

VASUBANDHU
VIJÑAPTIMĀTRATĀSIDDHI. TRIMŚIKĀKĀRIKĀ
(THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOLE EXISTENCE OF IDEATION.
THE TREATISE IN 30 VERSES)

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Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi is probably the most famous of Vasubandhu's writings and it consists of two treatises: *Viṃśikārikā* and *Triṃśikārikā*. The first of them is rather an apologetical text, mainly interested in exposing and refuting the objections brought to Idealism. *Triṃśikārikā* (*The treatise in 30 verses*) represents the assertive presentation of the Idealist doctrine done by Vasubandhu. After having rejected the major objections brought to Idealism in *Viṃśikārikā*, in this text he exposes his own doctrine.

The outline of Vijñānavāda doctrine presented here represents the classical form of this philosophy, the text being a landmark for the history of Buddhist Idealism.

Very briefly, the text depicts the eight types of consciousness of which Vijñānavāda avails for the idealist explanation of the entire existence: the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), the "mind" (*manas*), the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and the five sensorial consciousnesses. Then, Vasubandhu presents the metaphysical and soteriological implications of the statute of "ideation" (*vijñapti*), bringing to the fore the vacuity, the absence of own-being involved by such a condition. This statement bears important soteriological consequences, since it abolishes the objective reality of bondage. The final part of the text points to the fact that the idealist doctrine preached by Vijñānavāda is nothing more than a deconstructive "skill-in-means" which, eventually, should be itself discarded in order to reach the condition of untainted purity of the Absolute. Only at the moment the Vijñānavāda practitioner liberates himself even from his own religion he reaches the final goal of his spiritual path.