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PROLEGOMENA

In 1978 Gadjin Nagao published a short paper called “‘What Remains’ in Śūnyatā: A Yogācāra Interpretation of Emptiness.” There he argued that, according to the views expressed in the texts of the classical Indian Yogācāra, “emptiness” (*śūnyatā*) does not denote simple absence or nonexistence (*abhāva*); rather, there is always something left over or remaining (*avaśiṣṭa*) in emptiness, something that is identified with the basis for or locus of all human activity, and that is otherwise called the “dependent” (*paratantra*) aspect of experience. This remains even for Buddha: the realization of emptiness, claims Nagao, does not entail the end of the flow of experience, of what the Yogācāra calls *abhūta-parikalpa*, the comprehensive construction of what is unreal. Rather, this constructive activity continues, though it is now radically different, and is called “perfected” (*pariniṣpanna*).

Our goal in this paper is to make this formal thesis more specific. If it is true that Indian Yogācāra texts do want to argue that the flow of experience does not end with the attainment of awakening (*bodhi*), which technical terms do they use to denote what remains? Can more be said, logically or phenomenologically, about what “what remains” in emptiness is like and which terms are used to describe it? As a first step toward answering these questions we shall look at terms for mental imagery in one particular corpus: the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MV), comprising a root-text in verse together with two prose commentaries, a *bhāṣya* (MV-bh) attributed to Vasubandhu and a *ṭīkā* (MV-ṭ) attributed to Sthiramati. We shall attempt to see whether the patterns in which these terms are used suggest anything about whether Buddha’s experience is taken to be constituted by mental images, and if so what these

might be like. We shall also try to gain more precise ideas than are yet available to anglophone scholars about the semantic range of technical terms in this area, as well as about the relationships among them. A glance at secondary literature in this field shows that this is much needed. There are no standard translations for the technical terms, no clear sense of which are approximate synonyms and which bear significantly and consistently different meanings; and the translations that are given indicate that their users have widely and vividly different understandings of what these terms mean. We hope that this essay will clear up some of this confusion, as Bruce Hall's work on *vijñapti* has done in connection with that term, and as one of us (Griffiths 1990) has tried to do with terms for omniscience in an associated corpus of Buddhist texts.

THE MADHYĀNTAVIBHĀGA-CORPUS

The MV-corpus comprises a root-text in verse divided into five chapters, together with a commentary and a subcommentary as mentioned. Many things about the corpus—authorship, date, verse-enumeration and verse-division—are either disputed or unknown. We offer brief comments here.

As to authorship and date: the explanation given in MV-ṭ of MV-bh's *abhyarcana*, or opening dedicatory verse, attributes MV to one Maitreyañātha, whom some traditions treat as a bodhisattva destined to become the next Buddha for this world-realm, and some as a human teacher. The colophon of the Tibetan translation of MV attributes it to Āryamaitreya. The colophon of MV-bh, in both its Tibetan and Sanskrit versions, attributes it to Vasubandhu, a Buddhist scholastic thinker who may have flourished in the fourth century CE. The colophon of the only Sanskrit manuscript of MV-ṭ to have been recovered attributes it to Sthiramati, who may have been active in the sixth century. The corpus as a whole therefore dates from roughly the fourth to the sixth century, and represents classical Indian Yogācāra.

The Sanskrit text is available in the following complete and partial editions: V. Bhattacharya & Giuseppe Tucci (MV-ṭ, first chapter); Gadjin Nagao (1964, MV-bh, complete); Nathmal Tatia (MV-bh, complete); Susumu Yamaguchi (1934, MV-ṭ, complete); Ramchandra Pandeya (MV-ṭ, complete with the text of MV alone as an appendix [194-202]). There are Tibetan versions of all three texts. That of MV is called *Dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa* (Tōhoku #4021);

that of MV-bh is called *Dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel pa* (Tōhoku #4027); and that of MV-ṭ is called *Dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel bshad* (Tōhoku #4032). There is one Chinese version of MV, called *Bian zhong bian lun song* (Taishō #1601), translated by Xuanzang; there are two different versions of MV-bh: one, the *Zhing bian fen bie lun* (Taishō #1599), was translated by Paramārtha, and the other, the *Bian zhong bian lun* (Taishō #1600), was translated by Xuanzang. There is no Chinese version of MV-ṭ.

There are translations of various segments of the corpus into modern languages. Th. Stcherbatsky long ago translated the first chapter of MV-ṭ into English, as also (independently) did David Friedmann; Susumu Yamaguchi (1935) translated the entire MV-ṭ into Japanese; Paul O'Brien translated the third chapter of MV-bh (with extensive notes on MV-ṭ) into English; Erich Frauwallner (324-326) translated parts of the first chapter of MV into German; and David Ruegg (97-100, 426-427) translated parts of the first and fifth chapter of MV into French. All these translations were made more than twenty-five years ago. More recently, Stefan Anacker has translated the second, fourth, and parts of the fifth chapter of MV-bh into English; and Thomas Wood has translated the first chapter of MV into English.

There are, unfortunately, various problems and disputes about the number of verses in the MV, and about their proper division. These disagreements mean that the enumeration of verses in the editions and translations mentioned is often significantly different (especially in the first, third and fifth chapters). This makes reference quite complicated. We shall not try to resolve these questions here, but shall instead refer to the texts of the corpus using, with very minor modifications and additions, the sectional divisions and titles given in MV-bh (and followed by MV-ṭ). These are set out in an appendix, with the page-numbers of the three most easily available editions (Nagao [N], Yamaguchi [Y], Pandeya [P]) given in parentheses following each sectional title. The first number of each section-number indicates the chapter to which it belongs.

TERMS FOR MENTAL IMAGERY IN THE MADHYĀNTAVIBHĀGA-CORPUS

We have chosen to deal with the following terms: derivatives of the root *klṛp-* (among which we find most commonly *kalpana*, *kalpita*, *vikalpa*,

parikalpa, and *parikalpita*); the nominal items *vijñapti* (here making use as much as possible of the work already done by Hall), *pratibhāsa*, and *nimitta*. Comments on the semantic range of these terms, and possible translations for them, will follow in part four.

Our method has been, first, to find all instances of these terms in the verses of MV and the prose of MV-bh. To do this we read through the text in Nagao's edition of MV-bh (in which all the verses of MV are quoted in full), making use also of the trilingual (but not complete) index of technical terms given in an appendix to that edition (80-231). We also gained some help from the even more partial index of Sanskrit technical terms in Pandeya's edition of MV-ṭ. We then consulted MV-ṭ's comments upon all these text-places, making use principally of Yamaguchi's edition, but also consulting Pandeya's edition at times. Where the relevant terms in MV or MV-bh are commented upon by MV-ṭ using one or more of our terms we have included that text-place in our list; but we have not done so when MV-ṭ simply quotes MV or MV-bh rather than explains them. We have also added a fairly extensive (though not comprehensive) list of the occurrences of these terms in MV-ṭ outside the context of immediate commentary upon the text-places in MV or MV-bh isolated as described above.

Based upon this method the list below is divided into four parts. The first gives terms derived from *kl̥p-*; the second *vijñapti*; the third *pratibhāsa*; and the fourth *nimitta*. Within each of these subdivisions the terms are listed alphabetically, following Sanskrit alphabetical order. Where they occur in compounds the compound is given in full (alphabetized by its first member), with the elements separated by hyphens, vowel coalescence removed where its presence would prevent such division, and the final member of the compound given in stem form. When a compound contains more than one of our chosen terms it is given in all relevant subdivisions of the list, and is marked with an asterisk to indicate this fact. Terms are located by text (MV, MV-bh, MV-ṭ), and by section-number.

Terms Derived From Kl̥p-

akalpana—MV-bh 5.2.3.3

akalpita—MV-ṭ 1.1.3

aneka-parikalpa-pravṛtti—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2

abhūta-kalpa—MV 1.1.3

abhūta-kalpana—MV 1.1.8

- abhūta-parikalpa—MV 1.1.1; MV-bh 1.1.1 (x5), 1.1.2, 1.1.3 (x2),
1.1.5; MV-ṭ 1.1.2 (x2), 1.1.3 (x5), 1.1.8, 1.1.9 (x3)
- *abhūta-parikalpa-pratibhāsa-bheda—MV-ṭ 1.1.2
- abhūta-parikalpa-mātra—MV-bh 1.1.3; MV-ṭ 1.1.3, 1.1.5
- abhūta-parikalpa-mātratā—MV-ṭ 1.1.2
- abhūta-vikalpa—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
- avikalpa—MV-bh 3.10.9; MV-ṭ 3.10.9
- avikalpa-jñāna—MV-ṭ 3.10.9
- avikalpa-dhātu—MV-ṭ 1.2.2
- avikalpanatā—MV-bh 5.2.3.3 (x2); MV-ṭ 5.2.3.3
- avidyādi-pratyaya-pravṛtti-kalpana—MV-bh 3.10.4
- aviparyāsa-kalpita—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
- ahaituka-kalpana—MV-ṭ 3.10.4
- kalpana—MV-bh 5.2.4; MV-ṭ 5.2.3.3
- kalpana-mātra—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
- kalpayata—MV-bh 5.2.4 (x2)
- kalpayati—MV-bh 5.2.4 (x2)
- kalpayanti—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
- kalpita—MV 1.1.3; MV-ṭ 3.2, 3.4 (x2), 5.2.3.2
- kalpitatva—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
- kalpita-svabhāva—MV-ṭ 3.1, 4.1.8
- kalpyeta—MV-ṭ 3.10.4
- kleśa-parikalpita-mala-dvaya-śānti—MV-ṭ 3.4
- guṇa-doṣa-avikalpa—MV 3.10.9; MV-ṭ 3.10.9
- grāhaka-vikalpa—MV-ṭ 1.1.1
- grāhya-vikalpa—MV-ṭ 1.1.1
- grāhya-grāhakādi-kalpita-vyavahāra-āśrayatva—MV-ṭ 3.1
- grāhya-grāhaka-vikalpa—MV-bh 1.1.1; MV-ṭ 1.1.1, 1.1.4, 5.2.3.2
- grāhya-grāhaka-vikalpa-āśraya—MV-bh 5.2.3.2 (x2)
- grāhya-grāhaka-vikalpita—MV-ṭ 1.1.1
- niḥsāmarthya-kalpana—MV-bh 3.10.4
- *nimitta-vikalpa—MV-bh 3.8
- nirvikalpa—MV-bh 2.4.3, 5.2.3.3, 5.2.4; MV-ṭ 3.8, 4.1.7 (x2), 5.2.1
(x2), 5.2.3.2 (x2), 5.2.4
- nirvikalpa-jñāna—MV-bh 5.2.1; MV-ṭ 0 (x5), 5.2.1, 5.2.3.2
- nirvikalpa-jñānapariḡhṭva—MV-bh 5.2.1
- nirvikalpa-jñāna-vaśitā—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
- nirvikalpa-jñāna-ṣayatva—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
- nirvikalpatā—MV-ṭ 1.1.4

- nirvikalpatva—MV-ṭ 1.2.0, 5.2.3.2 (x3), 5.2.4
nirvikalpa-vaśitā—MV-bh 2.4.3; MV-ṭ 2.4.3
nirhetukatva-kalpana—MV-bh 3.10.4
parikalpa-mātra—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
parikalpa-vikalpa-artha-dharmatā-artha—MV 3.10.0
parikalpita—MV-bh 1.1.3, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.8, 3.10.0 (x2); MV-ṭ 1.2.3,
3.3, 3.4 (x2), 3.6, 3.8, 3.10.0
parikalpita-avabodha—MV-ṭ 3.2
parikalpita-ātmaka—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
parikalpita-ātmatva—MV-ṭ 3.3
parikalpita-dharma-vikalpa—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
parikalpita-paratantra-lakṣaṇa—MV-bh 3.9, 5.2.3.3
parikalpita-rūpa—MV-ṭ 1.1.4, 3.10.0 (x2)
parikalpita-lakṣaṇa—MV-bh 3.1, 3.3; MV-ṭ 3.3 (x2)
parikalpita-svabhāva—MV-bh 3.6; MV-ṭ 1.1.3 (x2), 3.1, 3.2, 3.4
parikalpita-svabhāva-abhiniveśa-vāsanā—MV-bh 3.4
parikalpyata—MV-bh 3.3; MV-ṭ 1.1.3
parikalpyate—MV-bh 3.3; MV-ṭ 1.1.2, 3.10.0
pariniṣpanna-parikalpita-paratantra-akhyā—MV-bh 5.2.3.3
bhāva-abhāva-vikalpa-rahita—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
bodhi-nirvikalpa—MV-ṭ 4.1.6
mana-udgraha-vikalpa-ākhyāna—MV-ṭ 3.10.10
*yathā-ukta-nimitta-svabhāva-viśeṣa-vikalpaka—MV-ṭ 3.8
rūpa-vikalpa—MV-bh 3.10.0
vikalpa—MV 3.8; MV-bh 3.10.10, 5.2.4 (x5); MV-ṭ 1.2.3, 3.5, 3.8
(x3), 3.10.0, 5.2.4 (x8)
vikalpa-antara-kalpita—MV-ṭ 1.1.3 (x2)
vikalpakatva—MV-bh 3.10.10
vikalpa-kleśatva—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
vikalpa-trāsa-kaūśīdyā-vicikitsā-upaśānti—MV-bh 1.2.5
vikalpa-dvaya-anta—MV-bh 5.2.4 (x5); MV-ṭ 5.2.4
vikalpa-dvaya-antatā—MV 5.2.4
vikalpa-prabheda—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
vikalpa-prabheda-pradarśana-artha—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
vikalpayati—MV-bh 5.2.3.3
vikalpa-viśaya-atikrānta-svarūpatva—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
vikalpita—MV-bh 3.10.0
vikalpita-dharma-trāsa—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
*vijñapti-antara-parikalpita—MV-ṭ 1.1.2

viṣama-hetu-kalpana—MV-bh 3.10.4
 vyāpara-kalpana—MV-bh 3.10.4
 sarva-kalpa-apravṛtti—MV 5.2.3.2
 sarva-vikalpa—MV-bh 5.2.3.2
 sarva-vikalpa-apravṛtti—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2
 sarva-vikalpa-prahāṇa-artha—MV-ṭ 4.1.8
 savikalpatva—MV-ṭ 4.1.7
 śaśa-viṣāna-kalpana—MV-ṭ 1.1.1
 hetutva-kalpana—MV-ṭ 3.10.4

Vijñapti

*artha-sattva-ātma-vijñapti-pratibhāsa—MV 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2 (x2)
 para-vijñapti—MV 4.1.7
 lakṣaṇa-vijñapti-śuddhi-samyak-prapannatā—MV 3.9
 vijñapti—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 *vijñapti-antara-parikalpita—MV-ṭ 1.1.2
 vijñapti-asambhava—MV-bh 5.2.4
 vijñapti-tattva—MV-bh 3.9; MV-ṭ 3.9
 *vijñapti-pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2
 vijñapti-mātra—MV-bh 1.1.4; MV-ṭ 1.1.4 (x2)
 vijñapti-mātra-upalabdhi—MV-bh 1.1.4; MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 vijñapti-mātra-upalambha—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 vijñapti-mātra-jñāna—MV-ṭ 5.2.4 (x4)
 vijñapti-mātra-jñāna-kṛta—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
 vijñapti-mātrata—MV-ṭ 3.9
 vijñapti-mātratva—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 *vijñapti-mātra-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 3.5

Pratibhāsa

abhūta-artha-pratibhāsata—MV-bh 1.1.4
 *abhūta-parikalpa-pratibhāsa-bheda—MV-ṭ 1.1.2
 ātma-pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2
 artha-pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2
 artha-pratibhāsatva—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 *artha-sattva-ātma-vijñapti-pratibhāsa—MV 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2 (x2)
 artha-sattva-pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2 (x2)
 grāhya-grāhaka-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 1.1.2
 grāhya-grāhaka-pratibhāsa-bhrānti—MV-ṭ 3.2
 grāhya-grāhaka-pratibhāsa-bhrānti-sadbhāva—MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2

ghaṭa-patādi-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 tat-pratibhāsa-bhrānti-sadbhāva—MV-bh 5.2.3.2
 tat-samudaya-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 paramāṇu-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 3.10.0
 pratibhāsatvam—MV 5.2.3.2
 pratibhāstate—MV-bh 1.1.2, 5.2.3.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 5.2.4
 pratibhāsamāna—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 pratyeka-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 rūpādi-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 3.5, 3.10.0
 sattva-pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2
 svākāra-pratibhāsa-vijñāna-kāraṇatva—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 *vijñapti-pratibhāsa—MV-bh 1.1.2; MV-ṭ 1.1.2 (x3)
 *vijñapti-mātra-pratibhāsa—MV-ṭ 3.5
 vitatha-pratibhāsatva—MV-bh 1.1.2
 viśaya-pratibhāsa-ātma—MV-ṭ 1.1.4 (x2)

Nimitta

animitta—MV 1.2.2; MV-ṭ 1.2.2, 2.4.3, 5.2.4 (x3)
 animittatva—MV-ṭ 1.2.2, 2.4.3
 anyonya-nimitta-bhāva—MV-ṭ 3.8
 upekṣā-nimitta—MV-ṭ 4.1.7 (x2)
 jñāna-animitta—MV-ṭ 5.2.4 (x3)
 jñāna-nimitta—MV-ṭ 5.2.4 (x2)
 jñeya-animitta—MV-ṭ (x3)
 jñeya-nimitta—MV-ṭ 5.2.4
 duḥkha-satya-nimitta—MV-bh 3.10.8
 nimitta—MV 3.8, 3.10.0, 4.1.3.2; MV-bh 3.10.10 (x2), 4.1.3.2,
 5.2.3.1; MV-ṭ 1.1.4, 2.4.3, 3.8 (x6), 5.2.3.1
 nimitta-abhāva—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 nimitta-abhāvatva—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 nimitta-ālambana—MV-ṭ 1.1.4
 nimitta-kṛta—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 nimitta-gata—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 nimitta-graha—MV-ṭ 1.2.3
 nimitta-nirodha-artha—MV-bh 1.2.2
 *nimitta-vikalpa—MV-bh 1.2.2
 nimitta-vikṣepa—MV-bh 5.2.3.1; MV-ṭ 5.2.3.1
 nimitta-samudācāra-abhāva—MV-ṭ 2.4.3 (x3)

- nimitta-vigata—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 nirnimittatā—MV-bh 2.4.3
 pragraha-nimitta—MV-ṭ 4.1.7
 praśrabdhi-nimitta—MV-ṭ 4.1.3.2
 bhrānti-nimitta—MV-ṭ 3.8
 *yathā-ukta-nimitta-svabhāva-viśeṣa-vikalpaka—MV-ṭ 3.8
 rāgādi-nimitta—MV-ṭ 5.2.4 (x3)
 vikṣepa-nimitta-upaśamana—MV-ṭ 4.1.7
 viparyāsa-tan-nimitta-tat-pradarśana-artha—MV-ṭ 3.1
 vedanā-nimitta—MV-bh 3.10.8
 vedanā-sanimitta-artha-tan-nimitta-pratipattita—MV 3.10.8
 vyavahāra-nimitta—MV-ṭ 1.1.7
 śamathādi-nimitta—MV-bh 4.1.7; MV-ṭ 4.1.7
 śamatha-nimitta—MV-ṭ 4.1.7
 sarva-nimitta—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 sarva-nimitta-abhāva—MV-bh 1.2.2
 sarva-nimitta-eka-rasa-ākāra—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 sarva-nimitta-prahāṇa-karma—MV-ṭ 1.2.5
 sūtrādi-dharma-nimitta—MV-ṭ 2.4.3
 sūtrādi-dharma-nimitta-nānatva-asamudacāra—MV-bh 2.4.3

INTERPRETATION

Terms Derived from Klṛp: The Construction of a Mental World

The root *klṛp-* denotes most generally the process of ordering or regulating, of giving an intentional shape or structure to something, and by so doing fitting it for or making it conformable to some purpose. Its range extends on the one hand in the direction of artistic creation (*kavikalpana* means something like the constructively creative activity of a poet), and on the other in the direction of simple constructive or ornamental activity, as in building a house, trimming a beard, or ‘caparisoning an elephant’ (Monier-Williams 263). In general, lexical items derived from this root suggest an activity the point of which is to alter its object, by ornamenting it, analyzing it, dividing it, bringing it together with other things, and so forth. Derivatives of this root occur most often in this corpus (as is obvious from the lists above) with a prefix, either *pari-* or *vi-*; we shall turn to those in a moment, but shall focus to begin with on forms without a prefix.

Among these there are relatively few instances, including simple nominal items (*kalpa* or *kalpana*), some active verbal forms (*kalpayati*, *kalpayanti*), and a rather large number of participial forms (mostly *kalpita*). Among the nominal items, *Kalpa* occurs only in the verses of MV, and then only for metrical reasons: it is glossed once with *parikalpa* and once with *vikalpa*, and has no independent semantic significance. *Kalpana*, though, is more important. In a cluster of cases (3.10.4) it is best understood to mean “false judgment”—that, for example, conditioned things can be produced by unlike causes (*samskārādīnām viśamahetukalpana*) or that there are no causes at all (*nirhetukatvakaḥkalpana*). That a false judgment with propositional content may be the product of *kalpana* is made explicit by the introduction of an *iti* clause at this same text-place: *kalpana* that there are no conditions such as ignorance for the coming into being of conditioned things (. . . *na santy avidyādipratyāyāḥ samskārādaya iti kalpanāt*). The MV-ṭ to this same text-place also uses an *iti*-clause with an active verbal form (*kalpyeta*), as also does the MV-bh elsewhere (5.2.4), in a context in which the object of *kalpayati* is the judgment that the ground of the real might be defiled or purified (. . . *dharmadhātuḥ samkliśyate vā viśuddhyate veti kalpayati*).

This emphasis on the unreality of the objects of *kalpana* is also evident in MV-ṭ’s use of the same term in connection with a hare’s horn—a standard example of a nonexistent object (*śaśaviṣānavikalpa*, 1.1.1). This instance is especially striking because it occurs in a context where *vikalpa* and *parikalpa* are widely used with slightly different connotations (to be turned to in a moment); that *kalpana* was chosen for this purpose suggests its special appropriateness for the labelling of an activity that produces unreal objects, whether these are judgments whose content is false, or percepts whose content is nonexistent.

Much the same can be said of the participial form *kalpita*. If *kalpana* denotes a constructive activity productive of false judgments or unreal percepts, then *kalpita* denotes the status of such things: they have been constructed by their subjects, but are entirely fictive. This is said, for instance, of each of the four kinds of objects that figure, whether as concept or percept, in the flow of experience—sensory organs, their objects, selves, and mental representations with phenomenal properties (*artho 'tra rūpādayaś cakṣurādaya ātmā vijñaptayaś ca / sa ca kalpitena svabhāvenābhūtaparikalpa nāstīti*, MV-ṭ 1.1.3; compare MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2, where the property of being *kalpitatva* is predicated of objects perceived

dualistically, in terms of the split between subject and object). All of the participial uses of *kl̥p* without a prefix fall into this pattern.

Very similar patterns are evident in the uses of *kl̥p* and derivatives coupled with the prefix *pari-*. The prefix here has the sense of completeness or comprehensiveness: if *kalpana* denotes specific instances of a constructive mental activity whose objects are false or unreal, then *parikalpa[na]* denotes a complete or comprehensive version of that same activity, a version whose scope is universal.

Most frequently, *pari + kl̥p*- terms occur in the participial form *parikalpita*. This is a technical term used to denote one of the three 'aspects' (*svabhāva*) under which experience may occur, the other two being *paratantra* and *pariniṣpanna*. There is already an extensive secondary literature on this set of ideas (Sponberg; Kochumuttom; Griffiths 1986) since it constitutes one of the central and distinguishing categories of Yogācāra metaphysics, and some of the primary sources analyzing it are available in English translation (Tola & Dragonetti). We shall not, therefore, go into this scheme in detail here, but shall simply note that MV-bh 3.6 identifies *parikalpitasvabhāva* with the agreement among ordinary people, arrived at upon the basis of habit, as to what things should be called, and as to when it is important to distinguish one thing from another—the text gives the specific example of distinguishing earth from fire and physical form from sound (*yasmin vastuni saṅketasamstavānupraviṣṭayā buddhyā sarveṣāṃ laukikānāṃ darśanatulyatā bhavati / pṛthivy eveyaṃ nāgni rūpam evedaṃ na śabda ity evamādi*, MV-bh 3.6). The point here is that *parikalpita* denotes that to which names and their correlative concepts have been applied (the same point is made at 3.8 and 3.10.0); and *parikalpa[na]* denotes the activity of applying names and concepts to the flow of experience.

The status of the objects of this activity is the same as that of the activity of *kalpana*: they are completely unreal (*aryantam asattva*, MV-ṭ 3.10.0), or without essence (*svabhāvasūnya*, MV-ṭ 1.1.1). Also, as with *kalpana*, such objects may be either concepts or percepts: the image of the hare's horn is used again (MV-ṭ 3.3), and we also find the judgment that dreaming consciousness must have as its object something previously experienced dismissed as *parikalpamātra* (. . . *tasmāt parikalpamātram evaitad anubhūtārthaviṣayam svapne vijñānam itī*, MV-ṭ 1.1.4). Graphically, the status of those objects subjected to *parikalpa* is likened to the objects of false reports, like that of a tiger's presence where there is no tiger (. . . *yathā vijñānenārthaḥ parikalpyate*

tathārthasyābhāvo vyāghrādiśrutādiṣv iva vitathālambanatvād viiathapratibhāsātā, MV-ṭ 1.1.2).

The other main locus for the use of *pari + kṛp-* is in the compound *abhūtaparikalpa*. The MV-ṭ explains this compound in the following way:

abhūtam asmin dvayaṃ parikalpyate 'nena vety abhūtaparikalpaḥ / abhūtavacanena ca yathāyaṃ parikalpyate grāhyagrāhakatvena tathā nāstīti pradarśayati / parikalpavacanena tv artho yathā parikalpyate tathārtho na vidyata iti pradarśayati / (MV-ṭ 1.1.1)

The compound 'unreal comprehensive construction' may be understood to indicate that the duality comprehensively constructed either by it or in it is unreal. The term 'unreal' indicates that the extent to which something is comprehensively constructed in terms of a dichotomy between subject and object is the extent to which it does not exist. The term 'comprehensive construction' indicates that the extent to which an object is comprehensively constructed is the extent to which it is not found.

This is very clear: the objects of *parikalpa*, in so far as these are phenomenally marked by a distinction between subject and object, have no reality at all. But the comprehensively misleading results of the constructive activity labelled by *pari + kṛp-* do themselves have reality, as MV clearly says (*abhūtaparikalpo 'sti, MV 1.1.1*). There is, throughout this corpus, an especially close relation between *abhūtaparikalpa* and the relative (*paratantra*) aspect of experience (*abhūtaparikalpaḥ paratantraḥ svabhāva iti, MV-ṭ 1.1.3*); and this in turn suggests that when a nominal form of *pari + kṛp-* is used (*parikalpa* or *parikalpana*), rather than a participial form with a passive sense such as *parikalpita*, it may sometimes denote, descriptively, the simple fact of the flow of experience, with all its finally illusory phenomenal properties of division between subject and object, "appearances," as MV-ṭ puts it, "that consist in objects, living beings, and selves and representations" (*arthasattva-atma-vijñaptipratibhāsam, MV-ṭ 1.1.9*). Such locutions leave open the possibility that the phenomenally rich series of mental images that usually constitutes the flow of experience may occur without being accompanied by a sharp phenomenological distinction between subject and object. We shall return to this, but in so far as it is the case we might say that *parikalpa[na]* and *abhūtaparikalpa* have a dual use: they can be used to denote both an undefiled nonerroneous flow of

experience, and a defiled and mistaken set of percepts and concepts that results from constructive action upon that flow. In the first use, *parikalpa* means simply *para-tantra*, the way things really are. The MV-ṭ equates *abhūtaparikalpa* with *dharma* to make just this point. In the second, it means *pari-kalpita*, the way things are when the usual conceptual, affective, and perceptual constructions have been made. The MV-ṭ (1.1.1) makes this distinction, identifying *abhūtaparikalpa* with error (*bhrānti*) when it is defiled (*saṅkliṣṭa*), and with emptiness (*śūnyatā*) when it is not.

Vikalpa—and other *klrp*- terms with *vi*-, an essentially distributive prefix—introduces a slightly different set of connotations. *Vikalpa*, which we shall provisionally translate “discriminative construction,” is above all an active function: it is something that sentient beings do, an activity whose objects can be both mental images and words (MV-ṭ 3.8). It produces the artificially constructed awareness of specific objects, and in so doing produces experience whose phenomenal properties correspond to nothing (*kim artham punar ayaṃ vikalpitaṃ rūpam ucyata iti ata āha / tatra hi rūpavikalpaḥ kriyata iti / yasmād rūpakhyātavijñāne 'drṣṭatattvair aparijñātarūpasamjñatvād rūpābhiniveśaḥ*, MV-ṭ 3.10.0). These phenomenal properties consist essentially in separateness, a separateness that is sometimes construed in terms of dualities (as when seven kinds of *vikalpa* are distinguished according to a list of seven pairs of contradictory concepts in MV-ṭ 5.2.4), and sometimes in terms of trinities (as when, in MV-ṭ 5.2.1, the absence of *vikalpa* is identified with nonapprehension of such linked threefold sets as gift-giver-recipient or possessor of awareness-object of awareness-act of awareness).

There is a very close link between the activities denoted by *vikalpa* and the experience (perceptual or conceptual) of particular individuated objects (*svalakṣaṇa*). It is in contexts where this connection is emphasized that the proper relation between *pari + klrp*- and *vi + klrp*- begins to become clear. Things that have been subject to the former—things that can be qualified with the term *parikalpita*—have been given names, reified, and sorted into categories; the latter (*vikalpa*) requires the former's operations before it can engage in its paradigmatic function, which is to construct an opposition between subject and object (. . . *yaj jñānaṃ sarvavikalpasya pratipakṣa ity ayaṃ svalakṣaṇa 'viparyāsa iti parikalpitadharmamukhena sarvadharmeṣu sarvavikalpapravṛtīḥ / ato nāmamātrapravedhajñānaṃ sarvavikalpapratiapakṣaḥ svalakṣaṇe 'viparyāsa ity uktam*, MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2). It follows, then, that it is precisely

an awareness that penetrates to the misleading functions of *parikalpa* that will dispose of *vikalpa*.

The obverse of this is the claim that the way things really are—the “ground of the real” (*dharmadhātu*)—is inaccessible to awareness characterized by *vikalpa* (*svasāmānyalakṣaṇayor aviparyāso dharmadhātāv eva / tasya vikalpaviṣayātikrāntasvarūpatvāt*, MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2). There are no individuatable particulars in the *dharmadhātu*, and so *vikalpa* can work on it only by creating concepts and percepts that in fact are absent from it. To put this rather differently: awareness free from *vikalpa* is identical with emptiness (*śūnyatā*) which in turn is called the ‘sphere in which there is no *vikalpa*’ (*avikalpadhātu*, MV-ṭ 1.2.0, 1.2.2). *Parikalpa*, as we have shown, has the potential to be pure and error-free; *vikalpa* does not: it is what produces defilement and error in the flow of concepts and percepts. Paul O’Brien (242 n.) has put the point in similar fashion.

Awareness in which there is no *vikalpa* is, therefore, properly conformed to the nature of things. It is free from concepts and percepts whose objects are unreal, as well as from all misleading phenomenal properties. Is it then free from *all* concepts and *all* percepts? Consider this:

viparyāso hi vikalpaḥ / vikalpānālambanatvān na viparyāsavastu /
nimittanīrodhād animittam iti / atrānimittatvaṃ nimittanīrodha ucyate /
etad eva pradarśanārtham āha / sarvanimittābhāvād iti / sarvair eva
samskr̥tāsamskr̥tanimittaiḥ śūnyatā śūnyety animittam iti / (MV-ṭ 1.2.2)

Error is discriminative construction. [Emptiness, understood as] free from error is so because it is not an object for discriminative construction. [Emptiness, understood as] free from mental images is so because mental images have ceased in it. This means that it possesses the property of being without mental images, which in turn is indicated by the words ‘because of the absence of all mental images.’ Emptiness is empty of the mental images of all things, conditioned and unconditioned: this is what it means to say that it is free from mental images.

We have translated the technical term *nimitta* in this passage as “mental images”—a point to which we shall shortly return. For the moment we simply note that this passage clearly equates the absence of discriminative construction with the absence not only of misleading *qualia* in particular moments of experience, but of all *qualia*, all mental images with

phenomenal properties of any kind (if this is indeed what *nimitta* means here).

So far we have been translating *klrp*- terms by “construct” and derivatives. It is time to note that this is not the most common choice. Since the time of Stcherbatsky that has probably been “imagination” and derivatives. Thomas Kochumuttom, Bimal Matilal, and others, have regularly made this choice. According to Matilal, for example, *vikalpa* or *kalpana* has a specific technical and philosophical use in Indian thought which gives it very significant commonalities with the technical use of “imagination” by Hume or *Einbildung* by Kant. It is, he suggests, the faculty that organizes the raw data of perception, differentiating such data into classes and conceptual categories: it is the “‘connecting or uniting power which operates in two dimensions’”. It is the instrument of our perceptual awareness of both kind-identity and individual-identity, concept-identity, and object-identity” (309). Moreover, as we have shown, in the MV-corpus the objects created by *vikalpa* are often said to be simply nonexistent.

The functions of *vikalpa* mentioned by Matilal, as well as *klrp*-’s connections with illusionism, certainly provide some overlap with the semantic range of “imagination” in English. Both imagination and *klrp*-creatively construct new concepts and percepts; and the objects constructed by both may be taken to be illusory, not present where they appear to be (or indeed anywhere). But there are also very significant differences. *Klrp*- terms do not have to do only—or even mostly—with the manipulation of images. They more often denote either phenomenal properties of the flow of experience, properties (such as the division between subject and object) that may have no connection with images; or the activity of the mind in creatively constructing such properties. We suggest, therefore, that a translation such as the one we have adopted, focussing as it does upon the constructive elements of *klrp*-, may be more revealing: the exercise of *klrp*- is more like the act of building a house than the act of manipulating mental images, and its primary result is a comfortably habitable mental world comprising mental images whose essential property is that they appear to belong to a subject and to intend an object. It should be quite clear from what we have said so far that mental images of this kind do not remain in emptiness. Are there other kinds that might?

Representations, Appearances, Mental Images

The terms under consideration here are *vijñapti*, *pratibhāsa*, and *nimitta*. Bruce Hall (8-9) has pointed out that *vijñapti* is a technical term appropriated from the Sarvāstivāda abhidharma by Yogācāra theorists for their own uses. It is derived from the causative form of the root *jñā-*, “to know,” with the same distributive prefix (*vi-*) as that found in *vikalpa*. *Vijñapti* connotes, then, a communicative act, something that makes something known to someone. Yogācāra theorists generally use it to denote any mental event that communicates something, any mental event with phenomenal properties. A possible translation, therefore, and the one that we shall adopt here, is “representation.”

The MV-corpus emphasizes, as do other Yogācāra works, that representations—mental events with phenomenal properties—are all there is, usually using some form of *vijñapti + mātra* (“representation-only”) to indicate this. This point is given its most detailed statement in the MV-corpus at 1.1.4. Technically, the MV-corpus says that *vijñaptayaḥ* are one of the four kinds of appearance (*pratibhāsa*—a term to which we shall return) in which the comprehensive imagination of the unreal consists (1.1.2). The other three are nonsentient objects (*artha*), sentient beings (*sattva*), selves (*ātma*), and the four are linked with the Yogācāra theory of the eight kinds of consciousness, a theory whose exposition is beyond our scope here. But in addition to this technical sense, there is also a broader sense of the term in which the last three of the four categories just mentioned can be understood as kinds of *vijñapti*. And in so far as the term is taken in this way, every instance of *vijñapti* must, in virtue of the fact that it “represents” something to someone, have phenomenal properties that are in principle accessible to description. But this does not entail—nor even suggest—that *vijñaptayaḥ* simply cease for an awakened one (*buddha*). *Vijñapti* can be used in a sense neutral as to this possibility. Further help might be gained from looking at the usage of *pratibhāsa* and *nimitta*.

Pratibhāsa—“appearance” or “manifestation,” from the root *bhās-*, “to shine,” “to appear,” “to be manifest”—together with its verbal forms (*pratibhāsate* and so forth) occurs in the MV-corpus mostly in 1.1.2 and 1.1.4. It almost always indicates a phenomenally rich but false or misleading appearance. MV-corpus 1.1.2 is concerned with the modes in which the comprehensive construction of what is unreal may appear to those for whom it is an experiential fact. It is explained there that the four kinds of appearance referred to in the preceding paragraph are all

comprised in the second of the four truths, that which explains how it is that suffering arises (*etāny arthasattvātmavijñāptipratibhāsāny aṣṭau vijñānāni sasamprayogāni samudayasatyasaṅgrahāt*, MV-ṭ 1.1.2), and so are more or less unreal (*vitatha*). If suffering is to be abandoned, they too must be abandoned. In all these respects, *pratibhāsa* is like *vikalpa*: both it and its products are systematically misleading and to be abandoned.

But does the removal of systematically misleading appearances mean the removal of *all* appearances, the removal of all mental events with phenomenal properties? MV-corpus 5.2.3.2 contains a discussion of ten kinds of non-erroneousness (*aviparyāsatva*), one of which is freedom from error about objects (*artha*). *Pratibhāsa* figures prominently in that discussion. Objects, we are told, appear (*pratibhāsate*) with a dualistic mode of appearance (*ākāra*), and they do not exist as they appear because they are naturally without duality (*advayaprakṛitvāt*) (MV-bh 5.2.3.2). But this does not mean that objects are completely without existence: on the contrary, they exist precisely as misleading appearances (*pratibhāsabhrāntisadbhāva*, MV-bh 5.2.3.2), and it is precisely in virtue of being aware of this fact that, as MV-ṭ puts it, the bodhisattva penetrates to the reality of all things, which is just that they are essentially free from the duality of subject and object (*anenāviparyāsaññānena bodhisattvo grāhyagrāhakasvabhāvarahitān sarvadharmān prati-vidhyati*, MV-ṭ 5.2.3.2). Notice that it is not said that such penetration, such freedom, consists in or is produced by the absence of appearances with specifiable phenomenal properties—not even by the absence of appearances with the phenomenal property of subject-object dualism. Instead, penetration consists in not being misled by this phenomenal property—by, in effect, knowing enough about the real nature of these phenomenal properties not to be misled by them. The possibility that appearances continue (though not, of course, erroneous judgments about them) for the bodhisattva who has penetrated to emptiness is thus left open: the occurrence of appearances does not entail the presence of error.

A somewhat similar case can be made for *nimitta*, which we are here translating “mental image.” This term is sometimes used to mean something close to “cause,” as when MV-ṭ glosses it with *kāraṇa* (*vikṣepanimittopaśamanāc chamathaḥ / śamathādinimittam śamathādi kāraṇam*, MV-ṭ 4.1.7; compare 3.10.8). But it more often means the image of an object in the mind (*arthapratibimba* is used as a gloss for it in MV-ṭ 1.1.4); and even when its connection with chains of cause and

effect is emphasized (MV-ṭ 3.8: *anyonyanimittabhāvād nimittam*), the context is always that of explaining the causes that produce particular affective or cognitive states in an experiencing subject. And primary among such causes is the presence of some mental image—understood broadly, to comprise both concepts and percepts. The discussion of the six kinds of distraction (*vikṣepa*) in 5.2.3.1 is typical. One of these six is *nimittavikṣepa* (“distraction by mental images”), and the reference appears to be to mental images arising in meditation that might produce distraction. A practitioner might, for example, experience a mental image that she takes to be her Self (*dhyayy ayam mahātmety evaṃ sambhāvanātmanity anena nimittena samādhau prayuktasyāśaya-vilayatvāl laddhād alabdḥād vā kuśalapakṣād vikṣepo nimittavikṣepa ity ucyate*, MV-ṭ 5.2.3.1), and be distracted by it.

In our discussion of *vikalpa* we have already noted that emptiness is said to be *animitta*, free from mental images (1.2.2); this might seem to be the strongest piece of evidence we yet have for the conclusion that there can be no mental images therein. But let us look a little more closely. In 2.4.3 there is an interesting analysis of the obstacles (*āvaraṇa*) to progress on the part of the bodhisattva through the ordered stages (*bhūmi*) of the meditational path. In the discussion of the seventh stage MV-bh says that in it one removes diversity (*nānatva*) in one’s experience because one no longer has any mental images (*nimitta*). MV-ṭ explains that since there is no diversity in the ground of the real (*dharmadhātu*) all mental images—even those that have aided the practitioner in penetrating to it—must become undifferentiated therein, and one will have an awareness in which all mental images are of the same kind (*sarvanimittakarasākārajñānena*, MV-ṭ 2.3.2). One enters a condition, it seems, in which mental images are in some significant respect all of the same kind, and so one no longer fights against or is concerned about conventional reality, which consists precisely in mental images that are of different kinds (*yataḥ sarvanimittāny animittatvena pratividhyati nimittakṛtaṃ ca vyavahāraṃ na virodhayati*, MV-ṭ 2.3.2). This condition, the texts go on to say, becomes effortless or spontaneous (*anābhoga*) on the eighth stage.

But this is not precisely a condition in which there are no mental images of any kind. It is, rather, a condition in which, in the most important respect of all, every mental image shares the same property: that of not producing cognitive or affective error, which requires that every mental image be free of phenomenal properties that might produce

such error. The prime candidate here, of course, are those properties produced by the discriminative construction that the MV-corpus calls *vikalpa*. The predicate “imagelessness” (*nirnimittatā*) then has a double meaning: there are no images in emptiness if by *nimitta* is meant an image with error-producing phenomenal properties; but there are images in emptiness if by that is meant a phenomenally rich flow of experience in which all objects are experienced directly and without distortion. The MV-corpus in fact goes on to suggest just this when it says that in the ninth stage the practitioner gains mastery (*vasitā*) over certain kinds of awareness as a result of her effortless entry into “imagelessness.” The kinds of awareness in question here have to do with such phenomenally complex matters as knowledge of the grammar, meaning, syntax, and lexica of natural languages (technically, the four *pratisamvit*: of *dharma*, *artha*, *nirukti*, and *pratibhāna*), and such awareness necessarily involves the presence to its possessor of rich phenomenal content.

A strong case can be made, then, for the conclusion that phenomenally rich mental images—designated by *viññapti*, *pratibhāsa*, *nimitta*, or *abhūtaparikalpa*—do remain in emptiness but that these cannot have been subject to the constructive activity denoted by *vikalpa*.

CONCLUSIONS

We began with the question of whether more can be said than was said by Nagao about what ‘what remains’ in emptiness is like. We hope at least to have shown that the technical terminology employed in the MV-corpus for mental imagery suggests strongly that one can say that unconstructed *nimittāni*, *viññaptayaḥ*, and *pratibhāsāḥ* remain in *śūnyatā*; and that the freedom from constructive mental activity that characterizes these mental events is evident in the fact that they neither give rise to nor are constituted by error. Most important, they do not give rise to the error of thinking that there are experiencing subjects and experienced objects, nor to the error of experiencing the world in terms of such a dichotomy.

But what would consciousness of this kind, the consciousness possessed by Buddha, be like? It would not simply rest in an imageless void, but would continue to experience a flow of mental images (*nimitta*), appearances (*pratibhāsa*), and representations with phenomenal properties (*viññapti*). It would not, however, experience any sort of conceptual construction (*vikalpa*), since this necessarily involves the

reification of these illusory appearances, the separation of their phenomenal properties, the formation of names and categories, and their bifurcation into subject and object. In more standard Yogācāra terms, Buddha would still perceive the pure flow of phenomena which constitutes the *paratantrasvabhāva*, but without the dualities and distinctions which constitute the *parikalpitasvabhāva*. However, this raises the further question of just how an awakened being could continue to function without the operations of *vikalpa*. Wouldn't the absence of such conceptual constructions impose a rather strict limitation upon Buddha's experiences and actions?

One of us (Griffiths 1990) has raised a similar question with regard to the Yogācāra doctrine of omniscience (*sarvākārajñatā*). If we understand omniscience to be a kind of awareness based on the direct unmediated presence of an appearance, free of conceptual construction, then this would seem to impose certain serious limitations on the content of such knowledge. Not only would an omniscient being not know any volition or temporal change; such a being would also not know the experience of a duality between subject and object.

In the MV-corpus a similar paradox is raised by the attainment of *nirvikalpajñāna*—a state in which the conceptual distinction between subject and object is absent, as also is its phenomenal correlate. At least from our own deluded and unawakened viewpoint, an experience in which there could be no distinction between subjects and objects would seem to be rather restricted. Moreover, in the event that one could attain such a form of nonconceptual, nondual awareness, would such awareness bear any resemblance to the way in which ordinary deluded human beings experience the world, or would it be entirely different? This question has very direct and very serious soteriological implications. For if an awakened being experiences reality without conceptual distinctions or their phenomenal correlates, how then is it able to interact with, instruct, and aid ordinary human beings, who still dwell within a world of subjects and objects? A being who could not perceive the world as a subject confronting an object would appear to be oddly limited—particularly if its goal were to help ferry sentient beings to the further shore of awakening. Attempting a systematic account of the nature of Buddha that would deal with these problems was, it seems to us, one of the main impulses behind the development of systematic theorizing about Buddha after about the third century CE.

But there are also more strictly philosophical problems raised by the MV-corpus's treatment of mental imagery after awakening. This treatment, as we have expounded it, rests upon the claim that there is such a thing as experience prior to and independent of conceptual activity (which means also prior to and independent of linguistic and every other kind of cultural activity). This view is not easy to defend—it runs counter to much (probably most) contemporary English-language philosophy, as it did also to much philosophical thinking in India—and it has extremely complex philosophical ramifications. One dimension of these was worked out in the epistemological analyses of the differences between *pratyakṣa* and *anumāna* offered by Buddhist thinkers after Dignāga; and another was explored in the debate between Yogācāra theorists after Sthiramati as to whether consciousness is inherently *sākāra* or *nirākāra*. It does not appear likely to us that the position can, in the end, be successfully defended; but our purpose here has not been to explain why this is, but only to clarify the usage of technical terms in a particular corpus on the topic of just why experience does not end in emptiness.

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APPENDIX: SYSTEM OF REFERENCE FOR THE MV-CORPUS

- 0 śāstraśarīra (N 17; Y 1-9; P 3-9)
- 1 lakṣaṇa (N 17-27; Y 10-63; P 9-50)
 - 1.1 abhūtaparikalpa (N 17-22; Y 10-45; P 9-35)
 - 1.1.1 sadasallakṣaṇa (N 17-18; Y 10-16; P 9-14)
 - 1.1.2 svalakṣaṇa (N 18-19; Y 16-21; P 14-18)
 - 1.1.3 saṅgrahalakṣaṇa (N 19; Y 22-23; P 18-19)
 - 1.1.4 asallakṣaṇānupraveśopāyalakṣaṇa (N 19-20; Y 23-29; P 19-24)
 - 1.1.5 prabhedalakṣaṇa (N 20; Y 29-31; P 24-25)
 - 1.1.6 paryāyalakṣaṇa (N 20; Y 31-32; P 25-26)
 - 1.1.7 pravṛtilakṣaṇa (N 20-21; Y 32-35; P 26-28)
 - 1.1.8 saṅkleśalakṣaṇa (N 21-22; Y 35-44; P 28-34)
 - 1.1.9 abhūtaparikalpaṇḍārtha (N 22; Y 44-45; P 35)
 - 1.2 śūnyatā (N 22-27; Y 45-63; P 35-50)
 - 1.2.0 śūnyatā: prologue (Y 45-46; P 35-36)
 - 1.2.1 śūnyatālakṣaṇa (N 22-23; Y 46-49; P 36-38)
 - 1.2.2 śūnyatāparyāya (N 23-24; Y 49-51; P 38-40)
 - 1.2.3 śūnyatāprabheda (N 24-26; Y 51-59; P 40-47)
 - 1.2.4 śūnyatāsādhana (N 26-27; Y 59-61; P 47-49)
 - 1.2.5 śūnyatāṇḍārtha (N 27; Y 61-63; P 50)
- 2 āvaraṇa (N 28-36; Y 64-109; P 51-82)
 - 2.1 pañcāvaraṇa (N 28; Y 64-68; P 51-53)
 - 2.2 prayoganasamyojanāvaraṇa (N 28-29; Y 69-75; P 53-57)
 - 2.3 bodhisattvāvaraṇa (N 29-33; Y 75-89; P 57-68)
 - 2.3.1 daśaśubhādiṣv āvaraṇa (N 29-32; Y 75-83; P 57-64)
 - 2.3.2 daśakāraṇāni (N 31-33; Y 84-89; P 64-68)
 - 2.4 bodhipakṣapāramitābhūmiṣv āvaraṇa (N 33-36; Y 89-107; P 68-81)
 - 2.4.0 bodhipakṣapāramitābhūmiṣv āvaraṇa: prologue (N 33)
 - 2.4.1 bodhipakṣeṣv āvaraṇa (N 33; Y 89-94; P 68-71)
 - 2.4.2 pāramitāsv āvaraṇa (N 33-34; Y 94-97; P 72-74)
 - 2.4.3 bhūmiṣv āvaraṇa (N 34-36; Y 97-107; P 74-81)

- 2.5 āvaraṇasamāsa (N 36; Y 107-108; P 81-82)
- 2.6 āvaraṇapīṇḍārtha (N 36; Y 108-109; P 82)
- 3 daśavidhatattva (N 37-49; Y 110-165; P 83-124)
 - 3.0 daśavidhatattva: prologue (N 37; Y 110-111; P 83-84)
 - 3.1 mūlatattva (N 37-38; Y 111-113; P 84-86)
 - 3.2 lakṣaṇatattva (N 38; Y 114-116; P 86-87)
 - 3.3 aviparyāsatattva (N 38-40; Y 116-119; P 87-91)
 - 3.4 phalāhetutattva (N 40-41; Y 119-123; P 91-93)
 - 3.5 audārikasūkṣmatattva (N 41-42; Y 123-127; P 94-97)
 - 3.6 prasiddhatattva (N 42; Y 127-129; P 97-98)
 - 3.7 viśuddhigocarattattva (N 42; Y 129-130; P 99)
 - 3.8 saṅgrahattattva (N 42-43; Y 131-133; P 99-101)
 - 3.9 prabhedaṭṭattva (N 43-44; Y 133-135; P 101-103)
 - 3.10 daśavidhakaūśalyatattva (N 44-48; Y 135-163; P 103-123)
 - 3.10.0 kausālyatattva: prologue (N 44; Y 135-142; P 103-108)
 - 3.10.1 skandhārtha (N 45; Y 142-143; P 108-109)
 - 3.10.2 dhātvārtha (N 45; Y 143-144; P 109)
 - 3.10.3 āyatanārtha (N 45; Y 144-148; P 110-112)
 - 3.10.4 pratīyasamutpādārtha (N 45-46; Y 148-150; P 112-113)
 - 3.10.5 sthānāsthānārtha (N 46; Y 150-154; P 113-116)
 - 3.10.6 indriyārtha (N 46-47; Y 154-157; P 116-118)
 - 3.10.7 adhvārtha (N 47; Y 157-158; P 118-119)
 - 3.10.8 catuṣṣatyārtha (N 47; Y 158-159; P 119)
 - 3.10.9 yānatrayārtha (N 47-48; Y 159-160; P 120-121)
 - 3.10.10 samskr̥tāsamskr̥tārtha (N 48; Y 160-163; P 121-123)
 - 3.11 tattvapiṇḍārtha (N 48-49; Y 163-165; P 123-124)
 - 4 pratipakṣabhāvanāvasthāphala (N 50-59; Y 166-198; P 125-148)
 - 4.0 pratipakṣabhāvanāvasthāphala: prologue (Y 166; P 125)
 - 4.1 pratipakṣabhāvanā (N 50-55; Y 166-187; P 125-140)
 - 4.1.0 pratipakṣabhāvanā: prologue (N 50; Y 166; P 125)
 - 4.1.1 catvārismr̥tyupasthānāni (N 50; Y 166-170; P 125-127)
 - 4.1.2 catvārisamyakprahāṇāni (N 50; Y 170-172; P 128-129)
 - 4.1.3 catvāra ṛddhipādāḥ (N 51-52; Y 172-176; P 129-132)
 - 4.1.3.0 catvāra ṛddhipādāḥ: prologue (N 51; Y 172-173; P 129-130)
 - 4.1.3.1 pañcadoṣāḥ (N 51; Y 173-174; P 130)
 - 4.1.3.2 aṣṭaprahāṇasamskr̥tārḥ (N 51-52; Y 174-175; P 130-132)

- 4.1.4 pañcendriyāni (N 52; Y 176-177; P 132-133)
- 4.1.5 pañcabalāni (N 52-53; Y 177-180; P 133-135)
- 4.1.6 saptabodhyāṅgāni (N 53-54; Y 180-182; P 135-136)
- 4.1.7 aṣṭamargāṅgāni (N 54-55; Y 182-185; P 136-139)
- 4.1.8 pratipakṣabhāvanāprabheda (N 55; Y 185-187; P 139-140)
- 4.2 pratipakṣabhāvanāvasthā (N 56-57; Y 188-192; P 140-144)
- 4.3 pratipakṣabhāvanāvasthāphala (N 57-58; Y 192-195; P 144-146)
- 4.4 pratipakṣabhāvanāvasthāphalapiṇḍārtha (N 58-59; Y 196-198; P 147-148)
- 5 yānānuttarya (N 60-77; Y 199-262; P 149-193)
 - 5.1 trividhānuttarya (N 60; Y 199-201; P 149-150)
 - 5.2 ṣaḍvidhapatipattyānuttarya (N 60-73; Y 201-251; P 150-186)
 - 5.2.0 ṣaḍvidhapatipattyānuttarya: prologue (N 60; Y 201; P 150-151)
 - 5.2.1 paramāpratipatti (N 60-62; Y 201-209; P 151-156)
 - 5.2.2 manasikārapratipatti (N 62-64; Y 209-213; P 157-160)
 - 5.2.3 anudharmapatipatti (N 64-69; Y 213-233; P 160-173)
 - 5.2.3.0 anudharmapatipatti: prologue (N 64; Y 213-214; P 160)
 - 5.2.3.1 ṣaḍvidhāvīkṣepaparīṇatā (N 64-65; Y 214-216; P 160-162)
 - 5.2.3.2 daśavidhāvīparyāsa (N 65-68; Y 216-226; P 162-169)
 - 5.2.3.3 daśavidhavajrapadāni (N 68-69; Y 226-233; P 169-173)
 - 5.2.4 antadvayavarjanapatipatti (N 69-73; Y 233-251; P 173-186)
 - 5.2.5 viśiṣṭāvīśiṣṭapatipatti (N 73; Y 251; P 186)
- 5.3 ālambanānuttarya (N 73-74; Y 252-254; P 186-188)
- 5.4 samudāgamānuttarya (N 74-75; Y 255-258; P 188-190)
- 5.5 śāstranāmavyākhyāna (N 75-76; Y 258-259; P 191)
- 5.6 yānānuttaryapiṇḍārtha (N 76-77; Y 259-262; P 192-193)