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**HUMAN STATES OF AWARENESS IN VIJÑĀNAVĀDA BUDDHISM (THE OPERATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESSES - PRAVRṬṬI VIJÑĀNA)**

**Abstract:** After being engendered through the appropriating activity (*upādāna*) of the mind (*manas*), applied to the universal experience of the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), the individual experience is constituted through the conjoint activity of the six “operational consciousnesses” (*pravṛtti vijñāna*): the five sensory consciousnesses and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). The brute sensory experience is projected by the five sensory consciousnesses, approximating the senses, but being rather some faculties (*indriya*), capacities, the potentiality of consciousness to engender some specific types of experience. In Vijñānavāda, the sensory experience is totally devoid of concept (*vikalpa*), presenting itself as an amorphous flow of sensory inputs. Conceptualization is performed by the mental consciousness which, in an illusory manner, projects the categorically discriminated entities onto the sensory flow. Vijñānavāda authors claim that the conceptually determined entities created by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) are purely fictitious, hence the mental consciousness projecting a totally illusory ontological sphere, which broadly comprises all the states of human awareness. Most of the human conscious experiences take place at the level of this conceptual sphere, this meaning that human awareness and the entire human drama involve mainly illusory entities.

Therefore, conceptual experience is severely flawed, firstly, because it is produced at the level of the limited individual self (*ātman*), and, secondly, due to its fictitious character (*vitatha*).

**Keywords:** Buddhism, *Vijñānavāda*, mental consciousness, *manovijñāna*, operational consciousness, *pravṛtti vijñāna*, perception, concept, category.

**STĂRILE DE CONȘTIENȚĂ, ÎN BUDHISMUL VIJÑĀNAVĀDA (CONȘTIINȚELE OPERAȚIONALE - PRAVRṬṬI VIJÑĀNA)**

**Rezumat:** După ce a luat naștere în urma activității apropiatoare (*upādāna*) a minții (*manas*) aplicată experienței universale a conștiinței-depozit

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(*ālayavijñāna*), experiența individuală se constituie prin activitatea conjugată a celor șase „conștiințe operaționale” (*pravṛttivijñāna*): cele cinci conștiințe senzoriale și conștiința mentală (*manovijñāna*). Experiența perceptuală brută este proiectată de către cele cinci conștiințe senzoriale, echivalente aproximative ale simțurilor, dar reprezentând mai degrabă niște facultăți (*indriya*), capacități, potențialitatea conștiinței de a da naștere unor anumite tipuri de experiență. În Vijñānavāda, experiența senzorială este într-un total lipsită de concept (*vikalpa*), prezentându-se sub înfățișarea unui flux amorf de impulsuri senzoriale. Conceptualizarea este operată de către conștiința mentală care, într-o manieră iluzorie, proiectează entități discriminate categoric asupra registrului fluxului senzorial. Autorii Vijñānavāda susțin că entitățile determinate conceptual create de conștiința mentală (*manovijñāna*) reprezintă pure ficțiuni, în felul acesta, conștiința mentală dând naștere unui registru ontologic în totalitate iluzoriu, care, în mare măsură, cuprinde toate stările de conștiință umană. Cele mai multe experiențe conștiente ale omului se produc la nivelul acestui registru ontologic fictiv, aceasta însemnând că întreaga dramă umană implică, în principal, obiecte iluzorii.

În felul acesta, experiența conceptuală are un caracter radical alterat: în primul rând, deoarece este produsă la nivelul individual și astfel preia toate limitările condiției individuale (*ātman*), și, în al doilea rând, datorită caracterului său fictiv (*vitatha*).

**Cuvinte cheie:** budhism, *Vijñānavāda*, conștiință mentală, *manovijñāna*, conștiințe operaționale, *pravṛtti vijñāna*, percepție, concept, categorie.

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### 1. The operational consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*) and the conscious human experience

#### The projection of the individual being at the level of the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) and of the mind (*manas*) as a process inaccessible to the human awareness

The appropriating activity (*upādāna*) of the mind (*manas*), applied to the universal experience of the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), is the one through which the individual being (*ātman*, *pudgala*) is constituted. Due to the fact that they precede the individual, representing the conditions (*pratyaya*) for him to be constituted, the individual being is not aware of these two types of experience, they are not encompassed within his field of conscious experience, over which he has a certain degree of freedom. It is precisely for this reason that they can represent bondage. Something is able to enchain only if it escapes the control of the person it is chaining. Otherwise, it would be nothing else but a contingent

experience of the subject, which would not have the capacity to alter his nature in any way.

Therefore, the mind (*manas*) and the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) create the individual sphere of experience. The individual consciousness is constituted through the following two steps: the appearance of the ideations of the storehouse consciousness, at their universal level, and the limiting and appropriating activity (*upādāna*) of the mind. Buddhism and other philosophical systems which approach this issue do not succeed in offering details regarding the manner in which it is possible for the consciousness to get enchained as a result of a process which takes place nowhere else but at its own level. The universal consciousness undergoes this process of self-limitation through which its own ideations lead it into error and enchain it; it is difficult for the human reason to understand how such a process is possible, but the fact that it takes place is clearly stated in the Buddhist texts. The very idea of “individual being (*ātmabhāva*)”, the way it is depicted in Vijñānavāda, contains something hard to fathom by the human reason, the fact that a human being is nothing else but the universal consciousness entrapped in its own ideations.

#### **The sphere of the operational consciousnesses as the sphere of the individual consciousness**

The individual sphere of awareness is explained in Vijñānavāda on the basis of the six operational consciousnesses (*pravṛtti vijñāna*).<sup>1</sup>

„V.4. Being established (*saṃniśritya*), being founded (*saṃniśritya pratiṣṭhāya*) in the appropriating consciousness (*ādānavijñāna*), a group of six consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) is born: the visual consciousness (*caḥsurvijñāna*), the auditory (*śrotra*) consciousness, the olfactory (*ghrāṇa*) consciousness, the gustatory (*jihvā*) consciousness, the tactile (*kāya*) consciousness and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*).”<sup>2</sup>

The term “*pra-vṛtti*” derives from the root “*pra-vṛt*”, root which has quite a multifarious semantic range. However, all meanings converge on the idea of “engaging in an activity”, of “carrying it (*vṛt*) it forward (*pra*)”.<sup>3</sup> Essential for the case in point is the connotation of “conscious activity”, an activity deployed under

<sup>1</sup> For a study on the operational consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*), see Swati Ganguly, *Treatise in Thirty Verses on Mere-consciousness*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1992, pp.45-46!

<sup>2</sup> *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, V.4, E. Lamotte, *Sandhinirmocana Sūtra. L'explication des mysteres*, Institut Orientaliste, Louvain, 1935, p. 185.

<sup>3</sup> See Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1997, pp.693-694!

Williams-Monier, *op.cit.*, p.693, „*pra-vṛt*” has the meaning „to proceed”, „to commence”, „to begin to”, „to set about”, „to engage in”, „to be intent upon”, „to be occupied with”, „to behave”, „to conduct one's self towards”, „to deal with”.

pag. 694, „*pravṛtti*” – „activity”, „exertion”, „efficacy”, „active life”, „giving one's self to”, „application”, „use”, „employment”, „conduct”, „behaviour”, „practice”.

the control of the individual. “*Pravṛtti*” is not synonymous with “*pariṇāma*” (“transformation”) because the “transformations of consciousness” (*vijñānapariṇāma*) refer to any type of dynamics of the consciousness, not only to those encompassed within the sphere of individual awareness, while “*pravṛttivijñāna*” refers strictly to the individual awareness.<sup>4</sup>

The operational consciousnesses have, in case of an individual being, a contingent existence; at a certain moment, any of them may be either present, or absent, according to the specific conditions (*pratyaya*) of that moment.<sup>5</sup> Although the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) necessarily accompanies the activity of the five sensory consciousnesses, it is not always present as under certain circumstances it itself can be missing. The certain degree of freedom that each individual has in respect of his awareness is due precisely to the fact that this awareness can be, at least to a certain extent, controlled by him. Any perception, any conceptual discrimination can be stopped by the individual. The situation is not the same in case of the experience of the mind (*manas*) or of the experience of the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*). The conditions for their activity to happen are not related to the individual and, thus, they escape his conscious control. Not even the experience of the mind, of constituting the individuality, is related to the individual, but it precedes him.

„15. The five (*pañca*) [sensory consciousnesses] take birth (*udbhava*) in the root-consciousness (*mūlavijñāna*)<sup>6</sup> according to the conditions (*yathāpratyaya*). The consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) [are born] together (*saha*) or not, like the waves (*taraṅga*) in the water (*jala*).

16. The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is always (*sarvadā*) produced (*sambhūti*), except for (*ṛta*) [the states] devoid of concept (*asaṃjñika*), slumber (*middha*), fainting (*mūrcchana*), the unconscious ones (*acittaka*) or in the two attainments (*samāpatti*).”<sup>7</sup>

„V.5. These are like the water streams of a great river. If the conditions (*pratyaya*) for the birth (*utpatti*) of one wave appear, one single wave occurs (*pravṛt*). If the conditions for the birth of two or more waves appear, several waves

<sup>4</sup> For the relation between the operational consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*) and the conscious experience, see Ashok Kumar Chatterjee, *The Yogācāra Idealism*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1999, p.106!

<sup>5</sup> For an analysis of the activity of the six operational consciousnesses and of the conditions which their activity depends on, see Ming-Wood Liu, *The mind-only teaching of Ching-ying Hui-Yuan: An early interpretation of Yogaacaara thought in China*, „Philosophy East and West”, no. 35, vol.4, 1985, p.363!

<sup>6</sup> In the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*).

<sup>7</sup> „15. *pañcānāṃ mūlavijñāne yathāpratyayamudbhavaḥ /*

*vijñānānāṃ saha na vā taraṅgānāṃ yathā jale //*

16. *manovijñānasambhūtiḥ sarvadāsaṃjñikādrte /*

*samāpattidvayānmiddhānmūrcchanādapyacittakāt //*”

Vasubandhu, *Triṃśikā*, 15-16, S. Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu. The Buddhist Psychological Doctor*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1998, p.443.

occur. Nevertheless, regarding the river to whom the water streams belong, it is known that it is neither interrupted (*samucchitti*), neither exhausted (*parikṣaya*).<sup>8</sup>

### The six operational consciousnesses

The six operational consciousnesses are, according to Vijñānavāda, the visual consciousness (*cakṣurvijñāna*), the auditory consciousness (*śrotravijñāna*), the olfactory consciousness (*ghrāṇavijñāna*), the gustatory consciousness (*jihvāvijñāna*), the tactile consciousness (*kāyavijñāna*) and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). The first five are adjacent to each other, complementary; the ideations of each of them constitute the specific ideations of each of the five senses. The mental consciousness is though in a different type of relationship with the other five operational consciousnesses; it takes over the raw sensory material of the first five operational consciousnesses and ascribes conceptual determinations to it, including it into specific categories.

The visual consciousness (*cakṣurvijñāna*), the auditory consciousness (*śrotravijñāna*), the olfactory consciousness (*ghrāṇavijñāna*), the gustatory consciousness (*jihvāvijñāna*) and the tactile consciousness (*kāyavijñāna*), on the one hand, and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), on the other, form the two main divisions of the operational consciousnesses. The terminology of the school does not have though a generic term for the five sensory consciousnesses. Sometimes, they are labelled “the five consciousnesses” (*pañcavijñāna*) or, simply, “the five” (*pañca*). Or, while the storehouse consciousness is sometimes called “the eighth consciousness”, the mind is called “the seventh consciousness”, the five sensory consciousnesses are called “the five consciousnesses” and the mental consciousness is termed “the sixth consciousness”.

Explaining human experience in terms of the six operational consciousnesses represents, somehow, an excessive simplification of the human experience. The system of the six operational consciousnesses accounts for the cognitive activities of a human being; however, it does not account for the volitive, active experiences. These aspects of human experience find no systematic explanation in Vijñānavāda literature.

## 2. The five sensory consciousnesses

### The idealist interpretation of the senses as sensory faculties (*indriya*), as the five sensory consciousnesses

The five sensory consciousnesses, generally labelled “the five consciousnesses” (*pañcavijñāna*), equal the sensory faculties, the senses of a being.

<sup>8</sup> „mahata udakaughasya vahataḥ sa ced ekasya taraṅgasyotpattipratyayaḥ pratyupasthito bhavaty ekam eva taraṅgaṃ pravartate / sa ced dvayoḥ sambahulānāḥ taraṅgānām utpattipratyayaḥ pratyupasthito bhavati / sambahulāni taraṅgāni pravartante / na ca tasyodakaughasya srotasā vahataḥ samucchittir bhavati na parikṣayaḥ prajñāyate /”  
*Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, V.5, Lamotte, *op.cit.* 1935, p.186.

Hence, the term “sensory consciousnesses”, although not to be found in the Sanskrit terminology of Vijñānavāda, renders their status well enough.

„II.117. The five [sensory consciousnesses] manifest (*khyā*) the perceivable ones (*dr̥śya*)<sup>9</sup>.”<sup>10</sup>

„The third transformation of consciousness (*vijñānapariṇāma*) has as its nature the comprehension of the sensory fields (*viśayopalabdhyātmaka*). Through this statement, the own-being (*svabhāva*) and the aspect (*ākāra*) of the six consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) is being indicated.”<sup>11</sup>

If we consider the idealist metaphysical context of Vijñānavāda, we can also equate the sensory consciousnesses with the sensory organs.

„The name [of the operational consciousness] is established according to the [sensory] organ, because the organ has five functions [in relation to an operational consciousness]: the consciousness (*vijñāna*) has the organ as a support (*āśraya*), the consciousness is determined (*vidhā*) by the condition of the organ, the seeds (*bīja*) of the consciousnesses depend on the organ, [the apparition] of the consciousness is simultaneous with [the activity] of the organ, the consciousness conforms to the organ.”<sup>12</sup>

According to Vijñānavāda, the manifestation of the sensory experience represents a process which takes place exclusively at the level of consciousness (*vijñāna*); otherwise, the idealism would have been compromised. What to the common sense, affected by the erroneous belief in the existence of the “external” objects (*bāhya artha*), appears as a sensory organ, as an entity exterior to the consciousness, which only mediates the production of sensory ideations at the level of the consciousness, according to Vijñānavāda, is nothing else but a certain function (*sāmarthyā*) of the consciousness. The eye (*cakṣus*) is not an outer instrument through which consciousness could acquire visual experiences being determined from the outside, but is rather a function, a capacity of the consciousness to experience visual sensations. The senses (*indriya*) are sensory faculties rather than sensory organs. Vijñānavāda even tries to explain this condition of the senses (in Sanskrit, *indriya*) on the basis of the etymology of the Sanskrit word “*indriya*”, which is derived from “*indra*”. The word “*indra*”, in spite of the uncertainties related to its precise etymology, does convey the meaning of “power”, “capacity”.<sup>13</sup>

„As their name, «*indriya*», indicates, [the senses] are only «capacities» (*śakti*), and not external objects, derived from the four material elements

<sup>9</sup> “*Dr̥śya*”, literally, „seen”, „visible”.

<sup>10</sup> „II.117. ....*pañcanām khyāyate dr̥śyam* /”

*Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, cap.II, vers 117, Bunyiu Nanjio, *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, Bibliotheca Otaniensis, Otani University, Kyoto, vol.1, 1956, p.48.

<sup>11</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch’eng-wei-shih-lun*, Louis de la Vallee Possin, *Vijñaptimtratātrāsiddhi. La Siddhi de Hiuan-Tsang*, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris, vol. I, 1928, p. 291-2.

<sup>12</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch’eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 289.

<sup>13</sup> See Monier-Williams, *op.cit.*, p. 166-167!

(*bhautikarūpa*). A compact (*sapratigha*)<sup>14</sup> form (*rūpa*), existing outside the consciousness, cannot be logically accepted. Therefore, the five organs, just as their five objects, all these ten fields (*āyatana*), are nothing but transformations of consciousness.

Nevertheless, although all these pertain to the consciousness, are nothing but transformations of the consciousness, their functions are manifold. Hence, the one which produces the visual consciousness, the one which represents the condition for the birth of the visual consciousness, is named «the organ eye » (*caḥsur-indriya*).<sup>15</sup>

„The name of «senses» (*indriya*) is given to the potentialities (*sāmarthya*) of forms (*rūpa*), which lie within the consciousness.”<sup>16</sup>

„7..... The senses (*indriya*) have the nature (*rūpa*) of capacities (*śakti*), because they represent auxiliary causes (*sahakārin*) which determine [the production of sensations].”<sup>17</sup>

„Therefore, for us, just as the form is interior, the eye also is an interior proper being.”<sup>18</sup>

Sensory faculties can be best explained in terms of seeds (*bīja*), of imprints (*vāsanā*), of karmic residues. Vijñānavāda considers that the entire experience of a being (*ātman*, *pudgala*) is the result of the appropriation (*upādāna*) of a certain individual basis (*ātmāśraya*) and of the seeds (*bīja*) belonging to it, under the determination of the karmic imprints (*karmavāsanā*). The sensory experience is nothing else but a particular aspect of the appropriated individual experience.<sup>19</sup> Due to the existence of some specific karmic imprints, at the moment of reincarnation (*pratisamdhī*), the consciousness (*vijñāna*) appropriates, among others, the seeds (*bīja*) which, later on, will engender the sensory experience. The concepts of “sensory faculty”, “sense” (*indriya*) are nothing else but generic names for a certain type of individual experience which happens, just as in case of other

<sup>14</sup> *Sapratigha* – literally, which opposes resistance to penetration.

<sup>15</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch’eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 42.

<sup>16</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch’eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 231-232.

In this passage, Hiuan-Tsang deals with an opinion of Dignāga, which, nevertheless, is in agreement with the system of classical Vijñānavāda.

<sup>17</sup> „*sahakāriṅvaśādyaddhi śaktirūpaṃ [tat] indriyam //*”

Dignāga, *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, 7, in Śāstri N. Aiyasvami, *The Ālambana-parīkṣā of Acarya Dignāga with Commentaries of Vinītadeva and Dharmapala*, „Adyar Library Bulletin”, 6, 1942, p.52.

The sanskrit text is not the original, but Śāstri’s reconstruction.

<sup>18</sup> Vinītadeva, *Commentary on Ālambanaparīkṣā*, 7, in Śāstri, *op. cit.* 1942, p.52, note 46.

Śāstri’s translation was done from the French translation of Yamaguchi.

<sup>19</sup> For the interpretation of the sensory faculties and their activity as karmic transformation, see Tom Johannes Frank Tillemans, *Materials for the study of Aryadeva, Dharmapala and Candrakīrti : the Catuhsataka of Aryadeva, chapters XII and XIII, with the commentaries of Dharmapala and Candrakīrti*, Université de Lausanne, 1990, p. 258-259 (note 281) and 283-284!

individual experiences, due to some specific seeds (*bīja*) that the consciousness has appropriated.<sup>20</sup>

The fact that the senses do not represent objects (*artha*), parts of the human body, is also proved by the fact that they are not known directly, by perception (*pratyakṣa*), as it should have happened if the realist theory of perception had been true. Even if a certain sense is an intermediary for the production of certain perceptions, an alleged condition of “object” (*artha*) would have made the sense itself perceptible. According to Vijñānavāda, the manner in which a human becomes aware of his own sensory capacities is by inference (*anumāna*); more precisely, by the abstractization of the sensory experiences of a certain type. The repeated, persistent experience of a certain type of sensation (*pratyakṣa*) proves the existence of a certain predisposition (*sāmarthya*) of the consciousness, which is nothing else but the sensory faculty (*indriya*). Each and every sensory faculty is known through its particular activity, namely the sensations of a particular type. As evidence in support of this fact stands the common experience, which shows that the concepts referring to particular colours, particular shapes etc. are phenomenologically prior to the concepts of “seeing”, “sight”<sup>21</sup>.

„The senses (*indriya*), representing the supports of the [operational] consciousnesses, are not known through perception (*pratyakṣapramāṇa*). Their existence is inferred from their activities; they are those who give birth to the ideations.”<sup>22</sup>

„The senses (*indriya*) are inferred (*anu-man*) from their own activities (*svakārya*), as having the nature (*rūpa*) of capacities (*śakti*); [they] are not material elements (*bhautika*).”<sup>23</sup>

### **The accidental, contingent association between the corporeal organs and the sensory faculties**

The fact that, through inference (*anumāna*), a human notices the existence of an association between a certain sense and a certain part of his body is simply a finding subsequent to the mere awareness of the activity of the sensory faculties (*indriya*). The comprehension of the sensory faculty is already accomplished when a certain sense is associated to a certain body part and, therefore, this association is nothing else but an accidental determination ascribed to that particular sense. A

<sup>20</sup> For a criticism of the realistic theories of perception, see Dharmapāla, *Catuḥśatakavṛtti*, ad. *Catuḥśataka*, V.311-317, in Tillemans, *op.cit.*, vol. I, p.150-161! Throughout the dispute, Dharmapāla brings several arguments in favour of the idea that senses are nothing else but karmic potentialities of the consciousness.

<sup>21</sup> An analysis that emphasises the fact that the organ “eye” is different than the sight itself and which demonstrates the inferred nature of the knowledge referring to the existence of the organ “eye”, in *Abhidharmakośa*, I.9 and in *Dhammasaṅgani*, 616, 628.

<sup>22</sup> Hsuan-Tsang, *Ch’eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.42.

<sup>23</sup> „*indriyaṃ svakāryāt śaktirūpamevānumīyate na tu bhautikam !*”  
Dignāga, *Ālambanaparīkṣāvṛtti*, ad. 7, in Śāstri, *op.cit.* 1942, p.52.  
The sanskrit text is not the original, but Śāstri’s reconstruction.

human becomes aware of his visual abilities before realising the existence of his eyes and, of course, before making the association between the eye and the sight. No matter how tight is the association between a sensory faculty and a particular bodily organ, the sense itself is different from the bodily organ associated to it. The sensory faculty (*indriya*) is of an ideatic nature (*viññapti*); it simply represents the propensity (*sāmarthya*) of the consciousness (*viññāna*) to experience a particular type of ideations (*viññapti*). Even if the activity of a particular sensory faculty is associated to the activity of a particular body part, it does not mean that the nature of the sensory faculty includes in any way the nature of that particular organ. The association between a sense and a certain bodily organ is made empirically, a posteriori; there would be nothing contradictory about the possibility of the existence of some sensory representations in the absence of the organ associated to that particular sense.

The existence of a distinction between the sensory faculty itself (the sensory consciousness), on the one hand, and the bodily component associated to it, on the other, also clearly results from the opposition between the personal, individual, non-common (*asādhāraṇa*) character of the sensory faculty and the public, common, shared (*sādhāraṇa*) character of the bodily component, which is available not only to the experience of the individual himself, but equally to the experience of the other beings.

The late Tibetan or Chinese authors of Vijñānavāda, even outline a distinction between two components that usually make up the senses of a being. Thus, they distinguish between a purely formal component (the sensory faculty, the sensory consciousness) and a bodily one, consisting of those body parts which particular sensory faculties were associated to. These bodily components are the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue and the body or, more precisely, the skin. In terms of the division between the representation component (*darśanabhāga*) and the object component (*nimittabhāga*), division operated during the later stages of Vijñānavāda, the bodily component of the senses relates to the perceived object component (*nimittabhāga*), experienced as exterior to consciousness, while the purely formal component pertains to the individual awareness, to the representation component (*darśanabhāga*).

„The five consciousnesses are all supported by organs of pure form ..... The foolish have difficulty in distinguishing consciousness from organ.”<sup>24</sup>

### **The idealistic interpretation of the sensory contact**

The condition of faculties of the consciousness, of capacities (*sāmarthya*), ascribed to the senses (*indriya*) also has certain implications regarding the nature of the sensory contact (*pratyakṣa*). This can no longer be considered in a realistic manner, as the interaction (*saṃnipāta*) between consciousness (*viññāna*) and

<sup>24</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Pa-shih kuei-chu sung*, R. Epstein, *Verses Delineating the Eight Consciousnesses*, „Vajra Bodhi Sea”, Dec.1997, p.38.

something from outside (*bāhya artha*), but it is reinterpreted as a process that takes place entirely at the level of consciousness. More precisely, the sensory contact (*sparśa*) takes place when certain internal conditions (*pratyaya*) of consciousness are fulfilled, when the condition of consciousness allows the actualization of the sensory potentiality (*śakti, sāmārthya*) of the senses. Vijñānavāda doesn't explicitly deny the realistic description of the sensory contact, which depicts it as "the conjunction of three [elements]" (*trkasamnipāta*), that is the conjunction (*samnipāta*) between consciousness (*vijñāna*), sense (*indriya*) and object (*viśaya*), but it reinterprets it in idealistic terms. All three elements involved in the production of the sensory contact (*sparśa*) are reinterpreted as transformations of consciousness (*vijñānapariṇāma*), as conditions of consciousness, and their conjunction represents just the actualization of some internal conditions of consciousness which, once realised, will engender another transformation, namely the sensory contact.

„These three preexist in the state of seeds (*bīja*). The sensory contact (*sparśa*) which also preexists in the state of seeds (*bīja*) is based on these three to be reborn. .... This activity is called [karmic] «maturation» (*vipāka*). The sensory contact (*sparśa*) is such a maturation.”<sup>25</sup>

### 3. The five sensory consciousnesses and the non-determined (*avikalpaka*) perception (*pratyakṣa*)

#### The experience of the five sensory consciousnesses as non-determined perception

As previously shown, the five sensory consciousnesses are quite precise equivalents for the “senses”, for the “sensory faculties”. At the same time, the experience engendered at their level can be considered as the sensory knowledge, the sensory datum.

However, there is a very significant difference between what is understood by “sensory knowledge”, “sensory datum”, “sensory experience” (*pratyakṣa*) in Vijñānavāda and the meaning of these concepts in the majority of the western philosophical systems. Vijñānavāda insists upon the absence of conceptualization, of categorial discrimination (*vikalpa, samjñā*), in case of the experience of the five sensory consciousnesses. Their ideations (*vijñapti*) present themselves as an amorphous flow, void of determination, void of internal delimitation. The categorial schematism, the categorial subsumption (*vikalpa, parikalpa, samjñā*), represents a subsequent stage of experience, performed by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*)<sup>26</sup>. In Kantian terminology, the ideations of the five

<sup>25</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Ganguly, *op.cit.*, p. 82 (slightly modified).

<sup>26</sup> The conceptually non-determined nature of perception is also stated by other schools of Indian philosophy. For instance, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika includes the term “*avyapadeśa*” (“that which can not be indicated”) in the definition of perception (*pratyakṣa*). See Gautama, *Nyāyasūtra*, I.2.4, and N. Aiyasvami Sastri, *The Alambana-pariksa of Acarya Dignaga with*

sensory consciousnesses represent apperception, i.e. the raw sensory material of knowledge, which no formalism of any kind, no categorial scheme has been applied to yet.

The only specification regarding the type of experience characteristic to the five sensory consciousnesses is that each consciousness corresponds to a determined type of sensation: the visual consciousness (*cakṣurvijñāna*) is associated to the ideation (*vijñapti*) of shape and colour (*rūpa*)<sup>27</sup>, the auditory consciousness (*śrotravijñāna*) is associated to the ideations of sound (*śabda*), the olfactory consciousness (*ghrāṇavijñāna*) is associated to the ideations of smell (*gandha*), the gustatory consciousness (*jihvāvijñāna*) is associated to the ideations of taste (*rasa*) and the tactile consciousness (*kāyavijñāna*) is associated to the tactile ideations (*spraṣṭavya*). The last category also includes thermal sensations and sensations associated to weight.<sup>28</sup>

„8. The third consists in the six kinds<sup>29</sup> of apprehension (*upalabdhi*) of the sensory fields (*viśaya*).”

[Bhāṣya:] .....«The six kinds»: the meaning (*artha*) is the apparition (*pratipatti*) of the perceptions (*grahana*), of the comprehensions (*upalabdhi*) of the fields (*viśaya*), whose nature (*ātmaka*) is of six kinds: form (*rūpa*), sound (*śabda*), smell (*gandha*), taste (*rasa*), touch (*spraṣṭavya*) and factors (*dharma*).”<sup>30</sup>

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*Commentaries of Vinitadeva and Dharmapala*, „Bulletin of Tibetology”, 1-3, 1980, p.218-220!

The Vedānta logicians as well noticed the fact that, at first, perception has a raw shape, being unconceptualized; the perceptual material is only later on included under categories. Thus, in Vedānta, there are two stages of perception: “the perception devoid of conceptualization” (*nirvikalpakapratyakṣa*) and “the perception accompanied by conceptualization” (*savikalpakapratyakṣa*). See Dharmarāja Advarīndra, *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, in Swami Madhavananda, *Vedānta-Paribhāṣa of Dharmarāja Adhvarīndra*, Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, 1997, p.32-33.

<sup>27</sup> The Sanskrit term “*rūpa*” may mean both “shape” and “colour”.

<sup>28</sup> The fact that the only possible specification regarding the content of perception is the one referring to its typology (visual, auditory etc.) led to an etymological interpretation of the term “*pratyakṣa*” (“perception”) which claims that the term would mean “corresponding to each (*prati*) sensory organ (*akṣa*)”. Perception can be determined only with reference to the specific sensory organ involved in its production. See Tillemans, *op.cit.*, p. 273-274 (notes 365-367)!

<sup>29</sup> The text speaks about „six kinds” since it also considers the mental consciousness and its specific sphere, namely the sphere of the constructed own-beings (*parikalpa svabhāva*). According to *Triṃśikā*, the operational consciousnesses represent the third type of transformation, the first two being the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) and the mind (*manas*).

<sup>30</sup> „8. *trītyaḥ ṣaḍvidhasya yā viśayasupalabdhiḥ sā* /”

[Bhāṣya:] ..... *ṣaḍvidhasyeti* *ṣatprakārasya rūpaśabdagandharaspraṣṭavyadharmātmakasya viśayasya yā upalabdhirgrahanaṃ pratipattirityarthāḥ* /”

**Perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference, subsequent knowledge (*anumāna*), according to the Sautrāntika-Yogācāra logicians**

The logicians of Vijñānavāda, known under the name of “Sautrāntika-Yogācāra”, will largely discuss on the topic of the opposition between the undetermined nature of perception (*pratyakṣa*) and the subsequent mental determination (*anumāna*). Perception, according to the Sautrāntika-Yogācāra logicians, constitutes the mere experimentation of something, without identifying that something or including it into any category of the intellect.

Moreover, one of the classical definitions given to perception in the texts of this school states that perception “is devoid of mental construction” (*kalpanāpoḍha*). A positive definition of perception, which would conceptually indicate what perception represents, is impossible due to this distinction between perception (*pratyakṣa*) and conceptual construction (*kalpanā*).

The instance which does the conceptualization is the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) or, in the terminology of Sautrāntika-Yogācāra, conceptualization pertains to inference, to subsequent knowledge (*anumāna*), and not to perception (*pratyakṣa*).

**The experience of the sensory consciousnesses as non-erroneous (*vitatha*), non-afflicted (*akliṣṭa*) experience**

Though the experience of the sensory consciousnesses can never be found isolatedly, but it is always accompanied by the afflicted experience of the mind (*manas*) and by the erroneous experience of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), yet, intrinsically, the sensorial experience is neither afflicted (*kliṣṭa*), nor erroneous (*vitatha*). The sensory experience becomes afflicted when associated to the perception of an ego (*ātma-dr̥ṣṭi*), perception engendered by the mind (*manas*); it becomes erroneous when superimposed with the conceptual nature (*svabhāva*), the conceptual identities, categories (*vikalpa*) engendered by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*).

“The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is the support of conceptualization (*vikalpa-āśraya*), in regard to these [sensory data].

The mind (*manas*) is the support (*āśraya*) of their affliction (*saṃkleśa*) or purification (*vyāvadāna*), since their afflicted or purified character depends on it.”<sup>31</sup>

Impossible to be ever met in isolation, but only along with the conceptual experience (*parikalpa*) of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and with the appropriating experience (*upādāna*) of the mind (*manas*), the sensory experience

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Vasubandhu, *Triṃśikā*, 8, Anacker, *op.cit.*, p.442; Sthiramati, *Triṃśikābhāṣya*, ad.8, K.N. Chatterjee, *Vijñaptimaatratā-siddhi*, Kishor Vidya Niketan, Varanasi, 1980, p.59-60.

<sup>31</sup> Huan-Tsang, *Ch’eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 239-40.

(*pratyakṣa*) is always accompanied by error (*vitatha*) and affliction (*kleśa*), not intrinsically though, but only as extrinsically determined<sup>32</sup>.

In itself, sensory experience (*pratyakṣa*) involves neither affliction, nor error. It appears at an individual level (*ātmabhāva*) and, therefore, it is limited, but its experience does not involve the error of considering its own content otherwise than it really is. Operational consciousnesses do not assign to their own content a fictitious higher ontological status. Sensory experience doesn't involve any claim of "own nature" (*svabhāva*), of "self" (*ātman*); the sensory consciousness simply engender the ideations characteristic to them, without projecting any error unto them.

The later Chinese texts of the school distinguish three types of knowledge: the direct, veridical one, the inferred one and the erroneous one. The direct, veridical knowledge consists of the pure sensory datum, devoid of any conceptual identity. This is the type of experience characteristic to the five sensory consciousnesses. Since nothing is added to the simple sensory datum, error is totally excluded from this type of experience and thus the direct knowledge is always veridical. The other two types of experience, i.e. inference and error (dreams, hallucinations etc.) involve the activity of the mental consciousness and are susceptible of error, of untruth.

Also according to the distinction made by the late authors, the sensory consciousnesses are associated to the natural condition of experience, unlike the mental consciousness, which is associated to absolutely imaginary contents, and unlike the mind which is associated with the knowledge that consists of transposing the substantiality of the absolute to the illusory self. The last two types of knowledge differ from the knowledge of the natural condition because they involve error. In case of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), the error consists of experiencing some purely fictitious characteristics, while, in case of the mind (*manas*), it consists of transmuting the substantiality somewhere where it can not be found. Unlike these, the experience of the sensory consciousnesses consists of the manifestation of the phenomena in their normal, natural state, without ascribing them any illusory own-being or the substantiality that is not characteristic to them.

„The direct, veridical perception of natural states can involve any of the three [moral] natures.”<sup>33</sup>

### **The experience of the sensory consciousnesses as experience of the flow of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*)**

The non-erroneous nature of the sensory experience is due to the fact that it has as its object the conditional flow (*pratītyasamutpāda*) as it is, without ascribing to it any conceptual nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) and the substantiality (*arthatva*,

<sup>32</sup> For the mind (*manas*) as the one which leads into error the entire individual, the entire assembly of the six operational consciousnesses, see Liu, *op.cit.*, p. 361,364!

<sup>33</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Pa-shih kuei-chu sung*, in R. Epstein, *Verses Delineating the Eight Consciousnesses*, „Vajra Bodhi Sea”, 1998, p.39 (slightly modified).

*dravyatva, vastutva*) it does not have. It may be stated that the sensory experience (*pratyakṣa*) is nothing else but the manner in which the conditional flow affects the human being. The contribution of the human being to the content of the sensory experience is minimal. In case of the sensory experience, the human person is rather passive and thus the sensory experience (*pratyakṣa*), through its undelimited (*aviccheda*), undetermined (*nirvikalpa*), continuous nature, simply reflects the equally undelimited, undetermined, amorphous, continuous nature of the causal flow (*pratītyasamutpāda*).

The Sautrāntika-Yogācāra logicians, whose approach to “reality” is more empirical than the one of classic Vijñānavāda (they consider that everything that has causal efficiency - *arthakriyāsamartha*, everything that may represent a part of a causal chain is real), ascribe full reality to the object of perception (*pratyakṣa*), i.e. the object experienced by the sensory consciousnesses. The ontology of Sautrāntika-Yogācāra is more empirical than that of the classic Vijñānavāda, as it does not resort to a metaphysical concept of “reality”, which would be applied only to a sphere transcendent to manifestation, but it considers as “real” anything that has causal efficiency, anything that can engender an effect. The object experienced by the sensory consciousnesses is the universal causal flow (*pratītyasamutpāda*) which, for the Sautrāntika-Yogācāra logicians, represents “reality”. Perception (*pratyakṣa*) would be nothing else but the non-determined, amorphous, continuous experience of this causal flow. Only the subsequent stage, labelled as “inference” (*anumāna*), in the terminology of Sautrāntika-Yogācāra, or “conceptualization” (*parikalpa*) performed by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), in the terms of Vijñānavāda, is considered as unreal, as false (*vitatha*).

The opposition between the reality of the object of perception, of the object experienced by the sensory consciousnesses, and the unreality of the object of inference (*anumāna*), of the experience of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), can also be found in classic Vijñānavāda, but in a slightly modified way, for reasons that are related to the ontological framework of the schools. Classic Vijñānavāda ascribes reality to the causal process (*pratītyasamutpāda*) but with the restriction that this is only a contingent, relative (*paratantra*) reality and not absolute, as it is considered in Sautrāntika-Yogācāra. Therefore, the experience of the sensory consciousnesses is associated with the dependent (*paratantra*), relative reality, while the ideations of the mental consciousness are considered, as in the case of Sautrāntika-Yogācāra, absolute unreality (*atyantābhāva*), error (*viparyāsa*), pure imagination (*parikalpa*).

In the terminology of the three own-natures (*trisvabhāva*), the status of the sensory experience, respectively, of the experience of the mental consciousness, can be reformulated as follows. The undetermined experience of the sensory consciousnesses corresponds to the experience of the dependent own-being (*paratantrasvabhāva*), which is real, even if having only a relative, conditioned reality; the conceptual experience of the mental consciousness corresponds to the constructed own-being (*parikalpitasvabhāva*), which is absolutely unreal (*atyantābhāva*), erroneous.

**The mind (*manas*) and the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) as supports (*āśraya*), conditions (*pratyaḥ*) of the sensory consciousnesses**

When dealing with the supports (*āśraya*), the conditions (*pratyaḥ*) responsible for the production of the sensory experience, Vijñānavāda texts display a certain heterogeneity.

The most suitable explanation for the conditionings of the sensory consciousnesses seems to be that which states their dependency on the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), on the conditional flow, on the one hand, and on the mind (*manas*), on the other. As for their dependency on the mind (*manas*), one must specify the fact that they do not depend so much on the appropriating (*upādāna*), perturbing (*kleśa*) activity of the mind, but on its limitation activity, the activity of focusing upon a limited, determined part of the universal experience. To put it differently, the operational consciousnesses depend on the mind, but not so much on the afflicted mind (*kliṣṭamanas*), as on the mind as an immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaḥ*).<sup>34</sup> Dependency on the mind is related to their individual character, to their being circumscribed to the person; the sensory faculties have this personal nature, which is explained through their being born at the level of the experience delimited by the mind, at the level of the individual experience.<sup>35</sup>

„Hence, in respect of the visual consciousness, the eye (*caḥṣus*) represents its regent condition (*adhipatipratyaḥ*), the form (*rūpa*) represents its objective condition (*ālambanapratyaḥ*) and the consciousness that has just ceased to exist in the immediately preceding moment (*anantaniruddhavijñāna*) represents their immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaḥ*).”<sup>36</sup>

On the other hand, the experience of the sensory consciousnesses depends on the conditional flow (*pratītyasamutpāda*), on the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*). This dependency on the trans-individual conditional flow explains the common experience of the fact that the senses of a being are oriented towards outside. The sensory experience, although located at the level of an individual, is not strictly subjective but it seems to be also determined from the outside of the individual. There is an obvious difference between the purely subjective status of conceptual construction (*parikalpa*) and the not entirely subjective status of the

<sup>34</sup> See section 5, “The determination of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) by the mind (*manas*)” for an explanation of the two aspects of the mind: the afflicted mind (*kliṣṭamanas*) and the mind as an immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaḥ*)!

<sup>35</sup> For a study upon the dependency of the six operational consciousnesses on the appropriation of an individual identity, see William S. Waldron, *The Buddhist Unconscious: The ālaya-vijñāna in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought*, RoutledgeCurzon, London, 2003, p.97!

<sup>36</sup> Asvabhāva, *Upanibandhana*, ad. *Mahāyānasamgraha*, I.28, E. Lamotte, *La Somme du Grand Vahicule d’Asaṅga (Mahāyānasamgraha)*, Publications de l’Institut Orientaliste de Louvain, 8, 1973, p. 48.

sensory experience, and this is explained precisely by the fact that the sensory experience is determined from the outside of the individual as well.

This does not compromise the ontological idealism because Vijñānavāda interprets even the trans-individual experience, even the universal causal flow, in idealistic terms, considering them as ideations (*vijñapti*) of the universal storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*).

The later texts of the school even explicitly state the fact that the experience of the sensory consciousnesses depend on the shared component (*sādhāraṇa*), on the common component of the storehouse consciousness. Or, in terms of the distinction that Dharmapāla operates between the representation component (*darśanabhāga*) and the object component (*nimittabhāga*) of the storehouse consciousness, one may state that the experience of the sensory consciousnesses is determined by the object component.

„ ... the five [sensory consciousnesses] are established in the object component (*nimitta*) of the eighth [consciousness].”<sup>37</sup>

Vijñānavāda texts don't state very explicitly this theory referring to the determination of the sensory consciousnesses by the mind and the storehouse consciousness, at least not in the manner previously presented. Generally, they offer theories that are quite heterogeneous, quite complicated and, more often than not, different texts present theories that are incompatible on this subject.

For instance, the necessary coexistence of the five sensory consciousnesses with the mind and the mental consciousness determined some authors to consider, not exactly accurately, that these two instances would constitute supports (*āśraya*), conditions (*pratyaya*) for the production of sensory experience.<sup>38</sup> The incorrectness of this opinion can be explained by the fact that in such a situation the operational consciousnesses would not constitute undetermined, non-conceptual perception anymore, but, having the mind (in both its aspects, afflicted mind and mind as an immediately preceding condition) and the mental consciousness as supports, they themselves would be characterized by conceptualization (*vikalpa*), appropriation (*upādāna*) and attachment to the ego (*ātmasneha*).

#### **The states of consciousness (*caitta*), the factors (*dharma*) associated to the sensory consciousnesses**

The fact that the experience of the sensory consciousnesses represents pure and raw perception also has some consequences on the factors (*dharma*), on the states of consciousness (*caitta*) associated to them. Older texts, such as *Triṃśikā*, when discussing the factors associated to each of the eight consciousnesses, consider the six operational consciousnesses together, as a whole, and thus the

<sup>37</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Louis de la Vallee Poussin, *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi. La Siddhi de Hiuan-Tsang*, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris, vol. II, 1929, p.469.

<sup>38</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 239; *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* considers mental consciousness as their condition, Asvabhāva considers the mind as their condition; apud. Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 239, note 1.

existence of a distinction between the factors associated to sensory consciousnesses and those associated to mental consciousness is out of the question. However, more recent texts, especially the Chinese sources, not only detail and expand the list of factors associated to the consciousness, reaching a total number of one hundred factors, but also analyse the mental consciousness and the five sensory consciousnesses separately.<sup>39</sup> As a result, the list of factors associated to sensory consciousnesses is shortened to 31 factors, as opposed to the 51 factors associated to mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). The reason for this restriction is that those factors which necessarily involve conceptualization, intellectual discrimination, such as pride (*māna*), erroneous opinions (*kudrṣṭi*), or doubt (*vicikitsā*), were eliminated from the list of factors associated to sensory consciousnesses.

#### 4. The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and the categories

##### The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) as the instance responsible for conceptual determination, for categorial discrimination

The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is the one which operates the conceptual discriminations (*vikalpa*) upon the raw sensory material produced at the level of the five sensory consciousnesses.<sup>40</sup> The ideations of the five sensory consciousnesses present themselves as a flow lacking internal separation. The mental consciousness operates the categorial divisions, the conceptual discriminations (*vikalpa*, *parikalpa*) within this amorphous flow. Its main function is precisely to discriminate (*vi-kṛp*, *vi-jñā*); the particle “*vi*”, meaning “separation”, “division”, is essential for the description of the activity of the mental consciousness which separates, discriminates, delineates certain parts of the sensory experience and assigns them a conceptually determined own-being (*svabhāva*).

„Discriminating knowledge (*vi-jñā*) [is performed] by the [mental] consciousness (*vijñāna*).”<sup>41</sup>

The identity (*svabhāva*) of an object (*artha*), the object considered as an individual entity, is exclusively produced by the operations of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). At the level of the sensory consciousnesses, the experience does not consist of separate objects (*artha*) but everything constitutes an amorphous undefined flow of sensations. The delimitation (*parikalpa*,

<sup>39</sup> The factors associated to consciousness have constituted an important topic in many works, either classic or modern. See Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma"*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2002, p. 95-107, and Yamakami Sogen, *Systems of Buddhist Thought*, Cosmo, New Delhi, 2002, p. 219-230!

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion on the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), as it is regarded in the Abhidharma schools, see Sukomal Chaudhuri, *Analytical Study of the Abhidharmakośa*, Sanskrit College, Calcutta, 1983, p.140!

<sup>41</sup> „*vijñānena vijānāti*”

*Lañkāvatāra-sūtra*, chap. II, verse 116, Nanjio, *op.cit.*, p. 48.

*pariccheda*) of a particular object at the level of the raw sensorial material represents an operation performed solely by the mental consciousness.

Not only conceptual identity (*saṃjñā, svabhāva*) is the product of the mental consciousness, but also everything representing a determined characteristic, a particular feature (*lakṣaṇa, nimitta*). Anything that can be stated about an object, any of its characteristics, due to the very fact that they can be expressed in words (*abhilāpya*), that they have a determined meaning, represent the result of the activity of discrimination performed by the mental consciousness. Since the experience of the operational consciousnesses is absolutely devoid of determinations, even the most primitive attributes, even the primary characteristics, such as a certain colour, a certain shape, a certain taste are products of the mental consciousness. Any determination ascribed to experience, no matter how empirical it might seem, is not produced by the senses, but by the mental consciousness.

The mental consciousness is responsible for all names (*nāman, saṃjñā*), for all operations of naming; the relation between the mental consciousness and the name is only a consequence of the relation between the mental consciousness and the concept, the determination. The name is nothing but the public aspect, the outer aspect of the concept and thus it also represents a product of the mental consciousness.

„.....all operational consciousnesses are objects of mental consciousness; therefore, various aspects of mental consciousness are conceptual. When that engages and focuses on that basis, one obtains the names of this and that.”<sup>42</sup>

The epistemic consequences of this view are very important since, considering that the entire experience of the mental consciousness is absolutely fictitious, illusory, the entire conceptual knowledge, the entire sphere of concepts (*vikalpa*) becomes deprived of empirical validity, being totally equated to imagination (*parikalpa*).

### **Categorical identity as superimposed on the raw sensory material**

The experience of the mental consciousness is generally simultaneous with the experience of the sensory consciousnesses; although there may be situations in which the mental consciousness produces ideations (*vijñapti*) in the absence of the activity of the sensory consciousnesses, as is the case with dreams (*svapna*), hallucinations or free fantasy, most often the mental consciousness accompanies the experience of the sensory consciousnesses, putting it in a conceptual form (*vikalpa, parikalpa*). Vijñānavāda texts state that the mental consciousness functions along (*saha pravṛtta*) with the sensory consciousnesses, that it is simultaneous (*samakāla*) with them and that it has the same object as they do (*samaviśaya*).

<sup>42</sup> Jñānagarbha, *Āryamaitreyakevalaparivartabhāṣya*, J. Powers, *Jnanagarbha's Commentary on Just the Maitreya Chapter from the Samdhinirmocana-Sutra*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1998, p.49.



manifestation becomes an object of human deliberation, it is, in most cases, already displayed in a conceptual manner.

**The sensation as determining only the intensity of conceptual experience and not its content**

The role of pure sensation (*pratyakṣa*) in constituting the conscious human experience is that it makes the representations of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) more vivid (*paṭu*), when they happen along with the ideations (*vijñapti*) of the sensory consciousnesses.

„Regarding the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), it has two simultaneous supports, namely the seventh and the eighth consciousnesses. If any of these is missing, the mental consciousness cannot exist.

When it has as a support the five [sensory] consciousnesses, it is more lively (*paṭu*); nevertheless, the five [sensory consciousnesses] are not necessary for its existence and hence they cannot be considered as supports of it.”<sup>47</sup>

Therefore, the contribution of the senses (*indriya*) to the conscious experience is rather related to the intensity, persistence and force with which the representations of the mental consciousness are manifesting. In the case of free imagination, of fantasy, of dream (*svapna*), the mental consciousness is not assisted by the sensory consciousnesses and, consequently, it does not have much intensity, its series of ideations (*vijñapti santāna*) being interrupted more easily. When the activity of the mental consciousness is accompanied by the activity of the senses, i.e. in the case of what is commonly termed as “perception” (*pratyakṣa*), the ideations of the mental consciousness still represent only imagination and mental construction (*parikalpa*), but their higher stability and enhanced intensity are due to the fact that they are assisted by the sensory activity. However, this does not mean they are produced by the sensory consciousnesses, but only that they are made more lively (*paṭu*) through their being assisted by the senses.

**The conceptual sphere (*parikalpa*) as separate from the sphere of sensory experience (*pratyakṣa*)**

The concept (*vikalpa*), the notion (*saṃjñā*), the own-being (*svabhāva*) that the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) ascribes to the ideations of the five sensory consciousnesses are not as much synthesized from the sensory material, as they are superimposed (*adhyāsta*) on that material. The self identity (*svabhāva*), the conceptual nature (*parikalpa, saṃjñā, vikalpa*), does not intrinsically belong to the sensory experience; the mental consciousness does not synthesise, does not extract anything from something. On the contrary, the mental consciousness creates by itself the conceptual nature which it will later superimpose on the sensory material produced by the sensory consciousnesses. The conceptual identity (*parikalpa, vikalpa*) is extrinsic to the sensory material (*pratyakṣa*), something created only by the mental consciousness, without any participation of the senses

<sup>47</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.240.

(*indriya*). After the sensory experience is engendered, the concept freely created by the mental consciousness will be superimposed on it.

Without being determined in any way by the senses when engendering concepts, the mental consciousness performs an activity that is closer to imagination rather than to synthesis or subtraction. The concepts manifested by the mental consciousness find no support, no justification whatsoever in the perceptions of the senses and, therefore, they represent imagination, fantasy, pure mental construction (*parikalpa*). According to the theory of the three own-beings, the concept, the category (*vikalpa, samjñā*) represent the constructed own-being (*parikalpitasvabhāva*), which is nothing but imagination, which lacks any objectivity, but is exclusively projected by the individual consciousness.

The object (*viṣaya*) of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is a universal (*sāmānya*), but not in the sense of abstracting a single common feature from a larger number of particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*). It's simply a single fictitious feature which is arbitrarily ascribed to several particulars, whose nature does not require, does not justify the application of that universal. Therefore, the concept is not a universal feature (*sāmānya, lakṣaṇa*) shared by multiple particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*) but rather a single mental construction freely superimposed on multiple particulars. The connection between the particulars and the universal is not an intrinsic, natural (*svābhāvika*) one, but an extrinsic one, an act of superimposition (*adhyāsa*).

„But surely the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) arises after the ear consciousness and designates a universal character .....”<sup>48</sup>

„Therefore, in conclusion, the universal character does not in fact refer.”<sup>49</sup>

Although the conceptual ideations engendered by the mental consciousness are generally associated with the sensory ideations, this does not also imply the existence of a natural (*svābhāvika*) connection between them. The ideations (*vijñapti*) of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) are originated exclusively in the seeds of conceptualization (*prapañcavāsanā*), in those individual imprints that the mind (*manas*) appropriated and are not based on the sensory ideations, as the common sense claims. Vijñānavāda does not go into too many details about the process through which the mental consciousness superimposes conceptual characteristics (*parikalpita lakṣaṇa*) upon sensory contents. However, it explicitly claims the artificial connection between concept (*parikalpa, vikalpa, samjñā*) and sensation (*pratyakṣa*), as well as the subjective nature of the concept. Some texts consider memory (*smṛti*) to be responsible for the operation of the conceptual discriminations, suggesting that their origin is to be found within the individual subject. Sometimes, the difference between concept (*parikalpa*) and sensory data (*pratyakṣa*) is justified based on the existence of a temporary interval between them, between the occurrence of the sensory ideations and the occurrence of the concepts, characteristic to the mental consciousness.

<sup>48</sup> Dharmapāla, *Vṛtti* on Āryadeva, *Catuḥśataka*, ad. kārikā 318cd, Tillemans, *op.cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>49</sup> Dharmapāla, *Vṛtti* on Āryadeva, *Catuḥśataka*, ad. kārikā 318cd, Tillemans, *op.cit.*, p.164.

„ ... is born (*utpad*) the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), which is associated with (*samprayukta*) memory (*smṛti*) and is characterized by the apparition (*pratibhāsa*) of forms (*rūpa*) and of the other discriminations (*vikalpika*).”<sup>50</sup>

„16. When it [is produced], the object (*artha*) is no longer seen (*drś*). How could it be conceived (*mata*) its condition of sensory perception (*pratyakṣatva*)?”

When that knowledge (*buddhi*) which is the sensory perception (*pratyakṣa*) takes place (*bhū*) – «This is my sensory perception» –, then the object (*artha*) is no longer seen (*drś*), since discrimination (*pariccheda*) [is performed] only by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), after the visual consciousness (*cakṣurvijñāna*) has ceased (*niruddhatva*). Therefore, how could it be accepted (*iś*) as sensory evidence (*pratyakṣatva*) of anything? Duet o the particularity (*viśeṣa*) that all the objects (*viśaya*) are momentary (*kṣanika*), forms (*rūpa*), tastes (*rasa*) and the others cease (*niruddha*).”<sup>51</sup>

„When the mental consciousness arises, the sound and the ear consciousness have both already ceased, so what does the universal character rely upon?”<sup>52</sup>

This way, the mental consciousness engenders a new ontological level, that of discriminated, determined, conceptual entities (*parikalpita*). This can be considered as a distinct ontological level, different from that of perception (*pratyakṣa*), of the experience of the causal flow (*pratītyasamutpāda*), since any attempt of reducing the conceptual entities to sensory experience is bound to fail; consequently, the conceptual level (*parikalpa svabhāva*) becomes “something else” than the sphere of the causal flow (*paratantra svabhāva*). The ontological level of the mental construction (*parikalpa*) is the third level of reality accepted in Vijñānavāda, along with the absolute level of the perfected own-being (*pariniṣpanna*), the ultimate reality, and the level of the causal flow (*paratantra*), of the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*).

### The “exteriority” (*bāhya*) of the objects of common experience as a fictitious product of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*)

The “external objects” (*bāhya artha*), having determined conceptual identities (*svabhāva*), are the main kind of entities accepted by the common

<sup>50</sup> „*smṛtisamprayuktā tatpratibhāsaiva rūpādivikalpikā manovijñāptirutpadyata...*”

Vasubandhu, *Viṃśikāvṛtti*, ad. 17b, Anacker, *op.cit.*, p.419.

<sup>51</sup> „16.....*sa ca yadā tadā/*

*na so'rtho drśyate tasya pratyakṣatvaṃ katham matam //*

*yadā ca sā pratyakṣabuddhīrbhavadādam me pratyakṣamiti tadā na so'rtho drśyate manovijñānaenaiva paricchedāccakṣurvijñānasya ca tadā niruddhatvāditi / katham tasya pratyakṣatvamiṣṭam / viśeṣeṇa tu kṣanikasya viśayasya tadidānīm niruddhameva tadrūpaṃ rasaādikaṃ vā /”*

Vasubandhu, *Viṃśikāvṛtti*, ad. 16b, Anacker, *op.cit.*, p.418-9.

<sup>52</sup> Dharmapāla, *Vṛtti* on Āryadeva, *Catuhṣataka*, ad. kārīkā 318cd, Tillemans, *op.cit.*, p. 163.

thinking and by the realistic philosophy. For the idealistic school of Vijñānavāda, they represent only constructed own-beings (*parikalpitasvabhāva*), projected by the mental consciousness, and which are, erroneously, interpreted as autonomous, objective entities (*artha*). The reality (*sat*) illicitly ascribed to them creates the illusion of their objectivity; the “exteriority” (*bāhyatva*) commonly ascribed to them is nothing else but a consequence of the ontological autonomy (*svabhāva*) erroneously imputed to them. Their illusory autonomous existence made them “something else” than consciousness, made them “exterior” to consciousness. The ontological idealism makes the object present at the level of the subject, including the former into the latter; the object’s “exteriority” is possible only in an illusionary manner, when the object’s condition of ideation is overlooked and is replaced with an erroneous condition which involves substantiality (*dravyatva*), autonomous own-being (*svabhāva*).

„When the [sensory] consciousnesses occur, the form is not consider as being external. Only afterwards, the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) gives birth to the erroneous notion (*saṃjñā*) of exteriority (*bāhya*)..... Regarding the form that the mental consciousness considers as being external and real, it is said to be non-existent, since it is the mental consciousness the one which erroneously constructs it as being real.

The object is not a form, but it appears as a form (*rūpābhāsa*), is not external, but it appears as external (*bāhyābhāsa*).....”<sup>53</sup>

**The absolute non-existence (*atyantābhāva*) of the object (*artha*) intended by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*)**

The object (*artha*) of the mental consciousness is said to be absolutely non-existent (*atyantābhāva*); this means that it is impossible to find an object which complies with the category (*vikalpa*, *saṃjñā*), with the conceptual identity constructed (*parikalpa*) by the mental consciousness. The concepts constructed (*parikalpa*) by the mental consciousness claim to refer to objects which are both determined, delimited (*pariccheda*), and ontologically autonomous (*svatantra*), substantial (*dravya*). According to Vijñānavāda, it is impossible to find this kind of objects, which would be both determined and substantial. The concepts, the notions constructed by the mental consciousness, which intends this kind of objects, represent nothing more than imagination, free fantasy.

„It is stated that the other [consciousnesses] are directed (*mukha*) towards one [object], are conditioned by an object (*vastupratyaya*). [This] is not valid also in respect of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). Since it is not directed towards one [object], [it] has as a condition (*pratyaya*), aims at something existing [only] conventionally (*saṃvṛtisat*), such as a chariot or others ..... Hence, it is established (*sidh*) that the object (*artha*) that the mental consciousness

<sup>53</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1929, p.428-29.

(*manovijñāna*) is established on (*ālambana*) is absolutely non-existent (*atyantābhāva*).<sup>54</sup>

„.....the sixth consciousness makes the mirages, the past, the future and other illusions appear as objective ...”<sup>55</sup>

An argument for the non-existence of the object intended by the mental consciousness, frequently brought up by the authors of Vijñānavāda, takes its stand on the unanimous acceptance of some situations, such as the dream state (*svapna*), the hallucinations, the illusions, in which the mental consciousness can produce ideations utterly devoid of an object (*artha*). The possibility of the existence of the ideations of the mental consciousness even in the absence of a proper object is taken as a premise based on which Vijñānavāda extends the applicability of this situation and claims that the mental consciousness is always devoid of object (*anartha*).

„17. The one who is not awoken (*aprabuddha*) doesn't realise (*avagam*) the non-existence (*abhāva*) of the objects (*viśaya*) seen in dream (*svapnadṛś*).

The world (*loka*) is fallen asleep (*prasupta*) in the slumber (*nidrā*) of the [mental] imprints (*vāsanā*) and in the practice (*abhyāsa*) of some unreal (*vitatha*) discriminations (*vikalpa*). Just as in the case of dream (*svapna*), non-existing (*abhūta*) objects (*artha*) are seen (*dṛś*) and the one who is not awoken (*aprabuddha*) doesn't realize (*avagam*) correctly (*yathāvat*) their non-existence (*abhāva*).

But, when [the world] is awoken (*prabuddha*) due to the obtainment (*lābha*) of the non-conceptual (*nirvikalpa*) transcendent (*lokottara*) knowledge (*jñāna*), [which is] the antidote (*pratipakṣa*) of that [condition of sleep], then, due to the apparition (*bhāva*) of the pure (*śuddha*) worldly (*laukika*) knowledge (*jñāna*), acquired as a reverse of this [enlightenment] (*tatpṛṣṭhalabdha*), of [the knowledge] directed towards [everything] (*sammukhin*), se înțelege (*avagam*) în mod corect the non-existence (*abhāva*) of the objects (*viśaya*) is correctly (*yathāvat*) understood. These [situations] are identical (*samāna*).<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> „pare tāni ekonmukhāni vastupratyayāni iti pratipadyante / ato manovijñānaṃ na yuktaṃ / ekonmukhatvābhāvāt rathādi[vat] samvṛtīsatpratyayatvābhyupagamāt / ..... tathā manovijñānalambanārtho 'tyantamabhāvaḥ sidhyati /”

Dharmapāla, *Ālambanaparīkṣāvyākhyā*, N. Aiyasvami Sastri, *The Alambana-parikṣa of Acarya Dignaga with Commentaries of Vinitadeva and Dharmapala*, „Adyar Library Bulletin”, 3, 1939, p.56-57.

<sup>55</sup> *Fan ming yi tsi*, Tok. XXXVI, Sylvan Levi, *Materiaux pour l'étude du système Vijñapti-mātra*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Etudes, Champion, Paris, 1932, p.160.

<sup>56</sup> „17.....svapnadṛgviśayābhāvaṃ nāprabuddho 'vagacchati / evaṃ vitathavikalpābhyāsavāsanānidrayā prasupto lokaḥ svapna ivābhūtamarthaṃ paśyanna prabuddhastadabhāvaṃ yathāvannāvagacchati / yadā tu tatpratipakṣalokottaranirvikalpajñānalābhātiprabuddho bhavati tadā tatpṛṣṭhalabdhaśuddhalaukikajñānasammukhībhāvādviśayābhāvaṃ yathāvadavagacchatīti samānametat/”

Vasubandhu, *Viṃśikāvṛtti*, ad. 17c, Anacker, *op.cit.*, p. 419.

### **The experience of the mental consciousness and the deliberate reasoning**

The ideations of the mental consciousness represent, to a very high degree, the awareness of the individual. The raw sensory experience engendered by the five sensory consciousnesses is automatically subjected to the categorial schematism and only in a conceptual form does it become an object of awareness, of the conscious attention of the individual. Most often, human awareness operates with categorically delimited phenomena (*vikalpa*) and less with raw perceptions (*pratyakṣa*).

All conscious operations of the human thinking take place on the conceptual level (*parikalpa*); all acts of inference, of discovering regularities, of predictions, abstractions, imagination, fantasy, memory, involve concepts and not raw perception. The raw sensory material can be directly, passively experienced, but the conscious thought can not operate (*pra-vṛt*) with this type of material due to its undetermined nature. The perceptions of the five sensory consciousnesses, being continuous, amorphous, undelimited, can be only passively received; to try to operate with this sensorial material is possible only if certain delimitations (*pariccheda*) are operated, or this means precisely conceptualization (*vikalpa*).

Sautrāntika-Yogācāra considerably details the discussion on the nature of perception (*pratyakṣa*) and of conceptualization (*kalpanā*), of “inference” (*anumāna*). The Yogācāra logicians noticed the fact that the object of perception is always the absolute particularity (*svalakṣaṇa*), which is unique, unrepeatably in its characteristics. The general characteristics (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*) pertain to conceptualization, to what the authors of the school call “inference” or “subsequent knowledge” (*anu-māna*). Since the object of perception is an unrepeatably particular, an absolute particular (*svalakṣaṇa*), it strictly characterizes only the present experience. Moreover, due to its absolute particularity, it also has a discrete nature, there being no connection between the object of perception at a given moment and the object at another moment. The experience of the raw perception is simply a succession of momentary (*kālika*), unique (*eka*), absolutely particular (*svalakṣaṇa*) and unrepeatably appearances. Of course, at the level of this perceptual flow (*pratyakṣa*), no regularity (*niyama*) whatsoever can be discovered, no prediction of any kind is possible. Everything is reduced to the momentary ascertainment of a present state, absolutely particular and which, once ceased, will never come back again.

Therefore, human thinking would not only have great difficulties in operating with these absolute particulars, but, more than this, it would not have any reason, any kind of motivation to perform such operations. No kind of prediction is possible in relation to these absolute particulars (*svalakṣaṇa*), no kind of regularity (*niyama*) can be discovered in regard to their succession. Human thinking, which tries to discover laws, regularities at the level of experience so as to be able to make predictions, is completely incapable of doing this in case of the experience of raw perception.

Consequently, all laws, all regularities (*niyama*), all predictions involve concepts (*kalpanā*), generalities (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*), and, therefore, they don't occur between sensorial ideations (*pratyakṣa*), but rather among the constructions (*parikalpa*) of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). Any law, any prediction involves the existence of general terms in order to make the connection between the already known cases and the still non-experienced situations which are nevertheless subjected to the law or prediction in case.

Therefore, since the entire human knowledge referring to the future, to the past, to situations inaccessible to direct perception, to regularities, to any kind of generalities is constructed by the mental consciousness and, considering that even the present sensory experience appears to the human consciousness not in its raw form, but, most often, in a conceptual shape, it can be stated that the human awareness unfolds primarily at the level of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*).

The mental consciousness is functional throughout the entire range of human awareness; the only states in which it is missing are the various states of unconsciousness (*acittaka*) a being may go through. Generally, these states are considered to be five: the condition of being devoid of conceptual experience (*āsamjñika*), slumber (*middha*), fainting (*mūrchana*) and the two mystical realisations, the attainment of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) and the state of lack of consciousness (*asamjñīsamāpatti*).

“16. The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is always (*sarvadā*) produced (*sambhūti*), except for (*rta*) [the states] devoid of concept (*asamjñika*), slumber (*middha*), fainting (*mūrchana*), the unconscious ones (*acittaka*) or in the two attainments (*samāpatti*).”<sup>57</sup>

Hiuan-Tsang mentions another opinion as well, according to which the mental consciousness would be also missing at the moment of birth and at the moment of death.

„Others consider that the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is missing also at the moments of birth and death.”<sup>58</sup>

### 5. The determination of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) by the mind (*manas*)

#### The conceptual cognitive experience as determined by the individual self (*ātman*) appropriated through the activity of the mind (*manas*)

In Buddhism, the categorial system is not based in an objective reality whose structure would be reproduced through the categorial system, but it is something purely subjective. The conscious thinking, the experience of the mental

<sup>57</sup> “*manovijñānasambhūtiḥ sarvadāsamjñikādrte / samāpattidvayānmiddhānmūrchanādapyacittakāt //*”  
Vasubandhu, *Triṃśikā*, 16, Anacker, *op.cit.*, p. 443.

<sup>58</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.410.

consciousness, operating with this categorial system (*parikalpita svabhāva*), also represents a purely subjective activity, similar to fantasy. The conscious reasoning, the categorial system and the experience of the mental consciousness don't reproduce an objective reality, are not determined by such a reality. They represent purely subjective experiences, determined only by individual, subjective conditions (*pratyaya*). The mental consciousness only brings to a conscious level some elements pertaining to individuality (*ātmika*), to subjectivity. The common, pre-philosophical reflection, as well as the realistic philosophy tend to consider conscious thinking, conceptual thinking, as an attempt to reproduce an objective reality, as having cognitive value, as being determined by an objective reality.

Vijñānavāda, and Buddhism in general, considers that conscious conceptual reasoning would rather reflect human individuality (*ātmika*), subjectivity. Using the terminology of Vijñānavāda, we can state that the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) only projects in a conscious form something related to the ego, to the self (*ātman*) appropriated by the mind (*manas*). Both the mind and the mental consciousness relate to an individual self (*ātmika*), to a human subjectivity. If the mind (*manas*) is responsible for the unconscious inborn (*sahaja*) attachment towards this self (*ātman*), the conscious form of this attachment, the conscious recognition (*vikalpita*) of the individual self appropriated by the mind, are done by the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*). All experiences of the mental consciousness are determined exclusively by the personality (*ātman, pudgala*) appropriated by the mind, as there is nothing objective, outside the individual, to determine it. Therefore, between the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and the mind (*manas*) there is a very tight connection; the mental consciousness conceptually experiences the individual self (*ātman*) and its determinations (*ātmika*), which the mind unconsciously appropriates.

The authors of Vijñānavāda even interpret the name of “mental consciousness” (*manovijñāna*) precisely as referring to the idea of “consciousness/awareness (*vijñāna*) of the mind (*manas*)”. To put it differently, the mind and its unconscious activity constitute the object (*viśaya*) of the mental consciousness, which brings them to a conscious level (*vikalpita*).<sup>59</sup>

„The seventh [consciousness] ..... is the object (*ālambana*) of the sixth.”<sup>60</sup>

„What is visual consciousness (*caḥsurvijñāna*)? It is the one which, being established in the organ «eye» (*caḥsus*), discriminates the forms (*rūpa*).

What is mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*)? It is the one which, being established in the organ «mind» (*manas*), discriminates the factors (*dharmā*).”<sup>61</sup>

Using a less philosophical terminology, the fact that the mind represents the object (*ālambana*) of the mental consciousness might be expressed by saying that the ideations (*vijñapti*) of the mental consciousness comply with the personality

<sup>59</sup> For the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) as the instance responsible for the cognition of the mind (*manas*), see Chatterjee, *op.cit* 1999, p.106!

<sup>60</sup> Huan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1929, p.469.

<sup>61</sup> Huan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.292.

(*ātman*) appropriated by the mind. The conscious experience of an individual, namely the ideations of his mental consciousness, depends on the mental-corporeal-sensorial structure that constitutes his person.<sup>62</sup> The mind appropriates this structure unconsciously; it produces the sense of the ego (*ātmaḍṛṣṭi*), of the self, regarding the appropriated structure (*upādānaskandha*). The mental consciousness consciously experiences some contents of the appropriated personality.

The process through which the activity of appropriation (*upādāna*) performed by the mind (*manas*) comes to determine the conceptual experience (*parikalpa*) of the mental consciousness is not very clearly detailed in Vijñānavāda texts. Nevertheless, it is suggested that, first of all, the mind determines the mental consciousness to represent, in a conceptual (*vikalpita*), conscious manner, the appropriated self (*ātman*). Once this self has acquired a conceptual representation, the next step seems to be the one through which everything that the self interacts with is represented in a conceptual manner. A possible justification could be that, once the self is experienced as having a conceptual identity, it is natural for its interaction with the rest of manifestation to be also conceptually presented. Since the self mediates the experience of the entire manifestation, the universe being represented as it is reflected at the level of the individual self, the conceptual representation of the self implies the existence of a conceptual representation of its interactions as well. Through this, the entire universe the self interacts with acquires a conceptual representation. This outline of the process through which experience acquires a conceptual form due to the determination exerted by the mind is rather a reconstruction attempt, as it never appears explicitly and entirely formulated in any text of the school, but is only suggested.

**The association of the sensory consciousnesses (*pañcavijñāna*) with the sensory organs (*indriya*) and of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) with the individual self appropriated by the mind (*manas*)**

Vijñānavāda texts tend to ascribe this role of consciously experiencing the determinations corresponding to the individual self (*ātman*) appropriated (*upādāna*) by the mind (*manas*) to the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), but, within this process, the role of the five sensory consciousnesses (*pañcavijñāna*) is close enough to that of the mental consciousness. More precisely, the sensory consciousnesses experience the ideations (*vijñapti*) produced at the level of the appropriated sensory organs (*indriya*) and the mental consciousness puts these ideations in a conceptual form (*parikalpita*). Therefore, we can consider that the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and the sensory consciousnesses (*pañcavijñāna*) are equally involved in the process of bringing to awareness determinations of the appropriated individual self.

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<sup>62</sup> For the dependence of the mental consciousness on the mind, see Waldron, *op.cit.*, p. 227-228 (notes 72-74)!

The sensory consciousnesses experience the ideations corresponding to each of the five sensory organs; nevertheless, this sensory content presents itself in a raw, unconceptualized, form. The sensory consciousnesses are “established” (*āśrita*) in these sensory organs, have them as “support”, as “basis” (*āśraya*, *ālambana*), but, since the sensory organs represent organs appropriated (*upādānaskandha*) by the mind, the sensory consciousnesses have also the mind as their support (*āśraya*). However, in order to differentiate them, they take their names not from the mind (*manas*) – which represents their common support – but from their particular bases, which are the specific sensory organs. Thus, instead of being called, undifferentiatedly, “mental consciousnesses” (*manovijñāna*), they are given specific names such as “visual consciousness” (*caḥsurvijñāna*), “auditory consciousness” (*śrotravijñāna*) etc. Their experience equally constitutes an experience of a content appropriated (*upādānaskandha*) by the mind but, since certain bases (*āśraya*, *ālambana*) specific to each of them have been identified as well, they were given names according to these bases, so as to clearly differentiate them.

The situation was not the same in the case of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) itself, for which the authors of Vijñānavāda did not find any specific corporeal (*kāyika*) support (*āśraya*) from which it could have been given a specific name. The authors of the school simply noticed the dependence of the consciousness which performs the conceptualization on the individual self (*ātman*), on the person (*pudgala*) appropriated by the mind (*manas*), and thus they call it “mental consciousness” (*mano-vijñāna*). The same way, the visual consciousness (*caḥsurvijñāna* – literally, in Sanskrit, “the consciousness of the eye”, “*caḥsus*” meaning “eye”), having the eye (*caḥsus*) as support, was given the name of “*caḥsurvijñāna*”, the consciousness which performs the conceptualization, having the individual self (*ātman*) appropriated by the mind (*manas*) as support, was given the name of “*mano-vijñāna*” (“consciousness of the mind [which appropriates the individual self]”).

„Since the five organs represent the seeds (*bīja*) of the five [sensory] consciousnesses (*vijñāna*), we must consider that the mind (*manas*) represents the seed of the mental consciousness. This, because the mind is, in regard to the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), what the five sensory organs are in regard to the five [sensory] consciousnesses.”<sup>63</sup>

Modern science would ascribe the process of conceptual reasoning to the brain, but the authors of Vijñānavāda do not seem to have any knowledge about this.<sup>64</sup> They do not associate the process of conceptual thinking to any specific part of the human body, but they consider that the only support of the consciousness which performs the conceptualization is simply the person (*pudgala*), the

<sup>63</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.234.

<sup>64</sup> For an interesting analogy between the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and the brain, see Whalen Lai, *Ch'an metaphors: Waves, water, mirror, lamp*, „Philosophy East and West”, 29.3, 1979, p.69!

individual self (*ātman*), at large. Since it was directly dependent on the individual self appropriated by the mind (*manas*) and since it lacked any specific support (*āśraya*), the consciousness which performs conceptualization could not have been given another name but “mental consciousness” (*manovijñāna*).

Strictly speaking, the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and the sensory consciousnesses are equally mental consciousnesses, i.e. instances of the consciousness which have the mind (*manas*) as object (*ālambana*). The fact that the term “mental consciousness” (*manovijñāna*) is used only for that consciousness which operates the categorial synthesis lacks any serious philosophical ground. It is true that there are significant differences between the activity of the mental consciousness and that of the sensory consciousnesses, but these are not related to the fact that the former is based on the mind (*manas*) to a greater extent than the latter.

„All the six consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) are established in the mind (*manas*); nevertheless, only the sixth, the mental consciousness, receives the name of «mental consciousness» (*manovijñāna*). This happens because it is named according to its special support, namely the seventh consciousness, the mind (*manas*). In the same way, the five [sensory] consciousnesses, even if they are equally established in the mind (*manas*), are also named according to their special supports, i.e. the eye etc.

Otherwise, we can state that the reason the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is thus named is the fact that it is established only in the mind (*manas*), while the other five are also established in certain material organs (*rūpīndriya*), such as the eye etc.

Therefore, the six consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) are named according to their supports and considering them in relation to another [consciousness]: visual consciousness, ..... mental consciousness.”<sup>65</sup>

„The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) ..... must have a support, a field (*āyatana*) corresponding to its name. .... This support is the seventh consciousness, [namely the mind].”<sup>66</sup>

**The mind (*manas*) as the object (*ālambana*), as the realm (*dhātu*) of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*)**

Vijñānavāda texts often explain the relation between the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), on the one hand, and the mind (*manas*), the self (*ātman*) appropriated by the mind, on the other, as a relation between a consciousness and its object (*ālambana*), its realm (*dhātu*). Even if the concept of “mind” (*manas*), in the sense it has in Vijñānavāda, can not be found in the Abhidharma texts, the manner in which Abhidharma discusses the object of the mental consciousness is still quite similar to the manner in which Vijñānavāda discusses the same problem. The difference resides in the fact that, when exposing

<sup>65</sup> Huan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.289-290.

<sup>66</sup> Huan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p. 282.

its theory about the object of the mental consciousness, Vijñānavāda resorts to the concept of “mind” (*manas*), while Abhidharma does not involve this concept.

The Vaibhāṣika school, at least in the form it is presented by Vasubandhu in *Abhidharmakośa*, postulates the existence of a so-called “*mano-dhātu*” (“realm of the mind” or, more precisely, “realm of the mental consciousness”) as the object (*ālambana*) of the mental consciousness. In order to establish a similarity with the five sensory consciousnesses, which certain organs (*indriya*) and certain specific objects (*viśaya*, *āyatana*) are associated to the mental consciousness is sometimes said to have as an object the so-called “field of the mind” (*manaāyatana*) or “organ of the mind” (*manaindriya*)<sup>67</sup>. The field of the mental consciousness represents the experience of the sensory consciousnesses, put in a categorial form (*vikalpita*).

“I.17. The first five consciousnesses have the five material organs, namely the eye and so on, as supports; the sixth consciousness, the mental consciousness, doesn’t have such a support. Therefore, in order to ascribe a support to this consciousness, whatever serves as a support for it, namely each of the six consciousnesses, is named «mind» (*manas*) or «realm of the mind» (*manodhātu*) or «field of the mind» (*manaāyatana*) or «organ of the mind» (*manaindriya*).”<sup>68</sup>

The same function is attributed to the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) in Vijñānavāda, only that in a slightly different terminology. The mental consciousness exerts its activity on any of the contents of the sensory consciousnesses, putting them in conceptual frames. As for its object (*ālambana*), Vijñānavāda texts don’t claim that it would be any of the sensory consciousnesses, any of the sensory faculties (*indriya*), but it is generally said that its object is the mind (*manas*), i.e. of that aspect of the consciousness which appropriates the whole body, including its sensory faculties.

That the mind, the self appropriated by the mind, represents the object (*ālambana*) of the mental consciousness results from the common, pre-philosophical ascertainment of the fact that the conscious experience of a person is dependent on his self, on his psycho-corporeal structures. A person experiences the sensory ideations engendered by his sense organs as well as his discursive thoughts, engendered by his brains (the equivalent, in a modern terminology, of the mental consciousness). Thus, it may be stated that, since it depends on certain components of a person, the conceptual experience depends on the appropriation act (*upādāna*) of the mind, through which a particular individual self, along with his predispositions towards particular experiences, are assumed as own identity (*ātman*).

<sup>67</sup> In Abhidharma, the term “mind” (*manas*) does not have the meaning it has in Vijñānavāda, but it rather stands for the “mental consciousness” (*manovijñāna*) of Vijñānavāda.

<sup>68</sup> Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośa*, I.17, apud. *Mahāyānasamgraha*, Lamotte, *op.cit.* 1973, p.16, footnote.

**The seeds of conceptualization (*abhilāpavāsanā*) and their appropriation by the mind (*manas*)**

Of all the elements belonging to an appropriated personality, Vijñānavāda considers that responsible for the production of conceptual experience are the so-called “imprints of the linguistic categories” (*abhilāpavāsanā*). The authors of the school do not identify a certain organ (i.e. the brain) and its specific mechanisms as the ones accounting for the production of the conceptual experience, but they confine themselves to considering these imprints (*vāsanā*), these seeds (*bīja*), as being those which account for the apparition of the conceptual experience (*parikalpa*).

Since the process of conceptualization is not based on anything objective, conceptual experience depends simply on the conceptualization performing instance that was appropriated. Conceptualization, being somehow similar to imagination, i.e. having a subjective nature (*ātmika*), the act of appropriating (*upādāna*) the seeds of conceptual construction (*abhilāpavāsanā*), performed by the mind (*manas*), acquires a decisive role in engendering the conceptual experience (*parikalpa*). Consequently, in case of any being, the experience of conceptualization engendered by the mental consciousness depends exclusively on the mind (*manas*) which appropriates a certain type of seeds of conceptual construction (*abhilāpavāsanā*) and not on any alleged characteristics of an objective entity (*artha*).

Both the sense organs (*indriya*) and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) represent appropriated elements. Therefore, what a person experiences in a conscious manner is basically the same with the appropriated elements that constitute his personality, his individuality (*ātman*). The trivial ascertainment that nobody experiences the ideations produced by the sensory organs or the mental consciousness of others represents a supplementary proof of the dependency of the conscious experience (the experience of the operational consciousnesses) on the appropriating activity of the mind. The very idea of “personal experience”, of “individual experience” analytically contains the idea of “mind” (*manas*), of “appropriation” (*upādāna*), because individuality (*ātmabhāva*), personhood (*pudgala*), necessarily involve the mind (*manas*). The realistic philosophy claims a certain objectivity of the conscious experience considering that it reproduces, that it intends a certain objective reality; however, Buddhism considers that human awareness is strictly an individual (*ātmika*), subjective phenomenon and, thus, it is the individuality (*ātman*) appropriated by the mind that determines the content of the conscious thinking (*parikalpa*).

„The mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) is said to be based on mind (*manas*), because as long as mind (*mind*) has not ceased, [mental consciousness] is not freed from the bondage of perception (*vijñapti*) in regard to phenomena (*nimitta*).”<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> „*tan manovijñānaṃ mana-āśritam ucyate aniruddhe hi manasi nimitte vijñaptibandh(an)āmuktiḥ niruddhe ca tanmuktiḥ* /”

It is true that a certain person may create new concepts or may acquire concepts from the relations with other individuals, but these two situations do not jeopardize the subjective nature of the categorial system because, in the first case, one may consider that the creation of the new concepts is done only on the basis of the pre-existing ones, while, in the second case, the subjective nature of the categories is preserved, their origin being still within an individual.

„The comprehension of the factors (*dharmagrāha*) is of two types: inborn (*sahaja*) and conceptual (*vikalpita*).

The first type is born only from some causes inherent [to personality], such as the imprints (*vāsanā*) of the error (*vitatha*), namely from the beginningless tendency towards the perception of some factors and from the seeds this tendency imprints to the consciousness. This [type] is always associated to the person. It is born through itself and manifests through itself, without depending on any false teaching (*mithyādeśanā*), on any false reflection. That's why, it is named «inborn» (*sahaja*).....

The second type of [comprehension] is born as a result of the actualization of some external conditions (*pratyaya*). For it to be born, false teachings or false reflections are necessary. Hence, it is named «conceptual» (*vikalpita*).<sup>70</sup>

**The individual being (*ātman*) as the object component (*nimittabhāga*) of the mind, the ideations of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) as its representation component (*darśanabhāga*)**

Vijñānavāda texts operated a distinction between a representation component (*darśanabhāga*) and an object component (*nimittabhāga*); this distinction is not really correctly applied to all types of consciousness. This distinction rests on the illusion that there is an “object” external to consciousness, which would represent the object component (*nimittabhāga*), as opposed to the representation of the object within the consciousness, i.e. the representation component (*darśanabhāga*). The possibility of applying this distinction to the storehouse consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) is doubtful, but it can be applied to the individual consciousnesses that involve the illusory experience of an “external object” (*bāhya artha*).

In case of the mind, it may be considered that, as its object component (*nimittabhāga*), it has any type of manifestation that is appropriated (*upādāna*), anything that could constitute a human individual (*pudgala*). As its representation component (*darśanabhāga*), i.e. as the way the mind represents its object for itself, Vijñānavāda identifies the ideations (*vijñapti*) of the mental consciousness

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*Yogācārabhūmi*, *Pravṛtti* section, in Waldron, *op.cit.*, p.183 (slightly modified); in Lambert Schmithausen, *Ālayavijñāna: On the Origin and the Early Development of a Central Concept of Yogācāra Philosophy*, *Studia Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series*, International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo, 1987, p. 202 (English translation), p. 489-490 (Sanskrit reconstruction).

<sup>70</sup> Huan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.80.

(*manovijñāna*), and this because the mental consciousness is the one that becomes conscious, that represents the object appropriated by the mind. In case of an individual, the manner in which he represents the self appropriated by the mind consists of those conscious conceptual experiences that refer to the self and which are engendered by the mental consciousness. The component of representation (*darśanabhāga*) of the mind doesn't comprise only the conscious ideations dealing with the self, engendered by the mental consciousness, since the experience of the mind also includes the afflictions (*kleśa*). However, the representation component (*darśanabhāga*) of the mind at least includes the ideations of the mental consciousness, as a result of the relation of tight determination by which the mind, exerting it upon the mental consciousness, transfers its content to the latter.

„II.11. The ideations of the mind (*manovijñapti*) have as their object component all the ideations, starting with the visual ideations and until the factors (*dharmā*), while, as their representation component, they have the ideations of the mental consciousness (*manovijñānavijñapti*), since the mental consciousness represents the concepts and manifests itself as all the concepts (*vikalpa*).”<sup>71</sup>

**The determination relation between the mind (*manas*) and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), formulated in Abhidharmic terminology**

In Abhidharmic terms, the relation between the mind (*manas*) and the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) can be expressed by stating that the mind represents either the immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaya-āśraya*) either the sovereign condition (*adhipatipratyaya-āśraya*) of the mental consciousness.<sup>72</sup> There are some differences between these two positions, which are not easy to explain otherwise than in Abhidharmic terms, but both positions share the fact that they ascribe to the mind the role of determinant (be it either immediately preceding either regent) in relation to the mental consciousness. The theory according to which the mind is an immediately preceding condition is the oldest of the two and it can be found in texts such as *Yogācārabhūmi*, *Mahāyānasamgraha*, *Abhidharmasamuccaya* etc. The mind appears as the regent condition (*adhipatipratyaya-āśraya*) or, to put it differently, as the simultaneous condition (*sahabhū-āśraya*) of the mental consciousness, at Nanda, an author known only from the references to him made by Hiuan-Tsang.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Asaṅga, *Mahāyānasamgraha*, II.11, Lamotte, *op.cit.* 1973, p.100-101.

<sup>72</sup> For a discussion on the four types of conditions (*pratyaya*) discovered by the Hīnayāna philosophers and which are generally accepted in the Mahāyāna schools as well, see *Abhidharmakośa*, III, 61-65 in Chaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p.113-114. See also Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1999, vol.I., p.138-139, Ganguly, *op.cit.*, p.49-50!

<sup>73</sup> Hiuan-Tsang, *Ch'eng-wei-shih-lun*, Poussin, *op.cit.* 1928, p.230-232.

„What is mind (*manas*)?..... It also represents the consciousness (*viññāna*) which has just ceased to exist in the immediately preceding moment (*samanantaraniruddha*) of the six [operational] consciousnesses.”<sup>74</sup>

„I.16. Acting as an immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaya*) and representing a support (*āśrayībhūta*), the consciousness that has just ceased to exist in the immediately preceding moment (*anantaranirudhaviññāna*) represents the support of the birth (*utpattiyāśraya*) of the mental consciousness (*manoviññāna*).”<sup>75</sup>

„..... the consciousness that has just ceased to exist in the immediately preceding moment (*anantaranirudhaviññāna*) and which is named «mind» (*manas*) gives birth to the occasion (*avakāśa*) for the apparition of the consciousness which is about to occur (*utpitsu viññāna*) and hence it represents the support of its birth (*utpattiyāśraya*).”<sup>76</sup>

#### **The double function of the mind: the production of afflictions and the determination of the mental consciousness**

Both *Mahāyānasamgraha*, and *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* suggest an etymological derivation of the name “*manas*” from the term “*samanantara*” (“immediately”). They also accept the classical – and correct at the same time – etymological interpretation, according to which “*manas*” comes from the root “*man*” (meaning “to think” but which, in *Vijñānavāda*, acquires a more specific meaning: “to mentalize”, “to appropriate”, “to consider something as its own self”). The etymological relatedness between “*manas*” and “*samanantara*” is not correct though; the presence of the group of letters “*mana*” in “*samanantara*” is only the result of a phonetic accident generated by the adjoining of “*sam*” (“together”) to “*an*” (privative particle) and to “*antara*” (“interval”, “break”) – which, together, yield the meaning of “together/joint, without any intermediary interval” – these being the real etymological components of “*samanantara*”, which have nothing to do with “*man*” or “*manas*”.

The search for two etymological interpretations for “*manas*” was probably motivated by the double function ascribed to the mind in *Vijñānavāda* texts: that of being the determinant condition of the mental consciousness and that of engendering the afflictions, by inducing attachment to the appropriated individual self.

„I.6 The mind (*manas*) can be of two types (*dvividha*):

<sup>74</sup> „*manas katamat / .....yacca saññāṃ viññānāṃ samanantaraniruddhaṃ viññānam /*” *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Pradhan (1950:12), apud. Tsong-Khapa, *Yid dang kun gzhi dka'ba'i gnas rgya cher'grel pa legs par bshad pa'rgya mtsho*, Gareth Sparham, *Ocean of Eloquence. Tsong Kha Pa's Commentary on the Yogācāra Doctrine of Mind*, Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi, 1995, p.112.

<sup>75</sup> Asaṅga, *Mahāyānasamgraha*, I.6, Lamotte, *op.cit.* 1973, p.16.

<sup>76</sup> Vasubandhu, *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya*, ad.I.6, Lamotte, *op.cit.* 1973, p.16.

1) .... acting as an immediately preceding condition (*samanantarapratyaya*) ..... represents the support of the birth (*utpattyāśraya*) of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*).

2) The second is the afflicted mind (*kliṣṭamanas*).....

The [operational] consciousnesses are born having the first type of mind as a basis; the second type represents affliction.<sup>77</sup>

„Therefore, the mind is of two types: the afflicted mind and the mind as an immediately preceding condition.”<sup>78</sup>

Both functions represent alteration; through its capacity of engendering afflictions (*kleśa*), the mind alters the calm, peaceful (*śanta*) condition of consciousness, while, through its being the determinant of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), the mind participates in the alteration of the uniform (*sama*), non-determined condition of reality. This alteration is done through the projection of the various determined own beings (*svabhāva*). Therefore, the experience of the mind, in both its aspects, constitutes an “obstruction” (*āvaraṇa*) of reality.

In the specific terminology of Vijñānavāda, we can state that the double function of the mind consists in engendering the “obstructions of the knowable” (*jñeyāvaraṇa*) and the “obstructions of the afflictions” (*kleśāvaraṇa*).

„This mind (*manas*), which is the seventh [consciousness], has two potentials: a) the potential to produce afflictive emotions when it again views the storehouse [consciousness] (*ālaya*) as self, and b) the potential that comes from it functioning as the simultaneously arising basis of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), that designates [things] with various expressions (*vyavahāra*). [This latter potential] produces grasping after factors (*dharma*), the obstructions of the knowable (*jñeyāvaraṇa*).”<sup>79</sup>

### **The determination of the categorial system by the condition, by the inclinations of the individual self**

An important philosophical consequence of the determination of the mental consciousness by the mind is the fact that any kind of conceptual knowledge (*vikalpa*, *parikalpa*), which constitutes a product of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*), depends on the ego (*ātman*), involves the ego. As a result, conceptual knowledge has a subjective nature (*ātmika*), involves the limited individual perspective it is produced from. Being dependent on the ego, conceptual knowledge (*parikalpa*) is affected by the erroneous nature (*viparyāsa*, *vitathā*) of the discrimination of the ego (*ātmadr̥ṣṭi*). Any representation of the mental consciousness (*manovijñāna*) involves the attachment to the self (*ātmasneha*), the

<sup>77</sup> Asaṅga, *Mahāyānasamgraha*, I.6, Lamotte, *op.cit.* 1973, p.15-16.

<sup>78</sup> Tsong-Khapa, *Yid dang kun gzhi dka'ba'i gnas rgya cher'grel pa legs par bshad pa'rgya mtsho*, Sparham, *op.cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>79</sup> Tsong-Khapa, *Yid dang kun gzhi dka'ba'i gnas rgya cher'grel pa legs par bshad pa'rgya mtsho*, Sparham, *op.cit.*, p. 115.

error of the self. Vijñānavāda – and Buddhism in general – claims that the categorial classification results from the inclinations of the ego; thus, the erroneous nature (*viparyāsa*) of the ego (*ātman*) is passed on to conceptual knowledge.

„30. Those who do not know (*ajānaka*), the immature ones (*bāla*), conceive (*kṛp*) [the idea] of «inner self» (*antarātman*). Through establishing (*āśritya*) in the view of the self (*ātmadarśana*) many opinions (*dr̥ṣṭi*) [take birth].”<sup>80</sup>

„The view of the reality of the body (*satkāyadr̥ṣṭi*) ..... is the root (*mūla*) of all the other opinions (*dr̥ṣṭi*).”<sup>81</sup>

The relation between the appropriated individual self and the tendencies to apply a certain categorial system involves more than the mere existence of the seeds of a certain categorial system (*abhilāpavāsanā*) in an appropriated self. The categorial discriminations tend to conform to certain tendencies of the individual. The categorial system tends to display, in a conceptual manner, the states which the individual may go through; the application of a categorial system to the individual states reifies them, turns them, in an illusory manner, into determined, autonomous entities. The Buddhist authors do not detail the manner in which a certain individual self determines the application of a certain categorial system, but they indicate clearly enough the fact that the categorial system is related to the self and to its states. First and foremost, the individual self acquires a conceptually determined identity, on the basis of which, its various particular conditions as well acquire categorial identities, being thus reified.<sup>82</sup> The categorically structured universe would therefore reproduce the tendencies, the interests of an individual self.

„38. The one in pain (*duḥkhin*), [thinking] «I am subjected to pain» (*duḥkhito 'ham asmi*), establishes [the existence] of the self (*ātman*) and of pain (*duḥkha*). Or, again, [the same thing happens] with the happy one (*sukhita*). [This act] is the one which engenders (*samutthāpaka*) a constructed (*parikalpa*) view (*dr̥ṣṭi*). Once born (*jata*), from it, that [view] is also born.”<sup>83</sup>

<sup>80</sup> „30. *kalpaya[n]ty antarātmānaṃ taṃ ca bālā ajānakāḥ / ātmadarśanam āśritya tathā bahvyaś ca dr̥ṣṭayaḥ //”*  
*Paramārtha-gāthā*, 30, Schmithausen, *op.cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>81</sup> „*satkāyadr̥ṣṭim ..... tadanyasarvadr̥ṣṭimūlam*”  
*Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Wogihara, 51,9f; apud. Schmithausen, *op.cit.*, p.515.

<sup>82</sup> For the tight relation between the mind (*manas*), the discrimination of the individual self, and the multiple categorial discriminations of the determined objects, see Chatterjee, *op.cit* 1999, p.104!

<sup>83</sup> „38. *duḥkhī duḥkhito 'ham asmīty ātmānaṃ sukhito vā punar duḥkhaṃ vyavasyati / parikalpo dr̥ṣṭisamutthāpakaḥ sa tasmā jātataḥ taj janayaty api //”*  
*Paramārtha-gāthā*, 38, Schmithausen, *op.cit.*, p. 232, appendix II.