

THE VAIBHASIKA (REALISTIC) DOCTRINE

[The Vaibhasikas are followers of the 'Abhidham-vibhanga-sastra' which, in its turn, is but a commentary on the *Abhidharma* of the Sarvastivadin school, This school is one of the earliest, if not the earliest of Buddhist sects]².

1. We now refute the Vaibhasikan who, trying to escape from the faults of the three previous schools of Buddhism, affirms that along with the cognition (of the outer object) the outer object is *perceived* (directly), that both the cognition and the object of cognition are of the form of unqualified (*nirvishesa*) momentary (*ksanika*) stream (*Santana*), that the knower (*jnata*) is only imagined (*kalpitam*).

2. He has already affirmed that the momentary atoms are not perceptual (objects) (as such): when he affirms that there occurs perception (of them) at the time of their grouping (only) he has declared that the group is the ultimate object of perception, but he has not offered any reason for the grouping to occur such as *samyoga* (conjunction) or (even) unspacedness (*nairantarya*).

¹ cf. *Tattva-mukha-kalpa*, p.670 (Pandit)

² *The central Conception of Buddhism*: Prof.Th.Stcherbatsky.

3. He who affirms that the qualities of momentariness and self-manifestation (*svalaksana*)¹ having appeared through indeterminate perception (*nirvikalpaka*), become objects and determinate perception due to the grouping (*punja*), cannot make indeterminate perception the source of right knowledge (*pramana*) for determining that these (qualities) appeared in this manner in indeterminate perception (because) (i) qualities are non-existent in it, and (ii) since *savikalpaka* is confused being additive of *samskra* and thus false.

4. Having stated that *vikalpa* (determinate perception) is confused (due to impregnation with impressions, *vasana*), since it reveals that which is not true,

(and since it is) incapable of being proved by any other instrument of right knowledge (*asamvāda*), and that

in *vikalpa* “in that form which appears outside as if it is one (self identical) thing, and for other (reason) as if it is distinguished, that is without reality, because it is not subject to examination (*pariksanga*).”

They affirm that determinate perception and inference are superimpositions, and that these also cannot (obviously) reveal the ultimate substance. Thus to one who affirms that *vikalpa* is not a source of right knowledge, there is no way of accepting the indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*), which is itself determined to exist by determinate cognition alone, as a right source of knowledge (*pramana*).

¹Prof. Stcherbatsky translates *Svalaksana* as manifestation as against Gougg’s trans of the same as *self-characteristic*.

5. To the inference which denies the authoritativeness of determinate perception, there happens the fallacy of *anaikantya* (the fallacy of non-application of the *vyapti*, concomitance).

6. To one who holds that all discussions which have their roots in determinate perception (*vikalpa*) are imaginations (*kalpita*), there will result the contradiction with the words of one’s own school. Therefore the non-existence of proofs for establishing one’s own system equal those of the *Madhyamikan*.

7. If it be said that in the consciousness as well as in that which it cognizes, therefore; there is a self nature (*svabhava* NOVEMBER, 2004 and that its modifications and that its modifications (alone) are unreal (*mithya*), this division (into one's own nature and *vikara* as its modification which are deemed to be real and false respectively) cannot be made.

8. Since the grouping (of atoms) which is determined by perception (*vikalpa*) that appears to be the qualified permanent thing, is said to be of the form of illusion (*bhranti*), since this is (said to be) due to the strength of the impressions (*vasana*) as the Yogacarin affirms, there is no way by which he (*Vaibhasikan*) can say that the outer object is *pratyaksa*, perceived.

9. Between the cognition and the object of cognition there is needed no other connection. Due to the quality of one's own nature (*svabhava-visesa*) there comes about this subject-object relation (*visaya-visayibhava*), and the object of cognition being true, this is being said.

10. If it be said that because the previous instant (the object) which is the cause, through the contact with sense-organs, by that relation with the later instant (cognitive moment) cognizes the previous instant, then, this is also refuted by the need for existence at the same time (*samakala*) (of the cognized and the cognition) to reveal the object, a fact which has been determined by the experience of all.

11. In accord with those who declare that (i) the secondary cognition (*anuvyavasaya*) perceives the first cognition (*vyavasaya*) along with its objects which might belong to the past or the future, and (ii) that the perception of the thing that has attained the state of destruction outlasts the destruction of that thing by just a moment, even if it said that the previous moment (the thing) can be made to be the object of the later moment (the cognition), then, it would happen that the previous moments in all the worlds can become objects (of the cognition of the later moment, i.e. they can all be causes of the later-moment-cognition).

12. If it be said that in regard to this (particular) cognition, they cannot be causes, then objectivity (*visayatva*) will have to be affirmed (also) of the sense organs (*adhipati*), helping cause (*sajakari*), and nearby momentary objects (*samantara*) which are all like the counter object (*alambana*). When the causes are all of equal importance (*tulya*), if it is said that a different time (*bhinna-kala*) is perceivable on account of the specific quality of the nature (*svabhava*) of the self-manifestation (*svalaksana*) only, then due to the arising of the specific quality of the nature of that, the objects that are of extremely

distant past and extremely distant future (*ciraviprakraṣṭa* NOVEMBER, 2004
BETWEEN *Nurastha*) could be perceived.

13. Those who accept the special characteristic (*svabhava-visesa*) of the object (*alambana*) (to produce cognition at the next moment even whilst ceasing to be before that moment arises), need not at all postulate the need for sense-organs (*adhipati*) and helping (*sahakari*) etc., causes.

14. Even if they are there, when there is not that special quality of the nature (*svabhava-visesa*) (in the thing), it cannot be made to become an object of direct perception. When the specific quality of the nature is there, even if these (*adhipati-sahakari-causes*) are not available, it can be made to become an object.

15. If it be said that the momentary self-manifestation (*svalaksana*) which is characterized by the special quality of its nature (*svabhava-visesa*) does not appear without them (i.e. these *adhipati* etc. causes), there is no way of establishing this invariable concomitance (mentioned above).

16. If it be said that it does not appear to another individual stream (*santanantaram*), then, because of the necessity in the nature (*svabhava*) of the two moments of the blue cognition and the object, such (an objection) is overruled [In other words, it is enough if you merely said that *svabhava* is the all-solver. We can trace this seeking refuge in the *nature* of a thing also in the *lokayata darsana*].

17. The affirmation of the Vaibhasika and the other three schools that all the objects they have (individually) accepted are momentary (*ksanika*), is contradictory to the well-established uncontradicted observations of Recognition by all persons.

18. If it be said that as in the actually observed (candle) flame-stream (which constantly perishes), due to the arising of grouping (of atoms) from (prior) grouping, even the pots etc. having similarity with causes in the cognition-stream also, the illusory recognition happens, therefore the permanence of the object is imagined (*kalpitam*), **we reply**, that as in the case of the flame which is differentiated by the absolute necessary difference in the instruments etc., (for the production of change etc.) here there is no way of refuting Recognition.

19. If all things are (of) momentary (duration), since there is no person (cognizer) to discover the identity etc. between the prior (object-moment) and later (cognition moment), even the illusory recognition (*pratyabhijna*) or remembrance cannot arise.

20. In the same way, in the doctrine of momentariness there will arise *atiprasanga*. (over-stepping in conduct) by the doers of good and evil deeds, since enjoyment of their results cannot accrue (to them), and since another person alone will be enjoying them. Even the example: “In which series alone *karmavasana* inheres, therein alone the fruits are realized even like the redness in cotton” mentioned by you is untenable¹.

21. That which has come about as a result of activities of the impression-supporting permanent entities (*vasanadhara-sthira-dravyanuvrtti*) cannot be said to belong to the momentary stream (*ksanika-santana*).

In the doctrine of the destruction without residue (*niranvaya-vinasa*)², there is no possibility of determining the unity of the stream (*Santana*).

22. By presuming that there is perceived destructing without residue in the (candle or oil) light, it cannot be maintained that this destruction without remainder is true in regard to pots etc. It is more appropriate to affirm that, as in the case pots etc. wherein we perceive destruction that leaves residue, so there is

in the light (*dipam*) also, destruction with residue. For the parts of the light become extremely subtle (when they disintegrate), even like the parts of bubbles.

23. If it be said that all things are momentary, like a could¹. **we reply** that

¹Cf. sec.2 on Yogacara doctrine.

² Cf. *Central Conception of Buddhism*; Prof. Th. Stcherbatsky p.12 who quotes in footnote five. *Abhidharma-kosa*. I.37 and the Yas. Comment *mrtasaya ananuvrtteh*, and that this is a point of analogy with the *linga sarira* of the Sāmkhyas. Also p.38 Refutations of the *Niranvaya-Vinasa Vedānta-Sūtra*. II.ii.6. *Samkhya-Sūtra* 1.45. which points out that Buddhists seek to controvert existence in this way.

such examples which take inferences drawn from existence (*satvadyanumana*) cannot be applied to establish momentariness in all things.

24. (If it be said that the division of continuous infinite time into small bits of time such as moments, *ksanas*, is possible only by assuming the existence of things having momentary duration which (existence) thereby becomes a *ksanikatva-updhi*, the moment-limiting adjunct, and therefore all things must be of this kind, we reply thus): Such a limiting momentary duration can be established by reciprocal (or differential) divisioning of permanent things (without having recourse to the doctrine of universal momentariness)².

25. By the irrefutable (validity of) recognition (*pratyabhijna*) the inferences of momentariness get refuted.

26. (To the question how a thing namely a seed can be productive when in the field and unproductive when in the granary, in which case if the seed were to be permanent it would have two contradictory attributes predicated of it, *karana* and *akarana* we reply) To the equally permanent thing' the capacity to produce

¹ Cf. *Sarvadarsana-samgraha*. P.20. trans. Gough.

² A moment is a point instant of the meeting of all cause without exception which as soon as they colligate produce the effects. This is the reciprocal divisioning of time by the several permanent entities none of which need be of momentary duration, though none may be eternal. Cf. *Central Conception of Buddhism*. P.41. "We call a moment, the point when an action is fully achieved." "It is a motion constant during a infinitesimally interval." The capacity to produce an effect and the incapacity to produce any effect (*akurvadsvabhava*) happens, because of the relationship or non-relationship with helping causes the relationship or non-relationship with helping causes (*sajakari – sambandha – sambandah*). Since these two (seed-stream and sahakari-stream) are being determined by their own individual instrument-streams (*samagri-pravaha*) by being distinguished by their different times (*kalabheda*), there is o contradiction.

27. Objection: (A thing cannot exist both in the past and ht future).

For the thing during its own lifetime to exist during the non-existence (prior of later) of other things is not a contradiction. [A thing can exist even whilst others perish and are born, their births and deaths and life-spans do not contradict its life-span]. What we do deny is that this (self-same object) does not exist during its own life-time.

28. Since perception (*pratyaksa*) perceives only that which is in the present time (*vartamana-kala*), if it be said that therefore 'it shows the thing's prior and posterior non-existence', we reply that it reveals only the present evidence of the thing; beyond that it cannot show its own non-existence (or existence) at other times.

29. The inference that affirms the absolute necessity (*dhruvabhavitva*) of destruction of all things without any cause whatsoever (*ahetuka-vinsa*) is vitiated by the fault of straying (*vyabhicara*).

“To a causeless being, since it has no dependence on any other, either eternal non-existence or existence (happens), because of having dependence, existence happens to things at some time.” This saying of Dharmakirti in the contest of ‘*Discussion on Existence*’ can equally apply to Destruction also. This destruction, if it is said to be without any cause (*ahetuka*), will become beginningless (*anadi*); when a thing loses its being, this destruction too should be deemed to be *tucca* chimerical (as it is also causeless); then, even to this thing, non-existence (*paravadhi*) will have to be given up.

30. If, in these ways, all sources of right knowledge are scrutinized, since some things are found to be transitory (*anitya*), for the sake of declaring that the body (*sarira*) (one has) and etc. are not permanent abodes of the self, (so as to inculcate renunciation) what the Scripture on Self-knowledge (*Adhyatmasastra*) has done is only to compare these with lightning and bubbles (which represent extreme transitoriness).

31. If destruction can happen without any cause, there is no purpose in prescribing the duties of non-killing etc. The instruction to any one not to destroy either the conscient self or its body etc. could only be given if destruction can happen through another agency (not otherwise).

If it be said that the prescribing of No-killing only means the desisting from bringing about quite alien brood (*Visabhaga-santana*) in the continuous stream (of life) or the desisting from creating peculiar mental conditions which are of the form of pain, we reply that for one who knows that the self (*atma*) is momentary consciousness, there can be no possibility of observing laws which prescribe duties and prohibit action etc. If the cause which is invariably concomitant (*anvaya-vyatireki*) with destruction, is made the cause of the various streams only which are sundered (*visabhaga*), and it is said that the incidental *vinasa* comes about without any cause whatsoever, then it would follow that even as in

the case of our friend Carvāka, the existences would have to be uncaused (and only come about by chance).

32. Finding that no one will accept all things to be momentary, the vibhajya-vaibhasikan¹(he who distinguishes between things eternal and non-eternal) declares that there is an entity which is eternal. In this school what is assented to as eternal in the following passage of Buddha:

“O Bhikkhus! An uncreated thing is. When the living being’s eternal nature (*sattvam*) is non-existent, then there will happen non-existence of mind”², is very clearly shewn to be based on fallacious reasoning. Because he accepts a permanent substance, it cannot be an answer to all our refutations against his

¹Cf. *Central conception of Buddhism*: p.43, note 3, also *Points of Controversy*: Aung and Rhys Davids, p.xxxviii and XI ff, for the Vibhajyavadins who are said to be midway between Sautrantiks and Vaibhasikas. The above verse is not traceable so far anywhere. No mention is made of this school in *Sarvadarsana-samagraha*. The fact that Buddha was a *vaibhajyavadin* mentioned above is accepted by Buddhists also.

² *Asti bhiksoh akritakam ydi nasti yetasya jantoh sattvam manasa sunyavastha sampadyate*. (Sanskrit version in Mysore ed.) *Tattva-mukta-kalapa* with *Bhava-Prakasika*.

other doctrines of momentariness and illusion of definite perception. The inference from existence (*satvadyanumna*) to prove momentariness will contradict anyone who accepts any substance to be eternal. For it will then happen that by taking the accepted eternal substance as example, the inference from existence itself can be made to prove that all other things are also permanent.

34. If it be said that leaving aside all reasons, if on the strength of scriptures (*upadesa*) alone do we declare that only one thing is eternal and all else momentary, (we retort) since such instructions have their roots in

delusion, they can never be believed in. If it were not so, even the Jainas by taking their scriptures alone could establish their own theses. We have already stated in the *Refutation of Other Systems in General*:¹ that there should be no discrimination (of true and untrue) as between any two human authorities, (that is, all of them are fallible).

35. (If it be said that the Advaitins do make this discrimination between eternal and non-eternal things, **we reply**), the discrimination between eternal and non-eternal made by disguised-buddhists will be refuted in the following chapter.

¹(*Samudayadhikra*).

“Atthi bhikkhave akada-am jayi natthi edassa jantuno sattam, manassa sannavattha sampajja”.

Therefore what results (from the examination of this system) is that all things have their essence eternal (*svarupa-nityam*), and only the several states (*avasthas*) which come about get destroyed (*anitya*).

36. What is said by these (*Vaibhasikas*) about space that it is the limitation which is made by the manifold groupings of imaginary objects, and that this is as chimerical like the sky-flower, is refuted by the fact of its parity with the other elements such as earth etc, which are accepted by them according to their own words, which we have already stated in the relevant context under the Sautrantik system. If limitation is an illusion, to the atoms as well as to their groupings, infinitude (of dimension) will result, as some others (*Bhaskara*) say. By saying that limitation even in respect of the momentary consciousnesses is illusory, according to the principle of moving flame (*jvala-sancarana*), since there will not obtain what has been said regarding the abandonment of the previous body and the entry into a new womb, it would be necessary to postulate omnipervasiveness in respect of all consciousnesses.

37. For the three schools Buddhism (omitting Madhyamika who denies all) who hold that the self is the stream of cognitions (*buddhi-santana*). To say that the cognition that arises from 'Aham' 'I', the substance, as that substance itself, will be contradictory to all experience. If a division into the stream of cognitions and storehouse of impressions (*alaya-vijñānā*) is made (to overcome the above criticism) (we point out that there is no intrinsic reciprocal relationship between these two (streams).

38. To say that Moksa consists either in the arising of the pure consciousness-stream, or in the destruction of the passions in the stream of cognitions is refuted by the refutation (already made) of the (doctrine of) momentary existence.

39. Their use of their five-fold *skandas* twelve *ayatans*, four *artha-satyas*, eighteen *dhatas* etc.¹ are technical terms which having no authority (*pramana*), and are baseless, like a garland without the string.

40. This Vaibhasika doctrine has been refuted by the author of the Vedānta Sūtras under the sūtra "*Samudaya-ubhaya-hetukepi taqdapraṅgatih,*" (II.ii.17)," Even on the aggregate with its two causes, there is non-establishment of that."

¹Cf. *Central Conception of Buddhism*: Prof. Th. Stcherbatsky p.27 footnote 4. *Abhidharmakosa*, IX and p.96ff.