [is it]? All dharma-s other than itself.

Just as in the case of visual consciousness, likewise are those of auditory, olfactory, gustatory, bodily and mental consciousnesses.

The following is another example from the text which better illustrates its method of exhaustive investigation. The discussion, under the section on the condition qua object, pertains to the possible types of temporal object that a visual consciousness can take:

There is the group (kāya) of six consciousnesses: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, bodily and mental consciousnesses. This group of six consciousnesses is either past, present or future.

In the case of past visual consciousnesses:

Are there any that take a past, but not a future or present object?
Are there any that take a future, but not a past or present object?
Are there any that take a present, but not a past or future object?
Are there any that take a past or present, but not a future object?
Are there any that take a future or present, but not a past object?
Are there any that take a past or a future, but not a present object?

As in the case of past visual consciousnesses, the same [analysis is to be applied] in the cases of future and present visual consciousnesses.

As in the case of visual consciousness, the same [analysis is to be applied] in those of auditory, olfactory, gustatory, bodily and mental consciousnesses.

All past visual consciousnesses take past objects; the other alternatives (pāda) are not available.

A future visual consciousness may take a past, future or present object.

All present visual consciousnesses take present objects; the other alternatives are not available.

As in the case of visual consciousness, the same applies in those of auditory, olfactory, gustatory, bodily and mental consciousnesses.

All past, future and present mental consciousnesses should be said to take all dharma-s as objects.4

Not all Sarvāstivādins, however, would recognize the reality of the conditions. MVŚ informs us that the early Dārṣṭāntikas and others5 deny their reality. The Bhadānta too declares that they are unreal, being nothing more than terminologies conceptually designated by the Abhidharma masters. The MVŚ compilers defend the Ābhidharmika position:

If it is held that the conditions are devoid of reality, then it would imply that all dharma-s are devoid of reality, since all four conditions completely subsume all dharma-s: The condition qua cause subsumes all conditioned dharma-s; the equal-immediate condition subsumes all past and present dharma-s other than the very last thought and thought-concomitant dharma-s of the past and present arhat-s. The condition qua object and the condition of dominance [each] subsumes the totality of dharma-s. …

Moreover, if the conditions are unreal in nature, there would not be the possibility of transforming the three grades of wisdom. The inferior grade of wisdom will permanently be inferior; the medium grade permanently medium; the superior grade permanently superior. But the fact is that wisdom can change from being inferior to being medium, from being medium to being superior. Accordingly, the conditions must exist as real entities, for they are efficacious [in bringing about these changes]. …6
In regard to the mutual subsumption (saṃgraha) between the causes and the conditions, MVŚ mentions two opinions:

**Question:** Do the causes subsume the conditions, or do the conditions subsume the causes?

**Answer:** They mutually subsume each other, accordingly as the case may be: The first five causes constitute the condition qua cause; the efficient cause constitutes the other three conditions.

**According to some:** the conditions subsume the causes, but the causes do not subsume the conditions: The first five causes constitute condition qua cause; the efficient cause constitutes the condition of dominance; the immediate condition and the condition qua object are not subsumed by any cause.

In regard to the arising and ceasing of a dharma, for the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas, both require causes and conditions. This is in contrast to the Dārṣṭāntika view that only arising, but not ceasing, requires causes and conditions. But since the Sarvāstivāda holds that all dharma-s — causes and conditions included — are ever present, why do dharma-s not arise and cease incessantly? MVŚ records several responses to this question:

The Venerable Vasumitra explains thus: “A dharma arises as a result of having assembled with one production (i.e., the disjoint conditioning jāti; see § 11.3.5); it ceases as a result of having assembled with one impermanence (i.e., the disjoint conditioning anityatā/vyaya; see § 11.3.5). [Each dharma] not assembling with two or more production and impermanence, how can dharma-s arise and cease incessantly?” He further explains thus: “Having arisen as a result of being assembled with causes and conditions, being submerged by a continuous series of moments that follow it is unable to re-arise. It is like the case of a person who, having fallen from a cliff, is further being continuously submerged by the mud falling from above. At the time, he cannot even move, not to speak of getting up.

The Bhadanta says: “the assembled causes and conditions being temporary, how can dharma-s arise and cease incessantly?”

Venerable Buddhadeva explains thus: “The activity of arising and ceasing of a dharma ought to occur only once in each case. If a dharma arises again and again, or ceases again and again, then it would not be having activity. Hence, dharma-s do not arise and cease incessantly.”

The first explanation above, by Vasumitra, represents the Vaibhāṣika view: In the arising of a dharma, the disjoint conditioning jāti must
exercise its function. At the same time, it is equally emphasized that
the ability of jāti in producing a dharma can be exercised only when
an assemblage of causes and conditions, required for the arising of a
dharma, obtains.\footnote{10}

MVŚ contains various other discussions on the four conditions.
The following are two more examples:

**Question:** Of these four conditions, which are superior, which
are inferior?

**Answer:** According to some: the condition qua cause is superior,
the others are inferior, for it is when there is an increase in cause
that arising or ceasing occurs.

**According to some:** the equal-immediate condition is superior,
the others are inferior, for it can give way to the gateway of the
noble path.

**According to some:** the condition qua cause is superior, the
others are inferior, for it is the support for the [arising of] thought
and thought-concomitants.

**According to some:** the condition of dominance is superior, the
others are inferior, for it does not hinder the arising and ceasing
of dharma-s.

**The correct position (如是說者):** All are superior, all are
inferior, for the efficacies are distinctive….

**Question:** Following the deficiency of which condition does
parinirvāṇa occur?

**Answer:** According to some: following that of the condition qua
cause, for the cycle of samsāra is on account of the force of the
condition qua cause; samsāra is abandoned when the condition
qua cause is abandoned.

**According to some:** following that of the equal-immediate
condition, for parinirvāṇa occurs upon the discontinuation of the
last thought of an arhat.

**According to some:** following that of the condition qua
object, for parinirvāṇa occurs when the ānubhava-s (the objects of
knowledge) do not generate the subsequent thought and thought-
concomitant dharma-s.

**According to some:** following that of the condition of
dominance; for after the last thought of an arhat, there is the
complete extinction without there being any non-hindrance.
The correct position: parinirvāṇa occurs following the deficiency of the four conditions, for at the time of parinirvāṇa, the arhat attains parinirvāṇa without the dharma-s subsumable as the four conditions exercising any activity with regard to his serial continuity (santati).\(^{11}\)

7.1.1. Condition qua cause (hetu-pratyaya)

This is the condition in its capacity as direct cause in the production of an effect — it is the cause functioning as the condition. In the example of the growth of a fruit plant: the condition qua cause is comparable to the seed. However, it is a common tenet of all schools of Buddhism that nothing is produced by a single cause (§ 2.4.3.1),\(^{12}\) even though in the analysis of the causal complex, the main cause can be singled out. Of the six causes, all except the efficient cause are conditions qua cause.\(^{13}\) Strictly speaking, however, some of the efficient causes should also come under this category if they make some positive contribution in the causal process. As we have seen above, this condition subsumes all the causes except the efficient cause. It comprises the totality of conditioned dharma-s.\(^{14}\)

7.1.2. Equal-immediate condition (samanantara-pratyaya)

A citta or caitta serves as a condition for the arising of the succeeding citta or caitta: It gives way and induces the arising of the next citta-caitta in the series. AKB explains as follows:

With the exception of the final [citta-caitta-s] of an arhat, the citta-caitta-s that have arisen are the equal-immediate conditions. This condition is equal as well as immediate, hence ‘equal-immediate condition’… Why are the last citta-caitta-s of an arhat not equal-immediate conditions? Because there is no continuation of another citta [from them, i.e., they cannot ‘drag out’ or induce a subsequent fruit owing to the deficiency in the necessary conditions at that time].\(^{15}\)

Saṃghabhadra:

Why are the equal-immediate conditions confined to thoughts and thought-concomitants?

Because it corresponds to the signification of the equal-immediate condition. This condition generates equal and immediate dharma-s. From this perspective, it is called “equal-immediate”. That is to say: within one and the same serial continuity (santati; 相續), no two dharma-s of the same type can arise — hence “equal”. With respect to its fruit, this condition is
not intervened by any other dharma of the same type — hence “immediate” ... Or rather: the earlier co-existent mental factors (as a group kalāpa) serve in an equal manner as the conditions for immediately succeeding ones (as a group). They are not called “equal-immediate” only in terms of being of the same types.

The meaning of “equal” is also explained in MVŚ:

Question: In the preceding and succeeding moments, the thought-concomitants may be more or may be less — e.g., the thought-concomitants pertaining to the sensuality sphere are more, but not those pertaining to the fine-materiality sphere [etc.] How can one say that this condition induces equal and immediate dharma-s?

Answer: There is no fault here, since this is asserted with reference to equality of entity, but not with reference to equality of quantity (依事等說, 不依數等). If, within the single thought, there exist one ideation (samjñā), two sensations, (vedanā), etc., it is not said to be “equal”. Within the single thought, where the thought-concomitants, sensation, etc., are to arise, only one [of each type] will arise — hence “equal”

According to the Dārṣṭāntikas, this category also obtains among the material dharma-s, since the principle of the arising of the subsequent upon the ceasing of the precedent also applies — a preceding seed gives rise to a subsequent sprout; a flower gives rise to a fruit; etc. Sthavira Śrīlāta, a Sautrāntika leader also holds a similar view.

The Sarvāstivādins, however, maintain that this homogeneous causality does not apply to the domain of matter, since there is no equality or sameness in the serial continuity of matter. MVŚ explains thus:

If a dharma is conjoined (samprayuktaka), has a supporting basis (sāśraya), has a mode of activity (sākāra), is alertive (ābhogātmaka) and has an object (sālambana), then it can be established as an equal-immediate condition. This is not the case with material dharma-s.

According to AKB, the Bhadanta concurs on this point with the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas.

Moreover, Samghabhadra insists that the notion of an equal-immediate condition necessarily entails that a subsequent thought moment can only arise upon the cessation of the preceding thought moment which thereby ‘makes room’ for the arising of the former.
Vasumitra characterizes this condition as follows: (i) giving way, (ii) being successive, (iii) giving activity, (iv) capable of generating a thought, (v) capable of inducing a thought, (vi) capable of alerting a thought, (v) capable of enabling the serial continuity of a thought.

The view of the Ābhidharmikas is given in MVŚ as follows:

The characteristic of the equal-immediate condition consists of its enabling of the dharma-s that are having unique self-characteristics to arise immediately. The dharma-s having unique self-characteristics are the caïta-s, i.e., vedanā, samjñā, etc., and citta. Their self-characteristics are different individually; when they co-arise, there cannot be two [instances of them in each case].

Samghabhadra further elaborates a difference in causal nature between the equal-immediate condition and the homogeneous cause:

The equal-immediate condition [is established] in terms of its capacity of giving way (開避). It does not have the capability of giving way at the stage of arising; it is only when it has already arisen that it has the capacity of giving way. When it reaches [the stage of] having ceased, it is said to have given way. [On the other hand,] the homogeneous cause is like a bija-dharma: at the stage of arising, it abides in its bija nature; when it reaches the stage of having arisen, it becomes capable of grasping fruit (phala-grahaṇa). As its causal nature is not the same as that of the equal-immediate cause.

7.1.3. Condition qua object (ālambana-pratyaya)

According to the Sarvāstivāda, cognition is cognition of an object: A cognition cannot arise by itself, without taking an object. In fact, the very possibility of a cognition presupposes a real/existent as its object. (See supra, § 3.5.3.3). In this sense, the object serves as a condition for the cognition. As thought can take any object — the mind can think of anything — all dharma-s, i.e., sanskrta or asamskrta, past, present or future, can become condition qua objects. Thus, “All dharma-s are objects [i.e., conditions qua objects], accordingly as the case applies: The visibles are the objects of visual consciousness and its concomitants. Sounds, of auditory consciousness, [etc.,]…” Samghabhadra, speaking likewise, further explains why the totality of dharma-s are called conditions qua object:

The condition qua object is none other than the totality of dharma-s. Outside the cognitive objects of thought and thought-
concomitants, there is definitely no other dharma that can be apperceived (upa-√labh). That is to say, the totality of dharma-s are called cognitive objects (ālambana) because thought and thought-concomitants hold onto (攀緣; ā-√lamb) them for their arising. Because these very cognitive objects serve as the condition for their generation, they are called conditions qua object.28

That the nature of ālambana-pratyaya-s being cognitive objects is determined — even when they are not being cognized (see supra, § 6.2.1) — may be considered as a definite assertion of objective realism on the part of the Sarvāstivādins.

For the Sarvāstivādins, the cognitive object of a sensory perception is precisely the external object-domain (viṣaya) arising in the same moment as the sensory consciousness. This is possible thanks to the fact of simultaneously causality. (See also § 6.7.1). On the other hand, for the Dārštāntika-Sautrāntikas, the two objects are not the same — they in fact arise in two different moments. Saṃghabhadra explains their view:

The condition qua object is not the object-domain to be cognized. That which is the object-domain to be cognized is not the condition qua object. Why? They say that it is because a visible, etc., that can serve as the condition for generating visual consciousness, etc., is necessarily arisen in the preceding moment. When the visible is existing, the visual consciousness has not yet come into existence. This consciousness not having yet come into existence, what then takes [the object-domain] as cognitive object? When the visual consciousness comes into existence, the visible has become non-existent. The visible not existing, what serves as the cognitive object?29

As we shall see (§ 10.7–8), such contrasting stances lead to fundamentally different epistemological doctrines.

7.1.4. Condition of dominance (adhipati-pratyaya)

This is the most comprehensive or generic condition, corresponding to efficient cause: It is whatever that serves as a condition, either in the sense of directly contributing to the arising of a dharma, or indirectly through not hindering its arising. From the latter perspective, the unconditioned dharma-s — although transcending space and time altogether — are also said to serve as conditions of dominance. (See below, § 7.3.1; cf. infra, § 16.5.1). AKB explains the meaning of the term:
The condition of dominance is none other than the efficient cause. This condition is dominant [having the broadest scope], hence ‘condition of dominance’ … Or rather, [it is so called] because it is the condition for the predominant [number of dharma-s]: All dharma-s are conditions of dominance of all the saṃskṛta-s, with the exception of themselves.  

7.1.5. A single dharma may function as all four conditions

MVŚ\textsuperscript{31} explains that the distinct functions of the four conditions may be found in a given dharma:

A thought or thought-concomitant of a given moment projects the arising of a similar thought or thought-concomitant — [this is] condition qua cause.

This same thought or thought-concomitant gives way to the thought or thought-concomitant of the next moment so that it can arise — [this is] equal-immediate condition.

This very one can serve as the object of cognition for the thought or thought-concomitant of the next moment — [this is] condition qua object.

This very one does not obstruct the arising of the thought or thought-concomitant of the next moment — [this is] condition of dominance.

In this case, the condition qua cause is like the seed-dharma. The equal-immediate condition is like a dharma that gives way (開導; ‘gives way and induces’: avakāśa-dāna). The condition qua object is like a dharma walking-stick that supports. The condition of dominance is like a dharma that is non-obstructive.

7.2. Differences between a cause and a condition

The two terms, cause and condition, were used more or less synonymously in the sūtra-piṭaka. Even in the early canonical treatises of the Sarvāstivāda, the distinction was not articulated. In MVŚ, however, we come across various well-defined distinctions between the two:

What are the differences between a cause and a condition? According to Venerable Vasumitra: There is no difference — a cause is a condition, a condition is a cause … He further explains: If when this existing that exists, then this is the cause as well as the condition of that…
In addition: [what pertains to] the same species is a cause; what pertains to a different species is a condition, e.g., fire to fire, wheat to wheat.

In addition: what is proximate is a cause; what is remote is a condition.

In addition: what is unique is a cause; what is common is a condition. …

In addition: what produces is a cause; what subsidiarily produces (隨能生) is a condition.

In addition: what fosters its own series is a cause; what fosters another's series is a condition. …

(Also cf. opinion of apare in MVŚ, 663b: “Adhipati-pratyaya-s are either direct or indirect, close or remote, united or not united, arising here or arising in another. Those that are direct, close, united, arising here, are called hetu-s. Those that are indirect, remote, not united, arising in another, are called pratyaya-s.”)

Thus, we know that although a cause and a condition do not differ in respect of substance, there is a difference in significance: a cause signifies what is proximate, a condition signifies what is remote.32

Samghabhadra explains that in the case of both internal and external dharma-s — such as the fetal stages and the stages of plant growth, respectively — causes and conditions can be differentiated. As regards the fetal stage: kalala (first fetal stage), assisted by vijñāna (= pratisandhi-citta) in its capacity as a cause, produces the subsequent stages, arbuda (second stage), etc. Although it is not the case that arbuda, etc., are not dependent on vijñāna, the latter is not the cause on account of which the former are produced, for the two causal series — that of vijñāna and that of arbuda, etc. — are different. “But it is not that this vijñāna does not serve as the predominant condition for arbuda, etc., for [the principle of conditionality applies here —] this being, that exists; this not being, that does not exist.”33

Other distinctions are also mentioned in Ny, apparently acceptable to Samghabhadra:

A cause is that which generates, a condition is that which fosters; the former is like the birth-mother, the latter, the foster mother.

Further, a condition is that on account of the assistance of which a cause can generate and which fosters the series thus generated. For this reason, some say that a cause is singular, a condition is
multiple — like the case of the seed in contrast to the manure, etc.

Further, a cause is unshared in its function, a condition shares with other dharma-s — like in the case of visual perception, the eye in contrast to the visual object.

Further, that the activity of which pertains to its own domain (作自事) is a cause, that the activity of which pertains to others’ domain is a condition — like the case of the seed in contrast to the manure, etc.

Further, that which induces the arising is a cause, that which sustains is a condition — like the case of the flower and the stalk.

Further that which is near is a cause, that which is remote is a condition.

Further what produces is a cause, what accomplishes is a condition.\(^\text{34}\)

7.3. Five fruits (phala)
The Sarvāstivāda acknowledges five fruits: 1. disconnection fruit (visamyoga-phala), 2. virile fruit (puruṣakāra-phala), 3. fruit of dominance (adhipati-phala), 4. uniform-emanation fruit (niṣyanda-phala), 5. retribution fruit (vipāka-phala).\(^\text{35}\)

7.3.1. Disconnection fruit (visamyoga-phala)
Disconnection means disconnection from defilements. This fruit refers to the cessation through deliberation (pratisamkhya-nirodha). However, this is not in the sense that the unconditioned pratisamkhya-nirodha (≡ nirvāṇa), transcending temporality as it does, can be produced as an effect through a space-time causal process. It is called a ‘fruit’ of disconnection only because it is acquired as a result of following the noble path — the path does not function as a cause as such, producing it as the effect; it only induces the arising of the acquisition (prāpti) of it. AKB explains:

Only the saṃskṛta-dharma-s have causes and fruits, an asaṃskṛta does not have them. Why? Because of the non-existence [in it] of the nature of the sixfold causes and of the fivefold fruits.

Why is the [ānantarya-mārga] not conceded to be the efficient cause of disconnection? Because it is established [as a cause] on account of its being unobstructive to arising, and an asaṃskṛta has no arising.
Of what then is it a fruit? How is it a fruit of the path? [It is considered a fruit of the path] because its acquisition is through the force of the [path].\(^{36}\) (See below, § 7.3.2.2; cf. infra, § 16.3.2).

As Saṃghabhadra puts it, it is only in a special sense — in conformity with the sūtra usage of śrāmāṇya-phala and with conventional usage — that one can speak of the pratisamkhyā-nirodha as a fruit, without implying that it is causally produced; and as a “condition qua object” (ālambana-pratyaya), e.g., as an object of thought of a yogi, and adhipati-pratyaya, making an indirect contribution by merely not obstructing. In fact, “the way of establishing causes and effects among the saṃskṛta-s is not applicable to the case of the asaṃskṛta-s. Accordingly, a pratisamkhyā-nirodha is a cause which is without an effect, and an effect which is without a cause.”\(^{37}\)

### 7.3.2. Manly or virile fruit (puruṣakāra-phala)

#### 7.3.2.1. Definition of virile fruit

This fruit has a rather wide scope. But it is particularly correlated to the co-existent cause and the conjoined cause. AKB explains why it is termed ‘virile’:

The co-existent and conjoined causes have the virile fruit. As the [action] is not separate from the very person [who does it], the virile action is the person himself. Its fruit is a virile fruit. What is this so-called virile action? That which is the activity (kāritra) of a dharma; [so called] because it is like a virile action.\(^{38}\)

Also:

That [conditioned dharma], which is born from the force of which, is the fruit [of that force — a fruit] born of a virile action.\(^{39}\)

#### 7.3.2.2. Four types of virile fruits

Saṃghabhadra distinguishes four types of virile fruits:

- (1) conascent — produced by virtue of the dharma-s being simultaneously causes to one another;
- (2) immediate — produced in the subsequent moment by virtue of the preceding thought as the cause, e.g., the duḥkha-dharmanāna, produced by the laukikāgra-dharma-s;
- (3) separated in time — produced mediately by virtue of successive causes in a series, e.g., a crop produced by a farmer etc.;
- (4) not produced.
The fourth type refers to nirvāṇa,

because it is acquired, [not produced,] by the force of an ānantarya-mārga.

[Objection:] Since this is not produced, how can one call it a virile fruit produced by virtue of that?

[Answer:] It is observed that a thing acquired is also said to be produced. Thus, it is said ‘I produced wealth’, meaning ‘I acquired wealth’.

When an ānantarya-mārga [— the moment of receptivity (kṣānti) in which defilements are being abandoned unhindered —] removes the anuśaya-s, the corresponding pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are realized [in the next moment of definite knowledge (jñāna), called vimukti-mārga, in which the corresponding prāpti-s of visamyoga arise]. These pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are called disconnection fruits as well as virile fruits.

When an ānantarya-mārga does not remove anuśaya-s, the corresponding pratisamkhya-nirodha-s previously realized are realized again. Such pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are not disconnection fruits; they are only virile fruits:

That is, when one who has not been detached from any craving pertaining to the sphere of sensuality, enters into the darśana-mārga, his duḥkha-dharma-jñāna-kṣānti removes ten anuśaya-s, and the [corresponding] pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are realized. Such pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are called disconnection fruits as well as virile fruits.

When one who has been detached from all cravings pertaining to the sphere of sensuality enters the darśana-mārga, his duḥkhah-dharma-jñāna-kṣānti does not remove the anuśaya-s [involved], and the [corresponding] old pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are realized [again]. Such pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are not disconnection fruits since there already has been the disconnection; they are virile fruits for by virtue of this receptivity, other acquisitions [of these pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are arisen], and they are realized again.

When one who has been partly detached from the cravings pertaining to the sphere of sensuality enters the darśana-mārga, his duḥkha-dharma-jñāna-kṣānti removes some, but not others, among the ten anuśaya-s. Among the pratisamkhya-nirodha-s realized, some are new, others are old, and they are respectively named as the two fruits or the one fruit.
7.3.2.3. Virile action refers to the efficacy (功能) of a dharma

Samghabhadora objects to Vasubandhu’s referring to kāritra as puruṣakāra: The implication of this usage is the proposition — which he says Vasubandhu should have made — that “it is called a virile fruit because they (the co-existent causes) together drag out a common fruit”. This objection arises on account of the Vaibhāṣika definition of kāritra as phala-ākarṣaṇa (?) or phala-ākṣepa, i.e., the dragging out or projecting/inducing a fruit, as opposed to the actual ‘giving’ (phala-dāna) or producing a fruit. (See below, § 7.4). This would not be appropriate in the context of the present discussion of what causes produce what fruits.

Samghabhadora further asserts that such a proposition would entail that “there can only be virile fruits either immediately (anantaram) or sometime after the causes. They do not exist among the conascent. It is not possible that, among the conascent, all of them together acquire a common virile fruit for [a dharma] itself does not arise by virtue of itself. Nor can we say that each induces its fruit separately lest [the very definition be contradicted] that the co-existent causes do not share the same fruit.” He then explains:

> Herein, puruṣa-kāra, puruṣa-bala, puruṣa-sāmarthya (士能), puruṣa-sakti (士之勢分) — all these have the same meaning: As the efficacies (功能) of dharma-s are like virile actions, they are called virile action (puruṣakāra); just as a strong man is called a lion because he is like a lion.41

7.3.2.4. Examples of virile fruits

AKB gives the following as examples of virile fruits: The first dhyāna is the virile fruit of a citta which prepares it. A citta capable of magical transformation (nirmāṇa-citta) is the virile fruit of a pure citta in a dhyāna. An outflow-free dharma, e.g., duḥkhe dharmajñāna-ksānti, can be the virile fruit of a dharma with outflow, e.g., the laukikāgra-dharma-s.42

7.3.3. Fruit of dominance (adhipati-phala)

This is the most generic type of fruit, correlated to the most generic type of cause, the efficient cause. In terms of the karma doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda, the fruits commonly shared by a collection of beings by virtue of their collective karma-s belong to this category. Thus, the whole universe with all its planets, mountains and oceans, etc., is the result — the fruit of dominance — of the collective karma-s of the totality of beings inhabiting therein. (See below, § 7.3.5; cf. infra, § 14.8).
AKB explains this fruit as follows:

[The fruit of dominance] is a fruit born of the dominance of the [efficient cause].

[The efficient cause] is established merely on account of its being non-obstructive — what dominance does it have? This fact itself [constitutes the dominance].

Moreover, the efficient cause also has the nature of a contributive efficacy. Thus, [in this sense,] the ten āyatana-s [have dominance] with regard to the five sensory consciousnesses; the [collective] karma, with regard to the physical world. The auditory organ, etc., also have an [indirect] dominance, through a succession, with regard to the arising of visual consciousness, for having heard, there is, in a person, the arising of the desire to see. Other similar cases of this type of dominance are to be understood accordingly.\(^{43}\)

As we have seen above, the virile fruit also has a very broad connotation. How does it differ from the fruit of dominance? MVŚ explains:

**Question**: What is the difference between a virile fruit and a fruit of dominance?

**Answer**: That which is acquired through the exercise of an effort is a virile fruit. That which is acquired on account of non-obstruction is a fruit of dominance … Moreover, wealth is a virile fruit in respect of the doer, and a fruit of dominance in respect of the enjoyer. Thus the fruits [of a plant] are both virile fruits and fruits of dominance in respect of the planter; [but] only fruits of dominance in respect of the enjoyer…\(^{44}\)

Thus, since the factor of non-obstruction contributes to the arising of any fruit, the scope of the fruit of dominance is necessarily broader than that of the virile fruit.\(^{45}\)

The moral implication of the result of an act of non-obstruction is also taken up in MVŚ. The question is posed as to why, when someone kills a person other sentient beings are not guilty of this act of killing — given that they all have not obstructed the killing, thus functioning as the efficient cause? The answer is that the killer is fully engaged in the whole course of killing: he generates an evil intention and engages himself in the preparatory effort to kill and also brings about the completion of the result; other sentient beings have not done so. Another question concerns the notion of collective karma:
Question: External wealth (財物; bhoga) is generated by the collective karma (as fruit of dominance) of all sentient beings, why is it that a thief transgresses against only the owner of the wealth and not against other [sentient beings]?

Answer: The owner of the wealth keeps and protects his wealth; the others do not do so ... Moreover, the owner of the wealth thinks of the wealth as belonging to himself, and the thief thinks of himself as the owner of the wealth; [others do not do so]. Thus, [the thief] transgresses against only the [owner] and not others. Moreover, the transgression is against him for whom the wealth is both a virile fruit and a fruit of dominance; for other sentient beings, the wealth is a fruit of dominance and not a virile fruit.  

7.3.4. Emanation fruit (niṣyanda-phala)
The Sanskrit word niṣyanda (ni-√syand) literally means ‘flowing forth, issuing’. The notion is that of a fruit issued from a cause of a similar nature. Xuanzang’s translation of 等流 (‘equal-flowing’) is interpretive, but justifiable and meaningful (see above, §7.1.2 for the explanation of its corresponding condition, i.e., samanantara-pratyaya, as ‘equal and immediate’). Avatāra(T) defines it thus: rgyu dang ‘dra ba’i chos ni rgyu mthun pa shes bya’o | — “A dharma which is similar to the cause is said to be ‘cause-conforming’.” This fruit is correlated to the homogeneous cause and the universal cause. AKB explains why the latter is to be distinguished from the former:

That dharma which is similar to the cause is an emanation fruit, for instance, [those fruits similar to] the homogeneous and universal causes.

If the universal [cause] also has the same fruit, why is it not conceded to be [a fruit] of the homogeneous cause, [i.e., why not call a universal cause ‘a homogeneous cause’]? Because its similarity is in terms of stage (bhūmi) and the nature of being defiled, but not of category [of abandonables].  

7.3.5. Retribution fruit (vipāka-phala)
This fruit, pertaining to sentient beings (sattvākhyā) only, correlates with the retribution cause. The causal relationship between this fruit and its cause pertains to the domain of karma which is twofold, personal and collective. Personal karma results in an individual retribution. Collective karma-s are actions done collectively by a group of beings, resulting in collective experiences. (See infra, §14.8). Thus, the physical world — the bhājana-loka — inhabited by living beings is the result of the moral actions of the totality of beings. However, it is not named
a retribution, which, by definition, is unique to the individual. Instead, such a collective result is considered as a fruit of dominance.

Being a result of a process of maturation (vi-√pac; pac meaning cook/mature), a retribution fruit is neither simultaneous with its cause nor produced immediately. The Samabhedoparacananacakra, however, records a view of the Mahāsāṃghika that “karma and vipāka can arise simultaneously”.

The retribution cause depends on the development or maturation of the series for the realization of its fruit. Its moral nature is indefinable as being either kuśala or akuśala, i.e., it is non-defined (avyākṛta). Moreover, it is described as ‘non-veiled/non-covered’ (anivṛta), since it does not constitute a hindrance to the noble path. (See supra, § 2.4.3.2.1).

AKB explains as follows:

… retribution/maturation is a non-veiled-non-defined dharma, … pertaining to sentient beings, arising subsequent to a [morally] defined [dharma — its cause], for with respect to the retribution, a skillful or an unskillful dharma [as its cause] is [morally] defined on account of its definability. The retribution is that which arises from it subsequently, not simultaneously, not immediately. This is the characteristic of a retribution.

Why is a non-sentient thing born of karma not [considered] a retribution? Because of its being common — for, another person also is similarly able to partake of it. [By definition,] however, a retribution is unique [to the person on account of whose karma it is the result], for it is not the case that another person experiences the retribution of the karma of some other person.

Why does another person experience a fruit of dominance [which is also born of karma]? Because it is brought into being by a collective karma.

7.4. The ‘grasping’ and ‘giving’ of a fruit

According to the Sarvāstivāda, a causal process resulting in the actualization of its effect involves the following two steps:

(i) First, there must be the ‘grasping of a fruit’ (phala-grahana/phala-pratigrahaṇa). This step properly determines that the particular cause is causally related to its corresponding effect. Saṃghabhadra explains that ‘grasping of a fruit’ means ‘inducing/projecting (ā-√kṣip) of the fruit’. Yaśomitra also explains similarly:
By ‘[the causes] grasp’ is meant ‘they project’. It means that they abide in the state of being a cause.53

(ii) When the effect so-determined actually arises, i.e., is made to enter into the present, it is called the ‘giving of the fruit’ (phala-dāna) by the cause.

All the six causes grasp their fruits in the present moment. It is this causal function of grasping a fruit, occurring only in the present moment, that is called the activity (kāritra) of a dharma.54 For the Vaibhāṣikas, this activity of dharma of grasping or projecting its own fruit — causing the arising of its following moment in its serial continuity — uniquely defines its presentness. (See supra, § 5.5).

As for the giving of fruit: two causes — the co-existent and the conjoined causes — give their fruits only in their present moment. The homogeneous and universal causes give their fruits both in their present moment and when they are past. The retribution cause gives its fruit when it has become past.55 It cannot do so in its present moment or the immediately subsequent moment, as the process of maturation requires a time lapse. (See above, § 7.3.5).
NOTES

1 Ny, 445b.
2 VKŚ, 547b ff. See also supra, § 4.1.2.1.
3 T 26, 547b–c.
4 T 26, 559b.
5 MVŚ, 47b, 283a–b, 680b, 680c, 975a, 982b.
6 MVŚ, 283b.
7 MVŚ, 79a–b; same as that in AKB; cf. chart in § 6.1.
8 MVŚ, 105a–b.
9 MVŚ, 105a.
10 Ny, 411a; AKB, ii, stanza 46d.
11 MVŚ, 703b.

The same emphasis is also present in the Theravāda Abhidhamma. Cf. Vism, XVII: paccaya-sāmaggiṃ paṭicca samāṃ phalānam uppādo.
12 AKB, 98: kāraṇa-hetu-varjāḥ pañca hetavo hetu-pratyayaḥ.
13 PrŚ, 719a.
14 AKB, 98: arhataḥ paścimānapāsyotpannāḥ cittacaittāḥ samanantarapratyayaḥ | samaśca ayam anantarasaṃca pratyaya iti samanantarā-pratyayaḥ | … kasmād arhataś caramās cittacaittā na samanantarapratyayaḥ | anyacidūsāsambandhanāt. Cf. MVŚ, 50a; Ny, 443b–c.
15 《阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論》前生心聚與後生心聚作等無間緣
16 T29, 822a16–24.
17 T27, 50b27–c5.
18 Ny, 445b.
19 Ny, 447a.
20 MVŚ, 52a9–10. Other reasons given by various masters for denying the existence of samanantarā-pratyaya-s among matter are also given.
21 AKB, 98.
22 Similarly in MVŚ, 51a–b.
23 Ny, 445b.
24 MVŚ, 50b20–23. Characterizations by other masters are also given therein.
25 Ny, 423a1–4.
26 AKB, 100: ālambanam sarvadharmāḥ [62c] | yathā-yogam caksur-vijñānasya sasampravayogaśa rūpam | śrotra-vijñānasya śabdaḥ … |
27 Ny, 447b9–12.
28 Ny, 447b9–12.
29 AKB, 100: ya eva kāraṇa-hetuh sa evādhipatipratyayāḥ | adhiko’yam pratyaya ity adhipatipratyayāḥ | sarvah sarvasyā samāskṛtasya svaḥāvavārjasya… |
30 MVŚ, 109a.
31 MVŚ, 109b–c.
32 Ny, 409a.
33 Ny, 449c–450a.
7. Theory of Causality II – The Four Conditions and the Five Fruits

35 MVŚ, 79a, 108c.
36 AKB, 91: \textit{samskrtaisyai dharmasya hetuphale bhavataḥ} \textit{nāsamskrtaisy te} [55d]

kim kāraṇam \hspace{1em} sadvidha-hetv-asmabhavat pānicavidha-phaḷāsambhavac ca \hspace{1em} kasmāt mārgo visāmyogasya kāraṇa-hetur neṣaṭe \hspace{1em} yasmāt sa utpādāvighnaṃbhāvena vyavasthāpito na cāsamskrtaṃ utpattim | kasyedāṇīṃ tat phalam katham vā mārgasya phalam | tadbaleṇa prāptēḥ

37 Ny, 429a; cf. infra, § 16.3.

38 AKB, 95: sahaḥ-bhū-samprayuktaka-hetvoh puruṣakāra-phalam \hspace{1em} puruṣāsbhāvāyatirekāt puruṣakāraḥ puruṣa eva | tasya phalam puruṣaṃ | ko ‘yam puruṣakāro nāma | yasya dharmasya yat kāritram | puruṣakāraṃ eva hi puruṣakāraḥ

39 AKB, 96: yadhālajjāyate yattathalam puruṣakārajam | See Vy, 225: yad-balāj jāyate iti vistarāḥ | yasya balam yad-balām iti saśtī-samāśaḥ | yasya balāj jāyate iti samskrtaṃ tat phalam tasya puruṣakārajam | puruṣakāraj jātam puruṣakārajam puruṣakāra-phalam ity arthaḥ '

40 Ny, 437a.
41 Ny, 436a.
42 AKB, 97.

43 AKB, 94: tasyādhipatijam phalam \hspace{1em} anāvaranabhbhāvakāmātreatra avasthitasya kim ādhipatayam | etadeva \hspace{1em} aṅghbāvo pi cāsti kāraṇahetos tadyathā “pānicasu vijñānakāvesu dasānām āyatanānāṃ bhājanaloke ca karmānām | srotādāzmān apy asti caksurijnānotpatau pāramparayeṇa ādhipatyam/ṣrūtvā draṣṭukāmatotpattet’ ity evamādi yojam

44 MVŚ, 106c.
45 MVŚ, 630b.
46 MVŚ, 106c.

47 AKB, 95: hetor yah sādrśo dharmaḥ sa nisyanda-phalam | tadyathā sabhāga-sarvatraga-hetvoh \hspace{1em} yadi sarvatraga-hetor api samānām phalam yasmān na sabhāga-hetor evsyate \hspace{1em} yasmāt bhūmitaḥ kliṣṭatayā cāysa sādrśyaṃ na tu prakārataḥ \hspace{1em} yasya tu prakārato \hspace{1em} pi sādrśyaṃ so ‘bhupagamyata eva sabhāga-hetuḥ

48 T 49, 15c.
49 AKB, 90.
50 AKB, 95: anivrtya-vakṛto \hspace{1em} dharmah vipākah \hspace{1em} sattvākhyo vyākṛtodbhavaḥ [57b]

kuśalakusalam hi vipākaṃ prati vyākaranād vyākṛtata | tasmād ya uttaraṅkālam bhavati na saha nāntaram sa vipākah \hspace{1em} etad vipākasya lakṣānaṃ | kasmād asattvākhyo’rthah karmaṇaḥ na vipākah | sādhāraṇatvāt \hspace{1em} anyo’pi hi tat tathaṅva paribhoktiṃ samarthale asādharanatvaḥ nipupagamya vā kasmād kāraṇa-karma-saṃbhūtavāt

51 Cf. MVŚ, 98b.
52 Ny, 437c.
53 Vy, 226.
54 Ny, 437c.
55 MVŚ, 108c; AKB, 96 f.; Ny, 437c–438a — Samghabhadra here rejects an opinion recorded in MVŚ (loc. cit.) that for the kāraṇa-hetu-s, both their grasping and giving of fruits can be in the present moment or when they are past.
8. The Category of Matter (rūpa)

8.1. General nature and definition of rūpa

8.1.1. Delimitation of the domain of rūpa

8.1.2. Definition by the term rūpanā/rūpana

8.1.2.1. Rūpanā/rūpana interpreted as obstructiveness or resistance

8.1.3. Resistance and visibility highlighted as the two distinctive qualities

8.1.4. Special types of matter

8.2. Primary and derived matter

8.2.1. Explanation of the term mahābhūta

8.2.2. Great Elements as dhātu-s

8.2.3. Inseparability of the Great Elements

8.2.4. Dependence of upādāya-rūpa on the Great Elements

8.3. 'Atomic' theory

8.3.1. Descriptive definition of an 'atom'

8.3.2. Atoms of color and shape

8.3.3. An aggregate of similar atoms as a real entity

8.3.4. The octad as the minimal molecule that arises

8.3.5. Problems connected with the notion of atom

8.3.5.1. Definition by rūpanā/rūpana

8.3.5.2. Are there intervening spaces between the atoms or do they touch one another?

8.1. General nature and definition of rūpa

The term rūpa may be renders as matter. At the early stage of abhidharma study, there did not seem to be much attempt at a formal definition of rūpa. This is most probably due to the fact that rūpa is one of the most matter-of-fact existents in the human experience. There was little need to elaborate on what rūpa was. However, the fundamental concern of abhidharma being the investigation of self-characteristic and intrinsic nature of the ultimate reals (supra, § 2.3.2.1), it was inevitable that the Ābhidharmikas eventually came to seek an articulate definition of this category.

8.1.1. Delimitation of the domain of rūpa

The definition of rūpa in the sense of matter is often given in the sūtra merely in the form of delimiting the domain of all that comes under this category. This practice is inherited by the abhidharma treatises. Thus, in explaining rūpa-skandha, MVŚ quotes two such sūtra definitions:
Question: What is rūpa-skandha?

Answer: As it is said in the sūtra, ‘All rūpa-s [comprise] the four Great Elements and those derived from the Great Elements.’ Another sūtra says, ‘What is rūpa-skandha? All those rūpa-s — past, future, present, internal, external, coarse, fine, inferior, superior, distant, near — all these grouped together into one heap is called the rūpa-skandha.’

In addition, however, MVŚ here gives its Ābhidharmika definition as follows:

The Ābhidharmikas say thus: “What is rūpa-skandha? The ten [items in the] rūpa-āyatana and the rūpa subsumed under the dharmāyatana.”

The ‘rūpa subsumed under the dharmāyatana’ is a special type of rūpa that is non-obstructive and invisible (supra, § 2.4.1.3.1, infra, § 13.7). Not all Sarvāstivāda masters, however, accept such a species of matter (infra, § 13.4.2.1).

8.1.2. Definition by the term rūpaṇā/rūpaṇa

However, there are also more articulate definitions. AKB defines rūpa by the term rūpaṇa/rūpaṇā — which Xuanzang renders as ‘change-obstruction’ — understood in the sense of being subject to deterioration or disintegration. For the verb form, rūpayati/rūpyate, he also occasionally renders as ‘deteriorate’. The term is evidently linked etymologically to the root √rup (connected to √lup) — ‘disturb’, ‘violate’, ‘break’. But rūpaṇā is also often implicitly linked to √rūp, a denominative root from the noun rūpa, in which case rūpaṇā means no more than ‘the nature of being rūpa’. What this nature actually is, is then further articulated.

In its definition, AKB quotes in support the Saṃyuktāgama: It is repeatedly molested/broken, therefore, O bhikṣu-s, it is called the rūpa-upādana-skandha. By what is it molested/broken? Touched by even the contact of the hand, it is molested/broken.

The Chinese version of the SĀ reads:

That which is susceptible of being obstructed and decomposed (若可礙可分) is called rūpa-upādana-skandha. It is obstructed by the fingers. It is touched by the hand, or stone, or stick, or knife, or coldness, or heat, or thirst, or hunger, or insects such as mosquitoes, or wind or rain — this is called resistance by touch. Thus, resistance is [the characteristic] of the rūpa-upādana-skandha.
8. The Category of Matter (rūpa)

It is noteworthy that, in the *Samyukta-sūtra* quoted above, the oft-given definition of rūpa as that which is subject to resistance (pratighāta) and decomposition/disintegration was already found (see below). AKB (loc. cit.) further quotes the following stanza from the *Arthavargīya*⁶ to explain that ‘is broken’ means ‘is oppressed/molested/disturbed’ (rūpyate bādhyata ityarthaḥ):

If, when desire is born in one who seeks sensual pleasure, those sensual pleasures do not abound, he is disturbed/molested (rūpyate) like being pierced by an arrow.

And what oppression (bādhanā) does rūpa have? [An oppression] which is of the nature of change in arising.⁷

Yaśomitra observes that this question-and-answer is in anticipation of the question: “But how is rūpa oppressed?” — since rūpa is unlike a pleasure-seeking human:

Thus it says, ‘which is of the nature of change in arising’. This means: ‘which is of the nature of being disfigured’ (vikriyotpādanā).⁸

This apparently ‘subjective’ meaning is distinctly conveyed in Xuanzang’s translation of both rūpyate and bādhyate in this context as 惱壞, ‘vexed/(molested)-broken’, and Yaśomitra here clearly seeks to explain away its subjective implication.

However, one may understand this as the Ābhidharmika attempt to relate rūpyate to the subjective sense encountered in the sūtra-s: This subjective sense becomes understood to refer to the human experience of rūpa: The rūpa that arises is that which is experienced by the human. Since it is of the nature of being subject to resistance and impermanent, it is mutated or disfigured as it arises — visibly so in contrast to other dharma-s — and therefore it is ultimately disturbing to the experencer. In Saṃghabhadra’s words, this characteristic of rūpa may be stated as that of being the cause of unpleasant sensation (duḥkhavedanā-hetu):

Herein, why is matter-aggregate called matter? First of all, the Sugata’s noble teaching states that matter is so called on account of the fact that it changes and deteriorates. The meaning of this statement is as follows: because it is the cause of unpleasant sensation, because it is obstructive, because it is subject to being transformed, it is said to change-deteriorate. On account of change-deterioration, it is called matter. ‘It is the cause of unpleasant sensation’ — this means that matter changes and deteriorates, and can generate unpleasant sensation, as is said in the Arthavargīya: …¹⁰
8.1.2.1. Rūpaṇā/rūpaṇa interpreted as obstructiveness or resistance

AKB\textsuperscript{11} informs us that some Ābhidharmika masters interpret rūpaṇā as \textit{pratighāta}, ‘resistance’, which means “the hindrance to the arising of another thing in its own location”.\textsuperscript{12} MVŚ\textsuperscript{13} quotes the Sarvāstivāda \textit{ācārya} Vasumitra’s explanation of what constitutes the characteristics of things having the nature or quality of \textit{rūpa} (有色相):

Those having (i) the nature of gradual accumulation, (ii) the nature of gradual disintegration, (iii) cognizable form-substance, (iv) cognizable location, (v) cognizable size, (vi) cognizable obstruction, (vii) cognizable offensiveness (\textit{apakāra}), (viii) cognizable diminution or damage, (ix) cognizable addition, (x) the nature of the three kinds of \textit{rūpa} — visible and obstructive, invisible and obstructive, invisible and non-obstructive, (xi) the nature of being brought here and taken away there, (xii) the nature of change-obstruction (rūpaṇā).

This characterization amounts to an elaboration on rūpaṇā. The characteristic given in (x) is most probably due to the consideration of the Sarvāstivāda tenet of the non-informative matter (\textit{avijñapti}) — invisible and non-obstructive — as real entity. In brief, four distinctive features of \textit{rūpa} stand out: (a) accumulative, (b) occupying space — obstructive, (c) visible, (d) susceptible to mutability.

8.1.3. Resistance and visibility highlighted as the two distinctive qualities

Vasumitra’s characterization above can in fact be further narrowed down to two: visibility and resistance, for the susceptibility to accumulation, diminution and addition may be seen as derivable from the nature of \textit{rūpa} as possessing mass — a fact which in turn may be characterized as resistance. It appears that the Ābhidharmikas gradually came to stress primarily these very two qualities of visibility (sa-nidārśanatva) and resistance (sa-pratighātatva). The susceptibility to mutability did not come to be stressed probably because it is a characteristic not confined to \textit{rūpa} alone — all conditioned \textit{dharma}-s are impermanent and subject to change.

Saṃghabhadra highlights them as constituting the distinctive nature of \textit{rūpa}: Out of the ten items subsumed under \textit{rūpa-āyatana}, the first one only is given the name \textit{rūpa} as such on account of these two qualities most distinctive of \textit{rūpa}:

On account of it being obstructive, it deteriorates as soon as it is touched by the hand, etc., and on account of it being visible, one can indicate it as being located differently — here, there.\textsuperscript{14}
These two qualities are further elaborated by Saṃghabhadra:

(i) On being visible or ‘with-seeing’:

This is in two senses: 1. Matter is necessarily co-existent with seeing (darśana), hence said to be visible (‘with-seeing’, sanidarśana), for matter and the eye arise simultaneously; this is like [the sense of] ‘with companion’. 2. Matter has indicatability, hence said to be visible, for it can be differently indicated as being here or being there;\(^{15}\) this is like [the sense of] ‘with-object’ (sa-ālambana).\(^{16}\)

(ii) On being resistant or ‘with-resistance’:

Resistance means obstruction. ‘This has the obstruction by that’ (i.e., this is obstructed by that), hence it is said to be ‘with-resistance’. Obstruction (pratighāta) is threefold: obstruction qua hindrance (āvaraṇa-pratighāta), obstruction qua object domain (viṣaya-pratighāta) and obstruction qua cognitive object (ālambana-pratighāta).\(^{17}\)

An object domain (viṣaya) is to be distinguished from a cognitive object (ālambana): A dharma, y, is the object domain of another dharma, x, if x exercises its efficacy (seeing, etc.) in y. On the other hand, a cognitive object is a dharma grasped by a thought or thought-concomitant, (i.e., when the cognitive object is grasped, a consciousness is generated correspondingly to it).\(^{18}\) Accordingly, whereas thought and thought-concomitants have both an object domain and a cognitive object, the sense faculties have only object domains.

Of the aforementioned threefold obstruction, it is the obstruction qua hindrance that is specifically referred to as a characteristic of matter. These three types of obstruction are explained as follows:

1. Obstruction qua hindrance: When one material dharma occupies a location, another material dharma cannot arise in the same space. Two material dharmas are mutually resistant or obstructive in this sense to each other.

2. Obstruction qua object domain: When a sense faculty (e.g., the eye) meets with its corresponding object domain (e.g., a visible) and its efficacy (e.g., seeing) is exercised, then it is said to be obstructed by that object domain inasmuch as its sphere of vision is at that time confined to that object. An example is cited from PjŚ: the eye of a fish is obstructed by encountering a visible in water, not on land; the eye of a human is obstructed by a visible on land, not in water.
(3) Obstruction qua cognitive object: When thought and thought-concomitants are so obstructed by — confined to — their cognitive objects.\(^{19}\)

Like Saṃghabhadra, Yaśomitra highlights too “the nature of rūpa which is the indicatability of location: ‘It is here, there’.”\(^{20}\) Saṃghabhadra argues that visibility as an intrinsic characteristic of the category of rūpa must apply to even the smallest unit — an atom. For, otherwise, it will forfeit its very intrinsic nature as rūpa. (See below, § 8.3.3).

Elsewhere, Saṃghabhadra also gives three defining characteristics of rūpa: (i) indicatability of location, (ii) susceptibility to deterioration through obstructive contact, (iii) rūpa by designation. The third characteristic pertains to the non-informative matter subsumed under the dharmāyatana rather than the rūpāyatana. “They are called rūpa by way of designation (prajñapti) in terms of rūpa: It is not the case that they can be designated apart from the bodily and vocal [karma-s] which are rūpa in nature and from which they are generated, for in the sphere of immateriality, this designation does not exist.”\(^{21}\)

8.1.4. Special types of matter

Obviously, the third characteristic given by Saṃghabhadra above is intended to subsume the non-informative karma as a special type of matter in spite of its being devoid of the first two characteristics (i.e., visibility and resistance).

Besides the non-information matter which is unlike other matter that we encounter in phenomenal existence, the Sarvāstivāda concedes other types of special matter, such as that in the fine-material sphere and that of the intermediate beings (antarābhava); these kinds of matter are said to be transparent (accha). In fact, one reason that the faculty of suffering (duḥkhendriya) is absent in the beings of the fine-material sphere is that their bodies (āśraya) are constituted by transparent matter\(^{22}\) on account of which they are not subject to being injured. We have also seen above that the sense faculties are said to comprise very subtle and perspicuous (prasāda) kinds of matter (cf. § 2.4.1.3.2) which are suprasensible (atīndriya), and their atoms, being transparent like crystal, are mutually non-obstructive.\(^{23}\) MVŚ has a similar, but more illustrative description:

Because they are transparent/clear in nature, they do not mutually obstruct one another. That is to say, for such type of derived clear matter, even when a large number of them are accumulated together, there is no mutual obstruction. It is like the water in
an autumn pond; on account of its clarity, even a needle that is dropped into it can be visible.\textsuperscript{24}

Samghabhadrā quotes the meditators’ assertion that the matter seen in a meditation is a special type of derived matter:

All the hermitage-dwellers (āraṇyaka) assert thus: “The blue colour, etc, seen in meditation are visible (sanidarśana) matter.” It cannot be asserted that this matter is of the nature of a different mode of the matter that has been previously experienced by visual consciousness. For, it manifests clearly in the meditation. This matter qua object in meditation is derived from the Great Elements generated in meditation. It is lucid and clear, and is non-obstructive, like the space element matter.\textsuperscript{25}

\section*{8.2. Primary and derived matter}

Among the various definitions of a material (rūpin) dharma in MVŚ, the following involves the notions of the ‘Great Elements’ and ‘matter derived from the Great Elements’:

That dharma whose intrinsic nature consists of the four Great Elements or of that which is derived from the four Great Elements is called a material dharma. That dharma whose intrinsic nature does not consist of the four Great Elements or of that which is derived from the four Great Elements is called a non-material dharma.

Furthermore, that dharma which has the Great Elements as its cause (mahābhūta-hetuka) and whose intrinsic nature consists of the derived matter is called a material dharma. That dharma which does not have the Great Elements as its cause and whose intrinsic nature does not consist of the derived matter is called a non-material dharma.\textsuperscript{26}

In Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the totality of rūpa-dharma-s comprises (i) the primary matter comprising the four Great Elements (mahābhūta; ‘Great Reals’) — Earth (prthivī), Water (ap), Fire (tejas), Air (vāyu); (ii) 11 derived matter (upādāya-rūpa/bhautika)\textsuperscript{27} — five sense-faculties (indriya), five corresponding objects (artha/viṣaya) and non-information matter (aviññapti-rūpa). The four Great Elements are also subsumed under the objects of touch (spraṣṭavya) together with other derived tangibles, because their functions can only be experienced through touch. They have the specific nature (svabhāva) of solidity (khara), humidity (sneha), heat (uṣṇatā) and mobility (īraṇā), respectively, and perform the functions of supporting (dhṛti), cohesion (saṃgraha), maturation (pakti) and extension (vyūha), respectively. The Sarvāstivāda
acknowledges a total of 11 tangibles. The other seven are: smoothness (ślakṣṇatva), coarseness (karkaśatva), heaviness (gurutva), lightness (laghutva), coldness (śīta), hunger (jighatsā) and thirst (pipāsā).

However, among the ‘four great ācārya-s’ of the Sarvāstivāda lineage, Buddhadeva holds that rūpa comprises the mahābhūta-s alone; the so-called derived rūpa-s are just specific types of mahābhūta-s (mahābhūta-viśeṣa). His conclusion is said to have been based on certain sūtra statements which speak, for instance, of the solidity within the fleshy eye as the internal Earth Element, the mobility within it as the internal Wind Element, etc.28

Dharmatrāta, while accepting the derived rūpa-s as real entities distinct from the Great Elements, denies the existence of the category of derived matter known as “matter subsumed under the dharmāyatana” — which amounts to the denial of the non-information matter. He further holds that the Great Elements alone are the tangibles; there are no derived tangibles.29

Samghabhadra informs us that the Sthavira Śrīlāta also denies the existence of the derived tangibles. For him they are nothing more than the specific configuration of the Great Elements. Thus, he argues, the so-called coldness is simply a designation for the state wherein the Heat Element becomes less or not predominant. Likewise, heaviness or lightness is simply a designation of the fact that there exists a bigger or smaller quantity of the Great Elements within a given form of matter. He offers another reason for his denial: these so-called derived tangibles are also cognizable by our eyes. That is to say: our eyes grasp, accordingly as the case may be, the shape, quantity, color or appearance of the Great Elements. They can also cognize things which are smooth or coarse. 30

8.2.1. Explanation of the term mahābhūta

MVŚ remarks that the compound mahābhūta is to be taken as a descriptive compound (karmadhāraya samāsa), as in the case of mahābhūmi, and mahā-rājan, etc.: they are both mahā and bhūta, hence named mahābhūta.31 The Avatāra explains:

They are called the Great Elements because of their being both great and having the nature of an Element (bhūta). Thus Space [although great], is not included among the Great Elements, as by ‘Element’ one means the ability to produce its own fruit (svaphala). They are said to be ‘great’ as they are found in all secondary matter. Thus, there are only four Great Elements
because (i) there is no use for [any] more, and (ii) there will be inaptness [with regard to the fulfillment of the four functions if any one of them is lacking]; as in the case of a couch [which has four and only four] legs.\textsuperscript{35}

The sentence italicized above, potentially very informative in terms of doctrine, is, however, not found in the Tibetan version of Avatāra.\textsuperscript{33}

In the Vaibhāṣika doctrine, all conditioned dharma-s have this capability, and it is by virtue of this capability, technically called kāriṭra, that a conditioned dharma is distinguishable as being present, as opposed to being past or future (see supra, § 5.4). According to this explanation, Space is not a bhūta on account of its non-productivity. This is because, for the Sarvāstivāda, Space is an unconditioned which transcends causality in space-time. That ‘Space’ (虛空) in the above passage refers to the unconditioned ākāśa is clear from the fact that the Sarvāstivādin Ābhidharmikas sharply distinguish this from ākāśa-dhātu (空界) which is rūpa in nature.\textsuperscript{34} In this same context, Vasumitra’s explanation is that ākāśa is not one of the mahābhūta-s because it is devoid of their characteristics: increase, decrease; harm, benefit; gaining strength, waning — all characteristics of the conditioned. The Bhadanta’s explanation\textsuperscript{35} may be compared to that given by the compilers of MVŚ themselves:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bhadanta:</th>
<th>Compilers:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space, although being great, is not bhūta in its nature as it is non-productive. The other saṃskṛta dharma-s [— other than the mahābhūta-s —] although capable of being considered as bhūta, are not great in their nature as their characteristics are not common [to all material dharma-s]. Thus, Space is not classified as mahābhūta.\textsuperscript{36}</td>
<td>Question: Why are other dharma-s not called mahābhūta-s? Answer: Because the others do not have such characteristics as the mahābhūta-s. That is: because the unconditioned dharma-s are great but not bhūta; the other conditioned dharma-s are bhūta but are not great. Accordingly, these four alone receive the name mahābhūta-s.\textsuperscript{37}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that in Bhadanta’s explanation, Space is clearly contrasted with the conditioned dharma-s; and the comparison with the compilers’ own explanation bears out that Space, in all these explanations, refers to the unconditioned ākāśa. Accordingly, it can be concluded that bhūtam, in the compound mahābhūta, refers to the reals — the
causally productive — in the domain of the conditioned. Among these, only those four reals are the ‘Great Reals’ because they alone form the indispensable basis for the arising of all the derived rūpa-s. Or rather, as the compilers here explain:

*Bhūta* signifies that which can decrease or increase, harm or benefit, which arises and ceases. *Mahā* signifies that whose substance, characteristics, shape and quantity pervade everywhere, accomplishing great action.

Question: How do these four accomplish great work?

Answer: The great work consists in their being the supporting bases for the great masses of derived matter, causing them to disintegrate or to be formed. (*loc. cit.*)

8.2.2. Great Elements as dhātu-s

The Great Elements are also called dhātu-s in the sense of the ultimate source of genesis. Samghabhadra explains the significance of the term dhātu in this context, giving more than one sense of bhūta:

[Question:] For what reasons are these Great Elements named dhātu?

[Answer:] Because they are the place of origin of all rūpa-dharma-s. It is also from the Great Elements [themselves] that the Great Elements are produced. In the world, the places of origin are called dhātu-s; as for instance, the mines of gold, etc., are said to be the dhātu-s of gold, etc. Or, because they are the place of origin of various types of unsatisfactoriness (*duḥkha*), they are said to be dhātu; example as before. According to some: they are named dhātu because they sustain (√dhṛ) the self-characteristics of the Great Elements and secondary matter.38

8.2.3. Inseparability of the Great Elements

The four Great Elements exist inseparably from one another, being co-existent causes (*sahabhū-hetu*) one to another. Nevertheless, rūpa-dharma-s are manifested and experienced in diverse forms because of the difference in intensity or substance of one or more of the four Elements. MVŚ comments:39

Question: From the predominance of what is there smoothness, etc., up to thirst?

Some say: Smoothness, etc., [in each case,] is not due to the one-sided predominance of [any] mahābhūta. It is only owing
to the mahābhūta-s being of different nature that the effect of smoothness, etc., up to thirst is produced.

Other masters say: From the predominance of Water and Fire, there is smoothness. From the predominance of Earth and Wind, there is coarseness. From the predominance of Fire and Wind, there is lightness. From the predominance of Earth and Water there is heaviness … From the predominance of Water and Wind, there is coldness. From the predominance of Wind, there is hunger — because of the predominance of Wind, there is agitation causing the dissipation of food, inducing the hunger-tangible; the desire for food is thus produced. From the predominance of Fire, there is thirst — because of the predominance of Fire, there is oppression from heating up, causing the dissipation of what has been drunk and inducing the thirst-tangible; the desire for drink is thus produced.

But while MVŚ here does not comment clearly which of the two views — predominance of substance, predominance of effect — represents the orthodox Vaibhāṣika standpoint, Saṃghabhadra criticizes the Kośakāra for giving the latter view as the Vaibhāṣika view. According to Saṃghabhadra, the orthodox Vaibhāṣika view is that of predominance of substance.

Elsewhere, MVŚ explicitly affirms that in a given mass of rūpa, there can be a quantitative difference in the mahābhūta-s without contradicting the principle of their inseparability:

Question: Do the mahābhūta-s increase or decrease in substance (i.e., vary quantitatively)? … There is a fault in either case — if they increase or decrease, how can they be inseparable? For, if in a solid substance there are more atoms of Earth (prthivī-paramāṇu) and fewer of Water, Fire and Air, the Earth atoms quantitatively intermingled with Water etc., [accordingly as the case may be,] would be separated from the other Elements. [On the other hand,] if there is no increase or decrease, substances like water, stones, etc., ought not to differ in being solid, soft, etc.

Answer: One should say that there is increase or decrease in substance among the mahābhūta-s. … Although there is an increase or decrease, they are not separated, because together they perform a function by mutually supporting one another. Thus, in a solid substance, where the number of Earth atoms is greater than those of Water, Fire and Air, the Earth atoms are incapable of performing their functions in isolation from Water, etc. … It is like the case of many villages in which there is a collective management; there is a difference in the number of

223
villagers [among the villages], yet [the villagers are in each case] mutually dependent and cannot be separated.

It is therefore clear that inseparability does not necessarily mean that the four Great Elements are juxtaposed. It means that the four always co-exist and are functionally interdependent. They are what the Sarvāstivādins call co-existent causes to one another. Their inseparability can be inferred from their specific characteristic and activity that can be observed in all material aggregates. Thus, in an aggregate of fluid, besides the obvious specific characteristic of the Water Element, there must also be the Earth Element without which ice cannot result when the weather is extremely cold, nor can a ship be supported; there must be the Fire Element without which the fluid would never become warm; there must be the Wind Element without which it would never move. Thus, the Sarvāstivāda maintains that despite their divergent characteristics, the four Great Elements always arise together:

Question: The four Great Elements being opposed in their respective characteristic, how can they arise simultaneously unseparated?

[Answer:] The Venerable Vasumitra explains thus: … it is not the case that what are different in characteristics are necessarily opposed to one another. Those which, while differing in characteristics are not mutually opposed, may arise together without being separated, just like the four Great Elements and smell, taste, touch, and colors such as blue, yellow etc.42

According to the Sautrāntika master, Śrīlāta, however:

The Great Elements and the derived matter are mostly unseparated. But there are also some which are separated, such as the light of the sun, the moon, a lamp and a gem, as well as the fragrance, etc., that drifts apart from the flowers.43

8.2.4. Dependence of upādāya-rūpa on the Great Elements

All rūpa-s, except for the non-informative matter, are the fruits of karmic retribution. Although the so-called derived rūpa-s are already existing as ontological entities, their arising and functioning are dependent (upādāya) on the Great Elements. In this sense, the latter are said to be their cause: One set of the four Great Elements serves as the cause of an atom (paramāṇu) of the derived rūpa in a fivefold manner. MVŚ44 explains the sense of this dependence:

Question: Is it in the sense of [having the mahābhūta-s as] cause, or in the sense of [having them as] conditions? …
Answer: It should be said thus: it is in the sense of [having them as] cause.

Question: These [mahābhūta-s], with regard to the derived matter, do not have [the functions of] any of the five causes [besides being efficient cause], so then how are they the cause?

Answer: Although [the meaning of] any of the five causes, i.e., homogeneous cause, etc., is lacking, [the mahābhūta-s] are cause in five other senses: i.e., (i) generating cause (janana-hetu), (ii) reliance cause (niśraya-hetu), (iii) supportive cause (pratiṣṭhā-hetu), (iv) maintaining cause (upastambha-hetu), (v) development cause (upabṛṃhaṇa-hetu).

AKB,\textsuperscript{45} explaining in the same manner, defines each of these five causes: (i) because the derived rūpa-s arise from them, like a child from the parents; (ii) because they are influenced by them, like a pupil under a teacher; (iii) because they are supported by them; (iv) because they are their cause of non-interruption; (v) because they are their cause of development. Saṃghabhadra elaborates further:

Although [the derived matter] arises simultaneously [with the Great Elements], the sense of causation is applicable here because it operates in accompaniment with (\textit{anu-√vṛt}) [— i.e., it arises and ceases every moment together with — the Great Elements]; this is like the case of a sprout producing its shadow, or a lamp illuminating light.\textsuperscript{46}

[As a matter of fact,] although dharma-s are not non-existent since they already exist in their nature, their efficacies are accomplished in necessary dependence on the power of causes and conditions. For instance, it is not that the derived matter has not been existent as entities, but their efficacies are accomplished in necessary dependence on the Great Elements as cause.\textsuperscript{47}

MVŚ enumerates various differences between the Great Elements and the derived matter:

The Ābhidharmika says: the Great Elements are invisible (anidarśana), the derived matter visible (sanidarśana) or invisible.

The Great Elements are resistant (sapratigha), the derived matter resistant or non-resistant.

The Great Elements are with-outflow, the derived matter without-outflow or outflow-free.

The Great Elements are non-defined, the derived matter are skillful, unskillful, or non-defined.
The Great Elements pertain to the sense sphere (kāmadhātu-pratisamyukta), the derived matter pertains to the sense sphere, the fine-material sphere does not pertain to any sphere (apratisamyukta).

The Great Elements are of the nature of being neither-trainee-nor-non-trainee (naivaśaikṣa-nāśaikṣa), the derived matter is of the nature of trainee, non-trainee or neither-trainee-nor-non-trainee.

The Great Elements are abandonable through cultivation (bhāvanāheya), the derived matter is abandonable through cultivation or not to be abandoned (aheya).

The Great Elements are subsumed under the truths of unsatisfactoriness and the origin. The derived matter is subsumed under the truths of unsatisfactoriness, the origin and the path.

The Great Elements are without retribution (avipāka), the derived matter is with-retribution (savipāka) or without vipāka.

The Great Elements are non-defiled (akliṣṭa), the derived matter is defiled or non-defiled.

The Great Elements are not karma, the derived matter may or may not be karma.

Thus, the characteristics of the Great Elements differ in innumerable ways from those of the derived matter.48

8.3. ‘Atomic’ theory

Unlike the doctrine of the Great Elements, the Buddhist atomic theory is not discernible in the sūtra-s. It likely was taken over from outside the Buddhist schools — probably from the Vaiśeṣika. However, no Buddhists — including the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas — would conceive of atoms as being eternally immutable or permanent. Certain heretics (tīrthakāra) hold that the atoms, being eternal and immutable, remain when the universe dissolves. In contrast, the Sarvāstivādins teach that when the universe is destroyed by the three great calamities — through fire, water and wind — not even one atom can remain.49 Atoms are in fact momentary (see Vasumitra’s opinion below, § 8.3.5.2). They are not permanent (nitya) on account of their coursing through time. Only the asamskrta-dharma-s are permanent, being beyond space and time. At least by the time of MVŚ, the Buddhist Ābhidharmikas had already articulated the theory to a large extent in their own way. In addition, Buddhists — including the Ābhidharmikas — do not admit of any notion of quality inherent in a substance. The quality defines the ontological status of a real. For the Ābhidharmikas, a unique quality is in fact the real existent itself.
8. THE CATEGORY OF MATTER (rūpa)

The term that we have roughly rendered as ‘atom’ here corresponds to paramāṇu. However, at the outset, it should be borne in mind that the Vaibhāṣika notion of paramāṇu is not entirely the same as the notion of atom in modern physics (see below, § 8.3.4).

The Vaibhāṣika concedes that an atom as the smallest unit of matter is known through mental analysis. This is called the ‘conceptual atom’ (假極微; *prajñapti-paramāṇu). It is from this perspective that one could speak of paramāṇu as corresponding to the notion of ‘atom’. Nevertheless, this does not mean that atoms exist only as concept. The conceptual is always based on the ultimately real, and this ultimately real atom is the intrinsic characteristic of matter (the visibles, etc.). While a single paramāṇu cannot be directly observed, a physical assemblage (和集; he ji) of them is known through direct perception (pratyakṣa).

8.3.1. Descriptive definition of an ‘atom’

MVŚ gives a descriptive definition of an ‘atom’ as follows:

An atom (paramāṇu) is the smallest rūpa. It cannot be cut, broken, penetrated; it cannot be taken up, abandoned, ridden on, stepped on, struck or dragged. It is neither long nor short, square nor round, regular nor irregular, convex nor concave. It has no smaller parts; it cannot be decomposed, cannot be seen, heard, smelled, touched. It is thus that the paramāṇu is said to be the finest (sarva-sūkṣma) of all rūpa-s.

Seven of these paramāṇu-s constitute an anu — the finest among all rūpa-s perceivable by the eye and visual consciousness. [However,] this [anu] can be seen by only three types of eyes: 1. The divine eye (divya-cakṣus), 2. the eye of a Universal Monarch (cakravartin), 3. the eye of a bodhisattva in his last birth. Seven anu-s constitute a tāmra-rajas. … Seven tāmra-rajas-s constitute an ap-rajas … Seven ap-rajas-s constitute a šaśa-rajas; … Seven šaśa-rajas-s constitute an edaka-rajas … Seven edaka-rajas-s constitute a go-rajas … Seven go-rajas-s constitute a vātāyana-rajas … [in this way, the whole physical universe is composed].

This doctrine of the sevenfold incremental atomic agglomeration is also found in AKB and Ny, which likewise states clearly that “seven paramāṇu-s constitute an anu (sapta paramāṇavo ’ṇuḥ).

Saṅghabhadra defines the atom more succinctly:

The finest part in a resistant matter which cannot be further divided is called a paramāṇu. That is, this paramāṇu cannot be
From Samghabhadra's explanation above, we can therefore speak of two types of paramāṇu-s: 1. paramāṇu in the proper sense of the term — the smallest conceivable building block of matter. This is also called dravya-paramāṇu. 2. saṃghāta-paramāṇu in the sense of a molecule — the smallest unit of matter that can actually occur in the phenomenal world. (See below, § 8.3.4). Samghabhadra further says:

The size of an atom can also be illustrated by examples. But it is not explained because it is known only by the Buddha. However, in order to define an arañya (‘forest dwelling’, ‘hermitage’), the [Sarvāstivāda] Vinaya says only that an agglomeration of seven atoms is called an anu, etc. …

8.3.2. Atoms of color and shape

Rūpa, in the sense of visible objects, is twofold, namely, color (varṇa) and shape (saṃsthāna). Corresponding to these two, there are individual atoms of colors (such as blue, etc.) and shapes (such as long etc.) even though they are not directly perceivable by the eye and visual consciousness. The Sarvāstivāda argues that if there were no individual atoms of color and shape, an agglomeration of atoms would not, for instance, become green or long. The Sautrāntika, however, accepts the reality of color atoms only. For them, the so-called shape atoms are simply the color atoms arranged in various ways.

8.3.3. An aggregate of similar atoms as a real entity

It is not only that the ordinary human eye does not perceive the individual atoms which therefore individually cannot serve as the object of visual perception, but also an individual atom cannot serve as the supporting basis (āśraya) for visual consciousness:

The five consciousnesses, visual, etc., have an agglomeration [of atoms] as their supporting basis and take an agglomeration [of atoms] as object. They have the resistant (sapratīgha) as their basis and take the resistant as an object. They have a combination as their supporting basis and take a combination as an object.
But does this mean that the āyutana-s are unreal, or that — as claimed by the Sautrāntika — direct perception is impossible? The Sarvāstivāda answers to both these questions are a definite “No.” Although an individual atom is too feeble to function as a visual faculty, an agglomeration of atoms of the same kind will, in their collective and accumulative capacity, function as such.\(^{56}\) Likewise, as Saṃghabhadra argues, although in MVŚ the human eye is said to be unable to perceive an atom,\(^ {57}\) it does not mean that an atom is invisible in its intrinsic nature. It simply means that its visibility is virtually nil. An agglomeration of rūpa atoms comes to be directly perceivable.\(^ {58}\) The point here is that an agglomeration of atoms of the same type (和集) is also a real. This is in contrast to a unification of atoms (和合) — or for that matter various other dharma-s — of diverse species. Thus rūpa as a visual object is real, i.e., truly existent (dravyato'sti), whereas a combination of the five different skandha-s, imagined to be a ‘person’, is unreal.

### 8.3.4. The octad as the minimal molecule that arises

It is apparently after the period of MVŚ that the Sarvāstivādins articulated a doctrine that, in the physical order, a minimum of eight substances (aṣṭa-dravyaka) — constituting the subllest aggregate, “aggregate-atom” (saṃghāta-paramāṇu) — are necessarily conascent (八事俱生) in the sensuality sphere: the four Great Elements, plus visible smell, taste and touch. This “aggregate-atom” may be compared to the notion of a molecule, in contrast to “substance-atom” (dravya-paramāṇu), an individual atom as a real entity in itself. But, according to AKB, it is sufficiently clear that this “octad molecule” does not really mean a molecule comprising eight individual atoms. It represents the smallest unit of matter that can be cognized by us.

The octad molecule is the case of an agglomeration into the composition of which sound and the sense faculty do not enter. Where sound is produced, i.e., enters into the composition of the aggregate, one has a nonad molecule. Among the sense faculties, the bodily faculty (kāyendriya) is a nonad comprising the basic eight, plus a paramāṇu of kāyendriya. This is because no sense faculty can arise alone without the person’s bodily faculty.\(^ {59}\) This doctrine was not articulated in MVŚ, although in a passage therein stating the possibility of the conascence of the four Great Elements and smell, taste, touch and visible (see above, § 8.2.3), one might see the germ of the notion.
In AKB, Vasubandhu expresses this requirement in the following line:

\[ kāme 'ṣṭadravyako 'śabdaḥ paramāṇur anindriyaḥ \]

(“In the sensuality sphere, a paramāṇu which is without sound and sense faculty, consists of eight substances.”)

In the prose, he explains that what is called paramāṇu (in the singular) in the stanza is the subtlest material aggregate (rūpa-paramāṇu) that could be cognized.\(^{61}\) That is, paramāṇu here does not refer to an individual atom or substance-atom as the smallest unit of matter in itself, but to an aggregate-atom (samghāta-paramāṇu) that can actually be found in existence.\(^{62}\) In Xuanzang's translation here, he actually gives 微聚, ‘aggregate of the fine[st]’ in the stanza, as he does in the prose explanation.

Saṃghabhadra’s explanation is similar, and Xuanzang’s translation once again tries to show the sense of samghāta-paramāṇu in the word paramāṇu in the stanza:

Among the resistant matter, the ultimately finest part which cannot be subject to further division is called a paramāṇu (極微). … Such paramāṇu-s,\(^{63}\) when mutually combined and necessarily unseparated, are said to be a samghāta-paramāṇu (微聚). This, in the sensuality sphere, where sound and sense faculty are absent, arises as constituted of eight substances.\(^{64}\)

Yaśomitra likewise explains that a dravya-paramāṇu is the dravya that is the smallest unit of rūpa, and that by the word paramāṇu, the stanza refers to an aggregate-atom.\(^{65}\) This would mean that the smallest unit of matter that can actually arise in the empirical world consists of eight dravya-s, of which four are the Great Elements. In accordance with the notion that an aggregate of real substances of the same species is also a real (§ 8.3.3), such an aggregate-atom is also a real existent in the absolute sense (paramārtha-sat).\(^{66}\)

The author of ADV is critical of Vasubandhu’s interpretation of the word paramāṇu in the stanza. He gives the following different stanza:

\[ saptadravyāvinirbhāgī paramāṇur bahirgataḥ | \]
\[ kāmeṣv ekādhikaḥ kāye dvadhikaś cakṣurādiṣu || \]

(A paramāṇu comprising seven non-separable substances is manifested externally

Among those in the sensuality [sphere]; in the case of a bodily faculty it comprises one more; two more, in the case of the visual faculty, etc.)
In his prose commentary, he explains the word *paramāṇu* in the stanza as actually designating the subtlest ultimate division of a material aggregate in phenomenal existence, i.e., the substance-atom which arises with a group of seven other substances:

The subtlest/finest which is the ultimate division of the agglomeration of grasping of the material forces (*rūpasamśkasāropādānasāmcayabhedaparyantah*) is designated as a “*paramāṇu*”. But it is not separable with seven substances. It operates without being separated from four [Great] Elements and three derived matter, or from three [Great] Elements and four derived matter. That [*paramāṇu*] is the eighth. [This should be the meaning of a *paramāṇu* comprising eight substances (*aṣṭadravyākhaḥ ... paramāṇuḥ*)]

The author of the [*Abhidharma*-kośa], however, says that [the word] “*paramāṇu*” means the subtlest material aggregate. He therefore must tell [us] another matter which is other than the aggregate. If that does not exist, the aggregate too does not exist. Hence, it is proved that the subtlest refers to a material *paramāṇu*. (*rūpa-paramāṇu*)

However, as criticized by their opponents, the Vaibhāṣikas’ use of the term *dravya* here is ambiguous: Does it refer to an absolute real as an individual entity in itself, possessing an intrinsic characteristic, or as *āyatana* (i.e., *rūpa* as *rūpāyatana*, etc.) each possessing a distinctive common characteristic applicable to the type as a whole (e.g., all visibles are *rūpa*-s as a type — an *āyatana*)? The Vaibhāṣīka answer is that the term is used in both senses: the four Great Elements as four *dravya*-s in the sense of individual entities; the four derived matter as four categories of *āyatana*-s.

Saṃghabhadra’s commentary contains the following response to the opponents’ criticism:

As to the assertion that there is a fallacy whether the word “substance” is in the sense of substance as an entity or in the sense of *āyatana*; in the former case the [number “eight”] is too small, and in the latter, too big — there is [in fact] no fallacy, because [in this doctrine] the supporting basis (*āśraya*; i.e., the Great Elements) are *dravya*-s in the sense of individual substances and the supported (*āśrita*; i.e., the derived matters) are *dravya*-s in the sense of *āyatana*.

There is also no fallacy [of there being more than eight] if [“substance”] is taken exclusively in the sense of individual substance. For, in this context, the necessarily co-existents are
referred to; the substances such as matter as shape (samsthāna-rūpa) do not necessarily exist since they do not exist in light, etc.

It can also be taken exclusively in the sense of substance qua āyatana. Nevertheless, to prevent the numerous false assertions, the Great Elements are referred to separately — false assertions such as that the Great Elements and derived matters are not distinct in their nature as existents …

As to the assertion that each derived matter qua effect is derived from a separate [set of] Great Elements, and hence [the number] should be greater — this reasoning is invalid, for [here] we are speaking of [the Great Elements as substances] in terms of their type (jāti) [: each of them remains as a specific type (svajāti)].

From the above discussions, it is clear that in the atomic theory of the Vaibhāṣikas, there are two types of atoms as individual substances, those of the Great Elements and those of the derived matters. That the Great Elements too, like derived matters, are individual atoms is clear from both the Vaibhāṣika explanation that “substance” (dravya) as applied to them in the group of eight paramāṇu-s refers to substance in its proper sense, i.e. individual substances each having a unique individual intrinsic characteristic (dravya-svalakṣaṇa). This is in contrast to the sense of substance as applied to the four derived matter: dravya in their case refers to a species as real existent, each having a unique species characteristic, visual form, etc. (āyatana-svalakṣaṇa). For the distinction between the two types of characteristics, cf. supra, § 2.3.2.1). This is equally clear from Saṃghabhadra’s response to the opponents, particularly that the eight substances can also each be considered as an individual substance. Probably from around the time of MVŚ, the original disparity resulting from the relatively later introduction of the atomic theory into the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of matter had made it necessary for the Sarvāstivādins to rework on the doctrine. One result was that the Great Elements had later come to be regarded as paramāṇu-s. But, this is hardly to suggest that they had since been fully successful in overcoming all the incongruities and problems involved.

### 8.3.5. Problems connected with the notion of atom

We may see the divergence of interpretations concerning the term aṣṭa-dravyaka as betraying the problem that had arisen from the way in which the Ābhidharmikas attempted, rather unsuccessfully — even by the time of Saṃghabhadra — to synthesize two doctrines pertaining to matter — that of the mahābhūta-s which had an ancient root in the sūtra-piṭaka, and that of atoms coming subsequently from outside the
8. THE CATEGORY OF MATTER (RŪPA)

Buddhist tradition. It would seem that at first the four mahābhūta-s were conceived of as being material qualities — Earth Element is solidity, etc. They are real entities qua material qualities. But when the atomic theory was introduced into the abhidharma system, the notion that matter was constituted of atoms and that mahābhūta-s existed as atoms came to be developed. This led to a contradiction that seemed to have been quietly left unsettled: On the one hand, the atomic theory requires that atoms are grouped as septuplets from which matter is derived. The smallest molecule, an anu, or saṃghāta-paramāṇu, consisting of just seven paramāṇu-s, is the smallest unit of matter that is perceivable — and even then not by an ordinary human being (see above, § 8.3.1). On the other hand, a new doctrine was then articulated that a molecule that can arise in the empirical world consists of a minimum of eight substances. Taking both doctrines into consideration, one commentarial opinion, in fact, arrives at 1,379 as the number of atoms that constitute a molecule of a visible! The contradiction, however, would not have necessarily arisen if the mahābhūta-s were conceived of as dravya-s in the sense of real material qualities — real forces — rather than atoms.

Apart from this, the very notion of an atom being the ultimately indivisible, impenetrable unit of matter devoid of extension gives rise to conceptual difficulties. The following are among some of the controversies.

8.3.5.1. The definition by rūpaṇā/rūpaṇa

The defining characteristics of rūpa do not exist in all dharma-s classified by the Sarvāstivāda as rūpa. MVŚ. Question: If to have the characteristic of rūpaṇā is to have the characteristic of pratīghāta (變礙), then the past and future [dharma-s], the atoms and avijñapti ought not to have the characteristic of rūpa since they have no rūpaṇā. And if they do not have the characteristic of rūpa, they ought not to be rūpa in their intrinsic nature.

Answer: They are also rūpa-s since they acquire the characteristic of rūpanā: although a past rūpa is at the present moment without resistance, it has had resistance; although a future rūpa is at the present moment without resistance, it will have resistance; although each individual atom is without resistance, an aggregate of them has resistance; although an avijñapti is without resistance, its supporting basis (āśraya) — namely the four Great Elements — has resistance.
8.3.5.2. Are there intervening spaces between the atoms or do they touch one another?  

If two atoms touch one another, they do so either at a point of contact or in their totality. In either case, there is a problem: The former implies that an atom has parts or extension. The latter would result in two or more atoms coalescing into a single unit — in fact, the whole physical universe, in this case, ought to be the size of a single atom. On the other hand, if they do not touch one another at all, an agglomeration of atoms would fall into pieces when struck. Besides, how does one explain the possibility of sound being produced when two rūpa-s strike against each other?

The Vaibhāṣika position is that atoms do not touch. It is solely by the force of the Wind Element that atoms are held together. The production of sound, in fact, is possible precisely because atoms do not touch — for otherwise they would merge with the hand, etc., that strikes, and, there being no space in between, how can sound be produced?

Vasumitra explains that atoms cannot touch one another because they are momentary — the possibility of touch would imply that an atom can endure for more than one moment.

Bhadanta Dharmatrāta explains that atoms are metaphorically said to touch one another when they are juxtaposed without an interval (nirantara).

Vasubandhu approves of this explanation, for if there should be any interval between atoms, what prevents other atoms from getting into it? This would then contradict the notion that atoms are impenetrable.

Samghabhadrā also approves of Dharmatrāta’s explanation. But this word, nir-antara, he says, cannot mean literally that there is absolutely no interval between two atoms, for in that case how are they not in touch? “The prefix nis signifies ‘certitude’: there certainly is an interval; just as nirdahati means ‘it certainly burns’. Or, nis signifies ‘absence’: therein exists nothing of the size of an atom that intervenes. When atoms of the Great Elements which are nir-antara in this way arise close to one another, one says that they touch metaphorically.”

The Vaibhāṣika position is a logical consequence of the doctrine that an atom has no spatial extension, and yet is aggregated with six other atoms in the six directions (see above § 8.3.1) — north, east, south, west, above and below — with the given atom at the centre. This may imply that an atom has at least six sides — a point seized upon by the
Vijñānavādins in their refutation of the Ābhidharmika notion of atom. To avoid this fallacy, atoms must be thought of as being aggregated in such a way that in between the atoms there must be gaps which are less than the size of a single atom.

In MVŚ, there is a similar consideration as to whether there are gaps in an aggregate of the Great Elements. In either case, there is a fallacy: If there are gaps, how can the Great Elements be unseparated? If there are no gaps, why do they not coalesce into a unity? Two opinions are recorded: 1. There are gaps occupied by the space element (ākāśa-dhātu). Nevertheless, the four Elements are said to be unseparated because “the space elements can conceal themselves so that the substances are seen to be unseparated”. 2. The Great Elements are juxtaposed without any intervening gaps. Nevertheless, they do not coalesce into one, “in the same manner that among the skandha, āyatana, dhātu, and the three periods of time, in spite of there being no gap in between, they [in each case] do not coalesce into one. Moreover, the Great Elements, etc., are each distinct in their intrinsic nature and functions, hence they do not coalesce into one.” The absence of comment by the compilers of MVŚ here suggests that the earlier Sarvāstivādins were as yet undecided on this issue.
NOTES

1 MVŚ, 383a. The second sūtra passage is also quoted in AKB, 13: yad kimcid rūpam atītānāgata-pratyutpannam ādhyātmikam bāhyam vā audārikam vā sāksmam vā hīnām vā prānītam vā yad vā dūre yad vā antike tat sarvam aikadhyam abhisāṃkṣipta rūpa-skandha iti saṃkhyaṃ gacchati |

2 Cf. T 2, 11b.

3 AKB, 9: rūpyate rūpyata iti bhikṣavas tasmād rūpopādānaskandha ity ucyate | kena rūpyate | pāṇisparṣenāpi sprṣto rūpyate |

4 T 2, loc. cit.

5 Cf. S, iii, 86.

6 Cf. T no. 198, 4, 175c; Suttanipāta, IV, Aṭṭhakavagga 1.2.

7 AKB, 9.

8 Vy, 34.

9 See Entrance, 137 n. 69, n. 70.

10 Ny, 337b.

11 AKB, loc. cit.

12 Vy, 34: svadesē parasyotpatti-pratibandhaḥ |


14 Ny, 346b.

15 Cf. AKB, 19: sa hi śakyate nidarśayitum idam ihāmutra iti |

16 Ny, 348a.

17 Ny, 348a.

18 Cf. AKB, 19: yasmin yasya kāritram sa tasya viṣayaḥ | yac cittacaittair grhyate tad ālambanam | Xuanzang translates kāritra here as gong neng (功能), efficacy, which is also the rendering in Ny in this context.

19 AKB, 19 f.; Ny, 348a–b.

20 Vy, 51: idam ihāmutreti deśa-nidarśana-rūpanāt |

21 Ny, 540a

22 AKB, 46: duḥkhendriyaṃ nasty āśrayasyācchatvād… |

23 Cf. AKB, 5 f., 33: na cānyo’nyam āvṛṇvanti sphaṭikavad acchatvāt | This statement occurs in the description of atoms of the visual faculty. The SA, 91c, however, describes the sensory faculties as being “invisible and obstructive” (不可見、有對). If this is not a textual error, it may reflect an earlier stage of development in the Sarvāstivāda conception of this type of rūpa.

24 MVŚ, 63a

25 Ny, 346b.

26 MVŚ, 389c.

27 MVŚ, 661c.

28 MVŚ, 661c–662a

29 MVŚ, 661c, 662b.

30 For Śrīlāta’s denial of the derived tangibles and Saṃghabhadra’s refutation, see Ny, 352c ff.

31 MVŚ, 663a
The Category of Matter (rūpa)

32 Cf. Ny, 336b: "... There are only four Great Elements, no more, no less. The Vaibhāṣika says thus: If less [than four], there will be inaptitude; if more [than four], it will serve no purpose. Thus, there are only four, like the legs of a couch." MVŚ, 663a records the same explanation, attributed to 'certain masters'.

33 See Entrance, 130 f., n. 18.

34 MVŚ, 388b; cf. infra § 16.5.1.

35 However, the Bhadanta also seems to have denied the reality of unconditioned ākāśa (MVŚ, 949c). The Bhadanta in MVŚ is often regarded by scholars to refer to Bhadanta Dharmatrāta. However, it is well known that where Xuanzang's version of MVŚ gives 'Bhadanta', the earlier translation (T no. 1546) gives 'Venerable 'Bhadanta' (尊者婆檀陀 or 'Venerable Buddhadeva' (尊者佛陀提婆). Moreover, we now also know that where AKB (13) has simply 'Bhadanta', Xuanzang in AKB(C) inserts 'Dharmatrāta' (法救). Yasomitra in that context objects to Bhagavadviśeṣa's identification of Bhadanta with Dharmatrāta and asserts that in MVŚ, the one referred to simply as 'the Bhadanta' is a different master inclined toward the philosophy of the Sautrāntika (sautrāntika-darśāvalambin), whereas the one explicitly named as 'Dharmatrāta' is a Sarvāstivāda master (Vy, 44). Hence, there still seems to be much confusion yet to be cleared up in the identification of "the Bhadanta" in MVŚ.

36 MVŚ, 662b–c. See also Ny, 336a.

37 MVŚ, 663a.

38 Ny, 335c.

39 MVŚ, 665a.

40 Ny, 355b.

41 MVŚ, 682c–683a.

42 MVŚ, 683b.

43 Ny, 373a.

44 MVŚ, 663a.

45 AKB, 102 f.

46 Ny, 452a.

47 Ny, 440a.

48 MVŚ, 665a.

49 AKB, 189; also cf. MVŚ, 691a–b.

50 Ny, 522a.

51 MVŚ, 702a–b.

52 AKB, 176: rūpasyāpacīyamānasyaparyantah paramāṇuh | ... etat paramāṇvādikāṃ saptagnottaram veditavyam | saptapaṃānaṃ lohārajāḥ | tāni saptābrajas tāni sapta... | Also, Ny, 521c.

53 Ny, 383c; SPṛŚ, 799a.

54 MVŚ, 64a–b.

55 MVŚ, 63c.

56 Cf. a similar argument by Vasubandhu for the reality of the āyatana in AKB.

57 MVŚ, 702a.

58 Also cf. AKB, 189: paramāṇavatindriye 'pi samastānāṃ pratyakṣatvam |

59 AKB, 52 f.

60 AKB, 52.
sarvasūkṣmo hi rūpa-samghātaḥ paramāṇur (AKB(C): 微聚) ity ucyate | yato nānyatara viñāyaeta |

See Vy, 123.

Ny has 微 here which could correspond to anus rather than paramānu.

Vy, 123: Vy, 123: sarva-sūkṣmo rūpa-samghātaḥ paramāṇur iti samghāta-paramāṇur na dravya-paramāṇuh | yatra hi pūrvāpara-bhāgo nāsti | tat sarva-rūpāpačitam dravyaṃ dravya-paramāṇur itiṣyate | tasmād viśinaṣṭi 'samghātaḥ paramāṇur' iti |

Contra Katō, 156.

ADV, 65: sarvasūkṣmāh khalu rūpasamkāropādānasamcayabheda-bhavantah paramāṇur iti prajñāpyate | sa tu saptadravyāvāni bhāgī | caturbhī Sahāsī tribhī ś copādāyārūpāsī tribhī ś vā bhūtaiś caturbhī ś copādāyārūpanse avinirbhāgavarty asāv aṣṭama iti | kośakāras tv aha sarvasūkṣmo rūpa-samghātaḥ paramāṇur iti | tena samghātavyatiriktam rūpam anyad vaktaṃ | yadi nāsti samghāto 'pi nāsti | atah siddham sarvasūkṣaṃ rūpa-paramāṇur iti ||

Ny, 383c-384a. See also, Vy, 125: yad dravyam yasya svalakṣanam asti | tad dravyam gṛhyate | ... āyatanam api hi dravyam iti śakyate vaktum sāmānya-viśeṣa-lakṣaṇa-sadbhāvāt |

The same criticism and Vaibhāṣika response as in AKB, 53 f: evam api bhūyāmsi bhūta-dravyāṇi bhavanty upādāyārūpāṇām pratyekam bhūtacatuskāśrītavāt | atra punar jāti-dravyaṃ gṛhyate | bhūtacatuskāntarāṇāṃ svajātyanatikramāt |

See AKB(F), vol. 1, 148 f., note 1.

MVŚ, 389c–390a.

Xuanzang sometimes uses this same rendering for rūpaṇā.

MVŚ, 683c; AKB, 32 f.; Ny, 372a ff.

MVŚ, 683c–684a.

AKB, 33.

Ny, 373b.

Viṃś, 7.

MVŚ, 683c–684a.
9. The Categories of Thought and Thought-concomitants (citta-caitta)

9.1. Definitions of thought (citta), mind (manas) and consciousness (vijñāna)

Abhidharma Buddhism is sometimes considered as a form of depth psychology on account of its uniquely detailed analysis of the nature and function of the mind. This is in keeping with the emphasis of the supremacy of the mind in the Buddha’s teachings — bondage in and liberation from saṃsāra are all fundamentally on account of our mind.

In contrast to Yogācāra idealism, Abhidharma Buddhism, as much as early Buddhism, refers to the same mental reality by the three synonymous terms citta, manas and vijñāna. However, whereas the Buddha explicitly stated that the mind or consciousness is no more than an empirical or functional reality that results from an assemblage of conditions, the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas held that it is a real entity (sad-dravya). These three terms are distinguished only in terms of the different functional aspects of the mind that they represent: The mind is termed citta because it accumulates, manas because it thinks, vijñāna because it cognizes. AKB records another distinction: citta because it is accumulated with the pure and impure elements; manas because it functions as the supporting basis (tadevāśrayabhūta — i.e., of the citta...
that succeeds it); vijñāna because it is supported (āśritabhūta — i.e., by manas for its arising). This amounts to saying that the citta that arises at the present moment is vijñāna.

MVŚ⁶ discusses the various distinctions:

Question: What is the difference between the three — citta, manas, vijñāna — mentioned in the sūtra?

[Answer:] There is the explanation that there is no difference — citta is none other than manas, manas is none other than vijñāna, for, although the three words are different, there is no difference in meaning …

There is also the explanation that the three … are also differentiated: that is, the names themselves are different …

Furthermore, there is a difference with respect to time (adhvan): what is past is called manas; what is future is called citta; what is present is called vijñāna.

Furthermore, there is a difference with respect to designation (prajñapti): citta is designated among the dhātu-s; manas, among the āyatana-s; vijñāna among the skandha-s.

Furthermore, there is a difference in terms of signification (artha): citta signifies ‘clan’ (gotra); manas, ‘gateway of arising’ (āya-dvāra), vijñāna, ‘agglomeration’.

Furthermore, there is a difference in terms of action (kriyā): that of citta is far-going (dūragama) …; manas, fore-running (pūrvaṅgama) …; vijñāna, birth-relinking (saṃdhāna/pratisaṃdhi) …⁷

Further, the activity of citta is being variegated (citra) …; manas, going towards (歸趣; gati (?)) …; vijñāna, cognition (vi-√jñā) …

Furthermore, the activity of citta is increasing or nourishing (滋長; saṃcitatva); manas, thinking; vijñāna, cognizing.⁸

According to Venerable Parśva: the activity of citta is increasing and severing; manas, thinking and contemplating, vijñāna, distinguishing and comprehending. Herein, it is to be understood that what increases is the with-outflow citta, what severs is the outflow-free citta; what thinks is the with-outflow manas, what contemplates is the outflow-free manas; what distinguishes is the with-outflow vijñāna, what comprehends is the outflow-free vijñāna.
9.2. Thought-concomitants (caitta/caitasika)

Citta can never arise by itself. It is always conascent with certain mental factors or concomitants known as caitta-s or caitasika-s each of which is a distinct real entity making a unique contribution to the perceptual process. What this means in simple terms is that a thought that arises is always one with a specific content and nature; e.g., one of doubt which is unskillful, etc., characterized by the caitta-s. The essential substance that remains if we abstract the particularized content is the citta. Likewise, these caitta-s — called the conjoined conditionings (citta-samprayukta-samskārāh) — are also always conascent with the citta and some other caitta-s. Accordingly, citta and caitta-s are in a reciprocal causal relationship — they are mutually conjoined causes (samprayuktaka-hetu), an exemplification of the co-existent cause (sahabhū-hetu).

9.3. Development of the theory of caitasika

9.3.1. Reference to cetasika/caitasika in the nikāya/āgama

In the sūtra-piṭaka, the term caitasika (Pāli: cetasika) occurs simply as an adjective: ‘mental’, ‘pertaining to the mind’. This is used in contrast to kāyika which means ‘bodily’ or ‘physical’. There is therefore no indication of the abhidharmic theory of caitasika in sūtra-s. The earliest occurrence of the term citta-cetasika is to be found in Paṭisambhidāmagga, a text which, although included in the Khuddaka-nikāya, is well known for its abhidhammic affiliation both in respect of style and content. In the Milindapañha, a work around the latter part of the 2nd century B.C.E. (included by the Burmese tradition in the Khuddaka-nikāya), Nāgasena explains nāma — as opposed to rūpa — as the citta-cetasikā dhammā. Nevertheless, the Pāli Anupada-sutta (no correspondence in the Chinese āgama) enumerates — in the context of the meditative experience — the following dhamma-s which most likely serve as a source for the later Abhidharmic category of cetasika/caitasika: vitakka, vicāra, pīti, sukha, cittekaggatā, phassa, vedanā, saññā, cetanā, chanda, adhimokkha, viriya, sati, upekkhā and manasikāra.

There is, however, an occurrence in the Citta-samyutta in which the term is used to refer to ‘mental conditionings’ (citta-samkhārā): Bhikkhu Kāmabhū explains to the householder Citta that saññā and vedanā are cetasika-s and bound up with citta (citta-paṭibaddha) which could suggest that the two dhamma-s are in some sense distinct from citta, although not necessarily having the same technical connotation as in the abhidhamma/abhidharma terminology. It is worthy of note that
the corresponding Chinese version here likewise speaks of saṃjñā and cetanā as mental conditionings; they are “caitasika-s, based on citta, connected with citta” (想思是心數法，依於心，屬於心). Exactly the same description in the form of Dhammadinnā’s explanation to Visākhā is also found in the Cula-vedalla-sutta.14

9.3.2. Development in the early abhidharma texts

At the outset, it must be borne in mind that certain developed features — in this case pertaining to caitasika — found in the extant versions (in Xuanzang’s translation) of an earlier text could well be a later interpolation or modification on the basis of a text or texts post-dating it. In the decidedly earlier canonical abhidharma texts — DSŚ, SgPS, PjŚ — where caitasika is clearly referred to as mental factors, their enumeration is characterized by a lack of systematization. Thus, in the DSŚ a large number of caitta-s are simply enumerated together as “dharma-s” — apparently without any taxonomical consideration — to be abandoned completely (atyantam prahātavya):

At one time, the Bhagavat was staying at the Anāthapiṇḍada ārāma, in Jetavana in Śrāvasti. At that time, the Bhagavat told the bhikṣu-s: ‘If you could completely abandon one dharma, I assure you that you would acquire non-return (anāgāmitva). One dharma — that is rāga — whoever can abandon it completely, I assure you that he would definitely acquire anāgāmitva. Likewise: dveṣa, moha, krodha, upanāha, mrakṣa, pradāsa, īrṣyā, mātsarya, māya, śāthya, āhrīkya, anapatrāpya, māna, atimāna, mānātimāna, asmimāna, abhimāna, unamāna, mithyāmāna, mada, pramāda, …’

Then follows the commentarial explanation on each of the items: “What is rāga? It is the rāga, samrāga with regard to the sensual object…” In terms of the later systematization in Vasubandhu’s Pañcaskandhaprakaraṇa,16 rāga, dveṣa/pratigha, moha/avidyā and māna would come under the category kleśa, and the underlined items under upakleśa.

In the Pañcavastuka of Vasumitra’s PrŚ,17 while there is as yet no explicit classification, the manner in which the items are specifically enumerated under caitasika-dharma-s suggests an implicit taxonomical consideration influenced by the sūtra-s (in the order as in the text):

vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā, sparśa, manaskāra, chanda, adhimokṣa, smṛti, samādhi, prajñā;
śraddhā, vīrya;
vitarka, vicāra;
9. The Categories of Thought and Thought-concomitants

apramāda, pramāda;
the kuśala-mūla-s, the akuśala-mūla-s, the avyākṛta-mūla-s;
all the samyojana-s, bandhana-s, anusaya-s, upakleśa-s, paryavasthāna-s;
all that are jñāna-s, all that are drṣṭi-s, all that are abhisamaya-s;
and the other dharma-s of this kind conjoined with citta.

This enumeration represents the early stage of the development of the theory of caitasika in which no explicit grouping was done. However, as noted by Yin Shun:18

(i) The first ten items later came to be classified as the ten mahābhūmika-s. These were already enumerated as a group exemplifying the samprayuktaka-hetu in JPŚ.19

(ii) Śraddhā and vīrya follow smṛti, samādhi and prajñā as the pañcendriya-s mentioned in the sūtra, and vitarka and vicāra are among the important dhyāna-aṅga-s — all being caitta-s discussed in the ancient doctrine of spiritual praxis.

(iii) The rest are enumerated as contrast between the kuśala and the akuśala caitta-s.

(iv) The kleśa-s to be abandoned are summarized as samyojana-s, etc., mentioned in the sūtra; the prajñā-s to be cultivated are summarized as “all that are jñāna-s…”.

9.3.3. Further development in the later abhidharma texts

It was probably in the Dhātukāya-śāstra that the caitta-s were explicitly classified — for the first time — into eight classes totaling 55 dharma-s.20 This text is closely related to the Saptavastuka which could have been a version of it that later came to be incorporated into PrŚ.21 The Saptavastuka gives the same classification, with the addition of ten more items grouped under kuśala-mahābhūmika-s. Yin Shun believes that this new class was taken over from MVŚ.22 In MVŚ we see the development into seven classes totaling 58 dharma-s as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>mahābhūmika</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>kleśa-mahābhūmika</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>parītta-kleśa-bhūmika</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>kuśala-mahābhūmika</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>akuśala-mahābhūmika</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>nivṛtāvyākṛta-mahābhūmika</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>anivṛtāvyākṛta-mahābhūmika</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But there are some repetitions. Thus, avidyā is enumerated in II, V and VI; avidyā, styāna and auddhatya in V and VI; all the ten in I are repeated in VII. The compilers of MVŚ explain that the repetitions are intentional — for the sake of emphasis. Thus, whereas “āhrīkya and anapatrāpya are acquired only in all the akuśala-citta, hence called akuśala-mahābhūmika-dharma-s; styāna and auddhatya, subsumed under kleśa and paryavasthāna, are conjoined with all akuśala-citta-s and, at the same time, strongly obstruct śamatha and vipaśyanā; hence they are repeated under the akuśala-bhūmika. [Likewise,] avidyā, subsumed as one of the anuśaya-s, is conjoined with all akuśala-citta-s; hence it is repeated in the akuśala-bhūmika.” If we omit these repetitions, the total comes to 43.

MVŚ\textsuperscript{23} explains each class as follows:

I. The universal dharma-s (mahābhūmika): dharma-s which exist in all types of citta — whether kliṣṭa or aklīṣṭa; sāsrava or anāsrava; kuśala, akuśala or avyākṛta; bound to the three spheres of existence or not bound to any sphere; pertaining to the trainee (śaikṣa), to the non-trainee (aśaikṣa) or to neither; abandonable by vision (darśana-heya), by cultivation (bhāvanā-heya) or not to be abandoned (aheya); in the mind-ground (mano-bhūmi) or in the first five groups of consciousness.

II. The universal dharma-s of defilement (kleśa-mahābhūmika): dharma-s which exist in all defiled citta-s — whether akuśala or avyākṛta; bound to any sphere of existence (pratīsāmyuktā); abandonable by vision or cultivation; in the mind-ground or the first five groups of consciousness.

III. The defilements of restricted scope (parītta-kleśa-bhūmika): dharma-s which exist only in a small number of defiled citta-s, are abandonable by cultivation and exist in only the mind-ground; “when one arises there is necessarily not a second one, being mutually opposed”.

IV. The universal skillful dharma-s (kuśala-mahābhūmika): dharma-s which exist in all kuśala-citta-s.

V. The universal unskillful dharma-s (akuśala-mahābhūmika): dharma-s which exist in all akuśala-citta-s.

VI. The universal veiled-non-defined dharma-s (nivrta-avyākṛta-mahābhūmika): dharma-s which exist...
in all nivṛta-avyākṛta-citta-s — citta conjoined with the satkāya-vyākhyāyati and antagrahadṛṣṭi pertaining to the kāmāvacara; citta conjoined with all the defilements pertaining to the rūpa- or ārūpya-dhātu; all nivṛta-avyākṛta-citta-s existing in the mind-ground or the first five groups of consciousness.

VII. The universal non-veiled-non-defined dharma-s (anivṛta-avyākṛta-mahābhūmika): dharma-s which exist in all anivṛta-avyākṛta-citta-s — whether bound to kāma-, rūpa- or ārūpya-dhātu; in the mind-ground or the first five groups of consciousness; whether retribution-born (vipākaja), pertaining to deportment (airyapathika), pertaining to arts and crafts (śailpa-sthānika) or supernormal power (lit. ‘fruit of higher knowledge’, abhijñā-phala = nairmāṇika). (For these four types of dharma, see also § 2.4.3.2.3)

9.3.4. Classic list in AKB

AKB enumerates a total of 46 caitta-s differentiated into six classes in the Sarvāstivāda system:

I. mahābhūmikā dharmāḥ 10
II. kuśala-mahābhūmikā dharmāḥ 10
III. kleśa-mahābhūmikā dharmāḥ 6
IV. akuśala-mahābhūmikā dharmāḥ 2
V. parītta-kleśa-bhūmikā dharmāḥ 10
VI. aniyatā dharmāḥ (indeterminate dharma-s) 8

(See chart in § 2.4.2 for the items listed under each class).

This classification represents more or less the classic one adhered to by the Sarvāstivādins, although slight variants are to be noted. Thus, the post AKB Avatāra, apparently inheriting the tradition of PrŚ, enumerates the caitta-s under vedanā, saṃjñā and citta-samprayukta-samskāra, in conformity with the five-skandha taxonomy.

Below, we will discuss only the mahābhūmika-dharma-s on account of their importance as universals. However, we shall also make some comments on the parītta-kleśa-bhūmika-dharma-s and the aniyatā-dharma-s on account of their relative obscure nature. The definitions of the caitta-s given in the Avatāra are more or less identical with those given in ADV whose author is an avowed Vaibhāṣika, and the reader is referred to this work for the rest of the caitta-s.
9.3.4.1. The ten universal thought-concomitants (*mahābhūmika-dharma*)

The word *bhūmi* is explained as “the sphere of movement” (*gati-viṣaya*). The sphere of movement of a *dharma* is the *bhūmi* to which it belongs (*yo hi yasya gati-viṣayah sa tasya bhūmir ity ucyate*). The ten *citta*-s to be enumerated below are called “great *bhūmi*” *dharma*-s because they are always conascent with any *citta*. That is, they always exist in every moment of thought. They are the distinct forces which together make possible the operation of consciousness. However, within the early *Sarvāstivāda* lineage itself, the acceptance of the doctrine of the *mahābhūmika*-s is far from being unanimous. In the time of *Samghabhadra*, the *Sautrāntika* leader *Śrīlāta* asserts that there are only three *mahābhūmikadharma*-s — *vedanā*, *saṃjñā* and *cetanā*. (See below, § 9.5).

9.3.4.1.1. Sensation (*vedanā*) is that force which contributes to the mental ability of sensation or feeling. It is the threefold experience (*anubhāva*) of pleasurable, unpleasurable and neutral feelings produced by different psycho-physical states (*kāyacitta-avasthāviśeṣa*) born of the coming together of an object (which is, respectively, desirable, undesirable or neutral), the sense faculty and the corresponding consciousness. It is that which causes the consciousness of an unenlightened being to be always tainted with craving.

9.3.4.1.2. Volition (*cetanā*) — That which causes the mind to be karmically creative (*citta-abhisamskāra*). It is the mental *karma*. The *Avatāra* describes it thus: “It moves forth (*pra-vyand*) the thought.” *Samghabhadra’s definition* runs: “*cetanā* is that which causes *citta* to do *kuśala*, *akuśala* and *avyākṛta* [karma], resulting in good, bad and neutral [vipāka]. On account of the existence of *cetanā*, the *citta* has the activity of moving forth with regard to the object. It is like a magnet, owing to the force of which iron can move forth.”

9.3.4.1.3. Ideation (*saṃjñā*)

This contributes to the mental ability to form definite ideas or concepts. It is that which grasps the marks — ‘male’, ‘female’, etc. — of an object (*viṣaya-nimittodgraha*). *Samghabhadra’s definition* defines it thus: “That which causes the determination and grasping of the diverse forms (*nimitta*) of male, female, etc., is named ideation.” The definition in the *Avatāra* says: “With regard to matter like blue, yellow, ..., *dharma*-s such as males and females, etc. — it comprehends them, [in each case,] by
conceptually combining together (eka-√jñā) their appearances (nimitta), names (nāma) and the signified (artha). It is the cause of reasoning (vitarka) and investigation (vicāra).”

9.3.4.14. Predilection/inclination (chanda)

This is the desire for action (kartu-kāmatā). The Avatāra33 says: “It accords with vigor (vīrya), [arising from the thought]: ‘I will make such and such an undertaking.’”34 Thus, predilection or desire in this general sense is indispensable for the undertaking of any action — skillful or unskillful. The desire for the acquisition of skillful dharma-s, called kuśala-dharma-cchanda, is encouraged in the spiritual practitioners and is specifically distinguished from desire in the bad sense of greed (rāga) or craving (tṛṣṇā).35

9.3.4.15. Contact (sparśa)

This is the contact born of the coming together of the sense faculty, the object and the consciousness (indriya-viṣaya-vijñāna-sannipātajā sprṛṣṭih); it is also by virtue of this dharma that the three are in contact. “It has the characteristic of enlivening the caitasika-dharma-s.”

The early Sarvāstivādin Dārṣṭāntikas deny the reality of contact, citing the sūtra passage which speaks of the coming together of the three — the visual faculty, the visible and the visual consciousness — as contact. So also the Sautrāntika Śrīlāta.37 The MVŚ compilers argue that contact is not the mere meeting of these three. They in fact serve as the conditions for the arising of a real entity called contact. Without the operation of this real force, the fact of contact among the three would be impossible.38

9.3.4.16. Understanding (prajñā)

This, defined as the investigation of dharma-s (dharma-pravicaya), is one of the most important caitta-s. For the Ābhidharmikas, “apart from dharma-pravicaya (= prajñā), there is no proper means for the appeasement of defilements on account of which the world wanders in the ocean of existence”.39 In its pure form, it is abhidharma per se.40 The specific understanding that operates in the discernment of the four noble truths in the course of spiritual progress is called discriminative deliberation (/consideration) (pratisamkhya).41 It is through this that absolute cessation of a defilement, and finally nirvāṇa (= pratisamkhya-nirodha), is acquired. In other words, when fully perfected, prajñā is the perfect wisdom of a Buddha. However, in its general functioning,
it may be pure or impure, right or erroneous. Thus, all views, both right or false, are _prajñā_ in their essential nature. Likewise, _asamprajanya_ and _akliśta-ajñāna_ (§ 10.4) are also _prajñā_. _Prajñā_ is in fact the _sine qua non_ for the element of understanding in any perceptual process. Samghabhadra explains that, among the various _caitta_-s conjoined with a _citta_, it is _prajñā_ alone that has the function of being aware. It plays a predominant role in powering the mental capacity of conceptual discrimination. The definition in the _Avatāra_ is typically abhidharmic in emphasis:

Understanding is the investigation (_pravicaya_) of _dharma_-s. It is the examination (_upalakṣaṇa_), as the case may be, of the following eight kinds of _dharma_-s: inclusion (_saṃgraha_), conjunction (_saṃprayoga_), endowment (_saṃvāgama_), causes (_hetu_), conditions (_pratyaya_), fruitions (_phala_), specific-characteristic (_sva-lakṣaṇa_), common-characteristic (_sāmānya-lakṣaṇa_).

9.3.4.17. Mindfulness (_smṛti_)

This enables the mind to remember clearly the object (_cittasyārthābhilapanā_), to be mindful of what has been done, what is being done and what will be done. The operation of this _caitta_ becomes particularly important in the practice of meditation. Like _prajñā_, it too plays an important role in the functioning of conceptual discrimination (See infra, § 11).

9.3.4.18. Mental application (_manaskāra_)

This alerts (_ā-

bhuj_) the _citta_ and directs it toward the object (_āvarjayati_). The _Avatāra_ says: “It is also the holding in mind (_saṃvāhāra_) of an object which has earlier been experienced (_pūrvānubhūta_).” This term is also often used in the Abhidharma in the sense of meditation or contemplation; and it would seem that this had been so before it came to be formally classified as a thought-concomitant. A contemplation on the real nature of things is called a “mental application to the real” (_tattva-manaskāra_). In contrast, a contemplation that involves visualization is called a “mental application to resolve” (_adhimokṣa/adhimukti-manaskāra_). In the following classification of three types of mental application, the first two pertain to the real, the third, to resolve:

(1) Mental application to intrinsic nature (_svalakṣaṇa-manaskāra_) — such as the contemplation that _rūpa_ is characterized by the susceptibility of change and obstruction; _vedanā_ is characterized by experience; etc;
9.3.4.1.9. Determination (adhimokṣa/adhimukti)

This is a very important mental force, particularly in meditative praxis and the process leading to liberation. In its “ordinary” function in the process of cognition, it contributes to making our mind to be determined/ascertained with regard to the object being cognized. The Avatāra defines thus:

It is the affirmation (avadhrāna) with regard to an object, i.e., it enables one to be free from diffidence with regard to an object being perceived (cittasya viṣayāpatisaṃkoca).

This Abhidharma definition of adhimokṣa/adhimukti is inherited by the Yogācāra. Sthiramati’s commentary on the Pañcaskandha-prakaraṇa brings out the same essential meaning more elaborately:

‘[With regard to] the ascertained object’ means: with regard to the five aggregates, etc. In accordance with the Buddha’s saying that “rūpa is like foam, vedanā is like a bubble, saṃjñā is like a mirage. saṃskāra-s are like a banana tree, vijñāna is like an illusory object” — they are accordingly ascertained. Or rather, in accordance with the intrinsic nature belonging to the particular dharma-s, one accordingly gives rise to ascertainment. The meaning of ascertainment is affirmation (印持 = 印可; avadhrāna). It has the function of [enabling the mind] not to be misled (/influenced) by others.

Samghabhadra mentions the following opinion of certain Sarvāstivāda masters:
adhi means dominance or sovereignty (増勝), mokṣa means liberation (解脫). This [thought-concomitant] enables the mind to operate freely, unobstructed, with regard to the object; like adhiśīla, etc.⁵³

9.3.4.19.1. Different nuances of adhimokṣa

Adhimokṣa is perhaps one of the most problematic terms to translate. Considering the various descriptions given in these abhidharma texts, however, it seems to include the following connotations (some of which are probably not entirely distinct from others):

(i) affirmation/commitment/acceptance/approval;
(ii) decisiveness/determination/resolve;
(iii) conviction_faith;
(iv) liking/inclination;
(v) mental freedom resulting from the eradication of indecision;
(vi) mental freedom resulting from detachment.

It may be noted that this term seems to bear some similarities particularly with śraddhā and chanda. Samghabhadra⁵⁴ explains the relationship among the three: “śraddhā is that which serves as the basis (āśraya) for chanda and an aid for adhimokṣa.” MVŚ⁵⁵ speaks of faith as being of two modes of activity or forms: faith in the form of acceptance/affirmation (信可), and faith in the form of liking/inclination (信樂). As regards adhimokṣa as liberation from defilement (vi), MVŚ explains that

with regard to all dharma-s, there are two types of liberation: one, unconditioned, viz., pratisamkyā-nirodha; two, conditioned, viz., adhimokṣa.

[The conditioned adhimokṣa is only sovereignty over an object, not disjunction (visaṃyoga; i.e., not pratisamkyā-nirodha).]⁵⁶ This [adhimokṣa] is again two-fold: 1. defiled, viz., improper (mithyā) adhimokṣa; 2. non-defiled, viz., proper (samyañc) adhimokṣa.

This [latter] is again two-fold: 1, with-outflow, viz., those conjoined with the contemplation of the impure and mindfulness of breathing; 2, outflow-free, viz., those conjoined with duḥkha-dharma-jñāna-kṣānti (see § 16), etc.⁵⁷

MVŚ also distinguishes between right adhimokṣa and right vimokṣa: The former is the cause, the latter is the fruit. Further, the former pertains to the stage of preparation (prayoga), the latter, the stage of perfection.⁵⁸ In such contexts, the basic meaning of adhimokṣa is undoubtedly freedom or liberation.
It is thanks to this mental force that the meditator is able to practise the visualization of the impure (aśubhā), visualizing the different stages of the decomposition of a corpse, etc. Likewise he must rely on this force to practise other important meditations such as the four immeasurables (apramāṇa), visualizing the radiation of loving-kindness, etc as finally pervading the whole realm of beings; etc. Although it cannot directly abandon defilements, it helps an ordinary worldling to be able to suppress them. And since a mental application to determination can lead to a mental application to the real, the defilements come to be abandoned mediately. Moreover, although the liberation qua adhimokṣa (i.e. adhimokṣa in its intrinsic nature) is a conditioned one, it forms the basis for the practitioner to finally progress towards the acquisition of the unconditioned liberation (which is pratisamkhyā-nirodha in its intrinsic nature). In fact, it is stressed that “even if a practitioner has vigorously cultivated the two requisites of śamatha and vipaśyanā at the preparatory stage, unless he generates adhimokṣa and becomes resolved towards the attainment of Nirvāṇa, he will never to able to abandon defilements and acquire liberation of the mind.”

9.3.4.10. Concentration (samādhi)

Concentration, defined as “the one-pointedness of the mind”, enables the citta to remain focused on an object. The Avatāra describes it thus:

It controls the monkey-like citta so that it can operate (vartate) on a single object. The Vaibhāṣika says thus: “Just as a snake that is confined in a bamboo pipe does not move in a crooked manner, citta, when concentrated (samāhita), proceeds upright.

Concentration may be either defiled or non-defiled; in the former case, it is also named dispersion (散亂; vikṣepa). Within the single moment in the cognitive process, there is always the abiding of the mind on the object, thanks to this force called concentration. But when the thought happens to be conjoined with concomitant, distraction (auddhatya), it is made to fluctuate with regard to the object within a series of moments. This is called dispersion, though in its intrinsic nature it is also none other than the same dharma, concentration.

9.3.4.2. The indeterminate thought-concomitants (aniyata-dharma)

Among the extant abhidharma texts, AKB was apparently the first to make an explicit mention of this class. In stanza 23c–d of chapter II of AKB, Vasubandhu states that “the caitta-s are of five types, in respect of the division into the mahābhūmi[-ka], etc.” But at the end of the
definitions of all the caitta-s of the five classes, he remarks that “there are also other [caitta-s] which are indeterminate (aniyata) — reasoning (vitarka), investigation (vicāra), regret (kaukṛtya), sleep (middha), etc.”

66 This class seems to be acceptable to the Vaibhāṣikas; Saṃghabhadra, for one, mentions it in the same way.

Yaśomitra explains that they refer to “those which sometimes exist in a skillful, sometimes in an unskillful, sometimes in a non-defined thought.” Thus, regret can arise in either a skillful or unskillful thought: In the former case, one regrets not having done a good action or having committed a bad action. In the latter case, one regrets not having done a bad action or having accomplished a good action. Likewise, sleep is unskillful if it is indulged in unnecessarily, but skillful when the body needs to be refreshed.

Yaśomitra further remarks that by the word “etc.” in Vasubandhu’s prose commentary, the following are to be included: (i) secondary defilements (upakleśa) such as disgust (arati), yawning (vijṛmbhikā), exhaustion (tandrī), uneven consumption of food (bhakte asamatā) (these four together with mental sunken-ness (cetaso līnatva) occur in AKB as the five nourishments (āhāra) of torpor-sleep (styāna-middha)); and (ii) defilements such as greed (rāga), etc. “These [thought-concomitants], greed, etc., are indeterminate with regard to [their inclusion in] any of the five classes: They are not mahābhūmika-s because they are not found in all cases of mind; not kuśala-mahābhūmika-s because they are not connected with skillfulness (kuśalatva-ayogāt); not kleśa-mahābhūmika-s because they are not found in all cases of defiled thought — for greed does not exist in a mind conjoined with hostility (sa-pratighe cetasi) nor does hostility exist in a mind conjoined with greed. (sarāge cetasi)”

He further quotes a stanza by ācārya Vasumitra which states that eight aniyata dharma-s are recognized — vitarka, vicāra, kaukṛtya, middha, pratigha, sakti (= rāga), māna and vicikitsā. It is to be noted that Pu Guang later followed this tradition and explained that the word “etc.” in AKB stanza subsumes greed, hostility, conceit and doubt.

However, Yaśomitra here objects to the number of eight, for “why are view (drṣṭi), etc., not conceded as indeterminate as well — since false view does not arise in a thought conjoined with either hostility or doubt?”
9.3.4.3. Defilements of restricted scope (parītta-kleśa-bhūmika-dharma)

This class was probably first enumerated in the Saptavastuka of the PrŚ. The ten defilements in this class are: 1. anger (krodha), 2. enmity (upanāha), 3. concealment (mrakṣa), 4. depraved opinionatedness (pradāśa/pradāsa), 5. dissimulation (śāṭhya), 6. deceptiveness (māyā), 7. pride (mada), 8. avarice (mātsarya), 9. jealousy (īrṣyā), 10. harmfulness (vihiṃsā).

MVŚ explains why there are called defilements of restricted scope:

Those dharma-s [of defilement] which obtain in some [but not all] defiled thoughts are called dharma-s of defilement of restricted scope. That is: the seven — anger, enmity, depraved opinionatedness, concealment, avarice, jealousy and harmfulness — are exclusively unskillful; dissimulation, deceptiveness and pride may be either unskillful or non-defined. Moreover, the seven, anger, etc., pertain only to the sensuality sphere; dissimulation and deceptiveness pertain to the sensuality sphere and the first dhyāna; pride pertain to all three spheres. Moreover, these ten are abandonable by cultivation only and pertain exclusively to the mental stage ( mano-bhūmi). When one of them arises, there is definitely no another. Being mutually contradictory [among one another in nature], they are called dharma-s of defilement of restricted scope.

All defilements arise on account of ignorance, these so called restricted defilements are no exception. In AKB, Vasubandhu's explanation brings out their relation to ignorance:

Because these defilements of restricted scope are conjoined only with the ignorance which is abandonable by cultivation and which pertains to the mental stage.

Yaśomitra comments on this:

Restricted means little/minor (alpaka). What is that? Mere-ignorance (avidyā-mātra); this means solely avidyā (avidyaiva kevalā). ‘With that mere-ignorance’ means ‘not with other defilements, greed, etc’.

There is a controversy in MVŚ as to whether the ignorance which arises together with these restricted defilements are the “conjoined ignorance” (samprayukta-avidyā) — ignorance always arising in conjunction with other defilements — or the “independent ignorance” (āvenikī avidyā) which arises through its own strength. (See infra, §12.6.1.1.1.)
compilers’ position is that the ignorance arising through the strength of any of these defilements is not to be called the independent ignorance. On the other hand, there is another opinion which asserts that this is the independent ignorance abandonable by cultivation.

Both these opinions among the early Sarvāstivāda masters appear to have been transmitted to later times. In this context, we may note Pu Guang’s following comments which clearly indicate his knowledge of the existence of these two positions:

(I) The independent ignorance in such cases of thought is so called because it is not conjoined with other defilements — both the fundamental ones such as greed, etc, and the secondary defilements such as anger, etc, and also the indeterminate ones such as regret (kaukṛtya) — and arises through its own strength. It is abandonable by vision [into the four truths] only.

(II) The independent ignorance includes those ignorances which are not conjoined with the fundamental defilements such as greed, etc, as well as those ignorances conjoined with anger, etc., and regret, etc.

Pu Guang remarks that the position of AKB, as reflected in this discussion of the defilements of restricted scope, is the same as that of MVŚ. Saṃghabhadra, who allows the ignorance referred to here to be called “independent”, shares the second view above.79

9.4. Sarvāstivāda doctrine of conjunction (samprayoga)

The doctrine that the citta and caitta-s always arise and operate in union is expressed by the notion of conjunction (samprayoga). However, the early Sarvāstivāda ācārya-s interpreted this notion differently.80 For Vasumitra, samprayoga means mutually giving rise to each other and having the same basis (āśraya). For Dharmatrāta, it is companionship or association. The vijñāna and caitta-s are samprayuktta only if they mutually accommodate each other, co-arise and take the same object. For Ghoṣaka, it refers to the sameness (samatā) of the citta and the caitta-s with regard to basis, object (ālambana), mode of activity (ākāra), and action (kriyā).

Eventually, a fivefold equality or sameness (pañcadhā samatā) among the citta and caitta-s came to be accepted as the standard requirements for the notion of conjunction:81
I. Same basis: both the citta and caitta-s must be supported by the same basis (āśraya), i.e., the sense organ.

II. Same object (ālambana): they must have the same object.

III. Same mode of activity (ākāra): the mode of apprehending the percept must be the same; thus, if the citta apprehends greenness the caitta-s too apprehend likewise. (See also § 10.8 for a further discussion on ākāra.)

IV. Same time (kāla): they must be conascent.

V. Same substance (dravya): in a given citta there is conjoined only one vedanā (either pleasurable, unpleasurable or neutral), one samjñā (either the idea of ‘small’ or ‘big’, or ‘male’ or ‘female’, etc.), etc.

As to whether a citta can be conjoined with another citta, the Vaibhāṣika answers in the negative: “A citta may be conjoined with the caitta-s; the caitta-s may also be conjoined with [other] caitta-s; the caitta-s again may be conjoined with a citta. There can be no conjunction (samprayoga) between one citta and another, as no two citta-s co-arise within one [and the same] person.”

9.5. Dārșṭāntika and Sautrāntika Doctrine of successive arising

However, it is to be noted that in spite of the questionable attribution of the meaning of ‘companionship’ to Dharmatrāta, he, in reality — together with other early Dārșṭāntikas — asserts that the citta-caitta-s arise successively and not simultaneously, like a group of merchants who pass through a narrow road one by one. For them, samprayoga means not simultaneous association but the association or ‘companionship’ of two mental dharma-s one immediately following the other without anything else in between the successive arising of the two.

Thus, in the early Dārșṭāntika perspective, when a citta is said to be conjoined with a caitta — say sukha vedanā — what it means is that the thought that arises at this given moment is one of pleasurable feeling. A so-called caitta is not a real mental entity distinct from the citta; it is simply a specific state or mode of functioning of the mind itself. This is precisely the definition given by ‘some other masters’ (unnamed) in AKB. These are in fact the followers of the Dārșṭāntika master Buddhadeva whose view, as given in MVŚ, is that there is no caitta apart from the citta. This argument of Buddhadeva is also recorded in ADV.
Dharmatrāta states that “the citta-caitta-s are [but] the specific modes of cetanā (cetanā-viśesa)”. This means that whatever one may choose to call it — citta or caitta — the mind arises specifically; mental activity as such being characterized by cetanā — ‘consciousness’, ‘understanding’. As a matter of fact, citta (> caitta), cetas (> caitasika) and cetanā are all derived from the same root √cit and cetanā, in a more general sense (than that of ‘volition’), can mean ‘understanding’, ‘consciousness’, etc., thus referring to mental activity in a general sense. Understood in this way, then, Dharmatrāta’s view is not so much different from Buddhadeva’s. The only significant difference seems to be that whereas Buddhadeva would absolutely not allow any reality status of the caitta-s apart from citta itself, Dharmatrāta would view the caitta-s as being distinguishable from (hence not exactly identical with) the citta/vijñāna inasmuch as they belong to the different stages of mental activity subsequent to the initial arising of consciousness.

A modification of Dharmatrāta’s doctrine is recorded in AKB:

According to some, sensation [arises] subsequently to contact (sparśa). First, there are the sense faculty and the object, then the consciousness. The coming together of these three is contact. From contact as the condition, sensation [arises] subsequently in the third moment.90

This doctrine is ascribed by the commentarial tradition to Śrīlāta.91 Ny explains his doctrine (quoted as “the Sthavira” in the Ny) as follows:

There are only three caitta-s [i.e., vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā].92

The samskāra-skandha comprises cetanā alone — the samskāra-s, manaskāra, etc., all have cetanā as their intrinsic nature.93

Śrīlāta claims that he bases himself on the sūtra passage which says:

Conditioned by the eye and the visibles, visual consciousness arises. The coming together of the three is contact (regarded as another distinct real caitta by the Sarvāstivāda). Born together are vedanā, saṃjñā, cetanā.94

The Vaibhāṣika capitalizes on the phrase ‘born together’ (sahajāta) in support of their doctrine of simultaneous arising of thought and thought-concomitants. The Sautrāntika, although equally leaning on this scriptural passage for their caitta doctrine, interprets ‘born together’ differently:
‘Born together’ does not mean ‘born together with contact’. …
This word ‘together’ has also been observed to mean ‘immediately after’ (samanantaram).\(^95\)

That ‘arising together’ can be taken to mean ‘arising one immediately after another’, reminds us of the notion of samprayoga advocated by Dharmatrāta and others in MVŚ. (See above).

The Pāli\(^96\) version corresponding to the above-quoted sūtra passage does not contain the term sahaŋāta (cakkhum ca paṭicca rūpe ca uppaŋjaŋi cakkhuviṇṇānam | tinnam saŋgati phasso | phassa-paccayā vedanā | vedanā-paccayā taṅhā | ayaṃ kho bhikkhave dukkhaṃ samudayo \)). This would lend support to the sequential model of the Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika: vijñāṇa → vedanā → saṃjñā → cetanā. It is apparently on this basis that Śrīlāta acknowledges only the three caittā-s mentioned in the sūtra and regards all the so-called caitta-s other than vedanā and saṃjñā as merely cetanā-viśeṣa.

The *Satyasiddhi-śāstra (SatŚ) too apparently inherits the early Dārṣṭāntika standpoint and repudiates the Sarvāstivāda doctrines of distinct caitta-s and samprayoga:

\[\text{Vedanā, saṃjñā and samskāra, etc., are the various names of the citta. For instance, [in the sūtra,] one and the same smṛti has five different names: smṛty-upasthāna, smṛtīndriya, smṛti-bala, smṛti-bodhyaṅga and samyak-smṛti; likewise for vīrya, etc. … Thus, the same citta, at different times, receives different names. Accordingly, we know that [the caitta-s] are none other than the citta…}^{97}\]

There are no conjoined dharma-s. Why? Because, there being no caitta-s, with what is the citta conjoined? Furthermore, the different characteristics, sensation, etc., cannot be simultaneous. Furthermore, cause and effect do not co-exist: Consciousness is the cause of ideation and other dharma-s, and these dharma-s should not exist simultaneously. Hence, we know that there is no samprayoga.\(^98\)

\subsection{9.6. Difference in functionality between \textit{citta} and \textit{caitta-s}}

With the development of the doctrine of the caitta-s as entities distinct from but conascent with the citta, the functional distinctions between the two came to be articulated. Citta or vijñāṇa is the general discernment or apprehension with respect to each individual object.\(^99\) This discernment is the mere grasping of the object itself, without apprehending any of its particularities. A caitta, on the other hand, apprehends the
particularities of the object.\(^{100}\) Thus, in a visual perception, the \textit{citta}, i.e., visual consciousness in this case, can only apprehend a blue object. It is only in conjunction with the \textit{caittra} called \textit{saṃjñā}, whose function it is to categorize, and \textit{prajñā} whose function it is to discriminatively conceptualize, that the mind apprehends specifically: “This is blue.”

AKB defines consciousness as follows:

> Consciousness is the cognition relative to each [object] \((\textit{vijñānam prativijñaptiḥ})\). The cognition \((\textit{vijñapti})\), apperception \((\textit{upalabdhi})\), relative to each object, is called the consciousness-aggregate.\(^{101}\)

On this, Samghabhadra comments:

> ‘Consciousness is cognition’ in the sense that it grasps the characteristic of an object in a general manner. ‘Cognition relative to each object’ means that each [type of consciousness — visual, etc. —] grasps in a general manner the object specific to it [— \textit{rūpa}, etc.]. That is, although numerous objects — \textit{rūpa}, etc. — are present, visual consciousness grasps only \textit{rūpa}, not \textit{śabda}, etc.; only blue, etc., not ‘It is blue’, etc., or ‘It is agreeable, not agreeable’, etc., or ‘a male, a female’, etc., or ‘a human, a post’, etc., or ‘It is a gain, loss’, etc. The same applies to the other types of consciousness each of which grasps its specific object in a general manner.\(^{102}\)

The \textit{dharma} being cognized serves as a condition qua object, \textit{ālambana-pratyaya}. That is, it is the indispensable condition for the generation of that consciousness which arises with an image (\textit{pratibimba; gzugs brnyan}), as in the case of a sensory perception, or with a mode of understanding (\textit{ākāra}), as in the case of a mental cognition (see § 7.1.3, § 10.7). MVŚ\(^{103}\) compares this \textit{pratyaya} to things of the nature of supporting, such as a walking stick.

ADV explains that while the \textit{citta} is conascent with the \textit{caittra}-s, it is distinguishable as the chief substance (\textit{pradhāna-dravya}) inasmuch as it is the \textit{citta} that grasps the mere object. The specifics pertaining to the object so apprehended are grasped simultaneously\(^{104}\) by a \textit{caittra} — \textit{saṃjñā} ideates, \textit{smṛti} recollects, \textit{prajñā} examines, etc. The implication is that without the raw or general grasping of the object to begin with, there cannot be the specific functioning of the \textit{caittra}-s. Accordingly, the \textit{caittra}-s are functionally subordinate to and dependent on the \textit{citta} which is like the governor (\textit{rāja-sthānīya}) in relation to the governed. It is by the \textit{citta} that the fundamental essence of a being (\textit{mūla-sattva-dravya}) is designated.\(^{105}\) That the \textit{citta} is the chief is also to be understood.
from the fact that the unenlightened are attached to it — not to the 
caitta-s — as the Ātman.

Moreover, when a person is liberated, one speaks only of the citta 
being liberated even though it is at that moment being accompanied 
by caitta-s and dharma-s belonging to other skandha-s. This is once 
again because these accompanying dharma-s are all dependent on the 
citta, and, when the citta is pure, the other skandha-s too are likewise 
pure. ADV further invokes the scriptural authority: It is said in the 
sūtra that beings are defiled or purified on account of the defilement and 
purification of the citta.

According to Xuanzang’s disciple, there were four ancient schools or 
views on the functional relationship between the citta and the caitta-s:

I. The citta apprehends the general characteristic — rūpa, śabda, 
etc. — and a caitta apprehends the specific characteristic in 
keeping with its functional nature — agreeable, disagreeable, 
etc.; for, with regard to a given substance, there cannot be 
more than one apprehensional function at one time.

II. The function proper to the citta is the apprehension (正 
取) of the general characteristic; it can also apprehend the 
specific characteristics. The caitta-s each apprehend their 
corresponding characteristic but cannot apprehend the general 
characteristics. This is because the citta has greater strength 
but the caitta is weak, therefore the caitta can perform only 
one function.

III. The caitta-s each can properly apprehend their own 
characteristics and at the same time secondarily apprehend 
the general characteristics. The citta can only apprehend the 
general characteristics but not the specific characteristics. This 
is because the citta is like the ‘king’ in relation to the caitta-s: 
where the citta operates, it, being the king, is necessarily 
followed by the caitta-s which are its subordinates — i.e., the 
caitta-s also do what the king does. However, where the 
caitta-s go, the citta does not — the king does not follow the 
subordinates.

IV. Both citta and caitta-s apprehend both the general and specific 
characteristics. But the citta primarily apprehends the general 
characteristics and secondarily apprehends the specific 
characteristics; whereas the caitta primarily apprehends the 
specific characteristic in keeping with its own nature and also 
secondarily apprehends the general characteristics and the 
specific characteristics proper to other caitta-s.
9.7. Difference between the first five and the sixth consciousnesses

Although all six consciousnesses are equally consciousness in nature and are equally dependent on the object and the sense organ in their arising, they differ in the way they grasp objects. Firstly, mental consciousness can grasp objects pertaining to the three periods of time. In terms of species of objects, it can grasp all dharma-s, conditioned and unconditioned. In contrast, the five sensory consciousnesses can grasp only the present objects and only those specific to them, i.e., visual consciousness can grasp only rūpa, etc.

Another important difference is stated in MVŚ as follows:

The five sensory consciousness are exclusively without discrimination (vikalpa). The sixth consciousness may or may not have discrimination: When it occurs in meditation, it is always without discrimination. If it is not in meditation, there can be discrimination, for discrimination in the form of examination occurs universally with non-concentrated (asamāhita) mental consciousness.

This difference involves the notion of the three types of discrimination:

1. Svabhāva-vikalpa — discrimination which is in the very nature of consciousness itself. It is vitarka and vicāra — or vitarka according to Saṃghabhadra.

2. Anusmaraṇa-vikalpa — discrimination in the form of recollection. It is the smṛti associated with mental consciousness.

3. Abhinirūpaṇā-vikalpa — discrimination in the form of examination. It is the non-concentrated prajñā pertaining to the mental sphere (mano-bhūmi).

The first five consciousnesses can have only svabhāva-vikalpa. Although they are also always associated with smṛti and prajñā, their functions of recollection and discrimination, respectively, are feeble therein. Accordingly, although they can discriminate in a general manner the object proper to their specific domain — visual consciousness can know a rūpa, say, a blue color — it cannot know “This is blue”. In contrast, mental consciousness can have all the three types of distincational functions. Sthiramati explains that the prajñā conjoined with a sensory consciousness is not named a abhinirūpaṇā-vikalpa on account of the fact that it does not take name as its object.
On account of its superimpositional function, mental consciousness plays the key role in the *samsāra* process of defiling and purification. MVŚ\textsuperscript{115} speaks of six events uniquely distinguishing mental consciousness from the first five consciousnesses: 1. spiritual retrogression, 2. detachment from defilements, 3. death, 4. birth, 5. the cutting off of the skillful roots, 6. the relinking with the skillful roots which have been cut off.

As to whether, like mental consciousness, the sensory consciousnesses too can project *karma*, various opinions are recorded in MVŚ:

Herein, there are two kinds of origination (*samutthāna*): origination qua cause (*hetu-samutthāna*) and the moment-origination (*kṣaṇa-samutthāna*, i.e., origination at the very moment of the action). The origination qua cause is the [initial] propelling thought (*pravartakaṃ cittam*). The moment-origination is the subsequent propelling cause (*anuvartakaṃ cittam*).

Question: Are the five sensory consciousnesses also capable of serving as both types of origination and project bodily and vocal *karma*-s?

One opinion: The five sensory consciousnesses cannot project bodily and vocal *karma*-s because mental consciousness alone can serve as the [initial] propeller and subsequent propeller, causing the *karma* to come into the presence. The five sensory consciousnesses cannot serve as the [initial] propeller and subsequent propeller, causing the *karma* to come into the presence. …

Another opinion: The five sensory consciousnesses can also project bodily and vocal *karma*-s because mental consciousness can serve as the [initial] propeller and subsequent propeller; the five sensory consciousnesses cannot serve as the [initial] propeller, but can serve as the subsequent propeller. …

According to the Venerable Saṅghavasu (僧伽伐蘇): The five sensory consciousnesses can also project bodily and vocal *karma*-s, serving as the origination qua cause and the moment-origination. …

The correct opinion (如是説者): The five sensory consciousnesses cannot serve as the origination qua cause to project bodily and vocal *karma*-s because mental consciousness can serve as the [initial] propeller and subsequent propeller for bodily and vocal *karma*-s; the five sensory consciousnesses can serve only as the subsequent propeller, but not the [initial] propeller.\textsuperscript{116}
However, Samghabhadra argues that the sensory consciousnesses can be skillful, unskillful and non-defined (i.e., are not exclusively non-defined). They can therefore also generate defilements:

[A sensory consciousness,] although staying for one thought moment in the object (viśaya), is capable of grasping marks (nimitta); they are therefore morally definable. Thus, the sūtra says: “Having seen rūpa-s with the eyes, he does not grasp the marks [or] the subsidiary marks (anuvyañjana) (sa ca kākṣusā rūpāni drṣṭvā na nimitta-grāhī bhavati / nānuvyañjana-grāhī).”¹¹⁷ Because the visible objects are grasped by two consciousnesses, there is first the arising of visual consciousness that grasps the marks of rūpa, then the arising of mental consciousness that grasps its subsidiary marks. Thus, the sūtra intends to show that because visual consciousness can grasp marks, it can also generate defilements.

But if so, why is mental consciousness alone said to be discriminative (vikalpaka)?

It should be understood that it is only on account of the force of discrimination that there come to be the various faults. ... The sensory consciousnesses [are said to be without discrimination in the sense that they have no discrimination in the form of examination and recollection]; but it is always conjoined with the intrinsic discrimination....

Sentient beings are of different natures; some with feeble defilements, others with strong defilements. For those with feeble defilements, there must first be the generation of false discrimination (虚妄分別; abhūta-parikalpa) before a defilement can come into play (sam-ud-ā-√car). For those with strong defilements, without depending on vikalpa, a defilement arises as soon as it accords with the object. Accordingly, there are cases where a defiled mental consciousness first arises, and other cases where another type of defiled consciousness first arises ... Thus, the five sensory consciousnesses are of all the three moral natures.¹¹⁸

9.8. Original nature of thought

The question of the original nature of the citta was one of the major controversies in Abhidharma Buddhism. One major doctrine is that it is originally or intrinsically pure. This doctrine seems to have been originally connected with meditational practice, for in the context of the three-fold training, śīla-samādhi-prajñā, samādhi is also often given in the sūtra as citta. This is because meditational practice is seen as
a process of removing the mental hindrances so that prajñā can, as it were, shine forth unobstructed. This seems to have inspired the doctrine of the original pure nature of citta.\textsuperscript{119}

The Theravāda, which holds this doctrinal position, is apparently inspired by the following passage in the Aṅguttara-nikāya:

This mind, O bhikkhu-s, is luminous (pabhassara). But it is defiled by adventitious defilements (āgantuka upakkilesa). The uninstructed worldling does not understand this as it really is; therefore for him there is no mental development.

This mind, O bhikkhu-s, is luminous, and it is freed from adventitious defilements. The instructed worldling understands this as it really is; therefore for him there is mental development.\textsuperscript{120}

The Pāli commentary identifies citta in this context as the bhavaṅga-citta — the citta in its intrinsic, neutral state (non-arising) — and interprets “luminous” as “pure/clean” (pabhassaran ti paṇḍaraṃ parisuddhaṃ).\textsuperscript{121}

Mental defilement and liberation do not pertain to the bhavaṅga-citta but to the phenomenal citta that arises from the bhavaṅga-citta at the stage of javana, i.e., the stage of karmic volition, skillful or unskillful.

The *Śāriputrābhidharma also cites a very similar passage as the above-quoted Aṅguttara passage.\textsuperscript{122}

From the Samayabhedoparacana-cakra, we learn that the Mahāsāṃghika too holds the same thesis.\textsuperscript{123} The Lakṣaṇānusāra (隨相論) explains as follows:

As the Mahāsāṃghika says: ‘The nature of the mind of beings is originally pure; it is defiled by adventitious dusts (眾生心性本淨，客塵所污). Pure — that is, the three roots of skillfulness. Beings from beginningless time possess adventitious dusts — that is, defilements. The defilements are the defilements of anuśaya, etc. The defilements of anuśaya are the three roots of unskillfulness.\textsuperscript{124}

The Mahāsāṃghika explains that both the roots of skillfulness and unskillfulness are not conjoined with thought — they are potentialities of skillfulness and unskillfulness. (Note that this school has only kuśala and akuśala; no neutral dharma-s). The idea is that the unskillful defilements and thought-concomitants can be removed; the mind in correspondence with the skillful potential is said to be “the originally pure nature of the mind”.

263
In MVŚ, it is also recorded that the Vibhajyavādins too hold a similar view:

Some hold that the nature of thought is originally pure, like the Vibhajyavādins. They say that the nature of thought is originally pure. On account of being defiled by adventitious defilements, it has an impure appearance. … They say that the essential nature of thought does not differ whether it is defiled or undefiled. That is, when the conjoined defilement has not been abandoned, it is called a defiled thought; when the conjoined defilement has been abandoned, it is called an undefiled thought. Just as a copper vessel, when the taint has not been removed, is called a tainted vessel, etc.; when the taint has been removed, a taintless vessel, etc. The same is true for thought.125

Ny records the Vibhajyavāda view as follows:

The Vibhajyvādins assert thus: It is only the thought having greed (sārāga-citta) that now gets liberated, like a vessel having becoming freed from the taint subsequently. It is like a crystal that shows different colors according to the specific color of its supporting basis, a different color arises. Likewise, when the pure thought is defiled by greed, etc., it is called [a thought] having greed, etc. Subsequently it again becomes liberated. The noble scriptures also say that the nature of thought is originally pure and at times is defiled by adventitious defilements.126

MVŚ (110a) also informs that “those who hold the view of a single thought series” (一心相續論者) also maintain that the nature of thought remains the same whether defiled or not, and gives the similes of washing a cloth, refining gold, etc., which are also found in the Aṅguttara nikāya. (A, III, 100):

Some hold that there is only the one citta, like those who hold the single serial continuity of citta. They assert thus: Whether a thought is with proclivities (sānuśaya) or without proclivities, its nature is not different. When the noble path arises, it is opposed to the defilement, not to the nature of citta; it [arises] in order to counteract the defilements, not citta. This is like the case of washing clothes, polishing a mirror, or refining gold, etc.; what it is opposed to are the taints, etc., not the clothes, etc. Likewise the noble path. … Although a difference exists at different times as to whether there is taint or no taint, etc., there is no difference in terms of nature. Likewise the case of citta.
9. The Categories of Thought and Thought-Concomitants

Samghabhadra (Ny, 733a-b) rejects the positions of the Mahāsāṃghika and the Vibhājyavādins. He proposes that the sūtra statements cited by them must be properly interpreted. He explains the Sarvāstivāda position thus: when citta abides in its intrinsic nature, i.e., the neutral nature, it is necessarily pure — essentially agreeing with the Theravāda commentarial tradition. But when it abides in adventitious nature, it can be defiled:

If they assert that citta has purity as its nature, and subsequently turns into being defiled at the stage of being conjoined with defilements, then it should have lost its intrinsic nature (svabhāva). Since it has lost its intrinsic nature, it should not be called citta. Thus, it should be asserted that citta is pure in its original nature and is, at times, defiled by adventitious defilements. If they keep their foolish faith and dare not to deny that this is sūtra, they should know that this sūtra contradicts reasoning and is thus an implicit teaching. … The sūtra … says so with the implicit reference to the original (prakṛti) and adventitious (āgantuka) nature [of citta]. That is, citta in its original nature is necessarily pure. A citta in its adventitious nature may be defiled. Citta in its original nature is the neutral citta which arises freely, being neither sorrowful nor joyful. The different species of sentient beings mostly abide in this citta, for it can exist in all situations. This citta is necessarily pure, being undefiled.

The citta in its adventitious nature refers to the other citta-s. It is not the case that sentient beings mostly abide in it. All [types of citta] may not obtain in some situations, because those who have cut off their roots of skillfulness necessarily do not have skillful thoughts, because at the non-trainee (arhat) stage there is necessarily no defiled [citta], and because this citta may be defiled and not always pure. As it is said: The river water is intrinsically clear; there are times when it becomes turbid on account of adventitious mud. In the same way, it is only with reference to a citta in its serial continuity that one speaks of it as being pure when it abides in its original nature; when it abides in adventitious nature, it is conceded to be temporarily defiled.127

When this citta does not arise in conjunction with defilements, it is liberated. Thus, contrary to the Vibhajyavāda, the lustful (sa-rāga) citta cannot be liberated.

In a similar manner, SatŚ speaks of the Buddha's teaching in this regard as being an expedient teaching:
It is not that the nature of \textit{citta} is not originally pure and becomes impure on account of Adventitious defilements. It is just that the Buddha, for the sake of those who think that \textit{citta} is eternal, speaks of it as becoming impure when defiled by adventitious defilements. Again, for the sake of those lazy beings who, on hearing that \textit{citta} is originally impure, think of its nature as being unalterable and thus do not generate pure \textit{citta-s}, He speaks of it as being originally pure.\textsuperscript{128}
NOTES

2. PrŚ, 692b; MVŚ, 371a–b; etc. AKB, 61: cittam mano ‘tha viññānam ekārtham | Also cf. Entrance, 120.
4. AKB, 61: cinotīti cittam | manuta iti manah | vijnātīti viññānam |
5. AKB, loc. cit.
6. MVŚ, 371a–b.
9. Cf. D, ii, 306; M, iii, 287–8; etc.
10. Paṭisambhidāmagga, 84.
11. Milindapañha, 49.
12. S, iv, 293.
13. T 2, 150b.
15. DSŚ, 494c.
16. T 1612, 848a.
17. PrŚ, 692c–694a.
19. T 26, 920c.
20. T 26, 614b.
22. Study, 164; MVŚ, 220a–b.
23. MVŚ, 220b–c.
25. Entrance, 83 ff.
26. AKB, 54 ff.
28. Entrance, 81.
29. Ny, 384b.
30. Ny, loc. cit.
31. Entrance, 80.
33. Entrance 82.
34. Cf. ADV, 69: chandah kartukāmatā viryāṅgabhūtah | Also Siddhi(C), 28a: “What is chanda? It has as its nature the aspiration for a desired object; and it serves as the basis for virya.”
35 Cf. AKB, 289.
36 Avatāra — cf. Entrance, 82. Also, ADV, 69: viśayendriyaviṣṇāna sannipāta jīvaśaṃkṣeṣaṃ vijñānaṃ jīvanalakṣaṇaṃ sparśaṃ.
37 Ny, 384b.
38 MVŚ, 760a.
39 AKB, 2.
40 AKB, loc. cit.; cf. § 1.2.
41 AKB, 4: yaḥ sāsravair dharmair viśmyogaḥ pratisamkhya-nirodhah | duḥkhādīnaṃ āryasatyānaṃ pratisamkhyaḥ praptā viśesas tena praṇyo nirodhah pratisamkhya-nirodhah. MVŚ, 220a.
43 Ny, 396a.
44 Entrance, 83.
45 Cf. ADV, 70: dhīḥ praṇāḥ dharma-samgrahādy-upalaksana-svabhāva.
46 Cf. ADV, 69; Entrance, 83. AKB, 54: smṛtir ālambana-asampramoṣaḥ.
48 Entrance, 83. Cf. Khandha Samyutta, Pupphavagga, sutta no. 3.
49 T no. 1613, 851c.
50 Cf. Khandha Samyutta, Pupphavagga, sutta no. 3.
51 Ny, 384b.
52 Ny, 391a.
53 MVŚ, 26a.
54 MVŚ, 172b.
55 MVŚ, 147a, 172b, 524c, 757c, etc.
56 MVŚ, 487b.
57 Cf. MVŚ, 35c–36a; etc.
58 MVŚ, 148b.
59 AKB, 54: samādhiḥ cittasyaikāgratā.
60 Entrance, 83.
61 MVŚ, 221a.
62 MVŚ, 574b.
63 AKB, 45.
64 AKB, 57.
65 Ny, 392a.
66 Vy, 132.
67 Cf. AKB, 58.
The Categories of Thought and Thought-Concomitants

9. T

He cites here AKB stanza, II, #29: āvenikatve tv aūkule drṣṭi-yukte ca vimsatī | kleshāś ca taurbhī kroh’ādyaih kaukṛtyenaikavināśaih || (AKB, 58)

However, the Saptavastuka and the DKŚ could have both been based on a common original. See Yin Shun, Study, 165.

MVŚ, 220b.

AKB, 57: ta ime parīta-kleśa-bhūmikā avidyā-mātreṇa bhāvanā-heyena manobhāmikenaiva ca sanprayogā |

Vy, 132.

See also, Dhammajoti, KL (2009b: 55 ff).

T41, no.1821, 80a. Also see Samghabhadra’s statement in Ny, 392c (cited by Pu Guang in this context): is ētōta (<i>catu</i>) is not <i>catu</i> (<i>catu</i>).

MVŚ, 79c–81b, 270a–b.

Cf. AKB, 62; MVŚ, 80c.

Ibid., 79c, 270a.

Cf. Study, 255 ff.

MVŚ, 79c, 270a, 493c, 745a, etc.

Asm (33 f.) enumerates six types of <i>sanprayoga</i>:
1. <i>sanprayoga</i> in terms of non-separation (<i>avinirbhāga-samprayoga</i>),
2. <i>sanprayoga</i> in terms of being mixed (<i>miśrībhāva-samprayoga</i>),
3. <i>sanprayoga</i> in terms of conglomeration (<i>samavadhāna-samprayoga</i>),
4. <i>sanprayoga</i> in terms of co-existence (<i>sahabhāva-samprayoga</i>),
5. <i>sanprayoga</i> in terms of execution of duty (<i>kṛtyānusthāna-samprayoga</i>),
6. <i>sanprayoga</i> in terms of concurrence (<i>saṃpratipatti-samprayoga</i>).

Among them, only the sixth type refers to the concurrence of thought and thought-concomitants with regard to the same object (<i>catu</i> (<i>catu</i>)). The fifth clearly admits of the sense of companionship and co-operation which do not necessarily demand the condition of simultaneity. (See also AsmB, 47).

AKB, 440: avasthāviśeṣo hi nāma cetasa ca citasaka bhavati |

MVŚ, 661c.

ADV, 76: kathām puṇa(na)ra idaṃ vijñāyate cittād arthāntarabhūtāsaḥ cafitasikāḥ | citam evo hi tadvedanādhaṁabhārvyapadiśvata ity evam cesyamāne buddhasūtraṃ anulomitaṃ bhavati | tasmān nārthāntarabhūtāsaḥ cafitasikā iti bhadantabuddhadevaḥ |

MVŚ, 8c.

AKB, 145: sparsād uttarakālaṃ vedanēty aparē || indriyārthāh hi pūrvānto vijñānam | sośau trayānāṃ saṃnipātah sparśah sparānaprayayāt paścād vedanā tṛīyē kṣāṇa iti |

Vy, 307: sparśād uttarakālaṃ vedanēty apar iti bhadānta-śrīlātaḥ | Ny, 387c; Pūrṇavardhana, Abhidharmakośa-ṭīkā-lakṣāṇānusārini, Peking no. 5594,
Vol. 17, 232, 336a: gzhan dag na re reg ba’i og tu tshor ba ‘byung ste zhe zer ba ni slob dpon dpal len te | etc.

92 Ny, 388b.
93 Ny, 339b.
94 Cf. AKB, 146: cakṣuḥ pratītya rūpāṇi cotpadyate caksur vijñānam | trayānāṃ saṃnipātah sparśaḥ sahajātā vedanā saṃjñā cetaneti | Also cf. SĀ, 72c, 87c.
95 AKB, 146.
96 S, ii, 72.
97 T 32, 274c.
98 T 32, 276b.
99 AKB, 11: viśayaṃ viśayaṃ prati vijñānaptir upalabdhir vijñāna-skandha ity ucyate | 
100 Vy, 38: upalabdhir vastu-mātra-grahanaṃ vedanādayas tu caitasā viṣeṣā viṣeṣa-grahaṇa-rūpāḥ | Also cf. Entrance, 120 f.
101 AKB, 11: vijñānam prativijñānaptiḥ (16a) | viśayaṃ viśayaṃ prati vijñānaptir upalabdhir vijñāna-skandha ity ucyate | 
102 Ny, 342a.
103 MVŚ, 109a, 284a, 285b; etc.
104 See Samghabhadra’s argument in Ny, 395b.
105 Cf. Entrance, 120.
106 MVŚ, 141b–c; Ny, 345b (Samghabhadra cites sūtra-s which stress consciousness/thought as the chief essence of a being).
107 ADV, 78: vastūpalabdhi-mātram hi cittam tenopalabdhe vastuni samjñāsmarane laksanānusmaranābhinirūpanādayo viṣeṣāḥ samjñā-prajñā-smrty-ādibhir ghryante ... ātmābhinivesād rājāsthānīyaṃ va ca | ... uktaṃ hi bhagavatā citta-saṃklesāt sattvāḥ saṃklysyaṃ | citta-vyavadāna-hetor viśūdhyante |
108 T 41, 26a–b.
109 MVŚ, 374b.
110 MVŚ, 219b; AKB, 22.
111 Ny, 350b.
112 Ny, loc. cit.
113 See supra § 9.6.
114 ZW, 236.
115 MVŚ, 315b.
116 MVŚ, 610a.
117 This sūtra statement is also cited in Vy (81) in the “what sees” debate. 
118 T 29, 349a.
120 A, i, 10.
121 Manorathapūraṇī, I, 60.
122 T 28, 697b.
123 T 50, 15b–c.
124 T 32, 163b.
9. The Categories of Thought and Thought-concomitants

125 MVŚ, 140b–c.
126 Ny, 733a.
127 Ny, 733b.
128 T 32, 258b.
SARVASTIVADA ABHIDARMA
10. Theories of Knowledge

10.1. Sarvāstivāda realism: From epistemology to ontology
   10.1.1. A real existent is established through experience (mundane or supramundane)
   10.1.2. Realism expressed in the doctrine of defilements
   10.1.3. Realism expressed in the doctrine of sensory perception
   10.1.4. Dharma-s as knowables (jñeya)

10.2. Various modes of operation of prajñā
   10.2.1. Understanding (prajñā)
   10.2.2. Knowledge (jñāna)
   10.2.3. Receptivity (kṣānti)
   10.2.4. View (dṛṣṭi)
   10.2.5. Correlation between understanding, view and knowledge (and receptivity)

10.3. Reflexive knowledge and omniscience (sarvajñā)

10.4. Prajñā of the Buddha and the two yāna-s
   10.4.1. Inferior prajñā of the two yāna-s owing to vāsanā and akliṣṭājñāna
   10.4.2. Examples of the inferiority of the two yāna-s prajñā
   10.4.3. Kleśa-āvarana, jñeya-āvarana, vimokṣa-āvarana and akliṣṭa-ajñāna
   10.4.4. Saṃghabhadra’s distinctions: kliṣṭa- and akliṣṭa-ajñāna, and vāsanā

10.5. Instrument of perception
   10.5.1. Four views on “what sees?”
   10.5.2. The “eye sees” view of the Vaibhāṣikas
   10.5.3. The Sautrāntika position and Saṃghabhadra’s defence of the Vaibhāṣika position
   10.5.4. Role of consciousness in perception

10.6. Important Sarvāstivāda thought-concomitants involved in discriminative cognition

10.7. Ontological status of the objects of knowledge
   10.7.1. Debate in Ny on the ontological status of the object

10.8. Direct perception, ākāra, sākāra-vijñānavāda, nirākāra-vijñānavāda and the Sarvāstivāda
   10.8.1. The notion of ākāra in the Sautrāntika and the Sarvāstivāda
   10.8.2. Several ākāra on a given ālambana
   10.8.3. The 16 ākāra-s as prajñā and not ‘images/aspects’ of objects
   10.8.4. Ākāra as pratyakṣa-jñāna
   10.8.5. The Sarvāstivāda doctrine of sensory perception is nirākāra-vijñānavāda
   10.8.6. The two aspects of the notion of ākāra according to Pu Guang
   10.8.7. The notion of sākāra as an attribute of citta-caitita-s
   10.8.8. Yogic direct perception of sāmānya-lakṣaṇa as a form of sākāra-jñāna
   10.8.9. Summary
10.1. Sarvāstivāda realism: From epistemology to ontology

In the preceding chapters (particularly chapters 2, 3, 6, 7 and 9) we have already discussed some aspects of the Sarvāstivāda theory of knowledge. In this chapter, we will offer some elaborations on what we have discussed earlier and also add other important epistemological doctrines that we have not covered so far.

10.1.1. A real existent is established through experience (mundane or supramundane)

Like all other forms of Buddhism, Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma is primarily concerned with the problem of knowledge: Given that we are bound to saṃsāra through ignorance (avidyā), how can we overcome the topsy-turvy way of cognizing things (viparyāsa) and acquire the liberating insight (prajñā) which sees things truly as they are (yathābhūtam)? With this central soteriological concern and starting from an epistemological investigation, the school arrives at a list of roughly 75 types of ultimate reals known as dharma-s. This central concern and fundamental methodology of investigation are summarily reflected in what the school underscores as Abhidharma in the absolute sense: i.e., pure prajñā defined as dharma-pravicaya (supra, §§ 1.2, 1.3).

A dharma — whether, physical, mental, neither physical nor mental, or even unconditioned — is a unique force, possessing a unique, intrinsic characteristic, that has impact on the human experience, and it is discovered by a valid means of knowledge (pramāṇa), either direct perception (including spiritual realization) or inference having its ultimate basis on direct experience (cf. supra, § 6.2.1) The absolute reality of nirvāna is establishable even though it is an unconditioned, for an ārya can experience it directly, and it moreover has impact on our thinking and aspiration (cf. infra, § 16.2.1, point 6). The Sarvāstivāda investigation into the absolute real leads to the conclusion that it is the universal principles directly realized by the ārya-s that constitute absolute truth (see supra, § 3.5.1). A metaphysical notion, like the Self (ātman) or the Person (pudgala), is not acceptable for the Sarvāstivāda as an ultimate real precisely because it cannot be cognized by any means of cognition or be experienced through the spiritual insight of the ārya-s.¹

10.1.2. Realism expressed in the doctrine of defilements

In the Sarvāstivāda explanation of the cognitive process, it is the external object that affects the manner of our cognition. The force of the object
domain is one of the three conditions that can generate defilements, the other two being the cause and the preparatory effort (prayoga). Arguing against the Dārṣṭāntika stance that the object domains are unreal because pleasure and displeasure are all only due to the force of mental discrimination, Saṃghabhadra states:

The advocates of logic (Yuktavādins = Sarvāstivādins) assert thus: “All object domains are real.” … It is observed that with regard to the objects, defilements arise differently. … Because, although there is no difference in terms of the cause and the preparatory effort, the manifestation of defilement is observed to be different, we therefore know that the object domains are not unreal entities — the difference results from the force of the object domain.

In the following discussion on the nature of the objects of defilement, the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas’ stance of realism is once again clearly contrasted with the idealistic predilection of the Dārṣṭāntikas:

The Ābhidharmikas state: “The object of bondage (saṃyoga-vaśtu) is real, the fetter which binds is also real. The Person is unreal.”

The Vātsīputrīya asserts: “The object of bondage is real, the fetter which binds is also real. The Person is also real.”

The Dārṣṭāntikas assert: “The fetter which binds is real, the object of bondage is unreal. The Person is also unreal.”

10.1.3. Realism expressed in the doctrine of sensory perception

The external world is perceived directly by our senses in spite of the Abhidharma doctrine of the momentariness of all conditioned dharma-s, thanks to the fact of co-existent causality (supra, § 6.7). In an experience of direct perception (pratyakṣa), whether sensory or mental, the perceptual object as the ālambana-pratyaya (supra, § 7.1.3) is actually the object out there existing at the very moment of the arising of the corresponding consciousness. It is a real entity, just as a single atom is a real.

Saṃghabhadra argues that a sensory consciousness necessarily takes a physical assemblage or agglomeration of atoms (he ji 和集; *saṃcaya, *saṃghāta, *samasta) as its object. What is directly perceived is just these atoms assembled together in a certain manner, not a conceptualized object such as a jug, etc. The jug per se is never perceived by the visual consciousness; only the rūpa as agglomerated atoms of color and shapes. This is direct perception which perceives only the intrinsic
characteristic (svalakṣaṇa), i.e., the entity in itself. It is the succeeding mental consciousness, with its judgmental or investigative (abhirūpanā) and conceptualizing capability and using names, that it can cognize its common characteristic and determines that the object is a ‘jug’. At this stage, it is no more an experience of direct perception but an inference. (See also supra, § 9.7). From the Sarvāstivāda perspective, if we cannot perceive the external object at the very moment when it is existing, then direct perception is impossible, which implies that inference too is impossible — and, finally, no true knowledge of the external is at all possible.

Samghabhadra rejects Śrīlāta’s theory that the object of visual perception is a unified complex (he he 和合; *sāmagrī, *saṃghāta) of atoms. He maintains that even an individual atom is in actual fact visible, even though its visibility is almost nil on account of its being very subtle for visual consciousness, which can grasp only a gross object (取境麤故). In fact, it is conceded that each individual atom, in its own right, actually serves as a perceptual object or a supporting basis. He argues that such a superimposed unity as proposed by Śrīlāta can only be grasped by investigative conceptualization (abhinirūpanā-vikalpa). A sensory consciousness, lacking this capacity as it does, can take only an existent — not a conceptualized unity — as its object. He further explains that a unified complex obtains where speech operates, as a result of the arising of an appellation (adhivacana) with regard to a multiplicity of dharma-s. It is on account of its non-discriminative nature that visual consciousness is incapable of discerning the extremely subtle form of an atom; only those endowed with the power of excellent wisdom can do so. In any case, he says, atoms are always found assembled and thus are visible (cf. supra, § 8.3).

While MVŚ certainly states that an atom “cannot be seen by the eye”, it also explains, much like Samghabhadra, that this is not in the sense of an object not being of the intrinsic nature of an object. Thus, with regard to an atom of color or shape, MVŚ says:

There exists [an atom (paramāṇu) of green]; it is just that it is not grasped by visual consciousness. If a single atom is not green, an accumulation of numerous atoms cannot be green; likewise for yellow, etc. . . .

There exists [an atom of a long shape, etc.]; it is just that it is not grasped by visual consciousness. If a single atom is not long, etc., in shape, an accumulation of numerous atoms cannot be long, etc., in shape.
Furthermore, there exist rūpa-s that are not visible on account of being extremely fine, not on account of being non-objects (aviṣaya).\(^{11}\)

Elsewhere, some Sārvāstivāda masters likewise state that an atom, as much as a material aggregate, necessarily possesses the same fundamental characteristic:

If a single atom does not have the characteristic (lakṣaṇa) of the material aggregate (rūpa-skandha), then even an agglomeration (这些 two Chinese characters very likely translate the same Sanskrit original for 和集) of numerous [atoms] should also not be an aggregate (skandha).\(^{12}\)

These statements must have formed the basis of Saṃghabhadra’s explanations, and we must therefore be cautious not to too hastily proclaim as neo-Sarvāstivāda his doctrines of the identical intrinsic nature of an atom as well as a gross matter, or of an “agglomeration of atoms” being the perceptual objects of a sensory consciousness.

10.1.4. Dharma-s as knowables (jñeya)

We may say that from the period of Abhidharma Buddhism onwards, the question of what constitutes the knowables (jñeya) becomes an increasingly important topic of investigation among the Buddhist schools. In the case of the Sarvāstivādins, as we have seen above, all dharma-s, in the proper Abhidharmic sense of the term, exist and constitute objects of cognition (vijñeya) and knowledge, the cognizables and the knowables. PrŚ explains what these knowables and cognizables refer to:

What are the knowable dharma-s? All dharma-s are known through the knowledges (jñāna) in accordance with the [specific] objects (隨其事, *yathā-vastu). How, moreover, is that? The knowledge of unsatisfactoriness (duḥkha-jñāna) knows unsatisfactoriness. The knowledge of origin knows origin. The knowledge of cessation knows cessation. The knowledge of the path knows the path. There is also the skillful conventional knowledge (saṃvṛti-jñāna) that knows unsatisfactoriness, origin, cessation, the path, as well as Space and cessation independent of deliberation (apratisamkhyā-nirodha). Hence it is said that all dharma-s are known through the knowledges in accordance with the [specific] objects. These are known as the knowable dharma-s.

What are the cognizable dharma-s? All dharma-s are cognized through the consciousnesses in accordance with the [specific]
objects. How, moreover, is that? Visual consciousness cognizes the visibles. Auditory consciousness cognizes sounds. Olfactory consciousness cognizes smells. Gustatory consciousness cognizes tastes. Bodily consciousness cognizes tangibles. Mental consciousness cognizes dharma-s; the eye, the visibles and visual consciousness; the ear, sounds and auditory consciousness; the nose, smells and olfactory consciousness; the tongue, tastes and gustatory consciousness; the body, tangibles and bodily consciousness. The mind, dharma-s and mental consciousness. Hence it is said that all dharma-s are cognized through the consciousnesses in accordance with the [specific] objects. These are known as the cognizable dharma-s.13

On “in accordance with the [specific] objects”, MVŚ comments that it means: in accordance with the (sphere) of activity (gocara?), with the object domain (viṣaya), with the cognitive object (ālambana).14

Not all the masters in MVŚ, Sarvāstivādins included, would agree with the orthodox Sarvāstivāda position. Some hold that “there are knowledges that do not take object domains as their cognitive objects, and there are object domains that are not the cognitive objects of knowledge”.15 Others assert that “there are knowledges that do not know what is to be known, and there are object domains to be known that are not knowable by knowledge”.16 The Venerable Pārśva explains in this way:

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.17

In the case of the Sarvāstivāda orthodoxy, the very possibility of a cognition necessarily implies the true ontological status of the object cognized (see also, § 3.5.3.3). All dharma-s are cognizable means all dharma-s exist truly. Elsewhere MVŚ states likewise: the scope of what are to be fully penetrated and fully known is the totality of dharma-s which are all real existents.18 In arguing for the absolute reality of past and future dharma-s, Samghabhadra states:

Just as a consideration of the knowables proves that merely relatively existent past and future dharma-s cannot become objects of knowledge (jñeya), just so, from various other considerations — of the abandonables and the realizables — one can prove, in
each case, that the past and the future cannot be mere relative existents, for unreal dharma-s cannot be abandoned, etc.\textsuperscript{19}

The very notion of dharma-s being jñeya-s spells out the fundamentally epistemological approach of the Sarvāstivāda orthodoxy in their dharma-pravicaya. Samghabhadra powerfully underscores this approach in his definition of an existent (sat):

The characteristic of the existent (sallakṣaṇa) consists in it being capable of serving as an object domain generating cognition (buddhi).\textsuperscript{20}

In brief: all ultimate reals — dharma-s — are knowable, cognizable. There can be no exception to this. And these knowables, cognizables, have their objective existence which affects our perception of not only the phenomenal world, but also the domain of the unconditioned. This is then truly an ontological commitment derived from an epistemological consideration.

10.2. Various modes of operation of \textit{prajñā}

In the Sarvāstivāda system, knowledge (jñāna), view (drṣṭi), receptivity (kṣānti) and other related terminologies are used very articulately, even though they all have understanding (prajñā) as their intrinsic nature. In other words, prajñā as the faculty of understanding has different modes of operation according to which it receives the different appellations — knowledge, view, etc. Moreover, unlike in other schools such as the Theravāda, prajñā may be skillful, unskillful, proper or right (samyañc), false or wrong (mithyā), with-outflow or outflow-free; etc. At the highest level, prajñā represents the Buddha’s perfect wisdom.

With regard to investigative conceptualization (abhinirūpaṇā-vikalpa), it is particularly the aspect of judgmental investigation of prajñā, represented by \textit{samtīraṇa}, that characterizes its function. In this connection, we may note that in the 
\textit{Dharma-samgraha},\textsuperscript{21} the three types of conceptualizations (cf. § 9.7) are given as anusmarana-, \textit{samtīraṇa}- and sahaja-; with \textit{samtīraṇa}- obviously corresponding to abhinirūpaṇā. When understanding displays its judgmental nature, \textit{samtīraṇa}tva, it is called a view.\textsuperscript{22}

\textit{Prajñā} can also function in other modes, resulting in receptivity (kṣānti) and knowledge (jñāna). MVŚ discusses the various modalities of prajñā in detail, showing their interrelation in the form of a \textit{catuṣkoṭi}.\textsuperscript{23} These descriptions provide considerable amount of information, both positive and negative, on the Vaibhāṣika epistemological doctrines.
10.2.1. Understanding (*prajñā*)

As one of the ten universal thought-concomitants in the Vaibhāṣika system, it necessarily arises in any mental state. It is usually defined as the “discernment/examination of *dharma*-s (*dharma-pravicaya*)”.\(^{24}\) MVŚ,\(^{25}\) besides giving the usual description that it is “discernment of *dharma*-s” and that it is found in all mental states, also defines it as the set of understanding conjoined with all the six forms of consciousness. (See also, *supra*, § 9.3.4.1.6).

10.2.2. Knowledge (*jñāna*)

In MVŚ, it is recorded that some hold knowledge (*jnāna*) to be none other than consciousness (*vijñāna*):

There are some who hold that *vijñāna* is just *jnāna*; only that [the former] is longer by one syllable, vi- (i.e., the prefix to *jñāna*).\(^{26}\)

For the Sarvāstivādins, however, knowledge is not synonymous with consciousness (*vijñāna*). Whereas the former is a thought-concomitant, the latter, is thought itself. Moreover, there indeed can be consciousness without knowledge in the proper sense. The distinguishing characteristic of knowledge is that it is an understanding that is decisive or definite (*niścita*).\(^{27}\) Some Sarvāstivāda masters require that knowledge repeatedly discerns (數數抉擇) the cognitive object. It is for this reason that the with-outflow understandings are called knowledges because they have been repeatedly discerning their cognitive objects from beginningless time. As for the outflow-free understandings, those which repeatedly discern are called knowledges; but the outflow-free receptivities with regard to the four noble truths are not called knowledges on account of their not having made any repeated discernment. Knowledge is also said to be that which realizes (*sākṣāt-√kṛ*) and comprehends — realizing the four truths; comprehending one’s own and others’ continuas (*santati*).\(^{28}\)

A total of ten knowledges are generally enumerated in their texts:

1. *Dharma*-knowledge (*dharma-jñāna*)

The knowledge that realizes the truth pertaining to the nature of *dharma*-s — that they are unsatisfactory, etc. In the saṁsāric faring of the practitioner, this knowledge arises for the first time in the second moment of his entry into the direct realization (*abhisamaya*) into the four noble truths. That is, when he gains spiritual insight into the truth of unsatisfactoriness pertaining to the sense sphere. In the first moment that precedes, he has acquired the receptivity (*kṣānti*) to this knowledge; i.e., the ability
to completely accept the truth even though its knowledge proper is not yet acquired. Following this moment, this knowledge refers to the knowledge of the dharma-s that arises by taking the four truths pertaining to the sense sphere as object (cf. infra, § 15.3).

2. Subsequent-knowledge (anvaya-jñāna)

This knowledge is so called because it arises subsequently to the dharma-knowledge, and is similar to the latter, though generated by taking the four truths pertaining to the two higher spheres (ṛūpa- and ārūpya-dhātu-s) as object.

3. Knowledge of unsatisfactoriness (duḥkha-jñāna)

This arises in the process of the direct realization by taking the truth of unsatisfactoriness as object. It is the counteragent for the defilements pertaining to this truth.

4. Knowledge of origin (samudaya-jñāna)

This arises in the process of the direct realization by taking the truth of origin as object. It is the counteragent for the defilements pertaining to this truth.

5. Knowledge of cessation (niruddha-jñāna)

This arises in the process of the direct realization by taking the truth of cessation as object. It is the counteragent for the defilements pertaining to this truth.

6. Knowledge of the path (mārga-jñāna)

This arises in the process of the direct realization by taking the truth of the path as object. It is the counteragent for the defilements pertaining to this truth.

7. Conventional-knowledge (saṃvṛti-jñāna)

This is the knowledge that arises taking conventional objects. It is therefore a with-outflow knowledge at the stage when the practitioner has not abandoned the defilements. Four subdivisions are enumerated:

i. innate knowledge (upapatti-pratilambhika);
ii. knowledge derived from listening to the teachings (śruta-maya);
iii. knowledge derived from reflection (cintā-maya);
iv. knowledge derived from cultivation (bhāvanā-maya).

8. Knowledge of the thoughts of another (paracitta-jñāna)

This knowledge knows the thought and thought-concomitants of another being. It arises with the support of the dharma-knowledge, the subsequent knowledge, the knowledge of the path and the conventional knowledge. Accordingly, it may be either outflow-free or with-outflow.

It does not arise with the support of the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin because an outflow-free one does not know without-outflow thoughts. It does not arise with the support of the truth of cessation because the latter is unconditioned.

There are limitations to this knowledge: one at a lower stage (bhūmi) does not know a thought of a higher stage. One belonging to a weaker faculty does not know the mind of a higher faculty (e.g., one belonging to a śraddhādhimukta does not know the thoughts of a drṣṭi-prāpta — see § 15.3.2). One belonging to a lower spiritual fruition does not know the thoughts of a higher one. Since this knowledge takes a present thought as object, it cannot know the past and future thoughts of another. Finally, one subsumed under dharma-knowledge does not know a subsequent knowledge; one subsumed under subsequent knowledge does not know a dharma-knowledge.

9. Knowledge of exhaustion (kṣaya-jñāna)

This knowledge arises in a non-trainee (i.e., an arhat) who has abandoned the ninth (final) grade of the defilements abandonable by cultivation (bhāvanā-heya) at the stage of existence-peak (bhavāgra). It is an outflow-free knowledge conascent with the acquisition (prāpti) of the exhaustion of outflows (āsrava-kṣaya), in the form of the certainty (niścaya): “unsatisfactoriness has been fully known by me (duḥkhaṃ me parijñātam), the origin has been abandoned (samudayaḥ prahīṇaḥ), cessation has been realized (nirodhaḥ sākṣātkṛtaḥ), the path has been cultivated (mārgo bhāvitaḥ”).

10. Knowledge of non-arising (anutpāda-jñāna)²⁹

‘Non-arising’ refers to the acquisition of the cessation independent of deliberation of the efficacies of knowing,
abandoning, realizing and cultivating with regard to the four truths. The outflow-free knowledge that knows this non-arising, conascent with the acquisition of the said cessation independent of deliberation, is called the knowledge of non-arising. It arises in the form: “unsatisfactoriness has been fully known by me; it is not to be known any more (duḥkhaṃ me pariṣiṇaṁ na punaḥ pariṣīneyam); … the path has been cultivated by me, it is not to be cultivated any more (mārgo bhāvito na punar bhāvitaṁvyaḥ).” It arises only in an arhat of sharp faculty (tīkṣṇendriya) who is not susceptible to retrogression (aparihiṇa-dharman).

The knowledge of exhaustion and the knowledge of non-arising together constitute what is called enlightenment or awakening (bodhi).

The category of knowledge is described in MVŚ as the set of all understanding conjoined with the first five forms of sensory consciousness, as well as all the understanding conjoined with mental consciousness excepting the pure receptivity (anāsrava-kṣānti). The latter is excepted because it represents only a preliminary stage of receptivity, but not final, thorough and decisive knowledge, as regards the four noble truths. Here, we learn that knowledge must be full, ultimate, thorough knowing. Vasumitra offers a similar view. The Bhadanta (Dharmatrāta) requires that “it is only the thorough seeing of a thing that can be qualified as knowledge, while Vāṣpa says that knowledge is derived through repeated examination. These ācārya-s’ explanations are apparently uncontested by the compilers.

10.2.3. Receptivity (kṣānti)

This represents the stage of understanding that precedes knowledge in the proper sense. At this stage, one sees a fact or a doctrine for the first time and is capable of being receptive to it even though one has not quite experienced it directly yet. Thus, at this stage of understanding, there is still the possibility of doubt. In the process of direct realization, it arises at the moment of the unhindered path (ānantarya-mārga) at which the defilement is being abandoned. The corresponding knowledge proper arises in the succeeding moment of the path of liberation (vimukti-mārga). (Also cf. § 11.3.1).

The following discussion highlights the differences between receptivity and knowledge:
Question: Why are the outflow-free receptivities not knowledges?

Answer: Because they have not had repeated examination on the domain which is seen. That is: From beginningless time, [the practitioner] has not seen the four noble truths with the outflow-free true insight; although he sees [them] now for the first time, he has not repeated the observation. Thus, [this insight] is not called a knowledge. For a knowledge is accomplished only when a homogeneous insight repeats the observation.  

10.2.4. View (drṣṭi)

MVŚ states, as does AKB, that only the eye and the understanding which is of the nature of judgment or decision, are views. They comprise the eye, the five false views, the worldly right view and the views of the trainees and non-trainees. For the Sarvāstivādins, it is the eye that sees; not consciousness, as held by the Vījñānavādins. It is therefore included as a view on account of its function of seeing (ālocana) in spite of its being non-epistemic. A view — other than the case of the eye — is defined as that which has the nature of judgment or decision (saṃtīrakatva), which is also part of Vasumitra's definition which requires judgment and investigation. Elsewhere, four characteristics of view are given — seeing, judging, firm attachment, and penetrating into the objects of perception.

10.2.5. Correlation between understanding, view and knowledge (and receptivity)

The inter-relationship of the aforementioned categories can be summarized as follows:

1. Some views are not knowledges — viz., visual faculty and the pure receptivity.
2. Some knowledges are not views — viz., the understanding conjoined with the group of the first five forms of sensory consciousness (pañca-vijñānakāya-samprayukta-prajñā); knowledges of exhaustion (kṣaya-jñāna) and non-arising (anutpāda-jñāna); all impure understanding conjoined with mental consciousness (sāsrava-mano-vijñāna-samprayukta-prajñā), excepting the five false views (mithyā-drṣṭi) and the worldly right views (laukikī samyak-drṣṭi).
3. Some views are also knowledges — viz., the five false views; the worldly right view; all pure understanding, excepting the pure receptivity, the knowledges of exhaustion and of non-arising.
4. Some views are not understanding — viz., the visual faculty.

5. Some understanding are not views — viz., the understanding conjoined with the group of the first five forms of sensory consciousness; the knowledges of exhaustion and of non-arising; all impure understanding conjoined with mental consciousness, excepting the five false views and the worldly right views.

6. Some views are also understanding — viz., all pure understanding excepting the knowledges of exhaustion and of non-arising, the five false views, and the worldly right view.

7. All knowledges are also understanding.

8. Some understanding are not knowledges — viz., the pure receptivity (for it has insight into the four truths for the first time, and therefore cannot make decisive judgment).

This inter-relationship may be diagrammatically (not to the scale) represented as follows:

Diagram Text Abbreviations

pvksp = pañcavijñānakāya-samprayukta-prajñā
kj = kṣaya-jñāna
aj = anutpāda-jñāna
mvsp = manovijñāna-samprayukta-prajñā
lsd = laukikī samyag-dṛṣṭi

These distinctions clarify that the eye is not a member of the set of understanding and therefore not knowledge, a subset of understanding. On the other hand, the understanding conjoined with the first five forms
of sensory consciousness all fall within the set of knowledge. That is, the necessary condition for knowledge is understanding, defined as having the discerning/discrimination of mental objects as its nature. But this condition is not sufficient. Understanding becomes knowledge only when it is full, final, and decisive. Such a requirement in the Vaibhāṣika notion of knowledge may seem more demanding than that in our ordinary usage of the term. These distinctions and explanations in MVŚ, together with the other sources given above, make it abundantly clear that for the Vaibhāṣikas, visual consciousness, but not the eye as seeing (i.e., the seeing by the eye) is epistemic. In other words, the mere seeing by the eye is non-epistemic, whereas visual consciousness is “conscious seeing” and epistemic.

10.3. Reflexive knowledge and omniscience (sarvajñā)

Reflexive knowledge refers to the doctrine that a thought or thought concomitant dharma, in knowing a dharma, also knows itself. This doctrine seems to be connected with that of omniscience, and these two doctrines are therefore discussed together here.36

The Samayabhedoparacana mentions that the Mahāsāṃghikas hold the following Buddhological doctrine:

[The Buddha,] in a single moment of thought, cognizes all dharma-s. With the prajñā conjoined with the single moment of thought, He knows all dharma-s.37

This means that, for the Mahāsāṃghikas, both cognition and knowledge of all dharma-s — including thought and the knowledge itself — within a single moment is possible. Such a position is unacceptable to the Sarvāstivādins who hold that an intrinsic nature (i.e., a dharma in itself) cannot know itself. More generally, an intrinsic nature cannot exercise any efficacy on itself.

In Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, JPŚ already addresses this issue:

Question: Is there a single knowledge that knows all dharma-s?
Answer: No.

Question: If this knowledge generates [the understanding] that all dharma-s are without the Self, what does this knowledge not know?
Answer: It does not know itself (lit: the intrinsic nature) and the dharma-s that are conjoined or co-existent with it.

Question: Are there two thoughts that are mutually cause to each other?
Answer: No. Why? Because there is no pudgala who generates two thoughts simultaneously — i.e., not before, not after. …

MVŚ\(^{39}\) cites the above passage and elaborates:

[This discussion] is for the purpose of refuting the tenets of others and elucidating those of our own. There are some who hold that the citta-caitta-dharma-s can cognize their own intrinsic natures (i.e., themselves), like the Mahāsāṃghikas who assert: “Because knowledge, etc., has cognition as its intrinsic nature, it can cognize both itself and others. This is just like the case of a lamp; because it has illumination as its intrinsic nature, it can illuminate both itself and others.”

There are some, like the Dharma-guptakas who hold that the citta-caitta-dharma-s can cognize what are conjoined with them. It asserts thus: “Prajñā can cognize the sensation conjoined with it.”

There are some, like the Mahīśāsakas, who hold that the citta-caitta-dharma-s can cognize what are co-existent with them. It asserts thus: “There are two types of prajñā which arise simultaneously: one is conjoined [with thought], the other not conjoined. The conjoined prajñā knows the unconjoined one; the unconjoined prajñā knows the conjoined one.”

There are some, like the Vātsīputriyas, who hold that the pudgala can cognize dharma-s. It asserts thus: “It is the pudgala that knows dharma-s, not knowledge (jñāna)…”

MVŚ comments that in JPŚ passage cited above, the questions are posed by the Vibhajyavādins and the answers are those of the Yuktavādins (i.e., Sarvāstivādins) and then goes on to elaborate further:

If the question is posed: … ”[Among the ten knowledges,] is there one that knows all dharma-s?” The answer is: “Yes. The conventional knowledge.”

If with regard to this conventional knowledge, the question is posed: “Is there a case that within two moments [of thought], all dharma-s are known?” The answer is: “Yes. In the first moment, this knowledge knows all [the dharma-s] excepting itself and those that are conjoined or co-existent with it. In the second moment, it also knows [what has existed] in the first moment, [namely] itself as well as those dharma-s that were conjoined or co-existent with it.” …

Question: Why is it that an intrinsic nature does not know itself?
Answer: Lest there be the fault of there being no difference between cause and effect, between that which does and that which is done, between the accomplisher and the accomplished, between the projector and the projected, between the producer and the produced, between the attribute and the attributed, between the propeller and the propelled, between the characteristics and the characterized, between the cognizer and the cognized. …

Dharma-s do not relate to themselves. They can only serve as conditions for others (lit. for other-natures, parabhāva). Accordingly, an intrinsic nature does not know itself.40

In a similar context of discussing omniscience, Samghabhadra refutes the doctrine of reflexive knowledge (without attributing it to any school), specifically objecting to the simile of a lamp’s ability to illuminate itself and other things simultaneously:

This is because a lamp’s illumination as an entity in itself (燈之照體) is not an absolute existent (不成實; *aparinīspanna). What is called a lamp is a specific agglomeration of visible matter (顯色聚差別; varṇarūpa-samghāta-viśeṣa). What is called illumination is the cause generating visual consciousness. As it is opposed to darkness, it is said to destroy the cause hindering a vase, etc.. By the illumination of a vase, etc., is meant the fact that the vase, etc., become cognizable on account of the presence of this [illumination]. Apart from metaphorical expressions, there is no illumination as a real existent which illuminates itself …

Moreover, if by conceding that a lamp is that which illuminates, one then concedes that it illuminates itself as well as others; in the same way, one ought to concede that because darkness is a hindrance, it is capable of hindering itself and others; because fire burns, it burns itself and others. Since the latter cases are not true, how can it be true in the case of a lamp?

It might be argued that a lamp has the power of destroying the hindrance to [both] the vase and the lamp, and of illuminating both the vase and the lamp, hence both should be said to be illuminated. This also is not logical, since darkness is combined with a vase and not combined with a lamp. That is, When darkness is combined with a vase, one can speak of its hindering the vase; although the vase is present at this moment, its cognition does not arise, and one thus says that darkness hinders the cognition of the vase. When the lamp arises and darkness is ceased, the vase is revealed and its cognition is generated. For this reason, the world speaks of the lamp having the function of illuminating the vase. There has never been an occasion when darkness is combined with a lamp, lest there be the fallacy that the mutually
contradictory are not mutually counteracting.\textsuperscript{41} Hence, one cannot say that darkness hinders a lamp. Since there is no lamp which does not generate cognition, one also cannot say that darkness is a hindrance to cognition; therefore although as a lamp arises it dispels darkness, one cannot say that it is illuminated like the vase is. Moreover, is there any reason to maintain that the cognitive function of knowledge is exclusively like a lamp's illumination and not like the cutting of a knife? That is, is there any reasoning to be found for one to maintain that knowledge is destined to be analogous to a lamp and not to a knife, etc. Hence there is little strength in citing the analogy of a lamp as proof.\textsuperscript{42}

It is therefore clear that reflexive knowledge is impossible for the Sarvāstivāda. Omniscience is possible; but it cannot be achieved within a single moment.

In later Indian treatises, the Sautrāntikas are described as holding the view of reflexive knowledge, denoted by the term svasamvedana/svasamvitti (also, ātmasamvedana) which means 'self-awareness'.\textsuperscript{43} In MVŚ, as we have seen, the doctrine is attributed to the Mahāsāṃghikas, but not to the Dārṣṭāntikas who were the forerunners of the Sautrāntikas. In Ny, although there is no explicit attribution of such a theory under this term to the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas, in a discussion on the latter's doctrine of direct perception, it is mentioned that they assert the simultaneous occurrence of anubhava-pratyakṣa and buddhi-pratyakṣa. That is to say, one has awareness of what one is directly sensing: “One has the awareness of a direct perception (現量覺; *pratyakṣa-buddhi) with regard to one’s own sensation.”\textsuperscript{44} This is clearly a doctrine of reflexive awareness. Śrīlāta argues there that unless this fact is accepted, we will not be able to account for the sense of vividness — as demanded by experience of direct perception — in the subsequent moment when one is completely convinced that “this is directly perceived by me” (idaṃ me pratyakṣam iti) (see below, § 10.8).

10.4. Prajñā of the Buddha and the two yāna-s

10.4.1. Inferior prajñā of the two yāna-s owing to vāsanā and akliṣṭājñāna

In the Mūlapariyāya-sutta of the Majjhima-nikāya, both an arahant and the Buddha are said to know each object of cognition truly as it is, and are therefore entirely free from any wrong conception. But whereas the arahant is described as “knowing perfectly” (pariṇātātm), the Buddha is described as “knowing perfectly to the end” (pariṇātātātm).\textsuperscript{45}
which clearly indicates a quantitative difference between the wisdom of an arhat and the Buddha. On this difference, the Pāli commentary explains:

Whereas there is no difference between Buddha-s and sāvaka-s as regards the abandoning of defilements by the [four] paths, there is a difference as regards perfect understanding (parin̄n̄a).\(^{46}\)

This means that although both an arahant and the Buddha are fully liberated through having removed all defilements, it is really only in the case of the Buddha that wisdom (paññā) is perfected. Such an explanation, given in the 5\(^{th}\)–6\(^{th}\) century Pāli commentary, represents a conscious working out of the much earlier feeling, on the part of the ancient Buddhists probably going back to the Buddha’s time, of the superiority of the Buddha’s supreme wisdom over that of the ‘two-yāna-s’, namely, the arhat-s and the pratyeka-buddha-s.

In the Pāli sub-commentaries (ṭīkā), it is explicitly stated that the Buddha alone is omniscient — not the arhat-s or the paccekabuddha-s. For it is only the Buddha who can completely abandon the defilements (kilesa) together with their traces (vāsanā);\(^{47}\) and this effects — indeed it is — the abandoning of all hindrances to knowledge, or, more literally, hindrances to the knowables (ñeyyāvaraṇa).\(^{48}\) As in the case of Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma (§ 10.1.4), these knowables are equated with all dhamma-s.\(^{49}\) When this cognitive hindrance is removed, omniscience (sabbaññutā) is attained.

When we examine the literature of the northern Buddhists, we find very similar (and in many ways more elaborate) ramifications of these notions, through the Abhidharma texts to the Mahāyāna scriptures, where — their intra-diversities in doctrines not-withstanding — the inferiority of an arhat’s prajñā, in sharp contrast to the Buddha’s perfect wisdom, is consistently exploited to the utmost.\(^{50}\)

10.4.2. Examples of the inferiority of the two yāna-s’ prajñā

MVŚ, although offering no definition on the two key concepts, traces (vāsanā)\(^{51}\) and non-defiled ignorance (akliṣṭājñāna), provides sufficient descriptions contrasting the prajñā of the Buddha with that of the two yāna-s, and a number of concrete examples. For instance, it tells us that even Śāriputra, the śrāvaka foremost in wisdom, is unable to know what happens in very remote times and places. Only the Buddha can know the infinite varieties of names of things; not the two yāna-s.\(^{52}\) While both the Buddha and Śāriputra can correctly understand all that is
Theories of Knowledge

subsumable under the 12 āyatana-s, the Buddha has both omniscience (sarvajñā/sarvajñatā) and ‘wisdom of all modes’ (sarva-ākāra-jñāna/ sarvathā-jñāna), and knows them with regard to both their common and intrinsic characteristics. Śāriputra has only sarvajñā which knows only their common characteristics. A Buddha’s knowledge knows both the intrinsic and common characteristics of all the three paths — the Buddha’s, the privately enlightened Buddha’s (pratyekabuddha) and the śrāvaka’s (i.e., ‘disciple’, referring in this context mainly to an arhat). A privately enlightened Buddha’s knowledge knows the intrinsic and common characteristics of the paths of the privately enlightened Buddha and the śrāvaka; with regard to the Buddha’s path, he knows only the common characteristic, not the intrinsic characteristic. A śrāvaka’s knowledge knows the intrinsic and common characteristics of the śrāvaka’s path; with regard to the Buddha’s and the privately enlightened paths, he knows only the common characteristic, not the intrinsic characteristic.

A supreme-perfect Buddha (anuttara-samyak-sambuddha) alone, as a result of having absolutely abandoned all defiled (kliṣṭa) and non-defiled (akliṣṭa) ignorance (ajñāna), understands all knowables, both conventional and absolute. He alone, having absolutely abandoned both types of ignorance, understands the diverse natures of the infinite number of beings (i.e., their intrinsic characteristics — all their particularities) and can benefit them accordingly. No śrāvaka or privately enlightened Buddha is able to know even the names of the various meditational attainments (samāpatti) that the Buddha enters into. No śrāvaka can know the samāpatti that a pratyekabuddha enters into. The samāpatti-s that Śāriputra enters into are not known by other śrāvaka-s. The samāpatti-s that Mahā Maudgalyāyana enters into are known only to Śāriputra, but not to any other śrāvaka.

AKB gives essentially very similar descriptions. It explains that the Buddha alone is called sarvathā-sarvahatāndhakāra, “he who has destroyed all darkness in every way”. For, by virtue of the acquisition of the antidote to ajñāna, He has absolutely destroyed ajñāna with regard to all knowables in every way, so that it cannot arise anymore. The pratyekabuddha-s and śrāvaka-s have also destroyed darkness with regard to all things (sarvatra), as they have removed the defiled delusion (kliṣṭa-saṃmoha = kliṣṭa-ajñāna), but they have not destroyed it in every way (sarvathā), because they have not removed the akliṣṭa-ajñāna. Accordingly, they still have this aklīṣṭa-ajñāna with regard to things far remote in time and space, to the infinite categories of things, and to the unique spiritual qualities of the Buddha (āvenīka-buddhadharma).
These descriptions are of a general nature and we therefore do not gain any further information on the concept than what we have already seen in MVŚ. However, we may note that here the distinction between the Buddha and the two yāna-s is entirely based on whether or not the aklīṣṭa-ajñāna is absolutely (atyantam) abandoned. No mention is made of vāsanā.

Vyākaraṇa commenting on this AKB passage, states explicitly that “abandoning the ajñāna absolutely” means that there is no further manifestation (samudācāra) of them. This means that the ajñāna that can still manifest in the case of the pratyekabuddha and śrāvaka is the aklīṣṭa-ajñāna. For, like the Buddha, they have already absolutely abandoned the defiled type.

Vyākaraṇa also offers some concrete examples which, like those in MVŚ, include ajñāna with regard to mundane things as well as spiritual qualities:

(1) Ajñāna with regard to things far remote in space — Maudgalyāyana cannot know that his mother is in the far distant Mārīcī lokadhātu. The two yāna-s in fact cannot know visible matter composed of atoms which are extremely distant, or invisible, non-material things belonging to far away places on account of their being many world systems away.

(2) Ajñāna with regard to things or events extremely distant in time — Śāriputra fails to perceive the spiritual potential of a seeker for ordination, which has to be pointed out by the Buddha.

(3) Ajñāna with regard to the infinite divisions of things. This refers to things difficult to perceive, such as the divisions of spheres, planes of existence, types of birth (yoni) and rebirth (upapatti). “For, it has been said, the [generative] cause — in all its various aspects — for even a single peacock feather is not to be known by those without sarvajñā-bala. This is because such knowledge [of a thing in all its modes/aspects] is the power of the Omniscient One.”

(4) Ajñāna with regard to the Buddha’s qualities (the 18 āvenika dharma-s, etc.), on account of their being extremely subtle and profound in nature (svabhāva-parama-sūkṣmagambhīratvāt) — Śāriputra does not know the Tathāgata’s fivefold outflow-free skandha-s (śīla, samādhi, prajñā, vimukti, vimukti-jñāna-darśana).
10.4.3. **Kleśa-āvaraṇa, jñeya-āvaraṇa, vimokṣa-āvaraṇa and aklīṣṭa-ajñāna**

In the definition of vāsanā given by the 5th century C.E. Dhammapāla in his *Udānaṭṭhakathā*, vāsanā is said to cease by the abandoning of jñeya-āvaraṇa.⁶⁴ In the northern tradition, the term jñeya-āvaraṇa, side by side with kleśa-āvaraṇa, is already attested — albeit only once — in MVŚ.⁶⁵

All four [proper abandonments (*samyak-prahāṇa*)] have the meaning of abandonment (*prahāṇa*): The former two abandon the kleśa-āvaraṇa. The latter two abandon the jñeya-āvaraṇa; for, when the skillful dharma-s are practiced, ajñāna is abandoned.

The context suggests that spiritual practice aims at abandoning the two-fold hindrances: hindrance of defilements (kleśa-āvaraṇa) and hindrance of the knowables (jñeya-āvaraṇa). These removed, spiritual perfection is achieved. The term jñeya-āvaraṇa clearly indicates its cognitive significance: The Buddha’s omniscience is achieved when this hindrance is overcome, and this hindrance is constituted of aklīṣṭa-ajñāna. In the terminology of the Vaibhāṣika, the aklīṣṭa-ajñāna is in fact the intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) of jñeya-āvaraṇa.

In addition to kleśa-āvaraṇa, the hindrance that prevents the arhat-s and pratyekabuddha-s from achieving spiritual perfection like that of the supreme-perfect Buddha is also referred to as the ‘liberation-hindrance’ (*vimokṣa-āvaraṇa*). MVŚ⁶⁶ explains why, when the ‘liberation-hindrance’ is abandoned on the cessation-attainment (*nirodha-samāpatti*), one is said to have “well done what is to be done”:

**Question:** Why is it that when one acquires the knowledge of exhaustion, one is said to have well done what is to be done?

**Answer:** Some say that the nature of the liberation-hindrance is an inferior ajñāna (下無智). … [They] explain that when the Bhagavat acquired the knowledge of exhaustion, he had already abandoned all ajñāna-s and produced the jñāna which counteracts them. For this reason He is said to have abandoned the liberation-hindrance.

Samghabhadra insists that this liberation-hindrance must be a real entity — and it is none other than the aklīṣṭa-ajñāna:

**What is this so called nature of liberation-hindrance?** An arhat, having liberated his citta, seeks further liberation, in order to be liberated from the [liberation-]hindrance: In the liberations which are hindered, there exists an inferior ajñāna which is non-
defiled non-defined and of the nature of hindering liberation. This is the nature of the liberation-hindrance. When one acquires detachment from a particular sphere (dhātu), one has abandoned it without any remainder, and liberation arises. However, it is only when it no longer is active (sam-ud-ā-√car) that one is said to have been liberated from it. …

[This] explanation is a valid one. Because there must necessarily be some [real] dharma whose force is capable of hindering one from being at ease with regard to the meditation. Otherwise, why is he not at ease with regard to the meditation?⁶⁷

10.4.4. Saṃghabhadra’s distinctions: kliṣṭa- and akliṣṭa-ajñāna, and vāsanā

It is in Ny⁶⁸ that we find articulated distinctions between kliṣṭa- and akliṣṭa-ajñāna on the one hand, and that between akliṣṭa-ajñāna and vāsanā on the other. Saṃghabhadra distinguishes the two types of ajñāna — kliṣṭa and akliṣṭa — as follows:

(a) That, on account of which the foolish and the wise are differentiated, is kliṣṭājñāna. That, on account of which the foolish excels the wise with regard to certain objects of perception, is akliṣṭājñāna.

(b) Furthermore, that, having abandoned which, there exists no difference between the Buddha and the two yāna-s, is the first type (kliṣṭājñāna). That, having been abandoned which, there exists a difference — in respect of re-arising (samudācāra) or otherwise — between the Buddha and the two yāna-s, is akliṣṭājñāna.

(c) Furthermore, that on account of which one is deluded with regard to the intrinsic characteristic and common characteristic of things is kliṣṭājñāna. That on account of which one does not know truly the taste, force, maturity, virtues, magnitude, quantity, place, time, similarities, differences, etc., of dharma-s, is akliṣṭājñāna. This very akliṣṭājñāna is called vāsanā. …

Saṃghabhadra clarifies that akliṣṭājñāna is an inferior or blunt prajñā, one of the recognized universal caitta-s in the Sarvāstivāda scheme of classification. His explanations⁶⁹ are as follows:

The understanding (prajñā) which does not strive diligently to understand the taste, force, maturity, etc., [of dharma-s], co-existing with dharma-s of other natures, serves as the cause for the arising of a subsequent similar understanding. This
understanding again does not strive diligently to understand, becoming the cause for the arising of another understanding which does not strive diligently to understand. Such a successive cause-effect series from beginningless time gives rise to a tendency, acquired through practice. Thus, it is this inferior knowledge (jñāna) — induced [through a succession] by previous knowledges which repeatedly become accustomed to being incapable of understanding the objects' taste, etc. — that is called aklīṣṭājñāna. Those very citta-caitta-s conascent with it are known collectively as vāsanā.

According to him then, aklīṣṭa-ajñāna and vāsanā are not exactly one and the same thing, although they are intrinsically connected, being conascent. Moreover, it is clear in his explanation that vāsanā, being the collective name for a group of citta-caitta-s — i.e., the whole mental make-up in which aklīṣṭa-ajñāna is a conascent member — is a mere concept and not a distinct, real entity.

10.5. Instrument of perception

10.5.1. Four views on “what sees?”

The question of what actually constitutes the instrument through which we come to acquire knowledge of the external world is one of the important epistemological issues among the Abhidharma schools. As regards the problem: “What sees?”, MVŚ inform us that in addition to the Vaibhāṣikas’ own view, there are three others, which are all refuted:

There are some who hold that visual consciousness sees, like Venerable Dharmatrāta.

There are some who hold that the ‘understanding’ conjoined with visual consciousness sees, like Venerable Ghoṣaka.

There are some who hold that the complex (sāmagrī) [of citta-caitta]71 sees, like the Dārṣṭāntikas …

Now, if visual consciousness sees, then consciousness should have the characteristic of seeing; since consciousness does not have this characteristic, the proposition is not acceptable.

If the understanding conjoined with visual consciousness sees, the understanding conjoined with auditory consciousness should also hear sound; since understanding does not have this characteristic of hearing, the proposition is not acceptable.

If it is the complex that sees visible forms, it follows that we should be able to see forms at all times, since a complex always exists; hence this proposition too is unacceptable.
This controversy, in a more elaborated form, is also found in PVV (= Pañcavastuka-vibhāṣā)\textsuperscript{72} by a certain Dhammatrāta, ca. 4\textsuperscript{th} century C.E. Here, all four divergent views (i.e., including the Vaibhāṣika view) are also enumerated and then refuted, by a certain disputant. Another work of this Dhammatrāta, the *Abhidharma-hṛdaya-vyākhyā* (T no. 1552) contains an even more elaborate account of the controversy, the first part of which is very similar to that in PVV. Vasubandhu (known to have substantially based his AKB on this work and Dharmaśrī’s *Abhidharma-hṛdaya*, of which this work is a commentary/revision), the author of ADV as well as Samghabhadra seem most likely to have consulted this text in their accounts on this controversy. ADV differs from the *Pañcavastuka* mainly with regard to the notion of “the complex which is given as that of the eye, etc.” (*cakṣurādisāmagrī paśyati*).\textsuperscript{73}

10.5.2. The “eye sees” view of the Vaibhāṣikas

The various sources\textsuperscript{74} all explain that the Vaibhāṣikas consider the eye as a view in the sense of seeing/perceiving, ālocanārthena. This is unlike the other views subsumed under prajñā which are views on account of their judgmental nature.\textsuperscript{75} According to the Vaibhāṣikas, the mere-seeing by the eye is, strictly speaking, non-epistemic, since the proper operation of prajñā is not involved — which is to say, in this instantaneous process there is no element of ‘understanding’, properly speaking. This is to be contrasted with the function of cognizing by the simultaneously arising visual consciousness and the discriminative function of the mental cognition (mano-vijñāna) induced in the subsequent moment.

In the context of explaining why the five sense faculties are called thus — that is, in each case an “indriya” which is said to denote ādhipatya, “supremacy/dominance” — Vasubandhu in AKB differentiates the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika views: According to the Vaibhāṣikas, the eye is an indriya because it exercises dominance in the seeing of visual forms, whereas for the Sautrāntikas, the dominance is with regard to the apperception of its specific object (svārthopalabdhi).\textsuperscript{76}

As far as the statement in the Sautrāntika proposition — “dominance in the perceiving of its specific object” — is concerned, the author of ADV may be justified in remarking that it is not any different from the Vaibhāṣika view.\textsuperscript{77} However, the different senses ascribed to the statement underscore their fundamentally different views as regards the perceptual process. For the Sautrāntikas, it means that the dominance is with regard to consciousness (vijñāne tu tayor ādhipatyam), for
the perceiving — as far as one can speak of a “perceiving agent” in a relative sense — is performed by visual consciousness, not by the visual faculty. There is in fact no “seeing of a visual form” or “hearing of a sound” apart from consciousness.78 There can be no seeing of form apart from grasping (grahaṇa), and grasping is none other than consciousness.79 In other words, in-as-much as the eye has dominance in the arising of visual consciousness, one could speak of its “seeing of a visual form”. But this should really mean the “perceiving of a visual form by consciousness”. And as the Dīpakāra (= author of ADV) notes elsewhere, the mere seeing (ālocana) by the eye is vastly different from the apperceiving (upalabdhi) by consciousness.80

In Ny, Saṃghabhadra argues vehemently that it is absolutely necessary for the function of seeing visible forms to belong uniquely to the visual organ. It is in fact, for that matter, absolutely necessary that each dharma, in the complex process of dependent origination, is able to exercise its specific function. Here we can better appreciate why Saṃghabhadra insists at such great length that it is the eye that sees. This absolute necessity, of course, stems from the central Vaibhāṣika conception that in the persistence of all dharma-s in the three periods of time, each and every dharma is a distinct dharma by virtue of its specific nature and function. Thus MVŚ says:

**Question:** How are the 12 āyatana-s to be established?

**Answer:** On the basis of the difference as regards intrinsic nature and activity. Although the 12 āyatana-s all pertain to the one personal existence, their 12 species of intrinsic natures and activities are different; they are not mutually commingled.81

Now, if the eye does not have a specific function — the only one of seeing visible forms — as mentioned in the sūtra (at least so from the Vaibhāṣika viewpoint) and confirmed in experience of the world — the eye as an āyatana or a unique rūpa dharma will fail to be established. By the same token, the specific nature and function of consciousness must be established and distinguished from those of the eye. The conditioned (samskṛta) dharma-s, however, are said to be “feeble in their svabhāva, not free, dependent on others, not capable of exercising their functions by themselves, and unable to accord with their own wishes”.82 The Vaibhāṣikas believe that they can remain as good Buddhists by explaining the causality of the functions of dharma-s in accordance with the Buddha’s teaching of conditioned co-arising. But their theory of sarvāstitva logically requires that each function too must not only belong uniquely to a given dharma, it must also persist in time together with the dharma. Unlike the dharma’s substance, it can be
brought into operation with the help of causes and conditions, but it is not anything new that comes into existence.

It is in accordance with such a Vaibhāṣika doctrine that Samghabhadra persistently seeks to establish that the seeing by the eye must properly belong to the eye (and hearing of sound must belong to the ear, etc.), even though at the same time its exercise needs the assistance of visual consciousness as a supporting condition.

10.5.3. The Sautrāntika position and Samghabhadra’s defence of the Vaibhāṣika position

Toward the end of the debate in AKB, the Sautrāntikas ridicule the debaters for their attempt to “devour empty space”:

Are you not devouring empty space here! Conditioned by the visual organ and visible objects, visual consciousness arises. Therein, what is it that sees, and what is it that is seen? It is really devoid of any function (nirvyāpāra) — a mere play of dharma-s as cause and effect. Therein, in conformity with the wish of worldly conventional usage, it is said figuratively that “the eye sees”, “consciousness cognizes”. But [the wise ones] should not be attached to such figurative usages here. For, the Bhagavat has said, “One should not obstinately cling to regional usages, nor should one [unnecessarily] rush towards (/clash with) worldly notions.”

Samghabhadra retorts that it is in fact the Sautrāntikas who are “trying to grab empty space”! He argues that the Buddhist principle of conditioned co-arising will in fact collapse altogether if the reality of the individually specific functions of the dharma-s — such as the seeing of visibles by the eye — is denied.

Samghabhadra further claims that the Sautrāntikas have misunderstood what the Buddha means when He urges us “not to obstinately cling to regional linguistic usages nor to rush towards worldly notions”. He argues that when the Buddha’s advice is applied in the context of their debate, it means that the reality of the collective must be denied — this accords with absolute truth — but not that of the individual dharma’s function participating in the collective, complex process of conditioned co-arising. Denial of the latter amounts to a denial of the possibility of dependent origination in toto. The Vaibhāṣika position in this debate, he concludes, is in fact founded in accordance with this reasoning and stands firmly on both conventional and absolute truths: Following the Buddha’s advice, in asserting that “the eye sees”, it does not unnecessarily
clash with the conventional point of view. By establishing that the eye — rather than a fictitious collective agent such as the Soul — has the unique, intrinsic function of seeing, it conforms to the absolute truth that while a collection of dharma-s as such is unreal, real dharma-s indeed exist, each being uniquely defined by its specific characteristic and function.

### 10.5.4. Role of consciousness in perception

Samghabhadra articulates that consciousness is the cause for seeing, not the very entity that sees:

> The eye, sustained by the force of consciousness, gives rise to its specific activity. This is like the arising of the specific activity of fire with the support of the force of fuel.

> In fact, if the activity of seeing visible forms is a dharma produced by consciousness, then this activity ought to arise [even] when separated from the visual organ. The conascent mahā-bhūta-s, nourished by consciousness, are caused to produce the specific organ capable of seeing visible forms. Therefore, it is wrong to say that it is the supporting consciousness that sees.

> Will any wise one say: “Whatever causes and conditions give rise to cognition, the resulting cognition is none other than those very causes and conditions”? Consciousness is the cause, not the essence, of seeing.

That is, in the simultaneous cause-effect relationship which obtains when visual consciousness, the eye, and other necessary conditions flash forth their individual functions in co-ordination to give rise to the seeing of a visible form, visual consciousness is a cause, not an effect (seeing). This is in contrast to the Sautrāntika view that visual consciousness — which is the seeing of the object — is an effect that is produced in the moment subsequent to that when the eye, the visible form, etc., were present.

In terms of intrinsic efficacy, the Vaibhāṣikas maintain that whereas the eye sees, consciousness cognizes (vijānāti). But, what exactly does consciousness do in the perceptual process? In AKB, Vasubandhu discusses this question:

> It is said in the sūtra, ‘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
Given the proper context — especially Vasubandhu’s usage of the term ākāra (equated with the resemblance of the object) here — this doctrine, as some scholars like La Vallée Poussin\(^7\) assert, can be considered a Sautrāntika one. Nevertheless, even the Vaibhāṣika would have no objection to the statement that consciousness in this process does nothing in particular. Samghabhadra too accepts that it is only with regard to the specific nature of dharma that one speaks in conventional terms of an agent, so as to refute the view that apart from consciousness there exists a real agent that is conscious; consciousness actually does nothing in the perceptual process:

In what other situations does one see the reference of an agent as a conventional expression (prajñāpāti) to nothing more than the nature of a dharma? One sees in the world that people speak of a shadow as that which moves. In this case there is no movement; but when it arises in a different place in the following moment (anantaram), it is said to move. The same is true for the case of consciousness; when it arises serially with regard to a different object, it is said to be that which cognizes — i.e., it cognizes the object — even though there [really] is no action [on its part].\(^8\)

### 10.6. Important Sarvāstivāda thought-concomitants involved in discriminative cognition

In accordance with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the mahābhūmika caitta-s, all the ten caitta-s so named are important in any process of cognition that is made possible thanks to their collective contribution. However, some among them, when functioning prominently, bring about the mental capacity of conceptual discrimination and hence the possibility of inferential knowledge. In a sensory perception which is the bare, generic awareness of the sense data, their functioning is not prominent. These thought concomitants are, in particular, prajñā, smṛti and also samjñā and the two aniyata caitta-s, vitarka and vicāra. Prajñā and samjñā are in fact respectively the main power supply for examination/deliberation (abhinirūpāṇa) and recollection (anusmaraṇa), respectively — the two sine qua non for a discriminative cognition (vikalpa) (§ 9.7). Samghabhadra explains why mental consciousness, in contrast to a sensory perception, can have the capacity of discriminative (vikalpaka) conceptualization:
If a consciousness can, within a single moment, grasp objects belonging to numerous species and can, with regard to one given perceptual object, generate a stream of thoughts — a consciousness of such a nature is said to be discriminative. The five groups of vijñāna, on the other hand, grasp only present objects. No two moments [of thought] have the same perceptual object, for when the previous grasping of a perceptual object has ceased, there cannot be the arising of a repeated grasping [of the same object] by the consciousness in the second moment. Mental consciousness can take objects belonging to the three periods of time. [In this case,] a dharma, although having ceased, can still be its object, and a stream of thoughts can be generated with regard to the same object. For these reasons, only this [consciousness] is said to be discriminative. However, since the five vijñāna-kāya-s are always conjoined with svabhāva-vikalpa, they are also discriminative. The sūtra-s speak of them as being non-discriminative [only] in the sense of being without anusmarana- and abhirūpaṇa-vikalpa-s.89

The involvement of the above-enumerated caitta-s may be summarized thus:90 saṃjñā is the cause of vitarka, and vitarka is in turn the cause for the arising of a sensory consciousness. At this stage, there is a simple inquiry or searching on the mere object grasped, in the form “what is it?” Both schools, Sarvāstivāda and Sautrāntika, would agree that some kind of inarticulate mental inquiry is involved here.

The Sarvāstivāda perspective may be understood to conceive of this as a contribution coming from the conascent thought-concomitants, saṃjñā, prajñā and smṛti — all operating weakly — and vitarka. For the Sautrāntika, it is the thought itself operating in its gross state, represented by vitarka, which makes the inquiry in the form of an inarticulate murmur. At the same time, a sensory consciousness is said to be distinguished from mental consciousness by its lack of abinirūpaṇa-vikalpa on account of its not taking name (nāma) as is object. This must then mean that, for the Sarvāstivāda, in a sensory perception the “wind of saṃjñā” (saṃjñāpavana) is strong enough only for a rudimentary determination, in a generic manner, of the object as a thing in itself, but not for conceptualization based on judgment and association. The same must be said of the contribution from prajñā, smṛti and vitarka. Vitarka, although not subsumed as a universal thought-concomitant, is nonetheless always present at the arising of a sensory perception. It is in fact considered the latter's cause, evidently in the sense that it makes the main contribution in such a rudimentary discrimination as regards the object's appearance (nimitta) that constitutes the grasping
of an object by a sensory consciousness.\textsuperscript{91} At the stage of conceptual discrimination in a mental cognition with which \textit{vīcāra} accords, the “wind of \textit{samjñā}” is sufficiently strong, and \textit{prajñā} and \textit{smṛti} operate prominently.\textsuperscript{92}

10.7. Ontological status of the objects of knowledge

We have seen above that already in VKŚ, Maudgalyāyana represents the Vibhajyavāda stance that there can be consciousness that takes a non-existent object (§ 4.1.2.1). Likewise, the Dārṣṭāntikas in MVŚ maintain that the objects of defilements are unreal (§ 10.1). More generally, the early Dārṣṭāntikas as well as the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas in AKB, etc., hold that non-existent objects can also give rise to cognition.\textsuperscript{93}

In contrast, for the Vaibhāṣikas, all object domains are real existents; for “whatever does not fall outside the object-domain of [sensory] consciousnesses, visual, etc., exists truly”.\textsuperscript{94} “Whatever is conceptually real can only be the object domain of mental consciousness.”\textsuperscript{95} In VKŚ, the main epistemological argument advanced for the central thesis of the tri-temporal existence of \textit{dharma}-s is that, in conformity with the Buddha’s teaching, consciousness necessarily has a perceptual object; the fact that we can be conscious of past and future objects proves that these objects exist truly.\textsuperscript{96} AKB inherits this as one of the four major arguments for \textit{sarvāstitva} (supra, § 3.3.2).

Samghabhadra states succinctly that “the characteristic of an existent (\textit{saḷ-lakṣaṇa}) is that it can serve as an object producing cognition (\textit{buddhi})”. Accordingly, an object of knowledge is necessarily existent, even though it may exist truly (\textit{dravyato ‘sti}) or conceptually (\textit{prajñaptito ‘sti}).\textsuperscript{97} (See also § 3.5.3 ff.). Stated otherwise, the possibility of knowing an object necessarily implies the true ontological status of the object.

10.7.1. Debate in Ny on the ontological status of the object

In Ny, there is a lengthy debate between the Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas on the issue. The Sautrāntikas, represented by Śrīlāta, enumerate the following cases which they claim to represent examples of perception of non-existent objects:\textsuperscript{98}

(a) The optical illusion of a fire-wheel (\textit{alāta-cakra}) resulting from a whirling fire brand.

(b) The cognition of the non-existent Self (\textit{ātman}).
(c) The meditational experiences, such as the all-pervasiveness of a meditational object (the so-called ‘base of entirety’, krtsnāyatana), e.g., a primary color, that results from resolute mental application (adhimukti-manaskāra).

(d) The view (dṛṣṭi) that has non-existence as its object, as mentioned in the sūtra.99

(e) The awareness of the non-existence of certain mental states such as craving, as spoken in the sūtra.

(f) Objects in a dream.

(g) The optical illusion of a double-moon, etc., resulting from ophthalmic disease.

(h) Knowing something that is non-existent.

(i) The cognition that takes as its object the prior non-existence (prāg-abhāva) of a sound.

As a general reply to the Sautrāntika claim, Samghabhadra invokes the scriptural authority that each of the six cases of cognition — visual, etc., up to mental — necessarily has two requisites: the sense faculty and the corresponding object. There is not a seventh type of cognition that is generated apart from the object, so that one can call it a cognition of non-existent object. In fact, if this could be the case, then a blind person ought to be able to see as much as one possessing eyes, there being no specifically requisite conditions that distinguish the two cases. Besides, non-existent dharma-s cannot be subsumed under any of the six types of objects taught in the sūtra-s. All the Vaibhāṣika arguments here are based on the main premise — which we have seen above — that whatever can serve as a perceptual object producing a cognition is an existent, although it may be real in the absolute sense or in the relative sense as a mental construction or concept. What is non-existent in the construction necessarily has as its basis something real. It is this latter basis that constitutes the actual object of the perception. An absolute non-existent (atyantam asad) has no function whatsoever and hence can never engender a consciousness. Thus, in the case of the perception of the unreal pudgala, the perceptual object is not the pudgala which is superimposed, but the five skandha-s which are real existents. The illusory perception of a double-moon has as its object the single moon; etc. In the same way, dreams, illusion, are actually recollections of real entities previously experienced — just that the element of imagination sets in, resulting in the superimposition on

303
these real entities under certain influences such as mental sluggishness, etc. Likewise, the imagination of a fictitious thing such as the tortoise’s hair (kaurmasya romah) and a hare’s horn (śaśa-śṛṅga) become possible because the rabbit, the horn, etc., have been experienced before. Even in the case of negations, their perception does not arise having absolute non-existents as objects. Thus, the perception of what we ordinarily regard as a pure abstraction, such as ‘non-existence’, too has a real object: the expression (abhidhāna) itself, which for the Vaibhāṣika is real, being word (nāma) which is a viprayukta-samskāra-dharma. When the knowledge taking this as its object arises, it knows that the negated does not exist. In the case where one perceives a negation such as ‘non-brahmin’ (abrāhmaṇa), the knowledge arises with the expression and the expressed (abhidheya) as its objects; the expression itself negates brāhmaṇa, operating with regard to what is expressed by it — kṣatriya:

When this knowledge first arises, by taking merely the expression as its object, it knows that the negated [i.e., brāhmaṇa] does not exist. When it arises subsequently, it may also take the expressed [i.e., kṣatriya] as its object and knows that what is negated does not exist in that.

10.8. Direct perception, ākāra, sākāra-vijñānavāda, nirākāra-vijñānavāda and the Sarvāstivāda

In contrast to the Sautrāntika and Yogācāra, the Sarvāstivāda theory of knowledge is described in the Sanskrit texts as nir-ākāra-(vi) jñānavāda: the theory that the external object is directly perceived without the need of any representational form in the consciousness. However, according to the tradition passed down by Xuanzang, among all the northern Buddhist schools it is only the Sāṃmitīya that really holds such a theory, since this school asserts that only mental dharma-s are momentary; external things can last longer than one moment. All other schools, including the Sarvāstivāda, would therefore have to be included in the camp of sākāra-vijñānavāda. We know of course that the Theravāda school too holds that a rūpa lasts 16 moments (citta-khaṇa-s) longer than a citta, so that direct perception in the true sense becomes possible. The confusion between these two traditional sources can only be cleared by examining the notion of ākāra explained differently in these schools.

10.8.1. The notion of ākāra in the Sautrāntika and the Sarvāstivāda

The Sautrāntika stance is that the ākāra corresponds exactly to the external object. It allows no possibility of a cognitive error in a genuine
theories of knowledge. However, this ākāra is a resemblance (sadrśā) constructed by the mind.

In the case of the Sarvāstivāda tradition, at the outset we note the information provided by MVŚ that various Ābhidharmika masters — most probably Sarvāstivādins — give various interpretations to ākāra:

Question: What is the intrinsic nature of the so-called ākāra?

Answer: Its intrinsic nature is prajñā. Herein it should be understood thus:

(i) prajñā is ākāra; it is also what cognizes with a form (ākārayati) and what is cognized with a form (ākāryate);
(ii) the citta-caitta-dharma-s conjoined (samprayukta) with prajñā, while not being ākāra, are what cognize with a form as well as what are cognized with a form;
(iii) those viprayukta-samskāra-s and other existent (sat) dharma-s, while being neither ākāra nor what cognize with a form, are what are cognized with a form.

According to some: What is called ākāra has collectively all citta-caitta-dharma-s as its intrinsic nature. This theory would imply that all citta-caitta-s are ākāra, and what cognize with a form (ākārayati) and what are cognized with an ākāra. All the other dharma-s, while being neither ākāra nor what cognize with an ākāra, are what are cognized with an ākāra.

According to some others: What is called ākāra has all dharma-s as its intrinsic nature. This theory would imply that the conjoined dharma-s are ākāra, as well as what cognize with a form and what are cognized with an ākāra. The disjoined dharma-s, while being ākāra as well as what are cognized with an ākāra, are not what cognize with an ākāra.

Comment: It should be said that what is called ākāra has prajñā as its intrinsic nature, as given in the first explanation....

Question: What is the meaning of ākāra?

Answer: Ākāra means the operation in the manner of examination/discernment (簡擇而轉; pra-vi-či) with regard to the nature of the object.104

From this, it is clear that the orthodox Sarvāstivāda view is that prajñā is ākāra, explained as the function of “operating investigatively with regard to the object”. This is essentially the same as the definition given for prajñā as “the investigation of dharma-s” (dharma-pravicaya).105 But this investigative operation may be correct or incorrect, skillful (kuśala) or unskillful (akuśala), sharp (tīkṣṇa) or blunt (mṛdu),
with-outflow (sāsrava) or outflow-free (anāsrava). Thus, when one commits the cognitive error of mistaking a rope for a snake or an aggregate of five skandha-s for a pudgala, it is a case of “the ākāra being topsy-turvy” (viparīta); the ālambana is existent and not illusory — the rope or the skandha-s.\textsuperscript{106} In brief, as stated by Saṃghabhadra: “Only a discriminative (sa-vikalpaka) consciousness is capable of grasping the specific characteristic of the object [in the form]: ‘it is blue, not green’, etc.”\textsuperscript{107} Accordingly, in the Sarvāstivāda epistemology, the operation of ākāra pertains to the domain of mental consciousness, not to that of a sensory consciousness where prajñā cannot properly function (see \textit{supra}, § 9.7). Moreover, it may or may not correspond exactly to the actual form of the external object.

\textbf{10.8.2. Several ākāra-s on a given ālambana}

That, according to the Sarvāstivāda, with regard to one and the same perceptual object there can be various ākāra-s, is clearly brought out in a consideration in MVŚ on the question: “If one leaves behind an ākāra, does one also [leave behind] the perceptual object (ālambana)?” The answer to this is given as a four-fold alternative (catuṣkoṭi):

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(I)] There is a case where one leaves behind the ākāra but not the perceptual object: viz., a person contemplates a given characteristic with a given ākāra; without abandoning this characteristic, he further has another ākāra — e.g.: he takes the rūpa-skandha as his object and has the ākāra of impermanence, immediately after that, the ākāra of unsatisfactoriness of the rūpa-skandha arises before him...

  \item[(II)] There is a case where one leaves behind the perceptual object but not the ākāra: viz., a person contemplates a given characteristic with a given ākāra; with this same ākāra, he further contemplates another characteristic — e.g.: he takes the rūpa-skandha as his object and has the ākāra of impermanence; immediately after that he takes the vedanā-skandha as object and the ākāra of impermanence arises before him...

  \item[(III)] There is a case where one leaves behind the ākāra as well as the perceptual object: viz., a person contemplates a given characteristic with a given ākāra, he further contemplates another characteristic with another ākāra — e.g.: he takes the rūpa-skandha as his object and has the ākāra of impermanence; immediately after that he takes the vedanā-skandha as object and the ākāra of unsatisfactoriness arises before him...
\end{itemize}
(IV) There is a case where one leaves behind neither the ākāra nor the perceptual object: viz., a person contemplates a given characteristic with a given ākāra, and continues to do so for some time — e.g.: he takes the rūpa-skandha as his object and has the ākāra of impermanence in a serial continuity for some time.¹⁰⁸

10.8.3. The 16 ākāra-s as prajñā and not ‘images/aspects’ of objects

The above passage also indicates the possibility of simultaneously having one and the same ākāra with regard to many and even all dharma-s, excepting the knowledge itself at that given moment, its conjuncts and co-existents, as when one contemplates that all dharma-s are devoid of a Self, etc.¹⁰⁹ In fact, the only case where the ākāra of an object corresponds exactly to the actual nature of the object is when the yogi acquires the prajñā qua true insight in the direct realization (abhisamaya) into the noble truths — he sees conditioned things truly as they are, in their aspects of being unsatisfactory, impermanent, etc. The contemplating yogi can see several aspects pertaining to a given object, each with a distinct and unconfounded ākāra — i.e., prajñā. Thus:

With regard to each with-outflow object (sāsrava-vastu), if the knowledge operates by way of the four ākāra-s, [understanding it] as duḥkha, etc., it receives the name duḥkha-jñāna. If the knowledge operates by way of the four ākāra-s, [understanding it] as samudaya, etc., it receives the name samudaya-jñāna. Hence the ākāra-s of the duḥkha- and samudaya-jñāna-s are not mixed (雜; miśra), while the ālambana-s are mixed…¹¹⁰

This is clearly a case of mental exertion — mental application with regard to the common characteristics (sāmānya-lakṣaṇa-manaskāra).¹¹¹ It is for this reason that the 16 ākāra-s of the four noble truths — duḥkhata, etc. — as direct perception of the yogi are said to be prajñā — the outflow-free or pure prajñā.¹¹² They clearly do not refer to images or ‘aspects’ of the objects, but are in the active sense of the mental function of understanding. These common-characteristics (sāmānya-lakṣaṇa) are the universal principles of all dharma-s intuited by spiritual insight pertaining to the absolute truth,¹¹³ not universals abstractly constructed by the mind as in the case of mental inference.

10.8.4. Ākāra-s as pratyakṣa-jñāna.

The spiritual insight acquired in the process of direct realization is called a dharma-knowledge (dharma-jñāna) where it pertains to the sense-sphere and a subsequent-knowledge (anvaya-jñāna) where it pertains
to the two upper spheres. Both are knowledges qua direct perception (pratyakṣa-jñāna).

Samghabhadra insists that the term anvaya does not imply that the subsequent-knowledges are anumāna, since in the sūtra both knowledges are equally spoken of as capable of seeing truly duḥkha, etc. Moreover, the ārya-jñāna-s cannot be inferential in nature, and no object pertaining to the ārya-satya-s can be realized by an inferential knowledge. He further argues that if the subsequent-knowledges are inferential, then there would not be even the dharma-knowledges having nirodha as object, since a nirodha is always non-empirical (adrśya). But it is from the point of view of indriyāśrita- and anubhava-pratyakṣa (see infra, § 10.8.8) that the objects of subsequent-knowledges are equally spoken of as capable of seeing truly duḥkha, etc. Moreover, the ārya-jñāna-s cannot be inferential in nature, and no object pertaining to the ārya-satya-s can be realized by an inferential knowledge. He further argues that if the subsequent-knowledges are inferential, then there would not be even the dharma-knowledges having nirodha as object, since a nirodha is always non-empirical (adrśya). But it is from the point of view of indriyāśrita- and anubhava-pratyakṣa (see infra, § 10.8.8) that the objects of subsequent-knowledges are said to be non-empirical. And in that case there ought not to be even the dharma-knowledges of nirodha since a nirodha cannot be an object for these two pratyakṣa-s. From the point of view of buddhi-pratyakṣa (see infra, § 10.8.8), however, it is not true that the objects of subsequent-knowledges are those of inferential knowledges. “Hence, all determination of things truly as they are (實義決擇; *tattvārtha-viniścaya), properly accomplished (如理所引; *yoga-vihita), are pratyakṣa-jñāna-s.”

10.8.5. The Sarvāstivāda doctrine of sensory perception is nirākāra-jñānavāda

Accordingly, from the Sarvāstivāda perspective, a sensory perception is definitely without an ākāra. It is for this same reason that MVŚ states that the prajñā conjoined with the five types of sensory consciousness is not drṣṭi although it is also a knowledge (jñāna):

1. it does not have a keen or sharp (tīkṣṇa, paṭu) mode of activity (ākāra) and cannot penetrate deeply into the perceptual object;
2. it cannot discriminate;
3. it can have only the svalakṣaṇa but not the sāmānya-lakṣaṇa, as its perceptual object;
4. it has only present objects, whereas a view can have dharma-s of all the three temporal periods, as well as the unconditioned, as objects;
5. a view can grasp an object repeatedly, but this prajñā can only grasp an object in a single moment;
Unlike a view, it cannot cogitate and examine a perceptual object. These explanations are essentially a good description of the Sarvāstivāda notion of sensory direct perception. We may note here once again the unambiguous notion that where prajñā operates, ākāra does not denote the ‘exact image/representation’ of the ālambana.

The conclusion therefore is that, as far as sensory perception is concerned, the Xuanzang tradition is not quite justified in grouping the Sarvāstivāda theory under sa-ākāra-jñānavāda. It is, properly speaking, nirākāra-jñānavāda.

10.8.6. The two aspects of the notion of ākāra according to Pu Guang

However, Pu Guang does speak of two aspects of the notion of ākāra: According to him, this notion connotes both a ‘comprehending activity’ (行解) and a representational image (影像; ābhāsa, pratibimba):

‘Comprehending activity’ refers to the difference in the comprehending activity of the citta-caitta-s when they grasp respectively the generic and specific characteristics pertaining to an object. It refers to the difference in the activities of the citta and the caitta-s. This comprehending activity may generate a correct or wrong comprehension with regard to the object … Ākāra refers to the fact that the citta-caitta-s are clear by nature; as soon as they are confronted with an object, an image arises [in them] spontaneously without the need of any mental application — just as images appearing in a clear pond or mirror. … If one uses the term ‘comprehending activity’, only the difference in the activities of the citta, etc., is referred to. If one uses the term ākāra, it refers to two types [of ākāra]: (1) ākāra in the sense of an image, (2) ākāra in the sense of a comprehending activity…

Question: With reference to which of the two — the mode of understanding or the ākāra [in the sense of an image] — is it said that [the citta-caitta-s] have the same ākāra (sākāra)?

Explanation: It is with reference to ākāra that they are said to have the same ākāra. The citta-caitta-dharma-s are clear by nature; as soon as they are confronted with a certain object, its form appears spontaneously. As they equally have this form, they are said to ‘have the same ākāra’. Thus, the Abhidharmāvatāra, in its second fascicle, says:

Just as visual consciousness, etc., are produced with eyes, etc., as their support, manifesting with an image of the object (義影像;
Accordingly, it is only from the point of view of ākāra [as the image of the object] that they are said to be having the same ākāra …

Question: From the point of view of which of the two — the comprehending activity or the ākāra [in the sense of an image] — is the perceiver so called?

Explanation: From the point of view of the latter, not the former: When the citta, etc., is confronted with the object, an image appears; in this sense [the citta, etc.,] is called the perceiver and the object is the perceived. This is because, when the citta-caitta perceive an object, they do not do so like a lamp-flame radiating its ray to reach an object or like a pair of pincers grasping an object. It is from the perspective of the manifestation of the image that the perceiver and the perceived are so called.

Pu Guang’s explanation above shows that Xuanzang’s tradition describes the Sarvāstivāda theory as sākāra because (i) the conjoined citta-caitta-s are said to have the same ākāra that Pu Guang takes in the sense of the object’s image; and (ii) the school speaks of a sensory consciousness arising with an image of the object. But, as we have observed, unlike the Sautrāntika, the Sarvāstivāda consistently equates ākāra with prajñā, so that only Pu Guang’s interpretation of ākāra as ‘comprehending activity’ may be acceptable, even though at the same time, his exposition of the Sarvāstivāda theory here is otherwise basically correct. Moreover, it must be noted that the Chinese Abhidharmāvatāra passage cited by him uses the word ‘image’ (影像) which clearly means an image, and not ‘mode of activity’ (行相) which is Xuanzang’s usual rendering for ākāra. In the corresponding example given in ADV (109) too, the word used is pratinidhi instead of ākāra. Since both texts are authored by orthodox Vaibhāṣika masters, it seems safe enough to surmise that in the Sarvāstivāda epistemological theory, the image arising in the sensory consciousness is not an ākāra — a mental construction by prajñā — but an image essentially belonging to the object, not the mind. And as Pu Guang says, it arises spontaneously like a reflection in a mirror: The reflection does not belong to the mirror which is always clear by nature.

Pu Guang’s discussion on the meaning of sākāra above refers to the Sarvāstivāda tenet that the conjoined citta-caitta-s are all sākāra — having the same ākāra (see above). In another context, all mental dharma-s are also described as sākāra, ‘with an ākāra’. But what this term means in this context becomes controversial.
10. Theories of Knowledge

10.8.7. The notion of sākāra as an attribute of citta-caitta-s

Vasubandhu raises the question in AKB that since the caitta prajñā itself is ākāra, sākāra in this context would imply that prajñā, as a mental dharma, is conjoined with another prajñā, which is against the Ābhidharmika tenet. He proposes to avoid this apparent contradiction by defining ākāra as the ‘object-grasping-mode (ālambana-grahaṇa-prakāra) of all the citta-caitta-s’. In this way, prajñā too as a caitta can be said to be ‘with an ākāra’. Yāsomitra states that this is a Sautrāntika definition. However, if the sense of compound means a ‘mode of understanding’ in the perceptual process and not an image, then it is essentially Sarvāstivāda rather than Sautrāntika. Moreover, it is noteworthy that Vasubandhu here does not contest the MVŚ statement that ākāra is prajñā and, in fact, proceeds to conclude with the same threefold classification of dharma-s (ākāra, ākārayati, ākāryate) that we have seen in the MVŚ passage quoted above. This is, however, not to say that Vasubandhu’s definition of ākāra is identical with that of the Sarvāstivāda. It is for this reason that Saṃghabhadra objects to it, demanding from Vasubandhu more articulation on his definition:

Herein, the Sūtrakāra affiliates himself with another school and asserts thus: ‘What is called ākāra is the object-grasping-mode of the citta-caitta-s’. This does not necessarily conform to logic. It must be considered what is meant by the ‘object-grasping-mode’:

If it refers to the different modes/species of the form of the object, then the notion that all [citta-caitta-s] can assume the image-form (能像) [of the object] cannot be established at all, for an object has various forms, skillful, permanent, etc. Or rather, the rūpa-dharma-s are to be subsumed under ākāra, since rūpa-dharma-s can also assume the images of the forms of others.

If it refers to the ability to grasp the specific characteristic of the object, then ākāra ought not to be possible for the five [sensory] consciousnesses, since they are not capable of grasping the specific characteristic of the object — since only a discriminative (sa-vikalpaka) consciousness is capable of grasping the specific characteristic of the object [in the form]: ‘it is blue, not green’, etc. However, this is not what is conceded [by his definition]. Hence [his definition] is logically invalid.

Saṃghabhadra’s objections confirm our surmise above that, for the Sarvāstivāda, ākāra does not mean the specific form or image of the object. It refers to the operation of prajñā at the stage of mental consciousness and is not applicable in the case of a sensory perception. After criticising Vasubandhu’s definition, Saṃghabhadra then proceeds to claim that the Sarvāstivāda explanation is the correct one:
1. The praññā which operates investigatively with regard to the object is said to be the ākāra.

2. All citta-caitta-dharma-s, including praññā, are said to be ‘those that cognize with a form’, which is synonymous with ‘those that grasp objects’ — praññā investigates the object, vedanā feels it, saṃjñā grasps its appearance, vijñāna becomes conscious of it, etc.  

3. All dharma-s, real or unreal, are equally said to be ‘those that are cognized with a form’.

In other words, this explanation leads to the same threefold classification as given in MVŚ which Saṃghabhadra, in fact, spells out explicitly in conclusion.

10.8.8. Yogic direct perception of sāmānya-lakṣaṇa as a form of sākāra-jñāna

But although the Vaibhāṣika doctrine of sensory perception can legitimately be labelled as a form of nirākāra-jñānavāda, we have seen above that the pratyakṣa of the yogi is said to perceive sāmānya-lakṣaṇa. This perspective is also discernible from the three types of pratyakṣa enumerated by Saṃghabhadra:

1. that which is dependent on the sense faculty (依根現量; indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa);
2. that which is experience (領納現量; anubhava-pratyakṣa);
3. that which is discernment (覺了現量; *buddhi-pratyakṣa).

The first refers to the direct grasping (pratyakṣam √grah?), supported by the five sense faculties, of the five types of external objects, rūpa, etc. The second refers to the coming into the present of the citta-caitta-dharma-s, vedanā, saṃjñā, etc. The third refers to the direct realization (sākṣāt-√kṛ) of the specific or common characteristic (sva-sāmānya-lakṣaṇa) — accordingly as the case may be — of dharma-s.

From this, it is clear that it is the visual consciousness, not the mere seeing by the eye, that is indriya-pratyakṣa.

The second type of pratyakṣa is intrinsically linked with the first in-as-much as these caitta-s become present at the first moment of the perceptual process together with visual consciousness, sensing and categorizing (albeit weakly), etc., on the very same object that is being grasped generically by visual consciousness.
The third type is mental consciousness that follows immediately from the first moment. It can still be considered a type of direct perception since it is a clear vivid perception directly induced by the immediately preceding sensory perception.\(^\text{126}\) Saṃghabhadra’s articulation, that the *buddhi-pratyakṣa* is the direct realization of either svalaṅga or sāmānya-lakṣaṇa accordingly as the case may be, can be comprehended as follows: As long as the contribution from the conascent *cātta*-s is still weak, it too, like the preceding consciousness, can only apprehend the mere object, e.g., a blue color; it is therefore a grasping of svalaṅga. But when the contribution is strong enough and it can apprehend, using name, “it is blue”, etc., it is apprehending universals — e.g., sāmānya-lakṣaṇa (see § 9.7). This is, then, not a case of *pratyakṣa*. The mode of activity (ākāra = prajñā) that functions at this time can be erroneous. However, in the case of spiritual realization — ‘realization-knowledge’ (證智; pratyakṣa-buddhi, *pratyakṣa-jñāna, adhigama-jñāna*) — the meditator apprehends directly, truly as they are, the universal characteristics of all dharma-s. The modes of activity in this case differ not in the slightest from the true nature of the dharma-s being examined. This is a case of direct seeing or direct perception *par excellence* (真現量; *bhūta-pratyakṣa, tattva-pratyakṣa*)\(^\text{127}\) — without any conceptualization, even though sāmānya-lakṣaṇa is involved. For this reason the Sarvāstivāda identifies the 16 ākāra-s pertaining to the four noble truths with prajñā — operating as spiritual insight. MVŚ states that “outside the 16 ākāra-s, there is no other outflow-free prajñā”. “The prajñā-s not subsumed under the 16 ākāra-s mostly discern svalaṅga-s; the prajñā-s subsumed under the 16 ākāra-s discern only sāmānya-lakṣaṇa-s.”\(^\text{128}\)

Samghabhadra argues that sahabhū causality obtains in a sensory perception; the sensory faculty and the object as the causes and the sensory consciousness as the effect all arise in the same first moment. Moreover, *vedanā*, the instrumental force for anubhava,\(^\text{129}\) must be ‘conjoined with’ consciousness — which entails not only simultaneity, but also that both take the same object, etc.\(^\text{130}\) In fact, a sensory consciousness necessarily has a present perceptual object, or it will not be possible for one to have the *pratyakṣa* experience. For, with regard to what is personally sensed, one experiences it and discerns it at different times. That is, the anubhava-pratyakṣa and buddhi-pratyakṣa are not simultaneous. Discernment occurs at the state of recollection, taking the experience — the *vedanā* — that has just ceased as its object. Accordingly, “a sensation — pleasurable, etc. — must first be experienced by the anubhava-pratyakṣa before a pratyakṣa discernment can arise having it as its perceptual object. Likewise, an external object
must first be experienced by indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa before a pratyakṣa discernment can arise having it as the perceptual object, by virtue of the thrust of presentness.” This is consistent with the Sarvāstivāda view that the citta-caitta-dharma-s cannot discern themselves or those conjoined or coexist with them. (See above, § 10.4). Saṃghabhadra argues that since the Sautrāntikas maintain that on account of causation being successive, an external object in the preceding moment has not been experienced directly (pratyakṣam), there can be no possibility of a subsequent discernment that is of the nature of pratyakṣa — having the thrust of vividness and immediacy.

The Sautrāntikas, on the other hand, argue that not mere recollection, but rather the simultaneity of the experiencing (anubhava) and the discerning (buddhi) must be admitted to account for such an experience. That is, unless one is self-aware of what one is presently cognizing or knowing — i.e., unless what is termed sva-samvedana (sva-samvitti) in later Buddhist logical texts is a fact — one cannot in the subsequent moment recollect as a pratyakṣa understanding in the manner: “I have experienced such a pleasure or pain.” The *Buddhabhūmi-sūtra-śāstra (佛地經論) underscores this doctrinal position by quoting Dignāga as follows:

The Pramāṇasamuccaya states: “Pratyakṣa is so called because all cittacaitta-s are self-aware. If this were not the case, one would not recollect [that one has directly perceived]; just as one [would not recollect] what one has not seen.”

10.8.9. Summary

Its theory of simultaneous causality notwithstanding, the Sarvāstivāda school, too, holds that sensory perception as a pratyakṣa experience is fully accomplished only in the second moment on recollection. The reasoning is that the external object must first be experienced by the indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa before a buddhi — i.e., the buddhi-pratyakṣa — having that pratyakṣa as its ālambana can arise.

Both the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika seek to account for the sense of vividness and immediacy necessarily entailed in a pratyakṣa experience, albeit via somewhat different mechanism: The former relies on the principle of simultaneous causality in the perceptual act and on the conascence of the sensory consciousness with vedanā and the other mahābhūmika-citta-caitta-s. The latter, while rejecting simultaneous causality, maintain that in the pratyakṣa act, the experiencing (anubhāva) and the discerning (buddhi) are necessarily simultaneous — the perceptual act is intrinsically self-aware.
The Sarvāstivāda school, in its various texts, consistently equates ākāra with prajñā, both being defined as the investigative operation with regard to the perceptual object. (However, the sense of ākāra in the notion of sākāra as an attribute of the citta-caitta-dharma-s is treated differently.) This is in contrast to the Sautrāntika and Yogācāra for whom ākāra connotes both an image/representation and a mental understanding arising in the mind — with the difference that the Sautrāntika would regard it as a correspondent to an external existent. To this extent, therefore, it is inappropriate to describe the Sarvāstivāda theory of sensory perception — said to be non-discriminative on account of the weak functioning of prajñā therein — as sākāra-jñānavāda. On the other hand, we must note that the pratyakṣa of the yogi is said to perceive sāmānya-lakṣaṇa. This perspective is also discernible from the explanation of buddhi-pratyakṣa. This is the case of satyābhisamaya, in which the outflow-free ākāra-s perceived by the yogi are not conceptual understanding. They correspond truly and exactly to the sāmānya-lakṣaṇa-s as universal principles pertaining to the absolute truth (paramārtha). This perception is therefore also a pratyakṣa experience; in fact, pratyakṣa par excellence — and in-as-much as it involves ākāra-s, is describable as a form of sākāra-jñāna. Prajñā at this stage is truly non-discriminative/non-superimposing, although not in the Vijñānavādin sense of transcending the ‘subject-object’ dichotomy. This Sarvāstivāda notion that a practitioner endowed with true spiritual insight perceives reality through ākāra-s might well have influenced those members among the latter-day Yogācārins who opt for the view that even for those who have acquired the non-discriminative insight (nirvikalpaka-jñāna) too, knowledge is sākāra.137
NOTES

1 Cf. AKB, 461: kathāṃ punar idam gamyate skandhasamātāna evedam ātmabhidhānām vartate nānyasminn abhidheya iti | pratyakṣānumānābhāvāt | ye hi dharmāḥ santi teṣām pratyakṣam upalabdhir bhavaty asāty antarāye |

2 MVŚ, 313c, 989c.
3 Ny, 639b.
4 MVŚ, 288a.
5 For the possibility of this correspondence, see AKB, 176.

7 Ny, 351a–b.
8 T 29, 788c.
9 Ny, 350c–351c.
10 MVŚ, 702a.
11 MVŚ, 64a–b.
12 MVŚ, 384a.
13 T 26, 713c.
14 MVŚ, 980b.
15 MVŚ, 228b–c.
16 MVŚ, 558b.
17 MVŚ, 558b.
18 MVŚ, 976c: 所通達所遍知言是實有法.
19 Ny, 625a.
20 Ny, 621c: 為境生覺是真有相.
22 Cf. AKB, 29; Vy, 80.
23 MVŚ, 489b ff.
24 AKB, 54: matiḥ prajñā dharmapraṇivicaḥ. ADV, 70: dhiḥ prajñā dharma-saṃgrahādyupalakṣaṇānvabhāvā. Similar in Prakaraṇa-sāstra (T. 1542), Saṅgītparāśa-sāstra (T. 1536), etc.
25 MVŚ, 490b.
26 MVŚ, 44a.
27 MVŚ, 547b.
28 MVŚ, 547c.
29 Cf. MVŚ, 546b ff.; AKB, 394; ADV, 373. MVŚ justifies the enumeration of eight knowledges (without ksaya- and anutpāda-) in the JPŚ as conforming to the sūtra-s. See also, Entrance, 102, and note 443.
30 MVŚ, 490b.
31 MVŚ, 490b–c.
32 MVŚ, 229a.
33 ‘Vijñānavādins’ here does not necessarily refer to the Yogācāra. It refers to all those who hold that it is vijñāna that sees.
In the early discourses, the Buddha’s wisdom (prajñā) is mainly described as the realization of the truth of conditioned co-arising (e.g., M, i, 167; Vin, i, 4 f.). This is further elaborated as the threefold knowledge (trivyādā): 1. knowledge of former births (piṭṭha-vivāsa-nusmṛti-jñāna), 2. knowledge of the disappearance and reappearance of beings (cyutypapāda-jñāna), 3. knowledge of the exhaustion of the outflows (āsravakṣaya-jñāna). We further see the enumeration of the six-fold higher knowledges (sadbhijñā) which adds three more to this list: 4. psychic power (ṛddhy-abhijñā), 5. divine ear (divya-śrota) and 6. knowledge of the thoughts of another (paracitta-jñāna).

T no. 2031, 15c.

Note that ‘cause’ is used in the strict Sarvāstivāda sense as an efficacy pertaining to the same (here, the person’s own) serial continuity.

Some masters provide the examples of a finger-tip not touching itself, a knife not cutting itself, etc. (MVŚ, 43a). See also, Ny, 742a–b, where Samghabhaddra states that the Abhidharmikas take as a premise that intrinsic natures do not take themselves as their ālambana-s. They do not relate to themselves.

M, I. 6.

MA, 52: buddhānaṁ sāvakehi sādhiṁ kinīcāpi tena tena maggena kilesappahāne vīseso nathi, pariṇāya pana athi.

na hi bhagavantam ṭhapetvā aṁne saha vāsanāya kilese pahatuṁ sakonti Visuddhimagga-mahāṭīkā, 1.219; Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā 1.217.

Silakhandavagga-abhinavaṭīkā 1.4: savāsanappahānaṁ kilesānaṁ ñeyyāvāranap-pahāνanti.

Dhammasaṅgaṇi-anuṭīkā, vīsatīgāthāvaṇṇāna: dhamma-saddena ñeyyā vīsesitabbā ... ñeyya-saddena dhammā vīsesitā...


For a further discussion on vāsanā, see infra, § 12.10.
AKB, loc. cit.: esāṃ buddhadharmesv ativiprakṛṣṭadeśakāleśv artheṣu cānanta- 
prabheṣu bhavaty evākliṣṭam ajñānam |
Vy, 4.
6 Vy, 5.
7 tathā hi āha: sarv’ākāram kāraṇam ekasya mayūra-candrakasyāpi nāsarvajñaair 
jiyeṣam, sarvajñā-balāṃ hi taj-jañānam. Also quoted in AKB, 474.
8 UdA, 194: kā panāyaṃ vāsanā nāma? yam kilesarhītassāpi santāne 
appahānakilesānaṃ samācārasadasasamācārahetubhāti, anādikālabhāvitehi 
kīleṣihi āhitam sāmatthiya-mattam, tathārūpā adhimitūti vadanti. tam panetam 
abhinthārasampattiyā nīvyāvaṇaṇaṇa-pahānavaṇesā yathā kilesa pahūnā, 
tathā bhagavato santāne naṇthi. yathā pana tathā kilesa na pahūnā tathā sāvakānaṃ 
paccekabuddhānaṇaṅca santāne atthi, tato tathāgatova anāvaṇaṇanadassano.
9 MVŚ, 724b.
10 MVŚ, 780b.
11 Ny, 724b.
12 Ny, 501c–502a.
13 Ny, 502a.
14 MVŚ, 61c.
15 Cf. Pañcavastu-vibhāṣā quoted below.
16 T no. 1555, 991b–c.
17 ADV, 31 f.
18 AKB, 30; ADV, 32; Vy, 80; Ny, 363c.
19 Cf. Vy, 80: rūpālocanārtheneti cakṣur na saṃtīrakatvena drṣṭi … prajñā 
saṃtīrakatveneti darśitaṃ bhavati.
20 AKB, 39.
21 ADV, 47.
22 AKB, 39: nāpi vijñānād rūpadarśanaṃ śabdaśravaṇam vā ‘sti |
23 Vy, 96: nāpi vijñānād anyad rūpa-darśanaṃ śabda-śravaṇam vā ‘stīti | na 
rūpa-darśana-śabda-śravaṇam grahāna-vyatiriktam vicāryamānaṃ labhyate |
grahānaṃ ca vijñānam etevi nānyad bhavati |
24 ADV, 32: caksuḥ paśyati vijñānam vijāṇāti svagocaram |
ālocanopalabdhitadvēṣeṇaḥ sumahāṃstayoh ||
25 MVŚ, 378c–379a.
26 Ibid., 283b.
27 Cf. YBŚ (T 30, 826b): “If one states that all conditionings comprise mere 
causes and effects at all times, absolutely without any experiencer or agent, 
then this is to be known as śūnyatā from the standpoint of absolute truth.”
28 Ny, 367c–368a. For a complete account of the whole debate based on AKB, Vy 
and Ny, see Perception, 30 ff.
29 Ibid., 364b.
30 AKB, 473 f.
31 Siddhi (F), 445.
32 Ny, 342a; SPṛŚ, 783c. Also cf. Siddhi (C), T 31, 39c: 識生時無實作用 ….
For more details, see *Perception*, chapter 6.

Saṃghabhadra (Ny, 349a) stresses that it is because a visual consciousness is also capable of grasping the appearance of a rūpa that it is also capable of generating defilements.

Cf. ADV, 81: kah punaravayam vitarkah ko va vicārah | vitarko nāma cittaudāryalaksanaḥ samkalpadvitiyanāmā viśayanimitaparakāravikalpi samjñāpavanoddhatavṛttih audārikapāñcavijñānakāyapravṛttihetuh | vicārastu cittasauksmyalaksano manovijñāna-pravṛtyanukūlah | Also, similar definitions on the two caitta-s in Abhidharmāvatāra (see *Entrance*, 83).

MVŚ, 288a–b, 228b. For a fuller discussion of this stance of the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas, see *Perception*, 44 ff.

Ny, 472b. For this reason, Saṃghabhadra (loc. cit.) argues that since reflections in the mirror can be seen, they exist truly.

Ny, 536a.

VKŚ, 535a ff.

Ny, 621c–622a. See also the definition given in *Satya-siddhi-śāstra*: “The mark of the existent consists in the fact that it is where cognition operates” (T 32, 254a: 知所行處,名曰有相).

Ny, 622a ff. Also cf. ADV, 271 ff.; *Satyasiddhi-śāstra*, T 32, 254a ff.

The 幻網經 (Māyā-jāla-sūtra) corresponding to the Brahma-jāla-sūtra of the Dīrgha-āgama.

Ny, 624a.

E.g., SDS, 46, 368–371, which classifies the Buddhist schools in terms of ākāravāda.

Cf. Pu Guang’s commentary on AKB, T 41, 27a; Kuei Ji’s commentary on *Siddhi(C)*, T 43, 269c, 318a; etc.

Cf. *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, IV, 8.

MVŚ, 408c–409a.

Cf. AKB, 54: matiḥ prajñā dharma-pravicayah | ADV, 70: dhiḥ prajñā dharma-samgrahādy-upalakṣaṇa-svabhāvā |; etc.

MVŚ, 36a; Ny, 623b.

Ny, 741b. See also infra.

MVŚ, 929a.

Cf. MVŚ, 45c, which states explicitly that the ākāra of this form is prajñā. MVŚ (42c, 43a) explains that within two moments, one can come to acquire such a knowledge with regard to the totality of dharma-s.


Cf. AKB, 399: kāśmirāṇāṃ tāvat nāmālakah sōdaśabhya 'nya ākāra

nāsty anāsravākāraḥ sōdaśākāra-nirmuktah | For the Vaibhāṣika tenet that the 16 ākāra-s are prajñā, see also AKB, 401.

MVŚ, 399c–400a.

Ny, 735c. Saṃghabhadra argues against an opinion held by certain masters that anvaya (類) here means comparison (比類): the comparison of facts not directly
perceived with those that are directly perceived. It receives the name anvaya-
jñāna as it is subsumed under inference (anumāna).
Vy, 542, explains tad-anvaya as tad-dhetuka — having the dharma-jñāna as cause — thus dissenting from the Vaibhāṣika view.
SatŚ, 245, too rejects the Sarvāstivāda definition above and declares his adherence to the sūtra when giving the same opinion thus: “The knowledge of the present dharma is named dharma-jñāna. As it is said in the sūtra, the Buddha told Ananda, ‘With regard to these dharma-s, see thus, know thus, penetrate thus. Know the past and future [dharma] also thus. The knowledge of the remaining — i.e., the past and future — dharma-s is named anvaya-jñāna. … Dharma-
jñāna is pratyakṣa-jñāna (現智). Following this dharma-jñāna one deliberates and knows inferentially — this is called anvaya-jñāna.”

MVŚ, 490c.

The Vaibhāṣika tenet is that citta and caitta-s co-arise necessarily. They are said to be conjoined (samprayukta).

T 28, no. 1554, 987c. Tibetan version of Abhidharmāvatāra: shes pa bzhiṅ du don gyi tshul gyi gnas lta bu'i rnam par rang gi don khong du chud par byed pa | — “Just like jñāna which causes the understanding of svārtha (svārtha-

pratyāyana) in the form of a representation of the artha.” Cf. ADV, 109: jñānavat | tadyathā jñānaṃ caksurādīn hetū apeksyaśartham vibhāvayati ; also, 111: jñānavat | tadyathā jñānaṃ caksurādīn hetū apeksyaśartham vibhāvayati |

Pu Guang seems to have taken these two examples illustrating that consciousness simply arises with an image of the perceptual object from Siddhi(C) — cf. Siddhi(C), 93c; T 43 (Kuei Ji’s commentary on Siddhi(C)), 493c–494a.

T 41, 26b–c.

Cf. MVŚ, 79c.

Cf. AKB, 401: praṇjākārah |
evaṁ tarhi praṇjā sākāra na bhaviṣyati | praṇjāntarāsāṃ[pra]yogā | evaṁ tu yuktāṃ syāt | sarveṣāṃ citta-caittānām ālambana-grahaṇa-prakāra iti |

Ny, 741b.

Samghabhadra does seem to acknowledge that sākāra in this context needs interpretation to avoid the difficulty pointed out by Vasubandhu and he proposes a few of them (Ny, 741a–b). Besides the one he gives in the conclusion here, another one given before-hand is that the citta-caitta-s are all said to be sākāra because they equally — i.e., simultaneously — with ākāra (= praṇjā) operate on the object. This is compared to the term sāsrava: An object being equal to the āsrava is said to be ‘with āsrava’ in the sense that it requires the same counteractive agent (praṇipākṣa) as the āsrava itself.

Loc. cit.

Cf. Pu Guang’s explanation in T 41, 135b.

Cf. MVŚ, 217a.

Cf. AKB, 229: One making present a feeling is said to experience it — saṃmukhīkurvaṃs tu tāṃ vedayata ity ucyate |

The two in conjunction satisfying the five-fold equality (samatā): āsrava, ālambana, ākāra, kāla, dravya (see AKB, 62). In this case of a sensory perception of course, the ākāra does not function prominently.
10. Theories of Knowledge

131 Ny, 374c.
132 Ny, 374c–375a.
133 Ny, 374c.
134 Candrakīrti criticizes this as a Sautrāntika doctrine. See La Vallée Poussin (ed.), Madhyamakāvatāra 167 f.
135 Ny, 574c.
136 T26, no. 1530, 303a26–27.
11. The Category of the Conditionings Disjoined from Thought
\textit{(citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra)}

11.1. Doctrinal evolution of the category
11.2. Definition of conditionings disjoined from thought in the later texts
11.3. Classic list in AKB

11.3.1. Acquisition (\textit{prāpti}) and non-acquisition (\textit{aprāpti})
   11.3.1.1. Acquisition, obtainment (\textit{pratilambha/lābha}) and endowment (\textit{samānvaśama})
   11.3.1.2. Temporal distinctions of acquisition and non-acquisition
   11.3.1.3. Acquisition and spiritual praxis
11.3.2. Group-homogeneity (\textit{nikāya-sabhāga, sabhāgaḥ})
11.3.3. Ideationless attainment, cessation attainment and ideationlessness
11.3.4. Vital faculty (\textit{jīvitendriya})
11.3.5. The four characteristics of the conditioned (\textit{saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa})
   11.3.5.1. Operation of the characteristics at different phases of the \textit{dharma}'s arising
   11.3.5.2. Secondary characteristics (\textit{anulakṣaṇa})
11.3.6. Word-group (\textit{nāma-kāya}), phrase-group (\textit{pada-kāya}) and syllable-group (\textit{vyañjana-kāya})
   11.3.6.1 Word (\textit{nāma}) and the nature of “Buddha-word” (\textit{buddha-vacana})
   11.3.6.2 Further investigation into the nature and function of \textit{nāma}

11.1. Doctrinal evolution of the category

In comparison with the Sarvāstivāda and other northern schools, the doctrinal development in the Pāli canonical \textit{abhidhamma} texts is more archaic and, in a way, more faithful to the doctrines of the \textit{sutta}-s. Thus, with regard to the conditioned \textit{dhamma}-s, the Theravādin Ābhidhammikas went no further than the dualism of mind and matter. The Northern canonical \textit{abhidharma} texts, on the other hand, made distinct advance, formulating new doctrinal categories not traceable to the Buddha’s teachings. One such important advancement was the category known as \textit{citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra} — “conditionings (forces) disjoined from thought”. In some cases at least, they may be considered as laws of nature. In the doctrinally fully articulated form, they are real entities which are neither mental nor material in nature, which yet can operate on both domains. What is more, although themselves conditioned, two of them — acquisition and non-acquisition — can operate on even the unconditioned \textit{dharma}-s.
This category seems to have evolved in the process of the Ābhidharmika analysis of the svalaksana of dharma-s. The methodology of subsumption/inclusion (supra, § 4) was applied to all dharma-s in respect of the taxonomical doublet — “citta-samprayukta” and “not citta-samprayukta”: dharma-s that are conjoined with the mind and those that are not. Already in the *Śāriputrābhidharma — one of the oldest extant northern abhidharma texts, known to have been based upon by several schools belonging the Sthaviravāda lineage — a distinction was made between these two classes of dharma-s which were said to constitute the dharmāyatana:

Dharmāyatana is the one divisible into two portions — [dharma-s] which are either conjoined with thought or disjoined from thought (citta-viprayukta).

What is the [portion of the] dharmāyatana that is conjoined with thought? Those pertaining to the dharmāyatana which are thought-concomitants — sensation, ideation, etc., up to the defilements (kleśa).

What is the [portion of the] dharmāyatana that is not conjoined with thought? Those pertaining to the dharmāyatana which are not thought-concomitants — production (jāti), etc., up to [the attainment] which is neither ideation nor non-ideation.¹

We may note that this taxonomical doublet is actually one of the mātrakā-s found in many early abhidharma. Items like production, etc., which later came to be included in the developed list of conditionings disjoined from thought, were enumerated among those that are not “conjoined with thought (citta-samprayukta)”. They were still not explicitly named elsewhere; on the basis of this doublet, *Śāriputrābhidharma classifies the five aggregates (skandha) into those that are (i) conjoined with thought, (ii) not conjoined with thought, (iii) neither said to be conjoined with thought or not conjoined with thought, (iv) partly conjoined with thought and partly not conjoined with thought:

Of the five aggregates, how many are conjoined with thought, how many are not conjoined with thought?

Two are conjoined with thought. One is not conjoined with thought. One is not said to be either conjoined with thought or not conjoined with thought. One contains two portions: either conjoined with thought or not conjoined with thought.

What are the two that are conjoined with thought? The sensation-aggregate and ideation-aggregate...
What is the one that is not conjoined with thought? The matter-aggregate…

What is the one that is not said to be conjoined with thought or not conjoined with thought? The consciousness-aggregate…

What is the one that is of two portions — either conjoined with thought or not conjoined with thought? The conditioning-aggregate…

What is [the portion of the] conditioning-aggregate which is not conjoined with thought? That [portion of the conditioning-aggregate which is not thought-concomitants — production, etc., up to cessation-attainment (nirūdha-samāpatti)].

However, the *Śāriputrābhidharma* speaks only negatively of conditionings which are “not conjoined with thought”, and not positively of a category known as “conditionings disjoined from thought”. This kind of broad connotation given to the term “dharma-s which are not conjoined with thought” is found even in the later texts wherein conditionings disjoined from thought as a technical category is known to have been established. Thus, in PrŚ we find:

What are the dharma-s disjoined from thought (citta-viprayukta-dharma)? They are the dharma-s which are not thought-concomitants..., i.e., matter (ṛūpa), the unconditioned (asaṃskṛta), and the conditionings disjoined from thought (citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra).

It was probably in JPŚ that for the first time we saw the explicit establishment by the Sarvāstivādins of this category. Thus, on the topic of retribution cause (vipāka-hetu), JPŚ speaks of “ṛūpa, citta, caitasika-dharma-s, citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra”. It also explains that the mental series of a sentient being in the non-material sphere proceeds (√vṛt) with “vital faculty, group-homogeneity and other such conditionings disjoined from thought as its basis”. In Vasumitra’s Pañcavastuka, the totality of dharma-s are explicitly classified into five categories:

There are five [categories of] dharma-s: — (1) ṛūpa, (2) citta, (3) caitasika, (4) citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra and (5) asaṃskṛta.

What are the conditionings disjoined from thought? Those dharma-s that are not conjoined with thought (citta-samprayukta).

Now what are these? Prāpti, asaṃjñī-śāmāpatti, nirūdha-samāpatti, āsaṃjñīka, jīvitendriya, nikāya-sabhāga, *upadhi/*sthāna)-pratilambha (依得), *vastu-pratilambha
Apart from their occurrence in PrŚ, the three items above, *upadhi/*sthāna-pratilambha, vastu-pratilambha and āyatana-pratilambha, also repeatedly occur in the earlier texts, DSŚ and SgPŚ, as well as in AmRŚ, among dharma-s such as group-homogeneity and vital force which we know are explicitly enumerated in the relatively later canonical Abhidharma texts as disjoined conditionings. PrŚ glosses them as follows:

What is *upadhi/*sthāna-pratilambha? This is the obtaining of the abode/location of support (所依處). What is vastu-pratilambha? It is the obtaining of the aggregates (skandha). What is āyatana-pratilambha? It is the obtaining of the internal and external āyatana-s.7

We can compare this gloss with that in AmRŚ which gives the first item as 處得, ‘obtainment of abode/location’ (*sthāna-pratilambha?):

*Sthāna-pratilambha is the obtaining of the going to a different location/place (方土). Vastu-pratilambha is the [obtainment of] the conditionings (samskāra) which are miscellaneous things. Āyatana-pratilambha is the obtainment of the internal and external āyatana-s.8

Comparing these two descriptions, we can see that they differ basically with regard to the first item. The former gives basis (依), and glosses it as “the abode/location of support”; the latter gives abode/location. Accordingly, the 處得 in PrŚ and SgPŚ could also possibly be *sthāna-pratilambha. In VKŚ, the first item is 處得 (‘obtainment of abode/location’), and the third is 生長處得 (‘obtainment of place of arising’). It may be noted that “place of arising/growth” is an Abhidharma gloss for āyatana.9 The following table provides examples of the occurrence of these three items together with their contexts in the canonical texts and AmRŚ:
What is the dharmāyatana?
… Thus, all past, future and present dharma-s are called dharmāyatana …
Now, what are they?
Sensation, …; all the fetters, …; all the knowledges …; acquisition, … vital faculty, group-homogeneity, *upadhi/*sthāna-) pratilambha (依得), *vastu-pratilambha and *āyatana-pratilambha … (T26, 500c).

What is meant by “old-age-and-death has birth as condition”? It means: different beings … appear among the corresponding groups of beings; therein arise the *skandha-pratilambha, *dhātu-pratilambha, *āyatana-pratilambha; the skandha-s are born and the vital faculty arises. (T26, 513a)

Noticeably, in texts later than JPŚ, these three items disappear from the among disjoined forces. This may be due to the fact that by this time, acquisition had come to assume the role of the force responsible for the acquisition of any dharma by a sentient being. When this happened, the role of obtainment played by the above three items became superfluous.

However, it must be noted that from the beginning, even within the broad Sarvāstivāda tradition itself, this newly articulated doctrinal category known as “conditionings disjoined from thought” had not been unanimously accepted, either as regards their reality (as a dravya having
a *svabhāva*) or as regards their total number. Thus, in MVŚ, we find that Bhadanta Dharmaśatāśā and the early Dārśāntika masters deny the reality of the whole *viprayukta-saṃskāra-skandha*. Buddhadeva considers all the conditioned *dharma*-s to be subsumable under either the Great Elements (as in the case of the *rūpa*) or thought (as in the case of the mental factors), which, of course, is tantamount to the denial of any such category as “*dharma*-s disjoined from thought” which are conjoined neither with matter nor thought. Yet he seems to concede a relative reality to at least some of them, such as acquisition,13 vital faculty and group-homogeneity.

In JPŚ, we find neither clear definitions nor a definite list of them, but only scattered descriptions of *nikāya-sabhāgata*, *jīvitendriya*, *jāti*, sthiti, *jarā*, *anityatā*, *prthagjanatva* and *prāpti*. In both DSŚ and PrŚ, we find 16 enumerated, and in AmRŚ, 17. It seems not until the *Abhidharmahṛdaya* that the number came to be more or less fixed at 14. AKB too enumerates 14, as does PrŚ whose list differs from AKB one only in replacing non-acquisition with *prthagjanatva*. Significantly, the *Avatāra* gives the same 14 as in AKB, although in a different order.

But the number of these disjoined conditionings seems never to have become absolutely fixed at 14 in the Sarvāstivāda tradition. Vasubandhu enumerates the 14 in a verse,18 ending with *ca iti*. Yaśomitra comments:

> The word *ca* [in the verse] is for the purpose of indicating those disjoined [conditionings] of a similar type that have not been [explicitly] mentioned, for *saṃghabheda*, etc., are conceded as [dharma-s] disjoined from thought existing as real entities. This is because of the mention in the *śāstra* “and also those [disjoined conditionings] of a similar type” (see PrŚ quoted above).

Saṃghabhadra, commenting on *-ādayaś ceti* in the same context, says:

>*-ādaya* is meant to include the phrase-group (*pada-kāya*) and the syllable-group (*vyāñjana-kāya*) as well as harmony/congruence (*sāmagrī*); *ca iti* indicates the *dharma*-s speculated by others which are none other than those of the previously [mentioned] categories: There are some who speculate that, apart from acquisition, etc., there exist such [intrinsic] natures as the aggregate-acquisition (*skandha-prāpti*), etc.

MVŚ, as well as Ny, mentions non-harmony/incongruence (*asāmagrī*) as a conditioning disjoined from thought, and states that it is a force which operates to cause schism in the *Saṅgha* (*saṅgha-bheda*) has this as its intrinsic nature.21 There are also certain other forces of operation which, in the opinion of the MVŚ compilers, are subsumable — in
a general sense — under “other dharma-s of such types which are [citta-]viprayukta” (此即攝在，復有所餘如是類法不相應中). These include mūrdha-patitatva — a force which causes the falling from the spiritual attainment called mūrdhan; parihāni — regression from spiritual attainment; and the “nature of an ordinary worldling” — a force obstructing the endowment of the ārya-dharma-s, thus rendering one an ordinary worldling. However, it is stated explicitly that they have certain dharma-s recognized in the Sarvāstivāda scheme of classification as their intrinsic natures. Thus, just as saṃghabheda is asāmagrī in its intrinsic nature, mūrdha-patitatva, parihāni and pṛthagjanatva have non-endowment (asamanvāgama = aprāpti) as their intrinsic nature. Accordingly, they are acknowledged, not so much as real entities distinct from those dharma-s said to be their intrinsic nature, but simply as distinct modes of operation of the latter. This is much like the case that knowledge, receptivity, view and non-defiled ignorance are all distinct modes of operation of understanding (prajñā) which constitutes their intrinsic nature in each case. They are as such not specifically enumerated as distinct dharma-s (apart from prajñā) in the Sarvāstivāda scheme of classification. It is, however, to be noted that in some Sarvāstivāda abhidharma texts such as the Abhidharmahṛdaya (AH),23 the Abhidharmahṛdaya Sūtra (*AHS)24 and the Abhidharmahṛdayavyākhyā,25 pṛthagjanatva is enumerated in place of non-acquisition under the category of conditionings disjoined from thought. This is probably on account of its importance in the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of spiritual progress. AmRŚ enumerates “the nature of an ordinary worlding” (pṛthagjanatva; 凡夫性; ) at the end of its list.26 MVŚ records that, according to some masters, there is in a sentient being a certain mark (相 nimitta?) of the nature of disjoined conditioning. When the Buddha contemplates it, He is able to know the specific past karmic cause and future consequence of that being. It is not clear as to whether the compilers of MVŚ accept such a dharma of disjoint conditioning, since their rejection of this view is from the perspective that the Buddha does not require any inferential means to have such a knowledge.27

ADV speaks of 13 in its verse28 although, in its prose commentary, it actually explains the same 14 in the same order as in AKB. All these post-AKB sources indicate that the Ābhidharmikas of this period did not fully agree as to the exact number of dharma-s to be included under the category of conditionings disjoined from thought. Indeed, this is the period when, challenged by severe criticism from the Sautrāntikas, particularly with regard to the reality of these disjoined conditionings, the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas felt tremendous pressure to give clear
definitions and proofs of these dharma-s as real entities. The larger part of the controversies in AKB is in fact concerned with this. Threatened by the serious objections posed by Vasubandhu in his AKB, Ny, SPrŚ and ADV became all the more determined to defend their position against the Sautrāntikas. Saṃghabhadra devotes much space in both his works, invoking scriptural authority and applying logical arguments, to establishing their reality. The author of ADV is just as determined and emphatic in this regard, explicitly declaring his intention to prove their intrinsic natures.29 Skandhila too in his Avatāra, which is also post-AKB, in spite of his avowed intention to steer away from controversies, cannot help sharing the same concern — and it would seem — to the same degree.

11.2. Definition of conditionings disjoined from thought in later texts

It was in the post-AKB manuals that we find articulate definitions of the category itself and of the items enumerated under the category. Saṃghabhadra30 explains that the three components (citta-, viprayukta-, -saṃskāra) together uniquely define citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra as a distinct doctrinal category in the fivefold category classification of dharma-s:

- citta — to signify that like citta, these dharma-s are not rūpa;
- viprayukta — to signify that the caittta-s, although also not of the nature of rūpa, are to be excluded as they are samprayukta;
- saṃskāra — to signify that the asaṃskṛta-s, although not of the nature of rūpa and not samprayukta with citta, are also to be excluded.

Yaśomitra, in a similar manner, in explaining the doctrinal significance of each of the components of the term, differentiates this category from the other four:

“Disjoined from thought” (citta-viprayukta) — the word “thought” is for the purpose of showing that they belong to the same type as thought: this means that like thought, they are disjoined from thought. And what is their sameness in type with thought? Inasmuch as they are not material (arūpin); for rūpa, in spite of the nature of being disjoined [from thought], does not obtain the name in respect of the nature of being disjoined (viprayukta) on the very account of it being material. Or, their
sameness in type with thought consists in their being of the nature of *nāma* in respect to the *nāma-rūpa* [distinction].

The thought-concomitants are also of the same type as thought, but they are conjoined (*samprayukta*) with thought in respect to the object; the word “disjoined” is for the purpose of distinguishing them [from the thought-concomitants].

The unconditioned [*dharma*-s] are also of the same type as the [disjoined conditionings] in respect to their not taking any objects (*anālambanatvena*); the word “conditionings” is for the purpose of excluding the [unconditioned which, being unconditioned, are not conditionings].

11.3. Classic list in AKB

The 14 enumerated in AKB are:

1. acquisition (*prāpti*),
2. non-acquisition (*aprāpti*),
3. group-homogeneity (*nikāya-sabhāga*),
4. ideationlessness (*āsaṃjñika*),
5. ideationless attainment (*asamjñi-samāpatti*),
6. cessation attainment (*nirodha-samāpatti*),
7. vital faculty (*jīvitendriya*),
8. production-characteristic (*jāti-lakṣaṇa*),
9. duration-characteristic (*sthiti-lakṣaṇa*),
10. deterioration-characteristic (*jarā-lakṣaṇa*),
11. impermanence-characteristic (*anityatā-lakṣaṇa*),
12. word-group (*nāma-kāya*),
13. phrase-group (*pada-kāya*),
14. syllable-group (*vyañjana-kāya*).

Among these, acquisition, non-acquisition and the four characteristics may be said to be the ones most important doctrinally. Accordingly, we shall devote more space to them in the explanations that follow.

11.3.1. Acquisition (*prāpti*) and non-acquisition (*aprāpti*)

Acquisition (*prāpti*) is perhaps the most important disjoined conditionings, and this fact seems to be reflected by its leading position in the list. It is a force that links a *dharma* to a particular series (*santati/ santāna*), i.e., the individual. Non-acquisition (*aprāpti*) is another real entity whose function and nature are just opposed to those of acquisition: It acts to ensure that a given *dharma* is delinked from the individual series.
As an illustration: when a person has jealousy in him, it is because, given the required assemblage of conditions for inducing the arising of this *dharma*, jealousy, a force called acquisition is also induced to arise at the same time, by virtue of which the jealousy comes to be linked to him. This force of acquisition will continue to link the jealousy to him from moment to moment — even at those times when his mind is not occupied with this defilement but with a skillful or non-defined thought — arising and ceasing in a serial continuity of its own. It is only when he is able to develop a sufficiently strong insight as the counteragent that it comes to be delinked from him: At this moment, there arises another acquisition of another *dharma*, the acquisition of the cessation (*nirodha*) of this defilement; and at the same time, the non-acquisition of this defilement is also induced to arise, effecting the delinking. The cessation and the non-acquisition together ensure that the defilement will not arise in him any more.

ADV, the *Avatāra* and Ny define acquisition as that which enables us to affirm that an individual is in possession of a particular *dharma*. The *Avatāra*:

> Acquisition is the cause (*kāraṇa*) that permits the affirmation: ‘one is in possession of a certain *dharma*’ (*dharmavat*). There are three kinds of *dharma*-s: pure (*śubha*), impure (*aśubhā*) and non-defined (*avyākṛta*). … One who possesses [any of] these *dharma*-s is said to be ‘in possession of that *dharma*’. The cause of certainty for such an assertion is named acquisition (*prāpti*), obtainment (*lābha, pratilābha*) and endowment (*samanvāgama*).³³

The case of acquisition exemplifies the doctrinal versatility of the disjoined conditionings. Being a force which is neither material nor mental itself, it can act on both types of *dharma*-s — and in the case of acquisition, even on the unconditioned. As the following explanation in MVŚ shows, the particular species to which an acquisition belongs will depend on the *dharma* that is being acquired, and may be identical with or different from that of the *dharma*:

> Question: Why is it that the species of the acquisition may be either identical with or different from that of the *dharma* acquired (*prāpta*)?

> Answer: There are three types of acquisition: 1. the acquisition of a conditioned *dharma*; 2. the acquisition of a cessation through deliberation; 3. the acquisition of a cessation independent of deliberation.
(1) The particular species of the acquisition of a conditioned dharma is specified according to that of the dharma acquired. This is because a conditioned dharma possesses its activity that projects its own acquisition.

(2) The particular species of the acquisition of a cessation through deliberation is specified according to that of the path through which [the cessation] is realized (sāksāt-√kr). This is because a cessation through deliberation, [being an unconditioned dharma,] does not possess its own activity. Its acquisition is projected through the force of the path at the time when [the practitioner] is seeking its realization.

(3) The particular species of the acquisition of a cessation independent of deliberation is specified according to the [practitioner’s] own supporting basis (āśraya). This is because a cessation independent of deliberation does not possess its own activity that projects its own acquisition, and it is not sought through a path; it is in dependence on [the practitioner’s] vital faculty and group-homogeneity alone that its acquisition arises.  

The strength of the acquisition can also vary. Along the different stages of spiritual progress of the practitioner, the strength of the acquisition of a particular cessation of a defilement can come to be increased, even though the practitioner does not need to re-abandon the same defilement. At some critical junctures, a single acquisition can be strong enough to effect the collective abandonment of a large group of defilements.

For instance: at the 16th moment — the moment following the end of the 15 moments of direct realization (abhisamaya) — the practitioner acquires the fruit of stream entry (srotaāpatti), there arises an acquisition of the collective abandonment of all the defilements to be abandoned by the path of vision darśanamārga-praheya).

As another example: when the practitioner abandons the last grade (the lower-lower grade) of defilement to be abandoned by cultivation (bhāvanā-heya), pertaining to the neither-ideation-nor-non-ideation sphere, he is completely liberated from all the hindrances pertaining to the triple spheres and the five categories of abandonability. At this very moment, the acquisition arising in him effects the collective acquisition of all the unconditioned dharma-s.  

Samghabhadra explains the function of acquisition in the distinctively Abhidharmika manner:
... Since bṛja (‘seed’) [as maintained by the Sautrāntika] does not exist, we know that the acquisition as acknowledged [by us] definitely possesses a [distinct] function as it is the cause by virtue of which a dharma which has been acquired is not lost, and as it is the marker of the knowledge (jñāna-cihna) that “this belongs to that person” (idam asyeti). Since its [distinct] function is established, we know that it exists as a distinct entity. Thus, both the essential nature and function of the acknowledged acquisition are universally established (prasiddha).

His definition, quoted in Vy,\textsuperscript{37} thus emphasizes two aspects of its function which uniquely qualify it as an ontological entity: (1) acquisition — or rather its series — continues to bind an acquired dharma to the individual; (2) it makes possible the knowledge that a given dharma belongs to this person, and not another. Together, these two aspects help to account for the fact that, given the Sarvāstivāda scheme of distinct ontological entities (dharma) perpetually existing in their intrinsic nature throughout time and neither decreasing nor increasing, the same category of dharma — e.g., greed or faith or understanding — can be said to be uniquely experienced or realized by a given individual.

The above explanation given by the Sarvāstivāda spells out the important role that acquisition plays in spiritual attainments. In the Sarvāstivāda perspective, the relationship between a transcendental absolute and the empirical is effected by acquisition which is a real force existing in its own right. On the path of spiritual progress, when one abandons (prabhā) a defilement, two final moments are involved: In the first moment, known as the unhindered path (ānantarya-mārga), the acquisition of the defilement is severed. In the second moment, known as path of liberation (vimukti-mārga), the acquisition of the corresponding cessation through deliberation (pratisamkhya-nirodha) arises, and the practitioner is said to have realized the cessation (cf. infra, § 12.9.2, § 16.2.2).

Acquisition, in its articulate sense as one of the disjoined conditionings at a somewhat later stage — as opposed to the early stage when it was used in a general sense — may have originated out of a pragmatic concern of the Sarvāstivādins: It seems to have originally referred to the acquisition of ārya-dharma-s, on the basis of which the ārya can be properly distinguished from an ordinary worldling. This stage of development may have taken place shortly after the compilation of JPŚ and before MVŚ. The argument that the unreality of endowment (= acquisition) entails the indistinguishability of an ārya and an ordinary worldling is already found in MVŚ.\textsuperscript{38} However, even in the later abhidharma texts like AKB, ADV, Ny and the Avatāra, we can
still sense this central concern which forms the chief argument for the necessary existence of acquisition as a real entity. Thus, the Avatāra gives the following as the only logical argument:

If acquisition were non-existent, when defilements like greed, etc., arise, the trainee (śaikṣa), being without an outflow-free thought, ought not to be an ārya. [Likewise,] an ordinary worldling gives rise to a skillful or non-defined thought, he ought to be at that moment regarded as one who is detached (vītarāga). Moreover, there being no acquisition of nirvāṇa for the ārya and ordinary worldling, both of them would be similar to each other and, therefore, both ought to be called an ordinary worldling or ārya.39

That at the stage of its dogmatic finalization as a conditioning disjoined from thought, acquisition has to do with spiritual attainment, can also be seen in the notion of non-acquisition. This is said to be opposite to acquisition; and prthagjanatva is defined as the non-acquisition of ārya-dharma-s. In this latter definition, the Vaibhāṣikas typically allowed themselves to be dictated by the dogma of JPŚ. This is to such an extent that they had consistently and dogmatically to explain their assertion of non-acquisition being never outflow-free as simply a Vaibhāṣika postulate — one that is a corollary of JPŚ definition.

11.3.1.1. Acquisition, obtainment (pratilambha/lābha) and endowment (samanvāgama)

It was at a relatively later stage that acquisition came to be defined generally as the dharma that effects the relation of any dharma to a living being (santāna). At this stage, two more terms, obtainment (pratilambha/lābha) and endowment (samanvāgama), then came to be distinguished in the explanation of acquisition. However, it is to be noted that even in the post-AKB manuals, they are still regarded as synonyms of acquisition, even though they are at the same time used to designate two different cases of the latter, as is clear from the above quotation from the Avatāra. ADV too clearly states: “What is called ‘acquisition’ is synonymously called ‘endowment’, ‘obtainment’” (prāptir nāma samanvāgamo lābha iti paryāyah). If this is to be considered an ambiguity, it is already so in MVŚ: In fascicle 15740 of this work, it quotes the Prajñāpti-śāstra to show that acquisition, obtainment and endowment are synonyms “differing in sound but not in meaning”.41 But in fascicle 16242 of the same work, seven differences between acquisition and endowment are enumerated:
Some say: the names themselves are different: one named acquisition, the other endowment.

Some say: the acquisition of what has not been acquired is named acquisition; the acquisition of what has already been acquired is endowment.

Some say: the acquisition at the very first instance is named acquisition; the subsequent repeated acquisition is named endowment.

Some say: the endowment (sam-anu-ā-√gam) of what has not been previously endowed is named acquisition; the endowment of what has already been endowed is named endowment.

Some say: what did not previously belong to one, now belongs to one — this is named acquisition; what has already belonged to one now [continues to] belong to one — this is named endowment.

Some say: the acquisition at the first instance is named acquisition; the non-interruption of what has already been acquired is named endowment.

Some say: the initial obtainment is named acquisition; the not-losing of what has already been acquired is named endowment. Hence, whereas acquisition applies to the first moment, endowment applies to both the first and subsequent moments.

From these different opinions recorded in MVŚ, two basic forms of distinction between acquisition and endowment are discernible: the first is based on the stage — first moment or subsequently — at which a given dharma comes to be acquired by the individual; the second focuses on the acquired dharma itself — whether it is acquired or possessed by the individual for the first time, or whether it is re-acquired or being continuously possessed subsequently.

Vasubandhu’s distinction between obtainment and endowment in AKB is based on [VI] and [VII] and essentially follows the first form inasmuch as the former is said to refer to the first moment of obtainment, whether or not the given dharma is acquired for the very first time or re-obtained after having been lost:

Acquisition is of two types: the obtainment (lābha = pratilambha) of what has not been acquired or of what has been lost [and re-acquired], and the endowment with what has already been obtained. It is established that non-acquisition is the opposite.43
Samghabhadra’s distinction, in contrast, is based on [II], and essentially follows the second form:

Although acquisition, obtainment and endowment have the same meaning, these different names are given from different perspectives. There are two types of acquisition: that of what has not been previously acquired and that of what has already been previously acquired. The acquisition of what has not been acquired is called obtainment. The acquisition of what has been acquired previously is called endowment.

Non-acquisition is to be understood as opposite to this: that of what has not been previously acquired and that of what has been acquired and lost. The non-acquisition of what has not been previously acquired is called non-obtainment (apratilambha). The non-acquisition of what has been lost is called non-endowment (asamanvāgama). Thus, the nature of an ordinary worldling is called the non-obtainment of the ārya-dharma-s [since an ordinary worldling has never yet acquired any ārya-dharma].

11.3.1.2. Temporal distinctions of acquisition and non-acquisition

An acquisition may arise simultaneously (sahaja) with the acquired dharma; this is comparable to a shadow that follows the figure. It may arise prior (agraja) to the dharma to be acquired by an individual series; this is comparable to the head bull (vṛṣabha) that leads the herd, since it conduces to the arising of the dharma. It may also arise subsequent (paścātkālaja) to the acquired dharma; this is comparable to a calf that follows the mother, since it remains after the acquired dharma has ceased.

The Avatāra gives examples of each kind:

The first kind of acquisition is mostly like that of the non-veiled-non-defined dharma-s.

The second kind is mostly like that of the skillful dharma-s of the sense sphere at the moment when one who has ‘fallen’ from a higher stage and is about to be reborn (pratisaṃdhi) in the sphere of sensuality.

The third kind is mostly like that of the understanding (prajñā) derived by listening (śrutamayī), by reflection (cintāmayī), etc., excluding the simultaneous acquisitions.

Here, a brief commentary (vibhāṣā) [as to which dharma-s have which kinds of acquisition] is in order:
The skillful and unskillful matter belonging to the sense sphere have simultaneous and posterior, but not anterior, acquisition.

All non-veiled-non-defined dharma-s and veiled-non-defined informative matter (nivṛtāvyākṛta-vijñapti-rūpa) have only simultaneous acquisitions excluding the supernormal faculties of vision and audition (cakṣurabhijñā, śrotābhijñā) and the transformation-thought (nirmāna-citta) [which, being strong (balavat) and achieved through a special effort (prayogaviśeṣa), can have all three kinds of acquisition], and excluding a small part among the arts and crafts (śailpa-sthānika) and deportment (airyāpathika) which have been intensely practiced. They do not have anterior and posterior acquisition on account of their feebleness (durbalatvāt).

All remaining dharma-s can have the posterior, anterior and simultaneous acquisition.\(^{45}\)

The following discussion in MVŚ on the fetters offers another illustration of the three types of acquisition:

Those fetters that are present — do they bind now?

Answer: Those fetters that are present, they bind now. That is, the present fetters necessarily have present acquisition-s. This is like the case of a shape and its shadow: the shadow is necessarily co-existent [with the shape].

There are fetters that bind now, but they are not present. That is, fetters that are past or future which bind now: the past or future fetters have present acquisition. The past fetters are like the bull that leads the acquisition-s [which are like the calves]. The future fetters are like the calves that go behind the acquisitions. Because their acquisitions are present, they are said to bind now.\(^{46}\)

The temporal distinctions of acquisition and non-acquisition are also made from the observer’s perspective, and in this way dharma-s of the three periods of time can in each case have three varieties of acquisition — past, present and future. This gives rise to a total of nine possible varieties: Thus, a dharma which is past from the observer’s perspective can have an acquisition which — from the dharma’s own perspective — may be past, present or future, since the acquisition may be prior to, simultaneous with or subsequent to it. The same applies to a present and future dharma. However, not all dharma-s can have the threefold — prior-simultaneous-subsequent — acquisitions. Thus, the acquisitions of some non-veiled-non-defined dharma-s — e.g., those that are retribution-born (vipākaja) and matter — can only be simultaneous: An individual does not acquire these dharma-s prior or subsequent to
their arising. This is said to be due to the weakness of these dharma-s on account of their not being a result of an effort.\(^{47}\)

Moreover, the acquisitions of the unconditioned dharma-s also cannot be subjected to this threefold distinction since they transcend the temporal process altogether.

As for non-acquisition, only the past and future dharma-s can have non-acquisition which are past, present or future. Dharma-s that are present from the individual’s perspective can only be past or future. That is, there can be no non-acquisition that is simultaneous with the dharma which is presently being acquired by the individual — a dharma that is presently being linked to the individual is not at the same time being delinked.

11.3.1.3. Acquisition and spiritual praxis

The Ābhidharmika recognition of the doctrinal importance of acquisition is discernible in the fact that it appears at the very top of the various lists — of both the abhidharma schools and the Yogācāra — subsequent to the stage when the category of conditionings disjoined from thought had been fully articulated doctrinally. For the Sarvāstivāda in particular, given their theory of tri-temporal existence, acquisition had become a sine qua non for the mechanism of defilement as well as purification. A defilement as a real dharma exists always (sarvadā asti); it cannot be destroyed. But its linkage with the practitioner effected by the corresponding acquisition can be severed by interrupting the acquisition-series. Likewise, a pure dharma can only come to be possessed by the practitioner through the operation of an acquisition that effects the linkage (infra, § 12). Acquisition, although conditioned in itself but neither mental nor material in nature, in fact plays the indispensable role of relating the unconditioned to the conditioned. It is the sine qua non for person’s experience of nirvāṇa. Moreover, nirvāṇa becomes a unique personal spiritual experience only by virtue of the acquisition that links the nirvāṇa to him (infra, § 16).

11.3.2. Group-homogeneity (nikāya-sabhāga, sabhāgatā)

This is a force which causes the mutual similarity among sentient beings. This is applicable only to sentient beings and what pertains to sentient beings. AKB, Ny and SPriŚ speak of satva-sabhāgatā and dharma-sabhāgatā. The former operates on sentient beings. The latter operates on the dharma-s pertaining to sentient beings, distinguishing them as the skandha, āyatana and dhātu which constitute the basis of the satva-sabhāgatā.
There is no such force operating among non-sentient things.\textsuperscript{48} Samghabhadra here points out that the Buddha has never spoken of such a non-sentient homogeneity. The reason is, according to him, that among non-sentient things, such as grass and trees, there are no such mutual similarities with regard to functionalities and inclinations as in the case of sentient beings. Moreover, it is because of sentient beings that grass, etc., comes to be produced. Furthermore, this dharma is generated only on account of previous \textit{karma} and present active effort (\textit{prayatna}), and both these factors are not found among the non-sentient.\textsuperscript{49}

Both ADV\textsuperscript{50} and Ny\textsuperscript{51} inform us that \textit{nikāya-sabhāgatā} is the term used in the Sarvāstivāda canonical \textit{abhidharma} texts. Samghabhadra defines it as follows:\textsuperscript{52}

There is a distinct entity called \textit{sabhāgatā}. It is the mutual similarity (\textit{sādṛśya}) among sentient beings. The cause of similarity (\textit{sābhāgya-kāraṇa}) among various species of sentient beings born in the same plane of existence (\textit{gati}), with regard to the body (\textit{śārīra}), shape (\textit{samsthana}), the [specific] functionalities of the faculties (\textit{indriya}), and food (\textit{āhāra}), etc., as well as the cause for their mutually similar inclinations (\textit{ruči}), is called \textit{nikāya-sabhāga}.

Samghabhadra further stresses that \textit{karma} alone cannot fully determine such similarities:

Just as \textit{karma}, the \textit{citta} and the Great Elements are all the cause for the clear matter (\textit{rūpa-prasāda}) [of which the sense organs are constituted], thus the body and shape, etc., are not caused by \textit{karma} alone, for it is observed that the bodies and shapes [of sentient beings] are results projected (\textit{ā-√kṣip}) by mutually similar \textit{karma}, [and yet] there exist differences with regard to the faculties, functionalities and food, etc. If one says that such differences result from those in the completing \textit{karma}-s (\textit{paripūraka-karma}), it is not reasonable, for there can be bodies and shapes which are projected by similar projecting \textit{karma} (\textit{ākśepaka-karma}); it is on account of there being difference in the group-homogeneity that the functionalities become different. If the bodies and shapes, etc., are no more than the result of \textit{karma}, then it would not be possible [for beings] to abandon or perform any function in accordance with their inclination. Herein, \textit{sa} (homogeneity) because of the mutual similarities in physical appearances, functionalities and inclination. \textit{Bhāga} means cause (\textit{nimitta}). There is a distinct real entity that is the cause of this homogeneity, hence it is named \textit{sabhāga}.
In the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of *karma*, one’s existence is determined by two types of *karma*. (1) The projecting (*ākṣepaka*) *karma* which results in one’s being born in a particular plane of existence (infra, § 13). This existence is designated principally by one’s *nikāya-sabhāga* since “it is only when one acquires the *nakāya-sabhāga* that one is said to be born”.53 (2) A multiplicity of completing (*paripūraka*) *karma*-s which together determine the particularities of the existence so projected. *Nikāya-sabhāga* in acting along with the *paripūraka-karma*-s to work out these particularities, contributes to the similarities so described among members of the same species.

AKB, ADV and Avatāra divide *nikāya-sabhāga* into the general (*abhinna*) and specific (*bhinna*) types. The Avatāra:54

The group-homogeneity is the cause for the similarities in striving and inclination among sentient beings (*sattvānāmekārtharuciḥ sādṛśyahetubhūta*). This is subdivided into two: (i) non-differentiated [or general] (*abhinna*), and (ii) differentiated [or particular] (*bhinna*).

In the first case, all sentient beings equally have self-attachment (*ātmasneha*), are similarly nourished by food, and have similar inclinations (*rati*) — this cause of sameness (*sāmya*) is named the [general] group-homogeneity. Each [sentient being] has within him his own group-homogeneity.

In the second case, sentient beings may belong to different spheres, stages, planes of existence, births, caste (*jāti*); they may be male, female, *upāsaka*, *bhikṣu*, trainee, non-trainee, etc. Within each being [of a given category], there is a *dharma* which is the distinguishing cause (*pratiniyama-hetu*) for the similarity in striving and inclination [among members of the same category]. This is named the group-homogeneity. If this were non-existent, there would be confusion in all the conventional usages (*lokavyavahāra*) such as *ārya*, non-*ārya*, etc.55

11.3.3. Ideationless attainment, cessation attainment and ideationlessness

The word *samāpatti* (< *sam-ā-\pad*) means attainment. In Buddhism, it means, in particular, the attainment of a meditative state. For the *abhidharma* scholiasts, it connotes an attainment in which there is complete evenness in mind and body — a connotation supposedly conveyed by the prefix *sam* taken in the sense of *samatā* (‘evenness’, ‘equality’). Xuanzang’s rendering of this term as 等至 (‘equal-attainment’/’equanimity-attainment’) as well as 定 (‘equipoise’,
‘evenness’, ‘stableness’), and the Tibetan snyoms par ‘jug par, ‘entering into evenness/equanymity’, reflect this connotation. The ideationless attainment and cessation attainment are two meditative attainments in which there is completely no mental activity at all. But just as nirvāṇa is not a mere state of absence of duḥkha but a positive entity capable of absolutely hindering the further arising of all defilements (infra, § 16), likewise these two attainments too are real entities.

The ideationless attainment (asamjñī-samāpatti) is sought by an ordinary worldling who falsely conceives of the state of extinction of all ideation as liberation and of this attainment as its means. He enters into this by first resolving to extinguish all ideations. Samghabhadra explains that it is called thus “because it is on account of being disgusted with ideations that one enters into this samāpatti. The prthagjana-s are not capable of being disgusted with sensations (vedanā), for it is on account of being attached to sensations that they enter into samāpatti-s.”

This attainment is subsumed under the fourth dhyāna:

When one has been detached with regard to the third but not to the fourth dhyāna, there is a disjoined dharma, named the ideationless attainment, [which can cause] the cessation of the thought and thought-concomitants of one in the stage of the fourth dhyāna.

The cessation attainment (nirodha-samāpatti), also called the attainment of the cessation of sensation and ideation (samjñā-vedita-nirodha-samāpatti), belongs to the stage of existence-peak (bhavāgra); that is the stage of the fourth ārūpya, the neither-ideation-nor-non-ideation attainment (naiva-samjñā-nāsaṃjñā-samapatti), which is the highest stage of saṃsāric existence:

When one has been detached with regard to the abode of nothing-ness (ākīmcanvāyātana), there is a disjoined dharma [which can cause] the cessation of the thought and thought-concomitants of one in [the stage of] the existence-peak. As it causes the even (sama) continuation of the Great Elements, it is named the cessation-attainment.

An ārya who seeks to abide in tranquility and loathes distraction can enter into it. He does so by first applying his mind to the thought of appeasement, resolving to extinguish both ideation and sensation. In fact, an ordinary worldling is incapable of this attainment, since he is incapable of transcending the defilements pertaining to the stage of existence-peak, which are abandonable by vision. Not all ārya-s,
however, can acquire this attainment at the time of acquiring the existence-peak — it has to be acquired through effort (prayoga). “It is only in the case of a Buddha Bhagavat [— who is absolutely free from all hindrances of meditative attainment (samāpatty-āvarana-vimukta)\(^{61}\) —] that its obtainment is said to be by [the mere fact of] detachment: At the very moment of obtaining the knowledge of exhaustion (kṣaya-jñāna), He is already capable of producing this attainment at will — the qualities (guna) of a Buddha are not through any exertion; they appear before Him as soon as He desires them — it is [in this sense] that He is said to have obtained it.”\(^{62}\)

The ideationlessness (āsamjñika) is the rebirth state of ideationlessness which is the retribution fruit of the ideationless attainment. Like the latter, it is not a mere state but a real force capable of causing the cessation of the thought and thought-concomitants of those born among the deities who are ideationless beings (asamjñi-sattva). It temporarily (kālāntaram) prevents the arising of all mental activities, like a dam which prevents the flow of a river (nadītoyasaṃnirodhavat).\(^{63}\) However, the ideationless attainment has only the ideationlessness and matter of those beings as its retribution. Their homogeneity and vital faculty are retributed by the fourth dhyāna, wherein thought exists, and the remaining aggregates (skandha) are retributed by both this attainment and the fourth dhyāna.\(^{64}\) These ideationless beings dwell in the Ideationless Heaven which is an elevated abode in the Great-fruit (bṛhatphala) Heaven within the fourth dhyāna.\(^{65}\) When mentation arises anew in them, they fall (cyavante) from their abode and are necessarily reborn in the sphere of sensuality, for those who are to be born in the Ideationless Heaven necessarily possess a karma retributable in the sphere of sensuality in the existence after the next (aparaparyāya-vedanīya), just as those who are to be born in the Uttarakuru necessarily possess a karma that will lead to rebirth in a heavenly plane of existence.\(^{66}\)

**11.3.4. Vital faculty (jīvitendriya)**

The word ‘faculty’ (indriya) is said to denote sovereignty or dominance (ādhipatya).\(^{67}\) The Sarvāstivāda acknowledges 22 faculties.\(^{68}\) MVŚ explains that the dominance of the vital faculty consists in (i) enabling one to assert that a being is in possession of the faculties (sa-indriya), (ii) sustaining the faculties.\(^{69}\) The former implies that sentience is defined by the presence of the vital faculty; the latter, that it is the sine qua non for being alive as opposed to being dead. “A body possessing the faculties lives” (sendriyah kāyo jīvati).\(^{70}\) Thus presence of the vital faculty sufficiently defines a living sentient being. MVŚ makes the clear distinction:
Dharma-s possessing the faculty [— sentient —] and dharma-s
devoid of the faculties [— non-sentient —] are different.\textsuperscript{71}

This Buddhist view is contrasted with the Jaina doctrine that external
things — water, plants, etc., — are also sentient, as the vital faculty
exists in all, i.e., internal and external.\textsuperscript{72}

The definition given in the canonical abhidharma texts is a simple one.
Thus, PrŚ:

\begin{quote}
What is the vital faculty? The life principle (āyus) in the three
spheres.\textsuperscript{73}
\end{quote}

MVŚ quotes and follows this definition.\textsuperscript{74} However, we can see already
in this text the doctrine of this category in the process of development
and elaboration on the one hand, and certain controversies relating
to it on the other. First, in spite of its adoption of the definition from
PrŚ, MVŚ quotes various opinions distinguishing the vital faculty
conditioning (jīvitendriya-samskāra) and the life principle conditioning
(āyuḥsamskāra), without making any comment.\textsuperscript{75} Explaining the
possibility of an arhat’s ability to willfully prolong or shorten his life,
it records an opinion by ‘some’ that such a possibility is by virtue of an
arhat’s mastery over the power of samādhi. With this, he transforms the
momentum for the duration (sthitikālāvedha) of the mahābhūta-s of the
faculties and projects, through his power of samādhi, a new momentum
for the same. This amounts to saying that the vital faculty is a mere
designation of the said momentum. The compilers of MVŚ rejects this
explanation and states that the vital faculty exists as a distinct entity
which is not of the nature of the mahābhūta-s of the faculties.\textsuperscript{76} Although
itself neither material nor mental, the vital faculty can operate (vṛt) with
either as its supporting basis. The question is asked as to why someone
born in the sphere of sensuality can give rise to the cessation attainment,
but not someone in the immaterial sphere. MVŚ answers as follows:

The vital faculty operates with two dharma-s as its supporting
basis: 1. matter, 2. thought. This meditation is devoid of thought,
having arisen by the cutting off of thoughts.

When someone born in the sphere of sensuality gives rise to this
meditation, the vital faculty operates with matter as its supporting
basis even though thoughts have been cut off.

When someone born in the immaterial sphere gives rise to
this meditation, the vital faculty operates with thought as its
supporting basis even though matter has been cut off.
[However,] if someone born [in the immaterial sphere] were to give rise to this meditation — there being neither matter nor thought — the vital faculty would be interrupted in the absence of a supporting basis. The person should then be said to be dead and not in the state of meditation.77

These early doctrinal ramifications and controversies pertaining to the category are continued in later texts such as AKB, Ny78 and the Avatāra. In AKB, Vasubandhu gives a Sautrāntika notion of the vital faculty — similar to the one given by ‘some’ in MVŚ quoted above: It is not a distinct entity (dravyāntara), but simply “the momentum of the duration of the group-homogeneity, [projected] by the karma in the three spheres of existence”.79 Samghabhadra reacts to this:

That the life principle exists as a real entity has been proved in the section dealing with the faculties.80 Here, we will merely question the Kośakāra thus: Where there are not the five internal rūpāyatana-s, projected by karma, there may sometimes not be the sixth āyatana, manas, projected by karma [which is morally non-defined (avyākṛta)] — that is, in the case where someone for a long time continuously gives rise to a kliṣṭa vijñāna, or kuśala-sāsrava or anāsrava vijñāna — there is no momentum (āvedha) which is a retribution projected by karma; what is there to be called the life principle? If there is in this case a karmic retribution which always exists uninterrupted from the moment of conception until death, then we may say that there is a momentum called vital faculty projected by karma, by virtue of which a being continues to exist during a determined period of time. But such a retribution force is not found in this case. How then can we say that the vital faculty exists herein? This being the case, what dharma is referred to as the momentum for the duration projected by karma? There being no [such] momentum for the duration projected, to whom then does the specified series belong? There being no such specified series, in what sense can it be claimed that the life principle is that which endures for as long as it is so determined [by the karma] to endure. …

Hence the life principle which exists as a distinct entity, capable of supporting warmth (ūṣman) and consciousness, is called the vital faculty. This vital faculty does not operate with only the body as its supporting basis, since the vital faculty exists in the immaterial sphere. Nor does it operate with only thought as its supporting basis, since the vital faculty also exists in one who is in the state devoid of thought. If so, with what as the supporting basis does the vital faculty operate? Its operation has the projecting karma in a previous life and the group-homogeneity of the present life as its supporting basis.81
Skandhila and the author of ADV likewise react to the Sautrāntika interpretation, defining and arguing in virtually identical terms:

A [real entity] projected by previous karma, serving as the cause for the uninterrupted series of the six entrances (āyatana) [of the human personality], and forming the basis for the designation (prajñapti) of the four births and the five planes of existences — this is named the vital faculty. It is also called the life principle (āyus) … Apart from the vital faculty, there could be no other dharma of the nature of a faculty, found in all the three spheres (trādātukavyāpin), continuing uninterrupted for a given period of existence and forming the basis for the designation of the four births and the five planes of existence.82

11.3.5. The four characteristics of the conditioned (sāṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa)

These four characteristics — sometimes called the primary characteristics — are intrinsic to a conditioned dharma, operating on it so that it arises only to cease. A dharma possessing these four characteristics is said to be a conditioned dharma. The Vaibhāṣikas maintain that there are four of them even though the sūtra speaks of only three.83 The apparent discrepancy is explained away as follows: Duration is the characteristic which supports the conditioned dharma-s making them stay and to which beings easily get attached. This is in contrast to the other three characteristics which cause the transitoriness of the conditioned dharma-s, helping them traverse through the three periods of time. Thus, in order that beings may get disgusted with the conditioned, the Buddha does not enumerate duration separately. The two characteristics, duration and change, are spoken of together as one, “just as Śrī [the goddess of prosperity] and Kālakarṇī [the goddess of bad luck]”.84

(i) The production-characteristic (jāti-lakṣaṇa) enables a dharma to arise. The Avatāra explains that “the causes of production of dharma-s are twofold: (i) internal and (ii) external. The former is the production-characteristic and the latter comprises the six causes or the four conditions.”85

Samghabhadra defines production-characteristic as follows:

Herein, production is a distinct dharma which is the dominant cause of non-obstruction at the stage of arising of the conditionings; for it induces them, enabling them to arise. ‘Inducing them’ refers to the fact that at the time of their arising, this dharma serves as their dominant condition. While all arising of the conditioned is called production
(jāti), this name production is given solely from the point of view of its being the dominant cause of non-obstruction at the stage of the arising of the conditionings.\(^8^6\)

The production-characteristic operates on the dharma that is about to arise, i.e., when it is in the future period. But it cannot operate alone,\(^8^7\) and it is for this reason that the future dharma-s do not all arise at once. Saṃghabhadra elaborates on this:

The production-characteristic serves as the conascent proximate cause (āsanna-kāraṇa) and produces the produced, i.e., the conditioned dharma-s. But [their production is not brought about by production-characteristic alone]; this must be assisted by the assemblage of the previous causes of their own species as well as other external conditions. This is just like the case of a seed and earth serving as distinctive cause and conditions (hetupratyaya-viśeṣa), [together] assisting the production of sprout, etc.\(^8^8\)

(ii) The duration-characteristic (sthiti-lakṣaṇa) is the internal cause of a dharma which enables it to stay temporarily. It is “a distinct dharma which is the dominant cause of non-obstruction for the conditioned [dharma] that has been produced but not yet destroyed, to project its own fruit”.\(^8^9\) This means that duration is a necessary and, in fact, the dominant condition for a conditioned dharma to exercise its kāritra, defined by the Vaibhāṣika as the activity for projecting a dharma’s own emanation fruit (niṣyanda-phala).\(^9^0\) This characteristic does not make a dharma stay long, as it operates at the time when the dharma is disappearing:

[The conditionings] cannot be said to stay at the time when they have disappeared or when they are being produced, as [at these times] they are without kāritra. …. It is only at the time of disappearing that the conditionings possess the activity of projecting fruit (kāritra of phalākṣepa).\(^9^1\)

(iii) The deterioration (/decay)-characteristic (jarā/anyathātva-lakṣaṇa) is the distinct internal force of a dharma which impairs (vi-√han) its activity of projecting fruit, rendering it incapable of further projecting another distinct fruit. It is “the cause for the samskṛta to be different in the subsequent [moment] from the previous [moment], in its continuation as a series”.\(^9^2\) It is argued that without the operation of this force a conditioned dharma will keep on projecting one distinct fruit after another ad infinitum. And if this would be the case, it ought not to be momentary (kṣanika) in nature, as we experience it.\(^9^3\)
(iv) The impermanence/disappearance-characteristic \((\text{anityatā/vyaya-lakṣaṇa})\) is that internal force that causes a present \(\text{dharma}\) whose activity has been impaired by the deterioration-characteristic, to enter into the past. In other words, it makes the \(\text{dharma}\) impermanent.

11.3.5.1. Operation of the characteristics at different phases of the \(\text{dharma}\)'s arising

In MVŚ, the Dārṣṭāntikas hold that the three characteristics represent three different stages of the existence of a \(\text{dharma}\):

There are some, such as the Dārṣṭāntikas, who hold that the three characteristics of the conditioned do not pertain to a single moment. They assert: “If there are the three characteristics within a single moment, then a \(\text{dharma}\) would be produced, deteriorate and vanish at one and the same time. But this is not reasonable, for they are mutually contradictory. It should be stated thus: production refers to the initial arising of a \(\text{dharma}\); impermanence refers to its final disappearance; deterioration refers to the maturation [process] in between.”

In AKB, the Sautrāntikas argue in a rather similar manner. They assert that these four characteristics are identical in substance with the conditioned \(\text{dharma}\)-s they characterize. For, if they exist as real entities apart from the latter, then a conditioned \(\text{dharma}\) should all, at the same time, be arising, staying, deteriorating and ceasing.

The Vaibhāṣika replies that in fact this Sautrāntika proposition would entail that, just as the characterized and the characteristics are identical, the characteristics themselves should also not be mutually different. If so, \(\text{dharma}\)-s should be produced when they are actually disappearing, and should be disappearing when they are being produced. Or rather, they are never produced at all.

Saṃghabhadra explains that the simultaneous existence of the characteristics does not result in the fallacy pointed out by the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas:

The four characteristics exercise their activities at different stages \((\text{avasthā})\): At the time when a \(\text{dharma}\) is arising, the \(\text{jāti-lakṣaṇa}\) exercises its activity. When [this \(\text{dharma}\)] has reached the stage of having arisen, the three — \(\text{sthiti}, \text{jarā} \text{and} \text{vyaya} \)— exercise their respective activities at the same time. Thus, the four characteristics exercise their activities at different times and
there is no fallacy that one and the same dharma arises, stays, deteriorates and ceases at the same time.97

Kuiji describes this explanation asserting the simultaneous operation of sthiti, jarā and vyaya as Saṃghabhadra's neo-Sarvāstivāda doctrine.98 However, the same explanation has already been offered by the MVŚ compilers.99

11.3.5.2. Secondary characteristics (anulakṣaṇa)

These four primary characteristics, themselves being conditioned just as the dharma-s they characterize, possess four secondary characteristics (anulakṣaṇa), viz.: production-production (jāti-jāti), duration-duration (sthiti-sthiti) deterioration-deterioration (jarā-jarā) and impermanence-impermanence (anityatā-anityatā). This, however, does not lead to an infinite regression. Each of the four primary characteristics characterizes eight dharma-s, but each of the secondary characteristics can characterize only one dharma. As a matter of fact, when a dharma is produced, nine dharma-s co-arise — the dharma itself, the four primary characteristics and the four secondary characteristics. The primary characteristic, production, produces the other eight dharma-s, excluding itself. The secondary characteristic, production-production, produces only the primary production, owing to its weakness compared to the primary production. The same applies to each of the other primary characteristics, on the one hand, and the three corresponding secondary characteristics on the other.100 MVŚ gives a straightforward explanation as to why each anulakṣaṇa can operate on one dharma only (i.e., a primary characteristic), whereas each mūla-lakṣaṇa can operate on the eight dharma-s: “It is so by virtue of the very nature of dharma-s (dharmatā).”101 According to Saṃghabhadra, this is “because of their difference in efficacy” (vyṛtti/vyāpāra/sāmartha).102

11.3.6. Word-group (nāma-kāya), phrase-group (pada-kāya) and syllable-group (vyañjana-kāya)

In the Sarvāstivāda conception, these three categories — which are synonyms respectively for name (saṃjñā), sentence (vākya) and phoneme (aksara)103 — are real forces that operate on words, phrases and syllables respectively, making meaningful human communication possible. The fact that these three are listed at the very end of the list of viprayukta-saṃskāra-s may suggest their being articulated and incorporated into the list at a relatively late stage. The development of this Sarvāstivādin doctrine seems to have been influenced by the contemporary Mīmāṁsakas and the Grammarians (Vaiyākaraṇa).104
However, in this process, the Sarvāstivādins consciously steer clear of the Grammarians notion of the eternal sound, retaining the distinctive Buddhist emphasis of impermanence.

11.3.6.1. Word (nāma) and the nature of Buddha-word (buddha-vacana)

As PS Jaini has observed, this Vaibhāṣika doctrine can be traced primarily to their speculation on the nature of buddha-vacana (‘Buddha-word’, ‘Words of the Buddha’). Yasomitra quotes the following passages from JPŚ on the nature of buddha-vacana:

What is buddha-vacana? That which is the Tathāgata’s speech, words, talk, voice, explanation, vocal-path, vocal sound, vocal action, vocal expression (vāgvijñapti)…

What is this dharma which has just been spoken of as buddha-vacana? The sequential arrangement, sequential establishment and sequential combination of the nāma-kāya, pada-kāya and vyañjana-kāya.

MVŚ explains the motives for the two passages: The first is given in order to prevent misconception of buddha-vacana (buddha-vacana-saṃjñā) with regard to what is in fact not buddha-vacana, and to show that what is spoken by the Buddha is true buddha-vacana. Elaborating on this first passage, the compilers of MVŚ state that buddha-vacana has vocal information (vāg-vijñapti) as its nature. The second passage quoted is said to be intended to show not the nature, but the function of buddha-vacana. MVŚ also mentions here the opinion of some who assert that buddha-vacana has nāma, etc., as its nature. The compilers do not reject this view; instead, they interpret it as referring to vocal speech as the successive cause — speech (vāk) gives rise to nāma; nāma manifests the artha. However, properly speaking, it has vāg-vijñapti as its nature.

Thus, in MVŚ we see two views acceptable to the orthodox Sarvāstivādins, although the first is the preferred one. The same two views are also given in AKB. There, Vasubandhu says that those who take speech as the nature of buddha-vacana subsume the Buddha’s dharma-skandha-s under the rūpa-skandha; whereas those who take nāma as its nature subsume them under the saṃskāra-skandha. According to Yaśomitra also, the Ābhidharmikas accept both views. The author of ADV also seems to accept both views; as he quotes an āgama passage which says that when the Buddha was alive, the buddha-vacana was of the nature of both vāk and nāma, and after His Parinirvāṇa, it is of the nature of nāma only. Collett Cox, however, asserts that “Yaśomitra’s interpretation of
the position of the Ābhidharmikas conflicts with that offered by the *Mahāvibhāṣa and Saṃghabhadra. For these two representatives of the Kāśmīra Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣikas, the intrinsic nature of the Buddha’s teaching is speech…”¹¹² But, as we have seen, the compilers of MVŚ actually accept both interpretations. As to Saṃghabhadra’s position in this regard, what he actually says is as follows:

Some assert that buddha-vacana has vāk as its svabhāva. They assert that the dharma-skandha-s are all subsumed under the rūpa-skandha, for vacana has śabda as its svabhāva.

Some assert that buddha-vacana has nāma as its svabhāva. They assert that the dharma-skandha-s are all subsumed under the saṃskāra-skandha, for nāma is of the nature of a viprayukta-saṃskāra. [Now,] vāk and vacana being synonyms, vacana may be conceded to be vāk; [but] nāma and vāk are distinct entities, so how is the [buddha-]vacana nāma? They explain thus: There must be nāma for it to be called vacana; hence the nature of buddha-vacana is none other than nāma. Why? It is called buddha-vacana because it conveys the artha truly; nāma can convey artha; hence vacana is nāma. Accordingly, buddha-vacana definitely has nāma as its svabhāva.¹¹³

It is clear from the above passage that Saṃghabhadra does not particularly hold that buddha-vacana is speech in nature nor does he object to either of the two views.

11.3.6.2. Further investigation into the nature and function of nāma

The consideration of the nature of nāma, etc., in MVŚ has already gone beyond the preoccupation with the nature of buddha-vacana. On a discussion on “the group of multiple words” (bahu-nāma-kāya) in JPŚ, MVŚ¹¹⁴ gives various views on its motives. These include:

(i) This discussion purports to analyze the meaning of the sūtra-s. “Thus, the sūtra says, ‘O bhikṣu-s, from the time when the Tathāgatas appear in the world, the nāma-pada-vañjana-kāya-s appear in the world.’¹¹⁵ Although it says thus, it does not analyze what the nāma-pada-vañjana-kāya-s are, this discussion here intends to analyze them.”

(ii) It purports to dispel doubts in those who might think that while the author is skilled in meaning — there being the analysis of various meanings in the treatise — he might not be skilled in literary expression.
(iii) It is in order to refute the Dārṣṭāntikas and others, and the Śābdikas — the former deny the reality of the three categories, the latter hold that the three have śabda as their intrinsic nature. The author intends to show that nāma-kāya, etc., are real dharma-s, subsumed under the aggregate of disjoined conditionings (viprayukta-sanmskāra-skandha).

(iv-vi) ……

(vii) It purports to elucidate the nature of defilement and purification — the nāma-kāya, etc., is the root of that which elucidates these two.

From the way MVŚ cites the sūtra passage which we quoted in the above paragraph, it is clear that the Sarvāstivādins consider nāma, etc., as impersonal, objective forces. This same passage is also cited by Skandhila and the author of ADV. The latter, in fact, states that the nāma-kāya, etc., which conveys the dhātu, āyatana and skandha-s is apuruṣeya — not created by any individual.¹¹⁶

Skandhila argues for the Sarvāstivāda position that vocal sound (vāk-śabda) does not directly convey the object-referent (artha):

> Lest it be that when one utters the word (nāma) ‘fire’, one’s mouth is immediately burnt.¹¹⁷ Words like ‘fire’, etc., must rely on speech for their production. From the words, ‘fire’, etc., the object-referents, i.e., fire, etc., are then conveyed.

He further explains that

> by ‘conveying’ is meant producing in others a comprehension (buddhi) of the object-referent to be illumined (dyotita). It does not mean that [the word] unites with the object-referent.¹¹⁸

The author of ADV explains in a very similar manner, summarizing as follows:

> A vocal sound operates on the word; the word expresses the object-referent (vāṅ nāmni pravartate | nāmrthāṃ dyotayati).¹¹⁹

Both masters similarly compare this to the perceptual process:

> Just as visual consciousness, etc., are produced with eye, etc., as their support, manifesting with an image of the object (jñānavad arthasya pratinidhi-sthānīyāḥ), the visible, etc., and [thus] comprehend their respective objects. The same applies to words, etc.¹²⁰ (See also § 10.8.2).
The Sautrāntikas maintain that nāma is none other than śabda. On this premise, it is argued that vocal sound cannot produce nāma which, according to the Sarvāstivādins, is a unitary, distinct, meaning-conveying entity: sounds, being rūpa and hence resistant, cannot be collocated; they must arise serially. It is unreasonable to say that the last moment of a vocal sound series creates the nāma, for in that case, the last sound alone would suffice for the conveying of the object-referent. The same difficulties are present if the Sarvāstivādins should argue that vocal sound produces the vyañjana which in turn produces the meaning-conveying nāma. In reply, Saṃghabhadra first argues for nāma being distinct from sound:

Sometimes one gets the sound but not the phoneme; sometimes one gets the phoneme but not the sound. Hence we know that they differ in substance.

The first case is that of hearing the sound and not comprehending the artha: It is observed that some people listen to others’ words vaguely and then ask, “what did you say?” It is all because they have not comprehended the syllables uttered. How then can one assert that the syllables are not different from the sound?

The second case is that of comprehending the artha without hearing the sound: It is observed that some people, without hearing the actual words spoken by others, know what they are saying by watching the movement of their lips, etc. This is all because they have comprehended the syllables uttered. This proves that the syllables must be different from the sounds.

Again, it is observed in the world that people recite mantra silently, hence we know that the syllables of a mantra differ from the sound of the mantra.

Again it is observed in the world that of two debaters whose articulation of the sound is similar, one loses and the other wins. This cause of losing and winning must exist separately from the sound.

Again as the object-domains (viṣaya) of the ‘unhindered knowledge of dharma-s’ (dharma-pratisamvid) and ‘unhindered knowledge of etymological interpretation’ (niruktī-pratisamvid) are different, we know that the phonemes are distinct from sound.

Hence, [we may conclude from all this that] sound is merely the articulation of a language, and its form is not differentiated. The inflection therein must be made in dependence on ka, ca, ṭa, ta, pa, etc. The phoneme must be uttered by means of
vocal sound. When the phonemes are joined together, nāma is produced. Nāma having been produced, it can illuminate the artha. Hence, we assert the following [causal] sequence: vocal sound gives rise to nāma; nāma illuminates artha. Therefore, it is universally established that nāma is different from śabda. It should be understood here that śabda is that which utters and aksara is that which is uttered; artha is neither. Thus they are established without confusion.  

As to the Sautrāntika argument that sound arises serially and hence cannot create a unitary meaning-conveying nāma, Saṃghabhadra turns the opponents’ argument against themselves: Given their Vibhajyavāda standpoint, the meaning of a word cannot be conveyed by a vocal sound series:  

The objection [of the opponent in fact] harms his own tenet: “Given his assertion that past and future [dharma-s] are devoid of intrinsic nature, and [the fact] that preceding and succeeding moments of sound do not arise at once, how can the vyañjana, the nāma, the pada come to be accomplished?” If the preceding moments contribute to the succeeding ones successively, so that the last moment accomplishes [the production of] the vyañjana, nāma and pada, [respectively], then one ought to be able to understand the artha by listening merely to the last [sound].  

Moreover, the past and the future being non-existent, there is no successive contribution — since there is always only the single [present] thought moment, how can there be successive contribution? There being no successive contribution, the preceding and succeeding moments are mutually alike. The last thought moment, being like the initial one, should not be able to convey [the artha]; and one listening to the last [sound] as if [listening to] the initial one, should not be able to understand the artha.  

Hence, his assertion that sound comes to be able to convey the artha [through] the successive contribution of the preceding to the succeeding moments, cannot be established.  

Skandhila gives two succinct reasons for the logical necessity of establishing the ontological status of the three categories:  

As sound is resistant and, as the eternal sound falsely held by the grammarians (vaiyākaraṇena parikalpita) cannot be established logically, there cannot be any dharma [such as sound], apart from these three — words, phrases and syllables — which are capable of conveying a corresponding object-referent.
The disproof of sound as being permanent is a popular theme in Buddhist logical texts which hardly needs mentioning. The first reason that sound is resistant should also be clear from Samghabhadra’s arguments above: being resistant rūpa, sounds must arise in a series, and this entails all the unacceptable logical consequence as argued by Samghabhadra. Moreover, for the same reason, there cannot be a real collocation of sounds in a single moment that can constitute a unitary, discrete dharma called nāma capable of the unique function of conveying an object-referent. As the author of ADV puts it, they cannot stand in unity like a bundle of balvaja (valvaja) grass possessing the collective strength contributed from the co-existent strands. For the Sarvāstivāda, since nāma is not a mental dharma — as agreed upon even by the opponents — nor can it be a rūpa or a permanent asaṃskṛta, as a real force it must exist as a disjoined conditioning.
NOTES

1. T 26, 528c.
2. T 26, 547b.
3. PrŚ, 714a.
5. T 26, 920c.
7. T26, 694a.
8. T28, 978c.
9. Cf. MVŚ, 379a; AKB, 13: nirvacanaṃ tu cittacaittānāṁ āyaṁ tanvantīty āyatanāni |

10. MVŚ, 730b.
11. MVŚ, 198b.
12. MVŚ, 316b.
14. JPŚ, 929a.
15. JPŚ, 1008a–b.
16. In the Yogācāra works around this period (i.e., 4th and 5th centuries), we find 23 in Abhidharma-samuccaya and 24 (with the addition of asāmagrī) in T no. 1614.
17. AKB, 35–36a.
18. Vy, 142: ca-śabda evamjātiyakānukta-viprayukta-pradarśanārthah |

samghabheda-prabhṛtyaś hi dravyataś citta-viprayuktā iṣyante iti ye 'py evamjātiyakā iti śāstre 'py uktavāt |
19. Ny, 396c.
20. MVŚ, 313b, 602b; Ny, 587b.
21. MVŚ, 27c, 313a, 231b.
22. T 28 no. 1550, 830c.
24. T 28 no. 1552, 943b.
26. MVŚ, 51b.
27. ADV, 85: prāptyādayastu saṃskārā viprayuktāstrayodaśa |
28. ADV, loc. cit.
29. Ny, 396c.
30. Vy, 142 f.: cittaviprayuktā iti citta-grahaṇam citta-samānajātiyā- |

pradarśanārtham | cittam iva cittena ca viprayuktā ity arthah | kiṃ ca teṣām samānajātiyātamaḥ | yadārūpaṁ 'mī bhavanti | rūpīt vā eva hi viprayuktve'pi rūpam na viprayuktve nāma labhate | yad vā mīśām nāma-rūpam iti nāmatvam tat teṣām cittena samānajātiyatvam caitā api cittena tulyajātiyāḥ | te tu cittena sahā 'lambane samprayaṅkās tad-viseṣanārtham viprayuktagrahaṇam | asānaskīrim api tat-samāna-jātiyām | anālambanatveneti tat-parihāṛirhaṃ saṃskāra-graḥaṇam |
11. The Category of the Conditionings Disjoined from Thought

32 AKB, 62:

\[ \text{viprayukt\text{"st}}u \text{ sāṃskārāḥ prāptya-prāptī sabhāgatā} \]
\[ \text{āsāmiṣṭaṃ samāpatti jīvitaṃ lakṣaṇāni ca} \]
\[ \text{nāmākāyādayaścetī} \]

33 Cf. Entrance, 108. ADV, 87: prāpti(in)nāma samanvāgamo lābha iti paryāyaḥ...

34 MVŚ, 801a.

35 Cf. MVŚ, 141b.

36 Ny, 398b.

37 Vy, 148: idam asyeti jñāna-cihnam pratilābdha-dharmāvipraṇāśa-kāraṇam ca

38 prāptity ācārya-saṃghabhadraḥ

39 MVŚ, 796c.

40 See Entrance, 108.

41 MVŚ, 797a.

42 MVŚ, 823a.

43 AKB, 62: dvividhā hi prāptir aprāptavihīnasya ca lābhaḥ pratilābdhena ca

44 sāṃjñaiḥ samanvāgamaḥ viparyayād aprāptir iti siddham

45 Ny, 396c.

46 Entrance, 109f. Also cf. MVŚ, 311c which gives the following as the example of the paścātēkāla-prāpti: those fetters which although having been connected (saṃyukta) are not past, i.e., those future and present fetters whose prāpti-s are past.

47 MVŚ, 312a–b.

48 Vy, 152: anabhisamāskāravatvād durbalatvam

49 SPrŚ, 805c; cf. AKB, 68.

50 Ny, 400b.

51 ADV, 89: nikāya-sabhāga ity asya śāstra-saṃjñā

52 Ny, 400a.

53 Ny, loc. cit.

54 Ny, 585b.

55 Entrance, 115f.

56 Cf. a very similar passage in ADV, 89: sabhāgataḥ nāma dravyam | sattvānām ekārthā-rucih sādṛṣyahetubhūtam | nikāya-sabhāga ity asya śāstra-saṃjñā | sā punar abhinnā bhinnā ca | abhinnā sarva-sattvānām sattva-sabhāgataḥ | sā pratisattvam sarvesvānta-snehāhara-rati-sāmyāt | bhinnā punas teṣam eva sattvānām dhātu-bhūmi-gati-yoni-jāti-strī-puruṣopāsaka-bhikṣu-

57 saikṣāsaikṣādīnām ekārtha-rucitva-bheda-pratiniyama-hetuh | tasyām khalv asaṭyām sarvāśaṃgata-lokavahāra-saṃkara-dōṣaḥ prasajyeta |

58 Cf. a similar definition of Saṃghabhadra quoted in Vy, 159: śārīrendriya-

59 samsthamāna-cesṭāhārādi-sābhāgaya-kāraṇam anyonyābhir abhisambhandha-

60 nimittām ca sabhāgaty ācārya-saṃghabhadraḥ | Also given in Ny, 400a: sa (homogeneity), because of the mutual similarities in physical appearances, functions (of the indriya) and desire; bhāga means cause (nimitta). There is a distinct real entity which is the cause of this homogeneity, hence it is named sabhāga.

61 Cf. also AKB, 67. AKB (loc.cit.) also speaks of dharma-sabhāgataḥ which does
not seem to occur in any other extant Sarvāstivāda śāstra except Ny, 400b and SPrŚ, 805c.

Ny, 401a.

Entrance, 112.

Entrance, 112. MVŚ, 775b: “Why is this nirodha called a samāpatti? It is called a samāpatti because, with regard to the nirodha dharma-s, there is no obstruction, no rejection; one experiences it at will and personally realizes it. For this reason the Bhagavat has said that [whereas] nirodha is momentary, samāpatti is continuous.

Question: A samāpatti is that which causes the thought to be even (sama). But in this case there is no mentation (acitta), how can it be named a samāpatti?

Answer: There are two kinds of samāpatti: (I) that which causes the thought to be even, (II) that which causes the mahābhūta-s to be even. Although the asamjñī- and nirodha-samāpatti interrupt the even-ness of mind, causing it not to continue, they induce the even-ness of mahābhūta-s, causing them to manifest. Hence they are called samāpatti-s.”

Ny, 401b, 403a; MVŚ, 776a.

Ny, 401c; MVŚ, 780a. Skandhila explains that an ārya enters into it “in order to dwell in bliss in the present life” (drṣṭa-dharma-sukha-vihārārthaṁ) and that a prthagjana cannot enter into it on account of his dread of it as annihilation (Entrance, 132). Saṃghabhadra ascribes this view to “some master”, and rejects it. (Ny, loc. cit.).

Ny, 402a.

Entrance, 114; Ny, 401c–402a; cf. MVŚ, 780b.

AKB, 68; Ny, 400c; Entrance, 113.

Ny, 400c; MVŚ, 615a.

Cf. MVŚ, 784b.

Ny, 400c; Entrance, 113, ADV, 91.

AKB, 38: kah punar indriyārthaḥ | idi paramaiśvarye | tasya indanti indriyāṇi | ata ādhipatyārtha indriyārthaḥ | MVŚ, 730c, explains the word in eight senses of which the first is ādhipatya.

MVŚ, 728c; AKB, 40.

MVŚ, 731b. Another view gives four aspects of its dominance: (i) in connecting up with the nikāya-sabhāga, (ii) in sustaining the nikāya-sabhāga, (iii) in fostering the nikāya-sabhāga, (iv) in enabling the nikāya-sabhāga to continue uninterrupted.

AKB, 243.

MVŚ, 635a.

MVŚ, 729a.

PrŚ, 694a, 723a.

MVŚ, 657c, 732b.

MVŚ, 657c.

MVŚ, 657b.

MVŚ, 779b.

Ny, 404b–c.

AKB, 74: na hi nāṣṭīti brūmo na tu dravyāntaram | kim tarhi | traidhātukena karmanā nikāya-sabhāgasya sthiti-kālāvedhaḥ |
11. The Category of the Conditionings Disjoined from Thought

For the full translation of these passages in Avatāra, see Entrance, 133f. Cf. almost identical description in ADV, 97: uktamḥ hy abhidharme — “jīvitendriyaṃ katamatā traídhiḥdhamam āyuḥ” iti | tat paṇuḥ ‘gati-prajñāpya-upādānaṃ’ vipākajā-svabhāvatvāt | uktamḥ hi sātuḥ- “nirvṛtte vipāke nāraka iti samkhyaṃ gacchati evaṃ yāvan naivaśamjñā-ñāsamjñāyanopapagalpaṃ samkhyaṃ gacchati” iti | na cānyad indriyaṃ vipākaṃ traídhiḥtayakavyāpy asti yajjanmaprabandhāṃ vichchedena vartamāṇam gati-prajñāpya-upādānaṃ syāt, anyatra jīvitendriyāt |

Cf. SĀ, 12, 21; A, i, 152.

Cf. Entrance, § 4.6.11.b. Cf. ADV, 104 f.: ... etāny eva vineyaparayojanavaśāt sātuḥ sīhity–anyathāvām ekikṛtya trīṇy uktāni | ... tato bhagavataḥ ‘nyathāvākhyaṇā jarsayā sahoktā śrīriva kālavarkaṃyānubaddhaṃ samvegānubaddhaḥ bhavisyāty eso rīthā−[vi]ṣayo drṣyate tasmāc cānyad catvāri | Also cf. AKB, 75; MVŚ, 201a–c.

Entrance, 136.

NY, 405c.

MVŚ (202c–203a): “Question: When the samskṛta-dharma-s arise, do they arise on account of the fact that they are in themselves of the nature of arising (體是生法故生), or on account of being joined with jāti-lakṣaṇa? Answer: ... They arise on account of the fact that they are in themselves of the nature of arising... But, although they are in themselves of the nature of arising, they cannot arise without being joined with jāti-lakṣaṇa. ... At the time of their arising, jāti-lakṣaṇa is their dominant cause of production. Just as a destructible dharma is destroyed by a cause of destruction and an abandonable dharma is abandoned by a cause of abandonment, a producible dharma is produced by jāti-lakṣaṇa.”

Cf. AKB, 79: nahi vinā hetupratyaya-samagryā jātir janikā bhavati |

Ny, 411a.

Ny, 405c. Cf. MVŚ, 201c: “By the force of the sthiti-lakṣaṇa, the samskāra-s, having arisen, are capable of grasping their own fruit and of grasping the ālambana. By the force of jarā and anityatā, there is no more activity after one kṣaṇa. If the sthiti-lakṣaṇa were non-existent, there ought not to be the cause-effect series of the samskāra-s, and the citta-caitta dharma-s ought not have any ālambana.”

Ny, 409c, etc.

Ny, 411c. Cf. ADV, 105: yadi hi dharmasya sthītir na svāt, tasyātmāni avasthitasya vṛtākhyah śakti-prabhāva-viśeṣo na svāt | anityatāgra[sta]sya ca notpakti−śakti ityataś ca kṛtyām na kuryāt | kriyāḥ bhavāḥ phalabhāvāḥ svāt | phalārthaścāyamārambhāḥ | tasmād āśtikār nāstika-pakṣam viśpya sthitiḥ praṅgṛhyatā itī siddham ||

Ny, 405c.

Cf. Entrance, § 4.6.10..

MVŚ, 200a.

Cf. AKB, 78.

Cf. Entrance, 117f.

SPṛŚ, 810a–b. See also MVŚ, 200a.


MVŚ, 200a7–12.

Cf. AKB, 76; Entrance, 117.
101 MVŚ, 200c–201a.
102 Ny, 406a–b.
103 AKB, 80; Entrance, 118.
107 MVŚ, 658c, 659c.
108 MVŚ, 659b.
109 AKB, 17.
110 Vy, 52.
111 ADV, 11.
113 Ny, 346c.
114 MVŚ, 69c–70a.
115 Cf ADV, 113: utkam hi bhagavatā | “tathāgatānām utpādān nāma-pada-vyāñjana-kāyānām utpādo bhavati” | … ye hy apauruseyā dhātv-āyatana-sāndhādyavadyotakās te prathamaṃ buddha-viṣayā eva; Entrance, 119.
116 See previous note.
117 Cf. MVŚ, 73a.
118 See Entrance, 119.
119 Also cf. AKB, 80; Ny, 413c.
121 Cf. AKB, 418 f.
122 Ny, 413c.
123 Ny, 415b.
124 Entrance, 119.
125 ADV, 110.
12. Defilements

12.1. The goal of spiritual praxis and the abandonment of defilement

12.2. Kleśa and anuśaya as the generic terms for defilement
   12.2.1. Kleśa (⊊kliś; ‘afflict’, ‘molest’)
   12.2.2. Anuśaya

12.3. Other doctrinal terms denoting defilements

12.4. Defilements as the root of existence

12.5. Ābhidharmika investigation of defilements

12.6. Classification of defilements
   12.6.1. Fundamental defilements
      12.6.1.1. The unskillful roots (akuśala-mūla)
   12.6.2. Some important classifications
      12.6.2.1. Darśana-heya and bhāvanā-heya kleśa
      12.6.2.2. Universal (sarvatraga) and non-universal (asarvatraga) defilements
      12.6.2.3. Defilements that take outflow-free objects (anāsravālambana) and those that take with-outflow objects (sāsravālambana)

12.7. Relationship between defilements and the mind

12.8. Operation of the defilements
   12.8.1. How a defilement arises
   12.8.2. How a defilement ‘adheres and grows’ (anu-√śī)
      12.8.2.1. Vasumitra’s elaboration
      12.8.2.2. Elaboration in Ny

12.9. Abandonment of defilements
   12.9.1. Meaning of ‘abandonment’
   12.9.2. Role of acquisition in the abandonment of defilements
      12.9.2.1. An abandonment is done once for all
   12.9.3. Abandonment by the mundane path
      11.9.3.1. Unhindered paths and paths of liberation of a worldling and an ārya
   12.9.4. Various synonyms in the process of gradual abandonment
   12.9.5. Methods of abandonment
   12.9.6. A defilement is abandoned through separation from its object

12.10. Traces (vāsanā) of the defilements and distinction between the wisdom of a Buddha and of an arhat
   12.10.1. Distinction between defilements and their traces (vāsanā)
   12.10.2. Examples of vāsanā in MVŚ
   12.10.3. Description in AKB and Vy
   12.10.4. Vāsanā and the two types of ajñāna in the Sarvāstivāda
   12.10.5. Vāsanā, non-defiled ignorance and perfect wisdom
   12.10.6. Saṃghabhadrā’s explanation of vāsanā
12.1. The goal of spiritual praxis and the abandonment of defilement

It is sometimes stated that the goal of Buddhism is moral perfection — a state where all defilements are removed and complete purity is attained. In the Buddha’s own discourses, the knowledge of the destruction of the outflows (āsravakṣaya-jñāna) is highlighted as a unique attribute of an arhat, so much so that the term kṣīna-āsrava — ‘one who has exhausted the outflows’ — came to be used as an epithet for an arhat. This fact is sometimes cited as evidence that for Early Buddhism, the final goal is the destruction of all defilements. It is further argued that the Ābhidharmika tradition follows this tradition. However, it must be borne in mind that the Buddha himself stated most unambiguously that all his teachings have but one goal, the goal of liberation from or cessation of duḥkha. Statements such as: “citta is liberated from the outflows” is to be understood as emphasizing the mental freedom from duḥkha in the absence of the disturbances from the defilements. The significance of defilement can be seen in the Buddhist emphasis of the meaning of ‘defilement’ or ‘impurities’ as indicated in the Sanskrit word kleśa which primarily means ‘disturbance’ or ‘molest’ (see below): kleśa-s are to be purged or abandoned as impurities because they afflict our mind. Apart from this, moral purity has no intrinsic value in itself for Buddhism. The abandonment of defilements, along with the transcendence of karma, serves as the means — not the end — of spiritual perfection. In any case, nirvāṇa, the summum bonum of Buddhism, is stated by the Ābhidharmikas as the absolute cessation of all duḥkha-s pertaining to the three spheres of existence. As a matter of fact, it is more correct to say that for the Ābhidharmikas too, prajñā (= dharma-pravicaya) is the supreme means for the ending of duḥkha-s. The first chapter of AKB states this explicitly: Beings wander in samsāra — hence experience duḥkha — on account of their defilements. Abhidharma, which in the highest sense is equated with the pure prajñā, constitutes the only means for the appeasement of defilements. This of course spells out, at the same time, the Ābhidharmika emphasis on the investigation of defilements.

The Ābhidharmika emphasis on the necessary dependence on insight for the overcoming of defilements is also underscored in their notion of two types of complete knowledge (parijñā) which they claim is a teaching in the sūtra-s — not only is the means of the abandonment emphasized as complete knowledge but the result, i.e., the abandonment itself, too, is called complete knowledge (see also, § 12.10.5):
The sūtra-s say that there are two types of complete knowledge: [1] complete knowledge qua knowledge (jñāna-parijñā) and [2] complete knowledge qua abandonment (prahāṇa-parijñā). …

[1] What is complete knowledge qua knowledge? The knowledges (jñāna), seeing (darśana), wisdom (vidyā), discernment (buddhi), direct realization (abhisamaya) — these are called complete knowledges qua knowledge. … Knowledge is thus called because it counteracts ignorance (ajñāna). Seeing is thus called because it counteracts wrong views. Wisdom is thus called because it counteracts nescience (avidyā). Discernment is thus called because it counteracts wrong discernment. Direct realization is thus called because it counteracts wrong direct realization. …

[2] What is complete knowledge qua abandonment? It is the absolute abandonment (atyanta-prahāṇa) of greed, the absolute abandonment of hatred and delusion, the absolute abandonment of all defilements. …

Question: Complete knowledge is thus called because it knows the cognitive object completely. An abandonment does not have a cognitive object and the function of knowing completing. Why is it called a complete knowledge?

Answer: Because the abandonment is the result of knowledge, it is also called a complete knowledge. … What is called complete knowledge qua knowledge has knowledge as its intrinsic nature. What is called complete knowledge qua abandonment has abandonment as its intrinsic nature.⁵

The complete knowledge qua abandonment is subdivided into nine types: six abandonable by insight and three abandonable by cultivation:⁶

1. abandonment of the defilements abandonable by vision into the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin, pertaining to the sense sphere;

2. abandonment of the defilements abandonable by vision into the truth of cessation, pertaining to the sense sphere;

3. abandonment of the defilements abandonable by vision into the truth of the path, pertaining to the sense sphere;

4. abandonment of the defilements abandonable by vision into the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin, pertaining to the two higher spheres;
5. abandonment of the defilements abandonable by vision into the truth of cessation, pertaining to the two higher spheres;

6. abandonment of the defilements abandonable by vision into the truth of the path, pertaining to the two higher spheres;

7. abandonment of all defilements abandonable by cultivation pertaining to the sense sphere, called ‘the five fetters pertaining to the lower portion’ (§ 12.3.1);

8. abandonment of all defilements abandonable by cultivation pertaining to the fine-material sphere, called ‘complete knowledge which is the exhaustion of the greed for matter’ (rūparāgakṣaya-parijñā);

9. abandonment of all defilements abandonable by cultivation pertaining to the non-material sphere, called ‘complete knowledge which is the complete end of all fetters’ (sarvasaṃyojana-paryādāna-parijñā).

The rationale for the above nine-fold division is as follows:

(a) Under the defilements abandonable by vision, those connected with the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin are grouped as complete knowledge because under these two truths, there are universal defilements (§ 12.6.2.2). Even when one has abandoned the universal defilements under the truth of unsatisfactoriness, one still cannot be freed from bondage as long as one has not also abandoned the universal defilements under the truth of origin. Hence only the complete abandonment of all defilements under both truths can qualify as a ‘complete knowledge’.

(b) A complete knowledge is established separately for the abandonment of the defilements connected with the truth of cessation and the truth of the path, because the practitioner has already abandoned the universal defilements earlier when contemplating the truths of unsatisfactoriness and origin.

(c) With regard to the defilements pertaining to the two higher spheres, those abandonable by vision are grouped together as a single complete knowledge because the counteracting path is the same for the two higher spheres; in the case of defilements abandonable by cultivation, one complete knowledge each is established for the two higher spheres because the counteracting paths are different for the two higher spheres.
12. Defilements

12.2. Kleśa and anuśaya as the generic terms for defilement

Many terms are used to denote defilements, characterizing their different functionalities and scope of operation. The two most generic terms, used as equivalents in the Sarvāstivāda system, are Kleśa and anuśaya.

12.2.1. Kleśa (< √kliś ‘afflict’, ‘molest’)

This term is understood in the sense of ‘defilement’ or impurity. In the Buddhist usage, the corresponding past participle, kliṣṭa, means ‘defiled’, ‘soiled’. However, the primary etymological sense of ‘molest’ or ‘be vexed’ is found in the early treatises and continues to be emphasized even in the late abhidharma treatises. Thus, the Avatāra defines the term as follows:

Defilements (kleśa) are thus named because they perturb and afflict the psycho-physical series. (Avatāra(T): de dag ni lus dang sems kyi rgyud nyon mongs par byed pas nyon mongs pa rnam zhes bya ste)

The occurrence of this term is rare in the sūtra-piṭaka. Its use was historically preceded by that of upakleśa, although subsequently the latter generally came to be understood as ‘secondary defilements’ — those which proceed from kleśa. At this later stage, it is explained that the upakleśa-s are also the kleśa, but they additionally include other defilements which are not called kleśa. Examples of these secondary defilements are moral immodesty, avarice and restlessness which are said to be emanations (niṣyanda) from greed (rāga).

AKB enumerates a total of 19 secondary defilements — non-diligence (pramāda), slackness (kausūdyā), faithlessness (aśraddhya), torpor (styāna), restlessness (auddhāta), immodesty (āhrīkya), shamelessness (anapatrāpya), anger (krodha), enmity (upānāha), dissimulation (śāṭhya), jealousy (īrṣya), depravity (pradāśa), concealment (mrakṣa), avarice (mātsarya), deceptiveness (māyā), pride (mada), harmfulness (vihiṃsā), remorse (kaukṛtya) and drowsiness (middha). An examination of the defilements listed under the 75 dharma-s in § 2.4.2 will show that these 19 secondary defilements comprise all the defiled dharma-s and two of the indeterminate (aniyata) dharma-s, but exclude the primary defilements. The latter, represented by the terms kleśa and anuśaya, are six: greed (rāga), hostility (pratigha), conceit (māna), ignorance (avidyā), views (dṛṣṭi) and doubt (vicikitsā) (see below, § 12.6.1). This means that the totality of defilements can be considered as comprising the primary and secondary kleśa-s.
12.2.2. Anuṣaya

Etymologically, anuṣaya is derived from anu + √śī (‘lie down’, ‘sleep’). In the Sarvāstivādin explanation, however, the chief meaning is ‘to adhere and grow concordantly [with the object]’. The prefix anu connotes the tenacity of the defilement. The sense of śī is not taken to convey the notion of latency as in the case of some other schools but rather that of subtlety. An anuṣaya is that which has or does anuṣayana, i.e., the function of growing or intensifying in accord with an impure object. For example, greed, when it arises taking a with-outflow (sāsrava) object, it becomes intensified as a defilement of that nature; the object in this case conduces to such an intensification. In AKB, following PrŚ, the following four meanings of anuṣaya are attributed by the Sarvāstivāda:

1. anu: meaning ‘fine’, ‘subtle’ — A pseudo etymological interpretation of the prefix anu — stressing the difficulty in detecting the arising of the defilements which are subtle in nature.

2. anu + √bandh (‘bind’) — They ‘bind along with’ (anu-√bandh), i.e., they proceed together with the psycho-physical series (saṃtātiti), ‘like the image of a bird moving in the sky (khacara) being followed by a fish moving in water (jalacara)’. “It is extremely difficult to be separated from them... According to some: this means that their acquisitions always follow along.”

3. anu + √gam or anu + √saj (Tibetan rjes ’brel suggests anu-√saj) — They follow along or adhere ‘like the oil in sesame seeds or the grease in a morsel of food’. Vasubandhu explains in the sense of anu + √saj: “they adhere through adhesion of their acquisitions”. Samghabhadra: from beginningless time, one is followed along by the acquisitions arising in one’s serial continuity.

4. anu + √śī — They grow or become intensified in accord with (anu-√śī): They become nourished from (a) the objects they take (ālambanato ‘nuṣerate) and from (b) the thought concomitants with which they are conjoined (samprayogato ’nuṣerate). Samghabhadra explains that the first way (a) is like the case of an enemy seeking a weak point; the second way (b) is like the case of a heated ball that heats up the water. Like a foster mother who causes the growth of an infant, both the object taken and the conjoined mental dharma cause the series of the defilement to grow and accumulate.
Out of the four senses given above, MVŚ gives only three, i.e., without that of anu-\sqrt{\text{gam}}. It attributes the explanation in terms of the four senses to the foreign masters.\footnote{19}

12.3. Other doctrinal terms denoting defilements

Apart from kleśa and anuśaya, other major doctrinal terms used to describe defilements are: 1. fetter (saṃyojana); 2. bondage (bandhana); 3. envelopment (paryavasthāna); 4. outflow (āsrava); 5. flood (ogha); 6. yoke (yoga); 7. clinging (upādāna); 8. corporeal tie (kāya-grantha); 9. hindrance (nivarana).

12.3.1. Fetter — MVŚ gives three meanings of saṃyojana: ‘binding’, ‘union with duḥkha’, and ‘mixing with poison’. The first meaning is said to be derived from the sūtra.\footnote{20} The second, because the fetters of the sphere of sensuality unite beings with duḥkha in that sphere; likewise for those of the fine-material and immaterial spheres. The third, because the ārya-s are disgusted with even the best states of birth and with the with-outflow dhyāna-s, as with excellent food mixed with poison.\footnote{21}

There are nine fetters: lust (anunaya), hostility, conceit, ignorance, views, irrational adherence (parāmarśa), doubt, jealousy and avarice.\footnote{22} There is also the doctrine of the ‘five fetters pertaining to the lower portion’ (pañca-avarabhāgīya) — to the sphere of sensuality; and the ‘five fetters pertaining to the higher portion’ (pañca-ūrdhvabhāgīya) — to the fine-material and immaterial spheres. The former comprise: Self-view (satkāya-dṛṣṭi), irrational adherence to abstentions and vows (śīla-vrata-parāmarśa), doubt, sensual-desire (kāmacchanda), malice (vyāpāda). MVŚ explains that these five are thus called because they “manifest in the lower sphere, are abandoned in the lower sphere, re-link (prati-sam-√\text{dhā}) birth in the lower sphere, grasp emanation and retributive fruits in the lower sphere”.\footnote{23} The latter comprise: greed (rāga) arisen from the fine-material sphere, greed arisen from the immaterial sphere, restlessness, conceit and ignorance.

12.3.2. Bondage — As is clear from the first meaning given to ‘fetter’ above, the nine fetters are also to be known as bondages. The Avatāra, apparently following PrŚ,\footnote{24} states explicitly that this is the case. It, however, also gives three bondages mentioned in the sūtra: (i) the greed-bondage (rāga-bandhana) which comprises all greed, with the same characterization as for the lust-fetter; (ii) the hatred-bondage (dveṣa-bandhana), which comprises all hatred, with the same
characterization as for the hostility-fetter; and (iii) the delusion-bondage 
(moha-bandhana), which comprises all delusion, with the same 
characterization as for the ignorance fetter.  
This term stresses the aspect of defilement which is the binding of beings to the 
triple spheres of existence (see below § 12.4, the 15th function of 
aniśaya).  
Saṃghabhadra defines bondage as that which binds, “that is, it prevents 
one from going towards detachment”.  

12.3.3. Envelopment — The Vaibhāṣika enumerates the following as 
ten envelopments: 1. torpor, 2. drowsiness, 3. restlessness, 4. remorse, 
5. jealousy, 6. avarice, 7. immodesty, 8. shamelessness, 9. anger, 
10. concealment. PrŚ enumerates only the first eight. These are 
called ‘envelopments’ as they envelop one’s psycho-physical series. 
Saṃghabhadra: “these ten bind sentient beings and place them in the 
prison of samsāra, hence they are called envelopments. Or rather, these 
ten serve as the causes giving rise to various evil actions, so that [beings] 
are retained in the evil planes of existence (durgati).”  

12.3.4. Outflow — This is an important term; all conditioned dharma-s 
are subsumable as being either with or without outflows (see supra, § 
2). There are three kinds of outflows: sensuality-outflow (kāmāsrava), 
existence-outflow (bhavāsrava) and ignorance-outflow (avidyāsrava). 
Both AKB and the Avatāra give three etymologies for āsrava: (i) they 
keep (āsayanti) beings in the three spheres of existence; (ii) they cause 
beings to flow around (āsravanti) between the highest state of existence 
(bhavāgra) and the lowest, the Avici hell; (iii) they incessantly discharge 
(kṣar) inexhaustible impurities through the six wound-like entrances 
— the six sense faculties — of beings (ṣadbhir āyatanavṛtāih). 
Vasubandhu favors the Sautrāntika explanation: “They are āsrava-s 
because by them the mental series flows into the objects.” MVŚ gives 
the following six meanings:

(i) keep/detain — they keep beings in the three spheres of 
existence;  
(ii) moisten or soak — just as when seeds are soaked in a 
  wet vessel, they give rise to sprouts, likewise the karma-
  seeds, when soaked in the kleśa-vessel, give rise to future 
existences;  
(iii) discharge or ooze — just as water oozes from a spring, and 
milk from the breast, likewise the āsrava-s ooze from the 
six wounds of beings;
(iv) confine — just as when confined by others, one is unable to travel everywhere at will, likewise beings are confined by kleśa-s to move around the various dhātu-s, gati-s, and yoni-s, and are unable to move freely toward the nirvāṇa-dhātu;

(v) bewitch — just as when one is bewitched by a spirit, one says what should not be said, does what should not be done, and thinks what should not be thought, likewise beings, bewitched by the kleśa-s, give rise to evil corporeal, vocal and mental acts;

(vi) intoxicate — just as when one has consumed too much alcohol derived from roots, stems, branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, etc., one does not know what should or should not be done, one is immodest (ahrī), shameless (anatrāpa), topsyturvy, and indulgent.

The Śabdavādins explain that ā means ‘from here up to there’, srava means ‘flowing’. The kleśa-s are called āsrava because they carry beings adrift in saṃsāra up to bhavāgra.34

12.3.5. Flood — There are four floods: sensuality-flood (kāmaugha), existence-flood (bhavaugha), view-flood (dṛṣṭyogha) and ignorance-flood (avidyaugha). MVŚ gives three meanings: the kleśa-s, etc., are called ogha because they cause beings to revolve in saṃsāra by (i) drifting them about, (ii) torrentially pouring onto them, (iii) submerging them (in the ocean of saṃsāra).35

12.3.6. Yoke — The same four given as floods are also called yokes, because they join (śleṣayanti)36 or yoke (yojayanti)37 beings onto various forms of duḥkha.38

12.3.7. Clinging — There are four clingings: sensuality-clinging (kāmopādāna), view-clinging (dṛṣṭy-upādāna), clinging to abstentions and vows (śīlavratopādāna), and Soul-theory-clinging (ātmavādopādāna). The Avatāra gives three meanings of the term: (i) ‘fuel’ (indhana) — because it enables the fire of karma to continue blazing and growing; (ii) ‘forcefulness’ (paṭutva) — because their mode of activity (ākāra) is very forceful or sharp;39 (iii) ‘envelopment’ — just as a silk-worm within a cocoon envelops itself to death, likewise beings, enveloped by the four clingings, go around in saṃsāra losing their wisdom-life.40
12.3.8. Corporeal tie — This topic is not discussed in AKB. The Avatāra enumerates four of them: bodily tie of covetousness (ābhidhāyā-kāya-granthā), bodily tie of malice (vyāpāda-kāya-granthā), bodily tie of irrational adherence to abstentions and vows (sīlavratāparāmarṣa-kāya-granthā), and bodily tie of dogmatism (idamsatābhinirvēsa-kāya-granthā). Skandhila explains that “they are called kāya-granthā because they variously tie around sentient beings. The meaning is the complete entrapping of the [psycho-physical] complex (kāya) of beings.”

MVŚ enumerates the following four: the bodily tie of (i) sensual-desire (kāmacchanda), (ii) malice (vyāpāda), (iii) irrational adherence to abstentions and vows, (iv) the attachment ‘this is real’; and gives two meanings of grantha: (a) corporeal bondage (kāya-bandhāna), (b) rebirth-linking (pratisaṃdhi).

12.3.9. Hindrance — There are five hindrances: (i) sensual-desire, (ii) malice, (iii) torpor-drowsiness (styāna-middha), (iv) restlessness-remorse (auddhatya-kaukṛtya), and (v) doubt. These are found in the sphere of sensuality alone, as they are purely unskillful. The Avatāra explains that they are called hindrances because they constitute the obstacles for the noble path, for detachment, and for the roots of skillfulness which are preparatory (prāyogika) for the two. MVŚ gives the following six meanings for nivāraṇa: obstructing, covering, breaking, ruining, (causing) to fall, (causing) to lie down. It enumerates the same five hindrances, but states that ignorance constitutes the sixth:

...outside these five nivāraṇa-s, there is a sixth, i.e., avidyā-nivāraṇa, ... [But] although avidyāmusāya is also a nivāraṇa, it is not mentioned among the five nivāraṇa-s owing to its heaviness; the Bhagavat has designated it separately as the sixth nivāraṇa: avidyā is mentioned separately because it is heavy compared to the previous five nivāraṇa-s which are of equal strength.

12.4. Defilements as the root of existence

In the abhidharma scheme of explanation, duḥkha results from karma, and karma arises from defilements. AKB declares that without the latter, karma-s are incapable of producing new existences. Accordingly, they are the root of existence (ṁūlam bhavasya). From another perspective, all defilements arise on account of ignorance, and it is for this reason that it constitutes the first link (nidāna) in the twelvefold formula of conditioned co-arising (pratītya-samutpāda), even though there is no notion of the First Cause in Buddhism. (See infra, § 13). Accordingly, ignorance is also declared to be the root of all existences.
In this context, ten functions that a defilement performs are listed. Saṃghabhadra adds six more:

Why are the anuśaya-s capable of serving as the root of existence?
This is because, when a defilement is arising, it performs 16 functions:

1. It makes firm its root, the counteragent (pratipakṣa) being distant. The root of a defilement is its acquisition.

2. It generates a weightiness of one's basis, for it brings about an inaptitude in one's basis for actions (āśraya-dauṣṭhulyaṃ janayaty akarmanyatāpādanāt).

3. It establishes a series (samtatim avasthāpayati), for it enables itself to be produced continuously.

4. It accommodates its field (kṣetram āpādayati), for it makes the basis [— the person —] conducive to its abiding.

5. It loathes virtues, for its nature is opposed to the virtues (guṇān dveṣṭi tad-virodhitvāt).

6. It serves as the seat of reproach, for it projects bodily, vocal and mental karma-s which are reproached by the wise (apavādānāṃ āspadī-karoti vidvad-vigarhita-kāya-karmothāpanāt).

7. It engenders a poisonous emanation (niṣyanda), for it engenders the secondary defilements (upakleśa) which are like [— of a similar nature to —] itself.

8. It blocks the path of liberation, for it abandons drawing near to those who teach the true doctrine.

9. It leads to karma-bhava (karmabhavam abhinirharati), for it induces the karma for new existence.

10. It gathers up its own requisites (sva-saṃbhāram parigṛhnāti), [i.e., its own causes,] for it repeatedly gathers up and gives rise to improper mental application (ayoniśomanaskāra).

11. It deludes one as regards the object of consciousness (ālambane sammohayati), for it harms the proper understanding of the person.

12. It plants the seeds of sufferings, for it can generate all forms of suffering in saṃsāra (vividhānārthabhājanam parigṛhnāti sarva-saṃsāra-vyasanānāṃ tat-prabhavatvāt).

13. It conducts the stream of consciousness (vijñānasroto namayati), for it induces consciousness on the objects of rebirth.
14. It makes one go astray from what pertains to the good (kuśalapaksad vyutkramayati), for it causes the falling away of the good dharma-s.

15. It amplifies its significance as bondage through preventing the surmounting of the sphere and stage to which it belongs (bandhanārtham spharati dhāvanatikrama-yogena), for it nourishes the defiled spheres.

16. It brings together the undesirable of the world in the form of ādhipatyā-phala, for, by virtue of this, there comes to be the deterioration of the external things (ādhipatya-phalena lokasyāniṣṭam upasamharati tad-vegena bāhya-bhāva-vikārāpateḥ).

12.5. Ābhidharmika investigation of defilements

If anuśaya-s, the root of existence, must be eliminated, how should one proceed to do so? The Ābhidharmika starting point is dharma-pravicaya, a thorough investigation into their nature. Saṃghabhadra enumerates the following as among the essential taxonomical topics — representing the different perspectives — for this examination:

1. Whether a given anuśaya is to be abandoned by insight (darśana-praheya) or by cultivation (bhāvanā-praheya).

2. Whether it pertains to one category (prakāra) of abandonability, or two, or three, or four, or all five — abandonable by vision into (i) duḥkha, (ii) origin of duḥkha, (iii) cessation of duḥkha, (iv) the mārga leading to the cessation, and (v) by the path of cultivation.

3. Whether it is a universal (sarvatraga) or non-universal defilement.

4. Whether it is universal with respect to its own sphere or to other spheres.

5. Whether it takes objects which are with-outflow (sāsrava-ālambana) or outflow-free (anāsrava).

6. Whether it takes objects which are conditioned (saṃskṛta) or unconditioned (asaṃskṛta).


8. How does it grow concordantly with the object (anuśerate)? [Two possible ways — § 12.8.2].
9. Whether it is abandoned by fully knowing the object (pari-
\(\sqrt{jñā}\)) or by abandoning the object.
10. Whether it is abandoned by the absolute destruction of its accompaniments or on account of the purification of the series (santati) that constitutes the practitioner.
11. Whether it is conjoined or not conjoined with a particular caitta.
12. Whether, after having abandoned it, one is still liable or not liable to retrogression.
13. Whether it gives rise to an undesirable retribution (aniṣṭa-vipāka) or is completely without any retribution.
14. Whether it is an equal-immediate condition (samanantarapratyaya) for a particular caitta or its object.
15. Whether or not it is abandoned as a result of its object being abandoned.
16. Whether, although it is abandoned in terms of its intrinsic nature, one is still bound to it on account of its object.
17. Whether it is a defilement that cannot exist in the stages of concentration (samāhita-bhūmi).
18. Whether it is a defilement that cannot be eliminated by a mundane path of counteraction.
19. Whether it pertains to the group of mental consciousness (manovijñāna-kāya) alone or to all six groups of consciousnesses.
20. Whether or not it can serve as the originating cause (samutthāna-hetu) for bodily and vocal karma.
21. Whether it can cause the cutting of the roots of skillfulness.
22. Whether it can cause the relinking with the roots of skillfulness [which have been cut].
23. Whether or not it is of the nature of speculation (drṣṭi-svabhāva).
24. Whether it is abandoned only when all its nine grades are abandoned or when only one grade is abandoned.
25. Whether it is abandonable either when one grade is abandoned or when all nine grades are abandoned.
26. Whether it comes to be endowed (samanvāgata) by an individual on account of a particular dharma.

27. Whether it does not come to be endowed (asamanvāgata) by an individual on account of a particular dharma.

28. Whether it comes to be conjoined (samprayukta) or not conjoined on account of a particular dharma.

29. Whether there is a possibility of its manifestation in a particular stage.

30. Whether, although not yet abandoned, it does not manifest its activity.

31. Whether it is abandoned in the sphere of sensuality (kāma-dhātu) alone or in the upper spheres as well.

32. Whether or not there is the endowment of this as a fruit.

33. Whether or not it shares the same counteragent with another defilement.

In summary, Saṅghabhadra states:

It is after having properly understood the nature of the anusāya-s in this way that one can decisively eliminate them.51

12.6. Classification of defilements

12.6.1. Fundamental defilements

The fundamental defilements are six in number (see A below). However, rāga is divisible into kāma-rāga, i.e., greed with regard to the sphere of sensuality (kāmadhātu), and bhava-rāga, i.e., greed for the subtler forms of existence in the rūpa- and ārūpya-dhātu, giving a total of seven (see B below). In the third classification (see C below), rāga is taken as one, and dṛṣṭi is divided into five forms, giving a total of ten.

Among the views, satkāya-dṛṣṭi is the false view that the five skandha-s of grasping constituting the person is the real Self. The Vaibhāṣika explains sat to mean ‘real/existent’, and kāya, ‘accumulation’. Satkāya-dṛṣṭi, therefore, refers to the view of a real Self superimposed on the impermanent skandha-s. Properly speaking, it is the view which falsely believes in the Self as well as that which pertains to the Self. Vasubandhu, however, presents the Sautrāntika view which interprets sat as ‘perish’; accordingly, this view is the false belief with regard to the ‘perishing accumulation’ (ātma-dṛṣṭir ātmīya-dṛṣṭir vā satkāya-dṛṣṭih |
One who harbors the satkāya-ḍṛṣṭi either thinks of the superimposed Self as being eternal or as susceptible to complete destruction at death — the view having these two extremes (anta) as objects is called antagrāha-ḍṛṣṭi. This view, therefore, presupposes the satkāya-ḍṛṣṭi. These two views, satkāya-ḍṛṣṭi and antagrāha-ḍṛṣṭi, are not classified as being unskillful, but as veiled-nondefiled. (cf. supra, §2.4.3.2.3). They are in fact also found in the two upper spheres of existence.

Mithyā-ḍṛṣṭi is the false view which denies causal efficacy, the four noble truths, etc. This is an important defilement, for it alone is responsible for the cutting of the roots of skillfulness (kuśalamūla-samuccheda).

Drṣṭi-parāmarśa is the attachment to or esteeming of one’s own views as being true and superior when, in fact, they are not. In particular, it refers to the obstinate attachment to the previous three views.

The fifth, śīla-vrata-parāmarśa, is the view expressed as irrational attachment to religious vows and observances by the heretics who undertake them as means for purification and liberation. An example of this is the belief that by immersing oneself in the Ganges, one will be cleansed of all sins.

(A) 6 kinds
1. rāga — greed
2. pratigha — hostility
3. avidyā — ignorance
4. māna — conceit
5. vicikitsā — doubt
6. drṣṭi — view

(B) 7 kinds
1. kāmarāga — sensual greed
2. bhavarāga — existence-greed
3. pratigha
4. avidyā
5. māna
6. vicikitsā
7. drṣṭi

(C) 10 kinds
1. rāga
2. pratigha
3. avidyā
4. māna
5. vicikitsā
6. satkāyadrṣṭi
7. antagrāhadṛṣṭi
8. mithyādrṣṭi
9. drṣṭi-parāmarśa
10. śīla-vrata-parāmarśa

12.6.1.1. The three unskillful roots (ākuśala-mūla)

From one perspective, among the six fundamental defilements in (A), greed, hostility and ignorance may be said to be the most fundamental. These three, since the time of the sūtra, have been referred to as the “unskillful roots”. “Root” is explained as “cause”. All unskillful
mental states spring from them. We must, of course, here also bear in mind the Abhidharma doctrine that greed and hostility are mutually exclusive. “Unskillful” is explained as that “which is not peaceful and secure” (akṣema; 不安隱).  

54 Hostility here is interchangeable with hatred (dveṣa), as also greed with covetousness (lobha), and ignorance with delusion (moha). Such fluidity in terminologies — which is still observed in AKB and subsequent texts — is probably due to the fact that the various names of some of these important thought-concomitants have been so mentioned already in the sūtra-s.

Greed refers exclusively to attachment to objects of the sensuality sphere, despite the fact there exist greed for existence (bhava-rāga) in the two upper spheres.  

55 The reason is that all defilements in the upper spheres are not unskillful, but veiled-nondefined. Hatred refers to the various intentions to harm sentient beings. This too is confined to the sensuality sphere. In this context of the three unskillful roots, SgPŚ defines delusion as the non-cognizance or ignorance of the very beginning (pūrvānta, pūrvānta-koṭi) and the very end (aparānta, aparānta-koṭi) of samsāra, of karma and its retribution, of cause and dharma-s generated by cause, of the Triple Gem (tri-ratna) of the four noble truths, of skillful and unskillful dharma-s, etc. It is noteworthy that in this description, ignorance is not specified as exclusively or primarily the non-cognizance of the four truths.  

56 In the later texts, however, it came to be emphasized primarily as the ignorance of the four truths. Moreover, the later texts also refined its definition to specifically exclude the ignorances conjoined with satkāya-dṛṣṭi and antagraha-dṛṣṭi — again, for the reason that they are veiled-nondefined. (See above).

A question is raised as to why the strong grade of false view, which is responsible for the cutting off of the skillful roots, is not made an unskillful root. In response MVŚ offers numerous reasons why the three alone are designated as unskillful roots. Among them, one is that, for the cutting off of skillfulness, they are predominant at the stage of preparation as well as the stage when the skillful roots are actually being cut off. On the other hand, false view is predominant only at the stage of the cutting off, not at the preparatory stage. Indeed, for the purification (viśuddhi) and pollution (samkleśa) of both the internal and the external, it is difficult at the stage of preparation and easy at the stage final achievement. Another reason: in the process of cutting off the skillful roots, these three are both the initial propeller (pravartaka) and the subsequent propeller (sustainer; anuvartaka), false view is only the subsequent propeller. Other reasons include: it is through the force of these three that false view becomes capable of cutting off the
skillful roots; when these three are exhausted, *karma* is exhausted; they constitute the hindrance of defilements (*kleśāvaraṇa*); it is on account of these three that the ten unskillful paths of *karma* (*akuśala-karma-patha*) are generated; etc. (The last few reasons also explain why other important defilements are not designated as unskillful roots).\(^59\)

MVŚ explains the interrelation among the three roots. Because of the different modes of activity associated with greed and hatred, there do not arise simultaneously. This is in fact the rationale for the later Sarvastivādins to include the two among the indeterminate thought-concomitants (*supra*, § 9.3.4.2). Delusion, however is always present:

If greed arises in a thought there is no hatred; if hatred arises in a thought, there is no greed. Delusion, [however,] necessarily exists in these two [types of] thought. Why? The modes of activities pertaining to greed and hatred are mutually contradictory; and delusion is not so. The mode of activity pertaining to greed is joyousness (*saumanasya*), that to hatred is dejectedness (*daurmanasya*); the mode of activity pertaining to ignorance is contradictory to neither. Moreover, when greed arises, the body grows (/increases), being benefited; when hatred arises, the body diminishes (/decreases), being damaged. Delusion is contradictory to neither. …\(^60\)

12.6.1.1.1. The two types of ignorance

Out of the three, ignorance can definitely claims primacy, since in Buddhism, it is root cause for all defilements, including greed and hatred. In the Abhidharma exposition on Conditioned Co-arising (*pratītya-samutpāda*), ignorance is the collective name standing for all the defilements in the past existence which give rise to the conditionings in the present existence (“Conditionings have ignorance as their [causal] conditions”, *avidyāpratyayāḥ saṃskārāḥ*). In fact, “all defilements can project *karma*; being the cause of *karma*, they are [collectively] called ignorance.”\(^61\) However, the Sarvastivādins insist that ignorance is not merely the absence of cognizance (*vidyā*), a kind of bad *prajñā*. It is a distinct *dharma*, a real existent, characterized by non-cognizance (*ajñāna*) and a disinclination to understand. Saṃghabhadra describes its characteristic thus:

There is a distinct *dharma* which harms the capability of understanding (*prajñā*). It is the cause of topsy-turvy views and obstructs the examination of merits and faults. With regard to *dharma*-s to be known (*jñeya-dharma*) it operates in the mode of disinclination, veiling the thought and thought-concomitants. This is ignorance.\(^62\)
Since VKŚ, ignorance has been spoken of as being of two types: 1. “Conjoined ignorance” (saṃprayuktā avidyā) — the ignorance that necessarily arises together with — and through the strength of — some other defilements; in fact it cannot arise independently. 2. “Independent ignorance” (āvēnikī avidyā) which, for its arising, does not need the support of any of the other proclivities. There has been a controversy among the Sarvāstivāda masters since the time of MVŚ as to its exact nature, particularly as regards whether it is abandonable by vision only, or also to be abandoned by cultivation. The compilers of MVŚ are inclined towards the former position, but apparently also tolerate the latter. There has also been a controversy as to whether the ignorance that arises with a defilement of restricted scope (parītta-kleśa-bhūmika-dharma — cf. supra, § 9.3.4.3) can qualify as an “independent ignorance”.  

12.6.2. Some important classifications

Of the various ways of classificatory topics mentioned above (§ 12.5), the more important ones are: (i) darśana-heya- and bhāvanā-heya; (ii) sarvatraga and asarvatraga; (iii) sāsrava-ālambana and anāsrava-ālambana; (iv) the five categories (nikāya) of abandonables — (1–4) by insight into duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga, and (5) by bhāvanā (cultivation).

12.6.2.1. Darśana-heya and bhāvanā-heya kleśa

When the cognitive object (ālambana) of a defilement can be abandoned by the mere insight into the four truths (satyānāṃ darśana-mātreṇa prahāṇāt), that defilement is said to be one ‘abandonable by (the path of) vision’ (darśana-mārga-praheya). Or, otherwise, it belongs to the category called ‘abandonable by (the path of) cultivation’ (bhāvanā-mārga-heya), that is, by repeated practice. Of the total of ten defilements, the five views and doubts are cognitive in nature; they are thus abandoned once proper insight is gained. On the other hand, rāga, pratigha, māna and avidyā partake of both cognitive and affective nature; thus their manifestations are not entirely abandonable by vision alone. Hence these four in their affective aspects have to be further counteracted by the path of repeated practice or cultivation.

(a) Darśanamārga-praheya (abandonable by the path of vision)

Darśanamārga refers to the stage of 15 thought-moments of direct realization (abhisamayā) into the four noble truths, at the end of which — i.e., in the 16th moment — one becomes a śrotaāpanna. During these
15 moments, a total of 88 defilements are abandoned by insight into the four noble truths, as shown below:

**In the sphere of sensuality:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Defilements</th>
<th>I. duḥkha darśana-heya</th>
<th>II. samudaya darśana-heya</th>
<th>III. nirodha-darśana-heya</th>
<th>IV. mārga-darśana-heya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. rāga</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. pratigha</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. māna</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. avidyā</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. vicikitsā</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. satkāyadrṣṭi</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. mithyādṛṣṭi</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. antagrāhadrṣṭi</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. drṣṭi-parāmarśa-d.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. sīla-vrata-p.-d.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                | 10 | 7  | 7  | 8  |

(Abbreviation: $d = drṣṭi$)

A total of $10 + 7 + 7 + 8 = 32$ kleśa-s pertaining to the sphere of sensuality are abandoned.

Note that satkāyadrṣṭi and antagrāha-drṣṭi are absent under samudaya. This is because satkāyadrṣṭi arises with regard to the five-skandha complex constituting the human individual. That is, it arises on account of not understanding the duḥkha-satya which, for the Sarvāstivādins, is the five skandha-s of grasping in their fruit aspect. Since the arising of antagrāha-drṣṭi is dependent on satkāya-drṣṭi, it too is confined under duḥkha-satya.

Śīlavrata-parāmarśa is also an erroneous view regarding the psycho-physical complex — the type of view, for instance, which inclines one to torture the body or mind — hence it is included under duḥkha-satya. Since it is also the type of view which mistakes irrational extreme asceticism as the path of purification, it also arises with regard to the path, hence it is subsumable under mārga-satya as well.

**In the two upper spheres:**

In the fine-material sphere, the same scheme applies as in the sphere of sensuality, but excluding pratigha, because in both the two higher spheres of meditational experience the mind is free from pratigha, in all four categories of abandonables. Thus, a total of $9 + 6 + 6 + 7 = 28$ defilements are abandoned in the rūpadhātu.
The same applies to the case of the immaterial sphere, giving again a total of 28 defilements which are abandoned.

This is how 88 (= 32 + 28 + 28) defilements come to be abandoned in the three spheres of existence by the darśana-mārga.

(b) Bhāvanāmārga-praheya (abandonable by the path of cultivation)

While the path of vision lasts for only 15 consecutive moments, the path of cultivation may last a whole life time or even more. The śrota-āpanna saint now embarks on a journey of repeated cultivation (bhāvanā) to elevate his insight (prajñā) for the purpose of counteracting the defilements that still remain. Bhāvanā means more than just ‘meditation’. However it is clear that the most fundamental part of the bhāvanā-mārga is indeed meditation. Thus, bhāvanāmayī prajñā is also known as samādhija-prajñā — insight or understanding born of meditation. Although in a broader sense, samādhi connotes the perfect integration of all psychic energies, the main method employed to achieve that is still meditation. Therefore meditation is given a prominent role. Hence we can see an emphasis on meditation consistent in all Buddhist traditions. The Sarvāstivādins in fact assert that the Buddha’s perfect wisdom — in contrast to that of an arhat — consists in the complete and absolute eradication of all defilements along with their subtle traces (vāsanā), and this happens only when the practitioner finally attains the vajropama-samādhi, whose strength (concentration) is comparable to that of a diamond that cuts through everything but cannot be cut by anything.

There are a total of ten defilements abandoned by the path of cultivation. These are innate and are really constituted by four of the fundamental defilements — rāga, pratigha, māna and avidyā. These ten defilements are intrinsically much more tenacious and resilient than the cognitively superimposed ones abandoned in the darśana-mārga, and therefore persistent efforts by cultivation are needed for them to be abandoned. Four pertain to the sphere of sensuality and three to each of the two upper spheres:

- kāmadhātu: rāga + pratigha + avidyā + māna = 4
- rūpadhātu: rāga + avidyā + māna = 3
- ārūpyadhātu: rāga + avidyā + māna = 3
12.6.2.2. Universal (sarvatraga) and non-universal (asarvatraga) defilements

This distinction is applicable to the defilements subsumed under the four noble truths. Among the 98 anuśaya-s, 11 are said to be ‘universal’, as they can move in all the five categories (nikāya) of abandonables pertaining to their own sphere (dhātu).

According to Saṃghabhadra, this means that: (i) they can take as objects all dharma-s belonging to the five categories in their own dhātu, (ii) they operate as anuśaya (anuśerate — have anuśayana) with regard to all of them, and (iii) serve as the cause for the production of defiled dharma-s in all five categories.66

There are 11, pertaining to the duḥkha- and samudaya-satya-s: seven under duḥkha-darśana-heya — satkāyadrṣṭi, antagrāha-drṣṭi, mithyā-drṣṭi, drṣṭi-parāmarśa, sīlavrata-parāmarśa, vicikitsā and avidyā; four under samudaya-darśana-heya — mithyādrṣṭi, drṣṭi-parāmarśa, vicikitsā and avidyā. Nine of them — excepting satkāyadrṣṭi and antagrāha-drṣṭi — are universals also in the other spheres (visabhāga-dhātu-sarvatraga). That is, they can also bear on an upper sphere. Satkāyadrṣṭi and antagrāha-drṣṭi are sabhāga-dhātu-sarvartraga, i.e., they are universal only in their own sphere.

All the remaining anuśaya-s are non-universal.

12.6.2.3. Defilements that take outflow-free objects (anāsravālambana) and those that take with-outflow objects (sāsravālambana)

The defilements abandonable by insight into cessation and the path are classifiable as (i) those taking outflow-free objects, and (ii) those taking with-outflow objects. The former comprise mithyā-drṣṭi, vicikitsā and avidyā. The latter comprise the rest of the nirodha-darśana-prāheya and māga-darśana-prāheya defilements. The former do not have anuśayana with regard to their objects which, being outflow-free, are not favorable to anuśayana. The latter have anuśayana only with regard to dharma-s of their own category in their own sphere by way of taking objects (ālambanataḥ).

12.7. Relationship between defilements and the mind

Various controversies arise among the different Abhidharma schools as regards the nature of the defilements. Among these, two are prominent:
(1) Are they conjoined with (\textit{samprayukta}) or disjoined from (\textit{viprayukta}) thought?

(2) Can a distinction be made between defilements in the latent, potential form and the manifested form?

These two issues are in some way connected.

As regards the first, if defilements are by nature disjoined from the mind, how can they affect the mind? On the other hand, if they are conjoined with the mind, how can there be liberation from them at all?

Already in MVŚ, these two controversies are recorded, and there we can also discern a very developed, articulate understanding of \textit{anuśaya}. We learn that the ‘abrupt-abandonment śramaṇa-s’ (頓斷沙門) hold that “when the \textit{vajropama-samādhi} manifests, all the \textit{darśana-heya} and \textit{bhāvanā-heya} defilements pertaining to the three spheres of existence are abandoned at once. At all the stages prior to this, there can be only the suppression of the \textit{paryavasthāna-s}; the \textit{anuśaya-s} are not yet capable of being abandoned.”\textsuperscript{67} In this proposition, there seems to be an implicit distinction between \textit{paryavasthāna} and \textit{anuśaya}.

The same distinction is also implied in the Bhadanta’s view that ordinary worldlings cannot abandon \textit{anuśaya-s}; they can only suppress the \textit{paryavasthāna-s}.\textsuperscript{68} This distinction becomes explicit in another discussion centered on the possibility of the retrogression of an \textit{arhat}:

The Vibhajyavādins further say that \textit{anuśaya} is the \textit{bīja} of \textit{paryavasthāna}. The \textit{anuśaya} is \textit{cittaviprayukta} in its intrinsic nature \textit{svabhāva}. The \textit{paryavasthāna} is \textit{cittasamprayukta} in its intrinsic nature. \textit{Paryavasthāna} arises from \textit{anuśaya}. Retrogression results from the manifestation (\textit{sammukhibhāva}) of \textit{paryavasthāna}. The \textit{arhat-s} have already abandoned the \textit{anuśaya-s}; the \textit{paryavasthāna-s} not arising, how can an \textit{arhat} retrogress? Hence they (the Vibhajyavādins) assert that it is logical that there is no retrogression.\textsuperscript{69}

The following points can be gleaned from the above passage:

1. There is a definite contrast between \textit{anuśaya} and \textit{paryavasthāna} on the part of some Ābhidharmikas — in this case the Vibhajyavādins.

2. An \textit{anuśaya} is asserted here to be the seed of \textit{paryavasthāna} — seeds in the sense of potentialities are not real, existent entities, hence are not conjoined with the mind.\textsuperscript{70} The
implication in this context is that *anuṣaya* is so subtle that it, in its latent state, has not conjoined with the mind; but, in its active state, i.e., as *paryavasthāna*, it conjoins with the mind.

3. The Vibhajyavādin point of view is that: When there is no *anuṣaya* there is no *paryavasthāna*. When there is no *paryavasthāna*, there is no retrogression.

In AKB and Ny, we see that the Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntikas advocate a doctrinal position similar to that of the Vibhajyavādins cited above, with the only difference that the *anuṣaya*, in the form of seeds, are potentialities and, therefore, cannot be said to be either conjoined with or disjoined from thought. In AKB, the controversy, between the Vaibhāṣika and the Sautrāntika, on the relationship between *anuṣaya* and *paryavasthāna*, takes the form of a debate on how the compound *kāmarāga-anuṣaya* (‘sensual-greed-proclivity’ of which sensual greed is the first component, proclivity, the second) is to be interpreted: Is it a determinative compound (*tatpurusa*) meaning ‘the *anuṣaya* of *kāmarāga*’ as the Sautrāntika holds, or a descriptive compound (*karmadhāraya*) meaning ‘the *anuṣaya* is *kāmarāga* itself’ as the Vaibhāṣika holds? The Vaibhāṣika opts for the second interpretation which accords with their tenet that there is no such thing as a latent defilement — defilement and *anuṣaya* are just synonyms. Vasubandhu, however, supports the Sautrāntika view:

[The interpretation] according to the Sautrāntikas is good. But what is [the interpretation] of the Sautrāntikas? It is: *kāmarāga-anuṣaya* means the ‘*anuṣaya* of *kāmarāga*’. And the *anuṣaya*, not being a distinct entity (*dravyāntara*), [i.e., a real existent,] is neither conjoined with nor disjoined from [thought]. For, when asleep, the defilement is called *anuṣaya*; when awakened, it is called *paryavasthāna*. But what is its sleeping state (*prasupti*)? The continuity of its non-manifested seed-state. What is its awakening (*prabodha*)? The state when it is manifested. …

Some scholars claim that this Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika theory expounded in AKB has its source in the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* (YBŚ). However, we know that Aśvaghosa, a typical Dārṣṭāntika master already cited in MVŚ, and Kumāralāta, a Dārṣṭāntika leader of ca. late 2nd or early 3rd century C.E., already held some form of the seed theory. And since these early Dārṣṭāntikas were the precursors of the Sautrāntikas, there is no need to assume that Vasubandhu had to borrow his account from YBŚ.
The standpoint of the various schools as to whether the *anuśaya*-s are *cittaviprayukta* or *cittasamprayukta* may be summarized in the following chart.  

- *Śāriputrābhidharma* (T no. 1548, 526c)
- *Satyasiddhiśāstra* (SatŚ)
- Sarvāstivāda
  - Dharmatrāta (MVŚ)
  - Sautrāntika (AKB, ADV)
  - Vibhajyavāda (Ny, 599b)
  - Mahāsāṃghika (Kvu X, 1)
- Vātsīputrīya (Ny, 599b)
- *Śāriputrābhidharma* (T no. 1548, 526c)

12.8. Operation of the defilements

In the Sarvāstivāda, *anuśaya* is merely a synonym for defilement and the concept of latency is not accepted. That is, *anuśaya* and *paryavasthāna* are synonymous. The term *anuśaya* is simply taken to denote the subtlety and tenacity of the defilements.

12.8.1. How a defilement arises

MVŚ informs us that, according to some heretics, the arising of a defilement is purely due to external stimuli — when the object exists, the defilement arises; when the former is destroyed, the latter does not arise. The Sarvāstivāda disagrees and proposes three reasons for the arising of defilements:

1. **On account of a cause (hetu-balena)**
   
   This refers to the fact that the *anuśaya*-s in one’s *saṃtāna* have not been completely known and abandoned (*aprahiṇa-aparijnāta*) — because their counteragents have not arisen, hence they can arise when the right conditions assemble.
2. On account of the object (viṣaya-balena)
This refers to the external stimuli conducive to defilements coming into the field of one’s experience (pratyupasthita, ābhāsagata) — as in the case of an arhat susceptible to retrogression.\(^{78}\)

3. On account of preparatory effort (prayoga-balena)
This refers specifically to improper mental application (ayoniśo-manaskāra).

Elsewhere in MVŚ, Vasumitra explains that defilements can arise even for someone dwelling in a hermitage (araṇya). In this case, there is no influence from external object, but there are the forces of the cause — the yet unabandoned anuśaya — and improper mental application within the hermit. On the other hand, even when in the presence of the cause and the object-stimulus, one may not generate defilement on account of the absence of improper mental application.\(^{79}\)

12.8.2. How a defilement ‘adheres and grows’ (anu-√ṣī)

According to the Kaśmīrian masters, there are two ways by which a defilement grows/increases concordantly (anuśete), i.e., obtains a footing and growth (pratiṣṭhāṃ labhate, puṣṭiṃ labhate):

(I) by way of taking an object (ālambanatas): On account of taking a with-outflow object. “[The defilement] grows as a result of its attachment to the particular mode of activity (ākāra) arisen in respect to the object.” When the object is outflow-free, anuśayana does not take place because it is not favorable to the growth of the defilement and hence there is no binding therein.

(II) by way of conjunction with a mental dharma (samprayogatas): The defilement ‘adheres and grows’ in concordance with the dharma with which it is conjoined, making the dharma have the same fault as itself. Thus, in the case of a rūga conjoined with a pleasurable sensation, the latter fuels the intensity of the former and the former also comes to have the aspect of greed; as a result, the whole mental complex (citta-caitta-s) becomes one of greed, i.e., a greedy mind.

According to the Western masters, the first mode of anuśayana is by way of bondage, the latter by way of companionship.\(^{80}\)
12.8.2.1. Vasumitra’s elaboration

In the same context, Vasumitra elaborates on this notion of ‘adhering and growing’:

1. Because of falling into an evil state of mind — just like a member of a group commits an evil and causes others in the group to fall into the same state of mind. In the same way, when one anuśaya arises, it causes the whole citta-caitta complex to be defiled. [Influence aspect]

2. Because it is like the heating of fire, e.g., a hot piece of iron is put into a vessel of water — both water and vessel become hot. In the same way, the whole citta-caitta complex becomes ‘heated up’ by the anuśaya. [Contamination aspect]

3. Because it is like smoke, etc. — when a garment is tainted by smoke and dust, etc., the whole garment becomes dirty. [Contamination aspect]

4. Because of it being reproachable — e.g., when one member of the saṅgha commits an offence, the whole saṅgha is reproached. Likewise, the presence of a single anuśaya renders the whole mental make-up reproachable.

The above constitute four reasons why one can speak of a defilement’s adhering and growing by way of conjunction. The same also apply to the case of anuśayana by way of taking an object: That is, where an object causes an increase with regard to these four aspects, one says that the defilement adheres and grows therein.

12.8.2.2. Elaboration in Ny

Concerning “anuśayana by way of taking an object”, Samghabhadra explains this to mean that “the anuśaya adheres along and grows (隨住 增長) in the (sāsrava) dharma, i.e., it binds concordantly and increases stagnation therein”. This is like the adherence of dust on a wet garment (ārdra iva paṭe rajāṃsi saṃsthātum [utsahante]), or the growth of seeds in an irrigated field. The anuśaya-s that take the anāsrava dharma-s — nirvāṇa or the path — or a higher sphere (than the one to which they belong) as objects, do not operate in this mode, because these objects are not appropriated as the Self or what pertains to the Self either through Self-view (ātmaḍṛṣṭi) or craving (tṛṣṇā). As a matter of fact, the wish for the attainment of the pure dharma-s or a higher sphere is not a greed as such but a predilection or aspiration for the good (kuśala-dharma-
chanda). Besides, the pure objects as well as the dharma-s belonging to a higher sphere are in nature opposed to the anuśaya-s that take them as objects, and hence not supportive of their growth. As such, the anuśaya-s cannot find a footing in them, just as the sole of a foot cannot stay when placed on a heated rock.\textsuperscript{82}

The “anuśayana by way of conjunction” is elaborated as a threefold operation:\textsuperscript{83}

1. inducing the acquisition [of the defilements];
2. obstructing the thought series (citta-santati);
3. serving as the homogeneous cause for the emanation of the subsequent moment in the series.

Samghabhadra also quotes the examples given by the pūrvācārya-s for the phenomena of anuśayana:\textsuperscript{84}

(i) \textit{samprayogatas} — Just as in an agglomeration of filth comprising excreta, water, mud, etc., the water and mud, etc., become filthy as a result of the excreta; by virtue of the water and mud, etc., the filthiness of the excreta too becomes more intense. Through mutual support, both become extremely loathsome. Likewise, in a mental agglomeration conjoined with defilements, the citta-caitta-s come to be defiled by virtue of the defilements; the latter too, by virtue of the former, become more intense. Through mutual support both become corrupted. The corruption gradually increasing in the series of this agglomeration, the accompaniments such as jāti, etc., also come to be defiled.

(ii) \textit{ālambanatas} — Just as in a filthy place, the pigs and dogs sporting and sleeping therein are besmeared by excreta becoming all the more filthy; at the same time, due to the pigs and dogs, this filthy place becomes even more filthy. Likewise, a with out-flow (sāsrava) object belonging to its sphere manifests its nature as being with-outflow through the force of the defilement that takes it as its object; at the same time, this object is capable of operating in accord with the force of the defilement to cause the gradual intensification of three grades (strong-strong, etc.) of strength of this defilement.

(iii) The non-operation of anuśayana with regard to an outflow-free object — this is like the case of a slippery and spotlessly clean man who accidentally falls into an agglomeration of filth. Although in contact with the excreta, there is no increment of filth on his part. At the same time this man is incapable of increasing the filth of that agglomeration of filth.
Likewise, although dharma-s which are outflow-free or which belong to a different sphere may at times be taken as objects by defilements, there is no mutual support for the increment of outflows therein. It is only by way of conjunction that there can be anuśayana with regard to such objects.

A further illustration, said to be by “some other” (apare), is also given: Just as, when wine is mixed with poison, its strength increases; at the same time, the power of the poison is also enhanced. Likewise, when a defilement takes a with-outflow object, the efficacies of both come to be enhanced through mutual support. On the other hand, when an effective medicine is placed inside a poison, it causes the diminution alone — not enhancement — of the efficacy of the poison. Likewise is the effect of an outflow-free object for a defilement. Accordingly, although false view (mithyā-drṣṭi) may arise when an outflow-free dharma is taken as an object, this false view does not have the strength to cut off the roots of skillfulness.  

12.9. Abandonment of defilements

12.9.1. Meaning of ‘abandonment’

For the Sarvāstivādins, defilements cannot be ‘destroyed’ in an ontological sense since, like all other dharma-s, their svabhāva-s exist perpetually. Abandonment in the proper sense means the severing of the acquisition linking the defilement to the individual series. MVŚ states that even past and future anuśaya-s are said to have the function of anuśayana, inasmuch as they, although without any present activity, can give rise to their acquisitions that arise in the present, just as an extinguished fire can give rise to smoke even though it no longer arises in the present. Therefore they too must be abandoned. Such an anuśayana, of course, does not entail ‘adherence and growth’ — a sense apparently articulated in a relatively later stage, despite the fact that Xuanzang uses here the same standard rendering of ‘sui zeng 隨增’.

12.9.2. Role of acquisition in the abandonment of defilements

Whatever the original signification of acquisition might have been, when it came to be articulated as a citra-viprayukta saṃskāra, it became, for the Sarvāstivāda system, a sine qua non for the mechanism of defilement as well as purification. One is defiled by a defilement when it arises in oneself and comes to be connected with one’s series by a conascent acquisition. When both this defilement and the acquisition come to cease — become past — in the next moment one continues to be defiled
on account of one's continuous connection with this defilement which, although past, is still existent, effected by the homogeneous series of acquisition (a nisyanda) perpetuated by the original acquisition. When one is finally freed from this defilement, it is not that one has made it extinct — the svabhāva-s of all dharma-s can never be destroyed. It is only that its linkage — acquisition — with oneself comes to be severed. This occurs when the counteracting path — i.e., the ārya prajñā — arises. MVŚ explains the role of acquisition in the abandonment of defilements as follows:

When an arhat abandons the defilements, it is not that he renders them totally non-existent, for the [intrinsic] natures of past and future defilements continue to exist as realities. In the series [of the practitioner], when the path contradictory to the defilement has not appeared (sammutkārṇī-bhū), he is said to have not yet abandoned the defilement. When in the series, the path contradictory to the defilement has appeared, he abandons the acquisition of the samyoga and realizes the acquisition of visāmyoga, and is [accordingly] not endowed with the defilement; he is then said to have abandoned the defilement. It should be explained thus: the cultivation of the noble path is an extra-ordinary event [in that], although it enables an arhat to abandon a defilement, it does not cause it to be non-existent. For this reason, the Venerable Ghoṣaka says: ‘When a defilement does not operate in the person, it is said to have been abandoned [by the person]. It is not that [this abandonment] causes it to be totally non-existent.’

Also:

It is not the case that when the noble paths are arisen, they cut off (abandon) the defilements like a knife cutting off a thing, [or] like a stone grinding incense. Rather, when the noble paths appear, they cause the cessation of the samanvāgama- prāpti (i.e., prāpti qua samanvāgama) of the defilements and the arising of the asamanvāgama-prāpti (i.e., the asamanvāgama which is aprāpti) of those defilements. At that time, one is said to have cut off/abandoned the defilements.

Indeed, without the intervention of acquisition which is in nature dissociated from the citta-caitta-s, it becomes impossible for a counteragent (pratipakṣa) to exercise its function on a defilement since the two are opposed in their moral nature. For the same reason, it is equally impossible for false view (mithyā-drṣṭi) to bring about the cutting off of the skillful roots (kuśalamūla-samuccheda), the two being unable to interact directly, as explained in the following passage.
Question: What is the meaning of the cutting off of the skillful roots?

Answer: It is not like the case, in the world, of an axe, etc., cutting a tree, for mithyā-dṛṣṭi and the kuśala do not mutually come into contact [— the two being mental entities of opposed nature]. Rather, when mithyā-dṛṣṭi appears in [a person’s] series, it causes the cessation of the samanvāgama-prāpti of the skillful roots and the arising of their asamanvāgama-prāpti — this is what is called ‘cutting off’. If the acquisition of the skillful roots are non-existent, at that time the skillful roots are said to have been cut off.

More precisely, in abandoning a defilement, the ceasing of the acquisition of this defilement is followed by the arising of the acquisition of the disconnection (visamyoga-prāpti) with that defilement as well as the nonacquisition of the same defilement; the latter is as important as the former since it ensures the disconnection with that defilement. The necessary co-operation of acquisition and nonacquisition in this process is compared to the two successive actions contributing to the definite removal of a thief from the house — the throwing out of the thief immediately followed by the shutting of the door. Two moments are therefore necessary in the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the abandoning of a defilement:

The first, known as the ānantarya-mārga, is the receptivity that actually ‘cuts off’ or abandons the defilement. The second, known as the vimukti-mārga, is knowledge proper which induces the acquisition of the fruit of disconnection — i.e., in this moment, the actual cessation (pratisamkhya-nirodha) of the defilement is realized or acquired (prāpta).

MVŚ argues that if asamanvāgama (= aprāpti) were not a real entity (but merely a name as some masters assert), the cutting/abandoning of defilements cannot be spoken of (lit: conceptualized; prajñapyate):

For, when the noble paths arise, they do not cut off (or abandon) the defilements in the manner that a knife cuts off a thing or that a stone grinds a thing. They merely cut off the acquisition of connection (samyoga) [with the defilements] and realize (sāksāti-√kṛ) the acquisition of disconnection, causing the arising of the asamanvāgama (= aprāpti) of the defilements. This is what is known as the cutting off of defilements.
12.9.2.1. An abandonment is done once for all

Once a particular counteracting path — mundane or supramundane — abandons a given defilement, it is done once and for all. There is no partial abandoning, and the abandonment is not repeated.\textsuperscript{92} However, the acquisition of disjunction (\textit{visamyoga-prāpti}) — i.e., the \textit{pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha} — from the defilement can take place repeatedly.\textsuperscript{93} This of course does not entail that a \textit{nirodha}, which is unconditioned, can change qualitatively; only that the practitioner’s attainment of it can be firmer and firmer or deeper and deeper as he progresses, or that the acquisition of the abandonment is changed from one which is with-outflow to one which is outflow-free.

The afore-mentioned principle is summarized in the following line of a stanza in AKB:

\begin{quote}
Destruction [of a defilement] is at once. The obtainment of disjunction from them is again and again. (\textit{sakṛt kṣayaḥ visamyogalābhas teṣāṃ punaḥ punaḥ}) (AKB, v, 63ab)\textsuperscript{94}
\end{quote}

Saṃghabhadra explains:\textsuperscript{95}

As a result of acquiring the unhindered path (\textit{ānantarya-mārga}) pertaining to them, the defilements to be abandoned are completely abandoned at once. Apart from [the case of] retrogression, there can be no further abandonment subsequently. Once [a defilement] has been abandoned, any further abandonment becomes futile.

[On the other hand,] although the acquired disjunction does not become progressively superior following the paths [of advancement, \textit{viśeṣa-mārga}], nevertheless as the paths advance, there can be the further arising of the acquisition which is superior. As the acquisition of disjunction is included in the path, when the path is relinquished or acquired, it too comes to be relinquished or acquired. Thus it is that there can be the repeated acquisition of the disjunctions.

12.9.3. Abandonment by the mundane path

The view of the ‘abrupt-abandonment šramaṇa-s’ quoted above (§ 12.7) implies that there is no possibility of an ordinary worldling abandoning any defilement. The Dārṣṭāntikas in MVŚ categorically assert that this is in fact the case. In his spiritual struggle, a worldling can only temporarily suppress his active \textit{paryavasthāna-s}; the latent defilements have not been abandoned in an absolute manner (\textit{atyantam}): by means of the mundane paths he hangs on to the first \textit{dhyāna}, away from the attachment to the sphere of sensuality. In this way, gradually he hangs
on up to the naiva-samjñā-nāsamjñāyatana, away from the attachment to the ākiṃcanyāyatana whence he cannot get away — there being no upper stage to hang on to. This is compared to an insect (or a man) climbing up a plant: it hangs onto an upper part leaving behind the lower part; but when it reaches the highest point, it necessarily retrogresses as there is nothing higher up to hang onto.\textsuperscript{96} Among those who hold such a position, some particularly emphasize the abrupt abandonment of all defilements:

Some maintain that all defilements are abandoned abruptly, and there is no gradual abandonment. They assert that all defilements are abruptly abandoned when the Diamond-like meditation (vajropama-samādhi) is manifested. On account of the fact that this meditation abandons all defilements, it is called the Diamond-like meditation; for, it is like diamond which is capable of breaking iron, stones, teeth, bones, pearls, jade, gems (maṇi), etc. Although they concede that there are four fruits of spiritual attainment (śrāmanya-phala), [they maintain that] the abandonment of defilements requires the Diamond-like meditation.

Question: If the first three fruits cannot abandon defilements, what is the use of designating them as [fruits of spiritual attainment]?

Their answer: The first three fruits are capable of suppressing the defilements, inducing the manifestation of the Diamond-like meditation; it is only then that the [defilements] come to be absolutely abandoned (atyantam prahīyante). Thus, they are not futile …

To refute their intention, it is shown that there are two types of counteraction for defilements — the two paths, that of vision and that of cultivation, are different. Either of them, when being manifested, is capable of absolutely abandoning [defilements].\textsuperscript{97}

For these masters who deny the possibility of real abandonment through the mundane path, therefore, there is in fact no distinction between defilements abandonable by vision and those abandonable by cultivation. Obviously, one important premise for this position is that real abandonment can only be achieved through the outflow-free understanding, and this arises only in an ārya when the truths are directly realized.

As opposed to the Dārṣṭāntikas, however, the Sarvāstivādins maintain that a mundane path (laukika-mārga) entailing a with-outflow understanding is also capable of counteracting defilements of both types, those abandonable by insight and those abandonable by cultivation.
Such counteractions actually constitute abandonments even though their effects are susceptible to being lost. As a matter of fact, even an ārya may occasionally make use of such a path. Accordingly, when a prthagjana becomes an ārya, he does not need to again abandon the same defilements that he has earlier abandoned by the mundane path. Thus, if a practitioner has abandoned sufficient categories of defilements by the mundane paths prior to entering the darśana-mārga, he can skip the stage of stream-entry (śrōtaāpatti) and plunge directly into that of either sakrdāgāmin or anāgāmin.

But there is some limitation: A prthagjana can abandon the defilements abandonable by vision and abandonable by cultivation pertaining to all the stages from the sensuality sphere up to the sphere of nothingness (ākīmcaṇya-āyatana) only, but not those pertaining to the sphere of neither-ideation-nor-nonideation (naīva-saṃjñā-nāsaṃjñā-āyatanaṇa = bhavāgra) which are completely abandoned only when the vajropama-samādhi is produced. Moreover, even if a worldling can abandon all the defilements that can possibly be abandoned by a mundane path of cultivation, he still remains a worldling. He must enter into the path of vision — into direct realization — in order to become an ārya. In other words, the mundane path of cultivation can only become effective through the path of vision: He does not have to abandon the same defilements again; but the disjunctions from these defilements that he has acquired by the mundane path must be re-acquired by means of the outflow-free knowledges in direct realization. Put differently: although through the mundane path he has already acquired the acquisitions which are with-outflow, he must acquire anew the outflow-free acquisitions of the disjunctions.

AKB states that all beings, ārya-s and prthagjana-s alike, are endowed with (samanvāgata) the pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha-s, excepting those who are sakala-bandhana-ādikṣaṇaṣthas and the sakala-bandhana-prthagjana-s. This is another expression of the tenet that even a prthagjana can acquire the cessation of defilements. A sakala-bandhana-ādikṣaṇaṣtha is an ārya who has not yet abandoned any defilement — and hence is still ‘bound with all bondages’ — at the first moment (duḥkhe dharma-jñāna-kṣānti) of his entering the path of vision; a sakala-bandhana-prthagjana is a worldling who has not abandoned any of the nine categories of defilements pertaining to the sphere of sensuality by means of the mundane path.

In making upward progress by means of the mundane path, an ordinary worldling generates six modes of activities:
In the mundane unhindered paths, he reflects on the lower stages as being

1. coarse (*audārika*), or
2. unsatisfactory (*duḥkhila*), or
3. like a thick wall (*sthūlabhittika*).

In the paths of liberation, he sees the higher stages as being

1. calm (*śānta*), or
2. excellent (*praṇīta*), or
3. exit (*niḥsaraṇa*).

Śaṃghabhadra elaborates on this:

> It is only in terms of possibility that it is said that in each of the two paths three modes of activity are generated. It is not that in all cases, a sentient being at the time of detachment (*vairāgya*) generates three modes of activity in both the unhindered path and the path of liberation.

In the lower stages: there is much restlessness (*auddhatya*) and little calm; hence “coarse”. In spite of great effort to temporarily weaken the force of restlessness, one is still unable to induce the arising of wonderful pleasure, hence “unsatisfactory”. There is an extremely great number of misfortunes qua obstructions capable of hindering the efficacy of seeing the direction of exit, hence “[obstruction like] a thick wall”. In the higher stages: without one’s striving, restlessness is feeble, hence “calm”. Without making effort and restlessness being feeble, superior pleasure is induced, hence “excellent”. One is able to have decisive vision of all the misfortunes in the lower stage in which one’s thought does not delight and which one is able to transcend, hence “exit”.  

In this way, by becoming disgusted with a lower sphere and finding delight in an upper sphere, the ordinary worldling abandons the defilements pertaining to the former and moves up to the latter.  

This method of practice, however, entails that he cannot abandon the defilements pertaining to the highest stage, existence-peak, for there is no stage higher than it to contrast with in order to generate disgust. Accordingly, to complete his journey, he must rely finally on the outflow-free knowledge arising in direct realization.
12. Defilements

12.9.3.1. Unhindered paths and paths of liberation of a worldling and an ārya

In the abandonment of a defilement, two stages, called “paths” are involved: the “unhindered path” (ānantarya-mārga), followed by the “path of liberation” (vimukti-mārga). (See infra, § 15.4). This applies to both the supramundane path as well the mundane path. Various views are found in MVŚ concerning the differences in the abandonment of defilements by an ordinary worldlings and an ārya:

Question: When a worldling and an ārya gain detachment from the nine grades of defilement of a certain stage, by how many unhindered paths and paths of liberation do they acquire the detachment?

According to some: A worldling is detached from the nine grades of defilement by only three unhindered paths and three paths of liberation. That is: he is detached from the three higher grades of defilement by the lower grade of the unhindered path and the path of liberation; he is detached from the three middle grades of defilement by the middle grade of the unhindered path and the path of liberation; he is detached from the three lower grades of defilement by the higher grade of the unhindered path and the path of liberation. The same applies in the case of an ārya.

According to other masters: A worldling is detached from the nine grades of defilements all at once by one grade of the unhindered path and the path of liberation. An ārya is detached gradually from the nine grades of defilements by nine grades of the unhindered paths and the paths of liberation. Why? The path of a worldling is blunt, and cannot differentiate the cognizable and abandonables into nine grades. Thus, he abandons them all at once by one grade of the path. The path of an ārya is sharp and can properly differentiate the cognizable and abandonables into nine grades. Thus, he abandons them gradually by nine grades of the path.

Comment: They should not explain thus. If they explain thus in order to show that a worldling is inferior to an ārya, they will end up showing the opposite — an ārya is inferior to a worldling. If a worldling is detached from the nine grades of defilement by a single grade of the path, and an ārya is detached from the nine grades of defilement by nine grades of the path, is it not that an ārya is inferior to a worldling? This is like the case that one who, having taken a lot of poisons, can vomit them all out by taking just a little medicine — is it not wonderful? It should be explained thus: whether a worldling or an ārya, he is detached
from nine grades of defilement by nine grades of the unhindered paths and the paths of liberation.

Question: If so, what is the difference between the case of a worldling and that of an ārya?

Answer: In the case of a worldling, by means of nine grades of the unhindered paths and the paths of liberation, he bundles together the fetters to be abandoned by insight and by cultivation into nine grades. Like the way of cutting grass, the different grades are abandoned all at once. In the case of an ārya, by means of a single unhindered path and a single path of liberation, he abandons the nine grades of defeatments abandonable by vision all at once; by means of nine unhindered paths and nine paths of liberation, he abandons gradually the nine grades of defilement abandonable by cultivation. This is the difference between the case of a worldling and that of an ārya. 107

The Sarvāstivāda also explains the difference in terms of abandonment by means of receptivity and by means of knowledge. A defilement abandoned by means of receptivity is one abandonable by vision (darśana-heya); a defilement abandoned by means of knowledge is one abandonable by cultivation (bhāvanā-heya). 108 In the case of an ārya’s abandonment through the supramundane path — when he is in the path of vision — the defilement abandonable by vision is abandoned by the outflow-free receptivity in the preceding moment. The succeeding moment of the path of liberation serves to ensure that the abandoned defilement will not re-arise. (See also, infra, § 15.4) In this case, there is no retrogression. When, subsequent to the path of vision, he uses knowledge to abandon a defilement abandonable by cultivation, such an abandonment may or may not be retrogressible. In the case of an ordinary worldling, he can only make use of the mundane path of cultivation to abandon a defilement, using a with-outflow knowledge; such an abandonment is retrogressible. 109

12.9.4. Various synonyms in the process of gradual abandonment

There are as many abandonments as there are with-outflow objects, 110 and complete freedom from duḥkha must be gained by gradually and systematically abandoning the defilements and realizing the corresponding cessation (nirodha). Repudiating the view of the “abrupt-abandonment śramaṇa-s” (頓斷沙門) who hold the view that the śrāmaṇya-phala is acquired by “abrupt awakening” (頓覺), MVŚ states that “there are 89 different stages in the abandonment of the defilements, for in all these stages there is the realization of nirodha”. 111 Depending
on the specific stage of progress at which a corresponding amount of defilements is abandoned:

The abandonment in its intrinsic nature [is given various names] — ‘abandonment’ (prahāna), ‘disjunction’ (visamyoga), ‘cessation’ (nirrodha), ‘truth’ (satya), ‘complete knowledge’ (parijñā), ‘fruit of the spiritual life’ (śrāmanya-phala), ‘sphere of nirvāṇa with a remnant of substratum’ (sopadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu), and ‘sphere of nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum’ (nirupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu). These eight types [of synonyms] may or may not apply in full in the different stages. Thus, when the receptivity to the knowledge of dharma with regard to duḥkha (duḥkhe dharma-jñāna-kṣānti) ceases and the knowledge of dharma with regard to duḥkha arises, that abandonment acquired is called ‘abandonment’, ‘disjunction’, ‘cessation’, ‘truth’; [but] it is not yet called ‘complete knowledge’, not yet called ‘fruit of the spiritual life’, not yet called ‘sphere of nirvāṇa with a remnant of substratum’, not yet called ‘sphere of nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum’… [In this way, finally,] when [the practitioner] is dissociated from the ninth [— final —] grade of bond, the vajropama-samādhi (in which whatever defilements remaining are eradicated without any trace) having ceased and the anutpāda-jñāna having first arisen, that abandonment [of defilement] acquired receives [all the names except] ‘sphere of nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum’… When the skandha-s, āyatana-s and dhātu-s of an arhat cease and continue no further, and he has entered into the ‘sphere of nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum’, [the abandonment receives all the names except] ‘sphere of nirvāṇa with a remnant of substratum’.112 (Cf. infra, § 16.2).

12.9.5. Methods of abandonment

Although it is often stated that a defilement is abandoned by a complete knowledge of its object, this is not the only method to abandon defilements. The Sarvāstivāda speaks of the following four methods — the first three for the defilements which are darśana-heya; the last, for those which are bhāvanā-heya:113

I ālambana-parijñāna: Complete understanding of the nature of the object due to which the defilement arises. This is applicable to the following defilements: (a) those under duḥkha- and samudaya-satya that are sabhāga-dhātv-ālambana (= sabhāga-dhātu-sarvatraga); (b) those under nirodha- and mārga-satya that are anāsrava-ālambana — namely mithyā-drṣṭi, vicikitsā and avidyā.114
Thus, for example, greed under duḥkha-satya, with regard to a beautiful object: one must have complete knowledge of the aspects pertaining to duḥkha-satya—duḥkha, anitya, etc.—in order to abandon it. As another example: doubt, under nirodha-satya, with regard to nirvāṇa: when all the aspects pertaining to nirodha-satya—nirdha, śānta, etc.—are fully understood, doubt is removed.

II tadālambana-saṃksaya: The destruction of a defilement which is the object of another defilement along with the destruction of the latter (the subject). This is applicable to the defilements under duḥkha- and samudaya-satya-s, which are visabhāga-dhātv-ālambana (= visabhāga-dhātu-sarvatraga). These are objects of the defilements that are sabhāga-dhātv-ālambana. When the latter are destroyed, they are also destroyed. Saṃghabhadra explains as follows:

This refers to the visabhāga-dhātvālambana defilements pertaining to the sphere of sensuality. For, the sabhāga-dhātv-ālambana defilements pertaining to the sphere of sensuality which are duḥkha- and samudaya-darśana-heya take them as objects—these defilements serve as their support; when the support is abandoned, they are also abandoned accordingly. It is like a weak patient who stands with the help of some support; when the support is removed, he falls down accordingly. How can [these sabhāga-dhātv-ālambana defilements] serve as their support? Because these can serve as their causes.¹¹⁵

III ālambana-prahāna: The abandonment of a defilement that takes as object another defilement by abandoning the latter— the object. This is applied to the sāsrava-ālambana defilements which are nirodha- and mārga-darśana-heya. These take the defilements which are anāsrava-ālambana (i.e., mithyā-dṛṣṭi, vicikitsā, avidyā) as object. “This is like a weak patient who walks with the help of a stick; when this stick is taken away, he falls down accordingly.”¹¹⁶ Example: When doubt (vicikitsā) with regard to the path is the object of śīlavrata-parāmarśa—when the doubt is removed, the irrational attachment to rites and observances will also vanish along with it.

IV pratipaksodaya: The abandonment of a defilement on account of the arising of its counteragent. This is specifically applied to the defilements that are bhāvanā-heya.

When one grade of a counteragent (e.g., weak-weak) opposed to one grade of defilement (e.g., strong-strong) arises, that grade of defilement is abandoned. However, as Saṃghabhadra explains,¹¹⁷
it is also applicable to the *darśana-heya* defilements since their abandonment too results from the arising of their counteragents. Counteraction is fourfold:118

(i) A counteragent resulting in abandonment (*prahāṇa-pratipakṣa*). That is, a counteracting path which directly abandons the acquisitions of the defilements. This is the unhindered path (*ānantarya-mārga*).

(ii) A counteragent that effects the maintenance (*ādhāra-pratipakṣa*) of the abandoning so obtained. That is, the noble path which first arises together with the acquisition of abandonment. This is the path of liberation (*vimukti-mārga*). By virtue of the fact that such a path maintains the acquisition of abandonment (i.e., the abandonment acquired is maintained; *tatprāpitam prahāṇam ādhāryate*), the acquisitions of the defilements become incapable of arising further.

(iii) A counteragent that results in distancing (*dūrībhāva-pratipakṣa*). That is, this counteractive path which causes the acquisition of the defilement that has been cut, to be more distant (*chinna-prāpti-dūrīkaraṇāt*), i.e., to be removed. This is the path of distinction (*viśeṣa-mārga*), thus called because it is the path arisen subsequent — as an advancement — to the path of liberation. Even the *jāti*, etc., which are conascent with its acquisition also receive the name ‘paths’, as they cause the increase in the series of those acquisitions that are opposed to the acquisitions of the defilements.

(iv) A counteragent that finds disgust (*vidūṣaṇā-pratipakṣa*). That is, the path by which the practitioner — seeing, from various perspectives, the faults in whichever sphere and stage where the counteragent arises — generates deep disgust. This is, in the main, the preparatory path (*prayoga-mārga*).119

Vasubandhu here proposes the following order as the correct one:120

(i) *vidūṣaṇā-pratipakṣa* constitutes the preparatory path (*prayoga-mārga*);

(ii) *prahāṇa-pratipakṣa* constitutes the whole of the unhindered path (*ānantarya-mārga*);

(iii) *ādhāra-pratipakṣa* constitutes the path of liberation (*vimukti-mārga*);
(iv) \( dūrhībhāva-pratipakṣa \) constitutes the path of distinction (\( viṣeṣa-mārga \)).

12.9.6. A defilement is abandoned through separation from its object

In Ny\textsuperscript{121} the question is raised: Through separation from what does the absolute abandonment of a defilement result? Is it from (i) its intrinsic nature (\( svabhāvāt \)), or (ii) its conjunction (\( saṃprayogāt \)) — i.e., its conjoined (\( saṃprayukta \)) \textit{dharma-s} such as sensations, etc., or (iii) its object (\( ālambanāt \))?

(i) is not possible since the intrinsic nature can never be relinquished. (ii) also is impossible, for the conjoined \textit{dharma-s} are mutually cause to one another (they constitute the \textit{saṃprayuktaka-hetu}), and their nature of being (conjoined) causes will always remain. Moreover, a \textit{citta} that becomes defiled as a result of (conjunction with) a given defilement will never become undefiled. Neither is (iii) possible: a \textit{dharma} which is taken as an object by that defilement will always remain as its object.

MVŚ explains the Sarvāstivāda position, which is that abandonment results from separation from the object:\textsuperscript{122}

One speaks of an \textit{anuśaya} as being abandoned when, by the force of its counteragent, it will no longer give rise to any fault with regard to the object. This is like the case of a person restraining his son from further visits to a drinking house, a house of prostitution or a gambling house, etc. It is impossible that an \textit{anuśaya} can be made to separate from its conjoined \textit{dharma-s}.

In Ny, Saṃghabhadra explains more elaborately:\textsuperscript{123}

The absolute abandonment of defilements definitely results from [separation from] their objects, for it is by the force of the complete knowledge (\( ālambana-parijñāna-balena \)) of the objects that the defilements are absolutely abandoned. …

There are two types of objects of the \textit{anuśaya}: \textit{samyoga-vastu} (i.e., \textit{sāsrava} objects) and \textit{asamyoga-vastu} (i.e., \textit{anāsrava} objects). The acquisitions of the defilements that take the \textit{samyoga-vastu-s} as objects and of those that are produced by the former type of defilements [but] not taking such objects, continue uninterruptedly in the present series of a sentient being even when his \textit{citta} is presently non-defiled, constituting the effects and the causes of past and future defilements, [respectively]. Likewise are the acquisitions of those defilements that take the \textit{asamyoga-vastu-s} as objects, and of those that do not take such objects and that are produced by these defilements, coming into activity following these defilements. By ‘constituting the effects and the causes of
past and future defilements’ is meant: This acquisition existing at the present is the emanation (nisyanda) effect of the past defilements — hence ‘effect’, and is the condition for the arising of future defilements — hence ‘cause’.

But this acquisition is opposed to the coming into activity of the acquisition (both acquisitions are plural in Xuanzang’s translation) which is the emanation from the prahāna-pratipakṣa for those [defilements] (tat-prahāna-pratipakṣa-nisyanda-prāpti-samavadhāna-viruddhā), for it sustains (ā-√dhā) the past and future defilements that are acquired [by virtue of it], so that the defilements, on account of which object they are arisen, set into motion defilements which take other objects (ato yen’ ālambanenotpānāḥ kleśā any’ ālambanān api kleśān pravartayanti). When the emanations of the prahāna-pratipakṣa bearing on this object arise, the acquisition of the defilements is terminated. The acquired defilements, although still existing as entities, are said to be abandoned with respect to their objects on account of the absolute termination of the acquisition constituting their causes and effects. For, when a certain object has not been completely known, the acquisitions — constituting the effects and causes of the past and future defilements — produced by the defilements which take this object and by the defilements produced by the force of these (former) defilements and taking other objects, arise uninterruptedly in the present series. When there is complete knowledge with regard to a certain object, the acquisition produced by the defilements does not continue any longer. Thus, it is known that the abandonment of a defilement definitely results from [the separation from] its object.124

It is to be noted that in the abandoning of a defilement, the counteracting noble path does not operate simultaneously with the defilement — the two being opposed in nature. Nevertheless, as a result of this path seeing the object in its aspects of being duḥkha, etc., the defilements bearing on this object are abandoned. The non-arising of the defilements results from the cessation of the acquisition constituting the effects and causes of defilements. Saṃghabhadra further illustrates this125 by the example of a person bitten by a rat: Even when no fever or loss of consciousness is occurring, he is said to be a sick person on account of the presence of the poison which constitutes the causes for fever, etc. It is only by taking the agada medicine which counteracts the poison that he can be said to be free from the sickness. Although the agada and the sickness of fever, etc., are not present simultaneously in the body, the agada is said to eradicate the sickness since it is on account of its power that the poison within the body is eradicated so that fever, etc., do not arise any longer.
12.10. Traces (vāsanā) of the defilements and distinction between the wisdom of a Buddha and of an arhat  

12.10.1. Distinction between defilements and their traces (vāsanā)

We have seen that both the Pāli commentarial tradition and the northern Abhidharma tradition had come to emphasize the superiority of the Buddha’s wisdom in contrast to that of the two yāna-s (the disciples and the pratyeka-buddha) (supra, § 10.4.1, § 10.4.4).

In the case of the Pāli tradition, this difference is accounted for mainly in terms of the notion of the distinction between kilesa and vāsanā. The Theravāda explanations on this distinction, however, are essentially the same as those in the Sarvāstivāda tradition, except that the Sarvāstivāda articulately connects the notion of vāsanā with that of the undefiled ignorance (§ 10.4). For both traditions, vāsanā constitutes the subtle traces that are left behind even after the defilements have been abandoned. Whereas a defilement is voluntary and kammically retributive, vāsanā is conceived of as being involuntary influences of past habits, morally neutral and non-retributive. A Buddha’s superior wisdom is then accounted for by the doctrine that the Buddha alone can completely abandon the defilements together with their vāsanā (cf.: na hi bhagavantaṁ ṭhapetvā aññe saha vāsanāya kilese pahātuṁ sakkonti). In the case of the Sarvāstivāda, it is said that the Buddha alone is completely freed from the non-defiled ignorance, and with this his vāsanā too is exhausted.

The following definition of vāsanā, given in the Udānaṭṭhakathā, is illustrative of such notions:

And what is this so-called vāsanā? They say that it is a tendency of this nature: A mere potency in the continuum of even one who has removed the defilements, deposited by the defilements which have been practiced from beginningless time, and which have become the cause for behavior similar to the behavior of those who have not yet abandoned the defilements. This is not found in the Fortunate One’s continuum where the defilements are abandoned by virtue of the abandoning of the knowable-hindrance on account of the ‘perfection of resolution’. But where the defilements are not abandoned in this manner, it exists in the continua of the sāvaka and the pacecka-buddha. For this reason, it is only the Tathāgata who is unhindered in knowledge and vision.

A Sarvāstivāda definition on vāsanā, given by Bhadanta Anantavarman, is found in Vy:
What is this so-called vāsanā of the śrāvaka-s? That specific potency which is a cause of distortion in bodily and vocal actions, existing in the thought of one who has previously committed a given act of defilement, created by that defilement, is called vāsanā. The vāsanā is a specific thought that is morally non-defined.129

Samghabhadra informs us of another definition given by “some ancient masters”:

There exists a distinct non-defiled caitta which is induced by the repeated practice of defiled and non-defiled dharma-s. It arises in the series of one who is not an omniscient, so that the citta-caitta-s do not operate freely. This is called vāsanā.130

These two Sarvāstivādin definitions, while agreeing in their essentials, are not entirely the same in detail. Anantavarman says that the vāsanā is a citta-viśeṣa, whereas the ancient masters say it is a caitta-viśeṣa. Moreover, the former speaks of them as being induced by defilements, whereas the latter, by both defiled and non-defiled dharma-s. Such a difference in relatively secondary points, however, does not necessarily amount to a contradiction between the two definitions.

12.10.2. Examples of vāsanā in MVŚ

MVŚ offers no formal definition of vāsanā. But there are sufficient descriptions of its visible effect on the arhat-s, from which we may derive a clear understanding of the Vaibhāṣika version of the notion which is essentially the same as what we read in the Pali ṭīkā (see § 12.10.1).

In the case of the Buddha, his vāsanā is completely abandoned, even though He occasionally uses words that may appear to be tainted with defilements — ‘semblance of greed’ (rāga-sadṛśa), ‘semblance of hatred’ (dveṣa-sadṛśa), ‘semblance of delusion’ (moha-sadṛśa), ‘semblance of conceit’ (māna-sadṛśa), etc.131 To explain that these are not cases of vāsanā — similes and not actually defilements — MVŚ compilers take pain to relate at length the nidāna for each of such episodes, showing that in such cases, the Buddha was actually consciously employing appropriate expedients to help the practitioners along.132

The case of the two yāna-s is quite different. Their acts resembling defilements are involuntary — and therefore morally non-defined; they are due to the conditioning of vāsanā. The two yāna-s are helpless against such “semblances of defilements”. Étienne Lamotte, in his “Passions
and Impregnations of the Passions in Buddhism”, gives examples of the arhat-s’ vāsanā, although mainly from the Mahāyāna sources. But there are many similar examples in MVŚ.

The most oft-cited one (by the Pali ṭīkā as well) is that of Pilindavatsa (Pali: Pilindavaccha), who by the force of his vāsanā, often calls others vrṣala (“little man”). Thus, he shouts at the Ganga god: “O you vrṣala! Stop the flow! I want to cross over.” This is an example of vāsanā of hatred.

Ānanda has a “weakness” for the Śākya — he feels tender towards them. This is an example of vāsanā of greed (loc. cit.).

Śāriputra throws away the medicine. This is an example of vāsanā of conceit.

The Venerable Gavampati always coughs before eating. He keeps on eating even knowing that he has not digested what has been eaten. This is an example of vāsanā of delusion (loc. cit.).

Another example is given of an elephant who used to carry the Buddha’s relic (dhātu) to Kāśmīra. By the merit of this, he was born a man and eventually became an arhat. When he was an elephant, he used to have merely one grain measure for his meal. After becoming an arhat, he continued to be able to fill himself up by eating merely one grain measure of food. This is a special dharma acquired by virtue of the vāsanā of his habit of eating as an elephant.

12.10.3. Description in AKB and Vy

In AKB, we find only two brief mentions of vāsanā in this sense, and these in the same chapter:

(1) The 18 āvenika-dharma-s of the Buddha are āvenika (unique) because He has abandoned the defilements along with their vāsanā (sa-vāsanam).

(2) The Buddha’s perfection as regards the abandoning of defilements (prahāṇa-sampad) is fourfold:

(I) He has abandoned all defilements (sarvakleśa-prahāṇa);

(II) He has abandoned them absolutely (atyanta-prahāṇa);

(III) He has abandoned them along with their vāsanā (savāsanaprahāṇa);
(IV) He has abandoned all hindrances to the attainment of samādhi (sarva-samādhi-samāpattyāvaranaprahāṇa).

For the Vaibhāṣika, the last (IV) aspect refers to the abandoning of aklīṣṭa-ajñāna. (See supra, § 10.4.3).

12.10.4. Vāsanā and the two types of ajñāna in the Sarvāstivāda

MVŚ distinguishes two kinds of false knowledges (mithyā-jñāna) — defiled and non-defiled:

Question: What is this false knowledge?

Answer: This is the non-veiled-non-defined knowledge, to be abandoned by cultivation and pertaining to the sense sphere, and which has a false mode of understanding (邪行相, mithyākāra). Thus, it generates such thoughts as a man with regard to a post or a post with regard to a man, and of a path (mārga) with regard to a non-path (amārga), and a non-path with regard to a path...

[As a matter of fact,] there are two kinds false knowledge: 1. defiled, 2. non-defiled. The defiled one is conjoined with nescience (avidyā), the non-defiled one, such as that which generates the thought of a man with regard to a post, is not.

As for the defiled one, both the śrāvaka-s and the pratyeka-buddha-s can abandon it completely, as well as render it incapable of manifesting (sam-ud-ā-√car). As for the non-defiled one, although it can be completely abandoned by the śrāvaka-s and the pratyeka-buddha-s, it can still manifest in them.

It is only in the case of the Tathāgata that it absolutely does not manifest any more, as He has permanently abandoned the defilements as well as the vāsanā-s. It is for this reason that He alone is called the Perfectly Completely Enlightened One (samyak saṃbuddha). The defiled false knowledge is a false knowledge from the absolute (paramārtha) standpoint. The non-defiled false knowledge is a false knowledge from the conventional (saṃvṛti) standpoint, not from the absolute standpoint, since it is not associated with the false dharma-s (mithyā-dharma) of defilement.

The non-defiled false view, which is here said to be a false view only from the conventional standpoint and not conjoined with those of defilement, is a mode of what is doctrinally articulated as the non-defiled ignorance. This passage also suggests the close relationship between this non-defiled ignorance and vāsanā, as it states that the Tathāgata, by permanently abandoning the defilements and the vāsanā-s, can render the non-defiled ignorance absolutely incapable of re-arising.
12.10.5. Vāsanā, non-defiled ignorance and perfect wisdom

When the knowable-hindrance (jñeya-āvaraṇa), the essence of which is the non-defiled ignorance (cf., § 10.4.3), is removed, omniscience is attained. For the Vaibhāṣika, this omniscience is not just a state of perfect wisdom. It represents a real, potent, counteractive force which arises at the time of attaining the supreme perfect enlightenment (anuttarā sanyāk sambodhi), counteracting the vāsanā and non-defiled ignorance. It is on account of this force that the defilement of the Buddha-to-be is utterly shattered without any trace. In explaining why the Buddha’s abandoning of defilement, unlike the two yāna-s’, leaves no trace (vāsanā) behind, MVŚ says:

The wisdom fire of the śrāvaka-s and pratyeka-buddha-s is not fierce. [With it,] although the defilement is abandoned, the vāsanā remains. It is like the case of ordinary fire in the world: although it can consume a thing, it leaves behind ashes. The Buddha’s wisdom is fierce; it consumes the defilement without leaving behind any vāsanā, like the fire at the end of time which consumes everything in its way leaving no ash behind.

The function of perfect knowledge — in the spiritual sense or wisdom, as opposed to mere intellectual understanding — for the liberation from defilement is in fact a doctrine fundamental to Buddhism. As we have seen above, a term which emphasizes this is “complete knowledge” (§ 12.1); in the technical terminology of the Sarvāstivāda, the abandonment of defilement (kleśa-prahāṇa) is a fruit of knowledge (jñāna-phala). The defilements, on account of which beings are bonded to saṃsāra, have their ultimate source in ignorance. Stated in terms of the doctrine of the two-fold ignorance, the defiled ignorance is the cognitive basis for defiled actions, and the non-defiled ignorance is that for actions which, although involuntary and not defiled in nature, bear resemblance to defiled actions and which prevent the totalistic vision of all knowables. While both vāsanā and non-defiled ignorance are differentiated from defilement, they are nonetheless intrinsically related to it. As we have seen (§ 10.4.4), Saṃghabhadra offers articulate explanations on the relationship between defilement on the one hand and non-defiled ignorance and vāsanā on the other.

The following discussion in MVŚ explains that the comparatively inferior wisdom of the two yāna-s can be understood as due to the hindrance of vāsanā or non-defiled ignorance:

Question: Why is it that the knowledge in the Tathāgata is designated as a power (bala), and not those in the śrāvaka-s and the pratyekabuddha-s?
12. DEFILEMENTS

Answer: A power is that which cannot be overcome and hindered. The knowledge in the śrāvaka-s and the pratyekabuddha-s can still be overcome by ignorance (ajñāna) and is hindered, hence it is not called a power. …

Question: Since there is no difference in respect of the exhaustion of outflows (āsrava-kṣaya) among the three yāna-s, why is it that the knowledge of the exhaustion of the outflows (āsrava-kṣaya-ajñāna) of the two yāna-s are not powers?

Answer: The Buddha's knowledge of the exhaustion of the outflows is superior and sharp; those of the śrāvaka-s and the pratyekabuddha-s are no match for it. Although the [knowledge of the exhaustion of the outflows of the Buddha as well as those of the two yāna-s] can both exhaust the outflows, there is a difference in speed. This is like the case of two persons, each cutting down a tree. One is strong and uses a sharp axe, the other has inferior strength and uses a blunt axe. While each cuts down a tree, one does it faster than the other. For this reason, the Buddha's knowledge of the exhaustion of the outflows is designated as a power, not those of the two yāna-s. Furthermore, the knowledge of the two yāna-s is not called power even though it can exhaust the outflows, on account of the presence of vāsanā.141

12.10.6. Saṃghabhadra's explanation of vāsanā

On vāsanā, Saṃghabhadra offers an explanation (cf. another explanation of his in § 10.4.4) according to which the mechanism whereby vāsanā results from defilement is somewhat complex:

At the stage when beings are still in possession of defilements, all their non-defiled citta-s, together with their series, are perfumed by defilements which intervene them, giving rise to impregnations (氣分), to be distinguished as a term from vāsanā, 習氣) which accord with the arising of defilements. Accordingly, special non-defiled citta-s and their retinue arise, operating in a manner similar to that of the [defilements]. They arise successively by virtue of the force of repeated conditioning, and for this reason those without faults [i.e., the ārya-pudgala-s] are still said to be in possession of vāsanā. In the case of the Omniscient One, it is permanently abandoned and does not manifest (sam-ud-ā-car) any longer.

At the stage when one has already abandoned the [defilements] abandonable by vision, in the mental series which may be defiled or non-defiled, there remain habitual conditionings (習性) which accord with the arising of defilements. These are impregnations of defilements abandonable by vision. Among them, the defiled
ones are called “nature/type” (類性) and are totally abandoned, without any possibility of manifesting, by the diamond-like (vajropama) path. Those that are non-defiled are called “vāsanā of defilements abandonable by vision”. These are also abandoned by the same path; but they may or may not manifest, depending on the [practitioner’s] faculty.

At the stage at which one has already abandoned the [defilements] abandonable by cultivation, it is only in the non-defiled mental series that there remain impregnations, acquired through practice, which accord with the arising of defilements. These are impregnations of defilements abandonable by cultivation and are called “vāsanā of defilements abandonable by cultivation”. Being with-outflow, they have already been abandoned in the case of the non-trainee. But they may or may not manifest, depending on whether the [non-trainee’s] faculty is superior or inferior. As the Bhagavat has acquired mastery over the dharma-s, such [vāsanā-s], just like the defilements, absolutely never manifest. It is for this reason that the Buddha alone is called the Skillful Series (kuśala-santati). On this very account, He has no lapses in his conduct and acquires the three smrty-upasthāna-s and other unique dharma-s. It is also on this very account that it is implicitly declared that the Buddha alone is said to be one who has acquired the fruition of non-trainee.

Samghabhadra’s explanations may be considered to be more articulate regarding the dispositional forces induced by defilements. According to him, the impregnations or habitual conditioning forces induced by defilements may be defiled or non-defiled. But it is only the latter that is called vāsanā. This vāsanā is divisible into two types: (1) vāsanā of defilements which are abandonable by vision, (2) vāsanā of defilements which are abandonable by cultivation. The first type is abandoned by the diamond-like path. As for the second type, even though it has already been abandoned by an arhat, it may or may not manifest, depending on the faculty of the arhat. In the case of the Buddha, it can never manifest.
NOTES

2. āsāvehi cittam vimuttam — M, no. 112, 3, 30.
3. E.g., Ny, 430b.
4. In the Theravāda tradition, three types of pariṇā are spoken of: /javāna-pariṇā, pahāna-pariṇā and tīraṇa-pariṇā. But these are found only in the exegetical literature.
5. MVŚ, 175a–b.
6. See MVŚ, 320c; AKB, 322 f.
7. MVŚ, 244a, 417c (on upakleśa).
8. Entrance, 95.
9. E.g.: PrŚ, 693c; AKB, 312: ye yāvat kleśā upakleśā api te |
10. AKB, 312.
11. AKB, 308; PrŚ, 702a.
12. Cf. MVŚ, 257a–b; ADV, 220; Ny, 641c.
14. Entrance, 92
15. AKB, 308.
17. Entrance, 92; AKB, 308; Ny, 641c.
18. Ny, 641c.
19. MVŚ, 257a–b; see also Entrance, Introduction § 7.
20. Cf. Salāyatana Saṃyutta, Samudda vagga 5 and 6, (S 35, 191): ‘seyyathāpi āvuso kālo ca balivaddo odāto ca balivaddo ekena dāmena vā yottena vā samyuttā assu … na kho āvuso kālo balivaddo odātassa balivaddassā samyojanam, na pi odāto balivaddo kālassa balivaddassā samyojanam, yena ca kho te ekenā dāmena vā yottena vā samyuttā tam tattha samyojanam, evameva kho āvuso na cakkhu rūpānam samyojanam, na rūpā cakkhusa samyojanam yañ ca tadubhayam paṭicca uppajjati chandarāgo tam tattha samyojanam.’ This sūtra is quoted by both Skandhila (cf. Entrance, 90) and Sāṃghabhadra (Ny, 642c) for the explanation of ‘connection’.
21. MVŚ, 237c.
22. For item-wise explanations, see AKB, 309 ff.; Entrance, 87 ff.
23. MVŚ, 252b.
24. Cf. AKB, 310 f. Also see infra, § 16.
25. PrŚ, 693b; so also Ny, 644b.
26. Entrance 90. Same three given in AKB, 311.
27. Ny, 644b.
28. PrŚ, 693c; AKB, 312.
29. Entrance, 97.
31. Cf. AKB, 308: āsayanti saṁsāre āsravanti bhāvāgrād yāvad avīciṃ saḍbhir āyatanavrāṇair ity āsravāḥ | Also cf. ADV, 220: ābhavāgram upādāya yāvad
avīcim sravanti srāvayanti vā citta-santatim ity āsravāḥ

AKB, 308: Entrance, 98 f.

AKB, 308: evam tu sādhīyāḥ syād āsravaty ebhiḥ saṃtatir viṣayeṣv ity āsravāḥ

MVŚ, 244a–b.

MVŚ, 247a. Cf. Entrance 98: “They are given the name floods as they make the good things of beings drift away, as does a flood.” Also cf. AKB, 308: harantīty oghāḥ

AKB, 308.

ADV, 220.

Cf. Entrance, 98. Also cf. MVŚ, 247b.

Cf. MVŚ, 247c — all three meanings in Avatāra are also among those given here in MVŚ.

Entrance, 100.

Entrance, 100, 170 notes 224 and 225.

MVŚ, 248c.

AKB, 318. Cf. Entrance, 100 f.

Entrance, 100 f. Likewise, Ny, 648c; cf. MVŚ, 249c.

MVŚ, 249c; the reason for the order of enumeration is also given (250c).


AKB, 277; Vy, 441.

AKB, 306 f.

Vy, 442: satpathād udvartayati viparīta-daśīka-samsevā’bhimukhkī-karanāt — ‘it causes one to leave the true path, for it makes one inclined toward associating with erroneous teachers’.

Ny, 596a–b; The almost identical Sanskrit cited here given in Vy, 442, where the 16 functions are mentioned and attributed to ‘another person’: sōdaśety anyāḥ

Ny, 596b.

Cf. MVŚ, 241c.

Cf. Entrance, § 4.5.25.

SgPŚ, 376b; 於欲境界諸貪. So also in the later texts; e.g. Avatāra, see Entrance, § 4.5.25.

SgPŚ, 376b–c; likewise DDŚ,494c–495a.

E.g., cf. Avatāra, see Entrance, § 4.5.25.

This reason is clearly stated in MVŚ, 241c.

MVŚ, 241b–243b.

MVŚ, 243b.

Ny, 488b.

SPrŚ, T29, 843c–844a.

See Dhammajoti, KL (2009b).

AKB, 280.

AKB, 328: phala-bhūtā upādāna-skandhā duḥkhasatyam

410
Ny, 611a. Xuanzang’s translation of AKB (AKB(C), 101c) contains these same three reasons, which is a more elaborate explanation of sarvatraga than AKB, 286 f.

MVŚ, 465c. Also see below, § 10.

MVŚ, 264b.

MVŚ, 313a.

Cf. the Yogācāra doctrine — e.g., in *Mahāyāna-samgraha (T 31, 134c), etc. — that the seeds as potentialities in the ālayavijñāna are morally non-defined; and when they are manifested (sam-ud-āvcar), they can become either kusala or ahusala.

AKB, 278.

See Study, 335 ff.


For the philosophical implications of these different standpoints, see Yin Shun, op. cit., 129—137.

Cf. Ny, 641c.

MVŚ, 313c. MVŚ here quotes PrŚ which speaks of these three sources for the arising of a defilement (PrŚ, 702c). Cf. AKB, 305: aprahīṇād anuśayād viṣayāt pratyupasthitāt | ayontiśo manaskārāt klesāḥ sampūrṇakāraṇāḥ | Also cf. MVŚ, 990a.

AKB, 306.

MVŚ, 989c.

Cf. MVŚ, 112c–113a.

Ny, 616b.

Loc. cit.; cf. AKB, 289 f.

Ny, 637c.

Ny, 616b.

Ny, 616c.

MVŚ, 113a–b.

MVŚ, 312c.

MVŚ, 479c.

MVŚ, 182b.

MVŚ, 333c; AKB, 352; etc.

MVŚ, 796c–797a; cf. 479c.

AKB, 321: sarveṣāṁ hi klesānāṁ sakṛt kṣayaḥ | yasya yah prahāṇa-mārgas tenaiva tasya kṣayaḥ |

AKB, 321: visamyoṣa-lābhas teṣāṁ punah punah |

AKB, 321. Xuanzang (AKB(C), 111c) renders the lines thus: “There is no repeated abandonment of defilements. [But] there is the repeated acquisition of [their] disconnection.” (諸惑無再斷，離繫有重得).

Ny, 652a.

MVŚ, 264c.

MVŚ, 264c.
98 MVŚ, 264b–c, 465a: 諸異能斷欲界乃至無所有處見修所斷隨眠，唯除有頂.

99 Cf. AKB, 353 f. See also infra, § 157.

100 MVŚ, 465a; 335a–c.

101 It is perhaps from this perspective that the compilers seem to be able to tolerate the view of the Bhadanta that “it is not possible for a worldling to abandon the anuṣaya; he can only suppress the envelopment (paryavasthāna)”⁹. The compilers’ response is: “There is no harm in terms of reasoning if one explains thus.”

102 AKB, 62. MVŚ, 290a–b; One ‘bound with all bondages’ (sakala-bandhana): he can be bound by any of the five categories of abandonables, and dharma-s of the five categories are all bound.

103 Cf. MVŚ, 282c, 478b.

104 Ny, 702b.

105 Cf. AKB, 368. In the earlier texts (e.g. SgPŚ, 444a), some examples of the application of this six-mode application are given with regard to the non-material (ārūpya) meditative attainments.

106 Cf. AKB, 353 f.

107 MVŚ, 328c.

108 E.g., cf. MVŚ, 267b.

109 MVŚ, a–b.

110 AKB, 4: yāvanti hi saṃyogadravyāṇi tāvanti visanyogadravyāṇi |

111 MVŚ, 465c.

112 MVŚ, 321b–322b.

113 MVŚ, 114b; AKB, 319; Vy, 498; Ny, 649c ff.

114 AKB, 288: nirodhārāśāna-prahātavās trayo ‘rusayā mithyā-drṣṭī vicikitsā ‘vidyā ca tābhyaṃ samprayuktā ‘venkī ca | mārgaḥrāśāna-prahātavās apy eta eva trayaḥ | ity ete śad anāsṛravālamanāḥ | śesāḥ sāsṛravālambanā iti siddham |

115 Ny, 650a.

116 Ny, 650a.

117 Ny, 650c.

118 Ny, loc. cit.

119 In AKB, 320, Vasubandhu argues that the sequential order of the four paths should be: (iv) → (i) → (ii) → (iii); cf. MVŚ, 114b.

120 AKB, 320: api tv essem iyaṃ anupūrvi sādhvī bhavet… |

121 Ny, 651a.

122 MVŚ, 113b–c.

123 Ny, 651a–b.


412
12. Defilements

tad-ālambana-prahāna-pratipakṣa-nisyanandotpattau tat-prāpti-vigame te kleśās
tad-ālambanā api santo hetu-phalāpākṛtāḥ prahīnā ity ucyante | tad yasmād
aparijnāte kāmimścit kleśā-vaśaye a-tad-viśayānām api kleśānām tad-viśaya-
kleśa-balena prāptir anāgatātiita-kleśa-hetu-phala-bhūtā santatau pravartate
yathā vastu | tasmād ālambanāt kleśa prahātavyā ity abhimatam iti |

| Ny, 651b. |
| For a detailed discussion of this topic, see Dhammajoti, KL, (1998a), 65 ff. |
| Visuddhimagga-mahātiikā, 1.219; Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā, 1.217. |
| UdA 194: kā panāyaṃ vāsanā nāma? yam kilesarahitassāpi santāne appahīna-
kleśānām samācārasadasasamācārāhetubhūtān, anādikālabhāvītehi kilesehi
āhitam sāmatthiyamattam, tathārūpā adhimuttīti vadanti. tam panetam
abhinihārasampattiyā neyyāvaranappahānānasem yaththa kilesā pahīnā, tattha
bhagavato santāne nathhi, yaththa pana tathā kilesā na pahīnā tattha sāvakānaṃ
paccekbuddhānañca santāne atthi, tato tathāgato na anāvaraṇaññadassano. |
| Vy, 647: kah punar īyaṃ vāsanā nāma śrāvakāṇām | yo hi yatkleśacaritaḥ pūrvaṃ
tasya tatkṛtaḥkāyavākceṣṭāvikārahethusāmarthyaviśeṣaś citte vāsanety ucyate |
avyākṛtaś cittaviśeṣo vāsaneti |

| Ny, 502a. |
| MVŚ, 77b. |
| MVŚ, 77b–79a. |
| Lamotte, E, ‘Passions and Impregnations of the Passions in Buddhism’, in
| MVŚ, 77a. |
| MVŚ, 216a. |
| AkB, vii, 414, 416. |
| MVŚ, 42b. |
| MVŚ, 780b. Also cf. SPrŚ (T no. 1563), 779a. |
| MVŚ, 77c. |
| MVŚ, 175b. |
| MVŚ, 530c–531a; also cf. 158a. |
| Ny, 502 a–b. |
13. The Doctrine of *Karma*

13.1. **Meaning and general nature of karma**

13.1.1. Three types of *karma* and the primary role of volition

13.1.2. The agent of *karma*

13.1.3. Defilements as the generating cause and supporting condition for *karma*

13.2. **Classification of karma**

13.3. Informative (*vijñapti*) and non-informative (*avijñapti*) *karma*

13.4. Definition and intrinsic nature of informative and non-informative *karma*-s

13.4.1. Definition and nature of informative *karma*

13.4.2. Definition and nature of non-informative *karma*

13.4.2.1. Non-informative *karma* as matter

13.4.3. The moral nature of informative and non-informative *karma*-s

13.5. The non-informative matter as restraint, non-restraint and neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint

13.5.1. Acquisition and relinquishment of the non-informative matter

13.6. **Paths of karma** (*karma-patha*)

13.7. **Rationale for the doctrine of non-informative karma**

13.8. Role of the non-informative in the process of karmic retribution

13.8.1. **Clues from MVŚ**

13.8.1.1. The emphasis of non-informative matter *qua prātimokṣa-saṃvara*

13.8.1.2. The emphasis of non-informative matter as a karmic force

13.8.2. **Clues from Saṇghabhadra**

13.8.3. Non-informative *karma* as a medium of preservation of karmic force

13.8.4. **Conclusion**

13.8.4.1. Summary

13.1. **Meaning and general nature of karma**

The Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmikas are quite aware of the profundity — and ultimately inconceivability — of certain teachings of the Buddha as verbalization of His perfect enlightenment. Among these is His doctrine of *karma*. MVŚ goes so far as to declare that, of all the Buddha’s discourses, those dealing with *karma* are the most profound. Likewise the *karmaskandha* among the eight *skandhaka*-s (discussed in JPŚ); the power pertaining to *karma* among the Buddha’s ten powers (*bala*); the inconceivability of *karma* among the four inconceivables¹ — apparently referring to the statement found in the *Aṅguttara* that the retribution of *karma* is inconceivable and not to be conceived.²

It should be noted at the very outset that the *karma* doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda is quite in keeping with the early Buddhist teaching that
*karma* is neither fatalistic nor completely bound by mechanical rigidity. It is undoubtedly inspired by the Buddha’s own doctrine on *karma* which is the Middle Way between absolute determination and absolute freedom, being in conformity with the universal principle of conditioned co-arising (*pratīya-samutpāda*).

MVŚ gives a threefold meaning of the term *karma*:

1. *karma* in the general sense of an action or deed (*kriyā*);
2. *karma* as the ecclesiastical proceedings used for regulating the affairs of the sevenfold Buddhist community — *bhikṣu*, *bhikṣunī*, etc.;
3. *karma* as a moral action on account of which the effect can be distinguished as desirable (*iṣṭa*) or undesirable (*aniṣṭa*).^3^

The third meaning refers to the moral action which principally — but not absolutely — determines the subsequent experiences of one’s existence. It is to *karma* in this last sense that the doctrine here pertains. MVŚ, however, also observes that people in the world generally apply the word *karma* to what is, in fact, its fruit (*karma-phala*).^4^ In brief, *karma* in this last sense refers to the retribution causes (*vipāka-hetu*)^5^ which effect a specific existence, either in their capacity as the principal projecting cause or as causes that assist in completing the specific details of the particular sentient existence. (See infra, § 14.5). MVŚ explains more specifically that these retributive causes are called *karma* on account of their fundamental role in determining the various spheres (*dhātu*), planes (*gati*) and modes of birth (*yoni*) of a sentient being’s existence and in differentiating the various types of persons (*pudgala*) with their various life-span, physical appearances, social status, etc.^6^

While all these retributive causes can be considered *karma* inasmuch as they contribute towards a being’s rebirth, some are responsible for projecting a particular type of existence (e.g., human), and others contribute in terms of the specific details (e.g., the life span of the human, etc.) (§ 14.5); and among all the different types of karmic contribution, that from volition is the most predominant. It is from this perspective that sometimes *karma* is made to refer only to that which projects a specific existence and, at other times, it is only volition that is spoken of as *karma* in the proper sense. From this same perspective, it is stated, at yet other times, that it is not only *karma* alone that projects an existence. For instance, AKB states:

It is not *karma* alone which is the projector of a birth (*janman*).^7^
Citing PrŚ, Saṃghabhadra explains that the conditionings disjoined from thought are not karma-s, articulately distinguishing what is karma in the proper sense from what, when co-existing and co-ordinating with karma, can also contribute as retributive dharma-s:

These retribution causes are, in brief, of two types: 1. those which can project; 2. those which can complete.

Now, the group-homogeneity and the vital faculty which are disjoined conditionings are exclusively the result of [karmic] projection (ākṣipta). How do we know? Because it is said in the sūtra. For instance, it is said in the sūtra: “karma is the cause of birth”; it is also said: “karma causes the samsāric cycle”; it is also said: “sentient beings are differentiated by the force of karma”; it is also said: “the inferior sphere (i.e., the sense sphere) is projected by volition-karma”. … It is also said in the PrŚ: “The vital faculties are the retribution of karma, because they are not karma-s. No disjoined conditioning is karma.” …

It is only at the time when the karma is projecting the vital faculty and the homogeneity that those which are not karma [in the proper sense], when taking them as objects, can also incur the retribution. … The bodily and vocal karma-s which do not co-exist, [arising and ceasing together with it] (cittānuvartin), definitely cannot project the vital faculty and the homogeneity. Otherwise, both the scriptures and logical reasoning will be contradicted. For, the sūtra says that the inferior sphere is projected by volition. This means that the vital faculty and homogeneity belonging to the sense sphere existence is incurred by the mental karma alone, not by the bodily and vocal karma-s. …

13.1.1. Three types of karma and the primary role of volition

As is clear from above, three types of karma are recognized in the Sarvāstivāda: mental, bodily and vocal. Correspondingly, karma is said to be established on a three-fold basis — in terms of originating cause (samutthāna), the mental karma is established; in terms of intrinsic nature, vocal karma; in terms of supporting basis (āśraya), bodily karma. This three-fold division of karma is also correlated with another three-fold significance of karma: It is karma because (i) it has efficacy (有作用), i.e., vocal karma, (ii) it entails movement, i.e., bodily action, even though there is no real movement as such, (iii) it is volitional (造作; abhi-sam-

MVŚ explains that volition comprises all that is mental karma — whether that which projects an existence (i.e., the group-homogeneity)
or that which completes its specifics (cf. § 14.5); whether with-outflow or outflow-free; whether pertaining to the mind or to the five sensory consciousnesses — since all these *karma*-s have the characteristic of being volitional activities (*abhisamskāra*). The notion of mental *karma* as the originating cause setting the other two types of *karma* into operation shows clearly that in spite of their insistence that *karma* comprises *cetanā*—as well as *cetayitvā-karma*, the Sarvāstivādins too assign the primary karmic role to volition. This emphasis is distinctively brought out in the following catechism in MVŚ:

**Question:** All with-outflow *dharma*-s, whether skillful or unskillful, are capable of effecting desirable or undesirable retribution fruits. Why is volition alone, and not other *dharma*-s, said to be capable of differentiating the desirable or undesirable fruits?

**Answer:** It is so said because volition is most excellent [in this process]: volition has the most excellent strength in effecting a desirable or undesirable fruit.\(^{11}\)

JPŚ states that “all *dharma*-s (here referring to *prātimokṣa-saṃvara*; cf. § 13.5) are originated (*sam-ut-√sthā*) on account of thought, not that it is not on account of thought”. Commenting on the statement, MVŚ says:

Herein it is shown that the bodily and vocal *karma*-s are originated on account of thought. There are two types of thought: [thought as] the propeller and [thought as] the subsequent propeller (§ 9.7). [The thought which serves as] the propeller projects the bodily and vocal *karma*-s; it arises before them. [The thought which serves as] the subsequent propeller assists the bodily and vocal *karma*-s; it arises together with them. Herein, it refers to [thought] as the propeller, not [thought] as the subsequent propeller.\(^{12}\)

MVŚ states that for the materialization of a future existence, one single volition generically projects it and many other volitions then determine its specifics.\(^{13}\) Saṃghabhadra, likewise, citing the *sūtra*-s and explaining the retributive causes in similar terms as MVŚ, further articulates that it is mental *karma* — volition — that is to be regarded as *karma* in the proper or specific sense inasmuch as it is the prominent cause (勝因; *viśiṣṭa-hetu*) in projecting a sentient existence. Bodily and vocal *karma*-s, while also being part of the retributive causes, can only contribute as completing causes (see § 13.8.2). In fact, their contribution becomes possible only when the *cetanā karma* is exercising its function of projecting the particular sentient existence.\(^{14}\) In stating that one *karma* projects one single existence, the story is related of Venerable Aniruddha who, by offering a single alms, projected several retributive
fruits as a *deva* and as a human: This is possible not because one single *karma* of alms-giving projected several different existences, but because, when offering the alms, he had generated several streams of volition — several *karma*-s — corresponding to several future existences. (See *infra*, § 14.5). We must note here once again that the projecting *karma* is volition. Accordingly, we may justifiably speak of the Sarvāstivāda notion of *karma* in two senses: in the proper or narrower sense, *karma* refers specifically to volition — and the Sarvāstivāda doctrine here does not deviate from the standpoint of early Buddhism; in the broader sense, it refers to all that constitutes the retributive causes contributing to the retributive fruit. In this connection, we may note the explanation in Ny as to why the factor, *bhava*, in the twelve-fold formulation of dependent co-arising is not named *karma*: It is because *bhava* is the specific *karma* (*karma-viśeṣa*) which effects rebirth — all *karma*-s are not the cause for rebirth.\textsuperscript{15}

13.1.2. The agent of *karma*

Given the Buddhist doctrines of impermanence — interpreted to its logical extreme as that of momentariness — and of non-substantiality (*nairātmya*), can it be said that the same person who incurs a *karma* experiences the effect himself? MVŚ examines this question, and explains as follows:

(i) From a certain point of view it can be said so: Although the *skandha*-s, *āyatana*-s and *dhātu*-s of a being are different in each moment of their serial continuity, yet there is an overall integrity — each series is distinct from another.

(ii) From another point of view, it can be said that the doer and the experiencer are different — for instance, a being who has incurred a *karma* as a human, experiences its effect in a different plane of existence.

(iii) From yet another point of view, it can be said that no one incurs any *karma* and no one experiences the effect — for all dharma-s are without a Self, empty of a person (*pudgala*); all *karma*-s are “devoid of a doer and an experiencer, there being only the agglomeration of the conditionings which arise and cease [momentarily]”.\textsuperscript{16} Samghabhadra cites the following two lines of a stanza which he asserts are the Buddha's own words denying a truly, independently existing agent of *karma*:
There is \textit{karma}, there is \textit{vipāka};

The doer is not apperceived (\textit{na upalabhyate/na vidyate}).\textsuperscript{17}

This, he says, nevertheless does not amount to the denial of agency in every sense. It denies only a really existent Self that leaves one group of \textit{skandha}-s and continues with another group.

It is for the sake of showing that the doers are none other than the conditionings (\textit{saṃskāra}) themselves, constituting a serial continuity of causes and effects, that [the Buddha] says further: ‘This being that comes to be; from the arising of this, that arises.’ (\textit{asmin satīdaṃ bhavati | asyo'pādād idam utpadyate})\textsuperscript{18}

\textbf{13.1.3. Defilements as the generating cause and supporting condition for \textit{karma}}

The Sarvāstivāda shares the basic Buddhist tenet that the unenlightened worldling experiences \textit{duḥkha} in \textit{saṃsāra} on account of his \textit{karma}; and \textit{karma} is generated because of defilements: defilement \rightarrow \textit{karma} \rightarrow \textit{duḥkha}. All \textit{duḥkha} ceases when \textit{karma} is transcended.

Defilements are not only the generating cause of \textit{karma}. It is by virtue of defilements that \textit{karma}-s accumulate (upacayām gacchanti — see below), i.e., become necessarily productive of a retribution.\textsuperscript{19} Without them, \textit{karma}-s are incapable of effecting a new existence.\textsuperscript{20} In fact, “It is not the case that an \textit{arhat} does not have the indeterminate \textit{karma}-s conducive to a rebirth. But on the account of the absence of the defilements, they become incapable of producing a rebirth.”\textsuperscript{21} That is, while \textit{karma} is the direct cause for a retribution, it requires the defilements as the necessary supportive conditions for the process.

\textbf{13.2. Classification of \textit{karma}}

Various classifications of \textit{karma} are given in the Sarvāstivāda texts, among which the following are the main ones:

\begin{enumerate}
\item volitional \textit{karma} (\textit{cetanā}) and \textit{karma} subsequent to willing (\textit{cetayitvā});
\item bodily, vocal and mental \textit{karma}-s;
\item informative (\textit{vijñapti}) and non-informative (\textit{avijñapti}) \textit{karma}-s;
\item skillful (\textit{kuśala}), unskillful (\textit{akuśala}) and morally neutral (\textit{avyākṛta}) \textit{karma}-s;
\end{enumerate}
karma-s which are with-outflow (sāsrava) and outflow-free (anāsrava) karma-s;

(i) meritorious (puṇya) karma — skillful actions pertaining to the sphere of sensuality, (ii) non-meritorious (apuṇya) karma — unskillful actions pertaining to the sphere of sensuality, and (iii) immovable (āneñjya) karma — skillful actions pertaining to the upper spheres;

(i) black (kṛṣṇa) karma yielding black retribution — impure (aśubha) action generating disagreeable (amanojña) retribution; (ii) white (śukla) karma yielding white retribution — action of rūpa-dhātu which is always pure (śubham ekāntena) generating agreeable (manojña) retribution; (iii) black-white karma yielding black-white retribution — pure action of kāmadhātu, being mixed with the impure, generating a mixed retribution; (iv) neither-black-nor-white karma yielding no retribution — outflow-free action which destroys the other three types of action;

karma-s conducive to pleasant experience (sukha-vedanīya), to unpleasant experience (duḥkha-vedanīya), to neither pleasant nor unpleasant (aduḥkhāsukha-vedanīya) experience;

karma-s experiencible in this life (drṣṭa-dharma-vedanīya), karma-s experiencible in the next life (upapadya-vedanīya) and karma-s experiencible in a future life subsequent to the next (apara-paryāya-vedanīya);

determinate (niyata) and indeterminate (aniyata) karma — e.g., a karma conducive to desirable (or to undesirable or neutral) experience is not necessarily retributed; but when it is actually retributed, it is necessarily experienced as a desirable retribution;

a karma that is done (kṛta) and one that is accumulated (upacita);

projecting (ākṣepaka) and completing (paripūraka) karma-s.

13.3. Informative (vijñapti) and non-informative (avijñapti) karma

When one performs an action through body or speech, this action informs others of the corresponding mental state within. Accordingly, it
is called an ‘informative or information action’. Mental \textit{karma} cannot by itself provide any information outside the mind. Thus, it does not have informative, and hence, non-informative \textit{karma}. The following chart shows the correlation among the first three classifications given in § 13.2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>two-fold</th>
<th>three-fold</th>
<th>vijñāpti/avijñāpti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cetanā-karma</td>
<td>mental karma</td>
<td>no vijñāpti or avijñāpti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cetayitvā-karma</td>
<td>bodily karma</td>
<td>bodily vijñāpti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bodily avijñāpti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vocal karma</td>
<td>vocal vijñāpti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vocal avijñāpti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A bodily or vocal informative action may be preceded by a preparatory stage (\textit{prayoga}) and followed by subsequent actions (\textit{prśham}) — actions consequential to the principal action. Thus, for the action of killing, it may be preceded by a series of preparatory actions — such as the volition to kill, followed by the detailed planning, buying a knife, sharpening it, etc., and finally stabbing the victim several times until he dies. At the very moment — at the very stroke — when the victim is actually killed, the doer has committed the transgression of killing. This action lasts only one moment. But simultaneous with the accomplishment of this principal action, an invisible karmic force is projected within the doer's body which continues to renew itself in a series. As this force is non-informing of the doer’s mental state, it is called non-informative \textit{karma} or non-information action. In terms of what is called a ‘path of \textit{karma}’ (infra, § 13.6), the informative \textit{karma} as well as the simultaneously arisen non-informative \textit{karma} at the moment when the victim actually dies, constitute the ‘principal (maula) path of \textit{karma}’. From this point onward, all unskillful informative \textit{karma-s} — such as skinning, cutting and eating the victim, etc. — and non-informative \textit{karma-s} generated therefrom are called the subsequent actions.\textsuperscript{24}

Each momentary member of the non-information-series is connected with the killer by the corresponding momentary member of the series of acquisition which is also simultaneously induced. In this way, by virtue of the acquisition-series, the killer continues to possess the non-informative \textit{karma} — likewise, the volitional and informative
The Doctrine of Karma

13.4. Definition and intrinsic nature of informative and non-informative karmas

13.4.1. Definition and nature of informative karma

There is a controversy as to what constitutes the intrinsic or essential nature of an informative karma.

The Sāṃmitīya asserts that it is movement (gati). For them, bodily movement can be real because, unlike the mental dharma-s, material things are not momentary.

The ancient Dārṣṭāntika as well as the Sautrāntika deny the ontological status of both the informative and non-informative karma-s. All karma-s are none other than volition: The sūtra reference to cetanā and cetayitvā karma-s corresponds to two types of volition. First, at the preparatory stage, the volition of intention (saṃkalpa-cetanā) arises. Next, a volition of action (kriyā-cetanā) arises, moving the body or emitting a speech — bodily or vocal action.

For the Vaibhāṣika, cetanā karma is mental karma and cetayitvā karma comprises both informative and non-informative karma-s, all of which are real entities. Informative karma is of the nature of resistant (sapratigha) derived matter:

(i) A bodily informative karma is the specific bodily shape (samsthaṇa-viśeṣa) at the time of the accomplishment of the action. More precisely, it is the total number of shape-atoms (samsthaṇa-paramāṇu) of matter constituting the part of the body forming the basis of the action. This number varies as some actions are based on just a certain part of the body — as in the case of the snapping of the fingers, etc.; others are based on the whole body — such as worshipping the Buddha.

(ii) A vocal informative karma is speech which again is matter, being articulated sound (śabda).

Samghabhadra argues that, if all karma-s are mere volition, then as soon as one produces a volition for patricide, one immediately has committed the mortal transgression. Should it be argued that this fallacy does not result, since one has not yet moved the body, it is then ipso facto
established that bodily action exists apart from the volition. That is, it is only when the body moves that there is the bodily karma accomplishing the transgression of killing, etc. This is a bodily transgression, even though it is necessarily generated by an evil volition.\(^{29}\) Samghabhadra, distinguishing the Vaibhāṣika from both the Sāmmīṭṭiya as well as the Sautrāntika who asserts that the shape-atoms are merely specific arrangements of color atoms which alone are real, explains as follows:

Within the body [of the doer], there exists a fruit of the four Great Elements arisen by a thought (citta) which is a specific shape capable of informing [others] of the thought. This is called bodily informative [matter].\(^{30}\) That is, it is a fruit of the transient Great Elements of emanation (anavasthāyi-naisyandika-mahābhūta) born of a thought of preparation. It is the samsthāna-rūpa — a category of rūpa distinct from the varṇa rūpa-s — which serves as the cause for visual cognition and which eclipses the samsthāna-rūpa-s that are born of retribution (vipākaja) and that are of the nature of growth (aupacayika) [— the existing samsthāna-rūpa-s of the doer’s body]. Such samsthāna-rūpa-s are called bodily informative [matter]. It is not the case that, as a result of such [samsthāna-rūpa-s] which are of the nature of being skillful, etc., those which are born of retribution and which are of the nature of growth come to be annihilated. This is like the case that, when the divine eye (divya-cakṣus) arises, the other faculties of vision and audition continue uninterrupted.\(^{31}\)

The word ‘transient’ in the above definition is pointed at the Sāṃmitīya who holds that matter is not momentary; and the phrase ‘a distinct category independent of other varṇa-rūpa-s’ is intended to counteract the Sautrāntika view. We may note from the above explanation that (i) the samsthāna-rūpa-s constituting the bodily information matter are morally definable as skillful or unskillful; and that (ii) they are arisen by thought, or more correctly, a thought in conjunction with a specific volition (cetanā-viśeṣa). Herein we see the necessary relation of bodily and vocal karma-s with mental karma. It is for this reason that even the Vaibhāṣikas accept that if karma-s are to be classified from the view-point of their origination (samutthāna), it should be said that there is only one type of karma — since all karma-s are originated from volition.\(^{32}\)

But although a mental karma — volition — is generally expressed through the agencies of the bodily and vocal karma, it does not mean that mental karma by itself cannot be retributive. The very fact that the retributive cause (vipāka-hetu) comprises dharma-s of all the five skandha-s — including thought and thought-concomitants — means
that mental *karma* too conduces to karmic retribution. MVŚ discusses the various cases of the “desired and undesired fruits effected by the three types of *karma*-s” — bodily, vocal and mental. Thus, there exists a situation where, “the vocal and mental *karma* do not effect their fruits of retribution in the manner a bodily *karma* does”: This is the case “when there is restraint of the body, not speech, and at that moment one has a skillful or neutral thought; that is, the non-informative *karma* (*avijñāpti, avijñāpti-karma*) projected by an unskillful bodily informative *karma* generated at the present moment co-arises (*anuvṛt* [with thought], and the non-informative *karma* projected by a skillful vocal informative *karma* generated at the present or a previous moment co-arises [with thought]. At that very moment, a skillful or neutral thought arises — in this situation, the bodily *karma* effects an undesired retribution; the vocal *karma* effects a desired retribution. As for the mental *karma*, if it is generated by a skillful thought, it effects a desired retribution; if it is generated by a neutral thought, it effects neither a desired nor an undesired retribution.”

There are also cases wherein, even without any bodily and vocal expression, bodily and vocal transgressions are incurred by virtue of the mental volition, e.g., the mental hatred (*manaḥ-pradoṣa*) of a ṛṣi, which can be fatal, and the silence, at the time of *poṣadha*, indicating acceptance.

**13.4.2. Definition and nature of non-informative *karma***

Vasubandhu defines non-informative matter in AKB as follows:

That serial succession (*anubandha*) — pure or impure — which exists even in one whose thought is distracted (*vikṣipta*) or who is without thought (*acittaka*), and which is dependent on the Great Elements, is called the non-informative [matter].

In Ny, Samghabhadra objects to this definition:

The Kośakāra is unable to describe the nature of the non-informative [matter] completely by this verse, for he says that the non-informative [matter] is a serial succession. His own commentary says: By serial succession is meant a serial flow (*pravāha*). Now, [the *avijñāpti* of] the first moment cannot be described as a series lest there be the fallacy of over-generalization (*atiprasaṅga*). Thus, his definition definitely excluded the non-informative [matter] of the first moment. Moreover, a series is unreal, and [to describe] the non-informative [matter] as unreal is contrary to the *abhidharma* tenets. Moreover, that which is projected by concentration (*samādhi*) does not continue as a series in the distracted and non-conscious states — it would then not be non-informative [matter]...
He then gives the following verse definition which he claims to be free from such faults:

That [morally] defined, non-resistant matter, which exists in the thought at the time of the action as well [as subsequently], which is of a dissimilar as well [as similar moral] species, and also in the thoughtless state — this is conceded as the non-informative [matter]. \((kṛt'ēpi \text{ visabhāge'pi } \text{ citte cittāyaye } ca yat \mid \text{ vyākṛtāpratighaṃ rūpaṃ } \text{sā hy avijñaptir iṣyate } \|)\)\(^{38}\)

In SPrŚ\(^{39}\) he replaces Vasubandhu’s verse above with this, and explains each term in the prose commentary. With regard to \(kṛt'ēpi\), he says:

“\(kṛt'ēpi\) refers [by the word \(\text{api}\)] to those [\(\text{avijñapti}-s\) which are] apart from the action. Generally speaking, there are two kinds of derived matter which are non-resistant: the first kind arises in dependence on the informative; the second on thought. Those which arise in dependence on the informative are further divisible into two kinds: those which co-exist with the action (i.e., the informative) and those which exist after the action has ceased. The words \(kṛt'ēpi\) are given in order to include exhaustively these different kinds of non-informative [matter] with their distinctive nature … It is “non-resistant” because of not being atom \((\text{paramāṇu})\) … \(^{40}\)

Yaśomitra\(^{41}\) quotes the above objection of Saṃghabhadra and refutes it: If what is called a series (\(\text{pravāha}\)) refers to many moments, then the first moment too amounts to a series, the word ‘series’ referring to the many moments beginning with the first moment. Moreover, if by ‘a serial continuity’ is meant ‘that which continues’ (\(\text{anubadhna} \text{tīty } \text{anubandhaḥ}\)), then grammatically — with the word having a final \(a\) suffix — a real entity is indicated. Accordingly, there is neither incompleteness in the definition nor any contradiction with the \(\text{abhidharma}\) treatises. On the other hand, even if by ‘serial continuity’ is meant ‘[the state of] serially continuing’, expressing a flow (\(\text{anubandhanam } \text{anubandha } \text{iti } \text{sroto } \text{bhidhīyate}\)), there is still no fault since its reference is to matter.

In Ny, Saṃghabhadra summarizes:

In brief, the non-informative [matter] is that non-resistant skillful or unskillful matter which arises in dependence on a specific corporeal or vocal informative \(\text{karma}\), and on a specific skillful or unskillful thought, etc.\(^{42}\)

This definition may be compared with that given in the \(\text{Avatāra}:\)

From a specific \(\text{vijñapti}, \text{citta}\) and [tetrad of] \(\text{mahābhūta}-s\), there arises [in the actor] a succession of skillful or unskillful

\(^{38}\) SPrŚ 38

\(^{39}\) SPrŚ 39

\(^{40}\) SPrŚ 40

\(^{41}\) SPrŚ 41

\(^{42}\) SPrŚ 42
matter which is non-cumulative and which persists in the states of sleep, wakefulness, distracted (vikṣipta) or non-distracted (avikṣipta) thought, or non-consciousness (acittaka). This is the characteristic of the non-informative [matter].

13.4.2.1. Non-informative karma as matter

Although the non-information is invisible, non-resistant and non-spatialized, it nevertheless is said to be of the nature of matter since its supporting basis (āśraya) — the four Great Elements — are resistant matter. This is comparable to the movement of a tree’s shadow which follows that of the tree. Vasubandhu likens this analogy to another supposedly Sarvāstivādin explanation that the non-informative karma is said to be rūpa because the informative karma from which it issues is rūpa in nature, and he objects to it.

Samghabhadra argues that it is, in fact, to be linked with the first interpretation: all non-informative karma-s, whether those in the kāma-dhātu which do not co-exist with thought or those which do (the dhyāna-samvara and anāsrava-samvara), are necessarily dependent on the Great Elements. In the case of restraint (samvara), MVŚ gives another reason: it is a rūpa “because it obstructs the arising of evil matter”; i.e., evil bodily and vocal actions which are matter in nature, for “it is universally acknowledged in the world that the guarding of bodily and vocal actions are said to be śīla” — another explanation that can cover all categories of restraints.

Non-information is, however, subsumed as a special case under dharmāyatana, rather than rūpāyatana. This subsumption is justified with the reference by the Elephant-simile sūtra to matter subsumed in the dharmāyatana. From this subsumption, one can also see that while the orthodox Sarvāstivādins insist that the non-informative matter is a subtle kind of matter for it to be capable of continuous interaction with the mind — as we shall see below that it is so meant to be — it is in this sense considered more akin to the thought concomitants. The non-informative matter is also a special type of matter in that it is not atomic in nature. In the discussion on the doctrinal perspective of the accumulative (accumulated; samcita) and the non-accumulative, AKB states that among the 18 elements (dhātu) only the five sensory faculties and their objects are accumulative “because of their being agglomeration of atoms (paramāṇusamghātatvāt)”, all the rest are non-accumulative. Samghabhadra repeats this in his Ny, adding that the rest are not atoms in their nature (體非極微). Moreover, as we have seen above (§ 13.4.2),
in his own definition, he explicitly speaks of the non-informative matter as being not atom.

In a way, there is a doctrinal advantage regarding the non-informative karma as material rather than mental: if it is a mental dharma conjoined with thought, there would be the philosophical problem of its continuous co-existence with the thought series which is, at various stages, of various moral nature — skillful, unskillful, neutral. On the other hand, by postulating it as a material reality, the Sarvāstivādins fell into serious difficulties: it has to be considered so much of a special type of matter that it might as well — at least from the viewpoint of the critics — be treated as non-material. Besides, as the Sautrāntika argues, how can a material force be conceived of as being ‘intelligent’ — as a creative karmic force should be?253 It is probably out of such consideration that Harivarman, a dissident Sautrāntika master — pointing out various faults in subsuming avijñapti as a rūpa — proposes in his SatŚ that it is a dharma disjoined from thought (citta-viprayukta).54

Orthodox Sarvāstivādins apart, some dissident masters within the fold of Sarvāstivāda itself — such as the early Dārṣṭāntika masters — also denied the reality of the non-informative matter.55 Bhadanta Dharmatratā denied the reality of the so-called dharmāyatana-saṃgrhīta-rūpa,56 while Buddhadeva, that of the derived matter.57 This Dārṣṭāntika denial was inherited by the Sautrāntika.58 It is also noteworthy that the DSŚ, one of the earliest Sarvāstivāda canonical abhidharma texts, also makes no mention of the avijñapti in all its discussion on matter. (See supra, § 4.1.1.1 g).

13.4.3. The moral nature of informative and non-informative karma-s

Informative and non-informative matter — being karmic forces — must necessarily be either skillful or unskillful. A neutral informative action — being weak in nature — cannot generate a karmic force (i.e., non-informative karma). In this case, the moral nature of the informative and non-informative karma-s is endowed by that of the volition and the thought conjoined with the volition. The latter becomes skillful or unskillful by virtue of their conjunction (samprayoga) with a thought-concomitant of either nature — e.g., greed or moral shame (hrī). The informative karma, on the other hand, although being matter in nature, becomes morally defined by virtue of the morally defined volition that serves as the originating cause (samutthāna) for the informative karma which in turn defines the moral nature of the non-informative karma which it generates. (For samutthānataḥ kuśala/akuśala, see supra, § 2.4.3.2).
For the generation of a bodily or vocal action, two kinds of origination are spoken of:

(i) origination \textit{qua cause} (\textit{hetu-samutthāna}), i.e., the thought — more precisely the volition — which gives rise to the action; and

(ii) simultaneous origination \textit{(tatkṣana-samutthāna)}, i.e., the thought that is simultaneous with the action and serving as its sustaining basis.\textsuperscript{59}

Although the volition sets an action into motion, the action cannot actually take place without the latter. This is compared to an action projected by the volition “I shall go to that village”. The actual action of going to that village cannot take place if the person dies immediately after the projection.\textsuperscript{60}

As to whether the first five consciousnesses can also serve as these two types of origination, MVŚ records diverse views. Some masters hold that mental consciousness alone can do so. Others assert that the first five consciousnesses also can generate bodily and vocal \textit{karma}-s; however, they can only serve to sustaining the operation, whereas mental consciousness can be both the projecting cause \textit{(pravṛtti-kāraṇa)} and the cause that sustains the operation \textit{(anuvṛtti-kāraṇa)}. Saṃghavasu maintains that the first consciousnesses can serve as both types of causes. The MVŚ compilers endorse the second opinion.\textsuperscript{61} AKB compares the first originating cause to the hand that propels a wheel to roll on the floor; on the other hand, it is only because of the floor — comparable to the ‘simultaneous origination’ — that serves to sustain the wheel at each moment that the actual rolling becomes possible.\textsuperscript{62}

With regard to the Great Elements on which both the informative and non-informative \textit{karma}-s depend \textit{(upādāya)}, it is explained that the non-informative \textit{karma} is not derived from the same Great Elements forming the derivative basis for the informative \textit{karma}. For, it is argued that the derived matter constituting the non-informative \textit{karma} and that constituting the informative \textit{karma} are different in nature — one is subtle, the other, gross. Accordingly, they must have different causes.\textsuperscript{63} The informative \textit{karma} is simultaneous with the Great Elements from which it is derived. As for the non-informative \textit{karma} of the sphere of sensuality, in the first moment, it arises being derived from the simultaneous Great Elements. Subsequently, although having become past, the same Great Elements of the first moment continue to serve as the base of operation (\textit{āśraya}) for the arising of the subsequent
moments of the non-informative *karma* — they are the projecting cause. The Great Elements arising simultaneously with the non-informative *karma* in each subsequent moment in the doer’s body serve as the support (*samanishraya*) of the non-informative *karma* — they are the sustaining cause of continuous operation. In other words, the Great Elements of the first moment are the origination *qua* cause, the simultaneously arising ones are the simultaneous origination. (See above).

**13.5. The non-informative matter as restraint, non-restraint and neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint**

The non-informative matter comprises the following three categories:

(i) restraint (*sāṃvara*): divisible into (a) *prātimokṣa* restraint, i.e., restraint in respect of the Buddhist disciplinary codes, (b) meditation (*dhyāna*) restraint and (c) outflow-free (*anāsrava*) restraint,

(ii) non-restraint (*asaṃvara*),

(iii) neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint (*naivasaṃvara-nāsaṃvara*).

This third category does not refer to actions derived from a neutral mind, for all non-informative *karma*-s necessarily issue from a sufficiently strong intention, skillful or unskillful. Rather it refers to those karmic actions — comprising the majority of moral and immoral actions — that fall outside the first two categories. Thus, murder not for the sake of livelihood or not committed out of a vow-conditioned mentality, is an instance of this category.

(i) (a) The *prātimokṣa* restraint is further divided into eight: *bhikṣu* restraint, *bhikṣuṇī* restraint, *śikṣamāna* restraint, *śrāmaṇera* restraint, *śrāmaṇerī* restraint, *upāsaka* restraint, *upāsikā* restraint and *upavāsa* (*upavāsastha*) restraint. These eight kinds of restraint belong (*pratisamyukta*) to the sphere of sensuality alone. The moral observances of the heretics (*bāhyaka*) do not constitute *prātimokṣa-sāṃvara*. This is because they are undertaken with a view of some form of existence or another, conceived as real liberation (*vimokṣa*); such an undertaking does not lead to the absolute rejection of or release from evil. The various disciplinary precepts may be differentiated as those pertaining to morality proper (*śīlāṅga*), being restraint from actions which are transgression in their intrinsic nature (*prakṛti-sāvadya*), and those which are precepts by way of prohibition (*pratikṣepaṇa-sāvadya*) or convention (*prajñapti*). Thus, in the case of the eight precepts observed by a lay Buddhist fortnightly, the first four — abstention from killing, stealing, unchastity,
false speech — belong to the former category. The others belong to the latter category. Of the latter, abstention from intoxicants pertains to vigilance (apramādāṅga); the last three abstentions — from unseemly shows, etc., from wearing ornaments, from the use of high beds and seats — pertain to abstention (viratyaṅga) or observance of vows (vratāṅga). When properly acquired, the prātimokṣa-saṃvara can act as a restraining force, helping the undertaker to avoid transgressing the precepts in the presence of conditions favorable for such transgression. (See also § 13.5.1). MVŚ explains that a skillful precept (= saṃvara) can counteract immorality (dausīlya) by virtue of its being accompanied by an undertaking (abhy-upagama).

(b) The meditation restraint is the non-informative matter co-existent (anuvartaka) with the concentrations (samādhi) of the fine-material sphere (rūpa-dhātu).

c) The outflow-free restraint is the non-informative matter co-existent with the outflow-free concentrations (anāsrava-samādhi), not belonging to any of the three spheres.

(ii) Non-restraint is a serial continuity of unskillful non-informative matter arising in the following persons: butchers, hunters, robbers, prison-wardens, executioners (vadhya-ghātaka), etc.

(iii) The serial continuity of various skillful or unskillful non-informative matter generated by acts such as the following is of the category of “neither restraint nor non-restraint”: the building of a vihāra, stūpa and saṅghārāma, etc., offering food and medicine, etc., to the Saṅgha, worshipping a caitya, singing religious hymns of praise; as well as striking (tāḍana), etc.

13.5.1. Acquisition and relinquishment of the non-informative matter

(i) (a) The prātimokṣa restraints are acquired by making vows to undertake them. The first seven kinds last until the end of one’s life; the eighth, for one day and one night.

It is an emphatic Sarvāstivāda doctrine that prātimokṣa-saṃvara is not the mere abstention from a wrong doing — as maintained by the Sautrāntika. Nor can it be acquired by a mere vowing. It is a distinct dharma (dharmāntara) with a distinctive nature (殊勝法性; *viśiṣṭo dharmaṭva) whose acquisition requires very specific conditions and ecclesiastical procedure. To begin with, the vows must be taken in front of a teacher whose utterances representing the vows are to be repeated word
by word by the undertaker. This is called paravijñāpana — informing to and from another (para). However, the Vinaya hermeneutists (vinaya-vaibhāṣika) concede ten ways of acquiring full ordination, some of which — e.g., the self-ordination (svayambhūtvena) by the Buddha and the pratyekabuddha-s — do not require a viñapti. In brief, it can be acquired only on account of either the force of an original resolution (pranidhāna), or the complete perfection of intention (āśaya), or through the power of the Buddha. It is asserted that the principles involved in these various divergent cases of acquisition can only be properly understood by the Omniscient One.

In the case of the upavāsa restraint undertaken, the candidate who repeats after the preceptor must be very humble, wearing no ornaments, and undertakes the complete set of eight precepts for one full day and night. It is only when all the requisite conditions are fulfilled that there arises the restraint as a distinct force endowed with the ‘nature of restraint’ (律儀性; *saṃvaratva). Because it is undertaken in this manner in front of a teacher, the undertaker can, through the force of moral shame (apatrāpya) — the ‘dominant influence of the world’ (here, the teacher in front of whom he has made the commitment) — avoid transgression even in situations where his own moral modesty (hrī) is not operative. On the other hand, when undertaken without fulfilling all the requirements, there can be “only the arising of good conduct (sucarita), not the acquisition of restraint. Nevertheless, in order that [one’s actions] will lead to desirable results, even such an undertaking should be done.”

The first seven prātimokṣa restraints are terminated by any of the following four conditions: (1) the willful giving up of the training that one has undertaken (śikṣāpratyākhyāna), (2) death (mṛtyu), (3) the cutting off of the three roots of skillfulness (kuśalamūla-samuccheda), and (4) the simultaneous arising of both the male and female sex organs (ubhayavyañjanotpatti, dvivyañanañodaya). MVŚ tells us that, according to the Vinayadhara: “The time of the disappearance of the Dharma constitutes the fifth condition: at the time of the disappearance of the Dharma, all the śikṣā, pravrajyā, upasampad, sīmābandha, and karma-vācanā completely cease. Therefore the saṃvara are also relinquished at that moment.” The MVŚ compilers, while not rejecting this last condition straight-forwardly, offer their own interpretation. According to Pu Guang, this condition is held by the Dharmagupta. It is to be noted that this same condition is also enumerated as the fifth in the *Abhidharmahṛdaya: 1. giving up of the training, 2. transgression of śīla, 3. death, 4. when false views predominate, 5. when the Dharma vanishes. We may assume that this fifth condition is one well recognized by the Gandhārian/Foreign (bahirdeśaka) Sarvāstivāda
masters. The eighth restraint is terminated by any of the aforesaid four conditions, or by the end of the night.

(b–c) The meditation restraint is acquired when the skillful thought is acquired upon entering into a meditation, and is terminated when it is relinquished upon one’s exit from meditation. Likewise for the acquisition and termination of the outflow-free restraint which follows those of the outflow-free thought. These conditions are on account of the fact that these two categories of restraint are thought-accompaniments (*cittaparivartin/cittānuvartin/cittānuparivartin*).

(ii) The non-restraint is acquired by both doing (*kriyayā*) and willfully undertaking to do (*abhyyapagamena*) an unskillful act. It is terminated by any of the following four conditions: (1) the undertaking of restraint, (2) death, (3) the simultaneous arising of both sex-organs, and (4) when the skillful thought of the fine-material sphere is acquired spontaneously (*dharma-tā-prātilambhika*) when the world system is about to be destroyed, as under this situation, the skillful dharma-s are all intensified spontaneously.\(^{81}\)

(iii) The category of neither restraint nor non-restraint is acquired by one of three ways: (1) by doing an action; as, for instance, with a pure and ardent thought one worships a *stūpa* with hymns; or, out of intense defilement, one strikes at other persons or things; (2) by a willful undertaking, as for instance when one vows thus: “I shall never eat before worshipping the Buddha”; (3) by an act of giving, as, for instance, building monasteries, making beds and seats (*śayanāsana*), putting up parks and making offerings to the *bhikṣu*-s, etc.; this non-informative matter is terminated when the originating thought (*samutthāna-citta*) and the material basis (*upadhī*) — the things offered — are completely destroyed.

What happens when one has acquired the non-information of restraint and then transgresses? According to the Sarvāstivāda masters outside Kāśmīra, when a person abiding in the *prātimokṣa*-restraint transgresses against the restraint, he relinquishes the restraint and acquires the neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint — another karmically retributive force but having nothing to do with making a vow. If he, however, sincerely and properly repents, he then relinquishes the neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint and again re-acquires the restraint. According to the Kāśmīra masters: when the person transgresses against the restraint, he does not relinquish it, but acquires additionally the neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint. He is at that time said to be abiding in both the neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint as well as in restraint. If he sincerely
and properly repents, he then relinquishes the neither-restraint-nor-
non-restraint and is only said to be an abider in restraint (saṃvarastha).
Both opinions are acceptable to the MVŚ compilers.\textsuperscript{82}

13.6. Paths of karma (karma-patha)

The teaching of the ten paths of skillful and unskillful karma (karma-patha) have formed a major ethical guidance among the Buddhists from the Buddha's time. The Sarvāstivādins explain that these ten paths of karma are intended by the Buddha to include the most important skillful practices and the gravest unskillful practices.\textsuperscript{83}

The ten unskillful paths of karma are:

1. taking life (prāṇātipāta),
2. taking what is not given (adattādāna),
3. sexual misconduct (kāma-mithyācāra),
4. false speech (mrṣā-vāda),
5. malicious speech (paiśunya),
6. harsh speech (pāruṣya),
7. frivolous speech (saṃbhinna-pralāpa),
8. covetousness (abhidhyā),
9. malice (vyāpāda),
10. false view (mithyā-dṛṣṭi).\textsuperscript{84}

The ten skillful ones are the opposites of these, i.e., abstention from killing, etc. These are skillful actions which are with-outflow, i.e., still conducive to rebirths in saṃsāra. The first three are bodily actions; the next four, vocal; and the last three, mental. The root-causes of the ten unskillful paths of karma are the roots of unskillfulness — greed (lobha), hatred (dveṣa) and delusion (moha): 1, 6 and 9 are achieved through hatred; 2, 3 and 8 through greed; 10 through delusion; 4, 5 and 7 through any one of the three roots.\textsuperscript{85} Likewise, correspondingly, the ten skillful paths of karma are achieved through the three roots of skillfulness.\textsuperscript{86}

It is emphasized that a mere conventional moral observation, without a dominant mental determination, is not a path of karma.\textsuperscript{87} Conversely, if one harbors an evil intention of, say, disrupting the unity of a harmonious community — whether one succeeds or not, one commits the path of karma of malicious speech.\textsuperscript{88} Each path of karma is divisible into nine grades — weak-weak (i.e., the lowest of nine grades), and so on, up to strong-strong (i.e., the highest of nine grades). (See supra, § 12). Thus,
although murder leads to an undesirable rebirth, the particular plane of existence into which the murderer is going to be reborn will depend on the grade of gravity of the action.\textsuperscript{89} The same applies to the other paths of \textit{karma}. Among the ten unskillful ones, it is false view — which denies cause and effect — that cuts off the roots of skillfulness: The strong-strong root of skillfulness is cut off by the weak-weak false view — up to, the weak-weak root of skillfulness by the strong-strong false view.\textsuperscript{90}

The paths of \textit{karma} are called thus because they are the paths based on which the volition — \textit{karma} — that originates them has its operation: “Because it operates as they operate; it moves as they move — it creates karmically (\textit{samskaroti}) in conformity with their force… They are paths of \textit{karma} because they are traversed by the volition: because the volition that originates the bodily and vocal \textit{karma} operates through the latter as the object.” They constitute the paths “through which the volition has its movement and operates to its accomplishment”.\textsuperscript{91} Thus, volition is not called a path of \textit{karma}. “Just as the road traversed by the king is called the road of the king, and it is not the king; likewise it is called the path of \textit{karma} because it is traversed by volition, and it is not volition.”\textsuperscript{92}

Accordingly, among the ten paths of \textit{karma}, the first seven are both \textit{karma} — being bodily and vocal \textit{karma} in nature, as well as paths of \textit{karma} — being the paths for their originating volition. The last three mental ones are only paths of \textit{karma} inasmuch as they serve as the paths for their conascent volition, but not \textit{karma}.\textsuperscript{93}

\textbf{13.7. Rationale for the doctrine of non-informative \textit{karma}}

MVŚ quotes the \textit{sūtra} passage in which three types of \textit{rūpa} are mentioned by the Buddha — visible and resistant (\textit{sanidarśana-sapratigha}), invisible and resistant (\textit{anidarśana-sapratigha}), invisible and non-resistant (\textit{anidarśana-apratigha}).\textsuperscript{94} The last is said to be alluding to the Sarvāstivāda category of non-information. Three logical arguments are also given:

(i) At the time when Ajātaśatru gave rise to the informative \textit{karma} (\textit{vijñapti-karma}) to kill his father, the latter had not died. When the latter actually died, the informative \textit{karma} had already become past. It is only on account of the subsequent non-information acquired through the force of the preceding informative action that he came to be ‘touched’ by the mortal transgression.
(ii) Likewise for the case of the heretical ascetic who killed Maudgalyāyana: when the latter attained parinirvāṇa, the previous informative karma of the killer had also faded into the past.95

(iii) If non-information were unreal, then there would be no legitimate establishment of the differences among those abiding in saṃvara, asaṃvara, and neither-saṃvara-nor-asaṃvara.96

Elsewhere, MVŚ also mentions (more briefly than AKB and Ny) the case of an action — say, murder — done through an emissary: at the time when the victim is actually killed by the emissary, the informative karma of the instigator is no more. Besides, this informative karma — vocal in nature — cannot be one that constitutes the principal act of killing. It is in fact only part of the preparation for the killing. There arises in him at this time, however, a non-informative karma of killing. It is this invisible karmic force at this present moment that causally effects the transgression of a murderer.97

In AKB, eight reasons for the real existence of non-informative karma are offered:

(i) The sūtra speaks of three types of rūpa-s (= first reason in MVŚ).

(ii) The Buddha speaks of outflow-free rūpa98 — apart from the non-informative matter, there cannot be any rūpa which is invisible, non-resistant and outflow-free (in the case of the anāsrava-saṃvara).

(iii) The sūtra speaks of the incessant increase of merit in one who has performed a material meritorious action (aupadhika-puṇya-kriyā) — only by virtue of the non-informative karmic force could merit increase even when subsequently the donor’s thought is unskillful or when he is in a thoughtless state.99

(iv) One who has an action done through an emissary would not be endowed with a karma-patha unless there exists the non-informative karma which constitutes the karma-patha itself. (See explanation below, § 13.8.2).

(v) The Buddha speaks of invisible and non-resistant matter which are subsumed in the dharmāyatana (see supra, § 13.4.2.1). He can only be alluding here to the non-informative matter.
(vi) One in meditation can only be endowed with these three — samyag-vāc, samyak-karmānta and samyag-ājīva — in the form of non-informative *karma*, for these three are incompatible with the state of concentration. Otherwise, there would not be the path comprising eight parts.

(vii) The non-informative matter must exist as the *prātimokṣa-samvara*; otherwise, there would not be anything on account of which the ordainee can still be called a *bhiṣu* or *bhiṣumnī* when he or she later has a mental state different — unskillful or neutral — from that (a skillful one) in which the ordination vows were received (= (iii) in MVŚ).

(viii) The *sūtra* speaks of the abstention (*virati*) from evil as a dike (*setu*) on account of its obstruction to the transgression of the precepts (*dauṣṭiya-vibandhatvāt*). Accordingly, this abstention — which is the non-informative matter — must be a real entity, or it would not have this obstructive efficacy.

This Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the non-informative *karma* is highly controversial among the various *abhidharma* schools. In MVŚ, the Dārṣṭāntikas’ standpoint is that “there is no retribution cause apart from volition; no retribution fruit apart from sensation”.¹⁰⁰ They also agree with the Buddha’s own teaching in stating that “the bodily, vocal and mental *karma*-s are all none other than volition”.¹⁰¹ Both these assertions constitute a refutation of the doctrine of the non-informative karma. The Sarvāstivāda includes the non-informative matter under the *dharmāyatana*, and speaks of it as ‘the matter subsumed under the *dharmāyatana*’ (*dharmāyatana-saṃgrhīta-rūpa*). The Dārṣṭāntikas, as well as Dharmatrāta, deny that there is such a thing as ‘matter subsumed under *dharmāyatana*’,¹⁰² which of course amounts to a denial of the non-informative matter. A more direct repudiation is as follows:

According to the Dārṣṭāntikas, the information and non-informative *karma*-s are not existent entities. Why? If the informative *karma* is an existent, then one can, with this as the basis, make the non-information [*karma*] an existent. But if the informative *karma* is non-existent, how can it project the non-information, making it (the non-informative *karma*) an existent?¹⁰³

The Sautrāntikas, too, deny the real existence of the non-information matter. In AKB, they are seen to be engaged in a lengthy debate with the Vaibhāṣika, repudiating all the eight reasons offered by Vaibhāṣika (see above) in detail.¹⁰⁴
13.8. Role of the non-informative in the process of karmic retribution

Some may argue as to whether the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the tri-temporal existence of the dharma-s alone suffices to ensure the continued existence of the efficacy of a karma that has become past. One of their major arguments for sarvāstitva is precisely that karmic retribution would be impossible if a past dharma ceases to be a real entity — possessing causal efficacy. Their doctrine of phala-ākṣepa and phala-dāna too could be seen to render any intermediary agent — such as the non-informative karma — futile for the preservation of karmic efficacy: At the very moment when a retributive cause arises, it determines the causal connection with the fruit-to-be; i.e., ‘it grasps the fruit’. At a subsequent time, when the necessary conditions obtain, it, although past, can causally actualize the fruit by dragging it, as it were, out of the future into the present; i.e., ‘it gives the fruit’. It might then be argued that the category of non-informative matter was not formulated for the karma doctrine, but for restraint. Such a conclusion becomes all the more tempting when one takes into consideration the notion that the non-information ceases at the time of the doer’s death — or, in the case of dhyāna- and anāsrava-samvara, when he emerges from the meditation. What, then, can the karmic role of the non-information be when a fruit of retribution arises after one or more lives?

Moreover, as we have seen, in the causal process leading to retribution, it is the originating volition that is considered by MVŚ to be the karma in the proper sense; the avijñapti (where it exists) constitutes the ‘path of karma’ — path “through which the volition has its movement and operates to its accomplishment”. (Supra, § 13.6). Accordingly, one can speak of volition as karma in the proper or narrower sense; and of the corresponding vijñapti- and avijñapti-karma-s as karmic contributors — and, for that matter, also the associated citta-caitta-s and viprayuktasaṃskāra-s, all functioning as vipāka-hetu-s — as karmic causes only in a general sense.

Samghabhadra, too, consistent with the earlier Sarvāstivādins, emphasizes the primary and continuous karmic role of the originating volition (infra, § 13.8.2), in spite of the Sarvāstivādin insistence that karma comprises two categories, cetanā and the cetayitvā. The volition although past, is still existent and can subsequently give rise to the corresponding retribution fruit.

The Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas, as we have seen, deny the reality of both the informative and non-informative karma-s. They claim that their
13. THE DOCTRINE OF KARMA

Karma doctrine, known as the “seed theory”, is in complete agreement with the causal principle governing the continuous process of growth from a seed into the final fruition: A seed, being momentary, does not directly give rise to the fruit. However, its causal efficacy for the fruition is continuously transmitted in the transformation of the series (santati-parināma) progressively manifesting as seed, stem, branches, leaves, flowers, and finally fruit. Likewise, a karma — the volition — does not directly produce the retribution; but through a similar transformational series, the karmic efficacy is continuously transmitted, until finally — when appropriate conditions obtain — the retribution is produced.105 Such a theory then relies solely on volition as karma, and does away completely with the need of the doctrine of the informative and non-informative karma-s.

Samghabhadra, however, claims that it is the Sarvāstivāda — rather than the Sautrāntika — doctrine of karma that can be said to accord with the causal principle of the sequential growth of a plant from its seed.106 He faults the Sautrāntika theory: Even if one were, for the sake of argument, to grant the possible validity of this theory of a progressive transformational series, it is observed that in the case of the growth from a seed into its fruit, there cannot be any interruption in the process. But in the case of a thought-process that finally gives rise to an effect, there can be interruption — the person can have thoughts of different moral natures subsequent to the originating volition. He may also be in the states of asamjñi-samāpatti or nirodha-samāpatti in which there is the complete interruption of mental activity. Accordingly, the Sautrāntika, acknowledging only volition as karma, cannot account for a karmic series that continues uninterrupted until the final fruition. And since they hold the present-only-exists standpoint, it means that in such a case, the karma becomes extinct before any fruition can possibly take place. For the Ābhidharmikas holding the doctrine of tri-temporal existence, argues Samghabhadra, the causes of retribution can continue to exist in relation to the person until fruition on account of the acquisition-series. That is to say, although the originating volition — and for that matter the informative karma (where there is one), other accompanying thought-concomitants and disjoined dharma-s — has become past, it continues to exist and be karmically related to the personal series through the acquisition-series. When the appropriate conditions obtain, although past, it can still have the efficacy of giving fruit. This accords with the observed fact that a seed, although ceased, can still have its efficacy manifested in the final production of its fruit.107
The above discussion shows clearly that the Sarvāstivādins assign the primary karmic role to volition. What then precisely is the karmic role of the **avijñapti karma** where it exists, projected by the volition and the **vijñapti-karma**?

13.8.1. Clues from MVŚ

To answer this question, we must not rely on the relatively later Sarvāstivāda texts alone, such as AKB, Ny, Avatāra, etc. For these texts represent the later stage of development when the doctrine of non-informative had come to be increasingly focused on the notion of restraint. Thus, in the case of a **bhikṣu** taking precepts from the preceptor, the non-informative is emphasized as a force of restraint (in the case of **prātimokṣa-saṃvara**) that consequently arises in the former which legitimately defines his **bhikṣu**-hood. But this is an understandable development within the Saṅgha members — the Sarvāstivāda theorists — who found the notion of non-informative matter validly and conveniently applicable in this case. The preoccupation with the emphasis on restraint is particularly conspicuous in the post-AKB texts. Thus, the **Avatāra** classifies, as does AKB, the **avijñapti** as **saṃvara**, **asaṃvara**, and **naivasamvaranāsaṃvara**, and gives the only logical argument for its reality that “it is by virtue of this [non-informative matter as **saṃvara**] that the status of a **bhikṣu**, etc., can be established. Were this non-existent, it would not be legitimately established that there exist **bhikṣu**-s, etc.”

Samghabhadra’s explanations, given summarily at the very end of his lengthy refutation of the Sautrāntika’s objections to the eight reasons for the establishment of the **avijñapti**’s reality, could also give the same impression of this preoccupation:

> What does this non-informative [matter] refer to? It refers to abstention (**virati**). ‘Abstention’, ‘non-doing’, ‘non-creating’, ‘non-informing’ (**avijñapti**) — these are synonyms for one and the same entity. … This non-informative matter is also called a **karma**, for it is produced [as a fruit of emanation] with the informative [**karma**] and the volition as its causes [and therefore has similar karmic nature]…

Here, Samghabhadra speaks of the **avijñapti** as abstention (= restraint). But we must remember the context of this explanation: it is given in refutation of the Sautrāntika’s claim that **saṃvara** is not a distinct entity but merely the non-doing of evil actions. In any case, as we shall see, Samghabhadra, like all Sarvāstivādins, does not confine **saṃvara** to the role of being a mere restraining force. To say that **saṃvara** (in the proper sense) is not **karma**, does not entail that it does not contribute at all to
karmic retribution, but to emphasize that it is an emanation-fruit of the projecting volition and *vijñapti-karma*. But being such an emanation, it is necessarily of the nature of *karma* — albeit in the broader sense of the term— of being among the causes which contribute to karmic retribution. (See *infra*, § 13.8.2).

For better clues, we should therefore first turn to MVŚ — compiled more than two centuries earlier than AKB. Judging by the rationales offered therein, we may say that the doctrine of the non-informative matter seems to have been articulated to account for both

1. the preservation of karmic efficacy as well as
2. the ontological status of ordination restraint,

with the former probably as the initial problematization. At any rate, the same two concerns are also unmistakable even among the eight reasons offered in AKB. It can be seen that, of the three logical reasons given in AKB, two, i.e., (iv) and (vi), relate to the non-informative matter as karmic force, and one i.e., (vii) relates to the notion of *samvara* which is not explicitly karmic. The last reason, although in the form of scriptural authority, also interprets the non-informative matter as a restraining force. Moreover, as will be made clear below, although *samvara* is not explicitly mentioned as a karmic force in the context of ordination, it has indeed such a nature inasmuch as it is contributive to karmic retribution.

13.8.1.1. The emphasis of non-informative matter *qua prātimokṣa-samvara*

As for the emphasis of non-informative matter *qua prātimokṣa-samvara*, we may note the reasons given in MVŚ as to why, of the three types of *samvara*, the *prātimokṣa-samvara* alone is used as the basis for differentiating the seven assemblies — bhikṣu, bhikṣunī, etc. The compilers’ own explanation is as follows: The *prātimokṣa-samvara*-s, acquired progressively, establish the sevenfold assemblies progressively: (1) those who abstain from the four transgressions by nature (*prakṛtisāvadya*: from killing to false speech) and one transgression by convention (*prajñapti-sāvadya*, *pratikṣepaṇa-sāvadya*: drinking liquor) are the upāsaka-s; progressively up to: (6-7) those who abstain from all transgressions are the bhikṣu-s and bhikṣunī-ś. This is then followed by an alternative explanation by ‘some’ (*kecit*; 有作是說):

The *prātimokṣa-samvara*, from the first moment of its projection by the informative *karma*, is present at all times [in the ordainee
who] is endowed (\textit{samany\textbar{g}gata}) with it: whether he is asleep, drunk, mentally derailed, fainted; whether he is having a volition or not; whether he is having a defiled or neutral thought, or is thoughtless (\textit{acittaka}) — in all states it is present, existing as an uninterrupted serial continuity. Accordingly, it can form the basis for the distinctive establishment of the seven assemblies.\textsuperscript{110}

This explanation, of course, is essentially the same as the major part of Vasubandhu's definition of the non-informative matter. (See above, § 13.4.2). But what is noteworthy is that it is only one of several explanations — not even the main one — endorsed by the MVŚ compilers whose own explanation does not allude to the ontological status of \textit{samvara} as a form of \textit{avijñ\textbar{ap}ti}. Considering this endorsement as well as the third logical reason given by the compilers for the reality of the non-informative matter (see above, § 13.7), we may presume that such an explanation as offered by "some" must have already been an accepted one among the Sarvāstivādins around the time of the compilation of MVŚ. But from our discussion above, we may also presume that there must subsequently have been a conscious shift of emphasis to the notion of the non-informative matter \textit{qua prātimok\textbar{ṣa}-restraint.}

13.8.1.2. The emphasis of non-informative matter as a karmic force

As for the emphasis on the non-informative matter as a karmic force, we may note, first of all, that MVŚ speaks clearly of restraint-karma (律儀業; \textit{samvara-karma}) as a distinctive karma (勝業; \*\textit{viśi\textbar{ṣ}ta-karma}) that gives rise to a fruit of restraint (律儀果; \textit{samvara-phala}) which is a 'great fruit' (大果; \textit{mahā-phala}).\textsuperscript{111} As we have seen above, when the eight lay precepts are undertaken without fulfilling all the requisite conditions, what the undertaker has is good conduct (§ 13.5.1), and good conduct is certainly karmically retributive.

MVŚ contains a discussion on such good conduct, in which a questioner elaborately cites two stories (\textit{nidāna}) related by Venerable Kātyāyanīputra:

(I) To certain butchers who said that they could not survive without practicing butchery during the day, the Venerable advised them to undertake the eight precepts at night. Doing accordingly, they were reborn as \textit{preta}-s. In the day times they suffered by being repeatedly devoured by black dogs; but at night — because of their having undertaken the precepts — they were able to enjoy with their senses to the fullest, like the \textit{deva}-s.
(II) To certain prostitutes who complained that they could not abruptly forsake their old habit of prostitution at night, the Venerable advised them to undertake the eight precepts during the day. Doing accordingly, they were reborn as preta-s, suffering during the day but enjoying like deva-s at night.

Now, will not these two stories contradict the doctrine that the upavāsa restraint must be undertaken for a full day and night? The answer is that such an undertaking — for less than a full day and night — “comes under ‘good conduct’; they are not saṃvara. What was experienced by them [— the pleasurable part in the stories —] were the fruits of good conduct, not the fruits of saṃvara.”

MVŚ then proceeds to distinguish various types of undertaking of the upavāsa-saṃvara:

(i) wherein the fundamental karma-patha is pure but not the preliminary stages (sāmantaka);

(ii) wherein both are pure but there is the damage done by unskillful thoughts (akuśala-vitarka);

(iii) wherein both are pure and there is no damage done by unskillful thoughts, but there is no proper mindfulness of the Buddha, etc.;

(iv) wherein both are pure, there is no damage done by unskillful thoughts and there is also proper mindfulness, but no dedication (pari-ṇāmana) towards liberation;

(v) wherein it is as (iv), but there is the dedication. With reference to the first four types, the Buddha said that “the saṃvara undertaken by them, although being distinctive/excellent karma, does not yield great fruit”.

It is only in the last case (i.e., (v)) that “the saṃvara undertaken is a distinctive/excellent karma capable of yielding great fruit”.112 (See also above, § 13.5.1).

We are therefore given to understand that an abstention from killing, etc., qua saṃvara is not only a karma — a retributive good action — but has an additional, distinctive quality. The latter, which makes it at once a saṃvara ‘cum’ karma that is capable of yielding an ‘excellent fruit’, is the saṃvaratva (see infra), acquired through a definite ecclesiastical procedure within the context of a consciously committed
monastic training and dedication to the Buddhist goal of liberation. This *ṣaṃvaratva* also operates as a continuously restraining force within the undertaker until it is relinquished.

Next to be noted is that, of the three logical reasons given in MVŚ (*supra*, § 13.7), the first two clearly intend the non-informative as the indispensable karmic agent: In both the examples given, it is at the time of the victim’s death that the mortal transgression is established. There is the repeated emphasis in this context that “at that time the informative [karma] has already faded; it is on account of the subsequent non-informative [karma] acquired through the force of the previous informative [karma] that … [the transgressor] is touched by the mortal karma”¹¹³. Such an emphasis prompts us to understand as follows: it is at this time that there occurs the sufficient causal determination of the fruit-to-be corresponding to the transgression. But at this time, the originating volition and the informative action have long become past. And while past dharma-s can have other causal functions (called vyāpāra, vṛtti, kriyā, sāmarthya, etc. — see *supra*, § 5.3), including that of ‘giving the fruit’, they cannot perform this causal function of helping to ensure the sufficiency of the causal determination. Even at their present moment, the simultaneously generated informative karma-s cannot ‘grasp’ or project the same retribution fruit together with the originating volition — not being mutually co-existent causes (*sahabhū-hetu*). This function therefore has to be done by a karmic force — a real entity — that is present. In this connection, we should note that MVŚ, while stating that the retribution cause comprises all the five skandha-s — the rūpa-skandha-s being informative and non-informative karma-s — also points out that the informative and the simultaneously generated non-informative karma-s have different retribution fruits: Not being mutually co-existent causes, these two cannot share the same fruit.¹¹⁴ This would of course mean that the originating volition too does not have the same fruit as the non-informative karma. Saṃghabhadra’s explanations are much the same. He also specifically rejects the view, held by some masters, that the thought and thought-concomitants and the informative and non-informative karma-s (unless these are *citta-parivartin*, as in the case in the rūpa-dhātu,) that originate in the same moment, collectively effect the same fruit. Saṃghabhadra further elaborates on karmic retribution pertaining to the sphere of sensuality:

Sometimes one *skandha* serves as the retribution cause, collectively effecting a common fruit — namely, the morally defined acquisitions and their arising (*jāti*), etc.
Sometimes two *skandha*-s serve as the retribution causes, collectively effecting a common fruit — namely, skillful and unskillful matter [i.e., the bodily and vocal *karma*-s] and arising, etc.

Sometimes four *skandha*-s serve as the retribution causes, collectively effecting a common fruit — namely, skillful and unskillful thought and thought-concomitants and their arising, etc.\[115\]

It follows from the preceding discussion that, with reference to the two examples cited in MVŚ, the informative *karma* at its present moment cannot function simultaneously together with its originating volition to project the retribution fruit; still less can it perform this function alone, being of the nature of a vocal instruction (see below) only. Neither can we conceive of the process of ‘grasping’ the same fruit as having taken place twice: first, by the originating volition when it arose, secondly by the non-informative *karma* arising at the time of the victim’s death. The illogicality of a fruit being projected part by part is maintained consistently by the Sarvāstivādins.\[116\] This leaves us with only two options:

(i) either the originating volition or the subsequent non-informative *karma* — now endowed with the specific karmic nature by the previous volition — alone projects the retribution fruit;

(ii) first, the volition projects the fruit — a necessary, but not sufficient, first step; next, the non-informative *karma* sufficiently completes the causal determination.

Unfortunately, in both examples the causal role of the originating volition is not explicitly specified.

**13.8.2. Clues from Saṃghabhadra**

We saw above (§ 13.8.1) that Saṃghabhadra, concluding that *avijñapti* is a real entity, refers to it as abstention, etc., clearly equating *avijñapti* with *samvara*. Moreover, elsewhere, articulating on *avijñapti* as a completing *karma*, he likewise refers to it as abstention.\[117\] This seems to suggest that in Saṃghabhadra’s mind, *samvara* represents the most important notion of *avijñapti*. And it is in this sense that one may be justified in speaking of an increasing emphasis on *samvara* in the Sarvāstivāda exposition of *avijñapti*.

However, Saṃghabhadra also definitely discusses the karmic role of the *avijñapti*. It is true that he states explicitly here that *avijñapti* is not
karma, “but because it has karma as its cause, it also receives the name karma.” But this should not at all be understood to mean that avijñapti is not karmically contributive:

It means, first, that it is the emanation fruit of the originating causes, the volition and the vijñapti, which are considered as karma. Such a statement is quite consistent with the MVŚ orthodoxy. It is also a common Sarvāstivāda position that in a karmic retribution, it is only the volition involved that projects the individual’s existence — his nikāya-sabhāga and jīvitendriya. The only retributive causes involved — including the avijñapti karma — contribute only as completing causes.

Secondly, it means that an abstention is essentially a non-action — refraining from certain action; for this reason Saṃghabhadra concedes avijñapti could also be called a non-karma.

Further, while making avijñapti synonymous with ‘abstention’, ‘non-doing’, etc., he also argues in the same context that the Buddha himself speaks of śīla — abstention from evil actions — as karma, and that both the Grammarians and people in the world consider stages of non-activity such as sleeping and standing as actions (karma). Elsewhere, accepting AKB exposition that prātimokṣa-saṃvara has as its synonyms śīla, sucarīta, karma and saṃvara, he explains as follows:

It is called sucarīta because it is praised by the wise, or because by practicing this, one acquires the iṣṭa-phala. It is called karma for it is action by nature (kriyā-svabhāvatvāt karma); because the shameful, by virtue of the avijñapti, do not commit evil, and thus there is the sense of action.

Saṃghabhadra’s explanations below, on the case cited above from MVŚ concerning a murder committed through an emissary (supra, § 13.7), are helpful for an articulate Vaibhāṣika understanding of the precise karmic role of the non-informative karma:

On account of the previous informative [karma] and the originating volition which served as the preparation, there still exists the unskillful acquisition (akuśala-prāpti) which continues to arise [in a series] even when the instigator subsequently generates skillful thoughts that continue for a long time. When the emissary accomplishes the action, [this preparation becomes] capable of projecting (ā-√kṣip) such a type of Great Elements and derived matter. This derived matter [— the non-informative karma —] that is generated is the principal karma-patha. That very previous informative [karma] and originating volition, at the time of their
arising (their present moment), served as the cause that grasped the derived matter of this present moment as a fruit of emanation. At this very present moment when the non-informative matter is arising, they — existing as past [dharma-s] — can give the present fruit. It is only the volitional karma which was generated previously that served as the projecting cause (ākṣepaka) for the undesired fruit [i.e., the retribution of murder].

The karma-patha [— the non-informative karma —] which is generated subsequently assists in completing (paripūraka), so that the fruit that has been projected will definitely arise in the future. …

It is not the case that the force of projection alone can ensure that a future desired or undesired fruit will definitely arise. Apart from the instigator's volition which generates the informative [karma], in the case that subsequently a skillful thought continues [as a series] until the time when the emissary accomplishes the action, if the non-informative [karma] does not exist, there will not be any other dharma capable of assisting as the completing cause. The fruit would then not arise. If it is the case that the preparatory volition123 alone can ensure the future arising of the fruit, without the need of a completing cause, then, in the event that the emissary subsequently does not commit the murder, the undesired fruit should still arise for the instigator [— which is inadmissible].124

Thus, according to Saṃghabhadra, in such a case:

(i) The preparation — comprising the initial volition and the informative karma — gives rise to the unskillful acquisition which continues as a series even when the subsequent mental states are skillful — e.g., the instigator may later become remorseful.125 It is this series that continues to link up the unskillful volition with the instigator.

(ii) The initial volition and the informative karma, constituting this preparation, when they arise (i.e., at their present moment), first project or 'grasp' the fruit of emanation — the non-informative karma which is to arise when the murder is accomplished — and later actualize or 'give' this fruit at the time of the accomplishment of murder.

We should note here the important notion that the non-informative karma is not to be understood simply as a continuation of the momentary informative karma; it is generated “with the informative [karma] and the volition as its causes” (see above, § 13.8.1). We see the same notion in Saṃghabhadra's definition of non-informative matter: “The non-informative [matter] … arises in dependence on a specific
corporeal or vocal informative *karma*, and on a specific skillful or unskillful thought, etc.” (See above § 13.4.2). It is for this reason that Saṃghabhadra states that “the *avijñapti* has *karma* as its cause, and does not serve as the cause of *karma*”.126 It is for this same reason that it is endowed by the volitional *karma* with the specific karmic nature of murder, and not a mere invisible continuation of the vocal *karma* which, in this case, consists of an order to murder. In this way, the *karma* of murder is seen to involve the totality comprising the volitional, physical/vocal and non-informative contributions.

(iii) The non-informative *karma* is the principal *karma-patha* of killing. Its function is to assist as a completing cause, ensuring the future arising of the fruit of murder.127

(iv) It is only the initial *karma* of volition that projects this future undesired fruit of retribution.128

Point (iii) above accords with the general causal principle that a fruit, although projected by a projecting *karma*, can never arise in the absence of the completing *karma*.29 This seems to mean that a future existence projected by a *karma* can only arise specifically — with the ‘given’ specified by the completing causes. This is reasonable since a personal existence comprises not only the *nikāya-sabhāga* and *jīvitendriya* projected by the projecting *karma* (volition), but also the body with the organs — comprising *rūpa*, *gandha*, *rasa* and *spraṣṭavya* — and with specific experiences as retributions derived from the completing *karma*-s. This is, in some respect, similar to the case that a thought always arises specifically — the specifics being contributed by the associated thought concomitants. The bodily and vocal *karma*-s effect, as their retribution fruits, “matter, thought and thought concomitants and conditionings disjoined from thought”. But they cannot project a *nikāya-sabhāga* — an existence such as that in hell resulting from the *karma* of murder.

Elsewhere, Saṃghabhadra states that there are in fact two types of retribution cause — projecting and completing;30 it accords with the *sūtra* to assign the volition — mental *karma* — to the former role and the non-informative *karma*-s to the latter.31 Thus, according to some Sarvāstivāda masters, the 32 marks of a Great Man (*mahāpuruṣa*) are first projected by the volition which is the projecting *karma* of the *nikāya-sabhāga*; they are then completed by many volitions. “The 32 marks of a Great Man are the fruits of the completing *karma* of the *nikāya-sabhāga*, not that of the projecting *karma* of the *nikāya-sabhāga*.” In this regard, the opinion of the MVŚ compilers is that
32 volitions project the 32 marks each of which is completed by many karma-s.\(^{132}\) As another example, MVŚ opines that the false view (mithyā-drṣṭi) that cuts off the roots of skillfulness can both project as well as complete a nikāya-sabhāga, for the reason that there is volitional karma conjoined with false view, and that these two share the same fruit.\(^{133}\)

In other cases where the doer himself accomplishes the action with the informative karma, the informative karma so determined, plus the non-informative karma generated, constitute karma properly called. Thus, “if, with a thought of killing, one is actually depriving another’s life, all the unskillful bodily informative karma-s and the simultaneous non-informative occurring at that very time, constitute the principal [path of karma] of killing”.\(^{134}\) Herein too, then, the karmic role of the non-informative karma is clearly acknowledged.

13.8.3. Non-informative karma as a medium of preservation of karmic force

One important question remains: After the fruit has been sufficiently determined, what is the use of the non-informative karma which is said to still continue until one’s death unless it is beforehand relinquished through some causes? The answer lies in the tacit notion that a karmic force — unless relinquished — affects one’s mind for as long as the mind exists. In the case of an ordination vow, the karmic force generated continues to show its effect in helping the ordainee to restrain himself. But this emphasis that came to be developed within the Saṅgha members must not be allowed to eclipse the karmic nature of the non-informative actions involved which are of a moral nature. In the case of a karmic action such as killing, its continuous effect is to be seen more explicitly in ‘accumulating’ (upa-√ci) the karma: that is, it continues to interact with the mind in various ways, as a result of which one may repeat similar actions, or rejoice in it, or feel remorseful about it (cf. § 13.5.1), etc. All these subsequent happenings will have consequences with respect to the actual karmic retribution: they may transform an indeterminate karma to be determinate — e.g., when there is rejoicing, etc.; or they may result in damaging the otherwise superior quality of the fruit — e.g., when the ‘great fruit’ to be of a saṃvara-karma is damaged by subsequent unskillful thoughts (see § 13.8.1); or intensify the sufferings in the retribution — e.g., when several mortal transgressions are committed after the first one; or even effectively expurgate or at least render harmless the effect of a grave transgression — e.g., through repentance (see infra, § 14.4).
Such an interaction presupposes a continuously present and active karmic agent — the avijnapti — through which the existing status of the karmic effect can be continuously modified. Above (§ 13.7), we have seen one of the arguments that the non-informative matter is the real force — the merit (punya) — that is said in the sutra to increase incessantly in one who has done a meritorious action. In the case of a material giving, this merit increases by reason of the qualities of the recipients and of the benefits that they derive from the gifts (guna-viṣeṣād anugraha-viṣeṣāc ca). Saṃghabhadrā explains that this increase is in the sense of the merit being transformed from a lower grade to a higher one, or becoming more in the serial continuation.  

13.8.4. Conclusion

From the discussion above, we may conclude that non-informative karma, as much as informative karma, is retributive. This is in fact what we should expect logically, since the very notion of karma implies retribution. In pristine clear terms, MVŚ states that “the bodily and vocal karma-s refer to those two karma-s [comprising] the skillful and unskillful informative [karma-s] and the non-informative karma-s derived from the informative karma-s which are not co-existent with thought (cittānuparivartin) — these definitely can effect retribution fruits”. Moreover, as regards the karma-patha-s:

Excepting sensual misconduct (kāma-mithyā-cāra), all the other principal (maula) karma-patha-s have necessarily non-informative, but not necessarily informative [karma]. If an action done by oneself is immediately accomplished, then it has informative karma. If it is done through another person, or if at the time of its accomplishment the informative [karma] has already ceased, then there is only non-informative [karma].

For the case of sensual misconduct, there is also necessarily informative [karma]. At the preparatory stage, there is necessarily informative [karma], not necessarily non-informative [karma]… At the stage of subsequent action, there is necessarily non-informative [karma]; not necessarily informative [karma] — [the latter] exists if a [consecutive action] is done, not otherwise.

All these, then, point clearly to the role of the non-informative karma as contributive to karmic retribution. Even after the series of a non-informative karma has ended — for example, when the person dies — as in the case of a past volition and informative karma, the non-informative karma too continues to be connected with the
personal series (santati) by virtue of the continuous acquisition-series which ends only when the fruit is actualized. From Saṃghabhadra’s explanation above, however, it would appear that it is still the originating volition that plays the primary karmic role; the role of the non-informative karma is a relatively limited one.

It is true that in the specific discussions on restraint — which occupy the larger part of the Sarvāstivāda exposition of karma — the non-informative karma is never explicitly stated to be karmically retributive. Nevertheless, in other contexts, we do find in MVŚ the terms saṃvara-karma, asaṃvara-karma and the explicit statement that bodily and vocal restraints are karma-s. With regard to the seven non-mental paths of karma, restraint and non-restraint are explicitly made synonymous with karma and paths of karma. Thus,

the seven principal skillful paths of karma — whether the informative [karma] or the non-informative [karma] arising in this same moment — each has seven significations: 1. morality (śīla), 2. good conduct (sucarita), 3. restraint (saṃvara), 4. prātimokṣa, 5. prātimokṣa-restraint, 6. karma, 7. path of karma. From this [moment] onward, the non-informative karma-s have only five significations — excluding prātimokṣa and path of karma. ….

Similarly for the seven non-mental principal unskillful paths of karma. In the sphere of sensuality, all the ten skillful and unskillful paths of karma can be acquired. The skillful ones are subsumable either as restraint or neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint; the unskillful ones, non-restraint or neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint.

Moreover, the category of non-informative matter which is neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint — vast in scope — comprises actions which are explicitly karmic in nature and which are more explicitly stated or understood as such. In such instances, the terms ‘non-informative transgression’ and ‘non-informative karma’ (avijñapti-karma) are a common-place. The following serves as a good illustration:

Question: If with one preparation, a person simultaneously kills both his mother and another female, with regard to the mother, he acquires the non-informative transgression of killing (prāṇātipāta-avadya) and of an ānantarya (matricide), with regard to the other female, he acquires only the non-informative transgression of killing. …
13.8.4.1. Summary

An examination of the rationale given in MVŚ for the avijñapti doctrine — similarly reflected in AKB and Ny — suggests that it was probably first formulated out of a twofold consideration:

(i) There are situations — such as that of a murder committed through an emissary — in which an invisible force must be assumed, capable of preserving the karmic nature of the originating volition and serving as a completing cause to ensure the future arising of the retribution fruit.

(ii) The avijñapti as an invisible force — called ‘restraint’ or ‘abstention’ — preserving the essence of the ordination vows, serves as a legitimate cause for the distinction among the bhikṣu-s, bhikṣunī-s, etc.

From this, the contrasting categories called non-restraint and neither-restraint-nor-non-restraint, as well as the categories of meditation and pure restraints came to be elaborated. It would seem that the monastic abhidharma scholiasts gradually shifted their focus of discussion on the avijñapti as restraint and its related categories.

But this shift of emphasis has never obscured the nature of the avijñapti as a karmic force — as is evident from AKB and Ny. Both works, composed a couple of centuries after MVŚ, still provide us with a clear picture of its karmic role, as follows:

(a) It is a retribution cause capable of karmic retribution, although its function is confined to be that of a completing — as opposed to a projecting — cause. This specific function is distinctly brought out by Saṃghabhadra.

(b) It preserves the karmic efficacy of the originating volition and the vijñapti-karma as a serial continuity with which the mind can interact in ways that modify its karmic existing status.

(c) This preservation, however, is a limited one, lasting at most till the end of one existence.

(d) Even after the avijñapti has been relinquished, the karmic efficacy that it represents — as well as those of the volitional and informative karma-s that have become past — continues to be linked with the personal series through the prāpti-series until the retribution fruit is actualized.
13. The Doctrine of Karma

(e) Even where the *avijñapti* is conceptualized as a force of restraint, etc., its karmic function is still to be understood — as evidenced by terms like *saṃvara-karma* (律儀業), etc.
NOTES

1 MVŚ, 586b.
2 A, ii, 80: kamma-vipāko bhikkhave acinteyyo na cintetabbo; the other three inconceivables are: buddhānāṃ buddhavisayo, jhāyissa jhānavisayo, loka-cintā. Cf. Milindapañha, 189.
3 MVŚ, 587b.
4 MVŚ, 587a.
5 For definition and nature of vipāka-hetu, cf. MVŚ, 98a–c. Also see supra, § 6.3.4.
6 MVŚ, 102c.
7 AKB, 258: na ca kevalaṃ karmaivākṣepakaṃ janmanāḥ |
8 Ny, 427b–c.
9 MVŚ, 578b–c.
10 MVŚ, 216c.
11 MVŚ, 217a.
12 MVŚ, 975c.
13 MVŚ, 604b: 一思總感, 多思成滿. See also infra, § 14.5.
14 Ny, 427b–c.
15 Ny, 492a.
16 MVŚ, 649b–c.
17 Cf. Visuddhimagga, XVI, 90: dukkham eva hi, na koci dukkhito | kārako na, kiriyā va vijjati | atthi nibbuti, na nibbuto pumā | maggam atthi, gamako na vijjati || Also cf. Nāgārjuna’s Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā, VIII, especially stanzas 1 and 12.
18 Ny, 485a.
19 Vy, 441: vipāka-dānaya niyatibhavanti.
20 AKB, 277: tāni karmāṇy anusaya-vaśād upacayaṃ gacchanti antareṇa cānuśayāt bhavābhinirvartane na samarthāni bhavanti.
21 Vy, 441: na hy arhataḥ paunarbhavikāni karmāṇy aniyatāni na santi | anusāyābhāvat tu punar-bhavābhinirvartane na samarthāni bhavanti |
22 See AKB, 234 f. The sūtra-s are cited as the basis of this classification — see Āṅguttara, ii, 230; Dīgha, iii, 230; T 1, 600a (Madhyamāgama); MVŚ, 589c; etc. (Other sources given in AKB(F), 128, n. 6). The last category may in part be compared to the Theravāda notion of an arahant’s kiriya(kiriyā/kriyā)-citta.
23 Cf. Ny, 569a.
24 Cf. MVŚ, 583b; AKB, 239. For the preparation of a skillful path of karma, cf. MVŚ, 595c.
25 AKB, 192 f.
26 MVŚ, 634b.
27 AKB, 195.
28 MVŚ, 635a.
29 Ny, 527c–528a.
30 Ny, 522a.
31 Ny, 535c.
13. The Doctrine of Karma

32 MVŚ, 587b; AKB, 192.
33 Xuanzang in AKB(C) translates avijñapti as both ‘non-informative’ and ‘non-informative karma’.
34 MVŚ, 614a–c.
35 MVŚ, 617c.
36 AKB, 8: viṣṇiptācittakasyāpi yo ‘nubandhaḥ śubhāśubhah | mahābhūtāny upādāya, sā hy avijñaptir ucyate || Ny, 335b.
37 Ny, 335c. The Sanskrit is quoted in Vy, 32.
38 SPṛŚ, 781c–782a.
39 SPṛŚ, loc. cit.
40 Vy, 30 ff.
41 Ny, 335b.
42 Entrance, 76, § 1.2.7.1.
43 MVŚ, 395a.
44 MVŚ, 390a; AKB, 9.
45 Ny, 338a. Samghabhadrāś explanation is justified by that in MVŚ, 390a.
46 MVŚ, 723c.
47 Loc. cit.
48 AKB, 196.
49 Dharma-yatana-saṃgrḥita-rūpa — Ny, 540b. Cf. T 2, 91c.
50 AKB, 24.
51 Ny, 357c.
52 Cf. AKB, 195 f.: sā ‘pi ca vijnaptih satī tadākṣepe cetanāyā balam nibhālaye | jaḍatvāt | Vy, 351: sā ‘pi ca vijnaptir bhavadiyā satī vidyamānā avijñapter ākṣepe utpādanacetanāyā balam sāmarthyam nibhālayate apekṣate | kasmār | jaḍatvād apaṭutvāc cetanā-balam antareṇa tām avijñaptīṃ janayitum na saknoi | na hy asatyam samādāna-cetanāyāṃ yadreçhotpannā vijnaptīṃ janayati | T 32, 290b.
53 Cf. MVŚ, 383c.
54 MVŚ, 662b.
55 MVŚ, 661c, 730b.
56 Vy, 364.
57 MVŚ, 610a; AKB, 203.
58 MVŚ, 610a.
59 AKB, 203.
60 MVŚ, 684c: “The non-information generated by the information is of the nature of an emanation (niṣyanda); it is non-appropriated (anupātta) and belongs to a sentient being (sattvākhyā). The Great Elements from which it is derived are of the nature of emanation; they are appropriated (upātta) and belong to sentient beings.”
61 Cf. AKB, 205 ff.; Avatāra, 981a–b; Entrance 75ff.
62 AKB, 208: na hi tat atyantam pāpasya pratimokșanāya saṃvartate.
63 MVŚ, 649a; AKB, 214.
AKB, 205: *dausīlya-prasarasya samvarāṇam samrodhah samvarah* | *cf. Ny, 552a.*

MVŚ, 623b.

Ny, 543c. See also quotation from Ny in § 13.8.1.

Ny, 539c.

AKB, 212, Ny, 552a–b.

Ny, 552b.

Ny, 529c.

For *hrīṇa* and *apatṛpya*, see *Entrance*, §§4.5.13-14.

*Cf. Ny, 552a.*

See also, AKB, 213.

Ny, 552a–b.

MVŚ, 608c.

T 41, 235c.

T no. 1550, 814a

*Cf. AKB, 459; MVŚ, 779b.*

MVŚ, 623a–b.

AKB, 238; cf. D, iii, 269; T 1, 437b; T 2, 274a.

MVŚ, 583b ff.; AKB, 243 ff.

MVŚ, 243a; AKB, 242.

MVŚ, 582c.

MVŚ, 103a–b.

MVŚ, 583c, 584a.

MVŚ, 243a. See § 14.2.

AKB, 248: *tatsamutthānacetanāyās tān adhiṣṭhāya pravṛtteḥ* | *AKB(C), 88c.*

MVŚ, 587c, 588a, 589a–b.

MVŚ, 589a.

MVŚ, 589b–c. *ibid.*, 587a: The Vibhajyavāda, in contrast, holds that the last three are *karma* in nature.

*Cf. D, iii, 217.*

Also cf. AKB, 238.

MVŚ, 634c.

*Cf. MVŚ, 635a, 636c; AKB, 196, 238.*

*Cf. T 2, 13b–c.*

AKB, 196 ff

MVŚ, 96a.

MVŚ, 587a.

MVŚ, 383b.

MVŚ, 634b.

AKB, 196 ff.

See AKB, 477: *naiva tu vayaṃ vināstāḥ karmanā āyatāṃ phalotpattim brūmaḥ | … tatsamatipariṇāmaviśeṣād bijaphalalavat | yathā bijāt phalam utpadyata ity ucyate | na ca tad vināstād bijād utpadyate | nāpy anantaram eva | … tattsāṁtati-parināma-viśeṣād anikurakāṇḍa-patraḍī-kramaniṣpannāt puṣpāvasānāt |
13. The Doctrine of Karma

106 Ny, 535b.

107 Ny, 535a–b.

108 See Entrance, 26.

109 SPṛŚ, 862a; also Ny, 543c. See below where Samghabhadra explains the avijñapti as a nisyaṇda-phala generated by the originating volition and the vijñapti. (Cf. Vy, 356: yathā vaibhāṣikāṇāṁ avijñaptivādānām avijñaptih karma-patha ity ākhīyate | kārṇa kāraṇopacārāt | kāyika-vācīkavām tu tat-kriyā-phaλatvāt | Also cf. MVŚ, 622c.

110 MVŚ, 643c.

111 MVŚ, 648a–b, 649c.

112 MVŚ, 648a–b.

113 MVŚ, 634c.

114 MVŚ, 96b–c.

115 Ny, 427c–428a; cf. MVŚ, 97b–c. The cases pertaining to the two spheres are also discussed.

116 MVŚ, 604a, 887c; AKB, 258.

117 Ny, 427c–428a: “…because multiple abstentions (遠離體) are generated by one citta…”; “The vijñapti-s consists of numerous paramāṇu-s. The avijñapti-s too consist of numerous abstention entities (遠離事: *virati-dravya). Although [these numerous entities in each case] are necessarily conascent, they nevertheless have different fruits…”

118 Ny, 544a.

119 Cf., MVŚ, 622c. Also, MVŚ, 723c: “It should be understood that the mental karma is the cause projecting the śīla (= saṃvara). The very cause for śīla must not be called śīla, lest there be the fallacy of confounding the cause with the effect.” Note also that in MVŚ (578c, 589a), AKB and Ny, cetanā is considered the karma in contrast to karma-patha — see supra, § 12.6.

120 See for instance, MVŚ, 887c, where the role as projecting karma is ascribed to cetanā.

121 AKB, 207.

122 Ny, 549b.

123 Judging from the context and from SPṛŚ, 心 must be an error of 思.

124 Ny, 543a; SPṛŚ, 861c–862a.

125 Ny, 542c.

126 Ny, 544a.

127 MVŚ, 96b.


129 Cf. Ny, 486c.

130 Ny, 427b.

131 Ny, 427c.

132 MVŚ, 887c.

133 MVŚ, 185a. For the discussion on the projecting and completing karma-s for the nikāya-sabhāga, also cf. MVŚ, 216c, 277a, 594a, 774a, 782c.

134 Cf. MVŚ, 583b, etc.

135 AKB, 197; Ny, 542b. However, note that in the case of one who acquires a restraint of a low grade with a generating thought of a low grade, there can be
no increase in the sense of transforming the restraint to one of a higher grade in spite of subsequent moral efforts. The same principle applies to the other grades of both restraint and non-restraint — MVŚ, 607b–c.

136 MVŚ, 96b. Cf. also MVŚ, 157c which says that the non-informative *karma* is to be known by going from the fruit into the cause; from the gross into the subtle…

137 MVŚ, 635a.

138 Cf. MVŚ, 649c, 650b, 651a, etc.

139 MVŚ, 984c.

140 MVŚ, 585c, 584a; cf. AKB, 207.

141 MVŚ, 586b, 584b.

142 MVŚ, 617c — various other instances abound. In this case, he of course also acquires the informative *karma* of killing — but this is with regard to matricide, as it is graver than the killing of another female (MVŚ, 619c; AKB, 263). See also the allusion to Ajātaśatru’s *avijñapti-karma* above.
14. Karma and the Nature of its Retribution

14.1. Karmic retribution as a Middle Way doctrine

The Middle Way nature of the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of *karma* is especially conspicuous in their discussions on retribution. The way in which a given *karma* is to be retributed — the manner in which the 'doer' experiences it — is by no means absolutely fixed. For one thing, it depends on the spiritual status of the experiencer. The *Loṇa-phala sutta* gives the example of the difference in the effect of a small amount of salt that is put into a cup of water and into the river. It states explicitly that if the effect of a given *kamma* is necessarily to be experienced in an immutable manner, then the spiritual life would be in vain and there would be no possibility of the utter destruction of *dukkha*. In a similar vein, AKB quotes the following stanza:

> The ignorant, committing even a small evil goes below;  
> The wise, although committing a great one, leaves behind the  
> bad [abodes].  
> A compacted [piece of] iron, although small, sinks into water;  
> The same made into a bowl, although great, floats.

This is likely an acceptable notion for the orthodox Sarvāstivādins since Saṃghabhadra also repeated the stanza in Ny without any objection.

14.2. Six causes affecting the gravity of a *karma*

The Sarvāstivāda teaches that given the same *karma* — e.g., killing — the gravity in terms of its retributive effect can vary depending on various factors. A *karma* can be divided into nine grades — low-low (i.e., the lightest), low-middle, etc., up to high-high (i.e., the most grave). According to the *Prajñāpti-śāstra*:
For the transgression of killing, the high-high grade leads to rebirth in Avīci hell [i.e., the lowest hell, with the greatest amount of sufferings incessantly]; the high-middle grade, to [rebirth in] Pratāpana Mahānaraka, . . .; the low-low grade, to [rebirth in] the planes of existence of the animals and preta-s.⁶

The causal factors influencing the retributive effect are said to be six:

(i) The subsequent actions (prśtha) following the principal action — the latter can become grave when, for instance, the subsequent actions contribute in such a way as to establish it as being necessarily retributed.

(ii) The nature of the ‘field’ (kṣetra-viśeṣa) — that is, the moral or spiritual status of the person with respect to whom the karma is incurred. Thus, among the five mortal transgressions (ānantarya karma),⁷ the splitting of the Saṅgha is the most grave because it is the most excellent field of virtue; splitting the Saṅgha is ruining the Dharma Body (dharma-śarīra). Next is the shedding of a Buddha’s blood, followed by the killing of an arhat, matricide and lastly patricide — a mother as a field is superior to a father because she has the kindness of nourishing and rearing the child. AKB gives the example of a bhikṣu who was born as a female as a result of having insulted the Saṅgha as being women folk, even though the intention involved was weak.

(iii) The basis (adhiṣṭhāna) — that is, the deed itself (the karma-patha). Given the same factor of field, the deed itself can determine the relative gravity of the karma. Thus killing the parents is much graver than stealing from them.

(iv) The preparatory action (prayoga) leading to the principal action.

(v) Volition (cetanā) — the mental force through which the karma-patha comes to be accomplished.

(vi) The strength of the intention (āśaya-viśeṣa) involved. For this, the example is given of a eunuch who regained his masculinity as a result of having — with a strong intention (tīvreṇ ‘āśayena) arising from the thought “I have such kind of suffering in losing my masculinity” — rescued bulls from being castrated.⁸

To these six, one may add another: the factor of the experience of the recipient of the action. This is clear from the way the Sarvāstivāda explains the naiva-saṃvara-nāsaṃvara type of avijñapti. Thus, when one
offers some material gift, such as food, a monastery (ārāma), etc., to the bhikṣu-saṅgha, or offers medicine to the sick, etc., the merit increases in one according to both the excellence of virtues of the recipients as well as the benefits they derive from the offering. Likewise, a factor that makes killing a grave transgression is the suffering that the victim undergoes.

An interesting question is raised in MVŚ: Which transgression is the more grave — destroying the eggs of ants or killing a human who has cut off the roots of skillfulness? The opinion of the MVŚ compilers is that from the point of view of punishment, the latter is the more grave since the killer has thereby incurred an extreme transgression — the victim is a human. From the point of view of a path of karma, the former is more grave since they are endowed with the skillful dharma-s. This means that karmically speaking, what matters most is the spiritual status of a sentient being: It is a very grave transgression indeed to interrupt the spiritual progress of any sentient being — be it as trifling as an ant!

14.3. Determinate and indeterminate karma

The Sūtra was also said to have taught that there are certain karma-s which, although they ought to be retributed in the present life, are transformed to be retributed in the hells, and others which, although they ought to be retributed in the hells, are transformed to be retributed in the present life. In this connection, the Sarvāstivāda notion of determinate (niyata) and indeterminate (aniyata) karma (see supra) is particularly noteworthy. The former comprises the three categories — ‘experiencible in this life’, ‘experiencible in the next life’, ‘experiencible in a subsequent life’; their retribution is certain. The latter may or may not be retributed. Saṃghabhadra explained the aniyata-vedanīya-karma as follows, clarifying in the process what is meant by a karma that is done (kṛta) but not accumulated (upacita):

In what sense are they not necessarily retributed?

The Bhagavat saw that there were certain types of karma which — on account of ethical conduct (śīla), or resolution, or the spiritual life (brahma-carya), or samādhi, or the power of knowledge (jñāna-bala) — are rendered fruitless or lightened, or moved into a different state. These are said to be indeterminate karma-s. In order to transform these karma-s, one should practice the spiritual life. Sentient beings have mostly these karma-s. However, when the sūtra says that there are certain karma-s which, although they ought to be retributed in the present life, are transformed
to be retributed in the hells, it does not, in this context, refer to the *karma* to be experienced in this life. What it means is that there are *karma*-s which are not necessarily experienced. If one can vigorously cultivate the precepts pertaining to the body, the thought (*citta*) and understanding (*prajñā*), these *karma*-s ought to be experienced in the human world. [However,] as a result of not cultivating the precepts pertaining to the body, the thought and understanding, one falls into *naraka* through these *karma*-s.

The Sūtra also says that there are certain *karma*-s which, although they ought to be retributed in the hells, are transformed to be retributed in the present life. This too does not refer to the *karma*-s that are determinate with regard to the time [of retribution],\(^\text{13}\) but to the indeterminate *karma*. The meaning is to be understood as above.

Alternatively, the meaning of the former sūtra reference is to be explained thus: There are *karma*-s which, although done, are not accumulated. If they are allowed to follow their own course, they would be retributed in the present life. If, [however,] one subsequently further commits *karma*-s that are retributable in the hells, nourishing the *karma* and causing it to be accumulated, one will proceed to experience it in the hells. Hence, the sūtra says that there are *karma*-s which one ought to experience presently among human beings, [but] which — as a result of one subsequently further committing *karma*-s retributable in the hells — are caused to be accumulated, transforming them to be retributed in the hells. Thus we know that the reference of the sūtra is to the indeterminate *karma*.\(^\text{14}\)

The sūtra alluded by Samghabhadra here seems to be the *Salt-simile sūtra* corresponding to the Pāli *Lonā-phala-sutta* (see above, § 14.1). MVŚ cites this sūtra and explains its import thus: A person who — say — destroys a life, incurs a *karma* that can lead to the retribution of being born in hell. If this person does not vigorously practice the spiritual path and attain arhathood, he would indeed be born in hell. If, however, he can do so, he will be able to experience the hellish sufferings as the karmic consequence in his present human body. MVŚ here quotes Vasumitra’s opinion that such an experience is possible only in the case of an *arhat* whose body is perfumed by superior (*viśiṣṭa*) *samādhi* and *prajñā* — even the *śaikṣa*-s are incapable of doing so, let alone the *prthagjāna*-s.\(^\text{15}\)

Necessarily retributive *karma*-s other than the five mortal transgressions and the five quasi-mortal transgressions — defiling one’s mother, defiling a female *arhat*, killing a predestined (*niyati-stha*) Bodhisattva, killing a trainee, stealing from the Saṅgha\(^\text{16}\) — are transcended under three circumstances:

---

\(^\text{13}\) MVŚ cites this sūtra and explains its import thus: A person who — say — destroys a life, incurs a *karma* that can lead to the retribution of being born in hell. If this person does not vigorously practice the spiritual path and attain arhathood, he would indeed be born in hell. If, however, he can do so, he will be able to experience the hellish sufferings as the karmic consequence in his present human body. MVŚ here quotes Vasumitra’s opinion that such an experience is possible only in the case of an *arhat* whose body is perfumed by superior (*viśiṣṭa*) *samādhi* and *prajñā* — even the *śaikṣa*-s are incapable of doing so, let alone the *prthagjāna*-s.

\(^\text{14}\) Necessarily retributive *karma*-s other than the five mortal transgressions and the five quasi-mortal transgressions — defiling one’s mother, defiling a female *arhat*, killing a predestined (*niyati-stha*) Bodhisattva, killing a trainee, stealing from the Saṅgha\(^\text{16}\) — are transcended under three circumstances:
(i) When the practitioner passes from the stage of the summits to that of the receptivities (kṣānti) of the nirvedha-bhāgīya, he transcends the state of retribution of the karma retributable in the evil planes of existence.

(ii) When he is attaining non-returnership, he becomes detached from the sphere of sensuality; karma-s retributable in the sphere of sensuality — other than those to be retributed in the present life — are therefore transcended.

(iii) When he is attaining arhathood, he is definitely not going to have any more rebirths in any of the three spheres; the karma-s retributable in the rūpa- and ārūpya-dhātu-s — other than those to be retributed in the present life — are transcended.

MVŚ and AKB express these circumstances as those when the aforesaid corresponding karma-s, in each case, stand near the practitioner, as it were, obstructing him to the utmost (vighnāyopatiṣṭhate). AKB compares the obstruction to that desperately made to the debtor by his creditors when he is about to leave the country. MVŚ explains that it is as if the karma-s were to say:

If you are able to enter into the state of the receptivities, you will definitely not be experiencing any births in the three evil planes of existence — in whose bodies then are we going to have the retributions?

14.4. A karma that has been done, and one that has been accumulated

The distinction discussed by Samghabhadra above (§ 14.3), between an action that has been done (kṛta; byas pa; 造作) and one that has been accumulated (upacita; bsags pa; 增長), also represents an important aspect of the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of karma. These two terms occur juxtaposed in some of the Abhidharma works before MVŚ, e.g., SgPŚ,18 PrŚ19 and JPŚ,20 but are not distinguished from each other or defined. In MVŚ, elaborate distinctions are made between karma-s that are just done but not accumulated, and those that are both done and accumulated.21

We will follow the explanations given in AKB22 which are more concise than those in MVŚ, supplementing with explanations and examples provided by MVŚ where appropriate. According to AKB, an action, although done, is not to be counted in terms of its effective karmic effect or of ‘having been accumulated’ under the following five conditions:
(i) If it is not done intentionally (i.e., not a saṃcetanīya-karma) or if it is done casually without having first involved the volition (i.e., not cetayitvā).²³

(ii) If the number of actions which together are responsible for a particular rebirth are not completed. Thus, if one karma is responsible for a particular rebirth of a person, at the preparatory stage the karma is done, and at the stage of the completion it is both done and accumulated. If three karma-s are necessary for the person to effect the rebirth, then when he performs the first two, his karma-s are only done but not accumulated; when he further performs the third one, then his karma-s become both done and accumulated.²⁴

An action is completed only by its subsequent (prṣṭha) action which comprises the moments of avijñapti projected by the principal action, e.g., killing, and other subsequent actions. One is in fact ‘touched’ (spṛśyate) by the transgression of killing on account of both the preparatory action (prayoga) and the achievement or completion of its result, i.e., the principal action of killing.²⁵ This applies even in the case of the five mortal transgressions. MVŚ gives the following examples:

(a) There is preparation, but not accomplishment of the fruit — a certain person intending matricide mistakenly killed another woman thinking that she was his mother. Subsequently, while cleaning his knife by poking it into a heap of grain wherein the mother was hiding, the mother was hurt by the knife and died as a result. In this case, when the son did the preparation, the fruit was not accomplished; when the fruit was actually accomplished, there was no more preparation.

(b) There is accomplishment of the fruit, but no preparation — a certain person was holding his parents while passing through a dangerous path. Fearing that robbers would come, he forcibly pushed the parents forward. The parents fell down and died as a result.

In both examples, the person did not incur the mortal transgression.²⁶ In fact, one who prepares for the killing, without actually generating the killing, has the fruit of the preparatory action, but not the completion of this fruit.²⁷
There are some other situations where one’s killing does not actually incur the transgression of killing — e.g., when one causing the death of another, dies even before the victim’s death. Since the killer dies before the accomplishment of the fruit (i.e., the principal action of killing), there is no subsequent nikāya-sabhāga to be endowed with (samanvāgata) that transgression. But even the transgression of a preparation can be a very grave one — such as Devadatta’s in his attempt to kill the Buddha, which amounts to a mortal transgression. Samghabhadra explained that what is ‘done’ refers to the two together — preparatory and principal actions; what is accumulated refers to the consecutive actions.

(iii) If there are no accompaniments (parivāra) — e.g., having committed an unskillful action, one does not rejoice in it.

(iv) If it is followed by remorse (vipratisāra) or repentance through confession, etc., which is counteractive to its effect (pratideśan’ādi-pratipakṣaḥ).

(v) If it is not necessarily retributed (vipāka-dāne niyataṃ).

In brief, when a karma is said to be both done and accumulated, it means that it has been volitionally projected as well as accomplished, and it becomes necessarily retributive.

Moreover, MVŚ explains that whether a karma is accumulated or not also depends on the moral and spiritual status of the doer: thus, if an unskillful karma is done by having false views concerning cause and effect, it is both done and accumulated — hence necessarily retributed. Conversely, if this doer has, instead, the proper views in this regard, then the karma is only done but not accumulated.

Furthermore, having done such a karma, if the doer “can abandon, cast it away (ut-√sṛj) and rely on counteraction”, or becomes remorseful, or does not “constantly recollect it”, or does not “rejoice in it and dedicate (pari-√nam) it to the fruit”, then it is not accumulated. In this connection, the notion that karma-s can be destroyed by outflow-free karma (the neither-black-nor-white category) should also be noted (supra, § 13.2).

In terms of the distinction between ‘grasping a fruit’ (phala-grahaṇa) and the actual ‘giving of a fruit’ (phala-dāna) (§ 7.4), a karma which has both functions is both done and accumulated. If it has only the former function, it is said to be done but not accumulated. Bhadanta Dharmatrāṭa expressed the same notion in different words:
If a *karma* that has been done will — when an assemblage of conditions obtains — necessarily effect its fruit, it is said to be done as well as accumulated; otherwise it is only said to be done.\(^{37}\)

The early Dārṣṭāntikas, who also belong to the general camp of the Sarvāstivāda, in fact had a doctrine that the effect of even the five mortal transgressions — the ānantaryā *karma*-s — can be transformed:

> Question: Are the *karma*-s experiencible in this life (*dṛṣṭa-dharma-vedanīya karma*) necessarily retributed in the present life (*dṛṣṭe dharme*)? The same question for the *karma*-s experiencible in the next life (*upapadya-vedanīya karma*) and the *karma*-s experiencible in a future life subsequent to the next (*apara-paryāya-vedanīya karma*).

The Dārṣṭāntikas hold that it is not necessarily so, for all *karma*-s are transformable — [all] up to the ānantaryā *karma*-s are transformable.\(^{38}\)

> Question: If so, why are they called *dṛṣṭa-dharma-vedanīya karma*-s, etc.?

They explain thus: The *karma*-s retributable in this life do not necessarily have their fruits of retribution in the present life. [But] those which are retributed are necessarily retributed in this — and not another — existence; hence they are called *karma* retributable in the present life. The same applies for the *upapadya-vedanīya* and *apara-paryāya-vedanīya karma*-s.\(^{39}\)

The above-mentioned doctrine of the Dārṣṭāntikas represents a denial of the *niyata karma*. This is in keeping with their doctrinal position which relegates the whole of *karma* and its retribution to the mental domain: “Apart from volition there is no retributive cause; apart from sensation there is no retribution fruit” (*cf.* § 6.3.4). Since, according to Buddhism, the mind can be trained and totally transformed, there is no reason to prevent the complete transformation of the karmic effect.

From the Vaibhāṣika perspective, karmic retribution is not determined by sensation alone; all the *dharma*-s subsumable as the retributive causes contribute to the determination. Samghabhadra,\(^{40}\) for one, rejects this view of the transformability of all *karma*-s. He argues that if all *karma*-s were transformable, the Buddha would not have taught that there is determinate *karma*.

However, AKB also speaks of the outflow-free *karma* as capable of destroying other *karma*-s.\(^{41}\) It is further said that the wise, through
a single thought of faith, can overcome an infinite heap of evil \textit{karma}-s which are not of necessary retribution.\textsuperscript{42} Such notions are once again quite in line with the early discourses. The \textit{Samyutta-nikāya},\textsuperscript{43} for instance, also speaks of the transcendence of evil \textit{kamma} (\textit{pāpassa kammassā samatikkamo}) through abstention (\textit{virati}) and meditation on loving-kindness (\textit{mettā-bhāvanā}). The orthodox Sarvāstivāda too, while upholding the \textit{niyata-karma} category, nevertheless would still accept the transformability of even such gravest evil through repentance — a doctrine that came to be developed in the Mahāyāna.\textsuperscript{44}

\textit{MVŚ} relates the story of Mahādeva who committed four out of the five \textit{ānantarya-karma}-s (excepting the shedding of a Buddha's blood):

Having committed the third \textit{ānantarya-karma}, by virtue of his not having cut off the roots of skillfulness, he gave rise to a deep sense of repentance and became restless. He was pondering as to how his grave transgressions could be expurgated. Later on, he learned that the Buddhist \textit{śramaṇa}-s had a way to expurgate transgressions. Thereupon, he went to the \textit{saṅghārāma} in Kurkuta-vana, outside the gate of which he saw a \textit{bhikṣu} pacing up and down slowly and reciting the following \textit{gāthā}:

\begin{quote}
If one has committed a grave transgression, [but later] cultivates the good for its expurgation, he is one who illuminates the world, like the moon set free from the cloud.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

Having heard this, he greatly rejoiced, realizing that by taking refuge in the Buddha's teachings the transgression can definitely be expurgated. (See also below, § 14.7, the case of a hungry ghost overcoming his karmic hindrance).\textsuperscript{46}

\textit{MVŚ} explains how a moral practice (\textit{śīla}) can counteract an immoral one (\textit{dauśīlya}):

It is on account of the thought with which one makes the vow of undertaking (\textit{abhyupagama-citta}) — serving as the assisting accompaniment (\textit{saparivāra}) — that the immorality practiced from beginningless time comes to be relinquished upon the undertaking of the moral practice. This is like the long accumulated darkness in a room being banished on the arrival of a bright lamp. It is also like the case of one's long accustomed notion salt with regard to what is [actually] not salty being removed upon tasting salt. The same applies in the case of a moral practice counteracting an immorality. It is to be understood in the same manner that the path [as the counteragent] counteracts a defilement.\textsuperscript{47}
14.5. Projecting and completing karmas

According to the Sarvāstivāda, one, and only one, karma — in the one moment — projects one, and only one, nikāya-sabhāga, i.e., one existence.\textsuperscript{48} Such a karma is called a projecting (ākṣepaka) karma. On the other hand, many karma-s are responsible for the specific experiences within the one existence — a person’s life span, size, wealth or poverty, etc. These are called the completing or filling-up (paripūraka) karma-s. The example is given in AKB of a painter who first paints the outline of a figure with one color and then fills in the details with various colors.\textsuperscript{49}

In MVŚ, the same example is given by some masters who opine that the completing karma-s follow the projecting karma. Other masters, however, assert that the order is reversed. The opinion of MVŚ is that no hard and fast rule applies here — either type of karma can be incurred first.\textsuperscript{50} In the case of a person who has committed more than one of the mortal transgressions, that are of the nature of being retributed immediately in the next existence, only the first one will project the next existence in hell; the others serve only as completing karma-s in that existence, causing more severe suffering to the doer.\textsuperscript{51}

The statement that a single karma projects a nikāya-sabhāga does not contradict the Buddhist principle of causality that nothing is produced by a single cause but by an assemblage of causal factors. What is meant by this statement is that karma — the volition — is the principal cause. It is directly responsible for the arising of the nikāya-sabhāga. We have seen that the functioning of karma needs the assistance of the defilements (see below, § 14.6). In brief, a karmic force can take effect only when assisted by various conditions (pratyaya).\textsuperscript{52} Moreover, it is explained that other retributive (sa-vipāka)\textsuperscript{53} dharma-s co-existing with the karma — such as vedanā, etc. — also contribute to the projection.\textsuperscript{54} It should also be understood that in a given existence, one can incur many projecting karma-s — not just one — each of which leads to a corresponding plane of existence in the future period.\textsuperscript{55} (See also, § 13.1).

The Sarvāstivāda holds that there is an intermediate existence (antarā-bhava) after death and before the next birth.\textsuperscript{56} The projecting karma for an intermediate existence is said to be the same karma that projects the next existence (rebirth).\textsuperscript{57} For this reason, an intermediate being has the form (ākṛti) of the future being to be born in the next birth.\textsuperscript{58} According to the Ābhidharmikas, the karma for an intermediate existence, being of a very strong nature, cannot be transformed with regard to its sphere (dhātu) and plane of existence (gati).\textsuperscript{59}
14.6. *Karma in terms of pratītya-samutpāda*\(^{60}\)

The Middle Way position of the Sarvāstivāda *karma* doctrine — like those of other Buddhist schools — are also expressed in terms of the Buddha’s teaching of conditioned co-arising (*pratītya-samutpāda*) comprising 12 links (*nidāna*). This is in conformity with the general Buddhist principle that nothing arises independent of conditions, thus avoiding the two extremes of eternalism (*śāśvata-vāda*) and annihilation (*uccheda-vāda*). The Sarvāstivāda stresses the ‘embryological interpretation’, distributing the 12 links over the three periods of existence as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 Periods</th>
<th>12 Links</th>
<th>Cause/Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>1. ignorance (<em>avidyā</em>) 2. conditionings (<em>samskāra</em>)</td>
<td>past causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>present 3. consciousness (<em>vijñāna</em>) 4. psycho-physical complex (<em>nāma-rūpa</em>) 5. six entrances (<em>ṣaḍāyatana</em>) 6. contact (<em>sparśa</em>) 7. sensation (<em>vedanā</em>)</td>
<td>present effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. craving (<em>trṣṇā</em>) 9. grasping (<em>upādāna</em>) 10. existence (<em>bhava</em>)</td>
<td>present causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>11. birth (<em>jāti</em>) 12. old-age-and-death (<em>jarā-marana</em>)</td>
<td>future effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first two links, ignorance and conditionings, constitute the past karmic factors leading to a person’s present existence as the result: Ignorance represents in a general manner all the defilements up to the very last thought of the past existence, since all these past defilements — whatever be their modes of operation — are necessarily conjoined with ignorance.\(^{61}\) They all have ignorance as their cause.\(^{62}\) Conditionings are all the past karmic formations driven by ignorance.

The third link, consciousness, is the relinking (*pratisamdhī*) consciousness that enters the mother’s womb in the person’s present rebirth.

The fourth link, the psycho-physical complex, represents the stage of embryonic development of which the completed development of the six sense faculties are represented by the fifth link, the six entrances (*ṣaḍāyatana*).
The sixth link, contact, represents the contact between the child’s sense faculties and their objects.

The seventh link, sensation, represents the stage when the child can differentiate between different types of feelings.

At the stage of the seventh link, craving, the child has developed sexual awareness and craving (eighth link) for material things in general.

In the next stage, grasping (ninth link), intensified craving develops and leads to strong clinging to the objects of craving.

The tenth link, existence, like the second link, is karma in nature. It subsumes all the present karma-s that — driven by the defilements of craving and grasping — project a future existence. Ny explains why this link, although karma in nature, is not called karma:

It is in order to show that this, being a cause that incurs a subsequent existence, is a distinctive type of karma (karma-viśeṣa); all karma is not a cause for the subsequent existence.

The eleventh link, birth, represents the stage of the first relinking thought in the future birth. It is therefore similar to the third link of consciousness.

The last (i.e., twelfth) link, old-age-and-death, represents the stage of existence from the moment of the future rebirth till death. It is therefore similar to the four links of the present period — from psycho-physical complex to sensation.

These 12 links of conditioned co-arising are explained as the mutual conditioning among the three — defilement, karma and duḥkha — as follows:

(i) defilement generates karma — the conditionings have ignorance as their condition (avidyā-pratyayāḥ saṃskārāḥ);

(ii) karma generates duḥkha — consciousness has the conditionings as its conditions (saṃskāra-pratyayāṃ vijñānam);

(iii) duḥkha generates duḥkha — the psycho-physical complex has consciousness as its condition, and so on up to: sensation has contact as its condition (vijñāna-pratyayāṃ nāma-rūpam … sparśa-pratyayā vedanā);

(iv) duḥkha generates defilement — craving has sensation as its condition (vedanā-pratyayā tṛṣṇā);
(v) defilement generates defilement — grasping has craving as its condition (*trṣṇā-pratyayaṃ upādānam*);

(vi) defilement generates *karma* — existence has grasping as its condition (*upādāna-pratyayo bhavaḥ*);

(vii) *karma* generates *duḥkha* — birth has existence as its condition (*bhava-pratyayā jātiḥ*);

(viii) *duḥkha* generates *duḥkha* — old-age-and-death has birth as its condition (*jāti-pratyayaṃ jarā-maraṇam*). The 12 links are also explained as being divisible into three parts:

(I) defilements: three links — ignorance as the past cause, craving and grasping as the causes for the future;

(II) *karma*: two links — conditionings as the past causes, and existence as the cause for the future;

(III) phenomenal bases (*vastu*), so called because they serve as the supporting bases (*āśraya, adhiṣṭhāna*) for the generation of defilements and *karma* — the remaining seven links.

These seven are the effects; the other five links are the causes.

AKB\(^66\) illustrates the mutual conditionality among these parts in a way similar to that given in MVŚ for the defilement-*karma-*duḥkha* triad:

(i) defilement from defilement;

(ii) *karma* from defilement;

(iii) phenomenal basis (*vastu*) from *karma*;

(iv) phenomenal basis from phenomenal basis;

(v) defilement from phenomenal basis.

It follows from this mutual conditionality that ignorance — being a defilement and like craving and grasping — has as its cause either a defilement or a phenomenal basis; old-age-and-death — being a phenomenal basis and corresponding to links 4 to 7 — has as its fruit a phenomenal base or a defilement.\(^67\)

The compilers of MVŚ give another explanation: The cause of ignorance is improper mental application (*ayoniśo manaskāra*); the fruits of old-age-and-death are sorrow, lamentation, suffering, grief and despair (*śoka-parideva-duḥkha-daurmanasyopāyāsā*).\(^68\) In brief, from
karma are born the phenomena which, in turn, serve as the bases for the generation of further karma. And in this way, the twelve-link conditioned co-arising represents the endless cycle of samsāric existence, wherein neither ignorance is the first cause, nor old-age-and-death, the end.69

The Sarvāstivāda speaks of conditioned co-arising as being fourfold:

(i) momentary (kṣanika) — the 12 links being embraced within a single moment;
(ii) prolonged (prākarsika) — extending over three periods of existence;
(iii) pertaining to states (āvasthika) — 12 states embracing the five skandha-s;
(iv) connected (sāṃbandhika) — through being causes and effects.70

All the four interpretations are accepted by the Sarvāstivāda. They represent the different doctrinal emphases of its various masters.

(i) The “momentary” interpretation is rejected by Śrīlāta.71 It is advocated by the Sarvāstivāda master, Śarmadatta (/Śamadatta; 設摩達多):

Within one moment, there are the 12 links. For instance: when one generates a thought of greed to kill a sentient being, the delusion conjoined with this [greed] is ignorance. The conjoined volition is conditionings. The conjoined thought is consciousness. In generating the informative karma, there necessarily is the co-existent name-and-form; the accompanying faculties (indriya) are the name-and-form and the six entrances (āyatana). The conjoined contact is contact. The conjoined sensation is sensation. The greed itself is craving; the enwrapments (paryavasthāna) conjoined with it are clinging. The two karma-s, bodily and vocal, are becoming (bhava). The very arising of all these dharma-s is birth; their maturing is old-age (jarā); their perishing is death.72

(ii) The “prolonged” interpretation emphasizes the fact that karma and its retribution are not confined to just the immediately preceding and succeeding existences, but extends throughout samsāra — to the beginning past and the future existences73 until one has transcended the samsaric existence altogether. Saṃghabhadra explains that it refers to the beginningless cycling (saṃsāra) on account of the defilements and karma pertaining to the previous and subsequent periods of existence.74

This interpretation is given by Devasarman in his VKŚ:75
On account non-cognizance (ajñāna), one generates intense greed (等貪; saṃrāga) with regard to an agreeable object; the non-cognizance herein is ignorance. The intense greed is conditioning. The cognition of the characteristic of the object is consciousness. The four aggregates together with consciousness constitute name-and-form. The faculties qua support of name-and-form are the six entrances. The coming together of the six entrances is contact. The experience (anubhava) therein is sensation. The delight generated from sensation is craving. The growing of this craving is called clinging. The karma capable of producing a future existence is called becoming. The arising of the aggregates is called birth. The maturing of the aggregates is called old-age. The relinquishing of the aggregates is called death. The fever (熱惱; *jvara) is sorrow. (śoka). Uttering of lamentation is grief ([悲] 歎; *parideva). The uneven sensation conjoined with the five sensory consciousness is pain (苦; duḥkha) …

MVŚ also cites the above passage, and explains that this interpretation differs from the “momentary” interpretation: This one refers to an uninterrupted continuance (相續; *prabandha) of numerous thought-moments rather than to just a single moment; most of the 12 links are distinct dharma-s, though they may arise simultaneously.77 This tallies with Yaśomitra’s explanation on the “prolonged” Conditioned Co-arising:

… prolonged; it means connected with an uninterrupted contuance. … because of the fact that it pertains to many moments or to many existences.78

(iii) The above ‘embryonic’ explanation is said to be the Buddha’s explanation in terms of “states”, pertaining to sentient beings (sattvākhya); it is for the sake of eradicating delusion (sammoha) regarding the past, present and future.79 This is the preferred interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda in terms of the twofold causal relationship in the three periods of existence — causes in the past existence → effect in the present; causes in the present → effect in the future. (See chart above).

MVŚ states that in JPŚ, the interpretation pertaining to states and the prolonged interpretation are expounded.80 Saṃghabhadra explains this Conditioned Co-arising pertaining to states as follows:

Conditioned Co-arising pertaining to states refers to the fact that in the three periods of existence, the five aggregates of [each of] the twelve [states]81 continue uninterruptedly, manifesting their efficacies as dharma-s. As it is said in the sūtra, “karma is the cause of birth, craving is the cause of arising.” …
All Abhidharma masters assert that the Buddha expounds on Conditioned Co-arising in terms of states. ... If in each link all the five aggregates are found, why only the name “ignorance”, etc., is designated [in a given link]? This is because in [each of] the states, the name, ignorance, etc., is designated when ignorance, etc., is predominant. That is, in a given state, if ignorance, etc., predominates most, the five aggregates in this state is collectively given the name “ignorance”; and so on up to: in the state wherein old-age-and-death predominates most, the five aggregates in that state is collectively named “old-age-and-death”. ... In this way, the five aggregates in the preceding state serve as the condition to induce the arising of the five aggregates in the succeeding state.” 82

(iv) PrŚ is said to expound on the both “connected” and the “momentary” interpretation. 83 Yaśomitra comments:

Connected means conjoined with the cause-effect connection (sāṃbandhikah hetuphala-sambandha-yukta). ... In PrŚ, it is said: “What is Conditioned Co-arising? All the conditioned dharma-s.” Therein, Conditioned Co-arising is [said to be] momentary because the conditioned dharma-s are in every moment conjoined with perishing (vinaśa-yogāt). It is [said to be] connected because of the connection of the two moments qua cause and effect (hetuphalabhitobhayakṣaṇa-sambandhāt). 84

The Ābhidharmikas also apply the principle of conditioned co-arising to external causality, thus covering both the sentient and the non-sentient. In AKB, this extension of application is justified with the assertion that the teachings in the Sūtra are intentional (ābhiprāyika), whereas those in the Abhidharma are definitive (lākṣaṇika). 85 MVŚ explains in a similar manner, asserting that application to both, the sentient and non-sentient — such as that in PrŚ which speaks of conditioned co-arising as pertaining to all the conditioned dharma-s — represents the teaching at the level of absolute truth (paramārtha). 86

However, the following comments given elsewhere in MVŚ would seem to imply that some Ābhidharmikas themselves too hold that the Buddha himself at times applied the principle to the whole of phenomenal existence:

For the sake of those to be transformed (vineya), the Fortunate One taught conditioned co-arising as being more or less:

Sometimes he spoke of one conditioned co-arising — all the conditioned dharma-s are collectively called conditioned co-
arising. Thus, it is said ‘What is conditioned co-arising? All conditioned dharma-s.’

Sometimes he spoke of conditioned co-arising as being two — cause and effect.

Sometimes, he spoke of conditioned co-arising as being three — the three different periods of existence, or the [triad:] defilement, k arma and phenomenal bases…. 

14.7. Past karma of the arhat-s and the Buddha

What happens to the past karma of the arhat-s and the Buddha?

It would seem that even they cannot escape the consequences of those which are determinate. However, their moral and spiritual perfection are such that even the gravest past evil karma — such as the splitting of a saṅgha (saṅgha-bheda) — can be made to be experienced in the present existence in such a way that finally no real harm is done. This then does not amount to a retribution as such.

MVŚ states that an ārya does not have retribution of previous evil karma: He has necessarily experienced the retribution of the determinate karma before entering the noble path. As for the indeterminate karma-s, he has already transformed and extinguished them through the power of the noble path. However, it is said that only an arhat can properly know his own previously incurred karma-s as to which are transformable and which are not. He transforms the former through the power of cultivation. As for the latter — of the completing type — he can induce them to be experienced in the present life, there being for him no more future existence.

MVŚ gives examples of evil karma-s which could not be averted by even the arhat-s. For instance, as a result of a previous evil karma, an arhat was imprisoned for a long time in the prison. The force of his evil karma was such that his disciples were made unaware of the imprisonment during all that time. It was only when this evil karma was exhausted that they could find out what had happened and requested the king to release their innocent teacher. On hearing the king’s order to release the śramaṇa in prison, the arhat suddenly woke up as if from a dream and was able to rise up to the sky through his power.

An example of a Buddha’s non-transformable karma which therefore is necessarily retributed, is the event of Devadatta’s splitting the Saṅgha. MVŚ explains that the Buddha himself, having examined his own previous births by means of His proper knowledge, saw that,
in a previous birth, innumerable kalpa-s ago, He had split the retinue of the rṣi-s. Seeing that the retribution of that karma was presently arising, He realized at the time that His Saṅgha was inevitably going to be split. Accordingly, He withdrew into His room and sat there silently as the schism was about to take place.⁹²

Although the life-span of a sentient being is determined by the completing karma, both the Buddha and an arhat can extend or shorten their life span for the sake of benefiting sentient beings or the successful continuation of the Dispensation. Thus, through the power of the action of giving as well as that of dhyāna, an arhat can transform a karma conducive to the retribution of great wealth to that conducive to longevity, or vice versa.⁹³

14.7.1. Can one’s karma bear effect on another or be experienced by another?

Another allusion to the possibility of overcoming the serious effect of evil karma is found in a discussion on the hungry ghosts (preta), in the course of which the following case is examined: A person becomes a hungry ghost on account of his extreme miserliness. The resulting karmic hindrance that he experiences is such that he sees food as impurities and drink as blood, etc., thus being unable to consume either of them. His relatives then perform a meritorious act of making offerings to śramaṇa-s and brāhmaṇa-s on a large scale, with the wish that the meritorious action would help him become free from such sufferings. It is conceded that the hungry ghost would indeed acquire the puṇya (得其福).

But the question then arises as to whether this amounts to the case of transferring merit from one person to another — does it imply that the effect of a karma done by one person is experienced by another?

For the Mahāyānists, the answer would easily be in the affirmative.

The Sarvāstivādins, however, sticking to the early Buddhist teaching on karma that one reaps what one has sown, deny that such is the case. Their explanation, instead, is as follows: That person earlier created himself, through his miserliness, the karmic hindrance for the experience of food and drink. At the time of witnessing the meritorious act occurring in his own abode, he thought of the relatives and fellow villagers as if they were his very own family members and of their belongings as if they were his own. Thereupon, he greatly rejoiced in their merit and gave rise to faith and respect in the field of merit (puṇya-kṣetra), i.e., the religieux receiving the offerings.
Realizing the merit of giving and the fault of miserliness, his volition conjoined with giving came to be accumulated, accomplishing the dṛṣṭa-dharma-vedāṇīya-karma and acquiring the dṛṣṭa-dharma-phala.\textsuperscript{94}

Vasumitra explains the phenomenon thus:

The fruit that he experiences now is projected by an earlier karma. The earlier karma is a hindrance which is removed by the present karma — hence there is no fallacy of a person experiencing the fruit of a karma done by another.

As a matter of fact, even if the person was born into a plane of existence other than that of the preta-s, he would still have been able to acquire the puṇya if he could likewise cause the volition conjoined with giving to be accumulated. And when this volition has accumulated, the person would experience the retribution of both requisites (getting food, clothings, houses, etc.) and a superior psycho-physical complex.\textsuperscript{95}

There is another interesting discussion in MVŚ that is relevant here: When the universe is at its last phase of existence, the human life-span is only ten years. However, those who can practice the ten skillful karma-patha-s will give birth to children with a life-span of 20. The question then arises: Does this not amount to that someone — the child — is experiencing the retribution of the karma of someone else — the mother? Dharmatrāta's explanation is interesting here:

*Karma* and retribution fruit are individually fixed: A karma retributable as a 20-year life-span will effect a fruit of 20-year life-span, and so on up to, a karma retributable as a 80,000-year life-span will effect a fruit of 80,000-year life-span. However, on account of the parents' skillful karma-s, the child's karma [conducive to the retribution of a 20-year life-span] comes to be capable of giving fruit (phala-dāna): Although there is no way that someone can experience the fruit of someone else's karma; karma-s [of different individuals] can mutually serve as conditions in giving fruit.\textsuperscript{96}

14.8. Man's *karma* and his environment, and collective *karma*

An individual's *karma* has repercussions not only for himself, but for the whole universe as well. All paths of *karma*, skillful or unskillful, are said to have a threefold result: fruit of retribution, fruit of emanation (niṣyanda-phala), and fruit of dominance (adhipati-phala). The ten paths of *karma* are in fact said to be established on account of these three fruits.\textsuperscript{97}
For instance, for the path of *karma* of killing, practiced repeatedly:

(i) the fruit of retribution is rebirth in hell, among the animals or among the *preta*-s;

(ii) the fruit of emanation is a short life-span when the transgressor is subsequently reborn in the human world;

(iii) the fruit of dominance is the lack of vitality (*alpaujasa*) and non-durability of external things — such as plants, the planets, etc. Similarly for the other paths of *karma*. 98

Whereas, of the three fruits, the first two are unique to the individual, the third is shared by all beings.

The case of the Universal Monarch’s (*cakra-vartin*) sovereignty over all four continents is also illustrative: his personal mightiness is his fruit of retribution; things under his domination are his fruit of dominance — brought about by his past *karma* contributing to these objects for his personal enjoyment. 99

The paths of *karma* are also said to be established on account of the fact that their prevalence, or otherwise, affects not only the person by way of retribution, but also visibly the external state of things. Thus, when the path of *karma* of the abstention from stealing prevails, all external things will not suffer any calamity or damages caused by frost, storm, etc. And when all ten skillful paths of *karma* prevail, this *Jambudvīpa* (ancient India) will witness four increases — of life-span, of sentient beings, of external items of utility and enjoyment (*pariṣkāra*), and of skillful *dharma*-s.100 All these clearly imply that an individual’s karmic action has both personal and collective aspects. The latter is what is called collective *karma*.

The Sarvāstivāda view — essentially in agreement with those of all Buddhists — is that the whole universe, with all its planets, mountains and oceans, etc., is the result — the fruit of dominance — of the collective *karma* of the totality of beings inhabiting therein.101 It begins with the winds endowed with special power born of this collective *karma*.102 The exhaustion of this collective *karma* brings about the dissolution of the universe through three great calamities — of fire, water and wind.103 The fact that the *karma*-s of beings in this world are mixed — some good, some bad — accounts for the existence of beautiful and pleasant external things such as fragrant flowers, etc., on the one hand, and human bodies with all their impurities on the other. In the case of the
Karma and the Nature of its Retribution

gods (deva), their exclusively skillful karma-s result in the equal beauty of both their internal bodies and external objects of enjoyment.\textsuperscript{104}

A question is raised: If the whole universe originates from the collective karma of all beings, why is it that when a person therein attains parinirvāṇa, there is no decrease in the external things resulting from the extinction of the karma-s of such a being? Vasumitra explains as follows:

There would be decrease in those things that are virile fruits (puruṣakāra-phala) and proximate fruits of dominance [—fruits brought about personally and directly, and hence to be experienced personally]. [Mount] Sumeru, etc., are only the person’s remote fruits of dominance [—he has only contributed to their arising indirectly and collectively along with other beings] there is therefore no decrease in such cases.

[Moreover,] Sumeru, etc., having arisen from the collective karma of all beings, would not become diminished even if among them [just] one single being remains, on account of their being sustained by his karmic force, how much more so when there are still innumerable beings who have not attained parinirvāṇa. …

[Moreover,] even if innumerable beings have attained parinirvāṇa or have been born elsewhere, there are also innumerable beings who have come to be born in this universe; on account of the latter’s karmic force, there is no decrease.\textsuperscript{105}
NOTES

1 A, i, 250; the Sarvāstivāda version is cited in MVŚ, 99b ff., as the Salt-simile sūtra, 鹽喻經 — see below.
2 Cf. AKB(F), 1062, n. 219.
3 AKB, 357.
4 AKB, 357: kṛtvā 'budho 'lpam api pāpam adhah prayāti | kṛtvā budho mahad api prājahāty anarthaṁ | mājīty ayo 'lpam api vārīni samhatam hi | pātrīkṛtam mahad api plavate tad eva |. (The underlined parts are emendations).
5 Ny, 694b.
6 Quoted in MVŚ, 182b.
7 Cf. MVŚ, 619a, etc.
8 MVŚ, 620a–c; AKB, 232, 271; Vy, 394.
9 See supra, § 13.8.3; AKB, 197; Ny, 542b.
10 MVŚ, 184c.
11 Ny, 569c; see passage quoted below.
12 MVŚ, 593b.
13 This is a rejection of the Dārṣṭāntika notion that there are karma-s which are determinate with regard to the time of retribution, but indeterminate with regard to retribution.
14 Ny, 569c.
15 MVŚ, 100a.
16 AKB, 264.
17 MVŚ, 276b–c. Cf. AKB, 265 — La Vallée Poussin’s translation here is not in accord with the Sanskrit.
18 E.g., T 28, 386b–c.
19 T 26, 718a.
20 T 26, 921b, etc.
21 MVŚ, 125c. It states that according to some masters, the two terms do not signify any difference.
22 AKB, 269, stanza 120, summarizes the five conditions under which a karma is said to have been accumulated:
On account of [i] its being intentional, of [ii] its completion, of [iii] being without remorse and counteraction,
Of [iv] accompaniments, and of [v] retribution, a karma is said to be accumulated
saṃcetana-samāptibhyāṁ nīskaukṛtya-vipaksatāḥ |
parivārād vipākāc ca karmopacitam ucyate |120|
23 Cf. MVŚ, 125c.
24 Cf. MVŚ, loc. cit.
25 AKB, 239: dvābhyaṁ hi kāraṇābhyaṁ prāṇātipātāvadyena sprāyate prayogataḥ mrte sati phala-paripūritaś ca |
26 MVŚ, 619a–b.
27 Vy, 401: prayogasya maulaḥ karma-pathāḥ phala-paripūriḥ | yo hi prayujyate maulam karma-patham na janayati tasya prayoga-phalam asti | na tu phala-
14. Karma and the Nature of its Retribution

paripūriḥ

28 MVŚ, 617c.
29 Cf. AKB, 260.
30 Cf. Ny, 569b.
31 Cf. MVŚ, 126a.
32 Cf. MVŚ, 126a; also see above where a naiva-samvara-nāsamvara — a retributive karmic force — is relinquished through sincere repentance, and through not doing in accordance with one’s pledge, etc.
33 AKB, 271 f.; Vy, 435; Ny, 569b; cf. MVŚ, 125c.
34 Cf. MVŚ, 125b.
35 Cf. MVŚ, 126a, 618a ff.
36 MVŚ, 619a.
37 Cf. MVŚ, 125c–126a, 618a–619a.
38 Cf. MVŚ, 359b.
39 MVŚ, 593b; Ny, 570b–571a.
40 Ny, 570c–571a.
41 AKB, 235.
42 AKB, 416.
43 S, iv, 317.
45 Cf. Dhammapada, 173; T no. 210, 562c.
46 MVŚ, 511a.
47 MVŚ, 623b.
48 MVŚ, 99a–b; AKB, 258.
49 AKB, 258.
50 MVŚ, 98a, 887c.
51 Ny, 578b; AKB, 261.
52 Cf. Ny, 396a.
53 MVŚ, 820c: Only the akuśala and the kuśala-sāsrava dharma-s are sa-vipāka, although their vipāka-phala-s may or may not be acquired.
54 AKB, 259.
55 Cf. AKB, 258; MVŚ, 99c.
56 AKB, 120 ff.
57 Cf. MVŚ, 356c ff.
58 AKB, 123.
59 MVŚ, 359b.
60 MVŚ, 116b ff. — especially 122a–c; AKB, 131 ff.; Ny, 480c ff.
61 Cf. MVŚ, 126a–b.
62 Ny, 497a.
63 Ny, 496c.
64 Ny, 492a.
65 MVŚ, 122b.
AKB, 134 f.

Ny, 497a.

MVŚ, 121c; other explanations are also given (ibid., 121c–122a; cf. AKB, 135).

MVŚ, 122b; AKB, 134 f.; Ny, 496c–497a.

MVŚ, 117c; AKB, 132 f.; Ny, 493b–494b.

Ny, 493c.

MVŚ, 118c; AKB, 133.

Cf. Ny, 494b.

Ny, 494b.

However, according to Yin Shun, the interpretation given in VKŚ is the “connected” interpretation. See Study, 217.

VKŚ, 547b. Also quoted in MVŚ, 118c.

MVŚ, 118c.

Vy, 286: … prākarṣikaḥ prabandha-yukta ity arthaḥ | … aneka-kṣaṇikatvād anekajānumikatvād vā |

AKB, 133; Ny, 494b.

MVŚ, 118c.

MVŚ, 118: “Herein, only the Conditioned Co-arising pertaining to states is expounded: the twelve stes are designated as twelve links each possessing the five aggregates.”

Ny, 494b.

MVŚ, 117c; AKB, 133: kṣaṇikah śāṃbandhikaś ca yathā prakaraṇeṣu pratītya- samutpādaḥ katamaḥ | sarve śāṃskṛta dharmā iti |

Vy, 286. Cf. Ny, 494b: “Connected Conditioned Co-arising refers to the fact that homogeneous and heterogeneous causes and effects arise in immediate succession, mutually connected.”

Cf. AKB, 133.

MVŚ, 117b.

MVŚ, 122a.

MVŚ, 620c.

MVŚ, 658b.

MVŚ, 103c.

MVŚ, 654c–655a, 655b.

MVŚ, 603c.

MVŚ, 656a–657c.

MVŚ, 61a.

MVŚ, 61a–b.

MVŚ, 103a.

MVŚ, 588c.

MVŚ, 588c–589a; AKB, 253 f.

MVŚ, 107a.

Cf. MVŚ, 588a–c, 127c.

MVŚ, 41b, 106c, 692c.

AKB, 157 f., 189: sattvānāṃ karmajāḥ prabhāva-visiṣṭo vāyurbījāṃ | Cf. MVŚ,
14. *Karma and the Nature of its Retribution*

691b; Ny, 216b.

103 MVŚ, 690a ff.
104 AKB, 192.
105 MVŚ, 106c–107a.
SARVASTIVADA ABHIDHARMA
15. The Path of Spiritual Progress

15.1. Doctrine of gradual enlightenment
15.2. Preliminaries for the preparatory stage
15.3. Different stages of the path
  15.3.1. Mokṣa-bhāgīya
    15.3.1.1. Śamatha and vipaśyanā
  15.3.2. Nirvedha-bhāgīya
    15.3.2.1. Warmth (uṣmagata/ūṣmagata/ūṣman)
    15.3.2.2. Summits (mūrdhan)
    15.3.2.3. Receptivities (kṣānti)
    15.3.2.4. Supreme mundane dharma-s
  15.3.3. Summary
15.4. Direct realization (abhisamaya), path of vision (darśana-mārga) and stream entry (srotaāpatti)
  15.4.1. Satyābhisamaya as a gradual process
  15.4.2. Entry into the Certainty of Perfection (samyaktva-niyamāvakrānti)
15.5. Non-retrogressibility of stream-entry
15.6. Path of cultivation (bhāvanā-mārga)
15.7. Attainment of the four fruits of the spiritual life
15.8. Out-of-sequence attainments
15.9. Retrogressibility of an arhat

15.1. Doctrine of gradual enlightenment

The sixth chapter of AKB is devoted entirely to the discussion on the path and spiritual attainments and it enumerates and defines various paths. Indeed, the study of the nature and functions of the various paths is an integral part of abhidharma. One of the four great Sarvāstivāda masters, Ghoṣaka, underscores this in his definition of abhidharma:

For the seeker for liberation engaged in the proper practice, [abhidharma] can analyze what has not been understood: this is duḥkha; this is the cause of duḥkha; this is the cessation of duḥkha; this is the path leading to the cessation; this is the preparatory path (prayoga-mārga); this is the unhindered path (ānantarya-mārga); this is the path of liberation (vimukti-mārga); this is the path of advance (viśeṣa-mārga); this is the path of the candidate (pratipannaka-mārga); this is the acquisition of fruit. Abhidharma is so called because it can correctly analyze such meanings. (See also, § 1.2).
For the Sarvāstivāda, the path of spiritual progress is a very long journey. It takes three *asaṃkhyeya-kalpa*-s for a practitioner to reach the state of perfect Buddhahood^5^ practicing accumulatively the six perfections (*śīla*, *dāna*, *vīrya*, *ksānti*, *dhyāna* and *prajñā-pāramitā*) and tens of thousands of difficult practices on the way. This long period of practice pertains, in fact, only to the stage of preparatory effort (*prayoga*).^5^ The whole process is one of gradual progress, and the Sarvāstivāda doctrine is definitely not one of sudden enlightenment. MVŚ records the Buddha's own statements in this regard:

> I remember that in the past, I have stated thus: ‘There is no śramaṇa or brāhmaṇa, etc., in the past, present or future who can acquire knowledge and vision with regard to all dharma-s abruptly. If one says there is, [one is speaking of] an impossibility. One must first go through three *asaṃkhyeya-kalpa*-s, practicing tens of thousands of difficult practices, gradually perfecting the six *pāramitā*-s, in order that one can possess true knowledge and vision with regard to all dharma-s.'^6^

MVŚ records the view of some, such as the ‘abrupt-abandonment śramaṇa-s’, that defilements are abandoned all at once at the stage of the arising of the *vajropama-samādhi*; at all the previous stages there only can be the temporary suppression of the active *pariyavasthāna*-s. Others, like the Dārśāntikas and the Bhadanta, assert that ordinary worldlings cannot abandon any defilements at all. This is because only the ārya-s possess the noble (i.e., pure) *prajñā* with which alone the defilements can be abandoned (cf. § 12.9.3). For these various masters then one cannot properly speak of any spiritual progress through the worldly paths. MVŚ states, in this connection, that it is in fact for the purpose of refuting such views that the two counteractions for the abandonment of defilements — the distinction between the path of vision (*darśana-mārga*) and the path of cultivation (*bhāvanā-mārga*) — are shown. Each of the three spheres of existence has these two categories of defilements — *darśana-heya* and *bhāvanā-heya* — which must be totally eradicated, and this process takes place gradually. Like the Sarvāstivādins, these opponents also concede that there are four fruits of the spiritual life (*śrāmaṇya-phala*). However, they hold that the abandonment of the defilements can take place only at the time of *vajropama-samādhi*. The first three fruits can only suppress the defilements, inducing the *vajropama-samādhi*. Other opponents hold that direct insight into all four noble truths arises abruptly (see below, § 15.3.1). This view too is refuted in the same context by the Sarvāstivādins who argue that like the *bhāvanā-heya* defilements, the *darśana-heya* ones must also be abandoned gradually, not all at once.^8^
In brief, in the Sarvāstivāda system, the gradual path of spiritual progress begins at the stage when the practitioner is an ordinary worldling. When he becomes an ārya, he must continue to move up gradually. The gradual degrees of spiritual insight acquired on the whole path correspond to the gradual abandoning of defilements at the various stages. At the very final stage of the path of cultivation, the vajropama-samādhi arises and the practitioner cuts off whatever defilements remain. He then acquires a homogeneous acquisition of disjunction (visamyoga-prāpti) collectively with regard to the abandonment of all the defilements pertaining to the two categories in the three spheres, and he is said to have acquired the complete knowledge of the exhaustion of all fetters (sarva-samyojana-paryādāna-parijñā). The end of the journey is when the knowledge of the absolute non-arising (anutpāda-jñāna) of all future defilements arises in him, and he is said to have attained nirvāṇa.

15.2. Preliminaries for the preparatory stage

The preparatory stage (prayoga), in the proper sense, comprises meditative practices. But, in keeping with the general Buddhist tradition, the whole spiritual path of the Sarvāstivāda is an integrated system of śīla–samādhi–prajñā. That is to say: meditative practices (samādhi) cannot be isolated from the total context of spiritual commitment and a life of ethical alignment that is, in general, in keeping with this commitment. Accordingly, there are preliminary preparations before one can even properly embark on those meditative practices.

DSŚ prescribes the following steps in the path of progress, starting from learning the Dharma from spiritual guides:

If one can draw near to and attend on the True Men (sat-puruṣa), then one can hear the True Dharma. Having heard the True Dharma, one can then properly contemplate (yoniśo manas-√kr, which in such contexts means meditation or contemplation) on the profound and subtle meanings. Having properly contemplated on the profound and subtle meanings, one can then proceed to the practice of the Dharma and what accords with the Dharma (dharma-anudharma-pratipatti). Having vigorously practiced the Dharma and what accords with the Dharma, one can then enters into the Certainty of Perfection (nyāmāvakānti = niyāmāvakānti).
These four steps — drawing near to the True Men, listening to the True Dharma, proper contemplation and the practice of the Dharma and what accords with the Dharma — are called the four factors of Stream-entry (srota-āpatty-ānga), being conducive to its attainment.\textsuperscript{12}

In the context of commenting on the sūtra reference to “profound Abhidharma”, MVŚ brings out more explicitly the integrated practices in terms of Abhidharma studies, meditative practices and realization:

In the absolute sense (paramārtha), the intrinsic nature of Abhidharma can only be the outflow-free faculty of understanding (prajñendriya). From this very perspective, those which bring about the excellent (viśiṣṭa) worldly ‘understanding derived from cultivation’ (bhāvanā-mayī prajñā) — namely, ‘warmth’, ‘summits’, ‘receptivities’ and the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ — can also be called Abhidharma on account of their ability to discern the four noble truths separately.

Again from this very perspective, those that bring about the excellent ‘understanding derived from reflection’ (cintāmayī prajñā) — namely, contemplation on the impure, mindfulness of breathing, etc. — can also be called Abhidharma on account of their ability to discern the aggregates (skandha) separately and collectively.

Again from this very perspective, those that bring about the excellent ‘understanding derived from listening’ (śrutamayī prajñā) — [namely,] the analysis and establishment of the intrinsic and common characteristics of dharma-s, destroying the delusion with regard to existent entities and cognitive objects (ālambana) — can also be called Abhidharma on account of the fact that they neither superimpose (sam-ā-√ruh) nor deny (apa-√vad) with regard to dharma-s.

Again from this very perspective, those that bring about the excellent ‘understanding derived from the abode of birth’ (upapatti-sthāna-prātilambhikā prajñā) can also be called Abhidharma on account of their ability to operate (√vrī) non-erroneously in receiving, bearing in mind, pondering and examining the12-limb (dvādaśāṅga) teaching of the tripiṭaka.\textellipsis\textsuperscript{13}

The above explanations are in fact a statement of preparatory stages that lead to the attainment of perfect prajñā (= Abhidharma in the absolute sense). These stages are as follows:
15. THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

Studying the Buddha’s teaching with the support of the understanding derived from birth (upapatti-prātilambhika-prajñā)

Studying the Abhidharma — analyzing the characteristics of dharma-s (śrutamayī prajñā)

Meditations such as contemplation on the impure and mindfulness of breathing (cintāmayī prajñā)

‘Warmth’, ‘summits’, ‘receptivities’ and the ‘supreme mundane dharma-s’ (bhāvanāmayī prajñā)

Attainment of outflow-free prajñā (final destination)

A more comprehensive, although succinct, prescription for the steps leading to stream entry is given in MVŚ as follows:

These are the preliminary preparations for one [aiming at] the fruit of stream entry:

At the beginning, because of his aspiration for the fruit of liberation, he diligently practices [i] giving (dāna) and the pure precepts (śīla); [ii] the understanding derived from listening, the contemplation of the impure, mindfulness of breathing and the foundations of mindfulness (smṛtyupasthāna); and [iii] warmth, summits, receptivities and the supreme mundane dharma-s; and [then he enters into] [iv] the 15 moments of the path of vision. This is collectively said to be “firmly on one’s feet”.

The above prescription clearly includes the practice of skillful acts such as giving and ethical alignment.

Elsewhere, MVŚ explains why there is no retrogression from stream entry and speaks of the foundation of the path of vision:

Question: Why is there no one who retrogresses from stream entry?

Answer: Because of the firmness of its foundation.

What is the foundation?

This comprises the [following practices] of the seeker for liberation: giving; ethical living; engagement in the works of the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha; attending on the old and the sick, recitation of the noble words and expounding them to others; proper mental application (yoniso manaskāra); the practice of the contemplation on the impure, mindfulness of breathing,
the foundations of mindfulness, the contemplation of the three meanings (三義), skillfulness with regard to the seven abodes (七處善; *sapta-sthāna-kauśala), warmth, summits, receptivities and the supreme mundane dharma-s.\textsuperscript{15}

We have here the prescription of not only more skillful activities, both social and religious, such as attending on the sick and expounding the Dharma, but also the following two additional contemplative practices:\textsuperscript{16}

(1) Contemplation of the three meanings, which refers to the sequential contemplation on the true meanings of the skandha-s, āyatana-s and dhātu-s.

(2) Skillfulness with regard to the seven abodes which is an examination of the five aggregates truly as they are, from seven perspectives. To take rūpa as an example: one examines rūpa itself as (i) fruit, and (ii) the causes from which it is generated. One further examines (iii) its cessation, (iv) the counteracting path leading to its cessation, (v) its enjoyable aspect (āsvādana) as an object of attachment, (vi) its loathsome aspect as a fault (ādīnava) to be avoided, and finally (vii) the transcendence of its attachment.

These two practices are not mentioned in AKB in this context. But their occurrence is already attested in the Saṃyuktāgama.\textsuperscript{17}

AKB prescribes the preliminaries as follows:\textsuperscript{18}

(I) observance of the precepts (śīlaṃ pālayati);

(II) development of the proper understanding derived from listening (śruta-mayī prajñā) — studying and receiving instructions from teachers.

To ensure success in meditation, one must purify one’s body and mind in three ways:

(i) physical withdrawal or distancing (vyapakarṣa) by dissociating from evil friends and cutting off unfavorable conditions, and mental withdrawal by eradicating unskillful thoughts (akuśala-vitarka);

(ii) practicing contentment and having few desires (saṃtuṣṭiś ca alpecchatā ca);
(iii) abiding in the four noble lineages (ārya-vamśa) — called thus because the noble ones are begotten from them (āryāṇām ebhyah prasavāt) — which are non-greed in nature (alobha): [they are] (a-c) contentment with clothing, food, bed and seat, and (d) delight in the abandonment of defilements (= in the realization of cessation (nirodha)) and in the cultivation of the noble path (prahāṇa-bhāvanā-ārāmatā).

Unlike in the Yogācāra, the preliminary practices are not specifically referred to as a distinct stage, known as “the stage of the requisites” (資糧位; sambhāra-avasthā) or sometimes “the path of requisites” (資糧道; *sambhāra-mārga; tshogs gyi lam), in the process of spiritual progress. Nevertheless, even in the early texts such as SgPs, we can find meritorious practices like giving referred to as requisites to be cultivated and accumulated. MVŚ explains that the Buddha acquires the pure great compassion (mahā-karuṇa) as a result of the perfection of the twofold requisites of merits and knowledge (福德智慧資糧; puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāra); the former comprising acts of giving, including that of his life, observation of the pure precepts, ascetic practices and endurance. (i.e., dāna-, śīla-, kṣānti- and vīrya-pāramitā); the latter, cultivation of the dhyāna-s and relentless seeking for excellent wisdom (i.e. dhyāna- and prajñā-pāramitā).

Elsewhere, MVŚ explains that the bodhisattva (i.e., the Buddha-to-be) can enter the womb without any topsy-turvi-ness on account of his being excellently equipped with merit and knowledge:

According to some masters (presumably some Sarvāstivāda masters), on account of the very great predominance of merit and knowledge in the bodhisattva, when he is about to enter the womb, he does not have any topsy-turvy ideation and does not give rise to any sensual craving. Although a Universal Monarch (cakravartin) and a Privately Enlightened One (pratyeka-buddha) also possess merit and knowledge, they are not greatly predominant in their case; for this reason, when they enter the womb, they too give rise to sensual craving even though there is no topsy-turvy ideation.

Within the Abhidharma tradition, merits and knowledge have indeed come to be highlighted as the twofold fundamental requisites in the path of spiritual progress. This Sarvāstivādin emphasis is consistently maintained in later time. Thus, Samghabhadra states likewise that a Universal Monarch, a Privately Enlightened One and a Perfectly Enlightened One (= Buddha) enter the womb differently. The first has proper awareness (without topsy-turviness, and hence sensual craving)
in entering, but not in staying inside it and exiting from it. The second can maintain proper awareness in both entering and staying, but not in exiting. The third can maintain proper awareness throughout the three stages of entering, staying and exiting. The difference is accounted for as follows:

The first excels in karma, in as much as he has cultivated extensive merits. The second excels in knowledge, in as much as he has cultivated learning (bahuśruta) and excellent discernment for a long time. The third excels in both, in as much as he has cultivated [both] excellent merits and knowledge for many aoens (曠劫修行勝福慧故).  

The emphasis of merits is also indicated in the doctrine of the three skillful roots attested in MVŚ and the subsequent texts: that conducive to merits (puṇya-bhāgīya), that conducive to liberation (mokṣa-bhāgīya) and that conducive to penetration (nirvedha-bhāgīya). As we shall explain below, the second and third together constitute the stage of preparation proper. AKB describes the three thus:

That conducive to merits is that which brings about desirable retribution. When that conducive to liberation has arisen, [the practitioner] is destined to be of the nature of [realizing] Nirvāṇa (parinirvāṇa-dharmā bhavati) … That conducive to penetration is fourfold, warmth, etc.

It is thus clear that the skillful root conducive to merits, though certainly helpful to the practitioner in a general way and therefore also constitutes preparatory effort in the broader sense, is not on a par with the other two roots which specifically prepare him for spiritual attainment. It is for this reason that it is not included in the preparatory path proper. The descriptions in the other texts are essentially the same, but explain this root in more wors. Saṃghabhadra's explanation, which is very similar to that in ADV, is as follows:

That conducive to merits is that which effects the seed of desirable retribution among gods and men, etc. It is that by virtue of which, there come about the various desirable retributions such as those of a greatly eminent clan (maheśākhya) in the world, great wealth (mahābhogya), physical beauty (rūpya), the Universal Monarch (cakravartin), Sakra, Brahmā, etc. That conducive to liberation is that on account of which, because of the stabilization of the skillful disposition towards liberation (moksāśayāvasthānāt), rendered unshakable, [the practitioner] becomes destined (niyata) for parinirvāṇa … That conducive to penetration is fourfold, warmth, etc.
15.3. Different stages of the path

The whole path leading to this final perfection is divided by the Sarvāstivādins into the seven stages of preparatory effort and four stages of spiritual fruits, as shown in the following chart:

7 prayoga

I. śamatha practices
II. smṛtyupasthāna-s (individually)
III. smṛtyupasthāna-s (collectively)
IV. uṣmagata
V. mūrdhan
VI. kṣānti
VII. laukikāgradharma

vipaśyanā

mokṣabhāgīya

nirvedhabhāgīya

(4 kuśalamūla)

4 phala

I. srotaāpatti pratiṣṭhāna phala
darśana-mārga

II. sakṛdāgāmin pratiṣṭhāna phala
bhāvanā-mārga

III. anāgāmin pratiṣṭhāna phala

IV. arhat pratiṣṭhāna phala
asaiṣṭa-mārga

From the chart above, one sees that the preparatory path comprises two portions:

(1) mokṣa-bhāgīya: those conducing, i.e., serving as causes, to liberation (= nirvāṇa);

(2) nirvedha-bhāgīya: those conducing to decisive distinction, i.e., to the arising of outflow-free knowledge.

In AKB, the nirvedha-bhāgīya is also collectively called the four skillful roots, as they lead to the fruition of stream entry (srotaāpatti) which is the point of no return in the spiritual journey — the practitioner is henceforth destined for perfect liberation. It is the critical point at which a prthagjana becomes an ārya, never to retrogress to be a mundane worldling again. MVŚ, however, speaks of both portions equally as being skillful roots — in the sense of being seeds, and explains the two terms as follows:

The mokṣa-bhāgīya kuśala-mūla-s: [the practitioner] plants the seeds that are decisive for liberation. On account of this, he decidedly can (is destined to) attain parinirvāṇa.
The nirvedha-bhāgīya kuśala-mūla-s are: uṣmagata(ūṣmgata), mūrdhan, kṣānti, laukiāgra-dharma.26

15.3.1. Mokṣa-bhāgīya

MVŚ27 proceeds here to analyze the mokṣa-bhāgīya articulately:

(i) They have as their intrinsic nature (svabhāva) the threefold karma — bodily, vocal and mental — with the predominance of the mental.

(ii) They pertain to the mind ground (mano-bhūmi).

(iii) They are acquired through effort, not innate.

(iv) They are derived from śruta-mayī and cintā-mayī, not bhāvanā-mayī prajñā.

(v) They are produced only among human beings, only in those existing in kāmadhātu — not rūpa-ārūpya-dhātu-s; and only those in the three continents — not in the Uttarakuru-dvīpa.

(vi) They are planted (as seeds) only where the Buddha-dharma exists, hence only when a Buddha appears.

(vii) They are planted by both males and females.

(viii) They may arise as a result of the practice of giving, or of ethical observance, or of hearing (learning) the Dharma from others: One may plant these seeds of liberation by the mere giving of one lump (piṇḍa) of food or by the mere observance of the eight precepts (upavasthā-śīla), etc., provided the motivation is genuinely for liberation.

(ix) These can be planted only by those who have a strong aspiration for nirvāṇa and disgust for saṃsāra.

(x) Once they have been planted, it takes a minimum of three lives to attain liberation: in the first life the seeds are planted; in the second, they are matured; in the third, liberation is attained. But it may take many many kalpa-s (a) if the practitioner fails to give rise to the nirvedha-bhāgīya, or (b) if he, although having given rise to the nirvedha-bhāgīya, fails in the many kalpa-s that follow to give rise to samyaktva-niyāma-avakramaṇa (i.e., attain stream entry — see infra, § 15.4).
(xi) There are six progressively superior types/families (gotra) (see infra — on six types of arhat) of mokṣa-bhāgīya: (1) parihāṇa-dharman — those susceptible to retrogression; (2) cetanā-dharman — those capable of ending their existences at will; (3) anurakṣanā-dharman — those capable of protecting themselves from retrogression; (4) sthitākampya — those capable of abiding in their attainment without retrogressing, although they may not progress unless effort is exerted; (5) prativedhanā-dharman — those capable of penetrating the state of arhat; (6) akopya-dharman — those absolutely not susceptible to retrogression. Each preceding type is transformed progressively to the succeeding type.

(xii) The śrāvaka-type (śrāvaka-gotra) of mokṣa-bhāgīya is transformed, giving rise to those of the pratyeka-buddha and Buddha. The pratyeka-buddha type is transformed, giving rise to those of the śrāvaka and Buddha. The Buddha-type having been given rise to, there can be no further transformation as it is the strongest (tiṣṇa, tiṝva) type.

Those who have not planted the kuśala-mūla-s of mokṣa-bhāgīya are said to be stream-accordants (anu-srota); those who have done so, stream-discordants (prati-srota). “Stream” here refers to saṃsāra. For even if one should perform great meritorious actions, or master the tripiṭaka, or practice and have various meditative attainments and supernormal powers, etc., and obtain favorable states of rebirth, one would still have to experience duḥkha in saṃsāra. On the other hand, as a result of having planted the kuśala-mūla-s of mokṣa-bhāgīya at the preparatory stage,

a person can be said to be abiding on the shore of nirvāṇa. [This is so] even if he should, on account of his defilements, subsequently commit various bodily, vocal or mental actions, or the ānantarya-karma-s, or cut off all kuśala-mūla-s to the extent that there exists in him not the slightest seed of white dharma-s, [even if he should] fall into the āvīci hells, undergoing various forms of suffering. This is on account of this person being destined to attain parinirvāṇa.28 (However, he is not said to have entered samyaktva-niyāma).

Such being the spiritual significance of the mokṣa-bhāgīya, the meaning of the term should become obvious. It is said that it is better to be Devadatta who fell into the āvīci hell than to be Udraka-rāmaputra who was born into the naiva-saṃjñā-nāsaṃjñā heaven. For, although
the former committed three of the ānantarya-karma-s and thereby cut off the kuśala-mūla-s, he will — on account of having acquired the mokṣa-bhāgīya — attain pratyekabuddha-bodhi at the time when human life can last 84,000 years, becoming a tīkṣṇendriya excelling even Śāriputra, etc. The latter did not plant the mokṣa-bhāgīya. Accordingly, in spite of his rebirth in the bhavāgra, he ended up in the evil planes of existence unable to gain liberation.

15.3.1.1. Śamatha and vipaśyanā

The above emphasis on the critical importance of the mokṣa-bhāgīya for liberation also spells out the great significance of tranquility (śamatha) and insight (vipaśyanā) — of which the mokṣa-bhāgīya is comprised — as spiritual praxis.

The practitioner begins with the two śamatha practices of contemplation on the impure (aśubhā-bhāvanā) and mindfulness of breathing (ānāpānasmṛti) which constitute the entrance into spiritual cultivation proper. The former practice is the contemplation on the progressive deterioration of the body, and has the counteraction of greed as its aim. The latter comprises six aspects: counting, following, fixing, observing, modifying and purifying. MVŚ calls these two meditative practices the two gateways of immortality (amṛta-dvāra), i.e., nirvāṇa.

In the Chinese commentary, the tranquility meditations are often collectively spoken of as the ‘five-fold mental stilling’ (五停心). This is also the term that had been used in the various works of the great Tian Tai master, Zhi Yi (智顗; ca. 538–597).

The corresponding Sanskrit term cannot be traced in AKB or other related Indian Abhidharma texts in their original. In MVŚ, the meditations under this group are mentioned in some places, but are not explicitly grouped together. At one place in this text, it is stressed that “meditators rely mostly on the contemplation of the impurities as the gateway for entering into the noble path”. There, this contemplation is discussed at very great length, and it is shown how, immediately after completing this contemplation, the meditator can sail into the vipaśyanā practice of the mindfulness on the body, etc.

But, as a specific group of tranquility practices, the five methods had probably developed at a fairly early stage. An early Chinese translation of the Bodhisattva-bhūmi (菩薩地持經; T 30, no. 1581) enumerates them as the five “gateways (/methods) for entry” (度門, *avatāra-mukha): 1. contemplation on the impure. 2. meditation on loving kindness (maitrī),


3. contemplation on conditioned co-arising, 4. contemplation on the division of the dhātu-s, 5. mindfulness of breathing. In Buddhāmitra's *Essential Methods of the Five-gateway Dhyāna-sūtra* (T 15, no. 619, 五門禪經要用法; 325c), the contemplation on the dhātu-s is replaced by the ‘recollection on the Buddha’ (*buddhānusmṛti*). These meditations are said to have been taught in consideration of the different personality types — those of the predominantly greedy type (*adhi-rāga*), those of the predominantly distracted type (*adhi-vitarka*), etc.:

(1) contemplation on the impure — greedy type

(2) meditation on loving kindness — hateful type

(3) contemplation on conditioned co-arising — deluded type

(4) contemplation on the dhātu-s — conceited, self-attached type

(5i) mindfulness of breathing — distracted type

(5ii) (recollection on the Buddha — those who are drowsy, have unwholesome thoughts, and are oppressed by object domains)

Having achieved tranquility, the practitioner then proceeds to the practice of insight comprising the fourfold application of mindfulness on body (*kāya*), sensation (*vedanā*), ideations (*saṃjñā*) and dharma-s. This is done in two ways: First, he contemplates the specific characteristics of each of the four — the body is impure; sensations are unsatisfactory; ideations are impermanent; all dharma-s are without a Self. He must also contemplate generally that the body, sensations, ideations and dharma-s are — in each case — like all conditioned dharma-s in being impure, unsatisfactory, impermanent and without a Self. Next, he contemplates collectively that all four — body, sensations, ideations and dharma-s — are equally impure, unsatisfactory, impermanent and without a Self.

It is to be noted that for the Sarvāstivādins, śamatha and vipaśyānā are not mutually exclusive practices, nor are they to be too sharply differentiated. It is an abhidharma doctrine that within one and the same thought there exists both śamatha and vipaśyānā. Indeed, according to the Sarvāstivāda, samādhi and prajñā necessarily co-exist as two of the ten universal thought-concomitants (see supra, § 9.3.4.1). The two types of practitioner are to be distinguished from the point of view of their preparatory stages:

Those who mostly cultivate the requisites of śamatha are those who, at the stage of preparatory effort, always delight in solitude and shun noisiness. They see the faults of socializing...
and constantly dwell in quiet places. When they enter into the noble path, they are called the śamatha-type of practitioner (śamatha-carita).

Those who mostly cultivate the requisites of vipaśyanā are those who, at the stage of preparatory effort, always delight in studying and reflecting on the tripiṭaka. They repeatedly examine the specific and general characteristics of all dharma-s. When they enter into the noble path, they are called the vipaśyanā-type of practitioner (vipaśyanā-carita).

Their mutual non-exclusiveness is also underscored in the various opinions given in MVŚ by different Ābhidharmika masters as to how many of the six aspects of mindfulness of breathing (§ 15.3.1.1) come under either śamatha or vipaśyanā: Some say the first three are śamatha, the last three vipaśyanā; others say the opposite. The compilers of MVŚ remark that “there is no fixed rule here — all may come under śamatha or all may come under vipaśyanā”.

One question here arises: Does one need to acquire the samāpatti-s in order to acquire the pure prajñā which liberates us from saṃsāra? Does one in fact need to practice meditation at all?

From the Sarvāstivāda Ābhidharmika perspective, the answer is clearly ‘yes’. It is stated that the four skillful roots (i.e., the nirvedhabhāgīya) can only be produced from the understanding derived from cultivation, at an equipoised (samāhita) stage, not from those derived from reflection and listening. In other words, at the preparatory stage leading to the actual attainment of warmth, etc., the practitioner necessarily depends on meditative practices.

More specifically, the practitioner can acquire these roots only at the stages of the ‘not-yet-arrived’ (anāgamya), the intermediate meditation (dhyānāntara) and the four fundamental meditations (dhyāna). This means that he must have acquired the degree of concentration of the ‘not-yet arrived’ stage. This stage is a ‘neighborhood’ (sāmantaka), i.e., a meditative state bordering the dhyāna stage proper into which its power of concentration is strong enough to lead. There is one such ‘neighborhood’ stage bordering each of the meditative attainments (samāpatti). Since there are eight meditative attainments — four dhyāna-s (also called the four ‘fundamental or principal meditations’, maula-dhyāna) of the fine-material sphere and four meditative attainments of the non-material sphere (ārūpya) — there are corresponding eight ‘neighborhood’ stages, the first of which, bordering the first dhyāna, is called the ‘not-yet-arrived’ stage.
15.3.2. Nirvedha-bhāgīya

Penetration (nirvedha) here refers to insight — that is, the ārya-mārga. AKB explains the term as follows:

Penetrating (vidha) is in the sense of distinction (vibhāga). Nirvedhaḥ means decisive distinction which is the noble path. For through it [— the noble path —] there is the abandonment of doubt and the distinction of the truths: ‘This is duḥkha’; up to ‘This is the path’. Its portion (bhāga) refers to one portion of the dārśana-mārga. They are conducive to nirvedha (nirvedha-bhāgīyāni) because they are favorable to it on account of being its inducer. ⁵⁰

The nirvedha-bhāgīya-s comprise the warmth (uṣmagata/ūṣmagata), the summits (mūrdhan), the receptivities (kṣānti), and the supreme mundane dharma-s (laukikāgra-dharma); each serves as the samanantara-pratyaya for the succeeding one. ⁵¹ These four are also called

1. “truth-coursing” (satya-cāra),
2. “counteraction-cultivation” (pratipakṣa-bhāvanā),
3. skillful roots (kuśala-mūla):

(1) because they course through the four truths by means of the 16 modes of activities (ākāra); (2) because “for the sake of the ārya-mārga, one cultivates the body as a receptacle (kāya-bhājana), removing the impurities and inducing the ārya-mārga”; (3) because “these four constitute the very foundation and footing for the ārya-mārga and nirvāṇa which are the truly good (paramārthena kuśala).” ⁵² In terms of the threefold prajñā — śruta-mayī, cintā-mayī and bhāvanā-mayī — the mokṣa-bhāgīya-s are subsumed under cintā-mayī prajñā, while the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s under bhāvanā-mayī prajñā; both being induced by the abhidharma which, in its intrinsic nature, in the highest sense (paramārthatas) is the outflow-free prajñā. ⁵³

As to whether a bodhisattva, in the course of his previous existences has given rise to the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s, opinions differ among the Sarvāstivāda masters. The Vaibhāṣika view (evaṃ tu varṇayanti) is that within the one sitting of the fourth dhyāna of the present life, the bodhisattva gives rise to all the excellent kuśala-mūla-s from aśubha-bhāvanā up to anutpāda-jñāna. ⁵⁴

As in the case of the mokṣa-bhāgīya-s (supra, § 15.2.1), there are also six gotra-s of nirvedha-bhāgīya-s, each being progressively transformed
into the succeeding superior type.⁵⁵ These are produced among humans of the three continents, excepting Uttaraku-dvīpa, and among gods — of both sexes — of the sphere of sensuality, but not among beings of the three evil planes of existence. They can only be produced where one can enter into samyak-nīyāma, and this is possible only where:

(i) both receptivity (kṣānti) and knowledge (jñāna) can be produced,
(ii) both the dharma-jñāna as well as the anvaya-jñāna can be produced,
(iii) there exist both the superior bodily basis (āśraya) and the experience of duḥkha.

In the other two spheres, only kṣānti and anvaya-jñāna can arise and there is no experience of duḥkha. Accordingly, the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s are not produced in the two upper spheres.⁵⁶

Concerning the doctrinal development of the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s, it is to be noted that JPŚ speaks of only three of them, without the receptivities, and commences its exposition with the laukikāgra-dharma-s.⁵⁷ It is only in MVŚ that we begin to see an elaborate exposition of the four. As observed by Yin Shun,⁵⁸ the systematized exposition of the four probably started with Ghoṣaka. The MVŚ compilers provide numerous views — apparently without quite committing to any of them — on why JPŚ commences its exposition with the laukikāgra-dharma-s.⁵⁹ At the initial part of this lengthy justification, we are told:

If the exposition is to follow the sequential order of the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s, one should first expound on the warmths, then the summits, then the receptivities, then the supreme mundane dharma-s; as in the exposition of Venerable Ghoṣaka’s *Jñanotpāda-śāstra* (生智論): “What is warmth? What is summit? What is receptivity? What is the supreme mundane dharma?”⁶⁰

But in spite of kṣānti being left out in Kātyāyaniputra’s exposition, it would seem to be the factor that most characterizes the nirvedha-bhāgīya. To begin with, it should be noted that these bhāgīya-s are preludes to the darśana-mārga. They lead directly to outflow-free insight. As we have seen, nirvedha signifies ārya-mārga, which in turn signifies spiritual insight. In Abhidharma, jñāna proper is preceded by kṣānti. The first moment of outflow-free insight when the practitioner enters into the darśana-mārga is the duḥkhe dharma-jñāna-kṣānti. And this outflowfree kṣānti is preceded by the with-outflow kṣānti of the nirvedha-bhāgīya.
The four *kuśala-mūla*-s sequentially lead one onto another, differing in grades which may be considered as progressive degrees of with-outflow insight (/receptivity): “There are three general grades of them: weak, medium, strong. Warmth is the weak grade; summit is the medium grade, receptivity and the supreme mundane *dharma* are the strong grade.”

Besides the differentiation in terms of grades, MVŚ further distinguishes them in the following terms:

... Furthermore, the warmths have the *smṛty-upasthāna* as their *samanantara-pratyaya*. Summits have the warmths as their *samanantara-pratyaya*. Receptivities have summits as their *samanantara-pratyaya*. The supreme mundane *dharma* s have the receptivities as their *samanantara-pratyaya*.

Furthermore, the warmths delight in contemplating the *skandha*-s separately. The summits delight in contemplating the *[tri]ratna*-s separately. The receptivities delight in contemplating the *satya*-s separately; from this the supreme mundane *dharma*-s are generated.

Furthermore, the warmths extinguish (*止*; *upaśamayati*) the weak delusion cognizing the *satya*-s (having the *satya*-s as *ālambana*). The summits extinguish the medium delusion cognizing the *satya*-s. The receptivities extinguish the strong delusion cognizing the *satya*-s; from this the supreme mundane *dharma*-s are generated.

Furthermore, the warmths extinguish the gross delusion cognizing the *satya*-s. The summits extinguish the medium delusion cognizing the *satya*-s. The receptivities extinguish the subtle delusion cognizing the *satya*-s; from this the supreme mundane *dharma*-s are generated.

Furthermore, the warmths generate the weak understanding (*明*; *āloka*; ‘light’) cognizing the *satya*-s. The summits generate the medium understanding cognizing the *satya*-s. The receptivities generate the strong understanding cognizing the *satya*-s; from this the supreme mundane *dharma*-s are generated.

As for understanding, the same applies to [the distinction in terms of] faith. Such are the differences.
From the above distinction, it becomes clear that the four nirvedha-bhāğıya-s are essentially four progressive degrees of understanding or insight, and of faith, in the noble truths, leading to the outflow-free direct realization (abhisamaya) of these truths in the darśana-mārga. This is comparable to the natures and roles of the nirvedha-bhāġiya-s in the Yogācāra. Asaṅga’s *Mahāyāna-saṃgraha explains the process of the progressive realization of vijñaptimātratā as follows:

In the penetration into vijñaptimātratā, there are four samādhi-s which are the support-bases of the four nirvedha-bhāğıya-s (nges par ’byed pa’i cha). How? On account of the four paryeṣaṇā-s (of nāma, artha, nāmārthaśabda-prajñāpti and nāmārthaviśeṣa-prajñāpti), in the weak receptivities to the non-existence of objects (arthabhāva), there is an *ālokabaddha-samādhi (snang ba thob pa’i ting nge ’dzin; 明得三摩地) which is the support-base for the nirvedha-bhāğıya, warmths.

In the strong (/greater) receptivities to the non-existence of objects, there is an *ālokavṛddhi-samādhi (snang ba mched pa’i ting nge ’dzin; 明增三摩地) which is the support-base for the summits.

In the four complete-knowledge (yathābhūta-parijñāna) of things truly as they are, when one has penetrated into vijñaptimātratā and become certain (nges pa; 已得決定; *niścita) as regards the non-existence of objects (i.e., one has penetrated into the emptiness of the grāhya), there is the samādhi of “having penetrated into part of reality” (de kho na’i don gyi phyogs geig la chud pa’i rjes su song ba’i ting nge ’dzin; 人真義一分三摩地; tattvārthaikadeśānupraviṣṭa-samādhi) which is the support-base for the receptivities that conform to the truths (bden pa’i rjes su mthun pa’i bzod pa; 諦順忍; satyānulomikī kṣāntiḥ), [immediately] after which, with the ideation of vijñaptimātra destroyed, there is the ānantarya-samādhi (de ma thug pa’i ting nge ’dzin; 無間三摩地) which is the support-basis for the supreme mundane dharma-s. These samādhi s are to be known as being close to abhisamaya.63

Thus, to acquire the abhisamaya of vijñaptimātratā, the practitioner must exert preparatory effort which comprises the four nirvedha-bhāğıya-s. Through contemplation by means of mundane knowledge (the four paryeṣanā-s), he ascertains the nature of dharma-s, and this is in the domain of meditation, giving rise to samādhi-s that constitute the support-bases for the nirvedha-bhāġiya-s. These are insight-generating (āloka) samādhi-s, described as being close to abhisamaya. Progressing successively from the warmths, he reaches the instantaneous supreme
mundane dharma-s, immediately after which he enters into abhisamayā, acquiring the outflow-free realization of Truth, vijñaptimātratā. Thus progressing through the warmths and the summits, and further through the four tattvārtha-parijñāna-s, he is able generate a samādhi that penetrates into part of reality, realizing vijñaptimātratā, which constitutes the support-base for the receptivities, called the “truth-conforming receptivities”. Passing from this, (now further realizing the emptiness of the grāhaka,) he generates the ānantarya-samādhi which constitutes the support-basis for the supreme mundane dharma-s. But these samādhi-s (insight), though “close” to abhisamayā (lardśana-mārga), are still without outflow. As seen above, parallelly in the Abhidharma, the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s also precede the abhisamayā into the noble truths, and are also of the nature of mundane contemplative insight.

Noticeably, in the Mahāyāna-saṃgraha exposition, the first stage of penetrating into the truth of vijñaptimātratā is that of the receptivities, described as “truth-conforming”. Indeed, in both the Abhidharma and Yogācāra systems, the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s may be said to be essentially characterized by the nature of the receptivities which are “truth-conforming”. In the MVŚ exposition above too, we can see that the feature of receptivity is most representative: the warmths are the initial stage of the receptivities; the summits, when fully reached, are their fully strengthened stage, now properly receiving the name “receptivity” — the stage that does not retrogress (see below) and culminates in the instant of citta-caitta-s known as the supreme mundane dharma-s which immediately lead the practitioner into the darśana-mārga.

The centrality of receptivity in this connection is also explicit in the following explanation on the anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti in the Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa (大智度論, ascribed to Nāgārjuna in the Chinese tradition):

Question: With regard to this one and the same thing (mūrdhan), why is it called “summit”, “state [of certitude]” (位; referring to bodhisattva-niyāma) and “non-arising”?

Answer: All the dharma-s in between the “conforming receptivity” (ānulomikī kṣāntiḥ) and the “receptivity to the fact that dharma-s are non-arising” (anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti) are called “summit”. Abiding at this summit, one goes directly towards buddha-hood, no more having to fear for relapsibility. This is like in the Śrāvakayāna teaching: In between the warmths and the receptivities, the dharma-s are called “summit”. ...

When the summits are developed and have become firm, it is known as the “bodhisattva state [of certitude]”. Having entered
into this state, one cannot be shaken by any defilement, any māra — it then also receives the name \textit{anuttarikadharma-kṣānti}.^{64}

Thus, in the above discussion, the Abhidharma \textit{āṣmagata} and \textit{kṣānti} are compared to the Bodhisattva-yāna's \textit{ānulomikī kṣānti} and \textit{anuttarikadharma-kṣānti}, respectively. The “summits” are the varying degrees of the development of the receptivity to Truth; and at its highest point (when this receptivity becomes firmly developed) one is destined to enter into the certitude of being an irreversible bodhisattva. This highest point may be said to be comparable to the “supreme mundane dharma” of the Abhidharma system.

Seen in this way, the whole Abhidharma process of the nirvedha-bhāgīya-s can be understood as the development of the receptivity towards the culminating outflow-free realization of the noble truths: \textit{kṣānti} precedes \textit{jñāna} proper. The essential nature of receptivity is one of resolute affirmation of reality/truth, attained by the practitioner through resolute conceptual understanding and faith. This is also essentially the nature of \textit{adhimukti/adhimokṣa}. Accordingly, we may also see here a clue on the name “\textit{adhimukti-caryā}” given to the stage of the Mahāyāna bodhisattva’s progress — said to comprise the four nirvedha-bhāgīya-s — preceding the actual ascendance to the first \textit{bhūmi}.

15.3.2.1. Warmth (\textit{uṣmagata/ūṣmagata/ūṣman})

This is the first indication or the anticipation of the \textit{anāsrava-jñāna}. MVŚ explains as follows:

As a result of the operation of knowledge on an object, there arises the warmth of the noble knowledge capable of burning the fuels of defilements. Hence, it is called ‘warmed up/warmth’. This is like rubbing [two stones] to get fire — as a result of the mutual dependence of the lower and upper [stones], there arises the warmth of fire capable of burning fuels. …

Venerable Ghoṣaka explains: On account of seeking liberation, there arise the \textit{kuśala-mūla}-s. They are the fore-sign (\textit{pūrva-rūpa}) for the arising of the sun of the noble path … [and] of the fire of the noble path; hence the name ‘warmth/warmed-up’. This is like the case of smoke as the fore-sign preceding the arising of fire.\(^{65}\)

This is a lengthy stage the practice of which is characterized by the three \textit{prajñā}-s — \textit{sruta-mayī}, \textit{cintā-mayī} and \textit{bhāvanā-mayī}. First, one begins with the cultivation of the \textit{sruta-mayī prajñā} by learning from a teacher or studying the \textit{tripiṭaka}. Then one realizes that all
The *tripitaka* teachings can be summarized into the 18 *dhātu*-s, the 12 *āyatana*-s and the 5 *skandha*-s. One then proceeds — progressively seeking more and more concise teachings — to examine each of them, understanding in terms of terminology, specific characteristics and common characteristics. In this manner, one progresses to the practice of the four *smṛtyupasthāna*-s, and finally the repeated contemplation of the 16 *ākāra*-s of the four truths, pertaining to both the sphere of sensuality and the two upper spheres. *Ākāra* here means the mode of comprehending activity of the mind. This activity on an object results in a resemblance or reflection of the object in the mind — the ‘mode’. The 16 *ākāra*-s are as follows:

(I) *duḥkha-satya* — impermanent (*anitya*), unsatisfactory (*duḥkha*), empty (*śūnya*) and soulless (*anātman*);

(II) *samudaya-satya* — cause (*hetu*), origin (*samudaya*), successive causation (*prabhava*) and condition (*pratyaya*);

(III) *nirodha-satya* — cessation (*nirodha*), calm (*śānta*), excellence (*praṇīta*) and escape (*niḥsaraṇa*);

(IV) *mārga-satya* — path (*mārga*), right method (*nyāya*), course of practice (*pratipatti*), conducive to exit (*nairyāṇika*)

This examination of the four noble truths, however, does not constitute direct spiritual insight; “it is like examining pictures through the veil of a silk-cloth”. It is only up to this point that the practitioner has perfected the *śruta-mayī prajñā*. With this as the basis, he produces the *cintā-mayī prajñā*. Having perfected this, he next produces the *bhāvanā-mayī prajñā*. This is also called the ‘warmth’. From warmth, the summits are produced. From summits, receptivities. From receptivities, the supreme mundane *dharma*-s. From supreme mundane *dharma*-s, the *darśana-mārga*. From *darśana-mārga*, the *bhāvanā-mārga*. From *bhāvanā-mārga*, the *asaikṣa-mārga*. In this way, the *kuśala-mūla*-s are gradually fulfilled.66

The warmth may be lost through retrogression, or transcendence of sphere or stage, or loss of the *nikāya-sabhāga*. As a result, one may commit the *ānantarya-karma*-s, cut off the *kuśala-mūla*-s, and fall into the bad planes of existence. Nevertheless, it can serve as the decisive cause for the attainment of *nirvāṇa*. “One who has acquired the warmed-up is like a fish that has swallowed the fisherman’s hook — [destined to be caught]; he is destined for the *nirvāṇa-dharma*.67
15.3.2.2. Summits (mūrdhan)

At this stage the practitioner continues to contemplate the 16 modes of activities of the four noble truths. But these roots receive another name on account of their excellence. They are called summits/peaks because:

(i) They are the highest of the shakable skillful roots. At this stage, one can either proceed to the next stage or fall back to commit evils and be born in the unfortunate planes of existence (durgati).

(ii) They are like peaks, between the previous and the subsequent stages. This is like a person situated at the peak of a mountain: He does not remain for long — either, in the absence of any obstacle, he passes over this mountain to another mountain, or, in the presence of obstacles, he has to descend. The nirvedha-bhāgīya-s are twofold: retrogressible and non-retrogressible. Among the former, the inferior one is called “warmed up”; the superior, “summits”. Among the latter, the inferior, “receptivities”; the superior, “supreme mundane dharma-s”. It is also because these excel among the retrogressible nirvedha-bhāgīya-s that they are called ‘summits’.

Like the warmth, the summits may be lost through the same causes. As a result, one may commit the ānantarya-karma-s and fall into the bad planes of existence. However, these skillful roots excel the previous one in that even when the practitioner should fall to commit evil, he will never fall to the extent of having the skillful roots cut off.

15.3.2.3. Receptivities (kṣānti)

Although all four nirvedha-bhāgīya-s are conducive to insight into the truth, the receptivities accord with satyābhisamaya more so than the other three, hence they alone are said to be truth-accordant. They are called receptivities “because of the greatest receptivity to the truths — on account of the non-regressibility [of this stage]”.

At the stage of warmth, the truth is acceptable to one and pleases (kṣamate rocate) one weakly; at the stage of the summits, to a medium degree. Immediately after that, receptivities now arise because of the greatest receptivity to the truths. … This is because receptivities do not retrogress, whereas there is the possibility of retrogression from the summits.
Like the warmth and the summits, the receptivities can be lost through the transcendence of sphere and stage or loss of the *nikāya-sabhāga*, not through retrogression. In fact, one who has acquired it can never retrogress from it, nor can he commit the *ānantarya-karma*-s or fall into the bad planes of existence.\(^{75}\)

The receptivities are also threefold: weak, medium and strong. As in the case of the warmth and the summits, the weak and medium receptivities contemplate fully all 16 modes of activity of the four truths — four pertaining to the sphere of sensuality and four to the two higher spheres; in all, eight truths and 32 modes of activity. However, the strong receptivities contemplate only the truth of unsatisfactoriness pertaining to the sphere of sensuality. This is because, at the stage of contemplation of the medium receptivities, there begins a successive reduction of the higher modes of activity and spheres until finally, in the last two moments of the stage, the practitioner applies his mind to only two modes of activity — impermanence and unsatisfactoriness — of the sphere of sensuality. This process of gradual reduction of modes of activity and cognitive objects is described as *ākāra-alambana-apahrāsa*\(^{76}\). The reason for being successively more restrictive in contemplation is so as to make the contemplation progressively more focused and thus more effective in inducing the outflow-free knowledge. MVŚ\(^{77}\) explains this with a simile: A wealthy man, unable to bring along all his possession to another country, changed them into money. Unhappy that the money was too much, he changed them into gold. Still unhappy that the gold pieces were too heavy, he changed them into expensive jewels. In this way, he was finally able to carry his possessions with him and travel freely.

In the very next moment when the strong receptivities come into operation, the practitioner, in a single thought, contemplates only the unsatisfactoriness pertaining to the sphere of sensuality. At this stage, although the *darśana-heya* defilements are not yet abandoned, they are already successfully suppressed.

### 15.3.2.4. Supreme mundane dharma-s

Immediately following the last moment of the strong receptivities, the supreme mundane dharma-s arise, contemplating — like the strong receptivities — in one moment only the unsatisfactoriness pertaining to the sphere of sensuality. These dharma-s have as their intrinsic nature those *citta-caitta*-s which serve as the *samanantara-pratyaya* for the entrance into *samyaktva-niyāma* (i.e., *darśana-mārga*).\(^{78}\) That is, with these as the *samanantara-pratyaya*, the practitioner relinquishes the nature of an ordinary worldling (*pṛthagjanatva* — see below, § 15.3.2) and acquires the nature of the noble (*āryatva*).
In JPŚ\(^7\) these are the first of the four nirvedha-bhāgīya-s to be discussed. MVŚ attempts to justify this choice of order, giving elaborate explanations.

These citta-caitta-s — [the last of an ordinary worldling] — in comparison to the other worldly dharma-s, are the best, the excellent, the senior, the chief, the superior, the wonderful; hence they are called the supreme mundane dharma-s.\(^8\)

They are said to be excellent since they alone can open up the door of the noble path.\(^9\) Moreover, they are said to be the best in comparison to the śruta-mayī; excellent, in comparison to the śruta-mayī; senior, in comparison to the śamatha and vipaśyanā practices; chief, in comparison to uṣmagata; superior, in comparison to mūrdhan; wonderful, in comparison to ksānti. Various other explanations for these six attributes are given in MVŚ.\(^10\)

There is another view that the supreme mundane dharma-s have the five outflow-free faculties (indriya) — śraddhā, vīrya, smṛti, samādhi, prajñā — as their intrinsic nature. This view is attributed to either the old Ābhidharmika masters or the Vātsīputrīyas. The former in this way in order to refute the view of the Vibhajyavādins that these five faculties are necessarily outflow-free. By asserting in this way, the old Ābhidharmikas intend to show that these five faculties can also be with-outflow since they exist in an ordinary worldling. The Vātsīputrīyas hold that these five faculties are kuśala in their intrinsic nature (svabhāvataḥ), and all differences pertaining to the ārya are to be established on the basis of these five.\(^11\)

The two Dārṣṭāntika masters, Dharmatrāta and Buddhadeva, also hold different views in this regard. For the former, all citta-caitta-s are simply specific states of cetanā; accordingly, the supreme mundane dharma-s have cetanā as their intrinsic nature. For the latter, the citta-caitta-s are none other than the citta itself; accordingly, the supreme mundane dharma-s have citta as their intrinsic nature.\(^12\)

Samghabhadra’s view apparently also differs somewhat from that of MVŚ:

Warmth, etc., all have understanding (prajñā) as their intrinsic natures. If we consider their retinue (parivāra), then all the five aggregates are included in each case; this is because there necessarily exists the accompanying matter (anuparivarta-rūpa). But their acquisitions are to be excluded, lest it be that the skillful roots, warmth, etc., re-arise in an ārya. But it is not
conceded that warmth, etc., arise for one who has already seen the truth, since it becomes futile for preparatory effort to arise in the case of one who has seen the truths.\textsuperscript{85}

15.3.3. Summary

To sum up: the nirvedha-bhāgīya constitutes the prajñā derived from cultivation, and the mokṣa-bhāgīya, the prajñā derived from reflection. These two prajñā-ś, together with that derived from hearing — which, in abhidharma, refers specifically to the study of the specific and common characteristics of dharma-ś — in the preliminary stage, constitute the threefold impure or with-outflow prajñā. They are considered as abhidharma in the conventional sense, and we can discern here the reason for the Ābhidharmikas to be concerned with spiritual practices. These conventional abhidharma-ś serve as the instruments for bringing about the out-flow-free prajñā which is abhidharma in the absolute sense\textsuperscript{86} (see supra, § 1.2).

15.4 Direct realization (abhisamaya), path of vision (darsana-mārga) and stream entry (srotāpatti)

In the stages of preparatory effort, contemplations on the truths were carried out with knowledges that are with-outflow (sāsrava). Immediately following the moment of the supreme mundane dharma-ś, the practitioner is able to give rise to the outflow-free knowledges (anāsrava-jñāna) with which he again contemplates the 16 modes of activity of the four truths — those pertaining to the sphere of sensuality followed by those pertaining to the two upper spheres. MVŚ explains why, for each of the modes of activity (duḥkha, etc.), the practitioner must first contemplate that pertaining to the sphere of sensuality, and then collectively that pertaining to the upper spheres:

(i) the former is grosser and more easily observed than the latter;
(ii) the sphere of sensuality is a non-concentrated stage, whereas the two upper spheres are both concentrated (samāhita) stages;

hence the practitioner must do the two contemplations separately.\textsuperscript{87}

This contemplation is termed abhisamaya — direct realization — which is the direct spiritual insight into the truths. One of the Ābhidharmika definitions of abhidharma is that “it is that which directly realizes (abhi-sam-ś) and realizes (sākṣāt-śkr) the dharma-ś”. And Vasumitra explains that “abhidharma is that which can directly realize the four noble truths”.\textsuperscript{88} This process takes 16 thought moments the first 15 of
which constitute the path of vision and the 16th the beginning of the path of cultivation.

Complete insight into each of the truths is achieved in two moments, called ‘paths’ on account of their having to be gone through. In the first moment, called the unhindered path (ānantarya-mārga), the outflow-free understanding that arises is called a receptivity (ksānti) to knowledge, and with this, the defilements abandonable by insight into the particular truth are abandoned. In the following moment, called the path of liberation (vimukti-mārga), knowledge proper arises through the induction of which the acquisition (prāpti) of the cessation through deliberation (pratisamkhyā-nirodha) of the defilements arises. In this way, for the whole contemplative process covering the sphere of sensuality followed by the two upper spheres, there arise eight receptivities and eight knowledges, all being prajñā in their intrinsic nature. This doctrine can be understood as follows: The abandoning of a defilement requires a sufficient degree of insight, represented by the notion of receptivity, into the true nature of things — unsatisfactory, impermanent, etc. When in the next moment the defilement which disturbs and sullies (two connotations of √kliś) the mind is no more, wisdom proper — a higher degree than receptivity — ‘shines forth’ as it were. Put differently, this can be seen as a corollary of the general Buddhist position that insight is the means as well as that which necessarily arises at the end — and in this sense the virtue par excellence — of spiritual praxis. In the Sarvāstivāda conception, the insight, designated as jñāna, that constitutes the very path of liberation is not just a mere state of mental clarity or cognitive perfection. It is a positive force having the efficacy of inducing the prāpti of pratisamkhyā-nirodha; which is to say, it serves as the necessary causal factor for the acquisition of the nirodha. The latter, being unconditioned, is not directly caused or directly produced by it; it is, however, acquired (prāpta) by virtue of the prāpti so induced by it. (See infra, § 16).

That the unhindered path and the path of liberation represent the indispensable functioning of insight in overcoming defilements and attaining cessation is also underscored by the doctrine of the three outflow-free cognitive faculties: anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya, ājñendriya and ājñātāvīndriya. These three faculties, in their essential nature, are constituted of manas, sukha, saumanasya, upeksā, śraddhā, vīrya, smṛti, samādhi and prajñā. These nine are said to be differentiated as the three distinctive faculties on account of the predominance that they exercise in the darśana-mārga, bhāvanā-mārga and aśaikṣa-mārga, respectively: the anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya, with regard to the
cessation of the *darśana-heya* defilements; the *ājñendriya*, with regard to the cessation of the *bhāvanā-heya* defilements; the *ājñātāvīndriya*, with regard to the state of bliss in the present life (*dṛṣṭadharma-sukha-vihāra*) of an *arhat*. In the acquisition of the fruit of stream entry, the *anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya* functions as the inductor (*āvāhaka*) of the *visaṃyoga-prāpti*, and the *ājñendriya* functions as the support of this *prāpti*. The first constitutes the unhindered path; the second, the path of liberation. In the acquisition of the fruit of arhathood, the *ājñendriya* constitutes the unhindered path; the *ājñātāvīndriya*, the path of liberation.

Vasubandhu explains that the *kṣānti*-s are called the *ānantarya-mārga*-s as they cannot be obstructed in the cutting of the *prāpti* of the *kleśa* (*kleśa-prāpti-vicchedaṃ pratyantarayitum aśakyatvāt*). The *jñāna*-s are called *vimukti-mārga*-s because in those who are thus liberated from the *prāpti*-s of these *kleśa*-s, they co-arise with the *visaṃyoga-prāpti*. Saṃghabhadra criticizes:

> If so, the *vimukti-mārga* should also be named *ānantarya*, inasmuch as its co-nascence also cannot be obstructed. Rather, one should explain thus: it is called *ānantarya* because there exists no *antara* (nothing in between); *ānantarya* itself is the *mārga*, hence the name *ānantarya-mārga*. The meaning is that there is no *mārga* of the same species which can come in between, preventing it from becoming the condition for the [arising] of the *vimukti-mārga*; for the *ānantarya-mārga* all last only one *kṣaṇa*, while the *vimukti-mārga* may continue as a series…

In the contemplation of the four truths pertaining to the sphere of sensuality, the receptivities and knowledges are called *dharma-jñāna-kṣānti* and *dharma-jñāna* — the term *dharma* signifying the fact that the nature of *dharma*-s subsumable under the particular truth is seen for the first time. That “*dharma*” here refers to the factors of existence is clear from the explanations in MVŚ that “*dharma*-knowledge is so called because its intrinsic nature pertains to all *dharma*-s (智體是法)”; “although all knowledges likewise pertain to *dharma*-s, only one of them is designated as *dharma*-knowledge”, in the same manner that “*dharma*-āyatana”, “*dharma*-dhātu”, etc., are specifically designated with the name “*dharma*”. The receptivities and knowledges pertaining to the two upper spheres are called *anvaya-jñāna-kṣānti* and *anvaya-jñāna*, the term *anvaya* — ‘subsequent’ or ‘following’ — signifying the fact that these truths are realized subsequently and in a similar manner to those pertaining to

511
the sphere of sensuality. Samghabhadra insists that the *anvaya-jñāna* is not an inferential knowledge, but rather a direct one like *dharma-jñāna*. The following chart summarizes the 16 moments of insight:

**The process of the direct insight into the four truths**

*darśana mārga* (15 moments)

1. *duḥkhe dharmajñānakṣānti*  
2. *duḥkhe dharmajñāna*  
3. *duḥkhe anvayajñānakṣānti*  
4. *duḥkhe anvayajñāna*  
5. *samudaye dharmajñānakṣānti*  
6. *samudaye dharmajñāna*  
7. *samudaye anvayajñānakṣānti*  
8. *samudaye anvayajñāna*  
9. *duḥkhanirodhe dharmajñānakṣānti*  
10. *duḥkhanirodhe dharmajñāna*  
11. *duḥkhanirodhe anvayajñānakṣānti*  
12. *duḥkhanirodhe anvayajñāna*  
13. *duḥkhapratipakṣamārge dharmajñānakṣānti*  
14. *duḥkhapratipakṣamārge dharmajñāna*  
15. *duḥkhapratipakṣamārge anvayajñānakṣānti*  
16. *duḥkhapratipakṣamārge anvayajñāna*

*A question may arise here: direct realization is direct perception *par excellence* (pratyakṣa), and direct perception is direct insight into the intrinsic characteristic of the object being perceived. But direct realization is said to be an insight into the common characteristics of the four truths — is there a contradiction here? MVŚ addresses this issue, and explains that in direct realization, the intrinsic characteristics are realized through the direct realization of the common characteristics. Moreover, total and true realization of the nature of the truths necessarily entails direct realization of both their intrinsic and common characteristics at once:

**Question:** If the truths are directly realized through their common characteristics, when are the intrinsic characteristics of the truths realized by means of the knowledge that knows truly (*yathābhūtajñāna*)? And if [the practitioner] cannot realize the intrinsic nature of the truths, how is it said to be a “direct realization of the truths” (*satyābhisamaya*)?

**Answer:** It is not the case that “direct realization of the truths” is so called in respect of the realization of the intrinsic natures by means of the knowledge that knows truly through a realization of intrinsic characteristic. Rather, it is called a “direct realization of the truths” in respect of the realization of the intrinsic natures by means of the knowledge that knows truly through a realization of common characteristics.
Moreover, at the time of direct realization, the non-cognizance/ignorance (*ajñāna*) with regard to the intrinsic and common characteristics of the truths are totally eradicated at once; it can [therefore] also be called a direct realization of the intrinsic and common characteristics even though it is a realization of common characteristics.

Moreover, unsatisfactoriness, impermanence, etc. (i.e., the 16 modes of understanding), are the intrinsic characteristics of the truths; these are none other than the common characteristics of the aggregates (*skandha*). Thus, the very direct realization of unsatisfactoriness, etc., is a direct realization of [both] intrinsic and common characteristics … (MVŚ, 406a12–20)

15.4.1. *Satyābhisamaya* as a gradual process

The above process illustrates the Sarvāstivāda position that the direct realization into the truths is a gradual process. In support of this position, MVŚ quotes a sūtra in which the Buddha is represented as stating to Anāthapiṇḍada (Pāli: Anāthapiṇḍika) explicitly that *satyābhisamaya* is a gradual process, like ascending a four-rung ladder. This position is consistent with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine that defilements are abandoned gradually. In AKB, Vasubandhu explains the rationale for the progressive sequence as follows:

The discourse of the truths is in conformity with [the order of] direct realization. Now, what is the reason that the *abhisamaya* of these truths is in this way?

For, that to which one is attached, by which one is oppressed, and from which liberation is sought — that very one, *duḥkha-satya*, at the stage of investigation is examined first.

Afterwards, [proceeding to investigate:] “What is the cause of this (*duḥkha*)?” — the *samudaya-satya*. “What is the cessation of this?” — *nirodha-satya*. “What is the way of this?” — the *mārga-satya*.

It is like having seen the disease, [there follows] the searching for its cause, its elimination and its medicine.

However, other Buddhist schools disagree. The Mahāsāṃghika, Mahīśāsaka and Dharmaguptaka are known to hold that it is an abrupt process. Thus, the Mahāsāṃghika states:

Within the one moment of the knowledge derived at the end of the direct realization [of the four noble truths] (*ekakṣaṇikābhisamayāntika-jñānena*), the differences in
the various ākāra-s of the four noble truths are fully known (parijñāta).\textsuperscript{105}

There was, however, a certain branch of the Mahāsāṃghika which held that there was a distinctive direct realization for each of the distinctive ākāra of the truths.\textsuperscript{106}

According to Yaśomitra\textsuperscript{107} the abrupt view belongs to the Dharmaguptakas, etc.; but according to Pu Guang,\textsuperscript{108} the Mahāsāṃghikas, etc. MVŚ mentions the Vibhajyavādins as among those holding the abrupt view:

There are some who assert that the four noble truths are directly realized at once, such as the Vibhajyavādins. … They base themselves on the sūtra: The Bhagavat said, ‘If, with regard to duḥkha-saṭṭha, there is no doubt, there is likewise no doubt with regard to the samudaya-, nirodha- and mārga-saṭṭha. Since doubt with regard to the four noble truths disappears at once, it is known that the direct realization is definitely abrupt and not gradual.\textsuperscript{109}

The Bhadanta, while holding that the direct realization into the four truths is acquired gradually, held that at the first moment of gaining entry into samyakva-nyāma (see below), one is said to have direct faith with regard to all the truths\textsuperscript{110} [at once]:

When one abides in the duḥkha-dharma-jñāna, if one does not acquire faith with regard to all four truths, one cannot be said to abide [therein]. This is like the case of one who takes an earthen vessel up a pavilion and then throws it onto the ground. When the vessel has not yet reached the ground, it can be said to be broken, even though it has [in fact] not yet been broken, on account of the fact that it is definitely about to be broken.\textsuperscript{111}

The Theravāda also upholds the abrupt view. Buddhaghosa, in his Visuddhimagga, reasons as follows:

In each of the four path-knowledges (sotāpatti-magga, etc.), [and] in that order, four functions—comprehension, abandonment, realization and practice—are exercised in one and the same moment. It follows that the four noble truths are fully realized in a single moment. Moreover, there is the single realization of the four truths in the sense of trueness in 16 aspects: oppression (piḷana), being compounded (sankhata), torment (santāpa) and change (vipaṇīma) pertaining to duḥkha-sacca; accumulation (āyūhana), source (niḍāna), connection (samyoga) and obstruction (pālabodha) pertaining to samudaya-sacca; exit (nissaraṇa), separation (viveka), being uncompounded
(asaṅkhata) and immortality (amata) pertaining to nirodha-sacca; leading out (niyyāna), cause (hetu), seeing (dassana) and dominance (ādhipateyya) pertaining to magga-sacca. This is compared to the simultaneous functions of the lamp:

- the lamp burning the wick — knowledge comprehending dukkha;
- the lamp dispelling darkness — knowledge abandoning samudaya;
- the lamp revealing light — knowledge developing the magga;
- the lamp consuming the oil — knowledge realizing nirodha.\textsuperscript{112}

Although the Sarvāstivāda holds the gradual view, it too concedes a certain sense of abrupt realization. This school speaks of three types of abhisamaya:

1. \textit{darśanābhisamaya} (abhisamaya as darśana) — the direct clear realization of the four noble truths by pure prajñā alone;
2. \textit{ālambanābhisamaya} (abhisamaya of object) — this pure prajñā taking the same objects as its conjoined dharma-s;
3. \textit{kāryābhisamaya} (abhisamaya as effect) — this pure prajñā, the conjoined dharma-s sharing the same objects with it, and other conascent dharma-s such as jāti and other viprayukta-saṃskāra-s, etc., all participating in the same enterprise. The Sarvāstivādins would concede that it is permissible to speak of abrupt abhisamaya with regard to kāryābhisamaya: At the very moment of the direct realization into duḥkha-satya, there can be the abandoning of samudaya, the realization of nirodha, and the cultivation of mārga. This is so because at the time of the seeing of duḥkha-satya, there is the kāryābhisamaya with regard to the other three satya-s.\textsuperscript{113}

An intermediate position between the ‘abrupt view’ and the ‘gradual view’ is given in SatŚ. On the one hand, it states as follows:

As a result of the insight into the \textit{nirodha-satya}, one is said to be enlightened.\textsuperscript{114}

Thus, when one truth is realized, complete insight into all the truths is obtained — a view similar to those of the Mahāsāṃghika and the Vibhajyavāda. On the other hand, the process that leads finally to the realization of \textit{nirodha-satya} is a gradual one:
The thought of concept (*prajñapti-citta), the thought of dharma (*dharma-citta), the thought of śūnyatā (*śūnyatā-citta) — these three thoughts having ceased, it is called nirodha-satya.\textsuperscript{115}

Initially, at the stage of developing the śruta-mayī prajñā and cintā-mayī prajñā, the practitioner eliminates the thought of prajñāpti by realizing that concepts such as the pudgala and a vase, etc., exist only at the saṃvṛti-satya level and are without any ontological status from the absolute standpoint. But the dharma-s, such as nirvāṇa and the skandha-s are true existents. This is called the elimination of the prajñāpti-citta by means of the dharma-citta.

Next, at the second stage, i.e., the stage of developing the bhāvanā-mayī prajñā, the practitioner further contemplates the dharma-s such as nirvāṇa and the five skandha-s. He then realizes that these dharma-s too, from the absolute standpoint, are non-existent — empty (śūnya). This is the elimination of the dharma-citta by means of the śūnyatā-citta:

The five skandha-s too are in actual fact non-existent; they exist [only] from the standpoint of saṃvṛti-satya. \ldots Moreover, as a result of the insight into the nirodha-satya, one is said to attain enlightenment (得道). Thus, we know that nirodha exists from the standpoint of paramārtha-satya, but not the skandha-s.\textsuperscript{116}

Finally, at the third stage, one must eliminate even the thought of śūnyatā, i.e. “the thought taking nirvāṇa as its object”.\textsuperscript{117} It is only then that one perfectly realizes the nirodha-satya. Through further contemplation one now realizes that:

[In the anupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa,] the skandha-s have ceased without any remainder — hence the name nirvāṇa. Herein, what is there that exists? \ldots It is not that there is no nirvāṇa; only that there are no real dharma-s.\textsuperscript{118}

In this way, one accomplishes the insight into the nirodha-satya.\textsuperscript{119}

15.4.2. Entry into the certainty of perfection (samyaktva-niyāmāvakrānti)

From the first moment of insight — the receptivity to the dharma-knowledge with regard to unsatisfactoriness (duḥkhe dharma-jñāna-kṣānti) — the practitioner becomes a noble one, an ārya, a term for the Buddhist saint. AKB gives the popular etymology as ārād yātāḥ — ‘has gone far’:
The ārya-s are] those in whom the outflow-free path has arisen. They are ārya-s because they have gone far from the evil dharma-s on account of their obtaining the acquisition of absolute disconnection [from the defilements], for, being destined for the exhaustion of the defilements, they are destined for perfection (samyaktva-niyatāḥ).\(^{120}\)

Prior to this critical point in his spiritual career, he has been an ‘ordinary worldling’. JPŚ defines the ‘quality of an ordinary worldling’ (pṛthagjanatva) as the non-obtainment (= non-acquisition, aprāpti) of the dharma-s of the noble ones.\(^ {121}\) This non-obtainment is not just a mere abstract concept of negation; it is a viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma — a real force — the efficacy of which is explained by Vasumitra as follows:

It causes sentient beings to generate views of different types (pṛthag-jāti), defilements of different types, do karma-s of different types, experience fruits of different types and births of different types. Furthermore, it causes sentient beings to fall into different spheres, go to different planes of existence (gati), experience different births. Hence, it is called the quality of an ordinary worldling. …\(^ {122}\)

MVŚ further explains that all ārya-s are called ‘equal beings’ (同生; samāna-jana?) because they attain the truth equally, see equally, are inclined equally. The ordinary worldlings are different from them — not having equality in the same manner as the ārya-s; hence they are called pṛthagjana.\(^ {123}\)

From the first moment of his entry into the path of vision up to the 15\(^{th}\) moment, this ārya is called the candidate for the fruit of stream-entry (srotaāpatti-phala-pratipannaka). He has now abandoned 88 defilements abandonable by insight (see supra, § 12.6.2.1 a). At the 16\(^{th}\) moment, he is called the “abider in the fruit of stream entry” (srotaāpatti-phala-stha). He is destined to final liberation within a maximum of seven rebirths.\(^ {124}\) However, according to the Vaibhāṣikas, the stream-entrant is said to be reborn at most seven times in the sense that he will have seven births as a human, seven intermediate existences (antarābhava); likewise his births among the gods — a total of up to 28 existences.\(^ {125}\) MVŚ explains the term stream entrant as follows:

\(\text{Srotas}\) means the noble path; ā-panna means entered. He is called a stream entrant (srotaāpana) as he has entered the noble path.\(^ {126}\)

Two types of practitioners who enter the path of vision are distinguished: One with a weak faculty (mṛdvindriya) enters the path having first
relied on faith in the teacher’s teachings; the other, with a sharp faculty (tīkṣṇendriya), having first studied and understood the Buddha’s teachings himself. In the first 15 moments of the path, the former is called a ‘pursuer through faith’ (śraddhānusārin); the latter, ‘pursuer through the doctrines’ (dharmānusārin). At the 16th moment, the former is called ‘one who is freed through predominance of faith’ (śraddhādhimuktā); the latter, ‘one who has attained through views’ (dṛṣṭi-prāpta):

A liberated person with a predominance of faith is called śraddhādhimuktā. It is not that he does not have any prajñā at all; but he is not illumined (i.e., made conspicuous) by that, hence he does not receive that name. One is a dṛṣṭi-prāpta from the fact of being illumined by views on account of the predominance of prajñā. It is not that he does not have any faith at all …

Others, however, on the basis of etymology, explain thus: “A śraddhādhimuktā is one freed from those abandonable by insight on account of the predominance of faith. A dṛṣṭi-prāpta is one who has attained the fruit on account of the predominance of views.”

The first receptivity is also explained as the entry into certainty (niyama/niyāma/nyāma), for it is the entry into the certainty of perfection (samyaktva-niyāmavakrānti). That is, from this point onward, the practitioner is destined for — i.e., will definitely attain — nirvāṇa (= samyaktva). Xuanzang’s translation here — probably following a fanciful etymology of the variant nyāma as < ni + āma (‘separation from the raw’; Tibetan: skon med pa — ‘free from defects’) given in MVŚ — corresponds additionally to the alternative term samyaktva-nyāma, rendered as 正性離生, ‘perfection which is the separation from the raw’:

This is called ‘entry into samyaktva-nyāma’, and also ‘entry into samyaktva-niyāma’, for this is the first entry into samyaktva-nyāma as well as the first entry into samyaktva-niyāma. In the sūtra, nirvāṇa is called samyaktva. Or, samyaktva signifies the noble paths. ‘Raw’ (生 — āma) refers to the defilements or the immaturity of the [skillful] roots; the noble paths can go beyond them, hence ‘separation from the raw’. The noble paths are said to be certainty on account of the fact that they can decisively lead to nirvāṇa, or that they can decisively discern the characteristics of the truths. Reaching this stage is said to be entry.

Although an ordinary worldling who has obtained the mokṣa-bhāgīya-s will definitely attain nirvāṇa also, he is not said in the same way as having entered the Certainty of Perfection for he could still commit evil and fall into the category of being destined for evil-ness. Moreover,
unlike the stream entrant who will be reborn at the most seven times, the
time of his attainment of nirvāṇa is unfixed. (See example of Devadatta,
in § 15.2.1).

15.5. Non-retrogressibility of stream-entry

The darśana-mārga is not retrogressible, for it is a path — process —
which proceeds very swiftly, without being held back or prematurely
interrupted. Just as one being carried forward by a rapid incapable of
holding back, when the practitioner is on this path, he is being carried
away by the great current of Dharma; there is no possibility of his going
backward.

Moreover, one retrogresses mostly on account of the
manifestation of defilements; when one is within the darśana-
mārga, there is no possibility of generating even a kuśala-citta
that is with-outflow, let alone a citta of defilements. Hence there
can be no retrogression.

Besides, retrogressibility in this case would entail the following fallacies:

Having gained insight into the truths, one does not have the
insight again; having attained the spiritual fruit, one does not
attain it again; having directly realized, one does not directly
realize it again; having entered into samyaktva-nyāma, one does
not enter into it again; having become an ārya, one becomes an
ordinary worldling again; having abided in the category of those
destined for perfection (samyaktva-niyata-rāśi), one abides in the
category of those who are not destined [for perfection or evil-
ness (mithyātva)] again. …

In fact, the practitioner can fall from all the fruits excepting the first. The Mahāsāṃghika, on the other hand, holds that a stream entrant is
susceptible to retrogression. He is in fact said to be capable of committing
all evils except the mortal transgressions (ānantarya).

15.6. Path of cultivation (bhāvanā-mārga)

The word bhāvanā, often translated as ‘meditation’ is more literally —
and also more correctly —‘cultivation’ or ‘development’ of the mind. It
is, however, true that meditation constitutes the most important aspect
of the process. But this ‘meditation’ must not be equated with samādhi
as opposed to vipaśyanā. There is no indication in the Sarvāstivāda
system that darśana-mārga refers to the latter, and bhāvanā-mārga —
in contrast — to the former. MVŚ states explicitly that, in truth, the two
mārga-s are not separable from each other. The two are differentiated only on account of the fact that, while both parijñā and apramāda are present in both, in darśana-mārga the former predominates and is strong and in bhāvanā-mārga, the latter. Venerable Vasumitra explains that

the defilements abandoned by the realization into the four truths cannot be distinguished as ‘this is abandoned by insight’, ‘that is abandoned by cultivation’. However, what is abandoned (prahīṇa), cast aside (pratiniḥ-sṛṣṭa) and expurgated (vyantī-bhūta) by the power of insight is said to be abandonable by vision. Those [defilements] whose various grades come to be gradually thinned and finally abandoned completely as a result of practice, cultivation and repeated action (āsevita-bhāvita-bahulikṛta) in accordance with the path that has been acquired are said to be abandonable by cultivation.\(^{137}\)

The path of cultivation is the stage of repeated practice which begins at the 16\(^{th}\) moment of satyābhisamaya. It is through this stage which may last a considerable period of time that all the tenacious defilements remaining after the darśana-mārga come to be gradually eradicated. These bhavanā-heya defilements comprise rāga, pratigha, moha and māna pertaining to the kāmadhātu; and three each — excluding pratigha which does not exist in a mind of meditation which is concentrated — in the two upper spheres. This gives a total of ten defilements (see chart in § 12.6.2.1 b). As these defilements are blunt by nature and hence difficult to detect and differentiate, they are collectively classified into nine grades on the basis of the degree of strength of their arising — weak (mṛdu), medium (madhya), strong (adhimātra); each again subdivided into weak, medium, strong — thus giving weak-weak, etc., up to strong-strong.\(^{138}\) Whereas the darśana-mārga is a sharp or forceful (tīvra, tīkṣṇa) path which on arising cuts off all the nine grades (see below) of the defilements at once, the bhāvanā-mārga is not forceful, so that the nine grades are cut off gradually through repeated practice, one by one.

This is like two knives, one sharp and one blunt, cutting the same thing; the sharp one cuts it at once, the blunt one gradually.\(^{139}\)

The sequence of abandoning the defilements begins with the strong-strong grade in the kāmadhātu and ends with the weak-weak grade in the bhavāgra bhūmi of the ārūpya-dhātu. In this way, a total of 88 grades of defilements existing in the nine bhūmi-s — kāma-dhātu, the four dhyāna-s of the rūpadhātu and the four ārūpya-s of the ārūpya-dhātu — come to be successively eradicated. The strong-strong grade of defilements is abandoned by the weak-weak grade of the counteractive
path. The reason for this is that the coarsest defilement is graded as the strong-strong and the subtlest, weak-weak. On the other hand, the most powerful counteragent is graded as the strong-strong, and the weakest is graded as weak-weak. Since the coarsest defilement is the easiest to counteract and the subtlest the most difficult; the weakest counteractive jñāna is utilized for the former, and the strongest, for the latter. AKB explains this with two similes: the gross stain of a cloth is washed out first, and the subtlest, last; a great darkness is dispelled by a small light, and a small darkness by a great light. As in the case of the darśana-heya defilements, the abandonment of each grade of the bhāvanā-heya defilements involves the unhindered path and the path of liberation. The difference is that in this case, the defilements are abandoned in the unhindered path by knowledge (jñāna), not receptivity. At the final stage, when the practitioner abandons the weak-weak grade and arrives at its path of liberation, one enters into the path of the non-trainee (aśaikṣa-mārga) and becomes an arhat.

15.7. Attainment of the four fruits of the spiritual life

The four fruits have their origin in the sūtra-s. As explained above, according to the Sarvāstivāda, at the 16th moment of the satyābhisamaya, the practitioner attains the fruit of stream entry. He has abandoned all the 88 categories of defilements abandonable by vision. In the sūtra, this attainment came to be associated with the overcoming of three fetters (saṃyojana) — satkāya-dṛṣṭi (Pāli; sakkāya-diṭṭhi), sīla-vrata-parāmarśa (Pāli: silabbata-parāmāsa) and vicikītsā (Pāli: vicikicchā). These three, together with kāmacchanda and vyāpāda, constitute the avarabhāgīya (Pāli: orambhāgīya). In this context, the Sarvāstivāda agrees with the Theravāda: The stream entrant has overcome only the first three avarabhāgīya fetters and must still overcome the last two as well as all the five ūrdhva-bhāgīya (Pāli: uddhambhāgīya) fetters — rāga pertaining to the two upper spheres, auddhatya, māna and avidyā. However AKB explanation here is not acceptable to Saṃghabhadra.

In the path of cultivation, the practitioner who has overcome up to five grades of the defilements becomes a candidate for the fruit of once-returner. When he has abandoned the sixth grade, he attains the fruit of a once-returner (sakṛdāgāmin), so called because, having been born among the gods and returning once to the human world, he will have no further rebirth. In addition to being free from the first three avarabhāgīya fetters, he has now also weakened or thinned rāga, pratigha and avidyā.
Having abandoned the seventh or eighth grade — or more strictly speaking, having reached the ānantaryā-mārga of the ninth grade — he becomes a candidate for the fruit of a non-returner. Having completely abandoned the ninth grade and abiding in the vimukti-mārga of the ninth grade, he attains the fruit of a non-returner. He will no longer be reborn in the kāmadhātu since he has now abandoned all five avarabhāgīya fetters that bind one to the lower dhātu. The non-returner who has realized the nirodha-samāpatti (= saṃjñāvedita-nirodha-samāpatti) is called a ‘bodily witness’ (kāya-sākṣin). He is so called because he has directly experienced the peace of this samāpatti through the basis of the body — there being no mentation — which is similar to nirvāṇa. This is the sharpest of all the faculties of non-returners.

From the moment when the non-returner becomes detached from the first grade of the defilements pertaining to the first dhyāna up to the moment when he abandons the eighth grade of the defilements pertaining to bhavāgra — or more strictly, when he is in the ānantaryā-mārga of the ninth grade of defilement of bhavāgra — he is a candidate for the fruit of arhathood. This unhindered path is the most powerful of all, capable of breaking all defilements whatsoever, and is accordingly called the vajra-like (vajropama) samādhi. When this ninth grade is completely abandoned, there arises in the practitioner the knowledge of the exhaustion of the outflows (kṣaya-jñāna). Immediately after this knowledge, if he becomes an arhat, if he is of the immovable (i.e., non-retrgressive) type in the vimuktī-mārga, there arises in him the knowledge of the non-arising of outflows, for he has then absolutely abandoned all defilements along with their traces (vāsanā) and overcome the undefiled ignorance (akliṣṭa-ajñāna — cf. supra, § 12.10). Otherwise, if he is a retrgressive type, there arises in him the same knowledge of exhaustion or the perfect view of the non-trainee. An arhat is called a non-trainee, for he has completed all training.

15.8. Out-of-sequence attainments

The above account of the sequential attainment of the four fruits represents the stages of progress of an ānupūrvaka — one who progresses according to the regular order. He begins as a sakala-bandhana. As we have seen earlier (§ 12.9.3), however, the Sarvāstivāda maintains that an ordinary worldling can abandon defilements through the mundane paths, except those that pertain to the existence-peak (bhavāgra). Since spiritual progress results from the abandonment of defilements, it means that an ordinary worldling can make tremendous progress before he enters into the noble path, and when he does enter it, he can attain up to
the stage of *anāgāmin-phala* — albeit the actual attainment of the fruit can properly take effect only after he has entered into direct realization.

Before entering into the *darśana-mārga*, if the practitioner has not abandoned any *bhāvanā-heya* defilement pertaining to the sphere of sensuality through the worldly path, or has abandoned up to the fifth category only, he becomes a candidate for stream entry upon entering the *darśana-mārga*. However, if he has abandoned from six to eight categories, he thereupon skips to become a *sakṛdāgāmi-pratipannaka*. In the 16th moment, he abides in the fruit of *sakṛdāgāmin*. Such a practitioner is known as a *bhūyo-vītarāga* — ‘one who has been much detached’. If the practitioner has become fully detached beforehand from the sphere of sensuality by having abandoned all the nine categories of defilement pertaining to it, or if he is detached with regard to the higher spheres by having additionally abandoned all nine categories of defilements pertaining to each of the stages of the fine-material sphere and the first three immaterial spheres — i.e., up to the stage of the *ākiñcanyāyatana* — he skips to become an *anāgāmi-pratipannaka* upon entering the *darśana-mārga*, and an *anāgāmin* in the following moment.

### 15.9. Retrogressibility of an *arhat*

It is an *abhidharma* controversy as to whether an *arhat* is retrogressible or not. For the Vibhajyavādins, his retrogression is impossible:

> When a vase has been broken, there remain only the broken pieces; it can no further be a vase. The case of an *arhat* ought to be the same — having crushed the defilements with the *vajropama-samādhi*, he ought not to give rise to the defilements again and retrogress. Just as, a log having been burnt, there remain only the ashes, it does not become a log any more. The same should be true for the *arhat* — having burnt the defilements with the fire of the outflow-free knowledge, he ought not give rise to the defilements again and retrogress.

The Mahāsāṃghika is also known to hold a similar view! So too, the Sautrāntika whose view is endorsed by Vasubandhu in AKB. According to the Sarvāstivāda, however, an *arhat* who has started as a *śraddhānusārin* is still susceptible to retrogression. He is said to be one circumstantially liberated (*samaya-vimukta*). His realization of *samāpatti* is also dependent on circumstances (*samaya*). MVŚ quotes the *sūtra* as teaching that there are five reasons for the retrogression of such an *arhat*:
(1) having too many undertakings;
(2) indulgence in conceptual proliferation (prapañca);
(3) being fond of quarrel;
(4) being fond of traveling afar;
(5) being constantly sick.

Moreover, the sūtra mentions an arhat named Gautika, a samaya-vimukta who had retrogressed six times. At the seventh time, fearing that he might again retrogress, he killed himself with a knife and attained parinirvāṇa.¹⁵¹

In contrast, one who has started as a dharmānusārin is not retrogressible. He is said to be non-circumstantially liberated (asamaya-vimukta) and is called ‘one liberated through wisdom’ (prajñā-vimukta). If, additionally, he has also overcome the hindrance to samāpatti and can enter into the nirodha-samāpatti at will, he is said to be ‘liberated doubly’ (ubhayobhāga-vimukta). In all, six types of arhat-s are distinguished:

(1) parihāṇa-dharman — those susceptible to retrogression;
(2) cetanā-dharman — those who can end their existences at will;
(3) anurakṣanā-dharman — those who can preserve themselves by constantly guarding against the loss of what has been acquired;
(4) sthitākampya — those who remain stable in their stage of attainment, with neither progress nor retrogression;
(5) prativedhanā-dharman — those capable of penetrating the state of the akopya-dharman arhat which they can attain quickly;
(6) akopya-dharman — ‘the unshakable ones’ — those not susceptible to retrogression. The first five are samaya-vimukta-s, the last asamaya-vimukta-s.¹⁵²
NOTES

1 AKB, 391.
2 MVŚ, 4b; see supra, § 1.2.
3 MVŚ, 70a, 85a, 315c, etc.
4 MVŚ, 428b: śrāvaka-bodhi requires only 60 kalpa-s of prayoga; pratyekabuddha, 100 kalpa-s.
5 MVŚ, 154a, 157c, 159a, 210b, etc.
6 MVŚ, 327c.
7 Cf. MVŚ, 264b–c, 465c; see also supra, § 12.7, § 12.9.3.
8 MVŚ, 264c–265a.
9 MVŚ, 317a.
10 DŚŚ, 463b: “Nirvāṇa is called Dharma; the noble eightfold path is called anudharma. The Buddha’s disciples’ practice therein is called dharma-anudharma-partipatti.”
11 DŚŚ, 459c.
12 DŚŚ, loc. cit.
13 MVŚ, 3a–b.
14 MVŚ, 317c.
15 MVŚ, 933c.
16 See SĀ, T 2, 10a–11c.
17 See SĀ, T 2, 10a–11c.
18 AKB, 334 ff.
19 AKB, 335 f.; MVŚ, 906c ff.
20 E.g., SgPŚ, 402a–c.
21 MVŚ, 159b–c.
22 MVŚ, 363c.
23 MVŚ, 479a.
24 MVŚ, 34c–35a; Ny, 595b–c; SPPrŚ, 892b; ADV, 218.
25 Cf. ADV, 218: punyabhāgīyam yena devamanusyopapattibījām pratigrhnāti maheśākhyaiś cakulamahābhogarīpyacakravartīśakrapakṣeṇaṇukāḷbhiṃśatād prāptaye phalam āksipti | moksabhāgīyam yenāvakṣamokṣāyāsavasthānād avaśyam pari(n)vaṇadharmaḥ bhavati | nirvedhābhāgīyam uṣmagatam(ī)m uṣmam pratiṣeṣānāṃ caturvidham ||
26 MVŚ, 35a.
27 MVŚ, 35a–b.
28 MVŚ, 885b–c.
29 MVŚ, 885b–886a.
30 AKB, 337.
31 AKB, 339 f.; MVŚ, 134c.
32 MVŚ, 384b, 662c, etc.
33 E.g.: Pu Guang’s commentary on AKB, T 41, 350a, 339b; etc.
34 E.g.: T 46, no. 1918, 557c–558a, 564a–b; T no. 1916; T no. 1911, 35c; etc.
E.g., MVŚ, 410a.
MVŚ, 205a.
MVŚ, 205a–208c.
T 30, 905b. Also cf. YBŚ, T 30, 427b, 458a-b, which enumerates them and also explains their respective counteracting functions, but without assigning to them a collective name.

Cf. AKB, 337.

smṛty-upasthāna — MVŚ, 936c ff., AKB, 341 ff.

All dharma-s other than body, sensation and ideation. MVŚ, 937a: mental objects — other than the vedanā-skandha — subsumed under the dharmāyatana.

svalakṣaṇa = svabhāva — AKB, 341.

MVŚ, 938a: This fourfold mindfulness is for counteracting the four corresponding topsy-turvy-ness (viparyāsa).

MVŚ, 148a.
MVŚ, 148a.
MVŚ, 135b.

AKB, 346: tac caitac caturvidham api nirvedhabhāgiyam

na śrutacintāmayaṁ

bhāvanāmayam |

AKB, 346.

See AKB, 447 f.

AKB, 346: nirvedhabhāgiyāni ko 'rthah | vidha vibhāge | niścito vedho nirvedhaḥ āryamārgas tena vicikitsā-prahānāt satyānāṁ ca vibhajanād idam duḥkham ayam yāvāt mārga iti | tasya bhāgo darśanamārgaikadesaḥ | tasya āvāhakatvena hitatvān nirvedhabhāgiyāni |

MVŚ, 30a.
MVŚ, 29c–30a.
MVŚ, 33b.
MVŚ, 33a–b.
MVŚ, 33b.
MVŚ, 33c.
JPS, 918a08–919a08.
Study, 286, 310, etc.
MVŚ, 5b27–7b25.
MVŚ, 5c8–10.

MVŚ, 30a4–6. Various views on the division and subdivision of grades among the four kuśāla-māla-s are then mentioned herein.

MVŚ, 30a27–b7.


MVŚ, 28a. I have suggested an alternative for *uṣmagata*/ūṣmagata as ‘warmed-up’ (‘gone/become warm’), taking it as an adjective which describes the first stage of the nirvedha-bhāgīya: the stage characterized as getting warmed up. However, in Xuanzang’s translation, he seems to understand the term as a noun. In AKB, of course, this first nirvedhabhāgīya does occur — albeit very rarely — as a noun, āśman, instead of uṣmagata. Moreover, uṣmagata could also be compared to drṣṭi-gatam which is essentially the same as drṣṭi. This being the case, we can certainly render even uṣmagata as “warmth”. On other hand, Vasubandhu’s gloss of the term could suggest either way, a noun or an adjective:

AKB, 343: āṣmagataṁ ivōṣmagatam

(1) “āṣmagata means as if it is warmed up (/has become warm”). Or,

(2) “āṣmagata means as if it is a kind of warmth.”

This second alternative understanding would tally with Yaśomitra’s gloss: “āṣmagata means a skillful root which is of the species of warmth.”

MVŚ, 34c.

MVŚ, 30c.

AKB, 344: yādṛśā āṣmāṇas catuḥsatyālambanāḥ śoḍasākārāś ca | utkṛṣṭataratvāt tu nāmāntaram |

Vy, 532: mūrdha-sabdo ‘yam prakāṣa-paryanta-vācī | tathā hi loke vaktāro bhavantī | mūrdha-gatā khaly āṣya śrīr iti … mūrdhabhāyaṁ pātaḥ pariḥṇīṁ | atikramo vā kṣānti-samnukhiḥ-bhāvo vā | mūrdhāṁ ca kalavat |

MVŚ, 25c; Vy, 532: dvē hi kuśala-māle cale | uṣmagata-mūrdha-lakṣane parhāni-sambhāvat | dvē acale kṣānti-laukīkāgra-dharma-lakṣane viparyayat | tatra tāyor yan mṛdu tad uṣmagatam | yad adhimātraṁ te mūrdhānaḥ | acalāyor api yan mṛdu sā kṣāntiḥ | yad adhimātraṁ te laukīkāgra-dharmāḥ |

MVŚ, 30b.

MVŚ, 24a ff.: various reasons given for the epithet; also cf. MVŚ, 223c.

AKB, 344: adhimātra-satyā-kṣaṇamād aparikhānaṁ |

Vy, 533: adhimātā-satyā-kṣaṇamād iti | uṣmagatāvasthāyam mṛdu satyaṁ kṣamate rocate | mūrdhāvaṁ madhyāṁ mṛdu-āsantram idānim adhimātā-satyā-kṣaṇamāt kṣāntir utpadayate | … yasmāt kṣāntir na pariḥvyate | mūrdhabhyas tu pariḥvyates ity āsti sāṃbhavah |

MVŚ, 30b–c.

AKB, 344: agradharma-samśleṣād asau kāmāvacara-duḥkhālambanaiva | ata evosmāgatādīnāṁ traidhātuka-duḥkhāyālambanaiva-siddhir niyamāvaccanāt | yadhā kila ṛpārūpya-pratipakṣādīnaṁ ekaikā-satyākārālambanāpahṛṣena yāvat kāmāvacaraṁ eva duḥkham dvābhayeṁ kṣānabhayeṁ manasiṣkāroty esā sarvaiva mādyā kṣāntir yadaikam eva kṣāṇaṁ tadādhiṁāte 

MVŚ, 25b.

MVŚ, 7b.

JPŚ, 918a ff.

MVŚ, 5a ff.

MVŚ, 11b. Cf. AKB, 345: sarva-laukīkaśrethavād iti laukīkāgradharmāḥ | vinā sābhāga-hetunā mārgasya tat-puruṣākārenākāraṇāt |

MVŚ, 11b–12a.

MVŚ, 7b–8b.
MVŚ, 8c — refuted by the Vaibhāṣika.

Ny, 680b.

MVŚ, 3b.

MVŚ, 16a — other explanations are also given.

MVŚ, 4a–b.

See also, supra, §12.9.3.1

According to the Kāśmīra Sarvāstivādins: “The ānantarya-mārga-s can abandon the kleśa-s, because they block the prāpti-s of the kleśa-s so that they do not continue; they can also realize the nirodha-s, because they induce the visamyoga-prāpti-s so that they may arise. The vimukti-mārga-s are only said to realize nirodha-s, as they appear together with the visamyoga-prāpti-s.” (MVŚ, 465c)

AKB, 40. For further explanation of these three indriya-s, see AKB, 42, 49.

AKB, 49.

AKB, 352.

Ny, 690a.

AKB, 350: prathamato dharmatattva-jñānād dharma-jñānam. Vy, 542: ādito duḥkhādi-duḥkha-duḥkhādyad ity arthaḥ | See also Entrance, 172f., n. 237

See MVŚ, 547c–548a.

On dhamme ānyata and anvaya ānyata in the Pāli canon, see Frauwallner, 168.

AKB: tadanyavādād ārya-duḥkhālambanam anvaya-jñānam | tathāvānugamanād AKB(C): “It is called 'species' (類) because this knowledge, bearing on the subsequent object, is similar to the preceding one, for the subsequent one realizes the object in accordance with (following) the preceding one.” Vy, 542 explains tad-anvayatvāt as tad-dhetukatvāt ('having that (i.e., dharma-jñāna) as its cause').

Ny, 735c.

See Entrance, 173, n. 238

See IAKB, I, xxxx.

MVŚ, 265a, 522a–b.

AKB, 328.

See Entrance, 177, n. 259; also cf. T 32, 257b.

T 49, 15c.

T 49, 16a.

Vy, 542: ārya-dharmagupta-prabhṛtayah |

T 41, 351c.

MVŚ, 533a.

I take 寶 to be an error for 實 in the text.

MVŚ, 533b.

Cf. Vism, 593.

AKB, 351; AKB(C), 121c–122a; MVŚ, 732c, 16b.

T 32, 257b.

T 32, 251b; see Studies, 586,

T 32, 333b.

T 32, 333c

ibid., 368c–369a.

AKB, 157: āryāḥ katame | yeṣām anāsravo mārga utpannah | ārād yātāḥ pāpakebyho dharmebya ity āryāḥ | ātyantika-visanyoga-prāptilābḥāḥ | ete hi klesā-ksaye niyatvatī samyaktva-niyatāḥ | See below for the notion of samyaktva-niyāma-avakrānti.

JPŚ, 928c; cf. MVŚ, 232b. See also supra, § 11.3.1.

MVŚ, 231c.

MVŚ, 232a–b.

AKB, 355: aksīnabhāvanāheyaḥ phalasthaḥ saptakṛtparaḥ |

AKB, 356.

MVŚ, 240a. Cf. AKB, 356: nirvāṇasroto hi mārgas tena tatra gamanāt | tadasāv āpanna āgataḥ prāpta iti srotāppannah |

Vy, 548.

Vy, 549: śraddhāḥdiko śraddhāḥdhimukta iti krtvā | na tu tasya prajñā naivāst | tasya na tu prabhāvita iti na tan nāma labhate | prajñādhikatvena drṣṭi-prabhāvitavātṛ drṣṭi-prāptaḥ | na tu tasya śraddhā nāsti … apare tu punar nairukta-vidhim āalambya vyācākṣate | śraddhāḥdhipatyena dārśana-hyeybhō muktaḥ śraddhāḥdhimuktaḥ | drṣṭy-ādhipatyenā prāpta-phalo drṣṭi-prāpta iti |

He is therefore said to be abiding in the class (rāśi) of those destined for samyakta. Cf. MVŚ, 140b.

MVŚ, 12a. which gives various interpretations. The grammarians (sābdika-s) explain as follows: The term is niyāma-avakrānti; yāma also signifies going (<ṣa); ni signifies 'to prevent' and also has the sense of 'not'. The yogācārya-s, having acquired the noble path, will never go to the gati-s of the asat-puruṣa. Thus the noble path is also called niyāma.

AKB(C), 121b.

Cf. MVŚ, 140b.

Cf. MVŚ, 265a ff.

MVŚ, 22c.

Cf. AKB, 157, for the three classes (rāśi) of beings: Those in the samyata-niyata-rāśi are destined for nirvāṇa; mithyāra, for rebirths in the evil destinies (gati); aniṣita; non-destined or non-fixed as regard either. Cf. MVŚ, 22c, 316b; AKB, 374 f., for other arguments for the non-retrogressibility of the dārśana-mārga.

T 49, 15c.

MVŚ, 276a–c.

AKB, 355.

MVŚ, 267a–b.

AKB, 355.

MVŚ, 267b.

E.g., S, v, 356–357.

AKB, 356.

Ny, 694a.

AKB, 358: devāt gatvā sakṛn manusyalokāgamanāt sakrdāgāmī | pareṇa jāmābhāvāt rāgadvēsamohānām ca tanātvād ity ucyate | mṛdu-prakārāvāsatvāt |

AKB, 358 ff.; five types of anāgāmin who attain nirvāṇa in the rūpadhātu are mentioned and explained herein: antarā-parinirvāyan, upapadya-parinirvāyan, sābhisaṃskāra-parinirvāyan, anabhisamākāra-parinirvāyan, and ārdhvasrotas.
Including the type who, being detached from the rūpa-dhātu, is reborn in the ārūpyadhatu where he attains nirvāṇa — i.e., the ārūpyaṅga — the total number of anāgāmin-s becomes six. Also cf. A, iv 70, 380; Ś, v, 201; Puggalapaññatti, 16–17, 70; Vism, 677.

147 AKB, 363.
148 MVŚ, 312b.
149 T 49, 15c; T 41, 375a.
150 AKB, 375.
151 MVŚ, 312b.
152 AKB, 372 ff.; MVŚ, 315b.
16. The Unconditioned (Asaṃskṛta) Dharma-s

16.1. Three unconditioned dharma-s of the Sarvāstivāda

16.1.1. Controversial nature of the unconditioned dharma-s.

16.1.2. Sarvāstivāda conception of the unconditioned

16.2. Cessation through deliberation

16.2.1. Proof of the reality of nirvāṇa

16.2.2. Cessation through deliberation, acquisition, and spiritual liberation

16.2.3. Sautrāntika conception of nirvāṇa

16.2.4. Conclusion on Cessation through deliberation

16.3. Cessation independent of deliberation

16.3.1. Distinction between cessation through deliberation, cessation independent of deliberation and cessation of impermanence (anityatā-nirodha)

16.3.2. Summary

16.4. Space

16.4.1. Arguments in MVŚ

16.4.2. Arguments by Saṃghabhadra

16.4.3. Summary

16.1. Three unconditioned dharma-s of the Sarvāstivāda

The orthodox Sarvāstivādins teach that there are three categories of unconditioned dharma-s:

1. cessation through deliberation (pratisamkhyā-nirodha);
2. cessation independent of deliberation (appratisamkhyā-nirodha);
3. Space (ākāśa).

In the Sarvāstivāda perspective, the unconditioned domain — excepting Space — just like the conditioned domain, is pluralistic.

1. The cessations through deliberation refer to the cessation of defilements acquired through the process of discriminative or deliberative effort. There are as many cessations through deliberation as there are with-outflow dharma-s.¹ This is the most important unconditioned category, representing as it does, the goal of Buddhist praxis. In some schools, such as the Theravāda, this is the only unconditioned. Accordingly, among the three kinds of the unconditioned of the Sarvāstivāda, we will be dealing with this at considerably greater length below.
2. The cessations independent of deliberation are those acquired simply on account of the deficiency in the required assemblage of conditions for the particular dharma-s. They are so called because they are independent of any deliberative effort. The quantity of this category is even greater than that of the cessations through deliberation, being as numerous as the conditioned dharma-s.²

3. Space is that ontological entity by virtue of which resistant things can be accommodated. It is to be distinguished from the ‘element of space’ which is space in the ordinary case, such as that found in a window.

16.1.1. The controversial nature of the unconditioned dharma-s.

Various schools have different conceptions of the unconditioned and disagree as to the ontological status of these dharma-s.

In the Sarvāstivāda conception, an unconditioned is:

1. that which transcends arising and ceasing,
2. an ontologically real possessing a unique efficacy — albeit not causal efficacy obtaining in the temporal process.

The Mahāsāṃghikas uphold the criterion that the notion of an unconditioned entails that which remains unchanged eternally and, from this perspective, includes Conditioned Co-arising and the noble path, representing the eternal principles of causality and liberation respectively, as among the nine unconditioned dharma-s:

1. pratisamkhyā-nirodha;
2. apratisamkhyā-nirodha;
3. ākāśa;
4. ākāśānityāyatana;
5. vijñānānityāyatana;
6. ākiñcanyāyatana;
7. naiva-saṃjñā-nāsaṃjñāyatana;
8. praviñya-samutpādaṭva;
9. ārya-mārgatva.³

For the Sautrāntikas, the unconditioned is simply a concept (prajñāpīti) of that which is opposed to the conditioned.

All the unconditioned are non-entities (sarvam evāsaṃskṛtam adravyam), for they do not exist as distinct existents (bhāvāntara) like rūpa, vedanā, etc.⁴

Thus, nirvāṇa is nothing more than the absolute absence of unsatisfactoriness. Accordingly, this school categorically denies the reality of all unconditioned dharma-s.

532
The Theravāda school is well known to accept nibbāna alone as the unconditioned dhamma. Yaśomitra also informs us that some, like the Vātsīputrīyas, hold that the same view. However, the information we get on the views of the various schools on the unconditioned are not always consistent. Thus, as regards the Vātsīputrīyas, MVŚ tells us that their doctrines “differ [from the Sarvāstivāda only] with regard to six or seven views; the rest are mostly similar [to those of the Sarvāstivāda].” In connection with the unconditioned, it mentions only that the Vātsīputrīyas maintain that nirvāṇa is threefold: pertaining to the trainee (śaikṣa), to the non-trainee (aśaikṣa) and to neither-trainee-nor-non-trainee (naiva-śaikṣa-nāśaikṣa) — no difference in other respects regarding the unconditioned is indicated. The Xuan Zang tradition, via Kui Ji, informs us as follows:

The Mahāsāṃghikas, Ekavyāvahārikas, Kukkuṭikas and Lokottaravādins acknowledge nine types [of the unconditioned dharma] … (same as above). The Mahīśāsakas also acknowledge nine: 1. pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha, 2. apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha, 3. ākāśa, 4. ānīṃja, 5. kuśaladharma-tathatā, 6. akuśaladharma-tathatā, 7. avyākṛtadharma-tathatā, 8. āryamārgatva-tathatā, 9. pratītyasamutpāda-tathatā. The Śāmmitīyas and the Dārṣṭāntikas acknowledge three asamskṛta-s which are not real existents (無有體性). The Vibhajyavādins hold that among the three nirodha-s, anitīyatā-nirodha is also unconditioned. The Sarvāstivāda school also acknowledges three types [of unconditioned dharma], but hold that they are real existents.

Even within the Sarvāstivāda school itself, opinions differ as regards the ontological status of these unconditioned dharma-s. It appears that at the early stages, the Sarvāstivāda did not sufficiently elaborate on the ontological status of the unconditioned dharma-s. However, all the three categories of the asamskṛta are already attested in the earliest canonical Abhidharma texts of the Sarvāstivāda. In an Abhidharmically more formal manner, the Jñānaprasthāna enumerates ākāśa and apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha as the two types of dharma that are “to be penetrated (pratividhātavya), to be fully known (parijñātavya), not to be abandoned (aprahātavya), not to be cultivated (abhāvayitavya), and not to be directly realized (asāksāt-kartavya); whereas the pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha is “to be penetrated, to be fully known, not to be abandoned, not to be cultivated, and to be directly realized.” It can be observed that in MVŚ, the various ācārya-s hold contradictory views. Thus, Buddhadeva accepts the realities of all three; the Bhadanta (= Dharmatrāta?) denies the reality of ākāśa; the Dārṣṭāntikas deny the ontological status of all three. Probably in response to the denial by the Dārṣṭāntikas
and the Sautrāntikas, in the post-AKB period there had consistently been an additional requirement in the definition of ‘Sarvāstivāda’: A Sarvāstivādin must accept not only the tri-temporal existence of dharma, but also the reality of all three kinds of unconditioned dharma-s. The controversial nature of these unconditioned dharma-s is also evident in Saṃghabhadra’s repeated accusation of the Sautrāntikas as siding with the followers of the ‘sky-flower’ (空花; kha-puṣpa) doctrine — apparently referring to the Śūnyatāvāda prevailing at the time — obstinately denying the svabhāva of all dharma-s.

16.1.2. Sarvāstivāda conception of the unconditioned

In its aspect of being a dependently co-arisen (pratītya-samutpanna) existent, a conditioned dharma is said to be samskṛta — ‘compounded’, ‘co-produced’, ‘conditioned’. In its other aspect of being a causally productive force, it is also called a saṃskāra — ‘conditioning’ or ‘conditioning force’.

In direct contrast, the asamskṛta-s are neither produced by causes and conditions, nor are they causally productive of other dharma-s. Saṃghabhadra argues, however, that their reality cannot be denied simply on the ground that they are neither causes nor effects — the Sautrāntikas, for one, accepts causality of past and future dharma-s but not their reality. (See also below, § 16.2.1).

AKB states that the asamskṛta-s are not subsumable under the skandha taxonomy, since “skandha” means a heap (rāśi), and, unlike rūpa, etc., the asamskṛta-s do not form separate heaps of “past asamskṛta-s”, “present asamskṛta-s”, etc. In Sthiramati’s *Tattvārthā, a question is raised:

If the asamskṛta-s are not real entities, it is reasonable that they do not form a skandha. Since they are asserted [by the Sarvāstivāda] to be existents, why is it not conceded that a plurality of them agglomerate as a heap — an asamskṛta-skandha?

Sthiramati explains:

There are two significations of a heap: (i) When those that exist separately in various locations are gathered together in one place, one calls it a heap. (ii) When tri-temporal dharma-s are grouped together through our faculty of understanding (prajñā) into groups each pertaining to one temporal period, one calls these [groups] heaps. Now, as the asamskṛta dharma-s have neither of these two significations, how can they be called heaps?
Thus, the essential characteristic of the *asaṃskṛta dharma*-s is that they are neither temporialized nor spatialized. This, however, does not mean that they are not distinctly individuated; rather, they exist as a plurality of real entities (*dravya*). Being beyond the space-time dimension, they can neither arise nor cease, and accordingly are not directly involved in any causal process.\(^\text{19}\) Only the past and present *saṃskṛta dharma*-s have the functions of ‘grasping a fruit’ (*phala-grahaṇa/phala-ākṣepa*) and ‘giving a fruit’ (*phala-dāna*) (cf. supra, § 7.4). These two functions are lacking in the future conditioned *dharma*-s as well as in the unconditioned *dharma*-s. Nevertheless, the unconditioned *dharma*-s, qua *dharma*-s, are real forces and can have an impact on human existence, even though, as Samghabhadra puts it, the way of establishing causes and effects among the conditioned *dharma*-s is not applicable to the case of the unconditioned *dharma*-s. (See below, § 16.2).

### 16.2. Cessation through deliberation

In the Sarvāstivāda, the better known term *nirvāṇa* is synonymous with *pratisamkhyā¬-nirodha*. The latter is defined as a disjunction (*visamyoga*) from with-outflow *dharma*-s acquired through the process of discrimination/deliberation (*pratisamkhyāna*) which is a specific outflow-free *prajñā*.\(^\text{20}\) Sthiramati explains that this specific *prajñā* refers to that in the ānantarya-mārga (see below) when the acquisition (*prāpti*) of defilement is abandoned, subsequent to which cessation through deliberation is realized (*sākṣāt-kṛta*) or acquired (*prāpyate*). MVŚ\(^\text{22}\) enumerates as many as 14 synonyms for cessation through deliberation, together with various interpretations for each of them:

1. *Nirvāṇa*;
2. Dissimilar (不同類; *asabhāga*);
3. Non-agglomerated (非聚 *arāśi?; asamudaya?*);
4. Non-manifest (非顯; *avarṇa*);
5. Most Excellent (*parama*);
6. Penetration (通達; *prativedha*);
7. *Arhat*;
8. Non-intimate (不親近; *asamsṛṣṭa*);
9. Non-cultivated (*asevita, abhāvita*);
10. Lovable (*abhipreta, ramaṇīya*);
11. Proximate (*antika, āsanna*);
The first and foremost, nirvāṇa, is explained in four senses:

(i) the absolute exit (nir) from all gati (vana);

(ii) the absolute absence (nir) of karma and of defilements — bad smell (durgandha = vana) and impurities;

(iii) the absolute exit (nir) from all the forests (vana) of skandha-s with their three fires and three characteristics;

(iv) the non-(nir-)weaving (vāna) of the fabric — vipāka-phala — of saṃsāric existence.

Elsewhere, MVŚ gives ten meanings of nirvāṇa, most of which are covered by the above four senses; the other senses that could be considered additional are: ‘without further existence’, ‘freedom from bondage’ and ‘transcendence of all saṃsāric sufferings’. Thus, nirvāṇa as the sumnum bonum of Buddhism is the pratisamkhya-nirodha which is acquired at the final moment of enlightenment as a result of which all defilements — and hence all duḥkha — pertaining to the three spheres of existence have ceased absolutely, and saṃsāric existence is totally transcended. MVŚ also speaks of this specifically in terms of the abandonment of defilement, the corresponding jñāna arisen and the path-structure as follows:

When [the practitioner] is dissociated from the ninth (i.e., final) grade of bond, the vajropama-samādhi (in which whatever defilements remaining are eradicated without any trace) having ceased and the anutpāda-jñāna having first arisen, that abandonment [of defilement] acquired is called ‘abandonment’ (prahāṇa), ‘disjunction’ (visaṃyoga), ‘cessation’ (nirodha), ‘truth’ (satya), ‘complete knowledge’ (parijñā), i.e., the complete knowledge that [refers to] the destruction of all bonds, ‘fruit of the spiritual life’ (śrāmanya-phala), i.e., the arhat-phala, and ‘the sphere of nirvāṇa with a remnant of substratum’ (sopadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu). … When the skandha-s, āyatana-s and dhātu-s of an arhat cease and do not continue any longer, [he enters] into the sphere of nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum (nirupadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu).

Accordingly, one can speak only of the non-trainee’s disjunction from defiled dharma-s as nirvāṇa-dhātu:
The disjunction acquired by an ordinary worldling … is not subsumable as either of the two types of nirvāṇa-dhātu… It should only be called an abandonment, a disjunction, a cessation, a truth (satya). It is not to be called a complete knowledge (parinirvāṇa), or a śramaṇa-phala, or a sopadhī-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu, or a nirupadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu.

The disjunction acquired by a trainee is called an abandonment, a disjunction, a cessation, a truth; at some stage called a complete knowledge and at some stage not so called; at some stage called a śramaṇya-phala and at some stage not so called. It is not called a sopadhī-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu or a nirupadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu.

The disjunction acquired by a non-trainee is called an abandonment, a disjunction, a cessation, a truth, a complete knowledge, a śramaṇya-phala. At some stage it is called a sopadhī-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu; at some stage it is called a nirupadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu. 📜

As the following discussion in MVŚ sums up, while on the one hand each abandonment of defilement can be spoken of as a nirvāṇa, on the other hand, this term is in actual fact reserved for the perfect attainment of an arhat:

Question: The abandonment of any [defiled] dharma such as satkāya-drṣti is nirvāṇa, why does it herein speak only of the absolute abandonment of greed (rāga) and so on up to the absolute abandonment of all defilements?

Answer: Although the abandonment of each and every [defiled] dharma is nirvāṇa, herein it speaks only of the “perfect nirvāṇa”. … Furthermore, the name nirvāṇa is [reserved] exclusively for the stage of the non-trainee. The stage of the trainee being yet incomplete, it is not called nirvāṇa. 📜

As unconditioned dharma-s, the pratisamkhyā-nirodha-s are not causes or conditions in the proper sense. Hence they cannot be said to have fruits (sa-phala). Nevertheless, in conformity with the sūtra tradition which speaks of śramaṇya-phala and conventional usage, it is permissible to call pratisamkhyā-nirodha a “fruit of disjunction” (visamyoga-phala) without implying that it is causally produced, and it is also permissible to consider them as a “condition qua object” (ālambana-pratyaya) — e.g., as an object of thought of a yogi, and adhipati-pratyaya — making an indirect contribution by merely not obstructing. 📜

According to the Sarvāstivāda:

The way of establishing causes and effects among the saṃskṛta-s is not applicable to the case of the asaṃskṛta-s. Accordingly, a
pratisamkhya-nirodha is a cause which is without an effect, and an effect which is without a cause.\textsuperscript{28}

16.2.1. Proof of the reality of nirvāṇa

For the Sarvāstivāda, nirvāṇa or pratisamkhya-nirodha is a distinct positive entity (dravyāntara) — an ontologically real force that is acquired by the practitioner when a given defilement is completely abandoned.\textsuperscript{29} In fact, this real force acts to ensure that the prāpti of the defilement so abandoned will absolutely not be able to arise any more.\textsuperscript{30} Skandhila’s definition clearly brings out this dynamic function:

The cessation through deliberation is that which causes the non-production of duḥkha — [a real entity which is a positive presence]: like a dike holding back the water or a screen blocking the wind.\textsuperscript{31}

The following are the main Vaibhāṣika arguments for its reality:\textsuperscript{32}

1. The Sūtra says, “Among all dharma-s — those which are samskṛta-s or those which are asamskṛta-s — detachment is supreme.”\textsuperscript{33} Here the asamskṛta-s are mentioned — in the plural — as among the dharma-s, and therefore cannot be non-existent. Those that are non-existent do not have the nature of dharma.

How can a non-existent be said to be supreme among the non-existent? It is observed empirically that among dharma-s which have their self-characteristics (svalakṣaṇa), some are said to be superior, others inferior. Thus nirvāṇa-s definitely exist as distinct entities which sustain their self-characteristics and hence are called dharma-s. (Cf. AKB, 2: svalakṣaṇa-dhāraṇād dharmaḥ).

2. The essences and functions of rūpa, vedanā, etc., which exist as a series, are empirically observable. Those of nirvāṇa, which do not exist as a series, are subtle and difficult to perceive. Nevertheless, when as a result of diligent contemplative practices the bhāvanā-mayī prajñā arises in the practitioner, the true essential nature and function of nirvāṇa are realized by him. Indeed, at the moment when he comes out from the contemplation, he exclaims: “Wonderful is nirvāṇa, it is cessation (nirodha), calm (śānta), excellent (praṇīta) and exit (niḥsaraṇa).”\textsuperscript{34} These specific characteristics of nirvāṇa which are experientially verifiable by the practitioner prove their very existence as real entities. In fact, characteristic and essential nature are one and the same thing. We may also note here the MVŚ doctrine that what pertains to the
absolute truth (paramārtha) is the universal principles directly cognized (abhi-sam-√i) by the ārya.

3. There are certain śūtra-s which explicitly say that nirvāṇa exists. Thus, a śūtra says:

O monks! there is definitely the unborn. If this were not, there would not be an end to birth-death and duḥkha. As there is the unborn …

Also:

“There is an abode (sthāna), an exit”; “I see that there truly is the real category (padārtha) of asamskṛta, namely nirvāṇa”; “It is called nirodha on account of the nirodha of the five aggregates of grasping”; “There are three dhātu-s — nirvāṇa-dhātu, samskṛta-dhātu, asamskṛta-dhātu”; “There is a nirodha-dhātu”; “There is the born (jāta), there is the unborn (ajāta)”; “There is the ārya-satyā of duḥkha-nirodha”; “I know directly the abode of security (kṣemāyatana, kṣema-gati)”; etc.

The Sautrāntikas and others, of course, deny that these śūtra statements constitute proof of nirvāṇa as a real entity. Thus, “There is the unborn” refers not to a real entity, but simply to the discontinuity of the birth (janmāpravṛtti) of existents; it means simply: “there is the cutting off of the series of the born”. Saṃghabhadra replies that it is only when the unborn is conceded to be a distinct real entity that it is meaningful to say “there is”. Besides, if there were no such entity, the Buddha should have simply said “there is the discontinuity of the born”. Moreover, before the path has arisen, there is no ‘cutting off of the series’; when the path is arisen, there is; again there is not, when an ārya retrogresses in giving rise to defilements — thus the cutting off of a series should not be asamskṛta. To show its unreality, the Sautrāntikas also cite the simile in the śūtra which likens nirvāṇa to the extinction of the flame of a lamp. The Vaibhāṣikas, however, argues that this simile does not contradict their view-point: The extinction referred therein is the anityatā-lakṣaṇa which exists as a real viprayukta-samskāra dharma, distinct from the flame. Besides, this simile is made with reference to the time of entering into the nirupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa when all remaining upadhi-s are completely cut off.

4. The Sautrāntikas and some Abhidharma masters concede that nirvāṇa exists, but only as a relatively real (praṇāptisat). The Sarvāstivādins argue that if it is conceded to exist, it must be accepted to exist as an absolutely real (dravya-sat, paramārtha-sat), for a real
supporting basis — on which nirvāṇa is designated as a relatively real — cannot be found.

The saṃskāra-s cannot serve as this basis for designating nirvāṇa as their cessation, for in this case, nirvāṇa, like its basis, would have to be a thing whose nature is to be abandoned, defiled, with outflow and impermanent — completely contradictory to the nature of nirvāṇa. Moreover, logically speaking, the saṃskāra-s being opposed in nature to nirvāṇa, cannot be the basis of the latter: there has never been a relatively real dharma that is opposed in nature to its very supporting basis, as in the case of light and darkness. Furthermore, since nirvāṇa is conceded to be the cessation of the saṃskāra-s, the latter cannot serve as the basis — it is not observed that light has darkness (its extinction) as the basis. Besides, it is also illogical in view of the fact that when the saṃskāra-s are existing, there is no cessation: a person who is non-detached, as long as he is still having defilements like greed, etc., cannot be said to have the cessation of these defilements. It is only when the defilements no longer exist in him that he realizes nirvāṇa.

Conclusion: If nirvāṇa has any reality, it must be a real entity in itself, not a mere designation derived from any basis.36

5. Some assert that nirvāṇa is unreal because a knowledge (jñāna) necessarily has an object, and for them the prajñā which perceives nirvāṇa (nirvāṇālambanā prajñā) has name (nāman) as its object. Saṃghabhadra refutes this, pointing out that it would lead to the consequence of mithyā-dṛṣṭi and samyag-dṛṣṭi being mutually accomplishing:

A samyag-dṛṣṭi comprehending nirvāṇa as being śānta and nitya would become a dṛṣṭy-upādāna, since all names are impermanent. A mithyā-dṛṣṭi vilifying nirvāṇa as being impermanent in nature would become a samyag-dṛṣṭi, since it would be an understanding in conformity to reality. Those who hold that nirvāṇa is devoid of any essential reality would never concede that name is a non-existent; those who hold that nirvāṇa has an essential nature would never concede that name itself is nirvāṇa.

6. If nirvāṇa were not a real entity, how can the receptive beings give rise to delight in nirvāṇa and disgust towards saṃsāra — there cannot be inferiority or superiority among non-existents. Moreover, it would mean that the Buddha had been deluding the receptive beings, for he would have been speaking of the non-existents in the same manner that he spoke of the existents. A further implication would be that a view that
denies the reality of nirvāṇa would be a samyag-dṛṣṭi. (Cf. following argument).

In this argument, there is an implicit stress that nirvāṇa, as much as the conditioned dharma-s, are real forces which can have impact on the mental stream of sentient beings. It is cognizable (vijñeya), even though ordinary worldlings cannot cognize it truly as it is (yathābhūtam). This point is also brought out from the following discussion in VKŚ:

Can a thought pertaining to the sense sphere (kāmadhātu-pratisamyukta-citta) … cognize the dharma-s which do not pertain to any sphere (apratisamyukta) — [namely, the outflow-free dharma-s]?

Answer: Yes, it can. That is: with regard to cessation, it may [cognize it] as cessation, calm, excellence and escape (the four ākāra-s of the truth of cessation — § 15.2.2.1). With regard to the path, it may [cognize it] as path, right method, course of practice and being conducive to exit (four ākāra-s of the truth of the path).
… It may be a cognition of the nature of doubt, or of delusion, or of being generated from proper reasoning (yoga-vihita), or of being generated from improper reasoning (ayoga-vihita).

7. The opponents argue: The Buddha explicitly states in the sūtra that “all” dharma-s are comprised in the 12 āyatana-s (Samyutta-nikāya, iv, 13), and also that these 12 āyatana-s are sa-prapañca and anitya. Now, if nirvāṇa is a real existent and is permanent, the Buddha would have distinguished it from the 12 āyatana-s. Saṃghabhadra answers: In the same context, the Buddha further speaks of all the 12 āyatana-s as being with-burning (sa-dāha) — i.e., having the heat of defilement. Now, surely the ārya-mārga is included in the 12 āyatana-s and yet it is certainly devoid of the burning of greed, etc. Why then does the Buddha not distinguish it from the other dharma-s? Thus, it must be understood that the Buddha in this context refers to the 12 āyatana-s which are with outflow. Hence the opponents, by quoting the above sūtra cannot establish the unreality of nirvāṇa.

8. When duḥkha is ceased, a pratisamkhya-nirodha — distinct from duḥkha and mārga — is acquired. It is this that is called nirvāṇa (432c). If there were no nirodha that exists as a real entity, then an arhat ought to have defilements and one at the śaikṣa stage ought to have been freed from defilements, since the moment (known as vimukti mārga) following that at which the prāpti of the defilement is abandoned (known as ānantarya-mārga) would not be different. In fact, it is this real entity arising at the following moment that functions as a force absolutely
preventing the **prāpti** of the defilement so abandoned from linking up the defilement with the individual series (**santati**). That is, **pratisamkhya-nirodha** is not a mere concept; it is a real force that absolutely prevents the re-arising of the defilement.

9. **Nirvāṇa**, if unreal, could not have been subsumed as one of the noble truths — the **nirodha-satya** — a non-existent cannot be predicated as ‘true’ or ‘false’. An **ārya**, in his **abhisamaya**, sees truly all four truths. Now since **prajñā** cannot arise with regard to a non-existent object (this is the articulated position of the Vaibhāṣikas[^38]), it would be topsy-turvy to say that an **ārya** sees a non-existent object. Moreover, with regard to a non-existent which absolutely defies all verbal qualifications, how can the **ārya**, in his spiritual realization, say: “**This** is cessation of **duḥkha**”? It is observed in the world that the demonstratives ‘this’ and ‘that’ are applicable only to existent things. Furthermore, all this will amount to the denial of the existence of the third truth. Besides, if **duḥkha-nirodha** signifies the mere absence of **duḥkha**, there need only be the mention of **duḥkha-nirodha-gāminī-pratipat** (the fourth truth) — the mention of **mārga-satya** suffices to indicate the absence of **duḥkha** that it counteracts. If it does not result in the absence of **duḥkha**, why is it said to be a counteractive path?

### 16.2.2. Cessation through deliberation, acquisition and spiritual liberation

The proposition that there are as many Cessations through deliberation as there are objects of junction (**saṃyogavastu**[^39]) — i.e., with-outflow **dharma**-s to which the ordinary worldlings are bound[^40] — is consistent with the Sarvāstivāda view that spiritual liberation is a gradual process dependent on the gradual abandoning of defilements. It is argued: If there is only one single **pratisamkhya-nirodha** or **nirvāṇa**, then at the time when the practitioner first gains insight into **duḥkha-satya** and thereby realizes the **pratisamkhya-nirodha** of the corresponding defilement, he would have at the same time realized the cessation of all defilements. Consequently it would be futile for him to further cultivate the counteraction of the remaining defilements.[^41]

The same proposition also entails that all sentient beings realize a common **nirodha** corresponding to the particular defilement. But this raises important questions as recorded in MVŚ: when sentient beings realize **pratisamkhya-nirodha**, (i) do they together realize a common one or (ii) do they individually realize a different (i.e., identical but distinct) one in each case? In the former case why is **nirvāṇa** said to be

[^38]: Vaibhāṣika
[^39]: Saṃyogavastu
[^40]: Outflow
[^41]: Further cultivate the counteraction of the remaining defilements.
the unique (asādhāraṇa) Dharma? Moreover, when one sentient being realizes nirvāṇa, [then] all beings should also acquire it at the same time, which entails that liberation comes about automatically without any effort! On the other hand, if each sentient being realizes a different nirodha, why is nirvāṇa said to be non-similar (asabhāga). Furthermore, how, in that case, is one to understand the sūtra statement that liberation of the tathāgata and that of the others are not different? The MVŚ compilers’ answer is that

when sentient beings realize pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha, they realize a common one. However, although nirvāṇa is in actual fact common as an entity, it is said to be non-common in respect to its prāpti since the visamyoga-prāpti arises separately in the series of each individual. (loc. cit.)

It is only when the prāpti of nirvāṇa arises in a particular individual that he is said to have acquired/attained nirvāṇa.

The above explanation given by the Sarvāstivāda spells out the important role that prāpti plays in spiritual attainments. Any religion or philosophy that posits a transcendental absolute needs to account for the way in which the empirical is related to the transcendent. In the Sarvāstivāda perspective, the relationship is effected by prāpti, a real force existing in its own right, which connects a dharma to a given series. The dharma then is one possessed by that particular individual. In abandoning a defilement, two final moments are involved: In the first moment known as ānantarya-mārga, the prāpti of the defilement is severed. In the second moment, known as vimukti mārga, the prāpti of the corresponding pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha arises, and the practitioner is said to have realized the nirodha.

The notion of prāpti is also invoked to explain away the apparent contradiction involved in stating that the nirvāṇa is a phala — visamyoga-phala — although it is not causally produced by the spiritual path. Saṃghabhadra explains:

Worldlings collectively sanction the name phala with regard to the accomplishment through effort of what has been longed for. Death is most distressful for human beings; accordingly it is deathlessness (amṛta = nirvāṇa) that human beings most long for. What is so longed for, when realized through the efficacy of the path, is called a phala. It is said to be without a cause (ahetuka) since the path is not any of the six causes for the asamskrta pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha to be acquired. Pratisamkhyā-nirodha is not a phala [causally] produced by the path (the
ānantarya-mārga); it is a phala realized by virtue of it. The path is not a generating cause for the pratisamkhya-nirodha; it is a cause of realization.\(^{44}\) Hence, between the two — the path and the nirodha — one cannot definitely speak of a cause-effect relationship or otherwise. ... [As a matter of fact, the prāpti of the nirodha could be considered the phala of the path.] since the path is the homogeneous cause (sabhāga-hetu) — or also said to be the co-existent cause (sahabhū-hetu) — for the prāpti of the nirodha. Nevertheless, this is not the phala directly sought after by the ārya. It is with the nirodha to be acquired in mind that the ārya practices the ārya-mārga. Accordingly, the specific phala of the path is none other than the acquired nirodha; not the prāpti of nirodha, since it is not for the sake of the saṃskṛta-s that an ārya practices the ārya-mārga.\(^{45}\)

In this connection the Sautrāntikas raise a question:\(^{46}\) What cause is there to ensure that a specific prāpti is linked to a specific nirodha? — What ensures that one acquires a particular pratisamkhya-nirodha and not another one? Saṃghabhadra replies that there is in fact no need for a specifying cause: by the power of one mārga, the defilements cease en bloc and the disjunction is acquired en bloc. Or, it is the very nature of things (dharmatā) that that which acquires (i.e., the mārga) and that which is acquired (i.e., the visamyoga) are specifically related. Or, it is the path by which the defilement is abandoned (prahāna-mārga) that is the specifying cause, for it is by virtue of the path that the arising of the acquisition of disjunction is induced — the nirodha of the defilements to be abandoned by a specific path cannot be acquired through a different path.

A further question:

There is a plurality of pratisamkhya-nirodha-s acquired through one and the same prahāna-mārga — what specifying cause is there to enable us to say this is [the pratisamkhya-nirodha] of rāga, this of dveṣa, etc.?

To this, Saṃghabhadra answers similarly:

All the [defilements] to be ceased, constituting a given category, are abandoned through a single path; the disjunctions acquired having the same prāpti, what need is there for a specifying cause? Or, as mentioned before, by virtue of the nature of things, the relation is not confused: From the beginning, there exists — between rāga, etc., and the [corresponding] nirodha — a specific, non-confused relation by virtue of the nature of things. Since at the time when the prahāna-mārga arises, the [pratisamkhya-
16. THE UNCONDITIONED \( (aṣaṃskṛta) \) Dharma-s

\[ nirodha-s \] are acquired en bloc, there is nothing wrong even if there is no specifying cause.

16.2.3. Sautrāntika conception of nirvāṇa

By way of contrast, we may here outline the Sautrāntika conception which Saṃghabhadra vehemently repudiates. The Sautrāntikas (and others) maintain that nirvāṇa is a mere concept referring to the absence of duḥkha\(^{47}\) on account of the absolute non-arising or abandoning of defilements due to the absence of the defilement-seeds (kleśa-bīja).\(^{48}\) For them, pratisamkhya-nirodha is “the non-arising — by virtue of the force of deliberation/consideration (pratisamkhya) — of [any] other proclivity at the time of the cessation of the arisen proclivities and of birth”.\(^{49}\) The acquisition of nirvāṇa is explained as the acquisition of a personal basis (āśraya = skandha-saṃtati) absolutely opposed (ayanta-viruddha) to the defilements that would arise and to future existence.\(^{50}\)

In AKB, the Sautrāntikas — in a similar manner — explains prāpti as a mere concept. There the Vaibhāṣika argues that prāpti must be a real entity without which one would not be able to differentiate an ārya from a prthagjana: an ārya, even when he possesses worldly thoughts at times, is different from a prthagjana because he has the prāpti of the ārya dharma-s. The Sautrāntika, however, argues that the validity of the distinction does not require such an ontological entity called prāpti. The distinction is made in terms of the difference in the personal basis: The whole personal basis of an ārya, as a result of his spiritual attainment, is totally transformed (parāvṛtta) to be pure, fully purged of all potencies (bīja) for defilements. As such, there will absolutely be no further arising of any defilement for him. Such an ārya is said to have abandoned the defilements.\(^{51}\)

Saṃghabhadra refutes the Sautrāntika conception:\(^{52}\)

(i) The pratisamkhya-nirodha thus defined does not differ from the non-arising owing to the deficiency in conditions.

(ii) Spiritual cultivation would be in vain, since there can also be non-arising without the ārya-mārga.

(iii) The dharma-s destined not to arise are like those that have become past, unable to re-arise — even when their seeds have not been abandoned — why then the need to cultivate the path? In the Sarvāstivāda system which holds that pratisamkhya-nirodha-s are realized separately through the gradual abandoning of the defilement and duḥkha pertaining to the three periods of time,
dhāma-s which cannot arise — owing to apratisamkhya-nirodha having been acquired — still need to be abandoned through further cultivation, as their prāpti obstructs nirvāṇa.

(iv) If nirvāṇa is merely a non-arising, how can one speak of acquiring it? It is not logical to answer that, through the acquisition of the counteraction (pratipakṣa), there is the realization of a transformed personal basis as described above. For then, at the very moment when one first acquires the ārya-mārga, one ought to have acquired nirvāṇa of the defilements counteracted by the path, since at this very moment one would have acquired such a personal basis. The practitioner abiding subsequently in the śaikṣa-mārga would have already become an aśaikṣa. This would render any further cultivation futile. The Sautrāntikas try in vain to avoid this consequence by saying that such a personal basis is not acquired until one has absolutely abandoned the seeds of defilements, and that this occurs only after the arising of the ānantarya-mārga. For in that case, the seeds of defilements, not being opposed to the āryamārga of the first moment, ought to be likewise unopposed to those of the subsequent moments — which means that an aśaikṣa would have defilements! This fallacy cannot be avoided by the Sautrāntikas which teaches that the seeds of defilements are merely the transformation of the series (saṃtati-parināma) serving as the supporting basis of the defilement, and that nirvāṇa is merely the non-arising of defilement. Given this teaching, what distinct dhāma-s are there that are opposed to which dhāma-s and that are unopposed to which dhāma-s? The Sarvāstivāda doctrine is free from this fallacy, for it teaches that prāpti-s are distinct entities in themselves. They are unopposed to the ksānti at which moment the defilement is abandoned, and opposed to the jñāna at which subsequent moment the prāpti of disjunction arises: the jñāna arises at the same time as the prāpti of disjunction which is opposed to the prāpti of the defilements. Furthermore, when the ārya-mārga of the moment is about to arise, the body of the worldling (prthagjana-kāya) is about to perish; when the former arises, the latter is relinquished. What distinct seeds of defilements apart from this body are there which are said to be unopposed to the first ārya-mārga but become opposed to the subsequent ones — the paths being not different?53
16.2.4. Summary

In the Sarvāstivāda perspective, there are as many nirvāṇa-s or pratisamkhyā-nirodha-s as there are with-outflow dharma-s. These are ontologically distinct real entities. Their reality is not even dependent on the criterion of causal efficacy in the space-time dimension but on the fact that they can impact on the mental streams of beings. Each nirvāṇa — via prāpti — acts to ensure the absolute non-arising of the defilement counteracted by the ārya-mārga by virtue of which the prāpti of the nirvāṇa is induced, and each is experiencible by the ārya as having distinct characteristics.

Nirvāṇa in the sense of the ultimate spiritual realization of the Buddhist practitioner refers to the pratisamkhyā-nirodha realized when all the kleśa-s and duḥkha-s pertaining to the three periods of time are completely abandoned (Ny, 430b). Although all practitioners acquire the same nirvāṇa corresponding to a given impure dharma, each individual’s experience of nirvāṇa is unique by virtue of the prāpti that links the nirvāṇa to him. Prāpti — although conditioned in itself but neither mental nor material in nature — in fact plays the important role of relating the unconditioned to the conditioned. It is the sine qua non for man’s experience of nirvāṇa.

It is not difficult to understand why Saṃghabhadra’s arguments for the reality of nirvāṇa — totally transcending the space-time dimension as it does — are not always cogent. Some obviously are contingent upon the Sarvāstivāda postulates and presuppositions. Ultimately, apart from some scriptural passages in their favor, the Sarvāstivādins cannot but appeal to the authority of spiritual insight:

Its self-nature can be personally realized only by the ārya. This much, although, can be said: There exists a distinct entity which is permanent and skillful. That is called a disjunction and a pratisamkhyā-nirodha.\(^{54}\)

16.3. Cessation independent of deliberation

Among the three unconditioned dharma-s, the reality of the apratisamkhyā-nirodha and ākāśa is especially contentious.\(^{55}\) Unlike the cessation through deliberation, the cessation independent of deliberation is not of the nature of disjunction from a defiled dharma. Although the term is attested in the early canonical texts, there is very little discussion on its nature in them. SgPS, in defining name-and-form (nāma-rūpa), simply mentions it as among the items subsumable under name.\(^{56}\) DSŚ includes all the three unconditioned dharma-s under the dharma-
āyatana;\textsuperscript{57} and distinguishing among the three elements — material, non-material and cessation — defines the cessation element (niruddha-dhātu) as comprising the two unconditioned cessations.\textsuperscript{58} It also speaks of the cessation independent of deliberation and Space together with all conditioned dharma-s as lower dharma-s (sa-uttara; ‘with a higher’) in contrast to the cessation through deliberation which is called the highest (anuttara; ‘without a higher’) dharma.\textsuperscript{59}

It is from JPŚ onwards that we can see definite doctrinal development on the nature of this cessation. Three types of cessations are distinguished and defined therein: (1) Cessation of impermanence is the disintegration and perishing of the conditioning forces (saṃskāra). (2) Cessation through deliberation is a cessation of the nature of disjunction (from defilement). (3) Cessation independent of deliberation is emancipation from diseases, calamities, grief, etc., and “the dharma-s of unsatisfactoriness in the temporal process” (行世苦法; \textsuperscript{*}adha-saṃcāra-(duḥkha-)dharma), without depending on deliberation/discrimination; “it is not the subduing, abandoning or transcending of sensual greed.”\textsuperscript{60} The commentary of MVŚ states that this passage is intended to refute those like the Dārṣṭāntikas who deny all the three types of cessation.\textsuperscript{61} In its comments, various important doctrinal developments on this cessation are discernible. (See below, § 16.3.1).

The nature of this category is further elaborated in MVŚ:

It is called a cessation independent of deliberation because it is not acquired through deliberative understanding, not being an effect of deliberation. Furthermore, it is so called because it is not acquired through deliberation by means of necessary effort, necessary preparation or necessary exertion. Furthermore, ... because its acquisition does not require the repeated ascertaining of duḥkha, etc. ...

It is [acquired] on account of the deficiency in conditions (pratīyāya-vaiśayān). Thus, when one is focused [on an object] in one direction, all the other objects — visible, sound, smell, taste and tangible — in the other directions cease. The thought and thought-concomitants that would have taken these objects do not arise absolutely (atyantam); they do not arise owing to the deficiency in conditions. On account of this non-arising, their cessations independent of deliberation are acquired.\textsuperscript{62}

The Sautrāntikas maintain that this cessation is nothing more than a notion designating the deficiency in conditions.\textsuperscript{63} In Ny, Saṃghabhadra argues against this, emphatically making the point that the apratisamkhyā-
niruddha is a real entity capable of obstructing absolutely the arising of the dharma-s concerned:

The deficiency in conditions is merely a non-existence of condition. A non-existent dharma is incapable of obstructing an existent: When later the necessary conditions happen to assemble together, what dharma will there be that is capable of preventing [the said dharma, which failed to arise earlier on,] from arising again? Yet it is impossible for a dharma which abides among the un-arisen (anuppanna) dharma-s to still arise later. Hence there must exist [a real dharma] capable of obstructing the conditions absolutely. It is not the mere deficiency in conditions that causes the absolute non-arising.\textsuperscript{64}

This positive description by Saṃghabhadra is considered a ‘neo-Sarvāstivāda’ doctrine by many scholars. However, such a positive emphasis is already found in MVŚ:

This cessation independent of deliberation is acquired only with regard to the future dharma-s which are of the nature of being destined not to arise (anupatti-dharmin, anupatti-dharmaka). Why? This cessation is originally meant for obstructing absolutely the arising of a conditioned dharma. The acquisition of this [cessation] arises upon the non-arising of the said dharma [which has been thus obstructed].\textsuperscript{65}

Skandhila too explicitly emphasizes this cessation as a real force. Having given a very similar definition to that in MVŚ quoted above, he adds:

The deficiency in the [necessary] conditions is also due to the force of this cessation. Hence, there definitely exists a real entity named ‘cessation independent of deliberation’\textsuperscript{66}

16.3.1. Distinction between cessation through deliberation, cessation independent of deliberation and cessation of impermanence (anityatā-nirodha)

Skandhila further argues for the reality of this category by distinguishing it from cessation as pratisaṃkkhyā-nirodha and as impermanence:

The Bhagavat has said: “If, at that moment the pleasurable sensation appears, the other two sensations [— unpleasurable and neutral —] cease.” Now, what can this cessation be apart from the [cessation independent of deliberation], since it definitely is not [the cessation of] impermanence or the cessation through deliberation? Again, it is said in the sūtra, “O bhikṣu-s,
if one attains stream-entry, one has exhausted [rebirths in] hells, the infernal regions and the animal region. The exhaustion here refers to the cessation independent of deliberation, since at the moment one has not acquired the cessation through deliberation for the retributive dharma-s.”

Such an articulate distinction is important for the Sarvāstivādins, as it amounts to the establishment of the three nirodha-s as discrete ontological entities. Saṃghabhadra makes the same distinction, citing the same sūtra passage and arguing similarly:

Moreover, cessation and exhaustion are two different names of the same substance. The sūtra says that a srotāpañña exhausts [existence in] the three durgati-s. Therefore, we know that there is a distinct entity which is the apratisamkhyā-nirodha, as this exhaustion definitely cannot be included under other nirodha-s: The sūtra says:

A srotāpañña has already exhausted [existence in] hells, has already exhausted [existence in] the animal realm, has already exhausted [existence in] the hungry-ghost realm. …

Now, it is not the case that he is already capable of abandoning the durgati-s, since he has not yet been detached (vīta-rāga) with regard to the kāmadhātu, and the durgati-s are said to be abandoned only when one has completely been detached from kāma-rāga. … Nor does the word ‘exhaustion’ here refer to the anityatā-nirodha, since what is exhausted is all as yet unproduced. Hence, it is proved that there definitely exists a distinct dharma named apratisamkhyā-nirodha. As a result of this dharma being acquired, the durgati-s are made absolutely incapable of being produced.

As we have seen above, the distinction between the three cessations has already been made in JPŚ. (§ 16.3). The MVŚ commentary elaborates upon JPŚ passage, differentiating the three cessations in distinctively abhidharmic terms:

(1) Distinction between with-outflow and outflow-free cessations independent of deliberation (= ap-n): The emancipation from “diseases, calamities, etc.” refers to the with-outflow ones; the emancipation from “the dharma-s in the temporal process” refers to the outflow-free ones.

(2) The cessations through deliberation (= pr-n) are cessations of with-outflow dharma-s through deliberation. The apr-n
is emancipation from diseases, etc without depending on deliberation. The cessation of impermanence (= ani-n) is the disintegration of the conditionings.

(3) The pr-n is of the nature of both emancipation and disjunction. The apr-n is emancipation, not disjunction. The ani-n is neither.

(4) The pr-n are acquired with regard to the with-outflow dharma-s of the three periods of time. The apr-n are acquired with regard to the future conditioned dharma-s destined not to arise. The ani-n operate on all of the present dharma-s.

(5) In terms of moral species: the pr-n are skillful and so are their acquisitions. The apr-n are non-defined and so are their acquisitions. The ani-n can be any of the three species, and so are their acquisitions.

(6) The pr-n are outflow-free and their acquisitions are either with-outflow or outflow-free; the apr-n are outflow-free, and their acquisitions are with-outflow only; the ani-n can be either with-outflow or outflow-free, and so are their acquisitions.

(7) The pr-n are not bound to any sphere of existence (apratīṣṭhyukta) and their acquisitions may be bound to fine-material sphere or the non-material sphere or not bound to any sphere. The apr-n are not bound to any sphere, and their acquisitions are bound to the three spheres only. The ani-n may be bound to the three spheres or not bound to any sphere, and so are their acquisitions.

(8) The pr-n are neither-trainee-nor-nontrainee (naiva-śaikṣa-nāśaikṣa) and their acquisitions may be trainee, non-trainee or neither-trainee-nor-nontrainee. The apr-n are neither-trainee-nor-nontrainee, and so are their acquisitions. The ani-n can be any of the three types, and so are their acquisitions.

(9) The pr-n are not to be abandoned (aheya) and their acquisitions are either to be abandoned by cultivation or not to be abandoned. The apr-n are not to be abandoned, and their acquisitions are to be abandoned by cultivation only. The ani-n can be any of the three types, and so are their acquisitions.

(10) The pr-n and the apr-n are both non-defiled, and so are their acquisitions. The ani-n may be either defiled or non-defiled,
and so are their acquisitions. (Likewise for the characterization in terms of being sāvadya/anavadya and parihāṇi/aparihāṇi).

(11) The pr-n are without retribution and their acquisitions are either with or without retribution. The apr-n are without retribution, and so are their acquisitions. The ani-n can be of either type, and so are their acquisitions.

(12) The pr-n are fruits of the paths and their acquisitions may be either paths and fruits of the paths or neither paths nor fruits of the path. The apr-n are neither paths nor fruits of the paths, and their acquisitions are both. The ani-n are either, or both, or neither, and so are their acquisitions.

(13) The pr-n are subsumed under the truth of cessation and their acquisitions are subsumed under the other three truths. The apr-n are not subsumed under the truths, and their acquisitions are subsumed under two truths, namely the truths of unsatisfactoriness and of origin. The ani-n are subsumed under three truths excepting the truth of cessation, and so are their acquisitions.

There are various other investigations into the nature of the cessation independent of deliberation. The following is on whether it is acquired collectively or individually:

Question: Are the cessations independent of deliberation acquired collectively or not acquired collectively?

Answer: This is not fixed. The cessation independent of cessation of shared dharma-s are acquired collectively; those of unshared dharma-s are acquired individually. In the case of ordinary worldlings living in a given plane of existence (gati), they acquire, from moment to moment, cessations independent of deliberation of dharma-s pertaining to other planes of existence; for, when objects such as visibles perish every moment, the visual consciousness, etc., which take them as cognitive objects, will absolutely not arise. The same applies to the case of [living in] a given sphere (dhātu), a given stage (bhūmi) or a given abode (āyatana).

Another more interesting elaboration concerns the role of this cessation in path of spiritual progress:

Question: By means of what skillful dharma-s do the spiritual practitioners acquire cessations independent of deliberation of the unfortunate planes of existence?
Answer: By means of giving, or ethical observances, or the understanding derived from listening (learning from teachers), from reflection or from cultivation.

By means of giving: there are those who, in spite of practicing open-door great giving for 12 years, are unable to acquire the cessation independent of deliberation of the unfortunate planes of existence ...; there are some who, though giving just once and just a lump of food, are able to acquire it on account of being profoundly disgusted with saṃsāra. ... (Similar description for the other means, up to:) By means of the understanding derived cultivation: ... when the receptivities of the lower grade (cf. supra, 15.3.2.3) are acquired ... According to the Bhadanta (Dharmatrāta): the cessation independent of deliberation of the unfortunate planes of existence is acquired only when there arises the outflow-free prajñā which comprehends Conditioned Co-arising; for, apart from the noble path (i.e. the outflow-free prajñā), the unfortunate planes of existence cannot be transcended. (Bhadanta’s view is rejected by the compilers here).

[For the case of] the fortunate planes of existence (sugati): At the time of the receptivities of the strong grade, [the practitioner] acquires the cessation independent of deliberation of all existences — except the seven existences each among humans and gods, and one existence each in the fine-material and non-material spheres.72

16.3.2. Summary

Little more than the mere mention of this cessation is found in the earlier canonical texts. Starting from JPŚ, however, we begin to find doctrinal articulations on it. This text, besides offering a definition of the cessation independent of deliberation, also distinguishes between with-outflow and outflow-free cessations independent of deliberation. In MVŚ, elaborate analysis — utilizing the Abhidharmic doctrinal perspectives — of its nature in comparison to those the cessation through deliberation and the cessation of impermanence.

Moreover, already in JPŚ, we see the implication that such cessations do not exclusively pertain to mundane human experiences wherein the cognitions of certain objects are commonly missed out in the absence of the required conditions. The specific separation of such experiences from the type which are described in JPŚ as cessations of “the dharma-s of unsatisfactoriness in the temporal process”, and specified as those of outflow-free dharma-s, suggests that this type of cessation can be of spiritual significance as well. This point becomes more explicit in
MVŚ which distinctly discusses the type of cessations independent of deliberation occurring every moment, of objects not cognizable by us, and also the type effecting the non-arising of the unfortunate planes of existence as a result of spiritual praxis like giving, ethical observances, etc.

Finally, whereas in the earlier canonical texts, this cessation is explained simply as being the result of the deficiency in conditions; since MVŚ, it has been further asserted that the cessation independent of deliberation is itself a necessary contributory factor: It is a positive force — a real existent — which helps to bring about the non-arising of the object concerned. This aspect is articulately expounded by Saṃghabhadra.

16.4. Space

The ontological status of the unconditioned Space is also highly controversial among the abhidharma schools. It is noteworthy that even in the Jñānaprāśthaṇa-śāstra, the canonical Sarvāstivāda abhidharma text upheld by theVaibhāṣikas as the supreme authority, only the two nirodha-s are mentioned, but not ākāśa. In MVŚ, some of the Sarvāstivāda ācārya-s, such as Dharmatrāta, while accepting the reality of the first two asaṃskṛta-s, deny that of ākāśa (§ 16.1.1). It is therefore possible that this category came to be regarded as one of the three unconditioned at a relatively later stage by the orthodox Sarvāstivādins. The latter maintain that the unconditioned Space is not to be confounded with the conditioned space-element (ākāśa-dhātu) which is the cavity of the door, mouth, etc, and of the nature of rūpa — more specifically of the nature of light and darkness (āloka-tamaḥ-svabhāva), as what we perceive in such cavities is light or darkness.\(^{73}\)

16.4.1. Arguments in MVŚ

MVŚ gives the Ābhidharmika definition of the space-element and distinguishes the two as follows:

The Ābhidharmikas assert thus: What is the space element? It is the agra-sāmantaka rūpa. By agra is meant agglomerated [matter] (citastham rūpam), i.e., a wall, etc. There exists a matter that is proximate to it, called agra-rūpa.\(^{74}\) Such space as found in the wall, in the forest, in the leaves, in the windows, among the fingers — they are called the space-elements. …

What is the difference between Space and the space-element? Space is not matter; the space-element is matter. Space is invisible (anidarśana); the space-element is visible (sanidarśana). Space
is non-resistant (*apratigha*); the space-element is resistant (*sapratigha*). Space is outflow-free; the space-element is without-outflow. Space is unconditioned; the space-element is conditioned.\(^{75}\)

Vasumitra argues that the existence of Space as a real entity is not only inferable from the *sūtra*-s; it can be known through direct perception (*pratyakṣa-pramāṇa*):

(i) If Space does not exist, all existent things ought not be able to find accommodation. Since it is observed that things are accommodated in various places, one knows that Space exists.

(ii) One knows its existence by observing that there are places for going, coming and gathering; These activities would not be possible without Space as the accommodative cause (*hetu*). That is, Space is efficacious.

(iii) Obstructive things are seen to occupy space — if Space does not exist, they cannot be accommodated.

(iv) In the absence of Space, there ought to be obstruction everywhere; the fact that some places are observed to be non-obstructive proves its existence.\(^{76}\)

MVŚ explains that, although the reality of Space is established from the fact of it being efficacious, it is not to be understood that it has any activity (*zuo yong*; 作用), since it is unconditioned. It means that it can serve as a dominant condition (*adhipati-pratyaya*), making an indirect contribution by way of non-obstruction (see supra, § 7.1.4):

The *asaṃskṛta ākāśa* has no activity. Nevertheless, it can serve as the proximate *adhipati-pratyaya* for the various *ākāśa-dhātu*-s. These various *ākāśa-dhātu*-s can serve as the proximate *adhipati-pratyaya* for the various *mahābhūta*-s. These various *mahābhūta*-s can serve as the proximate *adhipati-pratyaya* for the resistant (*sapratigha*) derived matter (*upādāya rūpa*). These resistant derived matters can serve as the proximate *adhipati-pratyaya* for the various *citta-caitta-dharma*-s.

If Space were non-existent, such a successive causal sequence cannot be established. Hence the intrinsic nature and characteristic of Space exist, lest there be such a fallacy; they must not be denied.\(^{77}\)
16.4.2. Arguments by Saṃghabhadra

Vasubandhu presents the Sautrāntika view that Space is unreal: It is merely the absence of tangible things (spraṣṭavābhāva-mātra) — people in darkness say that there is space when they do not encounter any obstacles. Samghabhadra informs us that the Sautrāntika master Sthavira Śrīlāta and all the other Dārṣṭāntika masters hold the view that the space-element is nothing apart from Space; but Space does not exist as a real entity, hence the space-element too is unreal. Skandhila invokes scriptural authority and applies logical arguments to establish the reality of Space.

Samghabhadra too argues at length against the Sautrāntika and others. His main argument is that ākāśa has an empirically observable intrinsic characteristic (lakṣaṇa), and this unique characteristic points to its existence as a distinct entity. Or rather, its effect is observable, and one can therefore infer the existence of the cause from that of the effect. To conclude this chapter, we will give his lengthy argument below which reads very much like a commentary on the corresponding passage in Skandhila's Avatāra:

As to their statement ‘ākāśa is merely the absence of spraṣṭavya’, we also accept that ākāśa is the absence of spraṣṭavya, as ākāśa has no tangibility. [But] what hetu have you to prove your statement that ākāśa is merely the absence of spraṣṭavya and does not exist as a separate dravya?

We have already proved that when people in darkness do not encounter any resistant object, they say that it is ākāśa. Is not this hetu sufficient to prove its non-existence?

One cannot by this hetu alone prove that ākāśa is definitely non-existent: They say only that it is ākāśa, not an obstacle. How do we know that they speak of the absence of spraṣṭavya alone as ākāśa? People in the world, for instance, say: “this is sukha, not duḥkha”. Now, how can it be that the absence of duḥkha alone is said to be sukha?

You might argue: “No, it is a false analogy — the activities of the two vedanā-s, duḥkha and sukha, being harmful and beneficial respectively, are distinct. [On the other hand], ākāśa, not accomplishing anything at all, cannot be perceived like sukha.” [But] if so, the above hetu given by you would be useless, since now you are proving the non-existence of ākāśa by the assertion that it absolutely accomplishes nothing.

Now, one definitely cannot take as necessary hetu that the absence of obstruction is said to be ākāśa, to prove that ākāśa...
is nothing but the absence of *spratavya*. Thus, the Kośakāra (i.e., Vasubandhu) here has no *hetu* capable of proving that ākāśa is definitely non-existent.

Moreover, the *sūtra* says that the unconditioned ākāśa accomplishes something; therefore it is not incomparable to *sukha*: Thus, the Bhagavat says, “Wind is supported by ākāśa; it has no activity, has a support, and is not appropriated by the thought.”

Moreover, the *rūpa*, light, is the *lakṣana* of ākāśa, hence we know that ākāśa exists as a real entity. Thus the *sūtra* says, “… Nevertheless, Space becomes manifest by reason of light.” Hence the *lakṣana* of Space, i.e., light, is decisively shown. It is for this reason that the *sūtra* goes on to say these words: The Buddha first says that Wind is supported by ākāśa; subsequently He says that ākāśa is without support. This is so that the *brāhmaṇa* [to whom the Buddha is speaking] would not harbor such doubt: “Now the Bhagavat has said that the Wind was supported by ākāśa. But how can one prove that ākāśa [really] exists?” In order to dispel his doubt, the Buddha goes on to say those words. If ākāśa were non-existent, what [is manifested] by reason of light? Light is material (*rūpin*), visible (*sanidarśana*) and resistant (*sapratigha*); if there is no ākāśa, by what can it be accommodated? Therefore when the Bhagavat says: “Nevertheless, Space becomes manifest by reason of light”, it shows that light, a *rūpa*, can serve as the truly-existent *lakṣana* of ākāśa. The Sthavira [Śrīlāta], however, not comprehending the import of this *sūtra*, replies thus: “If ākāśa becomes manifest by reason of light, it ought to be included as a *rūpa-dharma*.” How does he arrive at such a conclusion?

Moreover, ākāśa ought to exist as a real entity, because it is described in the *sūtra* just as thought (*citta*) is: Thus, the *sūtra* says: ‘ākāśa is immaterial, invisible and non-resistant. By what can it be supported?’ Now there cannot be such words of differentiation with regard to [absolutely non-existent things as] the ātman or the horn of the hare, etc.

As to this, he explains that those words are uttered in direct response to the [*brāhmaṇa*’s] question. Just as when the *sūtra* says: “Well subdue the ātman, the ātman is the support.” But if those words were indeed uttered in direct response to the question, [the Buddha] should not have spoken thus; He should simply have said: “O brāhmaṇa, ākāśa is without a substance, by what can it be supported?” Moreover, He should not have said: “Nevertheless, ākāśa becomes manifest by reason of light.” The *pūrvvānta* is not spoken of as being discernible; the doer of an action is not spoken of as apperceivable (*upa-√labh*) — and yet
these are to be known as direct replies which accord with truth. If, with regard to a non-existent, one speaks in the manner of speaking of an existent, then it becomes meaningless (anartha) speech. Moreover, the example cited cannot serve as a proof, as the ātman to be subdued refers to thought (citta) — this has been considered in detail [earlier] (ibid., 260c; cf. also AKB(C), 39a) when discussing the meaning of ādhyaṭmika. If the words ‘immaterial’, etc., do not have a [corresponding] real object (artha), how can the example cited be valid? [Thought is also described as being immaterial, etc.]

Furthermore, as regards the Sthavira’s assertion: “If ākāśa had any real substance at all, it would be eternal and hence the resistant rūpa-s would never be produced; or rather, one ought to subsume it as a samskṛta, as do the Vātsiputriya-s.” This is an assertion made without careful consideration, because [the ākāśa] imagined by him indeed cannot accommodate other resistant rūpa-s. It is not the case that the ākāśa dravya can be obstructed by other resistant rūpa-s so that it must give way to other rūpa-s being produced — which would imply that it is impermanent. On the other hand, because ākāśa is accommodative by nature and not rūpa by nature, it does not have to give way. [But] the ākāśa-dhātu, being an obstructible rūpa, necessarily gives way when other rūpa-s are being produced. That is to say: the ākāśa-dhātu is a fine rūpa; although not obstructing others, it is obstructed by others, and is so classifiable as impermanent and samskṛta. Ākāśa has the lakṣaṇa of being neither obstructive to others nor being obstructible by others, at the time when rūpa-dharma-s are being produced. How can it be classified as impermanent and samskṛta? As ākāśa co-exists harmoniously with rūpa, it does not arise or perish at the different stages [of the rūpa-s].

As to the fact that there is resistance in the wall, etc., it is because there are resistant rūpa-s in it which obstruct others. This is not the case with the unconditioned ākāśa since there is no [resistant rūpa] therein. The ākāśa-dhātu rūpa is fine and light and cannot obstruct others; as soon as it is excluded through being obstructed by other gross rūpa-s, it gives way. Such is the nature of sapratigha rūpa-s: When a given space is occupied by one, it cannot be occupied by another. The ākāśa differs from the ākāśa-dhātu in being apratigha; how can it be considered as impermanent like the latter.

Moreover, as regards his assertion: ‘If ākāśa exists as a real substance, it ought to become samskṛta, as this does not differ from the ākāśa-dhātu.’ This is an empty assertion without any truth, for the Bhagavat Himself says that they differ: Thus the sūtra says: “ākāśa is immaterial, invisible and non-resistant”.

SARVĀSTIVĀDA ABHIDHARMA

558
It also says: “when one is detached with regards to rūpa-s, the ākāśa-dhātu is abandoned together with the four [mahābhūta-s; the vijñāna-dhātu is not said to be abandoned]” (also cited in ibid., 347b). Now, if ākāśa-dhātu does not differ from ākāśa, which is immaterial, invisible and non-resistant, it ought also to be the same. It ought to be, like vijñāna-dhātu, said to be abandoned when one is detached with regard to the ārūpya-dhātu. Moreover, the sūtra says: “the ākāśa-dhātu accomplishes the vyavahāra-puruṣa”; and also says: “Nevertheless ākāśa becomes manifest by reason of light.” Now, if ākāśa-dhātu is none other than ākāśa, and light is none other than ākāśa-dhātu, then would the sūtra not be saying [in effect]: “Nevertheless, light becomes manifest by reason of light”? Hence we know there is a difference [between the two].

Moreover the sūtra says: “Among all dharma-s, whether the conditioned ones or the unconditioned ones, detachment (vairāgya) is supreme.” In this sūtra, dharma-s are said to be of two kinds; the unconditioned ones being dharma-s cannot be said to be non-existent, as without dravya, they ought not be of the nature of dharma-s. The words, ‘the unconditioned ones’ show that they comprise many dravya-s; therefore, there must be ākāśa and apratisamkhyā-nirodha-s from which one can be detached before they may be described in pluralistic terms, as apart from these there is no other asamskṛta. Hence this ākāśa-dhātu is not identical with ākāśa. The Sthavira, without reflection, asserts that the two are not different.

There are other ācārya-s who assert: “Ākāśa does not exist as a distinct dravya; for it is with regard to the absence of resistant rūpa that one gives rise to the idea (buddhi) of space.” Their assertion is illogical. In fact, it is by this very hetu that one can prove that ākāśa exists as a distinct dravya: This is because there exists, at a location different from that occupied by the resistant rūpa, a distinct ākāśa that serves as the ālambana for the buddhi of space, and because where there is no ālambana, buddhi cannot arise. Hence their assertion is mere empty words. Furthermore, [by the same token,] one can also say: ‘There exists no resistant rūpa as a distinct dravya, for the buddhi of rūpa arises where there is no space.’ Yet this cannot prove the non-existence of rūpa. Hence, they are unable to prove, [in this manner,] that ākāśa does not exist.

Should they say that rūpa-s, possessing a [distinct] naure (有體; i.e., existing as a real entity), are cognizable, then the same ought to be true of ākāśa, for it can be cognized through inference: Just as cakṣus, etc., although not cognizable through direct perception (pratyakṣa), are known to possess a [distinct] nature through
inference (anumāna) from the fact that they possess efficacies (有用). Likewise, as ākāśa too possesses efficacy — as mentioned above — one knows through inference that it possesses a [distinct] nature. Hence it is known that ākāśa has a distinct real nature (i.e., exists as a real entity).83

16.4.3. Summary

Not all the canonical Abhidharma treatises mention Space as an unconditioned dharma. In MVŚ, too, some of the Sarvāstivādin masters, like Dharmatrāta, do not accept Space as a real existent. The orthodox Sarvāstivādins, however, consistently maintain that it is a real existent, and not the mere absence of tangibles. Starting from MVŚ, we see various arguments for and against the position that it is a real entity. A clear distinction is made in this text between the unconditioned Space on the one hand, and the conditioned space element, on the other. Vasumitra and other Ābhidharmas in MVŚ argue that the reality of Space can not only be inferred, but actually is directly perceived since the events observed in our experience necessarily have a real causal basis — when we perceive that material things can be accommodated or that people can move about, we are actually directly perceiving a distinctive function of Space; and this distinctive function necessarily proves the existence of a distinct existent. Although Saṃghabhadra does not go so far as to assert that Space is actually directly perceived, he too argues that we can infer its reality from its observable distinctive function and characteristic (laksana); and that which possesses a unique function and a unique characteristic is a uniquely real: Its function is manifested through the fact that it accommodates resistant things; its characteristic — i.e., its observable aspect — is manifested through light. To further distinguish it as a unique existent from the space element, Saṃghabhadra articulates that whereas the space element is non-obstructive but is obstructed, Space is neither obstructive nor obstructed by other things.
16. THE UNCONDITIONED (asamskṛta) Dharma-s

NOTES

1 MVŚ, 162a; AKB, 4.
2 MVŚ, 164.
3 T49, 15c.
4 AKB, 92.
5 Vy, 15: santi hi kecid ekamevaśāṃskṛtam nirvāṇam ity āhur yathā vātśīputrīyāḥ | MVŚ, 8b17–27; also, 169a8–11.
6 The Mahāyāna adds six, …” (T41, no. 1822, 470a24–b1).
7 For instance: the Saṅgītiparyāya (T26, no. 1536, 369c6–8) and the Dharmaskandha (T26, no. 1537, 505a5). Likewise in the more developed canonical texts, as PrP (T26, 692c9–10).
8 MVŚ, 105c–106a, gives various reasons why the asamskṛta-dharma-s are devoid of causes and effects.
9 AKB, 4: yah sā强悍vair dharmair visamyoṣah sa pratisamkhyā-nirodhaḥ | duḥkhādīnām āryasatyānāṃ pratisamkhyānāṃ pratisamkhyā prajñāviśeṣas tena prāpyo nirodhaḥ pratisamkhyā-nirodhaḥ | Cf. also same definition in MVŚ, 161a.
10 TA(U-J), II, 231.
11 MVŚ, 163a–164b.
12 MVŚ, 147b.
13 MVŚ, 322a–b.
14 MVŚ, 168b–c.
15 MVŚ, 147b.
16 Ny, 428c.
17 Ny, 429a.
18 MVŚ, 432c.
20 Entrance, 125.
21 Ny, 430a–434b.
22 Cf. Aṅguttara-nikāya, ii, 34; etc.
34 Cf. Aṅguttara-nikāya, V8.7: idhānanda bhikkhu evamsaṅgī hoti | etam santam … nibbānanti |
35 Cf. Itivuttaka, 43
36 Cf. the last argument to that employed in the Ny (624c ff.) in establishing that the past and future dharma-s are not just designations on the basis of the real present dharma-s. Also cf. ADV, 278.
37 VKŚ, 560a-b.
38 Samghabhadra defines an existent (sat) as that which can serve as an object for the arising of buddhi (Ny, 621c622a).
39 Cf. AKB, 4: yāvanti hi samyogadravyānī tāvanti visamyogadravyānī |
40 Cf. also MVŚ, 162a: “The Cessations through deliberation are of the same extent as the with-outflow dharma-s qua entities; because, to the extent that they are objects of junction, to that same extent there are entities qua disjunction (visamyoga).”
42 MVŚ, 162a–b.
43 MVŚ, 162b.
44 MVŚ, 108c: “The fruit of liberation is realized (sāksātkṛta) by the path, not acquired by a cause.”
45 MVŚ, 428c; cf. MVŚ, 341a; AKB, 91 f.
46 Ny, 432c.
47 Cf. a similar view by ‘some’ in MVŚ, 177b.
48 Ny, 430b.
49 AKB, 92: utpannānuśaya-janma-nirodhe pratisaṃkhyābalenānyasyānupadāḥ prati-saṃkhyānirirdhāḥ |
50 Ny, 431a.
51 AKB, 63: āśraya-viśeṣād etat sidhyati āśrayo hi sa āryānām dārśanabhāvanāmārgha-sāmarthyāt tathā pārāvwrtto bhavati yathā prakīrtita na punās tatprānehānām kleśānām prarohasamartartho bhavati āto’gnaḍadharvihidvid abhībhuṭe āśraye kleśānām prahīṇa-kleśa ity ucyaṭe | Cf. also the contrasting views (bijā and prāpti) in ADV, 166.
52 Ny, 430a ff.
53 Similar definitions of prahīṇa and nirvāṇa — with Mahāyāna overtones — in Asm, 62; AsmB, 42; Siddhi(S) (commentary on last 2 stanzas); etc.
54 AKB, 92: āryaireva tattvabhāvah pratyātmavedah | etavat tu šākyate vaktum nityam kuśalam cāstiti dravyāntaram | tadvisamyośgaścocyate pratisaṃkhyā-nirodhaśceti |
55 It is interesting to note that the Theravāda Nettipakarana also includes both patisaṃkhyā-nirodha and appaṭisaṃkhyā-nirodha as among a list of ten nirodha-s (Nettipakarana, 87).
56 SgPŚ, 369c.
57 DSŚ, 500c
58 DSŚ, 504c.
59 DSŚ, 716a.
60 JPŚ, 923b.
61 Elsewhere, MVŚ (931b23–24) also tells us that “the Dārṣṭāntikas do not acknowledge that there exist the apratisaṃkhyā-nirodha dharma-s.”
16. The Unconditioned (asamkrita) Dharmas

62 MVŚ, 164b. Cf. AKB, 4:

\[\text{upadātyantavighno'nyo nirodho'pratisamkhayā} [6]\]

\[\text{anāgatānāṃ dharmānāṃ utpādasyātyantavighnabhūto visamyogād yo'nyo nirodhaḥ so'pratisamkhvyānirdhah | na hy asau pratisamkhvyā labhyate | kim tarhi | pratayavaikalyāḥ | yathaikarūpavyāsaktacaksur manaso yāni rūpāni śabdā-\]
\[\text{gandha-rasa-spraṣṭavyānī cātyayante} | \text{Also cf. Entrance, 127.} \]

63 Cf. Ny, 429a.

64 Ny, 434b.

65 MVŚ, 164b–c. See Study, 703 f.

66 Entrance, 127.

67 Entrance, 127.

68 Ny, 435a.

69 However, strictly speaking, this is not quite correct, since the unconditioned Dharmas are beyond the causal process. One can only speak of them as being acquired (prāpyante) through the path. See, above, §16.2.2.

70 MVŚ, 161b–c.

71 MVŚ, 164c.

72 MVŚ, 164c–165c.

73 Cf. AKB, 18.

74 AKB, 18, explains the Sarvāstivāda notion of the agha-sāmantakam rūpam as follows: agham kila citastham rūpam | atyartham ghātāt | tasya tat sāmantakam iti | Vy, 57, comments: agham kila citastham rūpam iti citastham samghātastham | atyartham hanti hanyate ceti agham nairuktena vidhinā | atyartha-sabdasya a-kārādesaḥ krto hante ca ghādesaḥ | tasya tat sāmantakam iti tasyāghasya kuḍyādesaḥ sāmantakam samīpastham | tad apekṣya vyavasthāpitam ity arthah | I.e., the etymology given here for agha is: a = atyartham; gha = hanti.

75 MVŚ, 388b.

76 MVŚ, 388c.

77 MVŚ, 389a.

78 AKB, 92.

79 Ny, 347b.

80 Entrance, 124.

81 Ny, 347b.

82 This seems to agree with the information from Yaśomitra (Vy, 15). But see our remarks above in §16.1.1.

83 Ny, 429a–430a.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. PRIMARY SOURCES

*Abhidhammatthasaṅgaho.* Ed., Kosambi, D (Saranath, 1941).


*Abhidharmakośāntīkālaksanānusārīni (chos mngon pa’i mdzod kyi ’grel bshad mtshan nyid kyi rjes su ’brang ba zhes bya ba)* of Pūrṇavardhana. Peking no. 5597


*Arthaviniścaya Sūtra and its Commentary Nibandhana.* Tr., Samtani, NH (Berkeley, 2002).


Milindapañha, Being dialogues between king Milinda and the Buddhist sage Nāgasena. Trenckner, V. PTS (London, 1890).

Nyāyabindutīkā (of Darmottara), Bib. Bud. VII. Indian reprint (Delhi, 1992).


*Prakaraṇābhidharmāvatāra (rab tu byed pa chos mngon pa la ’jug pa zhes bya ba). (Tohoku no. 4098, Peking no. 5599). Tr., by Jinamitra, Dānaśīla and Ye-shes-sde.


*Sāra-samuccaya-nāma-abhidharmāvatāra-ṭīkā (chos mngon pa la ’jug pa rgya cher ’grel pa snying po kun las btus pa zhes bya ba). (Tohoku no.4097, Peking no. 5598). Tr. by Jinamitra, Dānaśīla and Ye-shes-sde.

Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha. Mainkar, TG (Poona, 1978)


Sum cu pa’i ‘grel pa (Tibetan version of Sthiramati’s Triṃśikābhāṣya). Ed., Teramoto E (Kyoto, 1932).


*Tattvārthā (chos mngon pa’i mdos kyi bzhad pa’i rgya cher ‘grel pa don gyi de kho na nyid zhes bya ba) by Sthiramati. Tr., by Dharmapālabhadra (Peking no. 5875).


長阿含經 T no. 1 tr., Buddhayaśas and Zu Fo Nian.
中阿含經 T no. 26 tr., Saṃghadeva.
雜阿含經 T no. 99 tr., Guṇabhadra.
増一阿含經 T no. 125 tr., Saṃghadeva.
大智度論 T no. 1509 tr., Kumārajīva.
阿毘達磨集異門足論 T no. 1536 tr., Xuan Zang.
阿毘達磨法蘊足論 T no. 1537 tr., Xuan Zang.
施設論 T no. 1538 tr., Dharmapāla et. al.
阿毘達磨識身足論 T no. 1539 tr., Xuan Zang.
阿毘達磨界身足論 T no. 1540 tr., Xuan Zang.
眾事分阿毘曇論 T no. 1541 tr., Guṇabhadra et. al.
阿毘達磨品類足論 T no. 1542 tr., Xuan Zang.
阿毘達磨八犍度論 T no. 1543 tr., Saṅghadeva et. al.
阿毘達磨發智論 T no. 1544 tr., Xuan Zang.
阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 T no. 1545 tr., Xuan Zang.
阿毘達磨婆沙論 T no. 1546 tr., Buddhavarman Ā Daotai
雜婆沙論 T no. 1547 tr., Saṅghabhūti.
舍利弗阿毘曇論 T no. 1548 tr., Dharmyaśas et. al.
阿毘曇心論 T no. 1550 tr., Saṃghadeva et. al.
阿毘曇心論經 T no. 1551 tr., Narendrayaśas.
雜阿毘曇心論 T no. 1552 tr., Saṅghavarman.
阿毘達磨甘露味論 T no. 1553 tr., unknown.
入阿毘達磨論 T no. 1554 tr., Xuan Zang.
五事毘婆沙論 T no. 1555 tr., Xuan Zang.
Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma

薩婆多宗五事論
阿毘昙五法行經
阿毘達磨俱舍論
阿毘達磨俱舍釋論
阿毘達磨順正理論
阿毘達磨藏顯宗論
瑜伽師地論
成唯識論
阿毘達磨集論
阿毘達磨雜集論
大乘成業論
五蘊論
廣五蘊論
成實論
異部宗輪論
大唐西域記

II. SECONDARY SOURCES

Abhidharma and Indian Thought. (2000). Published by the Committee for the Felicitation of Professor Doctor Junsho Kato’s Sixieth Birthday. Tokyo.


Bibilography


—— (1961). “Un fragment sanskrit de l’Abhidharma des Sarvāstivādin.” In:


BIBLIOGRAPHY

Number 10, 55–74.


Orientation, 30; 1–28; 247–298.


Masuda, J (1925). “Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools.” In: Asia Major; vol. II; 1–78


Renou, L and Filliozat, J (1985). L’Inde classique – manual des études indiennes,
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Takahashi, Koichi (2005). *Philosophical Development from the Bodhisattvabhūmi to the Bodhisattvabhūmiviniścaya: With Special Reference to the Concept of Vastu as Used in the “Tattvārtha” Chapter*. Tokyo. (『菩薩地』「真實義品」から「攝抉擇分中菩薩地」への思想展開)


Van Velthem, M (1977). *Le traité de la descente dans la profonde loi*
BIBLIOGRAPHY

(\textit{Abhidharmāvatāraśāstra}) de l'arhat Skandhila. Louvain.


Winternitz, M (1933). \textit{A History of Indian Literature}. Vol. II. Calcutta.

Yin Shun (1968). 説一切有部為主論書與論師之研究 (\textit{A Study of the Śāstras and Ācāryas of the Sarvāstivāda and Other Schools}). Taipei.


ābhāsa Appearance; representational image.
ābhāsagata Appeared; coming into the field of one’s experience.
abhāvita Non-cultivated, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha in the MVŚ.
abhidhāna Expression.
abhidharma Envisaging Dharma; supreme (uttama) doctrines. It is so explained because Abhidharma leads us to be face to face with (i.e., direct realization of) Nirvāṇa, or to the true insight into the characteristics of dharma-s. In the highest sense, Abhidharma is pure prajñā.
abhidharma-kathā A solemn dialogue on the dharma (between bhikṣu-s).
Ābhidharmika/Ābhidhārmika A specialist in the Abhidharma.
abhidheya The expressed.
abhidhyā Covetousness.
abhijñā Higher knowledge; super normal power.
abhimāna Conceit of attainment, a mode of māna. It is characterized thus: “If one has not attained the distinctive acquirement of srota-āpatti, etc., and one claims that one has.” (Cf. Avatāra)
abhīnirūpaṇā Examination, judgemental investigation.
abhīnirūpaṇā-vikalpa Discrimination in the form of examination.
abhīnna Undifferentiated, general.
abhīprāyika With implicit intention.
abhīpreta Intended; Lovable/Inclined Toward, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha in MVŚ.
abhīsamaya Direct comprehension/realization (of the four noble truths
abhīsamayāntika-jñāna The knowledge derived at the immediate end of a direct realization into a particular noble truth. → abhisamaya.
abhīsamāskāra Volitional action (often implying a karmic significance); willful preparation.
abhīvinaya 1. ‘Facing vinaya’, ‘pertaining to vinaya’; 2. ‘excellent/profound vinaya’.
This term, as found in the sūtra-s, parallels the term abhidharma.
ābhogātmaka Alertive in nature.
abhuyupagama Commitment, undertaking.
abhuyapagama-cītta The thought with which one makes the vow of undertaking.
abrahma-carya-virati Abstention from unchaste conduct.
accha clear, transparent.
acittaka ‘Thoughtless’, without any mental activity (as in the cessation meditation).
adattādāna Taking what is not given.
adatta-phala That which has not yet given fruit.
adbhuta-dharma A wonderful occurrence.
ādhāra-pratipakṣa Counteragent that effects the maintenance of the abandonment so obtained.
adhigama Realization.
ādhikarmika Beginner.
adhimātra Strong (grade).
adhimokṣa Resolve, inclination, resolute affirmation.
adhimukti Inclination → adhimokṣa.
adhimukti-manaskāra ‘Mental application of resolve’. This refers to the application of adhimukti, in meditative practices like the aśubhā, as a force in visualizing a desired state (e.g. the state of deterioration of corpse) which is not the actual state at the present moment (e.g. the person being so visualized is actually not a deteriorating corpse). This is in contrast to tattva-manaskāra.
adhipati-phala ‘Fruit of (pre)dominance’; this is the fruit of the kāraṇa-hetu. The fruits of collective karma-s also come under this category. → karma.
adhipati-pratyaya Dominant condition.
adhipatya Sovereignty, dominance.
adhicitta ‘Higher mental training’; it has the same signification as adhisamādhi.
adhiprajñā ‘Higher understanding/wisdom’
adhirāga The ‘predominantly greedy type’ of personality. The meditation to counteract this is aśubhā.
adhisamādhi ‘Higher meditation’.
adhiśīla ‘Higher ethics’.
adhiṣṭhāna Support, base.
adhivitarka The ‘predominantly distracted type’ of personality. The meditation to counteract this is ānāpānasmṛti.
adhvan Time.
adhvan-saṃcāra Coursing in time.
ādhyātmika Internal.
adhyavasāya Determination, conceptual judgement.
ādiṇava Distress; the unpleasant aspect, demerit.
adṛśya ‘Invisible’; non-empirical.
aduhkāsukha Neither pleasant or unpleasant.
advēṣa Non-hatred.
agada Free from disease/affliction; a type of medicine that counteracts poison.
āgama Traditional or canonical texts; scriptural authority. → āptāgama.
āgantuka Foreign, adventitious.
agha That which is exceedingly obstructive (a = atyartham, ‘exceedingly’; gha = hanti ‘strike/obstruct’; atyartham hanti hanyate ceti agham); i.e., agglomerated, obstructive matter.
agha-sāmantaka-rūpa A matter that is proximate to agha (agglomerated matter); i.e., the space element.
agraja Previously arisen.
āhāra Food.
ahetuka Without a cause.
aheya Not to be abandoned (the outflow-free dharma-s).
āhṛīkya Non-modesty.
airyāpathika Pertaining to deportment: walking, standing, sitting and lying down.
aśvarya Sovereignty, freedom.
aśāta The unborn.
**ajñāna**  Ignorance. There are two kinds: **kliṣta** and **akliṣṭa**.

**ājñātavindriya**  The ‘having fully known’ faculty; the last of three outflow-free cognitive faculties. It exercises predominance with regard to the state of bliss in the present. In the acquisition of the **arhat**-fruit, it constitutes the path of liberation. → **anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya**.

**ājñendriya**  The second of three outflow-free faculties. It exercises predominance with regard to cessation of **bhāvanā-heya** defilements. In the acquisition of the fruit of stream entry, it functions as the support of the **visamyoga-prāpti**, and constitutes the path of liberation. In the acquisition of the **arhat**-fruit, it constitutes the immediate path. → **anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya**.

**ākāra**  Mode of activity. The **Sarvāstivāda** explains this as **prajñā**, that is, the particular mode of understanding that arises in the mind when an object is cognized. With regard to the four noble truths, there are four for each truth. There are, for **duḥkha-satya**: **anitya**, **duḥkha**, **śānta**, **anātma**; for **samudaya-satya**: **hetu**, **samudaya**, **prabhava**, **pratyaya**; for **nirdoha-satya**: **nirrota**, **śānta**, **praṇīta**, **niḥsaraṇa**; for **mārga-satya**: **mārga**, **nyāya**, **pratipatti**, **nairyāṇika**.

**ākāra-ālambana-apahrāsa**  ‘Reduction of **ākāra** and **ālambana**’. This refers to the process of successive reduction of the **ākāra**-s and **ālambana**-s (starting from 16 **ākāra**-s pertaining to the three spheres), commenced by the practitioner when he has attained the medium grade of **kṣānti**-s of the **nirvedha-bhāgīya**-s, until he finally contemplates on only unsatisfactoriness and impermanence pertaining to the **kāma-dhātu**. In the very next moment when the strong grade of **kṣānti**-s arise, in a single moment he contemplates on only the unsatisfactoriness pertaining to the **kāma-dhātu**.

**ākāra-samatā**  ‘Sameness in mode of activity’: Conjoined thought and thought-concomitants have the same mode of comprehending the shared cognitive object. → **pañca-samatā**

**ākāśa**  Space, an unconditioned **dharma**.

**ākāśa-dhātu**  Space element; to be distinguished from the unconditioned **ākāśa**. → **agha-sāmantaka-rūpa**.

**ākāśānantyāyatana**  The abode/sphere of infinite space; the first of four meditation attainments pertaining to the immaterial sphere. → **samāpatti**, **ārūpya-dhātu**.

**ākāśa-puṣpa**  Sky-flower (referring to something absolutely non-existent).

**ākīṃcanyāyatana**  The abode/sphere of nothingness; the third of four meditation attainments pertaining to the immaterial sphere. → **samāpatti**, **ārūpya-dhātu**.

**akliṣṭa-ajñāna**  Non-defiled ignorance. This ignorance has nothing to do with defilements, and can be fully eliminated only in a **buddha**. Owing to the presence of this, the **prajñā** of a **pratyeka-buddha** or a **śrāvaka** is inferior to that of a **buddha**.

**akopya-dharman**  ‘Of the nature of being unshakable’. The highest type of **arhat** who is absolutely not susceptible to retrogression.

**aṅkṣara**  Phoneme; one of the conditioning disjoined from thought. → **viprayukta-samśkāra**.

**aṅkṣema**  ‘Non-peacefulness and insecurity’, ‘not peaceful and insecure’. This is a defining feature of what is **akuśala**.

**aṅkṣepa**  Projection.

**aṅkṣepaka-karma**  Projecting karma (as opposed to **paripūraka-karma**); karma responsible for determining the specific type of sentient existence into which one is reborn.

ākulśala-mahābhūmika-dharma Universal unskillful/unwholesome \(dharma\)-s.

ākulśala-mūla Unskillful roots.

ākulśala-vitarka Unskillful reasoning.

ālambana Cognitive object, a \(dharma\) capable of generating a cognition of itself.

ālambana-abhīsamaya One of three types of direct realization. It refers to the fact of the outflow-free \(prajñā\) taking the same objects as its conjoined \(dharma\)-s in the process of direct realization. \(→ abhīsamaya\)

ālambana-pratīghāta Obstruction qua cognitive object. \(→ pratīghāta\)

ālambana-pratyaya Condition qua object, one of the four \(pratyaya\)-s.

ālambana-samatā Sameness of cognitive object (one of five conditions for two mental \(dharma\)-s to be said to be conjoined). \(→ pañca samatā\).

ālambanato ‘nuṣete (A defilement) grows concordantly by taking a \(sāsrava\) object.

ālāta-cakra Fire-wheel.

ālaya-vijñāna Store consciousness (of the Yogācāra system).

ālobha Non-greed.

ālocana Perceiving, reflecting.

āloka Light.

alpaujasa Lack of vitality.

alpechhatā Having few desires.

amala Taintless, pure.

amanojña Disagreeable.

amoha Non-delusion.

amṛta-dvāra Gateway of immortality (i.e., to \(Nirvāṇa\)), referring to \(ānāpāna-(anu)smṛti\) and \(aśubhānusmṛti/aśucyanusmṛti\).

anāgāmin Non-returner.

anāgāmin pratipannaka Candidate of the fruit of non-returner.

anāgata Future, the future.

anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya The ‘I shall know what has not been known’ faculty; the first of three outflow-free cognitive faculties which are: \(ājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya\), \(ājñendriya\) and \(ājñātāvindriya\). These three faculties, in their essential nature, are constituted of \(manas, sukha, saumanasya, upekṣā, śraddhā, virya, smṛti, samādhi\) and \(prajñā\). These three are differentiated as the three distinctive faculties on account of the predominance that they exercise in the \(darśana-mārga, bhāvanā-mārga\) and \(aśaikṣa-mārga\), respectively. The \(anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya\) exercises predominance with regard to the cessation of the \(darśana-heya\) defilements. In the acquisition of the fruit of stream entry, it functions as the inductor (\(āvāhaka\)) of the \(visaṃyoga-prāpti\), and constitutes the path of liberation.

anālambana (Consciousness) having no cognitive object.

ānantarāya karma (The five) mortal transgression: patricide, matricide, killing an \(arhat\), causing a \(Buddha\)'s bleeding and splitting of the \(Saṅgha\). The term lit. means “immediate”: These five are the gravest evil \(karma\)-s bringing immediate retribution in hell.

584
ānantarya-mārga Unhindered path. The moment of abandoning a defilement. Immediately after this is the path liberation.

ānāpānasmiti Mindfulness of breathing.
anapatrāpya Shamelessness.
anāsrrava Outflow-free (‘pure’ in the sense that such a dharma does not conduce to the saṃsāric process). → sāsrrava.
anāsrrava-jñāna Outflow-free knowledge.
anāsrrava-saṃvara Outflow-free restraint
andhakāra-phala Fruit of darkness/ignorance.
āneñjya Immovable.
aṅga Limb, part.
anidarśana Invisible.
anidarśana-apratigha Invisible and non-resistant.
ānimitta ‘Signlessness’; one of the 3 vimokṣa-mukha-s.
aniṣṭa-vipāka Undesirable retribution, generated from an akuśala karma.
anityatā Impermanence.
anityatā-aniyatā ‘Impermanence-impermanence’, one of four anulakṣaṇa-s of the conditioned dharma-s. Its function is to cause the perishing of anityatā/vyaya. → anulaksana.
anityatā-lakṣaṇa ‘Impermanence-characteristic’, a viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma that causes the perishing of a conditioned dharma. One of four characteristics (lakṣaṇa) of the conditioned dharma-s. → saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa.
anivṛta-avyākṛta Non-veiled-non-defined. A dharma that is both morally non-defined and non-obstructive to the noble path.
anivṛta-avyākṛta-mahābhūmika-dharma Universal dharma-s which are non-veiled-non-defined.
aniyata-dharma Indeterminate dharma. A category of dharma-s whose nature (skillful, unskillful; etc.) cannot be determined.
aniyata-karma Indeterminate karma. A karma that is not necessarily retributed.
antā-grāha-dṛṣṭi A view grasping the two extremes: existence, non-existence.
antā-bhava Intermediate existence.
anta End, extreme.
antika Fine, subtle. In the Sarvāstivāda atomic theory, seven paramāṇu-s constitute an anu. It is the finest among all rūpa-s perceivable by the eye and visual consciousness; and even then by only three types of eyes: 1. the divya-cakṣus, 2. the eye of a cakravartin, 3. the eye of a bodhisattva in his last birth.
anubandha Series, continuity.
anubhava-pratyakṣa Direct perception qua experience, one of three types of direct perception. → pratyakṣa.
anudhātu ‘Subsidiary element’, a term similar in significance to bīja (seed), used by Śrīlāta.
anulaksana Secondary characteristic (of the conditioned dharma-s). There are four: jāti-jāti, sthiti-sthiti, jarā-jarā, anityatā-aniyatā (/vyaya-vyaya). Each saṃskṛta-dharma is momentary thanks to the operation of the saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s, and each of these is in turned rendered momentary thanks to the operation of the four anulaksana-s.
ānulomikī kṣānti Receptivity that conforms [to Truth.]
anumāna  Inference.
anunaya  Lust.
anupādhiṣeṣa-nirvāṇa  Nirvāṇa without substratum.
anuprāsaṅga  A subsidiary topic or digression from the main topic under discussion.
anupūrvaka  One who progresses according to the regular order.
anurakṣaṇā-dharmā  Of the nature of being capable of protecting oneself from retrogression.
anuṣaṅga → anuprāsaṅga.
anuśaya  Proclivity. For the Sarvāstivāda, it is one of the synonyms for kleśa (defilement), signifying its subtle nature. For the Sautrāntika and others, it is a latent defilement, the seed of the paryavasthāna.
anuṣayana  The act of adherence and growth (of a proclivity/defilement).
anušerate  (Defilements) adhere and grow concordantly (with the sāsrava objects).
anusmarāṇa-vikalpa  Discrimination in form of recollection; one of three forms of discrimination. → vikalpa.
anu-srota Stream-accordants, those who have not planted the skillful roots of mokṣa-bhāgiya.
anuptāda  Non-arising.
anuptāda-jñāna  Knowledge of non-arising (of all defilements). In the case of the non-retrogressive type of arhat (→ asamaya-vimukta, aparīhāra-dharmā), the moment of the knowledge of exhaustion is immediately followed by the arising of this knowledge.
anuptāta  Non-appropriated (by a being's citta-caitta-s); i.e. sensitive (rūpa).
anuptatti-dharmāka  (Future dharmā-s which are) of the nature of being destined not to arise.
anuptatti-dharmā  Same as anuptatti-dharmāka.
anuptattika-dharmā-kṣānti  Receptivity to the fact that all dharmā-s are non-arising in their true nature.
anuttarā samyak-sambodhi  Supreme Perfect Enlightenment (of a buddha).
anu(pari)vartaka  1. ‘Operating in accompaniment with’. 2. ‘Subsequent propeller’ (as opposed to initial propeller).
anvaya-jñāna  Subsequent knowledge. It is a spiritual insight similar in nature to dharmā-jñāna and acquired subsequently to it, while one is gaining insight into a noble truth pertaining to the rūpa- and ārūpya-dhātu-s.
anvaya-jñāna-kṣānti  Receptivity to the subsequent knowledge.
anyathā-anyathātva  (anyathā-anyathikā) Buddhadeva’s explanation on temporality: a dharmā is said to be future, present or past relative to that which precedes and/or that which succeeds.
anyonyānaparivartanaikakṛtya  (The sahabhū-hetu-s are of the nature of) ‘sharing an activity by mutually operating in concordance’.
ap  Water (one of four Great Elements).
apakāra  Harm, injury.
aparānta(-koṭi)  The very end (of samsāra).
apara-paryāya-vedanīya karma  Karma-s whose retribution is experiencible in a future life subsequent to the next.
**aparihāna-dharman** of the nature of non-retrogression. An **arhat** of this nature is of the highest grade; he is an **asamaya-vimukta**.

**apatrāpya**  Moral shamefulness.

**apekṣā**  Relative dependance, cause-effect connection.

**aprahiṇa**  Have not been abandoned.

**aparijñāta**  Not having been completely known.

**apramāda**  Diligence, heedfulness.

**apramādāṅga**  (Pertaining to) the section of vigilance; this refers to the abstention from intoxicants.

**apramāṇa**  Immeasurable. There are four: **maitrī**, **karuṇā**, **muditā**, **upekṣā**.

**apraṇihita**  ‘Aspiration-free’, (the mind) not being bent on anything. It is one of three **vimokṣa-mukha-s**.

**aprāpti**  Non-acquisition, one of the **vipayukta-samskāra-dharma-s**. It is a force opposite in nature to **prāpti**, and serves to sever the link of a **dharma** from the serial continuity of the sentient being.

**apratigha**  Non-resistant.

**apratilambha**  Non-obtainment.

**apratisamkhyā-nirodha**  Cessation independent of deliberation, one of the three types of **asamskrta-dharma-s**. It is a cessation acquired not through any effort of deliberation, but due to the deficiency in **pratyaya-s**. But like a **pratisamkhyā-nirodha**, it is also not a mere absence, but a positive force preventing the arising of the **dharma** which has ceased.

**apratisamyuktaka**  Not bound or yoked (i.e., not pertaining to any sphere of existence). This refers to the **anāsrava dharma-s**.

**apratyakṣa**  Indirect perception.

**āptāgama**  Scriptural teachings as an authority (**pramāṇa**) for our knowledge of what is true/real.

**apuṇya**  A non-meritorious deed.

**ārāma**  A monastery.

**aranya**  An hermitage dwelling.

**āranyaka**  Hermitage dweller.

**arāśi**  Non-agglomerated, one of the 14 synonyms for **pratisamkhyā-nirodha** in MVŚ.

**arati**  Disgust, non-delight.

**arbuda**  The second stage in the foetal development.

**arhat**  ‘A Worthy One’, epithet for one who has achieved the highest spiritual attainment.

**arhat-pratipannaka**  Candidate for the fruition of **arhat**.

**artha**  Object-referent; meaning; purpose (There are many other meanings).

**artha-kriyā-samartha**  Efficacious for a purposeful action.

**artha-pratisaṃvid**  Unhindered knowledge with regard to meaning. One of four types of **pratisaṃvid**: **dharma-**, **artha-**, **nirukti-**, and **pratibhāna-**.

**artha-svarūpa**  The object in its unique nature.

**arthasya pratinidhi**  Image or representation of the external object.

**arthaviniścaya**  Determination or ascertainment of meaning.

**arūpi-dharma-s**  Immaterial **dharma-s**.

**arūpin**  Immaterial.
ārūpya  Immateriality. It also stands for the ārūpya-dhātu.

ārūpya-dhātu  The sphere of immateriality. This is subdivided into four progressive stages (bhūmi): 1. ākāśānantyāyatana, 2. vijñānāntyāyatana, 3. ākiṃcanyāyatana, 4. naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpyāvacara-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya  Noble; also a term for one who has become a Buddhist saint (who has attained one of the eight stages of spiritual attainment, and hence no more a prthagjana).

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.

ārya-mārga  Noble path.

ārya-mārgatva  The (universal) nature of the ārya-mārga; one of the unconditioned dharma-s of some schools.

ārya-satya  Noble truth. There are four: duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Pertaining to the sphere of immateriality.

ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka  Same as ārūpya-dhātu-pratisamyuṅka.

ārya-jñāna  Noble (i.e., anāsrava) knowledge.
asattvākhya  Non-sentient, not pertaining to sentient beings.
āśaya  Intention.
āśaya-vipanna  Evil intention.
āśaya-viśeṣa  A specific type of intention.
asevita  Non-cultivated, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha in MVŚ.
āsevita-bhāvita-bahulīkṛta  Well practiced, cultivated and repeatedly done.
asmimāna  Self-conceit. A mode of māna, characterized thus: “One clings to the pañcāṇḍa-skandha as the ātmā or ātmīya” (Cf. Avatāra)
āśraddhya  Lack of faith.
āśrava  Outflow, a synonym of kleśa.
āśravakṣaya-jñāna  The knowledge of the destruction of the outflows.
āśraya  Supporting basis.
āśraya-samata  ‘Sameness of the supporting basis’: conjoined thought and thought-concomitants share the same support-basis. pañca samata
āśrita  ‘supported’, as opposed to the support (āśraya). E.g., the Great Elements are the āśraya-s and the derived matters are āśrita.
aṣṭadravya  ‘Comprising eight substances’. The Vaibhāṣikas teach that the minimal molecule that can come into existence in the kāma-dhātu is an octad comprising eight dravya-s.
astitva  Existence.
āśubha  Impure.
āśubhā  The meditation on the impure (= aśubha-bhāvanā).
āśubha-bhāvanā  Contemplation on the impure.
āśucyanusmṛti  Recollection of the impure. Same as aśubhā and aśubha-bhāvanā.
asura  This term is generally only transliterated in Chinese, but occasionally translated as “non-god”, etc. They are believed to be beings who are constantly fighting with the deva-s.
āśvādana  Tasting, enjoying; the enjoyable aspect.
atikrānta-manaskāra  One who ‘has transcended mental application/effort’. i.e., one who has attained perfect mastery (in a practice), beyond the stages of a beginner (ādikārmi) and an adept (kṛta-parijaya).
atimāna  Superiority-complex. It is characterized thus: “If others are equal to one, and one claims one is superior, or if others are superior and one claims one is equal.” (Cf. Avatāra).
atīndriya  ‘Beyond the senses’, supra-sensuous.
atiprasāṅga  Over-generalization.
atireka  Supplementary.
ātman  A metaphysical Self/Soul whose existence is upheld by the Brahmanical schools.
ātma-vāda  Soul theory.
ātmavādopādana  Soul-theory-clinging.
ātmīya  That which pertains to (/belongs) to Self (ātman).
atyantaḥbhava  An absolute non-existent.
atyantat praṅha  (A defilement) ‘abandoned completely/absolutely’ will not arise any more.
aprapti  Absolutely opposed(/contradictory).
audārika Coarse.
auddhatya Restlessness.
auddhatya-kaukṛtya Restlessness-morose.
aupacārika Metaphorical.
aupacayika Of the nature of growth. One of the doctrinal perspectives in Abhidharma analysis: dharma-s are divisible as those which are aupacayika (e.g., rūpa) and which are not (e.g., citta).
aupadhika-puṇya-kriyā A material meritorious action.
avadāna One of the dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana. It is in the form of a simile or story clarifying or demonstrating the truth of a certain doctrinal point.
avadhāraṇa Affirmation, emphasis.
avadya ‘Not praise-worthy’, vice, transgression.
āvāhaka That which brings in, inductor.
avara-bhāgīya Pertaining to the lower section. paṇca-avara-bhāgīya.
avarana Covering, obstruction, hindrance. An important two-fold division is kleśāvaraṇa and jñeyāvaraṇa. Sometimes, other āvaraṇa-s are also mentioned, such as samāpatty-āvaraṇa, vipāka-āvaraṇa, etc.
āvaraṇa-pratīghāta Obstruction qua hindrance. → pratīghāta
avarṇa Non-manifest, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha in MVŚ.
avasthā State, position.
avasthā-anyathātva (/or avasthā-anyathika) ‘Difference in state’; Vasumitra’s explanation on temporality: A dharma in a given temporal state is termed future, present or past accordingly.
avasthika pratītya-samutpāda Conditioned co-arising in (twelve) states.
avatāra Descent, entering, entrance.
avatāra-mukha Gateway of entering.
avayava Part. It is also a synonym of svabhāva.
avetya-prasāda Faith/conviction (prasāda) based on insight.
avēṇika Unique, unshared.
avēṇikī avidyā ‘Independent ignorance’, a mode of avidyā. In this mode, the avidyā arises through its own strength, without relying on the other fundamental or secondary defilements.
avidyā Ignorance, nescience. It is not just the absence of vidyā, but a real existent functioning as positive force causing the non-cognizance. It operates in two modes: as samprayuktā avidyā and āvenikī avidyā.
avidyāpratyayāḥ saṃskārāḥ ‘Conditionings [in the present existence] have avidyā as their [causal] condition.’
avidyāsrava Ignorance-outflow.
avidyaugha Ignorance-flood.
avihiṃsā Harmlessness.
avijñapti Non-information. This refers to avijñapti-karma and avijñapti-rūpa.
avijñapti-karma Non-informative action. Unlike a viñapti karma which informs us of the mental state of the doer, this is a karmic force which, once projected by a bodily or vocal karma, continues to exist as a series invisibly; hence, non-informative.
avijñapti-rūpa Non-informative matter. This is a special type of rūpa which constitutes an avijñapti-karma. It is non-resistant and invisible, and comes into existence in
dependence on the force of a cetanā, a vijnapti karma and a set of mahābhūta-s. It is a special type of upādāya-rūpa which is not comprised of paramāṇu-s.

avikṣipta Non-distracted.
avinā-bhāva Being not mutually separated.
avinirbhāga Non-separation.
aviparīta Non-topsy-turvy, non-erroneous.
avyākrta (Morally) non-defined.
avyākrta-mūla Non-defined root.
āya-dvāra Gateway of arising.
āyatana Entrance, abode: a unique cognitive species. There are 12; the 6 internal faculties (from cakṣus to manas) and the 6 corresponding object-domains (from rūpa to dharma).
āyatana-pratilambha Obtainment of abode.
āyatana-svalakṣaṇa Intrinsic characteristic of a single, unique species of dharma, such as rūpa as distinct from vedanā, etc.
ayoniśo manaskāra Improper mental application.
ayukta Unreasonable, not logical.
āyus Life principle.
āyuḥsaṃskāra Life-force, life-principle conditioning.
bahirdeśaka Foreign/outside masters (those outside Kaśmīra).
bahu-dhātu Multiple elements.
bahu-nāma-kāya Group of multiple words.
bahu-śruta ‘Heard much’; learned in the Buddhist doctrines.
bāhya External.
bala Power.
balavat Strong.
bandhana Bondage. It is also a synonym for kleśa.
bhājana-loka ‘Reception world’; i.e., the physical world.
bhautika ‘Derived from the mahā-bhūta-s’ = bhautika-rūpa.
bhautika-rūpa Derived matter. Same as upādāya rūpa.
bhāva An existent, a mode of existence, a state of being.
bhāva-anyathātva (/bhāva-anyathika) ‘Difference in mode of existence/being’; Dharmatrāta’s explanation on temporality: A dharma is said to be future, present or past according to its mode of existence.
bhavāgra Existence-peak.
bhāvanā-mārga Path of cultivation.
bhāvanā-mārga-heya (Defilements) abandonable by repeated cultivation.
bhāvanā-mayī prajñā Understanding derived from cultivation.
bhavāsrava Existence-outflow.
bhavaugha Existence-flood.
bhāvita Developed, cultivated; perfumed (by a vāsanā).
bhedābheda Non-difference in difference.
binna Differentiated, specific.
bhikṣu A fully ordained male member of the Saṅgha.
bhikṣunī A fully ordained female member of the Saṅgha.
bhūmi Stage.

bhūyo-vītarāga ‘One who has been much detached'; a practitioner who, before entering into the darśanamārga, has already abandoned (through the worldly path) the defilements abandonable by cultivation, from six to eight categories.

bīja Seed.

bodhi Enlightenment, awakening. According to the Ābhidharmikas, it comprises kṣaya- and anutpāda-jñāna.

bodhipaksya-dharma Dharma-s conducive to Enlightenment. There are 37: four smṛtyupasthāna-s, four samyak pradhāna-s, four rddhipāda-s, five indriya-s, five bala-s, seven bodhyāṅga-s, eight āryaśāṅgika-mārga-s.

bodhy-aṅga Enlightenment-factors. There are seven: smṛti, dharma-(pra)vicaya, vīrya, prīti, praśrabdhi, samādhi, upekṣā.

brahma-carya ‘Brahma-faring’, the spiritual life; a life of celibacy.

bṛhatphala Great-fruit [Heaven].

buddhānusmṛti Recollection of the Buddha, a meditation on the Buddha’s perfected virtues.

Buddha-vacana Words of the Buddha.

buddhi Intellect, perception, cognition.

buddhi-pratyakṣa Direct perception qua discernment.

caitasika Thought-concomitant.

caitta Same as caitasika.

caṇḍur-abhijñā Supernormal power of vision,

cakṣur-indriya Visual faculty.

cakṣus Eye.

cakravartin ‘Wheel-wielding’, Universal Monarch.

catus-koṭi ‘Four-cornered’ (alternative), tetralemma.

cetanā Volition.

cetanā-dharman Of the nature of being capable of ending existence at will.

cetanā-viśeṣa A specific type of volition.

cetayitvā-karma Karma subsequent to willing.

chanda Predilection, desire.

cintā-mayī prajñā Understanding derived from reflection.

citastham rūpa Agglomerated matter.

citra Variegated.

citta Thought.

cittacaitta ‘Thought and thought-concomitant’; often used as a collective term standing for all mental factors generally.

cittānuparivartin Accompanying thought; thought-accompaniment.

cittānuvartin Same as cittānuparivartin.

citta-anuvartaka-rūpa ‘Matter accompanying (operating together with) thought’; i.e., the aviññāti.

cittaviprayukta-saṃskāra Conditionings disjoined from thought. They are forces/ dharma-s which are neither material nor mental. The Sarvāstivāda generally enumerates 14 such forces, such as prāpti, aprāpti, etc.

damana Subduing, taming.

dāna-śīla-aviruddha Unopposed to giving and precept.
**darśana** Seeing, insight, vision.

**darśana-abhisamaya** Abhisamaya in respect of the seeing of the four noble truths by the pure prajñā alone.

**darśana-heya** (Defilements) abandonable by vision/insight.

**darśana-mārga** Path of vision (Insight). It consists of 16 moments of insight into the four Noble Truths. Emerging from this meditative process, the practitioner is transformed from being a prthagjana into an ārya.

**daśa-kuśala-karmapatha** The ten skillful paths of karma. → kuśala-karmapatha

**daurmanasya** Distress, dejectedness.

**dauśīlya** ‘Bad behaviour’, immorality, transgression of precepts.

**dauśīlya-vibandhatva** Obstruction to the transgression of precepts.

**deva** A divine being: god.

**deva-putra** A being in a heavenly abode; a god. → deva.

**dharma** (1) An ultimate factor of existence, defined as “that which sustains its specific characteristic”(svalakṣaṇa-dhāranād dharmah). (2) Mental objects. (3) Doctrine. (there are many other meanings of this word).

**dharmānudharma-pratipatti** ‘Nirvāṇa is called Dharma; the noble eightfold path is called anu-dharma. The Buddha’s disciples’ practice therein is called dharma-anudharma-pratipatti.” (DSŚ, 463b)

**dharmānusārin** ‘Doctrine-pursuant’. A practitioner who relies primarily on the understanding of the Doctrine for spiritual progress.

**dharma-jñāna** The spiritual insight into the true nature of dharma-s, derived for the first time in one’s samsāric existence, in the direct realization of duḥkha-satya pertaining to the kāma-dhātu.

**dharma-lakṣaṇa** Characteristic of dharma.

**dharma-pratisaṃvid** Unhindered knowledge with regard to dharma, one of four types of pratisaṃvid → artha-pratisaṃvid.

**dharma-pravicaya** Investigation/discernment of dharma-s. This is the definition of both prajñā and abhidharma.

**dharma-sabhāgatā** Homogeneity among dharma-s.

**dharma-śarīra** Dharma Body.

**dhammatā** Nature of dharma; nature of things.

**dhammatā-prātilambhika** Obtained spontaneously (acquired in accordance with the nature of things).

**dharmāyatana** The dharma-abode, the āyatana corresponding to manas in the twelve-āyatana classification.

**dharmāyatana-samgrhita-rūpa** Matter subsumed under the dharmāyatana. This refers specifically to the avijñapti-rūpa.

**dhātu** Element (also explained as “source of origin”); sphere.

**dhṛti** Supporting, sustaining.

**dhyāna** Meditation, reflection. Only the first four samāpatti-s pertaining to the rūpa-dhātu can be called dhyāna, because in these four meditations, śamatha and vipaśyanā exist evenly. dṛṣṭadharma-sukha-vihāra

**dhyānāṅga** ‘Contemplation-factors’. There are five: (1) vitarka, (2) vicāra, (3) prīti, (4) sukha, (5) cittaikāgratā. The first dhyāna has all 5; second, (3)–(5); third, (4) and (5); fourth, only (5).
**dhyāna-antara** ‘Intermediate dhyāna’, between two mūla-dhyāna-s.

**dhyāna-saṃvara** Meditation-restraint; one type of avijñapti.

**divya-cakṣus** Divine eye.

**dravya** Substance; a real entity.

**dravyāntara** A distinct entity.

**dravya-paramāṇu** ‘Substance-atom’, atom as a single entity in itself; e.g., a green colour atom.

**dravya-saṃvara** Meditation-restraint; one type of avijñapti.

**divya-cakṣus** Divine eye.

**dravya-paramāṇu** ‘Substance-atom’, atom as a single entity in itself; e.g., a green colour atom.

**dravya-sañvartati** ‘Sameness in respect of [being a singular] substance’: Conjoined thought and thought-concomitants are equal in being singular in substance. E.g., although there are three types of sensation (vedanā) and various types of ideations (saṃjñā), only one single type of sensation and one single idea of ideation at a time is conjoined with thought and other thought-concomitants. → pañca-sañvartati

**dravyasat** Existent as a real entity; absolutely real.

**dravya-svalakṣaṇa** Intrinsic characteristic of a unique entity (dravya), such as a green colour.

**drṣṭa-dharma-phala** Fruit experienced in the present life.

**drṣṭa-dharma-sukha-vihāra** ‘Happy dwelling (state of bliss) in the present existence’.

This is one of the terms describing the blissful experiences of dhyāna.

**drṣṭa-dharma-vedanīya-karma** Karma experiencible in this life.

**drṣṭa** In the present existence.

**drṣṭa-pada** ‘One who has seen the track’: one who has gained insight into the noble truths through the darśana-mārga.

**drṣṭe dharme** In the present existence.

**drṣṭi** ‘View’; its svabhāva is prajñā. It is characterized by a strong mode of activity (ākāra) of speculation and judgment (samprajñā). As kleśa, it is five-fold: satkāya-drṣṭi, antagraha-drṣṭi, mithyā-drṣṭi, drṣṭi-parāmarśa and śīlavrata-parāmarśa. It also operates as proper view (samyag-drṣṭi).

**drṣṭi-parāmarśa** Clinging to one’s views as the only true ones.

**drṣṭi-prāpta** One who has attained through views.

**drṣṭy-ogha** View-flood.

**drṣṭy-upādāna** View-clinging.

**duḥkha** Unpleasant; painful; unsatisfactory; pain; unsatisfactoriness.

**duḥkha-darśana-heya** (Defilements) abandonable by insight into unsatisfactoriness.

**duḥkha-dharma-jñāna** Knowledge of the unsatisfactoriness, acquired in the process of abhisamaya.

**duḥkhe anvaya-jñāna** Subsequent-knowledge with regard to duḥkha pertaining to the two upper spheres of existence. It is a spiritual insight similar in nature, and acquired subsequently, to the duḥkhe dharma-jñāna.

**duḥkha-satya** The noble truth of unsatisfactoriness.

**duḥkhatā** The fact of unsatisfactoriness.

**duḥkha-vedanīya** Experiencible as being unsatisfactory; unpleasant/unsatisfactory experience.

**duḥkhilā** Miserable, depressing

**dūragama** Far-going.

**durgati** Unfortunate plane of existence.
**dūrībhāva-pratipakṣa**  Counteragent which results in distancing (from the *prāpti* of the defilement).

**dvādaśāṅga**  ‘Twelve-limb’, twelve-fold (classification). → **dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana**.

**dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana**  The twelve-fold classification of the ‘Words of the [Buddha] Dharma’:

**dveṣa**  Hatred. One of three *akuśala-mūla*-s.

**dveṣa-sadrśa**  ‘Resemblance of hatred’. It is not the *kleśa*, hatred itself, but only a resemblance of it. This refers to the *vāsanā* left behind as a result of the perfuming of *dveṣa*.

**dyotita**  Illuminated, elucidated, clearly shown.

**edaka-rajas**  ‘Ram-dust’. The size of seven *śaśa-rajas*-s.

**ek'ālambanakṛtya**  (The *samprayukta-hetu*-s are of the nature of) ‘sharing the same cognitive object and activity’.

**ekamśena**  Categorically.

**ekottara**  One-incremental.

**evam-pādaka**  ‘[A straight-forward answer] consisting the word “yes”’ (to a question of the form: “does *p* imply *q*?”).

**gambhīra**  Profound.

**gahana**  A dense forest.

**gandha**  Smell.

**gandha-arthā**  Olfactory object.

**gāthā**  A stanza.

**gati**  Plane of existence. The Sarvāstivāda speaks of five: *manuṣya, deva, tiryāṅc, naraka, preta*. Some schools, like the Vātsīputrīya, add *asura* as the sixth.

**geya**  ‘To be sung’, the second of the *dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana*. It Originally referred to an *uddāna* (summary) verse mnemonically summarizing the names of the (ten) preceding *sūtra*-s during the first Council. It has subsequently come to denote a repetition verse summarizing what has been said in the preceding prose.

**ghrāṇa**  Nose.

**ghrāṇa-indriya**  Olfactory faculty.

**go-rajas**  ‘Cow-dust’, the size of seven *edaka-rajas*.

**gotra**  Clan. 1. Family, lineage. 2. Kind, class.

**grāhaka**  Grasper (subject).

**grāhya**  The ‘graspable’, the grasped (the ‘object’).

**grāhyatā**  The essence of being a ‘graspable/object’

**grantha**  1. A text. 2. ‘tie’, one of the terms referring to a form of *kleśa*.

**guna**  Virtue, benefit.

**gurutva**  Heaviness.

**haituka**  Logician.


**hetu-jñāna**  Knowledge of the cause.
hetu-kauśalya  Skilfulness with regard to cause.
hetu-phala-bhāva  The state of cause-effect, causal relationship.
hetu-phala-mātra  Mere cause and effect.
hetu-pratyaya  Condition qua cause.
hetu-samutthāna  Origination qua cause.

Hetuvāda  ‘Theory of causes’; the school which expounds or stresses on the theory of causation. It is a name for the Sarvāstivāda school.
hetu-vidyā  A branch of science/study developed in Buddhism, corresponding roughly to (but with a broader scope than) what we understand as logic.

Hīnayāna  The ‘lower/inferior vehicle’; a derogatory term used by the Mahāyāna to refer to the Buddhist schools which emerged in the Abhidharma period.

hrī  Moral modesty.

idamsatyābhinirvesā-kāyagrantha  Corporeal tie of dogmatism.

indhāna  Fuel.

indriya  Faculty, organ.
indriya-pratyakṣa  Direct perception dependent on a sense faculty.
indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa  ‘Direct Perception supported by an indriya’. Same as indriya-pratyakṣa.

īraṇā  Mobility.

īrṣyā  Jealousy.

īryāpatha  Deportment.

iṣṭa-vipāka  A desirable retribution, generated from a kuśala karma.
itivṛttaka  “Of the form, ‘it happened thus’,”. One of the dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana.

It assumes the form of the narration of a past event.

ityuktaka  “Of the form, ‘it was said thus’,”. It stands for the same as itivṛttaka.

jaḍa  Dull, inanimate, unintelligent.

jananāvighna  Non-obstruction to birth.
jananahetu  Generating cause. One of a set of five hetu-s.
janman  Birth.

janmāpravṛtti  Non-proceeding of birth, discontinuity of birth.
jarā-lakṣaṇa  Deterioration-characteristic, a viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma that causes the decay of a conditioned dharma. → saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa.
jarā-jarā  ‘Deterioration-deterioration’, one of the four anulakṣaṇa-s. Its function is to cause the deterioration of jarā.
jarā-maraṇa  Old-age-and-death.
jātaka  Birth stories (of the Buddha as a bodhisattva).
jāti-lakṣaṇa  Production-characteristic, a viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma that causes the arising of a conditioned dharma. → saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa.
jāti-jāti  ‘Production-production’, one of the four anulakṣaṇa-s. Its function is to generate jāti. → anulakṣaṇa.
jighatsā  Hunger.
jihvā  Tongue.

jihvā-indriya  Gustatory faculty.
jīvitendriya  Vital faculty. A disjoined conditioning (viprayukta-saṃskāra) on account of which a sentient being is alive.
jīvitendriya-samskāra The conditioning force of the vital faculty.

jñāna ‘Knowledge’, a mode of prajñā, characterized by decisive (niścita) understanding. Some Sarvāstivāda masters require that knowledge repeatedly discerns the cognitive object. There is a standard set of 10: 1. dharma-jñāna, 2. anvaya-jñāna, 3. duḥka-jñāna, 4. samudya-jñāna, 5. nirodha-jñāna, 6. mārga-jñāna, 7. saṃvṛti-jñāna, 8. paracitta-jñāna, 9. kṣaya-jñāna, 10. anutpāda-jñāna.

jñāna-ākāra Knowledge-form.

jñāna-bala Power of knowledge.

jñāna-cīhna ‘Knowledge-marker’. Prāpti is the marker of the knowledge that “this dharma belongs to that person”.

jñāna-parijñā Complete knowledge qua abandonment. It has knowledge as its svabhāva. → prahāṇa-parijñā.

jñeya ‘Knowable’, object of knowledge.

jñeya-dharma ‘Dharma-s to be known’; i.e., objects of knowledge.

jñeyāvaraṇa Knowable-hindrance. Only a Buddha can overcome this, in addition to overcoming the defilement-hindrance (kleśāvaraṇa). When it is overcome, a Buddha is perfectly omniscient, capable of knowing both the intrinsic (svalaṃkṣaṇa) and common characteristics (sāmānyalakṣaṇa) of all things.

kāla Time.

kalala The first foetal stage.

kāla-samatā ‘Sameness of time’: Conjoined thought and thought-concomitants necessarily arise at the same time. → pañca samatā.

kalpanā Conceptualization.

kāmacchanda Sensual-desire.

kāma-dhātu-pratisamāyukta Pertaining (lit.: ‘bound/yoked’) to the sphere of sensuality.

kāma-mithyā-cāra Sensual misconduct.

kāmāsṛava Sensuality-outflow.

kāmaugha Sensuality-flood.

kāmavacara-pratisamāyukta Same as kāma-dhātu-pratisamāyukta.

kāmopādāna Sensuality-clinging.

kāraṇa Cause, reason, instrument.

kāraṇa-hetu Efficient cause. → hetu; jananāvighna.

kāraṇa-prajñāpīti ‘Designation/teaching on cause’, name of a chapter in the Prajñāapti-śāstra.

kārikā Stanza.

kārītra Activity. For the Vaibhāṣikas, the activity belongs only to a present dharma; it is its efficacy of projecting its own fruit (existence) in the next moment of its serial continuity. In this strict sense, this term is used in contradistinction from other general terms designating function, potency, efficacy, etc, such as kriyā, vyāpāra, sāmarthya, sakti, etc.

karkaṣatva Coarseness. A characteristic of prthivī.

karma ‘Action’. In the specifically Buddhist sense, it primarily means a morally skilful or unskilful action which determines specifically the manner of future existence of the doer. It is divisible as mano-karma, kāya-karma and vāk-karma. The latter two can induce avijñāpti-karma. Karma can also be distinguished as individual and
collective **karma**-s, of which the fruits of the latter are not regarded as **vipāka**, but **adhipati-phala**-s.

**karmadhāraya samāsa** Determinative compound in Sanskrit grammar.

**karma-patha** Paths of **karma**; the principal actions (usually given as ten) done through body, speech, and mind. **akuśala- karma-patha**.

**karma-prajñāpti** ‘Designation/teaching’ on **karma**, name of a chapter in the Prajñāpti-sāstra.

**karma-vācanā** Speech such as announcement made during an ecclesiastical proceeding in a Sangha meeting.

**karuṇā** Compassion.

**kārya-abhisamaya** ‘Abhisamaya qua effect’. MVŚ, 16b–c: *Abhisamaya* is the penetration (**prativedhanā**) into the ālambana-s; this is *abhisamaya* qua *jñāna*. Accomplishing the task is the *abhisamaya* qua effect; it is the abandonment of defilements. *Abhisamaya* is *jñāna-parijñā;* the accomplishing of a task (= *kārya-abhisamaya*) is *prahāṇa-parijñā*. Further, *abhisamaya* is achieved through the ānantarya-mārga; the accomplishment of the task is achieved through the vimukti-mārga.

**Kāśyapīya** A school of the Vibhajyavāda lineage. They differ from other Vibhajyavādins in conceding that past **karma**-s which have not given fruits are existent. → **adatta-phala**.

**kaukṛtya** Remorse. It can be either positive or negative: remorse after having done a good action is negative; that after having done a bad action is positive.

**kaurmasya roman** The tortoise’s hair, a simile for something absolutely non-existent.

**kauśīdya** Slackness, laziness.

**kāya** Body; group.

**kāya-bhājana** Body as a receptacle.

**kāyacitta-avasthāviśeṣa** A distinctive psychophysical state.

**kāya-grantha** ‘Corporeal tie’, a **kleśa**.

**kāya-indriya** Tangible faculty.

**khara** Solidity.

**kleśa** Defilement.

**kleśa-bīja** Defilement seed.

**kleśa-prahāṇa** Abandonment of defilement. This is not the destruction of defilement (as no **dharma** can be destroyed as such), but rather the severing of the **prāpti** from the serial continuity of the individual.

**kleśamahābhūmika dharma** Universal **dharma**-s of defilement.

**kleśāvaraṇa** Defilement-hindrance. → **āvaraṇa**

**kliṣṭa** Defiled. This includes both what is **akuśala** and what is **nivṛtāyākṛta**.

**kliṣṭa-ajñāna** Defiled ignorance. This is ignorance connected with defilement. It is overcome in the **arhat** and the **pratyeka-buddha** as well as the **samyak-sambuddha**.

**kriyā** Action, activity (not in the specific sense of **kārita**).

**kriyā-cetanā** Volition of action.

**kṛṣṇa karma** A black **karma**; one that yields a black (i.e., disagreeable) retribution.

**krodha** Anger.

**kṛta** Done.
kṛta-parijaya One who ‘has gained victory’. i.e., one who has become an adept (in a practice) and is no more a beginner (ādikarmika).

kṛtsnāyatana Base of entirety.

kṣana Moment; the shortest unit of time.

kṣaṇika Momentary.

Kṣaṇikavādin One who holds that dharma-s exist for no more than one kṣana. Saṃghabhadra ridicules the Sautrāntika-Dārṣṭāntikas, calling them Kṣaṇikavādins because they hold that dharma-s exist only in the single present moment.

kṣaṇika-pratītya-samutpāda One of the fourfold interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda. This interpretation is that the 12 links of conditioned co-arising are embraced within a single moment.

kṣānti 1. Endurance, tolerance, patience. 2. Receptivity, which is a form of prajñā. Two major meanings: (i) The cognitive ability to fully accept a truth/doctrine in advance, even before one has actually acquired the jñāna proper of that truth/doctrine. It is the moment immediately preceding that jñāna. (ii) The third spiritual attainment in the prayoga stage known as the four nirvedha-bhāgīya-s.

kṣatriya The warrior class; the second of the four major castes in the Hindu system.

kṣaya-jñāna Knowledge of exhaustion (of the āsrava).

kṣema Peace and security. This is the nature of what is kuśala. It is also a synonym for Nirvāṇa.

kṣetra-viśeṣa Distinctive field (of merit).

kṣīna-āsrava One who has exhausted the outflows, an epithet for an arhat.

kṣudra-vastuka Minor/miscellaneous matter.

kuśala Wholesome, skilful.

kuśala-dharma-chanda Aspiration/desire for the good.

kuśala-karmapatha (The 10) ‘skillful paths of karma’; the opposite of the akuśala-karmapatha.

kuśalamahābhūmika dharma Universal skilful dharma-s.

kuśala-mūla Roots of skilfulness. There are two sets of three: 1. alobha, adveṣa, amoha; 2. puṇya-bhāgīya, mokṣa-bhāgīya, nirvedha-bhāgīya. kuśalamūla-samuccheda Cutting off of the skillful roots.

laghutva Lightness.

lajjā Shamefulness

lakṣana Characteristic.

lakṣaṇa-anyathātva (/lakṣaṇa-anyathika) ‘Difference in characteristic’; Ghoṣaka’s explanation on temporality: a dharma is future, present or past depending on the temporal characteristic of which it is in possession.

lākṣaṇika Definitive.

lakṣya The characterized.

laukika Mundane, worldly.

laukikāgra-dharma The worldly supreme dharma. The fourth nirvedhabhāgīya-s belonging to the prayoga stage immediately after which one enters into the darśana-mārga.

laukika-jñāna Mundane knowledge.

laukika-mārga Mundane path.

laukikī samyak-drṣṭi Worldly right view.
loka-prajñapti ‘Designation/teaching on of the world’, a chapter in the PjŚ.
lokavyavahāra Conventional usages in the world.
lokottara-jñāna Supramundane knowledge. The outflow-free knowledge acquired by an ārya in the process of direct realization.
mada Pride, intoxication.
madhya Middle, medium.
mahābhūmika dharma Universal dharma.
mahā-bhūta Great Element.
mahā-karuṇā Great compassion. Its svabhāva is prajñā.
mahā-phala Great fruit. mahā-puruṣa ‘Great Man’.
mahā-rājan Great king.
Mahāyāna ‘Great Vehicle’. A name used by the Mahāyānists to stress that they aim at the perfect Buddha-hood of all beings, and their ideal is thus superior to that of the Hinayāna.
maitrī Love, loving kindness.
maitrī-bhāvanā Meditation on loving-kindness
māna Conceit, characterized by mental elevation (unnati) when one compares oneself with others. There are 7 modes: (i) māna, (ii) atimāna, (iii) mānātimāna, (iv) asvimāna, (v) abhimāna, (vi) ūnamāna, (vii) mithyāmāna. As the first of the 7 modes, its nature is described thus: “When others are inferior and one claims that one is superior, or others are equal to one, and one claims that one is equal.” (Cf. Avatāra)
manāḥ-pradoṣa (A willingly projected) thought of hatred.
manas 1. Mind. 2. The mental faculty which is the immediately past citta in a mental series.
mānātimāna Hyper-superiority-complex. A mode of māna, characterized thus: “If others are superior, and one claims one is superior, the mental elevation so produced is named.” (Cf. Avatāra)
manaskāra (also: manasikāra) Mental application, attention.
mānātimāna Extreme conceit.
mano-bhūmi ‘Mind-ground’, mental sphere, mental stage.
manojña Mentally agreeable.
manuṣya Human being.
mārga Path.
mārga-darśana-heya (Defilements) abandonable through insight into the path leading to cessation of duḥkha.
mārga-jñāna Knowledge of the path, acquired in the process of abhisamaya
mārga-satya Noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of duḥkha. mati Understanding. It is a gloss for prajñā.
mātrkā Matrix, a list summarily enumerating doctrinal topics to be elaborated upon.
mātrkā-dhara ‘Maintainer/holder of mātrkā’; the ancient specialists in what later on evolved to be the Ābhidharmikas.
mātsarya Avarice.
māyā Deceptiveness, illusion.
middha Drowsiness, sleep.
miśra Mixed.
mithyā  Wrong, false.
mithyā-ākāra  False mode of understanding.
mithyā-dṛṣṭi  False view.
mithyā-jñāna  False knowledge.
mithyāmāna  False, a mode of māna. It is characterized thus: “One claims that one has virtues when in reality one has not” (Cf. Avatāra).
mohā  Delusion. One of the three akuśala-mūla-s.
mohā-sadṛśa  ‘Resemblance of delusion’. It is not the kleśa, delusion itself, but only a resemblance of it. This refers to the vāsanā left behind as a result of the perfuming of mohā.
mokṣabhāgīya  Preparatory efforts (prayoga) conducing to liberation. They essentially comprise śamatha and vipaśyanā meditational practices.
mṛakṣa  Concealment.
mṛdu  Blunt, weak.
mṛdvindriya  ‘Weak faculty’; in contrast to a tīkṣnendriya.
mṛṣā-vāda  False speech.
mṛtyu  Death.
muditā  Sympathetic joy.
mūla  Fundamental, primary, basic, root.
mūla-dhyāna  ‘Fundamental dhyāna’. There are four: prathama-dhyāna, dvitīya-dhyāna, trītya-dhyāna, caturtha-dhyāna. → dhyāna, dhyānāṅga.
mūla-lakṣaṇa  The (four) primary characteristics.
Mūla-sarvāstivāda  ‘Fundamental/original Sarvāstivāda’. In spite of the name, it is a sub-sector that branched off from the original Sarvāstivāda.
mūrdhan  Summits, the second stage of the nirvedha-bhāgīya.
naiḥṣyandika  Of the nature of being an emanation (niṣyanda). One of the doctrinal perspectives in Abhidharma analysis: dharma-s are divisible as those which are naiḥsyandika (e.g. citta) and which are not (e.g., kāya).
naiyam-pādaka  ‘[A straight-forward answer] consisting the word “No”’ (to a question of the form: “does p imply q?”).
nairātmya  Soullessness, the fact of there being no Self; non-substantiality.
nairmāṇika  Transformational; pertaining to the psychic ability to transform.
nairyāṇika  Conducive to exit; one of the four ākāra-s of the mārga-satya.
naiya-śaikṣa-nāśaikṣa  Pertaining to neither the trainee nor the non-trainee.
naivasamjñā-nāsamjñāyatana  The sphere of neither-ideation-nor-non-ideation’, the fourth of the ārūpya-samāpatti. samāpatti, ārūpya-dhātu.
nāma  1. Name. 2. Word, one of the disjoined conditionings (citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra).3. The mental part of the psycho-physical complex (nāma-rūpa)
nāma-kāya  Word-group; one of the viprayukta-saṃskāra-s.
nāma-rūpa  ‘Name-and-form’, the psycho-physical complex of a sentient.
naraka  Hell.
nāstitva  Non-existence.
navāṅga-(buddha-)śāsana (navāṅga-dharma-pravacana)  The nine-fold classification of the Buddha’s teachings, expounded almost exclusively in the Southern tradition (Usually given in Pāli as navāṅga-satthu-sāsana. It also occurs in the Saddharma-
nendriya Not of the nature of a faculty.
neyārtha (A doctrine) whose meaning is yet to be fully drawn out; implicit (teaching)
nidāna Introduction; source; link.
nīsaraṇa Escape; Exit, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha in MVŚ.
nīṣyanda-phala Uniform-emanation fruit.
nīkāya-saṃbhāga Group homogeneity, one of the viprayukta-saṃskāra-s. It is a force which causes the similarities in appearance, inclination, etc., among a group of beings. E.g.: All humans share similarities as human because of this force.
nimitta Mark; sign; cause.
nīrāntara Without an interval.
nīrdeśa Exposition, discourse.
nīrmāṇa-citta Transformation-thought.
nīrodha ‘Cessation’.
nīrodha-darśana-heya (Defilements) abandonable through insight into the nīrodha-saṃyaya-niprasadha.
nīrodha-jīvāṇa Knowledge of cessation, acquired in the process of abhīsamaṇa.
nīrodha-saṃpatti Cessation-attainment, a meditative attainment in which all mental activities come to cease.
nīrodha-saṃya Noble truth of the cessation of duḥkha.
nīrūṣṭhit-ārthasaṃvid Unhindered knowledge with regard to etymology, one of the four types of pratisaṃvid. → artha-pratisaṃvid.
nīrupadhiśeṣa-nīrūpaṇa Nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum.
nīrupadhiśeṣa-nīrūpaṇa-dhātu The sphere of nirvāṇa without a remnant of substratum. nirvāṇa The goal of the Buddhist spiritual life, explained in Buddhism as the extinction/blowing out of the fire of rāga, dveṣa and moха. It is the state of perfect bliss, and transcendence of all duḥkha and births. In Sarvāstivāda, this is not a mere absence of duḥkha, but a positive entity acquired when a defilement is abandoned, which serves to prevent the further arising of the defilement. It is a synonym for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha.
nīrvāṇālambanā-prajñā wisdom (understanding in the highest form) having nirvāṇa as its object.
nīrvāṇa-dhātu Sphere of nirvāṇa.
nīrvedha Penetration, decisive distinction.
nīrvedha-bhāgīya Preparatory efforts conducing to decisive distinction: i.e., to the arising of outflow-free knowledge. These are also called the skilful roots; there are four: uṣmagata, mūrdhan, kṣānti, laukikāgra-dharma.
nīśraya-hētu Reliance cause, one of a set of five causes. → janana-hētu.
nīścita Decided, decisive, definite.
nīṣyanda Emanation.
nīṣyanda-phala ‘Emanation fruit’. This is the fruit for the sabhāga-hētu.
nīṭārtha (A doctrine) whose meaning has been fully drawn out; explicit. → neyārtha.
nīvaraṇa Hindrance.
**nivṛta-avyākrta** Veiled-non-defined; i.e., morally non-defined but still obstructive to the spiritual path.

**nivṛtāvyākrta-mahābhūmika-dharma** Universal dharma-s which are veiled-non-defined.

**nivṛtāvyākrta-viññāpti-rūpa** Veiled-non-defined informative matter.

**nivṛtti** Reversing/stopping of the **samsāric** process.

**niyama** Principle, a fixed rule.

**niyata karma** Determinate **karma**.

**nyāya** Logic, right method. It is also one of the **ākāra of mārga-satya**.

**ogha** Flood.

**pāda** Foot; a line, a (fourth) part.

**pada-kāya** Phrase-group, one of the **viprayukta-saṃskāra**.

**pāka** Cooking, maturation.

**pakti** Cooking, maturing.

**pañca-avara-bhāgīya** ‘Five fetters pertaining to the lower portion’, i.e., to the **kāma-dhātu**. They comprise: **satkāya-dṛṣṭi, śīla-vrata-parāmarśa, vicikitsā, kāmacchanda** and **vyāpāda**.

**pañca samatā** The fivefold sameness or equality the fulfillment of which two mental factors are said to be conjoined (samprayukta): 1. **āśraya-samatā**, 2. **ālambana-samatā**, 3. **ākāra-samatā**, 4. **kāla-samatā**, 5. **dravya-samatā**.

**pañca-nikāya** Five categories of abandonables: (1)-(4) those abandonable by insight into **duḥkha, samudaya, nirodha, mārga**, and (5) by bhāvanā.


**pañca śuddhi** ‘Comprising five things/categories’, an important chapter of PrŚ dealing with the five categories of dhāma-s: **rūpa, citta, caitasika, citta-viprayukta-saṃskāra** and asamskṛta.

**pañca-vijñāna-kāya** The group five (sensory) consciousnesses.

**pañcopādāna-skandha (pañca-upādāna-skandha)** Five aggregates of clinging/grasping. I.e., the **skandha-s** of a prthagjana.

**para-bhāva** ‘Other-nature’, as opposed to intrinsic (/self-)nature. → **svabhāva**.

**paracitta-jñāna** Knowledge of another’s mind.

**para-kṛta** Done by others, other-caused.

**paramāṇu** ‘The extremely fine’, an atom. The MVŚ defines it thus: “A **paramāṇu** is the smallest **rūpa**. It cannot be cut, broken, penetrated. . . . It is neither long nor short, . . . . It has no smaller parts; it cannot be decomposed, . . . . It is . . . the finest (**sarva-sūkṣma**) of all **rūpa**-s.” **Paramāṇu** is divisible as **dravya-paramāṇu** and **saṃghāta-paramāṇu**.

**parāmarśa** (Irrational) adherence. Two types are usually mentioned: **dṛṣṭi-parāmarśa** and **śīla-vrata-parāmarśa**.
paramārtha  Highest sense; an absolute real.
paramārtha-sat  Absolutely real, existent from the ultimate standpoint.
paramārtha-satya  Absolute truth.
pāramitā  ‘Perfection’. A bodhisattva fulfills the six perfections before attaining enlightenment.

The six are: dāna, śīla, vīrya, ksānti, samādhi and prajñā.
parāvrtta  Transformed.
paravijnāpana  Informing to or from others.
parihāna-dharman  Of the nature of being susceptible to retrogression.
parihāni  Retrogression (from spiritual attainment).
parināma  Transformation.
parinirvāṇa  Complete, final Nirvāṇa; i.e., the final passing away of an arhat or buddha.
parinirvāṇa-dharman  Of the nature of being able to attain (/destined for) Nirvāṇa.
paripūraka-karma  Completing karma; karma that contributes to specific details of a given type of existence (human, etc.) determined by an ākṣepaka karma.
pariṣkāra  Utensils.
parīttakleśabhūmikā dharmāḥ  Dharma-s of defilement of a restricted/limited scope.
A list of ten is given in AKB: krodha, upanāha, mrakṣa, pradāśa/pradāsa, śāṭhya, māyā, mada, mātasya, īrṣyā, vīhiṃsā.
parivāra  Retinue, accompaniment.
pāruṣya  Harsh speech.
paryavasthāna  Envelopment. For the Sautrāntika and some other schools, this represents the manifested (as opposed to latent) defilement. → anuśaya
paryāya  Synonyms, alternatives, doctrinal perspective.
pāścāt-pādaka  That which accords with the latter (and not the former) alternative.
pāścātya  Western masters, the Sarvāstivāda masters living west (around the Gandhāra region) of Kaśmīra.
apuṣṭya  Forcefulness.
phala  Fruit. The standard set of 5 fruits are: 1. adhipati-phala, 2. puruṣakāra-phala, 3. niṣyanda-phala, 4. vipāka-phala, 5. visamyoga-phala.
phala-ākarṣaṇa  The dragging out of a fruit (out of its existence in the future temporal period).
phala-dāna  The actual giving of the fruit (as opposed to phalākṣepa/phala-parigrahaṇa).
phalākṣepa  Projection of the fruit; i.e., the causal determination that a particular dharma, y, will be the corresponding fruit of a present dharma, x. Each dharma, at the present moment, and only at the present moment, can project its own fruit (i.e., can have this activity of yielding its own next moment of existence in its serial continuity. → kāritra).
phala-pratigrahaṇa  ‘Grasping of the fruit’; i.e., acquiring, in the present moment, the causal efficiency for a dharma’s effect. → phalākṣepa.
pipāsā  Thirst.
prabandha  Continuance, continuity, serial succession.
prabhā  Radiance.
prabhava  Source, origin, cause, production. As one of the ākāra of samudaya-satya, it means production or successive causation.

pradāśa (/pradāsā)  Depraved opinionatedness.

pradhāna  1. Chief. 2. Same as pahāna, in the sense of ‘exertion’, ‘effort’, as in samyak-pradhāna.

pradhāna-dravya  Chief substance/essence.

prahāna  Abandonment.

prahāna-parijñā  Complete knowledge qua abandonment. It is the absolute abandonment (atyanta-prahāna) of kleśa. Abandonment being the result of complete knowledge, it is also said to be a complete knowledge.

prahāna-bhāvanā-ārāmatā  Delight in the cultivation of abandonment (of defilements).

prahāna-mārga  Path of abandonment.

prahāna-pratipakṣa  Counteragent resulting in abandonment (of defilements).

prajñā  Understanding, wisdom.

prajñā-indriya  Faculty of understanding.

prajñā-vimukta  Liberated through understanding/wisdom. This refers to the type of arhat who, through prajñā, overcomes the klesāvaraṇa and becomes liberated.

prākarṣika-pratītya-samutpāda  One of the fourfold Sarvāstivādin interpretation of the conditioned co-arising. According to this interpretation, conditioned co-arising extends over (prākarṣika) three periods (past, present, future) of existence.

prakṛti  ‘Nature’, ‘original nature’.

prakṛti-sāvadya  A transgression which is an offence in its intrinsic nature; e.g., killing.

pramāda  Non-diligence, heedlessness.

pramāṇa  1. ‘Measure/criterion’; authority. 2. A valid means of knowledge; three are often mentioned in the Abhidharma: 1. pratyakṣa, 2. anumāna, 3. āptāgama; the Ābhidharmika usually invokes a two-fold argument for the validity of a doctrine: one is āptāgama, the other is yukti.

praṇātipāta  Taking of life.

pranidhāna  Resolution, past vow.

pranidhi-jñāna  Knowledge that is produced in accordance with the particular manner of the practitioner’s former resolution to have the knowledge.

pranidhi-jñāna-samādhi  The meditation, in accordance with the strength of which, the particular pranidhi-jñāna is produced.

prāṇīta  Excellent, wonderful. Also, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha in MVŚ.

prapañca  Conceptual proliferation.
prāpti Acquisition, a *viprayukta-saṃskāra* which links (establishes a relationship with) a *dharma* to a sentient being.

prasāda 1. Faith, freedom from doubt. 2. Clarity, translucence, sensitivity (said of the sense faculties).

prasāna Ga Attachment; consequence.

prasiddha Bilaterally or universally established.

praśrabdhi Calm.

pratipa-bimba Image, reflection.

pratideśan’ādi-pratipakṣa Counteractive effect by way of confession, etc.

pratigha Hostility.

pratighāta Obstruction. Three types of pratighāta are: āvaraṇa-, viṣaya-, and ālambana-. 

pratikṣepaṇa-sāvadya A transgression that is in terms of prohibition.

pratilābha Obtainment.

pratilambha → pratilābha.

prātimokṣa-saṃvara Restraint (as an avijñapti-karma) in the form of undertaking ordination vows.

pratiniḥṛṣṭa Cast aside.

pratiniyama-hetu Distinguishing/specifying cause.

pratipad Path (leading to *Nirvāṇa*); a synonym for *mārga*.

pratipakṣa Counteragent.

pratipakṣa bhāvanā Counteraction-cultivation.

pratipaksodaya (Abandonment of defilement on) arising of its counteragent.

pratipannaka Candidate of a spiritual fruit on the path of spiritual progress.

pratipatti Course of practice.

pratisaṃdhī Relinking.

pratisaṃdhī-citta The ‘relinking thought’; i.e., the consciousness that enters the mother’s womb at the time of rebirth.

pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha Cessation through deliberation. → *nirvāṇa*.

pratisaṃvid Unhindered knowledge. → *dharma-pratisaṃvid*.

pratisaṃvṛkṣa Connected with, pertaining to.

prati-svarāna Reliance, refuge.

prati-srota ‘Stream-discordant’, one who has planted the skillful roots of *mokṣa-bhāgiya*. Stream (*srotas*) refers to *saṃsāra*.

pratiṣṭhā-hetu Supporting cause, one of a set of five *hetu*-s. → *janana-hetu*.

pratitya-samutpāda Conditioned Co-arising.

pratitya-samutpādatva The fact/principle of *pratitya-samutpāda*, one of the nine unconditioned *dharma*-s of some schools.

pratyutpanna Present, the present.

prativedha Penetration, one of the 14 synonyms for *pratisaṃkhyā-nirodha* in MVŚ.

prativedhanā-dharman Of the nature of being capable of penetrating the state of an arhat.

pratītya-ārama Discernment/cognition with regard to an object.

pratyakṣa ‘In front of (/facing) the eyes’, direct perception. → *pramāṇa*.

pratyakṣa-buddhi A perception that is a *pratyakṣa*. 


606
pratyakṣa-jñāna  A knowledge that is a pratyakṣa.
pratyakṣa-pramāṇa  The valid means of knowledge, which is direct perception.
pratyaya  Condition. There are four: hetu-, ālambana-, samanantara-, adhipati-.
pratyaya-kausālya  Skill with regard to condition.
pratyeka-buddha  Privately Enlightened One. He practises by himself without a teacher, and becomes enlightened. However, he lacks mahākarunā, and his prajñā is inferior to a samyak-sambuddha.
pratyupasthita  Coming into the field of one’s experience; appearing right in front.
pravāhaḥ  A continuity.
pravartaka  Initial propeller, as opposed to subsequent propeller (anuvartaka)
pravrājyā  ‘Going forth’, leaving the home life.
pravrīti  Process; the sāṃsāric process.
pravṛtti  Process; the sāṃsāric process.
pravṛtti  Process; the sāṃsāric process.
prayoga  Preparatory effort. This stage comprises the mokṣa-bhāgīya and the nirvedha-bhāgīya.
prayoga  Preparatory effort.
prayoga-avasthā  The stage of prayoga.
prayoga-mārga  The preparatory path.
prayogaviśeṣa  A special or distinctive effort.
prayogika  Derived from preparatory effort.
premā  Affection.
preta  Hungry ghost.
pṛtiṃdiṛiya  The faculty of joy.
prṣṭha  Subsequent; back.
prṣṭhalabdha-jñāna  The mundane ‘knowledge of an ārya obtained subsequently’ to the true spiritual insight in the process of direct realization (abhisamaya).
prthagjana  An ordinary worldling (one who has not yet become an ārya).
prthagjanatva  The quality of a worldling; sometimes listed as a viprayukta-saṃskāra.
prthivī  Earth; also the Earth element, one of the four mahābhūta-s.
pudgala  Person.
pudgala-vāda  The doctrine of the Vātśiputra school and its branches that there exists a ineffable ‘person’ (pudgala) which is neither identical with nor different from the five skandha-s.
puṇya  Merit, meritorious action.
puṇya-bhāgīya  The part pertaining to (the accumulation of) merit. MVŚ speaks of three types of kuśala-mūla: puṇya-bhāgīya, mokṣa-bhāgīya, nirvedha-bhāgīya.
puṇya-jñāna-saṃbhāra  The requisites of merit and knowledge. This twin requisite is the main constituents of the preliminary practices leading up to the stage of prayoga in the path of spiritual progress.
puṇya-kṣetra  Field of merit.
puruṣa  A man.
puruṣa-kāra  ‘Manly/virile activity’. This term refers to the efficacious action of a dharma in a very general sense: Just as a man’s activity is not apart from the man, likewise, a dharma’s efficacious action bringing about a corresponding effect is not
apart the dharma itself. AKB, 96: “That fruit which is born through the force of a certain [dharma] is the fruit of the manly activity of that [dharma].”

puruṣakāra-phala ‘Manly/virile fruit’, the fruit for the sahabhū-hetu and samprayukta-hetu. However, since puruṣa-kāra refers to the efficacy of a dharma in a very general sense, the fruit of any hetu could also be called a “manly fruit”.

pūrvācārya Ancient master.

pūrva-rūpa Fore-sign.

pūrvaṅgama Fore-running.

pūrvānta(-koṭi) The first beginning (of saṃsāra).

pūrvaṇubhūta Experienced before.

*pūrvānudhātu Subsidiary elements that has been accumulated from the past; a term used by Śrīlāta in his version of the bīja theory.

pūrva-pādaka That which accords with the former (and not the latter) alternative.

rāga Greed. One of the three akuśala-mūla-s

rāga-saḍrśa ‘Resemblance of greed’. It is not the kleśa, greed itself, but only a resemblance of it. This refers to the vāsanā left behind as a result of the perfuming of rāga.

rāja-sthānīya Governor.

ramanīya Lovable, one of the 14 synonyms for pratisāṃkhya-nirodha in MVŚ.

rāsa Taste.

rāsa-artha Gustatory object.

rāśi Heap.

ṛddhipāda Bases of (supernormal) power.

ruči Inclination.

rūpa Matter.

rūpa-artha Visual object.

rūpa-dhātu-pratisaṃyukta Pertaining to the sphere of fine-materiality.

rūpaṇa (rūpanā) The characteristic of rūpa (primarily: obstructiveness and resistance).

rūpa-prasāda Translucent, sensitive matter which is the constituent of the sensory faculties.

rūparāgakṣaya-parijñā Complete knowledge which is the exhaustion of the greed for matter

rūpāvacara-pratisaṃyukta Pertaining to the fine material sphere.

rūpi-dharma Material dharma.

rūpin Material, having a particular form or figure.

śabda Sound.

śabda-artha Auditory object.

sabhāga Homogenous, similar.

sabhāga-dhātu-sarvatraga (Defilements) that are aid to be ‘universal’ (sarvatraga) in that they move in all the five category (nikāya) of abandonables pertaining to their own sphere (dhātu).

sabhāga-hetu ‘Homogeneous cause’. One of the six causes; it yields an effect which is similar in moral species. → svaphala-nirvartana.

sabhāgatā Group-homogeneity; one of the viprayukta-saṃskāra-s.
sabhāgavibhāga-kliṣṭadharma-prabandha-janaka (The nature of a sarvatraga-hetu is that it is) generative of the continuance (prabandha) of defiled dharma-s which are similar or dissimilar in nature.

sābhāgya-kāraṇa Cause of similarity.

sa-dāha Having the heat (of defilement). ṣaḍ-āyatana The six entrances/abodes.

saddharma The True Doctrine (of the Buddha).

sādṛśya Resemblance.

sahabhū-hetu Co-existent cause; one of six causes. → hetu; anyonyānuparivartanaika kṛtya.

sahaja (/saḥajāta) Conascent, born together.

sahāya Companion.

śaikṣa Trainee; referring to the ārya-s who are not artha-s; pertaining to the trainee.

śaikṣa-mārga path of trainee.

śakti Power, potency.

śailpa-sthānika Arts and crafts.

sa-indriya Possessing of the faculties.

sakala-bandhana A worldlyling who has not abandoned any defilements through the mundane path before becoming an ārya.

sākāra (1) Having a mode of activity; this refers to the fact that all citta-caitta-dharma-s can cognize an object. (2) Having the same mode of activity, one of the conditions for samprayoga. → pañcadhā samatā.

sākāra-jñāna-vāda The theory that knowledge necessarily possesses an image of its object.

sākāra-vijñāna-vāda Same as sākāra-jñāna-vāda.

sakṛdāgāmin Once-returner.

sakṛdāgāmin pratipannaka Candidate for the fruit of a once-returner.

sāksāt Directly, face-to-face

sāksāt-karaṇa Realization.

sālambana ‘Having a cognitive object’; a descriptive term for all mental dharma-s, since they all necessarily take an object in arising.

sallakṣaṇa ‘Characteristic of the existent’. What is existent is what can serve as an object for generating a cognition (buddhi)

samādāpana-naya System of instigative instruction

samādhi Concentration, meditation.

samādhi-bhāvanā Cultivation of concentration.

samādhija-prajñā Understanding/wisdom derived from concentration.

sāmagrī Harmony, congruence. It is also the name of a conditioning disjoined from thought which operates among a group of sentient beings bringing about harmony.

samāhitabhūmi ‘Concentrated stage’, the stage of concentration.

samanantara-pratyaya Equal-immediate condition, one of the four pratyaya-s. It serves as the support for, and gives way to, the arising of the immediately succeeding dharma in the serial continuity.

sāmantaka Neighbouring. In the context of meditation, this refers to the stage neighbouring a meditational attainment. → samāpatti.
**samanvāgama** Endowment. One is said to have an endowment of a *dharma* when one, having acquired the *dharma*, continues to possess it. → *prāpti, asamanvāgama*.

**samanvāgama-asamanvāgama-kauśalya** (An Ābhidharmika’s) skillfulness with regard to endowment and non-endowment.

**samanvāhāra** Holding in mind (of a previously experienced object).

**sāmānya-lakṣaṇa** Common characteristic.

**sāmānya-lakṣaṇa-kauśalya** (An Ābhidharmika’s) skillfulness with regard to common characteristics.

**samāpatty-āvaraṇa** ‘Hindrance to meditative attainment’. Some masters hold that this constitutes the *vimoka-āvaraṇa*. Saṃghabhādra maintains that this is in nature the akiṃṭājñāna.

**samāpatty-āvaraṇa-vimukta** Liberated from all hindrances to meditative attainment.

**sāmārtha** Capability, potency.

**śamatha** Calm, tranquility. As a meditation practice, it is distinct from (though not opposed to) *vipaśyanā*.

**śamatha bhāvanā** Tranquility cultivation/meditation.

**śamatha-carita** The tranquillity type (of practitioner).

**śamatha-vipaśyanā** Tranquility and insight, the two fundamental aspects of meditative praxis.

**samatikrama** Transcending; transcendence.

**samāpatti** Attainment. In particular, it refers to the nine meditation attainment: four *dhyāna*-s pertaining to the *rūpa-dhātu*, four *ārūpya samāpatti*-s, and *nirodha-samāpatti*.

**samāropa** Superimposition, addition. E.g.: Where there is no metaphysical ātman in the *skandha*-s, the belief that it exists is a *samāropa* on the *skandha*-s.

**saṃbandha** Connection, relationship.

**saṃbandhika pratītya-samutpāda** One of the fourfold interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda on conditioned co-arising. This interpretation is that the 12 links of conditioned co-arising are connected (saṃbandhika) through being causes and effects.

**saṃbhāra** Requisite, provision (needed on the spiritual journey or for spiritual attainment).

**saṃbhāra-pratītya-samutpāda** One of the fourfold interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda on conditioned co-arising. This interpretation is that the 12 links of conditioned co-arising are connected (saṃbandhika) through being causes and effects.

**saṃbhāra-pratītya-samutpāda** Requisite, provision (needed on the spiritual journey or for spiritual attainment).

**saṃcetanīya-karma** A deed that is done intentionally.

**saṃcaya** Accumulation, collection.

**saṃcitatva** The fact of being accumulated.

**saṃdhāna** (Birth-)relinking; a descriptive term for *vijñāna*. Same as *pratisaṃdhi*.

**saṃghāta-paramāṇu** Atoms in agglomeration, ‘aggregate-atom’, akin to the modern conception of a molecule.

**saṃgīti** ‘Collective singing/rehearsal’; often rendered as ‘Council/Congregation’ (of the Saṅgha, to discuss and ascertain the Buddha’s teachings).

**saṃgraha** (1) Mutual subsumption, inclusion, subordination. (2) Cohesion.

**saṃgraha-asaṃgraha-kauśalya** (An Ābhidharmika’s) skillfulness with regard to subsumption, non-subsumption.

**saṃjñā** Ideation.

**saṃjñāpavana** ‘Wind of saṃjñā’.

610
**saṃjñā-vedita-nirodha-samāpatti** (Meditation) attainment of cessation of sensation and ideation. Same as **nirodha-samāpatti**.

**saṃkalpa cetanā** Volition of intention.

**saṃkara** Confusion, mixing up.

**saṃkleśa** Pollution, the process of defiling; opposite to **vyavadāna**.

**saṃmoha** Delusion.

**saṃmukhībhāva** Coming into direct presence, becoming face-to-face.

**saṃnipāta** Coming together, assemblage.

**saṃniśraya** Support.

**saṃprayoga** Association, conjunction. Mental **dharma**-s are said to be in conjunction in accordance with the five-fold equality. → **pañcadhā samatā**.

**saṃprayogato 'nuśete** (A defilement) adheres and grows through the process of conjunction with the object.

**saṃprayoga-viprayoga-kauśalya** (An Ābhidharmik’s) skilfulness with regard to conjunction, disjunction.

**saṃprayukta** Conjoined, associated. → **pañca samatā**.

**saṃprayuktā avidyā** Conjoined ignorance; i.e., the ignorance that always arises together with, and necessarily through the support of, other defilements. → **āvenikā avidyā**.

**saṃprayuktaka-hetu** Conjoined cause; one of six **hetu**-s. The **citta-caitta**-s, when arising together, are conjoined causes. → **hetu; ekālambanakṛtya**.

**saṃsāra** The cycle of births and death.

**saṃskṛta** Conditioned, compounded.

**saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa** ‘Characteristic of the conditioned’. There are four of them, of the nature of **viprayukta-saṃsāra**: jāti, sthiti, jarā, anityatā/vyaya. Together, they render a conditioned **dharma** momentary (kṣaṇika).

**saṃskārāḥ** Conditionings, conditioning forces.

**saṃsthāna** Shape.

**saṃtati** Serial continuity.

**saṃtati-parināma-viśeṣa** A distinctive transformation of the serial continuity. This is a well known doctrinal term characterizing the Sautrāntika karma doctrine of **bija**.

**saṃtīrana** Judgement, judgemental decision.

**saṃtuṣṭi** Contentment.

**samudācāra** Manifestation, coming into play.

**samudāya** Origin.

**samudaya-darśana-heya** (defilements) abandonable through insight into the **samudaya-satya**.

**samudaya-jñāna** Knowledge of the origin (of **duḥkha**), acquired in the process of **abhisamaya**.

**samudaya-satya** Noble truth of the origin (of **duḥkha**).

**samutthāna-citta** Originating thought.

**samutthāna-hetu** Originating cause.

**saṃvara** Restraint. It is a type of **avijñapti**.

**saṃvara-karma** Restraint qua (avijñapti) **karma**.

**saṃvarastha** Abiding in restraint (i.e., possessing restraint).

**saṃvṛti-jñāna** Conventional knowledge: knowledge of conventional things.
Conventional notion.

Conventional truth.

Proper livelihood. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper speech. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper view. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper action. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper vigor. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper effort. Same as samyag-vyāyāma. → pradhāna.

Proper mindfulness. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper concentration. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Proper thinking. One aspect of the āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga.

Perfection that is the separation from the raw; i.e. from defilements or the immaturity of the skillful roots.

Certitude of Perfection (i.e. of Nirvāṇa).

Entering into samyakta-nyāma; i.e., attaining stream entry.

Same as samyakta-nyāma-avakramaṇa.

Connection, conjunction.

Object of conjunction.

Fetter. It is also a synonym for kleśa.

The Buddhist monastic community.

'Split of the monastic community'; it is also the name of a citta-viprayukta- saṃskāra, having asāmagrī as its svabhāva.

Visible.

Calmed.

Same as santati/saṃtati.

Torment.

(Progressive) transformation of a serial continuity.

Together with the retinue.

Resistant.

Co-ordination.

All exists; i.e. dharma-s always (sarvadā) exist, whether future, present or past.

One who has destroyed all darkness (/ignorance).

Complete knowledge which is the exhaustion of all fetters.

The fact of 'all exists', tri-temporal existence (of all dharma-s).

A follower of the sarvāstitva doctrine (Also stands for the name of the doctrine itself).

The finest.

One who has all destroyed darkness (ignorance) in all ways; i.e., a buddha who has overcome both the kliṣṭa and aklīṣṭa ajñāna.

‘Going everywhere’, universal.

Universal cause. One of the six hetu-s.
śaśa-rajās ‘Rabbit-dust’, the size of seven ap-rajās.
śaśa-śṛṅga Horn of a hare; a simile for something which is an absolute non-existent.
sāṣrava With-outflow. A with-outflow object is one by taking which the defilement adheres to it and grows. It is also one whose effect is to retain us in samsāra.
sāṣraya ‘Having a supporting basis’, a descriptive term for the citta-caitta-dharma-s.
sāṣṭra A treatise.
sāśvata-vāda The theory of eternalism.
sāṭhya Dissimulation.
satkāya-drṣṭi Self-view.
satpuruṣa The ‘True Man’.
sattva Sentient being.
sattvākhyā Pertaining to sentient beings.
satyābhisamaya Direct realization of the (four noble) truths.
saunarnasya Joyousness, joy.
Sautrāntika Follower of an important school of thought, characterized as “one who takes as authority the sūtra and not the śāstra.”: he is sūtra-prāmāṇika.
śa-vāsanam kleśa-prahāṇa ‘Abandonment of defilement together with the vāsanā’.
This refers to the abandonment of kleśa in the case of a perfectly enlightened buddha, in contrast to that of a śrāvaka or a pratyeka-buddha.
sāvayava Having a part.
sa-vipāka Retributive.
śikṣā Training.
śikṣāmānā ‘Learning’; ‘training’. A female member of the Saṅgha who is under probation for the bhikṣuṇī ordination.
śikṣā-pada Training factors.
śīla Morality, precept.
śīlāṅga The section of śīla.
śīla-vrata-parāmarśa (Irrational) adherence to abstentions and vows.
śīla-vratopādāna Clinging to abstentions and vows.
śīmā-bandha The bond of boundary.
śīta Cold.
skandha Aggregates, explained as ‘heap’ (rāśi). There are five aggregates: rūpa, vedanā, saṃjñā, saṃskāra, vijñāna.
ślakṣṇatva Smoothness.
smṛti Memory, recollection.
smṛty-upasthāna Base of mindfulness. There are four: kāya-, vedanā-, citta- and dharma-s.
sneha Humidity, adhesion.
śoka Sorrow.
sopadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu Sphere of Nirvāṇa with a remnant of substratum.
sparśa Contact, touch.
spraṣṭavya Tangible.
śraddhā Faith.
śraddhādhimukta (One who) is freed through predominance of faith.
śraddhānusārin ‘Faith-pursuant’. A practitioner who primarily relies on faith for spiritual progress.
śrāmaṇera A male novice member of the Saṅgha who has not yet received the Higher Ordination.
śrāmaṇerī A female novice member of the Saṅgha who has not yet received the Higher Ordination.
śrāmanya-phala Fruit of the spiritual life; spiritual attainment. There are four: srotaāpatti, sakṛdāgāmin, anāgāmin, arhat.
srotaāpatti Stream entrant. srotaāpatti-phala Fruit of stream entry.
srotaāpatti-phala-stha Abiding in the fruit of stream entry.
srotaāpatti- pratipannaka Candidate for the fruit of stream entry.
srotaāpatty-āṅga ‘Factors of Stream-entry’. There are 4: drawing near to the True Men, listening to the True Dharma, proper contemplation and the practice of the Dharma and what accords with the Dharma. They are called its factors, being conducive to its attainment.
śrotābhijñā Supernormal power of audition.
śrotra Ear.
śrotra-indriya Auditory faculty.
śruta-mayī prajñā Understanding derived from listening.
sthāna Abode, place.
Sthaviravāda The ‘School of the elders’. The present-day Theravāda is a branch derived rom the lineage of the Sthaviravāda in ancient India.
sthitākampya (Those) abiding in their attainment without retrogressing, although they may not progress unless effort is exerted.
sthiti-lakṣaṇa Duration-characteristic, a viprayukta-saṃskāra-dharma that causes the momentary duration of sthiti. → saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa.
sthiti-sthiti ‘Duration-duration’, one of the four anulakṣaṇa-s. Its function is to cause the momentary duration of sthiti. → anulakṣaṇa.
sthūlabhittika Like a thick wall.
stūpa A Buddhist relic-mount, a dagoba.
styāna Torpor.
styāna-middha Torpor-drowsiness.
sucarita Good conduct.
sugati Fortunate plane of existence.
sukha Happiness.
sukha-vedanīya Conducive to pleasant experience.
sukha-vihāra ‘Dwelling of happiness’.
sukhendriya Faculty of happiness.
śukla-karma  A white (śukla) karma yielding white retribution: the action of rūpa-dhātu, which is always pure (śubham ekāntena) generating agreeable (manojña) retribution.

śūnyatā  Emptiness.

Śūnyatā-vādin  One who proclaims the doctrine of emptiness.

śūnyatā-citta  The thought of the nature of śūnyatā (as a concept).

sūtra  (1) A discourse by the Buddha. (2) A concise discourse; the first of the dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana.

sūtra-pramāṇa  Criterion or authority for the sūtra. The Vaibhāśikas assert that Abhidharma is the authority for ascertaining the authenticity of a discourse calimed as a sūtra.

sūtra-prāmāṇika  (One) who takes the sūtra as the ultimate criterion/authority.

sūtraviśeṣa  A specific type of sūtra.

svabhāva  Intrinsic nature of a dharma. The intrinsic nature of a āsaṃskṛta dharma remains the same throughout time; but is nonetheless impermanent. The Sārvāstivāda holds that a dharma’s svabhāva exists always, even though its activity is impermanent.

svabhāva-vikalpa  Discrimination which is the very nature of consciousness itself.

svalakṣaṇa  Specific characteristic (unique to a dharma). This is divisible into dravya-svalakṣaṇa and āyatana-svalakṣaṇa.

svalakṣaṇa-kauśalya  (An Ābhidharmika’s) skillfulness with regard to intrinsic characteristics (of dharma-s).

svaphalākṣepa-kāritra  The activity which is the projection of a (dharma’s) own fruit. This is the definition of kāritra.

svaphala-nirvartana  (The sabhāga-hetu is of the nature of) ‘bringing forth their own fruits’.

svabhāva  Essential nature. This term is often used synonymously with svabhāva.

sva-saṃbhāram pariṅgrhaṇāti  (An anuśaya) gathers up to its own requisites (i.e., its own causes). This is in the sense that it repeatedly gathers up and gives rise to improper mental application (ayoniśo manaskāra).

sva-saṃvedana  Reflexive knowledge/awareness.

svayam-kṛta  Self-done, self-caused.

tadālambana-kleśa-prahāna  The abandonment of a kleśa that takes a particular (kuśala or an avyākṛta dharma as) object. When this happens, the dharma which is the object is also said to be abandoned since at that time the dharma comes to be disconnected.

tāmra-rajas (/loha-rajas)  ‘Copper dust’; the size of seven anu-s.

tandri  Exhaustion.

tarkābhimāna  Conceit in logical skill.

tatksaṇa-samutthāna  Moment-origination; i.e., origination at the very moment of the action.

tatsabhāga  ‘Similar to that (i.e., to that which is presently active, although this itself is non-active)’, a ‘facsimile’. E.g., an eye in darkness which does not exercise its function of seeing is a tatsabhāga eye.

tattva  Reality, suchness.
tattva-manaskāra ‘Mental application on the real’. A contemplation on the real nature of things is called a “mental application to the real”, such as the true characteristic of a dharma.

tebas Fire; also, one of the four mahābhūta-s.
tīkṣṇa Sharp.
tīkṣṇendriya ‘Sharp faculty’; in contrast to a mṛdv-indriya.
tīrthakāra Heretics.
tīrthika Same as tīrthakāra.
tiryāṅc Animal.
tīvra Strong, intense.
traidhātukavyāpin Pervading all three spheres.
tripiṭaka ‘Three Baskets’; the three collections of the Buddha’s teachings: sūtra, vinaya, abhidharma.
tri-ratna ‘Triple Gem’: Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha.
tṛṣṇā Craving.
ubhayabhāga-vimukta ‘Doubly liberated’. An arhat is so called when he overcomes both the klesa-varaṇa and vimokṣa-varaṇa. Besides being prajñā-vimukta, he is also freed from all the hindrances to meditative attainments.
uccheda-vāda Theory of annihilation.
udāna ‘Breathing out’, inspirational verses said to be uttered spontaneously by the Buddha; one of the dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana.
ūnamāna Defensive conceit, a mode of māna. It is characterized thus: If others excel one greatly, in respect of clan and lineage, etc., and one claims that one is only a little inferior; the mental elevation so produced is named (Cf. Avatāra).
unnati Bending upwards. A characteristic of māna.
upādhi Material basis, substratum.
upakleśa Secondary defilement. In its less technical sense, this term is also used to refer to defilement in general.
upalabdhī Apperception.
upalakṣāna Examination; close observation.
upanāha Enmity.
upapadhyāya-karma Karma experiencible in the next life.
upapatti-pratilambhika Acquired by birth.
upapatti-sthāna-pratilambhikā jñāna/prajñā A certain type of knowledge acquired by beings by virtue of being born in a particular gati. E.g., hell beings
possess by birth the *paracitta-jñāna*. For humans, this knowledge has to be acquired through cultivation.

**upāsaka** A male lay Buddhist.

**upasampad** ‘Completion’; the higher ordination for one who has joined the *Saṅgha*.

**upāsikā** A female lay Buddhist.

**upastambha-hetu** Maintaining cause; one of a set of five causes. → *janana-hetu*.

**upātta** Appropriated (by the *citta-caitta*-s); i.e. sensitive (*rūpa*).

**upavāsa-saṃvara** Restraint undertaken for one full day and a night.

**upavāsastha-śīla** Precepts undertaken for one full day and night. Same as *upavāsa-saṃvara*.

**upekṣā** Equanimity.

**upekṣendriya** The faculty of equanimity.

**ūrdhva-bhāgīya** (Fetters) pertaining to the upper portion. → *pañca-ūrdhva-bhāgīya*.

**ūṣman** Warmth.

**uṣmagata** ‘Warmed-up’, ‘warmth’. This is the first attainment in the *nirvedha-bhāgīya* of the *prayoga* stage. It is sometimes also given as *ūṣman*.

**uṣnatā** Heat.

**uttama** Supreme, highest.

**vadhya-ghātaka** Executioner.

**vag-vijñapti** Vocal expression; the informative *karma* of speech.

**Vaibhāṣika** A Sarvāstivādin who takes the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* as the authority.

**Vainaśika** ‘One who is (totally) destructive’, a nihilist. *Samghabhadra* refers by this term to those who deny the reality of the *svabhāva* of *dharma*-s.

**vairāgya** Detachment.

**vaitulya** Unmatchability. As a technical term, it is said by the Vaibhāṣika to be synonymous with *vaipulya* and *vaidalya* (Pāli: *vedalla*).

**vaipulya** ‘Development’, one of the *dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana*. → *vaitulya*.

**vajropama-samādhi** ‘Diamond-like concentration’; so called because, like a diamond that can cut through all things, it is the last stage in the abandonment of defilements; whatever defilements that have remained are all abandoned in this *samādhi*.

**vāk** Speech.

**vākya** Sentence.

**varga** A separate part/division, a chapter.

**varṇa** Color.

**varīmāna** ‘Turning’, ‘operating’; present, the present time.

**vāsanā** ‘Trace’, perfuming. *Samghabhadra* explains that this is a designation (not a real entity) for a mental state conditioned by the *akliṣṭa-aṭṭhāna*. The Buddha is free from this because he does not have the *akliṣṭa-aṭṭhāna*.

**vāsita** Perfumed. I.e., conditioned/developed by a *vāsanā*.

**vastu** Thing, base, reason.

**vātāyana-rajas** Dust in the wind passage.

**Vātsīputrīya** A school that branched off from the *Saṅvāstivāda*. Their special doctrines are the ineffable *pudgala*, the *asura* as the sixth *gati*, etc. → *Pudgalavāda*.

**vāyu** Air.

**vedanā** Sensation, feeling.
Vibhajyavāda The school of the “Distinctionists”. A school of thought doctrinally opposed to the Sarvāstitvāda. It holds that the present dharma-s alone exist. However, some among them, like the followers of the Kāśyapiya, concede that the past karma that have not yet given fruit (adatta-phala) can also be said to exist.

vibhaṅga Analysis, exposition.

vibhāṣā Commentary.

vicāra Investigation.

vicikitsā Doubt.

vidūsanā-pratipakṣa A counteragent which generates disgust.

vidyā 1. Knowledge, understanding. (The opposite is avidyā) 2. A science or study; e.g. hetu-vidyā.

vihimsā Harmfulness.

vijñāna Consciousness.

vijñāna-dhātu The consciousness element.

vijñānāntyāyatana The sphere of infinite consciousness, the second of four ārūpya samāpatti-s. → samāpatti, ārūpya-dhātu.

vijñāpita-karma Informative karma. This refers to the bodily and vocal karma-s that are ‘informing’, i.e., indicative of the mental state of the doer.

vijñāpimātratā The Yogācāra doctrine of ‘cognition-only’.

vijñeya Cognizable; the object of cognition.

vikalpa Discrimination, conceptualization.

vikṣipta Distracted.

vikriyotpādanā The nature of change (being disfigured) in arising.

vimokṣāvaraṇa Hindrance of liberation. To attain perfect liberation, an arhat must overcome this hindrance besides the kleśāvaraṇa. There are different opinions among the Abhidharma masters: Some say this is the samāpatty-āvaraṇa; others say it is the akliṣṭa-ajñāna. → ubhayabhāga-vimukta.

vimokṣa-mārga Path of liberation. (= vimukti-mārga).

vimokṣa-mukha ‘Gateway of liberation’. There are three: śūnyatā, ānimitta, apraṇihita.

vimukti-mārga Same as vimokṣa-mārga.

vinaya The disciplinary teachings of the Buddha.

vineya Those to be guided for spiritual transformation.

vipāka Retribution, maturation.

vipāka-jāta ‘Born of retribution’. One of the doctrinal perspectives in Abhidharma analysis: dharma-s are divisible as those which are retribution-born (e.g., eye) and those which are not (e.g. sound).

vipāka-hetu Retributive cause. → hetu; visadṛśaphalāksepakatva.

vipāka-phala Retribution fruit. Only the fruit of an individual’s karma is called a vipāka-phala. The fruit resulting from a collective karma is called an adhipati-phala.

viparināma Change.

viparīta Being topsy-turvy, turned upside down.

viparyāsa Topsy-turviness, erroneousness. E.g.: taking what is duḥkha for sukha, śūnya for aśūnya, anitya for nitya, anātman for ātman.

vipaśyanā-āptana Insight cultivation/meditation, as distinct from śamatha-bhāvanā.

vipaśyanā-carita The insight-meditation type of practitioner.
vīpratisāra  Remorse.
viprayukta-saṃskāra  Conditionings disjoined from thought.
virati  Abstention.
viraty-aṅga  The section of abstention.
vīrya  Vigor.

visabhāga-dhātv-ālambana  (Defilements) which take objects pertaining to other spheres (than that to which it belongs).

visadṛṣa  Different, dissimilar.

visadrśaphalākṣepakatva  (The vipāka-hetu is so designated on account of its) ‘projecting a fruit which is different [in moral nature]’.

visāmyoga  ‘Disjunction (from a defilement)’.

visāmyoga-phala  ‘Fruit of disjunction’; i.e. pratisaṃkhya-nirodha. This is called a fruit only expediently: An unconditioned dharma transcends the cause-effect process completely; properly speaking, one can only say that the nirodha is acquired (prāpta) by means of the path. I.e., the path induces the arising of the prāpti of the nirodha for the practitioner.

visāmyoga-prāpti  Acquisition of disjunction.

viśaya  Object-domain.

viśeṣa  Difference, distinction, special, specific.

viśeṣa-mārga  Path of advance/distinction.

viśiṣṭa  Distinguished, special.

viśiṣṭa-karma  Distinctive karma.

viṣkambhana  Subduing.

viśuddhi  Purification, purity.

vīta-rāga  Detached.

vitarka  Reasoning, discursive thought.

viveka  Separation.

vratāṅga  The section of observation of vows.

vṛtti  Operation, action.

vyākaraṇa  Explanation, prediction (a later acquired meaning). Also, the third of the dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana.

vyānja-kāya  The syllable-group, one of the viprayukta-saṃskāra-s.

vyantībhūta  Expurgated.

vyāpāda  Malice.

vyapakarṣa  Physical withdrawal.

vyāpāra  Function, operation.

vyatireka  The principle of difference/(exclusion).

vyavadāna  Purification; opposite to saṃkleśa.

vyaya-vyaya  ‘Disappearance-disappearance’. Same as anityatā-anityatā. → anulakṣaṇa.

vyūha  Extension, distribution, arrangement.

yathābhūtam  Truly; truly as it is.

yathābhūta-jñāna  Knowledge of things truly as they are.

yoga  Yoke. A synonym for defilement.

yoni  Mode of birth.
Index

abandonable by cultivation  226, 363, 364, 392, 396, 408, 520
abandonables 81, 207, 378, 379, 381, 395, 412 (see also prāheya)
Abhidharma 3–7 (origins of); 12–13 (as soteriology); 1–2 (conventional and absolute sense); 1–2 (definition of); 19–20 (as Buddha-vacana); 17–19 (as śūtra-pramāṇa)
Abhidharma-kathā 81, 278
Ābhidharmika/Ābhidhārmika 70, 81, 82, 84–88, 91, 278
abhidhyā 370
abhinarūpaṇā 81, 278
abhinarūpaṇā-vikalpa 81, 278
abhisamaya 11, 23, 81, 98, 166, 243, 280, 307, 333, 363, 378, 485, 502, 503, 509, 513, 515, 542 (see also direct realization)
abhisāṃskāra 81, 278
abhinirūpaṇā 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
abhiṣamākāra 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
adhipati-phala 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
adhipati-pratyaya 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
adhyātmika 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
ādhāra-pratipakṣa 399
adhimokṣa 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
adhimukti 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
adhimukti-caryā 504
adhimukti-manaskāra 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
ādhyāymika 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
agni 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
ahāra 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
ahā-sāmantaka-rūpa 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
absolute existent  77
absolute truth  75–77, 474, 539
acittaka 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
abrupt awakening  396
abrupt view  514, 515
abrupt-abandonment śramaṇa 382, 391, 396, 486
abhūta-parikalpa 262
aṅga 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
aśrama 29, 77, 79, 113, 123, 180, 190, 222, 245, 253, 254, 258, 278, 287, 328, 474, 548, 563
ālaya-vijñāna 180
alobha 491
āloka 487
ālokabddha-samādhi 487, 502
alpecchatā 70, 490
amṛta-dvāra 496
anāgāmin 523, 529, 530
anāgamyaka 498
anājñātam-ājñāsyāmīndriya 510, 511
ānantarya karma 460, 466
ānantarya-mārga 485, 510, 511, 522, 528
ānāpānasmṛti 496
anapatrāpya 41, 46, 47, 115, 242, 244, 365
anāsrava 345, 372, 378, 386, 397, 398, 400, 504, 509, 551
anāsrava-jñāna 504, 509
anāsrava-saṃvara 40, 135, 152, 227, 292, 295, 303, 384, 516, 517, 532, 542, 545
anatrāpa 369
anger 365, 368
anidarśana 40, 135, 152, 227, 292, 295, 303, 384, 516, 517, 532, 542, 545
anidarsana-apratīgha 40, 135, 152, 227, 292, 295, 303, 384, 516, 517,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arthaviniścaya</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ārya</td>
<td>75, 81, 85, 89, 166, 329, 334, 335, 337, 341, 342, 358, 361, 367, 389, 392, 393, 395, 396, 407, 475, 486, 487, 491, 493, 499, 508, 516, 517, 519, 528, 532, 539, 541, 542, 544–547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ārya-mārga</td>
<td>81, 499, 532, 541, 544–547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ārya-satya</td>
<td>308, 539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ārya-vanśa</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asabhāga</td>
<td>535, 543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asādāṅga</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asāika</td>
<td>50, 112, 244, 493, 505, 521, 533, 546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asāika-mārga</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asamaya-vimukta</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asamjñi-samāpatti</td>
<td>325, 331, 342, 439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asamjñi-sattva</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asamprajanya</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asanyoga-vastu</td>
<td>400, 412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āsanna-kāraṇa</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
asaratraga 361, 378, 381
āśaya 460
asevita 535
Aśokāvadāna 5, 100, 102
āśraddhya 41, 114, 365
āśrava 48, 282, 320, 362, 367–369, 407
āśravakṣaya-jñāna 362
āśraya 189, 218, 228, 233, 333, 371, 471, 500, 545, 562
āśraya-samatā 27, 189
āṣṭa-dravyaka 229, 232
āṣṭitva 155, 164
āśubha 332, 496
āśubhā-bhāvanā 496
āśucyanusmṛti 121
āsvādana 490
Aśvaghoṣa 383
atīndriya 218
ātmavādopādana 369
atomic theory 226, 232, 233
avasthā 11, 134, 136, 139, 145, 149, 151–153, 348, 491
avasthā-anyathātva 134
avayava 74
āvenikī avidyā 253, 378
avṛtya-prasāda 97
avidyā 65, 170, 172, 363, 365, 370, 375, 378, 380, 381, 397, 398, 405, 469, 470, 521
avidyāsṛava 368
avidiyaugha 369
aviiṃsā 41
avijñāpti-karma 425, 438, 451, 458
avijñāpti-rūpa 219
avyākṛta 17, 43–48, 50, 88, 112, 208, 243–246, 332, 345, 420
avyākṛta-māla 88, 243
āyatana-pratilambha 326, 327
āyatana-svalaksana 24, 232
ayoniśo manaskāra 471
āyuś 344, 346
bahirdeśaka 86, 432
bahu-dhātu 97
bandhana 522
Bhadanta 76, 85, 151, 194, 197, 221, 234, 237, 328, 382, 402, 412, 465, 486, 514, 533 (See also Dharmatrāta)
bhājana-loka 207
bhautika-rūpa 108
bhava 98, 172, 371, 374, 376, 419, 468, 469, 471, 472, 568
bhāva-anyathātva 133, 154
bhavāgra 496, 520, 522
bhāvanā-mārga 485, 486, 505, 510, 519, 520
bhāvanā-mayī prajñā 488, 494, 499, 505
bhavaugha 369
bhūmi 494, 496, 520
bhūyo-vītarāga 523
bīja 40, 61, 143, 180, 181, 198, 334, 382, 545, 562
bodhi 9, 14, 283, 525
bodhipaksya-dharma 9
bodhisattva 462, 496
bodhisattva-bhūmi 496
bodhisattva-niyāma 503
Bodhisattva-yāna 504
brahma-carṇa 461
brhatphala 343
Buddhabhūmi-sūtra-śāstra 503
INDEX

Buddhadeva 64, 84–86, 134, 136, 137, 140, 148, 157, 194, 220, 237, 328, 508, 533
Buddhaghosa 514
Buddhamitra 497
buddha-dharma 129, 291
buddha-vacana 86, 323, 350, 351
Buddha-word 323, 350 (See also buddha-vacana)
buddhi-pratyakṣa 289, 308, 312–315
cakra-vartin 478
caksurabhijñā 338
catuṣ-koṭi 51, 279, 306
cessation independent of deliberation 332, 333, 531, 547–550
cessation through deliberation 166, 202, 332–334, 510, 531, 538, 547, 549, 550
cetanā 495, 508, 524
cetanā-dharman 524
chanda 41, 109, 114, 241, 242, 247, 250, 267, 387
characteristics of the conditioned 173–175, 221, 323, 346, 348
cintā-mayī prajñā 499, 505
citta 66, 241, 257, 265
cittānuparivartin 433, 450
clinging 367, 369, 470, 472, 473
completing karma 340, 459, 468, 476
conceit 433, 450
concentration 373, 380, 498
conditionality 124, 178, 201, 471
conditioned co-arising 8, 9, 76, 165, 168, 172, 182, 297, 298, 317, 370, 416, 469, 470, 472, 474, 475, 497 (see also pratiya-samutpāda)
consciousness 66, 67, 70, 72, 73, 80, 83, 144, 146, 168, 169, 176, 182, 183, 191–193, 198, 206, 217, 227, 228, 345, 352, 371, 373, 401, 469, 470
contact 214, 218, 234, 387, 390, 469, 470
contemplation on the impure 488–490, 496, 497
Corporeal tie 370
Cox, C 147, 350, 409
darśanābhisamaya 515
darśana-heya 43, 49, 112, 118, 169, 244, 378, 379, 381, 396–398, 486, 507, 511, 521
darśana-mārga 485, 486, 499, 505, 507, 510, 519, 520, 523, 529
dausīlya 431, 437, 456
derived matter 175, 213, 219, 220, 222, 224–226, 231, 555

625
derived tangibles 219, 220, 236
deterioration 176, 214, 215, 218, 331, 347–349, 372, 496
Devaśarman 64, 191
dharma 21 (definition of), 31, 32, 63, 66–77, 79–87
Dharmagupta 528
dharma-jñāna 500, 511, 512, 514, 516, 528
Dharmakūrti 84, 91
dharma-lakṣaṇa 6, 15
dharmānudharma 97
dharmānusārin 518, 524
dharma-pratisaṃvid 353
dharma-pravicaya 11, 17, 26, 28, 35, 43, 247, 274, 279, 280, 305, 362, 372
dharma-sabhāgatā 339, 357
Dharma-skandha 4, 5, 30, 50, 93, 94, 96, 99 100
dharmatā 143, 159, 349, 544
dharmatā-prātilambhika 433
Dharmaratā 84–86, 133, 136–138, 140, 146, 151, 152, 154, 157, 184, 220, 234, 237, 477, 508, 533, 554
dharmāyatana 34, 36–38, 214, 218, 220, 324, 327, 427, 428, 436, 437, 526
dharmāyatana-saṃgrhiṇī-rūpa 428, 437
dhātu 66, 67, 165, 213, 221, 222, 235, 339, 352, 357, 369, 374, 381, 397, 398, 404, 463, 468, 490, 494, 497, 505, 520, 522, 530, 536, 537, 539, 554, 555, 558, 559
Dhātukāya 93, 114, 116, 243
dhyāna 173, 205, 342, 343, 367, 391, 476, 486, 498, 499, 520, 522
dhyāna-ānanga 243
dhyāna-śamvara 427
Dhyāna-sūtra 497
Diamond-like 392 (see also vajropama)
direct perception 84, 182, 227, 229, 555, 559 (see also pratyakṣa)
direct realization 485, 509 (see also abhisamaya)
divya-cakṣus 227
done and accumulated 463–465
doubt 63, 172, 365, 367, 370, 375, 397, 398, 499, 514, 541, 557
dravya 21, 22, 24, 27, 77, 86, 134, 137, 146, 150, 152, 156, 167, 168, 189, 228–233, 238, 239, 255, 258, 320, 327, 457, 535, 539, 556, 558, 559
dravyāntara 164, 345, 383, 538
dravya-paramāṇu 228, 230
dravya-samata 27, 189
dravya-svalākṣaṇa 24, 232
dṛṣṭa-dharmā-phala 477
dṛṣṭadharma-sukha-vihāra 511
dṛṣṭadharma-vedaniya-karma 466, 477
dṛṣṭānta 85
dṛṣṭa-pada 6
dṛṣṭi-prāpta 282, 518, 529
dṛṣṭy-ogha 369
dṛṣṭy-upādāṇa 369, 540
duḥkhadārśana-heya 381
duḥkha-jñāna 281, 307
duḥkha-satya 90, 319, 379, 397, 505,
Index

513, 515, 542
duḥkhadā 90
duḥkha-vedanīya 421
durgati 67, 368, 506, 550
dārībhāva-pratipakṣa 399
dvādaśāṅga 488
dvādaśāṅga-dharma-pravacana 20
dowment 70, 71, 329, 335–337, 374 (see also samavāgama)
envelopment 367, 369, 412
epistemology 273, 274, 306
 equipoise 341, 498, 574
 essential nature 82, 138, 139, 142–145, 149, 151–153, 155, 156, 158, 159, 184, 334, 510, 538, 540
evam-pādaka 51, 58
existence-peak 282, 342, 343, 394, 522
existent 282, 342, 343, 394, 522
fetter 52–58, 275, 367, 368
five-fold mental stilling 496
flood 367, 369, 410
foreign masters 86–88, 91, 92, 367
Frauwallner 131, 135–141, 148, 150, 158
 gati 340, 357, 359, 369, 468, 517, 529, 536, 539
geya 7
Ghoṣaka 485, 504
ghṛāṇa-indriya 41
 gotra 33, 60, 240, 495, 499
gradual view 515
grantha 94, 367, 370
 hetu-kauśalya 20, 27
 hetu-pratyaya 28, 105, 112, 146, 163, 180, 181, 191, 196, 347, 359
Hetuvāda 27, 63, 164, 186
 hindrance 195, 208, 216, 217, 367, 402, 406, 467, 476, 477, 524
hṛi 41, 45, 428, 432, 456
idamsatyābhinirvēśa-kāyagrantha 370
 ideation 164, 173, 176, 324, 333, 342, 526
 ideationless attainment 173, 331, 342, 343
 ideationlessness 323, 331, 341, 343
 impregnation 143
 indirect perception 182
 indriyāśrita-pratyakṣa 312, 314
 inference 73, 183, 559, 560
 information 218–220, 338, 350
 informative karma 218, 415, 422, 423, 425–430, 435, 436–439, 441, 444–452, 458, 472 (see also avijñapti-karma)
 intention 17, 19, 29, 36, 47, 59, 123, 206, 330, 392, 423, 430, 432, 434, 460
 intermediate existence 503
 intrinsic characteristic 168, 218, 227, 231, 556 (see also svalakṣaṇa)
 irrational adherence 367, 370
 īrṣyā 42, 114, 242, 253
 īryāpatā 503
 janana-hetu 225
 janmāpravṛtti 539
jarā-jarā 349  
jarā-lakṣaṇa 42, 331  
jāti-jāti 349  
jāti-lakṣaṇa 42, 331, 346, 348, 359  
jīhva-indriya 41  

jñāna-parijñā 363  
Jñānaprasthāna 133, 163, 554  
*Jñanotpāda-śāstra 500  
jñeya 81, 112, 195, 273, 277–279, 293, 377, 406  
jñeyāvaraṇa 503  
kāmacchanda 367, 370, 521  
kāmaugha 369  
kāritra 80, 131, 135, 137–150, 152, 154, 155, 156, 158, 159, 166, 184, 203, 205, 209, 221, 236, 347 (See also activity)  
karma-patha 460, 477  
karuṇā 11  
Kāryābhisamaya 515  
Kāśyapīya 68, 91  
Katō 85, 90, 91, 238  
Kātyāyaniputra 2, 19, 94, 105, 106, 117, 157, 442, 500  
kaukṛtya 365, 370  
kāyagrantha 370  
kāya-sāksin 503  
kha-puṣpa 503  
klesa 273, 293, 361, 365  
klesa-bīja 545  
klesa-mahābhūmika dharma 41  
klesāvarana 377  
kleśa-ajñāna 291  
krodha 365  
krta-parijaya 11  
kṛtsnāyatanā 303  
kṣānti 26, 81, 204, 205, 250, 273, 279, 280, 283, 393, 397, 463, 485, 486, 491, 493, 494, 499, 500, 503, 504, 506, 508, 510, 511, 516, 527, 546, 568  
kṣaya-jñāna 14, 282, 284, 285, 407, 522  
kṣema 44, 539  
kṣīṇa-āsrava 362  
Kumāralaṭa 84, 383  
kūṣala 493–496, 499, 504, 505, 508, 519, 527 (see also kūṣala-mūla)  
kūṣala-dharma-cchanda 247  
kūṣala-karmapatha 97  
kūṣala-mahābhūmika dharma 41  
kūṣala-mūla 12, 45, 109, 170, 243, 493–496, 499, 501, 504, 505, 526  
kūṣalamūla-samuccheda 375, 389, 432  
lajjā 70  
laksana-anyathātva 134  
Lamotte, E 89, 403  
laukikāgra-dharma 494, 499, 527  
laukkajñāna 77  
laukika-mārga 392  
laukī samyak-dṛṣṭi 284
logic  65, 82, 85, 131, 132, 137, 154, 156
logical reasoning  72
lokottara-jñāna  77
mada  365
mahābhūmika-dharma  41, 239, 244, 245, 566
mahā-karuṇā  11
Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa  93, 503, 526
mahāpuruṣa  448
Mahāsāṃghika  513–515, 519, 523
Mahāyāna-saṃgraha  180, 411, 502, 503
Mahīśāsaka  68, 91, 513
māna  42, 242, 252, 365, 375, 378–380, 403, 520, 521
manas  32, 169, 345, 510
manasikāra  385, 471, 490 (see also manaskāra)
manaskāra  385, 471, 490
mano-bhūmi  244, 253, 260, 494
mārga  379, 485, 486, 499, 505, 507, 510, 511, 513–515, 519–523, 526, 528, 529
mārga-jñāna  281
mārga-satya  48, 51, 379, 397, 505, 513, 514, 542
mātrkā  1, 4, 5, 6, 96, 99, 100, 107, 112, 116, 128, 324
mātrkā-dhara  1, 5
mātsarya  42, 114, 242, 253, 365
māyā  365
mental application  371, 385, 471, 490
mental concomitants  176, 366, 497
merits  13, 377, 491, 492 (see also punya)
mindfulness  488–490, 496–498, 526
mindfulness of breathing  488, 489, 490, 496–498
mithyā-dṛṣṭi  284, 379, 381, 388–390, 397, 398, 434, 449, 540
mode of activity  189, 197, 369, 385
moha  368, 403, 520
mokṣa-bhāgīya  493–496, 499, 509, 518
mrakṣa  365
mṛdv-indriya  517
mṛṣā-vāda  434
Mūla-sarvāstivāda  5, 100, 102
mundane path  523 (see also laukika-mārga)
mundane path of cultivation  393, 396
mūrdhan  67, 329, 485, 493, 494, 499, 503, 506, 508
Nāgārjuna  168, 454, 503
nairātmya  90
nairyaṇīka  505
naiva-saṃjñā-nāsaṃjñā  495
nāma  42, 76, 211, 241, 247, 269, 301, 304, 318, 319, 323, 326, 331, 335, 349–357, 360, 413, 469, 470, 502, 529, 547
nāma-kāya  323, 326, 331, 350–352, 360
nāma-rūpa  331, 469, 547
naraka  462
nāśitva  155
nendriya  50
neo-Sarvāstivāda  132, 150, 549
neo-Vaibhāṣika  141, 150
neyārtha  17–19, 29, 59, 113, 184
neyyāvanā  290, 293
nikāya-sabhāga  505, 507
nimitta  246, 247, 262, 267, 301, 329, 340, 357
nimitta-grāhī  262
nirmāṇa-citta  205, 338
nirvāṇa  65, 70, 166, 168, 173, 202–204, 325, 331, 332, 334, 342, 358, 378, 379, 381, 390, 391, 393, 396–398, 491, 505, 510, 513–516, 522,
524, 528, 531–533, 535–539, 541–547, 549, 550, 552, 554, 559, 562
niruddha-darśana-heya 112, 379
niruddha-jñāna 281
niruddha-samāpatti 522, 524
niruddha-satya 397, 505, 513, 515, 516, 542
nirukti-pratisamvid 353
nirupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa 397, 539
nirvāṇa 8, 9, 10, 13, 29, 32, 45, 46, 65, 72, 121, 166, 168, 202, 204, 247, 274, 335, 339, 342, 362, 369, 386, 397, 487, 493, 494, 495, 496, 499, 505, 516, 518, 519, 522, 529, 530, 531, 533, 535–547, 562, 568
nirvāṇa-dhātu 369, 397, 536, 537, 539
nirvedha-bhāgīya 493, 494, 499, 500, 506, 508, 509
nirvikalpaka 315
niḥsaraṇa 394, 505, 536, 538
niśraya-hetu 225
nītārtha 6, 12, 17–19, 29, 59, 113
nivarana 367, 370
nivrta-avyākṛta 46, 115, 243, 245, 338
nivrāvyākṛta-vijñapti-rūpa 338
nivrītti 9, 45
nīyata karma 466
non-acquisition 323, 331, 336, 337
(see also aprāpti)
non-defined 88, 169, 170, 171, 208, 225, 332, 337, 345, 403, 405, 411
non-endowment 70, 71, 329, 337 (see also asamavāgama)
non-existent object 72, 83, 542 (see also asad-ālambana)
non-information 218–220
non-informative karma 415, 422, 423, 425, 428–430, 435–439, 444–451, 458 (see also avijñapti-karma)
non-informative matter 216, 218, 224, 430 (see also avijñapti-rūpa)
non-retrogressibility 485, 519
non-returner 522
non-veiled-non-defined 208, 337, 405
obtainment 332, 335–337, 343, 391, 517
oga 367, 369
omniscience 65, 273, 286, 288, 290, 291, 293, 406
once-returner 521
outflow-free 67, 169, 173, 205, 225, 361, 372, 381, 385, 387, 388, 393, 394, 465, 466, 489, 493, 499, 507–510, 517, 523, 541, 555 (see also anāsrava)
pada-kāya 323, 326, 328, 331, 350, 360
padārtha 30, 111, 125, 539
paśānya 434
pañcadvā samatā 189
Pañcavastuka 40, 44, 110, 113, 242, 296, 318, 325
pañca-vijñāna-kāya 24
paracitta-jñāna 282
paramāṇu 223, 224, 227–233, 238, 276, 423, 426, 457
paramārtha 488, 516
paramārtha-satya 79
pariharāṇa-dharman 524
parihāṇi 329, 552
parijñā 362, 363, 364, 397, 487, 520, 536, 537
parijñāna 397, 400, 412, 502, 503, 579
parinirvāṇa 63, 195, 196, 436, 479, 492, 493, 495, 524
paripāraka-karma 341
parītta-kleśa-bhūmikā dharmāḥ 245
partially-common (characteristic) 24
pāruṣya 434
paryavasthāna 243, 244, 367, 382–384, 391, 412, 472, 486
pāścātya 86
### Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>path of cultivation</td>
<td>372, 380, 486, 487, 510, 520, 521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path of distinction</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path of vision</td>
<td>333, 378, 380, 393, 485, 486, 489, 509, 510, 517 (see also darśana-mārga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path of liberation</td>
<td>334, 371, 395, 396, 399, 485, 510, 511, 521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path of purification</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path of the non-trainee</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfuming</td>
<td>181, 186 (see also vāsanā)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phala-ākarṣaṇa</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phala-ākṣepa</td>
<td>205, 438, 535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phala-dāna</td>
<td>142, 205, 209, 465, 477, 535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phalākṣepa</td>
<td>142, 145, 149, 150, 347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phala-pratīgṛahaṇa</td>
<td>142, 149, 208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phoneme</td>
<td>349, 353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pipāsā</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleasure</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potency</td>
<td>139, 146, 402, 403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poussin LV</td>
<td>64, 85, 89, 159, 188, 480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pradāśa</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prahāṇa-bhāvanā-ārāmatā</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prahāṇa-parijñā</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prahāṇa-pratīpākṣa</td>
<td>398, 399, 401, 412, 413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prayoga</td>
<td>343, 385, 399, 460, 464, 480, 485–487, 525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratideśaṇādi-pratipakṣah</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratīpattī</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratjawati</td>
<td>108, 415, 418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratiniyama-hetu</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratipad</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratipākṣa</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratipannaka</td>
<td>485, 517, 523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratipattī</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratisamkhīyā-niruddha</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratīyā-saṃutpāda</td>
<td>8, 9, 27, 370, 377, 416, 469, 533 (see also conditioned co-arising)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prativedhanā-dharman</td>
<td>495, 524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratyakṣa-jñāna</td>
<td>273, 307, 308, 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratyāyā-kauśalya</td>
<td>20, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratye-kabuddha</td>
<td>290–293, 402, 405–407, 432, 491, 495, 496, 525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pratye-kabuddha-bodhi</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pravrajyā</td>
<td>71, 432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pravṛtti</td>
<td>9, 429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prayer</td>
<td>386 (see also chanda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>premā</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preparatory action</td>
<td>460, 464</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

631
preparatory path 399, 485, 493
pretā 66, 460, 476–478
primary characteristics 346, 349
prītiṇdiśya 108
proclivities 545
production 42, 142, 176, 177, 181, 194, 196, 234, 331, 346, 347–349, 352, 354, 359 (see also jāti)
projecting karma 340, 345, 468
prthabaladha-jñāna 23
prthagjana 335, 342, 358, 392, 393, 462, 493, 517, 545, 546
prthagjanatva 328, 335, 337, 507
prthivi 219, 223
Przyluski 85
Pu Guang 514, 525
purṇya 421, 436, 450, 476, 477, 491, 492
purṇya-bhāgiya 492
purṇya-jñāna-sambhāra 491
Pūrṇavardhana 269
puruṣa-kāra 163, 174, 188, 190, 191, 202, 203, 205, 211, 479
puruṣakāra-phala 163, 186, 188, 191, 202, 203, 479
pārvācārya 77, 124, 387
pārvānudhātu 40
pārva-pādaka 51, 58
rāga 334, 335, 365, 367, 374, 375, 378, 380, 385, 403, 497, 520, 521, 537, 544, 550
rāma 379
ṛddhi-pāda 97
reasoning 72, 179, 412, 541
receptivity 204, 390, 397, 500, 505–507, 510, 516, 518, 521
reflexive knowledge 273, 286
retribution 503 (see also vipāka)
retribution cause 503
retribution fruit 503
retrogressibility 485, 519, 529
rūpa 213–216, 218–225, 227, 229–234, 236, 238, 463, 469 (see also matter)
rūpanā 213, 214, 216, 233, 238
rūpa-prasāda 31, 340
rūparāga-kṣaya-parijñā 364
sabhāga 505, 507, 527
sabhāga-dhātu-sarvatraga 397
sabhāga-hetu 66, 84, 88, 110, 142, 149, 161–163, 169, 544
sabhāgatā 323, 328, 339, 340, 357
sahabhā-hetu 186, 189
śaikṣa 50, 112, 244, 335, 462, 533, 541, 546, 551
śaikṣa-mārga 546
sakala-bandhana 53, 393, 412, 522, 582
sākāra 197, 273, 304, 309, 310–312, 315, 320
sākāra-jñānavāda 315
sākāra-viśñānavāda 273, 304
sakrdāgāmin 393, 521, 523
sālambana 50, 197
sallakṣaṇa 74, 279
samādāpana-naya 6
samādhī 486, 487, 497, 508, 510, 519, 522, 523 (see also)
samādhi-bhāvanā 97
sāmāgri 276, 295, 328
samāhita-bhūmi 373
samanantarapratyaya 499, 507
sāmantaka 498, 554
samanvāgama 323, 332, 334, 335, 336, 337, 389, 390
samanvāgama-asamanvāgama-kauśalya 21
sāmānya-lakṣaṇa 17, 22, 43, 83, 106, 248, 273, 307, 308, 312, 313, 315
sāmāpatti 70, 173, 325, 331, 341, 342, 358, 498, 522–524
sāmāpatty-āvaraṇa 343
sāmāpatty-āvarana-vimukta 343
śamatha 485, 497, 498, 508
śamatha-carita 498
Samayabhedoparacaranca-cakra 12
sambhāra 11, 13, 491
sambhinna-pralāpa 434
sancetanīya-karma 464
Samghabhadra 2, 3, 5–7, 10, 11, 18–
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>498, 540, 553</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samājana</td>
<td>109, 124, 139–141, 147, 150, 173, 323, 346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samsthāna</td>
<td>228, 232, 357, 423, 424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samtaī</td>
<td>366, 545, 546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samtaī-parināma</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samātraṇa</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samudaya-jñāna</td>
<td>281, 307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samudthāna-cita</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samutthāna-hetu</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samvarā-karma</td>
<td>451, 453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samvṛti-jñāna</td>
<td>277, 281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samvṛti-satya</td>
<td>77, 90, 516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyak-pradhāna</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyaktva</td>
<td>485, 494, 495, 500, 507, 514, 516–519, 529, 582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyaktva-niyāma</td>
<td>494, 495, 500, 503, 507, 514, 518, 529, 529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyaktva-niyāma-avakramana</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyaktva-niyāmāvākṛānti</td>
<td>485, 518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyaktvāvākṛānti</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyoga-vastu</td>
<td>275, 400, 412, 542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>samyojana</td>
<td>52, 243, 367, 487, 521, 582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sanidārṣana</td>
<td>43, 50, 217, 219, 225, 435, 557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>santati-parināma</td>
<td>143, 439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sapratigha</td>
<td>50, 66, 112, 225, 228, 423, 435, 555, 557, 558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Śāriputra 2, 43, 94, 96, 99, 290, 291, 292, 404, 496
Śāriputrābhidhāma 263, 324, 325, 384
sarvādā asti 133, 149, 152, 156, 339
sarvahatāndhakāra 291
sarva-saṃyojana-paryādāna-parijñā 487
sarvāstitva 63, 64, 68, 69, 131, 132, 150, 152–155, 163, 183, 185, 186
Sarvāstivāda 63–65, 67–70, 72, 74, 84, 86, 87, 89, 91, 131–133, 135, 139, 140, 148, 150, 151, 153, 157, 159, 384
sarvathā-sarvahatāndhakāra 291
sarvatraga-hetu 110, 161–163, 171
śaśa-śṛṅga 304
śāśvata-vāda 469
śāṭhya 42, 114, 253, 365
śaśa-śṛṅga 304
savāsanaprahāṇa 404
śāśvata-vāda 469
śāṭhya 42, 114, 253, 365
śaśa-śṛṅga 304
savāsanaprahāṇa 404
śāśvata-vāda 469
śāṭhya 42, 114, 253, 365
śaśa-śṛṅga 304
savāsanaprahāṇa 404
śāśvata-vāda 469
śāṭhya 42, 114, 253, 365
śaśa-śṛṅga 304
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sthāvira</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(See also Śrīlāta)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sthaviravāda</td>
<td>63, 64, 68, 84, 91, 106, 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sthitākampya</td>
<td>495, 524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sthitikālāvedha</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sthitilakṣaṇa</td>
<td>150, 331, 359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sthitisthiti</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sthiulaḥhitrika</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stream-entry</td>
<td>393, 485, 517, 550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>styāna</td>
<td>365, 370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>styāna-middha</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subsumption</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sucarita</td>
<td>432, 446, 451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sugati</td>
<td>45, 553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sukha-vedantya</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sukhendriya</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sūkla</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>summits</td>
<td>463, 488–490, 499, 505–507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sūnyatā</td>
<td>13, 24, 90, 318, 319, 516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supramundane path</td>
<td>395, 396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sūtra-pramāṇa</td>
<td>19, 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sūtra-prāmāṇikā</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sūtra-visoṣa</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svabhāva-vikalpa</td>
<td>260, 301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svalakṣaṇa</td>
<td>83, 84, 138, 152, 156, 159, 324, 538 (see also intrinsic characteristic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svalakṣaṇa-kausālyā</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svaphalākṣepa-kāritra</td>
<td>147 (See also kāritra and activity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>svarūpa</td>
<td>80, 151, 152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sva-samvedana</td>
<td>289, 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tangible</td>
<td>32, 66, 223, 556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatia, N</td>
<td>150, 159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tatsabhāga</td>
<td>141, 145, 149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tattva</td>
<td>84, 528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tattva-manaskāra</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tattvārthā</td>
<td>158, 534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tattvārthaikadesāṇupraśīta-samādhi</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporality</td>
<td>131, 132, 140, 150, 202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theravāda</td>
<td>64, 210, 402, 409, 514, 521, 531, 562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tīkṣṇendriya</td>
<td>283, 496, 518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tīrthakāra</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traidhātukavyāpin</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripitaka</td>
<td>5, 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tri-ratna</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>truth-coursing</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubhayobhāga-vimukta</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uccheda-vāda</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unhindered path</td>
<td>334, 391, 395, 396, 399, 485, 510, 511, 521, 522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upabhāma-hetu</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upacita</td>
<td>421, 461, 463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upādāna-skandha</td>
<td>115, 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upādāya-rūpa</td>
<td>175, 213, 219, 224, 555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upadeśa</td>
<td>5, 6, 7, 20 (see also māṭrykā)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upadhi</td>
<td>325, 539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upakleśa</td>
<td>365, 371, 409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upalabdhi</td>
<td>258, 297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upanāha</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upapādya-vedaniya-karma</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upapatti-prātimbhika</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upapatti-sthāna-prātimbhikā prajñā</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upāsaka</td>
<td>341, 430, 441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upasampad</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upastambha-hetu</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
upavāsa-samvara 443
upavāsastha 430
upeksā 510
ārdhva-bhāgīya 367, 521
uṣmagata/uṣmagata 485, 493, 494, 499, 504, 508, 527
Uttarakuru 343, 494, 500
vaitulya 3, 4, 7
vajropama 65, 380, 382, 393, 397, 408, 486, 487, 522, 523, 536
vajropama-samādhi 65, 380, 382, 393, 397, 486, 487, 523, 536
vāsanā 181, 361, 380, 402, 403–408, 413, 522
vastu 84, 325, 400, 412, 413, 471
Vasubandhu 68, 77, 87, 137, 138, 142, 150, 151, 158, 159, 170, 171, 175, 205, 230, 234, 237, 328, 330, 336, 345, 350, 366, 368, 374, 383, 399, 412, 511, 513, 523, 556, 557
Vāśipūrtīya 91, 101, 103, 187, 275, 384, 558
vedanā 31, 80, 81, 89, 142, 153, 164, 173, 189, 198, 324, 342, 468, 469, 470, 497, 526, 533, 538, 556
Vibhajyavāda 29, 63, 64, 67, 68, 91, 101, 157, 264, 265, 302, 354, 384, 456, 515
vibhaṅga 4, 50, 98
vicāra 42, 241–243, 247, 252, 260, 300, 302
vickitsā 172, 365, 375, 381, 397, 398, 412, 521, 526
vidūṣaṇā-pratipakṣa 399
vidyā 96, 170, 363, 377, 412
view 67, 365, 367, 374, 375, 388, 389, 540 (See also ārṣṭi)
vihimsā 42, 114, 253, 365
vijñāna 31, 180, 201, 325, 345, 360, 469, 470, 559
vijñāna-dhātu 559
Vijñānakāya 64, 131, 191
vijñānti-karma 435, 440, 441, 452
vijñānatmārata 131, 174, 180, 182, 503
Vijñānatmārata-siddhi 316
vijñeya 541
vikalpa 260, 262, 276, 279, 300, 301, 564
vimokṣa 9, 250, 273, 293, 430
vimokṣa-āvaraṇa 273, 293
vimokṣa-mārga 9
Vimśikā vijñānti-mātra-siddhi 316
vimukti-mārga 66, 390, 399, 485, 510, 511, 522, 528
vipāka-hetu 110, 113, 161–163, 173, 325, 424, 438, 454
vipākaja 66, 245, 338, 359, 424
vipāka-phala 47, 163, 191, 202, 207, 481, 536
vipāṣyāna 13, 49, 244, 251, 274, 485, 493, 496–498, 508, 519, 526
vipāṣyāna-bhāvāna 13
vipāṣyāna-carita 498
vipraitisāra 465
viprayukta-saṃskāra 31, 32, 164, 323, 325, 328–332, 334, 349, 351, 355, 515, 517, 539
virāga 503
virāga-dhātu 503
virāti 437, 440, 457, 467
viratyaṅga 431
vīrya 14, 41, 242, 243, 247, 257, 267,
INDEX

486, 491, 508, 510
visabhāga-dhātv-ālambana 398
visamyoga 191, 202, 204, 389, 390, 391, 396, 411, 487, 511, 528, 529, 535, 536, 537, 543, 544
visamyoga-phala 191, 202, 537, 543
visamyoga-prāpti 390, 487, 511, 528, 543
viṣaya 31, 35, 73, 83, 199, 217, 219, 246, 247, 262, 278, 353, 385, 412, 413
viṣaya-pratighāta 217
viṣeṣa-mārga 9, 391, 399, 485
viśuddhi 376
Visuddhimagga 129, 317, 413, 454, 514
vitarka 490, 497
vratāṅga 431
vyākarana 7
vyāñjana-kāya 323, 326, 328, 331, 350, 351
vyāpāda 367, 370, 521
vyavadāna 270
vyāya 44, 164, 194, 348, 349 (see also anityatā)
warmed-up 488–490, 498, 499, 504–507
Western Masters 385
with-outflow 67, 169, 225, 361, 366, 367, 372, 381, 385, 387, 388, 392, 396, 408, 509, 519, 531, 555 (see also sāsrava)
worldly path 361, 373, 391, 392, 393, 523 (see also laukika-mārga)
worldly supreme dharma 488–490, 499, 505–509
Xian-yang Sheng-jiao Lun 6
Xuanzang 64, 124, 145, 147, 188, 207, 214, 215, 236, 237, 341, 388, 401, 411, 518, 533
yathābhūta-parijñāna 502
Yin Shun 64, 68, 88, 157, 411, 481, 529
yoga 367, 541
Yogācāra-bhūmi 6, 383
yoke 367, 369
yoni 357, 369
Yuktavādin 65
yukti 72
Zhi Yi 496
zuoyong 145, 147, 148, 555

637