

## CONCEPTION OF ĀLAYA-VIJÑĀNA IN YOGĀCĀRA PHILOSOPHY

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### Abstract:

Alaya is one of eight consciousness (vijñāna) eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, mind, mana, and alaya. This consciousness is the root of the dharmas, because it has the most powerful effect in all consciousness, it is also called the Master vijñāna. This consciousness is the root of the universal universe, storing all things that make it not lost, so called store-house. It is a place capable of storing and growing things, it is also called the bija (basic seed). Alaya-vijñāna, according to the Yogācāra school, alaya-vijñāna is the basic mind.

In the original Buddhist tradition, the psychological system has only six consciousnesses- vijñāna: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind consciousness. By the time of Mahayana Buddhism, especially the study of the Yogācāra, there was deep discovery within the six consciousnesses that had something that did not break, which led beings to birth and death, that it is the basic characters that works continuously to maintain life, called alaya-vijñāna. However, the earliest manifestations of the alaya-vijñāna is Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra<sup>1</sup>. The word alaya is originally meant for storage to store items, in full words it has three meanings: potential, storage and attachment (ego love).

Alaya-vijñāna are four kinds: good (kusala), defiled (akusala), defiled non-defined (nivrtavyakṛta) and non-defiled non-difined (anivrtavyakṛta). The alaya is non-defiled non defined because it is retribution in its essential nature.

**Key words:** Alaya- vijñāna, store-house, Yogācāra, mind, origination, storage, phenomenon

<sup>1</sup> The chief text of the Dharmalakṣaṇa school, translated into Chinese by Hsuan-Tsang around the fifth century A.D.

## Introduction:

Alaya-vijñāna is the basic consciousness of all the other seven consciousness. One of the effects of alaya-vijñāna is the present variable (manifested, simultaneously transforming). alaya-vijñāna turns out to be a life and a situation in which life is born.

In the fifth verse of Vasubhandu master, from number 1 to number 15 talk about the alaya consciousness<sup>2</sup>. alaya-vijñāna has three tasks:

First, it contains and preserves (potentially) all the seeds (bīja) of what we had spent. The seeds in alaya consciousness are manifestations of everything we have done, experienced, perceived or wisdom. Alaya-vijñāna attracts all the seeds, like magnets attract iron pieces.

Second, alaya consciousness is also the seeds (treasures). Museums are not just multi-story houses. It is also the artwork on display in it. The same is also alaya-vijñāna, which is not only a storehouse of seeds but also seeds in a warehouse. Seeds may differ from the repository, but we only find the seed in the repository. When you have an apple basket, the apples are different from the basket. When the basket is empty, you cannot call it an apple basket. The alaya-vijñāna is both the storehouse (the subject) and the seeds in the storehouse (the object). And when say about alaya consciousness, we mean both: the subject and the object of consciousness-vijñāna.

The third function of alaya-vijñāna is to contain about attachments (ego love) to the self. It is due to the complicated and subtle connection between alaya-vijñāna and mana -vijñāna. Mana-vijñāna arises from the alaya-vijñāna, and it also returns, embracing the alaya-vijñāna, considering it as its separate and independent Self. Most of our suffering is the result of this misconception of Mana-vijñāna<sup>3</sup>

Thus, alaya-vijñāna is the flexible foundation that is capable of accommodating seeds (whether good or evil) ideas, perceptions, impressions (vasana) ... arising in the phenomenon making the seeds become vivid lively and in operation.

And when we understand the function of this consciousness-vijñāna, we will have deep insight and realism in our own minds.

## The Operation of Alaya-Vijñāna:

Due to supposition is the self of the Dharma, is the opening sentence of the thirty verses of Vasubhandu. Like any other science, the field of yogācāra sets up a premise: assume that there is the so-called Self and there are other things called dharma. From that hypothesis, the masters of the Yogācāra school learned about the operation of the human mind.

<sup>2</sup> Treatise in thirty verse on mere consciousness- Swati Ganguly- 1992 ISBN 8120809245 Delhi-p7-144

<sup>3</sup> Lecture No. 16 to No. 22 of the fifty duy bieu ven Thich Nhat Hanh

According to yogacara, each individual's mind can be divided into eight categories, called eight king mind or eight consciousnesses-vijñāna. Masters just temporarily divide it up so that it is easy to understand. In fact, these eight minds are not independent of each other but each of them contains the other seven. The eight consciousnesses act as one block, which can be roughly divided into four stages - like the four film versions of a color image:

The first five vijñāna begin from the five senses of the body. The senses arise when our eyes see the rupas (eye-vijñāna); the ear hears the sound (ear-vijñāna); nose smelling aroma (nose-vijñāna); The tongue tasted things in the mouth (tongue -vijñāna) and when the body touched something (Body-vijñāna).

Mano- vijñāna is the sixth consciousness that arises when we come into contact with any object of recognition. Consciousness has base mind (also is seventh vijñāna mana); there are objects of dhamma that are all things, all phenomena, including those in human consciousness.

Manas, the basis for consciousness arises, is also a consciousness. Manas has the base is alaya-vijñāna and he also considers alaya-vijñāna to be the object. Māna-vijñāna is the seventh of the eight consciousness. This vijñāna is very hungry for a particular self and it embraces the image that it "looks" in alaya, considering it its lover. Therefore mana-vijñāna also sometimes called the lover.

Alaya- vijñāna is the basic mind. Alaya- vijñāna is the storage, including the subject of storage and the object of storage. The basic mind also has another name which is sarvabīja-vijñāna<sup>4</sup> which means all the seeds. Sarva is all. Bīja is a seed. Another name of the mind is ego love. The reason for this name is because the alaya-vijñāna has been mistakenly received by māna-vijñāna, alaya-vijñāna sometimes stuck and lost freedom. The mind becomes the object of love and attachment. The love and attachment, the attachment by mana-vijñāna advocates called ego. Alaya-vijñāna, the object of attachment, is called the attachment (ego love).

The nouns of potential, storage attachment (ego love) are used in Mahayana Buddhism, but the content is also in the sectarian Buddhism. Sarvastivada tradition in the north of Kashmir uses the noun of the basic vijñāna (mūla-vijñāna).

Mūla is the basic, the root. In Thirty Lessons about Consciousness of Vasubhandu also has the basic consciousness in chanting No. 15. Leaning on the basic consciousness; five consciousness automatics occur depending on conditions, or together or not together, like waves leaning on water

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<sup>4</sup> Treatise in thirty verse on mere consciousness- Swati Ganguly- 1992 ISBN 8120809245 : The 8th of eight consciousness (another name of alaya) p 39,40,41

The Theravada script states: "beings' attachment *alaya-vijñāna*, happiness *alaya-vijñāna*, love *alaya-vijñāna* ... so it is difficult to understand to origination" (Majjhima Nikaya). Sutra said: "Buddha says not *dhamma alaya-vijñāna*, but beings just respectfully hold it, stay there to pray for liberation"<sup>5</sup>

The *alaya-vijñāna* is in the potential body: This consciousness is said to be latent in the body, it is the mind that is rooted in maintaining and controlling the life of the body; it exists in every body and works continuously while awake and even when sleeping.

The *alaya-vijñāna* is the store of the seeds (*bija*): The *alaya-vijñāna* also has the name of the *sarvabīja-vijñāna* (the consciousness of all seeds), because it is a storage place store all the seeds (seeds formed from words, actions and thoughts, that is, three karmas: body, speech, and mind). The past karma turns into a seed and is practiced in the *alaya-vijñāna*, then, when it has conditions, it generates a new kamma, this new kamma continues to create new seeds. Because the current consciousness and the *alaya-vijñāna* has a mutual causal relationship with one another, to maintain life continuously, has formed *alaya-vijñāna* theory.

However, studying the Yogācāra sect holds the position "all created by the *alaya-vijñāna* ", so the policy of Yogācāra school.

The *alaya-vijñāna* not only produces the eye consciousness, but also the seventh consciousness is the *mana*, which also produces the body and the natural world (ie, the worldly atmosphere), and it preserve and maintain their continuous existence.

The *alaya-vijñāna* is the object of attachment: The attachment of *mana* the *alaya-vijñāna* makes the self. The *alaya-vijñāna* death and born in every moment, absolutely does not exist and is not a sovereign self, but from the *alaya* produces the *mana vijñāna*, and this consciousness re-attachment the *alaya-vijñāna* to be its self, a constant and masterful self. *Alaya-vijñāna* and *Śūnyatā*<sup>6</sup>

One of the biggest and most difficult problems faced by scholars in the face of the Buddhist doctrine of Anatta is that: If there is really no absolute self that is imperishable, what is the mind to connect human lives. Like the problem of Kimura Taiken (author of Mahayana and Theravada Buddhist ideology), he said that must have the mind to be the basic *Pratīyasamutpada* (Produced by causal conditions) to be able to stand.

Or some doubts of the Magi of Moliya Phagguna, Kassapa, and Timbakura in the Samyutta Sutra such as: If No-self, which is not real, who feels? Who feels? Who are ideas grasped and held (執受; C: zhíshòu)? Or where does suffering come from? Made by me or someone else? ... These are problems that need to be examined more clearly when studying Buddhist philosophy. And in order to solve the nature of these problems, invoking the Consciousness World through the commentaries of Asanga and

<sup>5</sup> Anguttara Nikāya- Mahāyāna-samparigraha-śāstra- Asanga has quoted the meaning of this verse to establish experiences

<sup>6</sup> Mādhyamaka is a Mahāyāna Buddhist school of philosophy which focuses on the analysis of emptiness, and was thus also known as *Śūnyatavāda*

Vasubandhu about *alaya-vijñāna*, to contribute enlightening doubts about Pratiyasamutpada thought – non-self (*nirātman*) and Emptiness (*Śūnyatā*).

It should be noted that, if Emptiness is considered to be the basis of the Madhyamaka Sastra (skt) The Treatise on the Middle way philosophy, then *alaya-vijñāna* is the focal point of the Yogācāra philosophy. Between Madhyamaka and Yogācāra complement each other on the same goal: to solve the Conditionality (Pratiyasamutpada) and selflessness (*nirātman*) of being. Therefore, on the linguistic level, the notion of Depending on another that which arises (*paratantra - svabhava*), which is self-dependent, is synonymous with the concept of no individual nature (*nibsvabhavatas*), or emptiness (*Sunyata*), which is also conditionality (*paticcasamuppāda*). or non-self (*nirātman*). Thus, both Madhyamaka and Yogācāra are aimed at the interpretation of emptiness (*sunyata*). However, it would be a mistake to bring in the *alaya-vijñāna* to replace *sunyata*; Because, as mentioned, between the Consciousness and the Madhyamaka, there is a separate methodology, so their arguments are not interchangeable, at least in terms of language and concepts.

Before going into the *alaya-vijñāna* survey, we need to note some of its essence premise on the basis of the factual treatise and liberation of the treatise.

#### ➤ **How to Perceive Reality**

The whole Buddhist ideology system in general and the Yogācāra philosophy in particular are focused on the way of perceiving reality; this is the vital factor of philosophical problems. Because of the difference between the Buddha's world (the enlightened human being) and the sentient beings (those who are immersed in ignorance), or between the holy man and the ordinary man referenced and delineated by two ways of perceiving reality. For example, on the same thing, but with the transcendent insight of Buddha, it is *Tathāta*, meaning that it exists as itself (to their appearances as they really are). On the contrary, in the discriminatory view of man, things will be perceived as either A or B, meaning that they (objects) appear according to the degree of discrimination of the perceived subject. Here the perceived object is decided by the discriminating concept of the perceiving subject, so it does not appear as itself.

#### ➤ **Basis of Reality Perception**

If the perception of reality is the view of the mind (*citta*) then the basis of realization is the MIND. The mind of the Buddha is understood as. Mind free from discriminating *Nirvikalpa-jñāna* (S), which, in essence, escapes all prejudices of the Self *Pudgala* (S), transcending all the false dualities of the dualism. The mind of Buddha or Buddha nature, as such, is the true reality and is defined as pure and Absolute (The real truth of things) (*Tathāta*)

In contrast, the cognition foundation (mind) human (or unenlightened sentient beings) is born of egoistic thinking. Therefore, that perception always appears as a proposition in the structure of the literature, that is, distinguishing the subject and its attributes or the perceiving subject and the perceived object (dharma). For the self-righteous thought without one of them (or the subject, or object), awareness will not occur. The cause (pudgala) and dharma (dharma) here are the product of dualistic thinking. Therefore, until the cognitive base is established by us, the discriminator, that is, between the subject and the object is considered to be independent entities, then it is still in wishful thinking, and cannot enter reality as reality (dharmatacitta). This cognitive basis is considered to belong to naive realism<sup>7</sup>.

### ➤ **The Essence of The Foundation Cognitive Reality**

From the above two premises, it is clear that foundation cognitive reality of Buddha and sentient beings is the mind. But the Buddha's mind is the absolute purity mind, while the mind of beings is the mind of pollution and impurity. Here, it should be noted that, on the nature (self-nature) of Buddha's mind and sentient beings are homogeneous (Buddha nature), meaning no two, no different.

It is only different from its state is pure or impure. Therefore, in terms of liberation (soteriology), practice is the process of purifying and returning the mind to its original.

Thus, the purpose of yogacara philosophy is to enlighten and explain (deconstruct) the simulated structure of dualistic thinking - which is the basis of suffering and death, to bring people back to reality, true - an ultimate reality without ego.

#### • **Analyzing Alaya-Vijñāna**

The alaya-vijñāna has the function of containing and maintaining the seeds and is the place used to store those seeds. It nourishes those seeds and makes them mature (vipaka) so that they become lifelike and operation. Here, we need to identify the own containment and maintenance of the alaya consciousness which shows that it is a process, not an entity. And on that process, it is misunderstood by mana consciousness, assuming that it is a true ego (ego), and thus emulates the subject (ego) and object (dharma). Until the practitioner reaches a certain level of meditation, that store of treasure will be broken, it will no longer exist.

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<sup>7</sup> Vidyāmātra-siddhi-śāstra-kārikā (S) The Commentary for the consciousness is awful. This book was composed by Vasubhandu Bodhisattva, which was created by Maitreya Bodhisattva in the 5th century. In the 7th century, master Hsuan Tsang translated it into Chinese characters.

The above is a definite part of Hermeneutical on the concept of alaya Consciousness in the Yogācāra doctrine system. Now we enter into the content of alaya vijñana according to the thoughts of Asanga in the Mahayana - satadharma - vidyādvāra - śāstea<sup>8</sup>.

The key to the difference between the Buddhist perspective and the other points of view is that Buddhism sees people and the world of things and phenomena through the lens of dependent origination, so they do not possess any self, any nature, their nature is nonself. Meanwhile, the other views that from man to the world of things, phenomena, each existence has its own egoism in itself, this is the point of view of ontological.

In this aspect (ontological), the alaya consciousness is seen as the center that maintains the simulated structure of existence, including the subject and the object, and the nature of the world with thousands of false differences. This means the realization of reality by a structure and the function of such an alaya-vijñāna, that reality is only a virtual reality.

On the other hand, if there is an established reality from the ignorant and foolish mind, then within the framework of the ontological reality it is the reality of the convention. Therefore, it is still a virtual reality, because that reality is conditioned by the transformation process of the alaya. And thus, a being, whether physical or mental, which is born from praṭītyasamutpāda, is itself the embodiment of the concept of yogacara. Because, apart from Consciousness - the process of perception will not have any existence own independent and immutable nature... Therefore, the way of perceiving reality or evaluating a gist by self-nature (of a subject) is always different from that gist. And in fact, this is the Yogācāra - praṭītyasamutpāda relationship. This was Vasubandhu in the 30 verses on mere consciousness, saying:

These consciousness transforms, differentiating subjects and objects, because they are both emptiness, so all are Consciousness.

However, alaya-vijñāna according to Asanga, includes both parts: impurity and purity. This, as mentioned at the outset, is presented by the Yogācāra philosophy in the reality of epistemology and liberation. In the reality of epistemology, its purpose is to illuminate the structure of the self which is not emptied which the alaya is misled, and then cleaning all purify defilements to restore its pure nature, that is, is the pure vijñāna

Thus, in order to be able to enter the reality of salvation, there is no other way than to be fully aware of simulation structure, unrealistic and transform the alaya-vijñāna, or clean the defilements that are covering its purity. That is the entrance to the reality of Yogācāra. Therefore, according to Asanga,

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<sup>8</sup> The sastra on the Hundred Divisions of all Mental Qualities, or the door to the knowledge of universal phenomena, translated into Chinese by Hsuan-Tsang

in order to achieve the duality of alaya-vijñāna. we need to mention the relationship between the alaya-vijñāna and the three self-nature (tri svabhāva).

Although there is a relationship between Recession and three self-nature, However, it is actually a process of realizing reality in both ways, virtual reality (subject and object) and reality as real (dualistic leave). Also, in terms of self-meaning, it is considered both true and non-true (self-nature established by duality). Thus, it is true that the meaning of the alaya and the three self-nature speaks of the character and the middle-way attitude of practical knowledge presented in the trung quan. three self-nature (tri svabhāva) understanding as follows:

#### 1- Provisionally established of self nature (prajñapti svabhāva)

One thing, in the context of a linguistic and conceptual convention, is identified by a name that is either A or B ...; and, in the eyes of the subject, that thing always possessed an independent (visesa) identity. And the distinctness of a simulated thing should be (by the perceived subject) completely different from that fact, this is called Provisionally established of self nature (prajñapti svabhāva)

. For example, when cutting trees for timber, tables, chairs, houses ..., what we call the specialities of tables, chairs, houses, ... indeed are completely untrue, they are present of untruth conditions. At some point, tables, chairs, houses were rotten, they were used for firewood. At that time, what would be called the difference of tables, chairs, houses would no longer exist. And when, using firewood to make coal, ash, ... even the specialization of firewood, coal, or ash ... is temporary, it is entirely dependent on conditions. Therefore, all concepts, identifiers for the attributes of the world and things, phenomena are conventions, simulations, so they are called autonomous simulations; because it is established on the basis of the aggregates (skandhas) or (蘊處界). Bases (ayatanas) and elements (dhatus)<sup>9</sup>, not on the nature of existing reality.

#### 2- Depending self- nature (paratantra svabhava)

Also called Depending on another that which arises. para-tantra-svabhāva. 依他起性. This nature says that a gist called or non-self, non- nature or non real ... does not mean that it does not exist. But that existence is due to conditions (causal conditions) formed, either vertically (cause and effect), or horizontally, one is present and the other is present. In modern physics, every being has its own set of fusion reactions. Therefore, its nature is Dependent birth Not having an independent nature (paratantra-svabhāva); Here it is called dependent nature.

<sup>9</sup> The five aggregates or skandhas, the twelve bases or ayatana, the eighteen elements or dhatus- Jorgensen, John; Lusthaus, Dan; Makeham, John; Strange, Mark, trans. (2019), *Treatise on Awakening Mahāyāna Faith*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, [ISBN 9780190297718](https://doi.org/10.1017/9780190297718)

The uniqueness of this nature (Dependent Origination) is that it overthrows all doctrines based on or sketched consciousness - as each existence possesses an independent, immutable entity; or Theology - as the reference or reduction of all existence for an absolute, unique cause (absolute oneness). If we deny this original dependence, philosophical and religious systems will fall into, or nothingness, or materialism.

Moreover, another unique feature of original dependence is that: in terms of liberating the treatise, on the one hand it serves as the basis for three self-nature, on the other hand the ultimate liberation can only arise from meditation about it. Because, if taking simulation nature as a basis of practice, this is a beginningless mistake; but if absolute unique -nature is the basis, then this is beyond the scope of human knowledge.

### 3- Absolute nature (parinispāna - svabhāva):

Also known as the perfect true nature (Parinispāna-svabhāva). The nature of this nature is absolute (Tathāta) or the ultimate reality. Here it is not covered by the Provisionally established (parikalpita – svabhāva). Thus, before enlightenment, this self-nature (purity consciousness) is covered by the structure of duality, making it impossible to manifest. And enlightenment, liberation means breaking the structure of the duality from it. Therefore, absolute nature is only experienced when man is free from the world of concept, discrimination of cause and effect, of yes and no, of truth and corruption, of legs and puppets, etc. absolute nature of its always is itself. Thus, the absolute nature is Nirvana.

Thus, the Buddha taught the three natures properties to explain that existence is emptiness, it does not possess the nature or any independent, eternal self. The Buddha taught the three natures with the intention of enlightening the three non- nature of being: the form without nature (Abhāvasvabhāva), Impermanent nature, and Relative truth (paramārtha-satya). Here, before the prospect of the three nature and the three non-nature, all criticisms or opinions about being, emptiness, birth, death, frequent, ceasing, past, future are abandoned. This is the content of the Middle Way<sup>10</sup>(madhyamā-pratipad).

According to Mahayana - Satadharma Vidyādvāra - Śāstra of Mr. Vasubandhu, when a practitioner reaches Immovable ground (Acalābhūmi), The 8th ground of Bodhisattva., the name of the ālaya will cease but only be called Vipāka-vijāna (The consciousness which brings various kinds of karmas to fruition), a connotative term for the ālaya-vijāna, when he attains the position of the Enlightenment; the name Vipāka-vijāna is no longer because the contaminant of the ālaya-

<sup>10</sup> In the doctrine of the yogacara, only the notion that each of the three nature (skt- trisvabhāva) or (c: 三性), has its own full meaning of the Middle Way. Madhyamika and yogacara collected papers of G.M. Nagao Delhi 1992 ISBN 8170303109

vijñāna has been completely purified, so there is only the pure consciousness, or the pure mind naturally (Cittapakṛti - parabhasvara), its nature is pure - smuggled should turn into the Great perfect mirror wisdom. ādarśa-jñāna or Non-discriminative wisdom (nir-vikalpa-jñāna).

This is the ultimate reality or supreme nirvana. Knowing this fully will help us not to fall into extremism, to believe that existence exists either yes or no, nor idealism (cittamātra), arguing that the philosophy of yogacara negates the existence of the world. The phenomenon of things outside the mind. The most important thing here is enlightenment - liberation, that is transformation at the base (Aśrayaparāvṛtti) to a certain level in order to establish a realistic view (yāthabhūtam) of the structure of the simulated reality, simultaneous deconstruct it on the basis of autonomy depending on or Dependent origin. And to do that, it is only necessary to practice meditation, the only, possible way to enter the reality of salvation. This is the path that Buddha walked by himself.

### **Conclusion:**

In short, the study of the alaya helps us to shed light on our path of practice. There, require for a reflection on the egoless nature of being and a maximum effort to overcome all the remnants of habit (vāsanā) from many generations.

This alaya consciousness is the root of things, so it is called store-consciousness; because it has the strongest effect of consciousness, it is also called the Master consciousness. This consciousness is the root of the universal universe, containing all things to make it not lose, so it is called the tathāgata-garbha. Again, because it is a seed capable of storing and growing all things, it is also called the Seed Consciousness.

The attainment in this meditation will help people to come out of suffering and attain supreme wisdom, and this is also the basic practice of Buddhism. until all defilements of structure remain in the mind, then the alaya is still a treasure containing all thoughts. And only when all thoughts are eliminated, that is when nirvana manifests. Remember that Nirvana is not present in the past, nor in the future, but Nirvana is always present with reality - a reality without ego, a reality that is - now and here.

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