

Final Liberation:
The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in the Works
of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati

Inaugural-Dissertation
zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der Philosophie
der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

vorgelegt von

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Taiwan

2025

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Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: 15.07.2024

Acknowledgment

As I reflect on my academic journey at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, Germany, I am filled with profound gratitude. The years of training, learning, and reflecting have culminated in this thesis, marking the conclusion of an enriching and transformative experience. At this juncture, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to those who have supported and accompanied me along the way.

I am deeply indebted to my esteemed supervisors, whose guidance has been invaluable. Prof. Dr. Jowita Kramer, my Doktormutter, granted me the freedom to explore the intricate concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. Our discussions have been a wellspring of inspiration and discovery, shaping my intellectual growth in immeasurable ways. Prof. Dr. Martin Lehnert introduced me to new methodologies and philosophical perspectives, broadening my understanding of Buddhist studies. Prof. i.R. Dr. Jens-Uwe Hartmann offered his patience and meticulous insights; without his corrections in writing style and Sanskrit translations, the completion of this thesis would not have been possible. I also remain profoundly grateful to Prof. Hsing-Ling Lee, my M.A. supervisor in Taiwan, and Prof. Ching Keng, both of whom encouraged me to apply for the Doctoral Program in Buddhist Studies at LMU and steadfastly supported me through every challenge.

Throughout my time at LMU, I have been fortunate to be surrounded by *kalyāṇamitras*. I extend my sincere gratitude to my colleagues and friends: to Prof. Ju-En Chien and Yu-Sheng Tsou, with whom I have shared countless discussions and manuscript exchanges; to Dr. Seongho Choi, who generously reviewed my early drafts and explored the *Śrāvakabhūmi* with me; to Dr. Jinkyong Choi and Prof. Charles DiSimone, who enriched my knowledge over many shared cups of tea. I also cherish the friendships of Dr. Tianran Wang, Dr. Serena Operetto, Dr. des. H el ene de Brux, Kittipong Vongagsorn, and Nadin K uhn, who made my time at LMU truly memorable. My gratitude extends to the Leipzig reading group, whose collective efforts in translating texts was invaluable, and to my Taiwan group, whose warmth and laughter provided solace and joy. Special thanks go to Dr. Mingyuan Gao and Prof. Oren Hanner for their thoughtful readings and insights. Above all, I am especially grateful to Sylvette Schwarz, whose support in practicing my German and uplifting encouragement meant so much to me.

The completion of this thesis has also been made possible through the generous financial support of the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange (CCKF), the GraduateCenter LMU, and the Sheng Yen Center for Chinese Buddhist Studies. Their unwavering support has allowed me to dedicate myself fully to my research and to continue my academic pursuits.

Finally, my deepest gratitude belongs to my parents and family. Their trust, faith, and unconditional support have seen me through the many challenges of this journey. I am truly fortunate to have them by my side.

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Abbreviations

AKBh	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i> , ed. P. Pradhan, 1967.
AKTA	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣyatīkā Tattvārthā</i> , Derge 4421.
CWSL	<i>Chéng Wéi Shì Lùn</i> 成唯識論, T 1585.
AS	<i>Abhidharmasamuccaya</i> , ed. 瑜伽行思想研究会, 2003.
ASBh	<i>Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya</i> , ed. 瑜伽行思想研究会, 2003.
BoBh	<i>Bodhisattvabhūmi</i> , ed. Unrai Wogihara, 1971.
KP	<i>Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa</i> 大乘成業論, T 1609.
MAV	<i>Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya</i> , ed. Gadjin Nagao, 1964.
MAVBh	<i>Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya</i> , ed. Gadjin Nagao, 1964.
MAVṬ	<i>Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā</i> , ed. Susumu Yamaguchi, 1966.
MSA	<i>Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra</i> , ed. Gadjin Nagao 2007.
MSABh	<i>Mahāyānasūtrālamkārabhāṣya</i> , ed. Gadjin Nagao 2007.
MSg	<i>Mahāyanāsaṃgraha</i> 攝大乘論, T1594.
MSgBh	<i>Mahāyanāsaṃgrahabhāṣya</i> 攝大乘論釋, T 1597.
MSgU	<i>Mahāyanāsaṃgrahopanibandhana</i> 攝大乘論釋, T 1598.
*MVŚ	* <i>Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra</i> 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, T 1545.
*Ny	* <i>Nyāyanusāra</i> 順正理論, T 1562.
PSk	<i>Pañcaskandhaka</i> , ed. Xuezu Li and Ernst Steinkellner, 2008.
PSkV	<i>Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā</i> , ed. Jowita Kramer, 2013.
ŚrBh	<i>Śrāvakahūmi</i> , ed. 大正大学綜合佛教研究所声聞地研究会, 1998.
*Saṃdh	* <i>Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra</i> 解深密經, T 676.
*SBhUC	* <i>Samayabhedoparacanacakra</i> 異部宗輪論, T 2031.
*SAVBh	* <i>Sūtrālamkāravṛttibhāṣya</i> , Derge 4034.
Tr	<i>Triṃśikā</i> , ed. Hartmut Buescher 2007.
TrBh	<i>Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya</i> , ed. Hartmut Buescher 2007.

*	Terms are reconstructed on the basis of the Chinese or Tibetan translation.
[]	Terms that do not exist in the original texts but have been added for the sake of translation.

Zusammenfassung

Titel: Endgültige Befreiung: Die Konzepte der *Bījas* und *Vāsanās* in den Werken von Vasubandhu und Sthiramati

Die Konzepte der *bījas* und *vāsanās* werden von der indischen Yogācāra-Schule verwendet, um den Prozess der Konzeptualisierung, die Kontinuität der Wiedergeburt im sich wiederholenden Geburtenkreislauf (*saṃsāra*) und das Potenzial zur Erlangung der endgültigen Befreiung (*nirvāṇa*) zu erläutern. Diese Arbeit konzentriert sich auf die Kontexte, in denen *vāsanā* die Manifestation von *bījas* aus dem *ālayavijñāna* verursacht. Um diese beiden Konzepte zu eruieren, fokussiert sich diese Arbeit auf drei Forschungsfragen: Erstens: Was umfassen die Begriffe *bīja* und *vāsanā* in Vasubandhus Werken? Zweitens: Welche Funktion haben *bīja* und *vāsanā* im Prozess der Konzeptualisierung? Drittens: Wie erleichtern *bīja* und *vāsanā* die Befreiung der Lebewesen?

Es ist bekannt, dass in Vasubandhus *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh) das Konzept von *prāpti* der Sarvāstivādin abgelehnt wird. Um Sarvastivada zu widerlegen, führt das AKBh das Konzept von *bījas* ein. Im AKBh ist *bīja* Name und Materie (*nāmarūpa*), d.h. ein Komplex von „psycho-physisch“, der keine reale Existenz im mentalen Kontinuum ist. Um dieses jedoch aufrecht zu erhalten, erachtet das AKBh die Konzepte der *bījas* und die Ursache der Homogenität (*sabhāgahetu*) als homogene Kausalität. Währenddessen wird die "spezifische Transformation in einer Serie" (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*) und die Ursache der Reifung (*vipākahetu*) als die heterogene Kausalität dargestellt. Andererseits wird der Begriff *vāsanā* als eine subtile Kraft verwendet, die es dem Bewusstsein ermöglicht, nach der Kultivierung durch zwei Meditationen, nämlich der des Aufhörens (*nirodhasamāpatti*) und der des Nicht-Denkens (*asaṃjñāsamāpatti*), vom ersten Augenblick zu entstehen. Konträr dazu argumentiert Saṃghabhadra in **Nyāyānusara* (*Ny) hingegen die Notwendigkeit des Konzepts von *prāpti*. Ohne dieses ist es unmöglich, einen gewöhnlichen Menschen (*prthagjana*) von einem edlen Menschen (*ārya*) zu unterscheiden. Außerdem stellt er in *Ny zusammenfassend fest, dass die Begriffe *bīja*, *vāsanā* und **anudhātu* Synonyme sind. Sthiramati, ein später Nachfolger von Vasubandhu und Saṃghabhadra, stellt in der *Tattvārthā Abhidharmakośaṭīkā* (AKTT) weiter klar,

dass durch das Konzept der *bījas* der Unterschied zwischen einem gewöhnlichen und einem edlen Menschen etabliert werden kann. Darüber hinaus erwähnt Sthiramati das "*bīja* der Erinnerung" (*smṛtibīja*), das eine "spezifische Kraft" (*śakti/ sāmarthya*) ist, die es dem Bewusstsein ermöglicht, aus der Kultivierung von zwei Arten von meditativen Zuständen wieder aufzustehen. Es kann zusammengefasst werden, dass die einleitenden Konzepte von *bījas* und *vāsanās* im AKBh sich auf einen Ersatz des Konzepts von *prāpti* konzentrieren, was dann die Erklärung der Yogācāra über den Prozess der Konzeptualisierung einleitet.

Der zweite Aspekt, der behandelt wird, befasst sich mit dem Prozess der Konzeptualisierung in Verbindung mit den Konzepten der *bījas* und *vāsanās*. In der *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (VinSg) der *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBh) sind *bījas* und das *ālayavijñāna* untrennbar miteinander verbunden und dienen als Ursache für das Entstehen von aktuellem Bewusstsein (*pravṛttivijñāna*), welches entsteht, wenn man Objekte wahrnimmt. Im *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MAV), einer anderen Quelle der Yogācāra-Schule, wird die Konzeptualisierung als "unwirkliche Vorstellung" (*abhūtaparikalpita*) bezeichnet, die zwei Arten umfasst: Der verunreinigte Greifer (*grāhaka*) und das Gegriffene (*grāhya*), sowie die Leerheit (*śūnyatā*). Auf der anderen Seite findet in der *Triṃśikā* (Tr) die Konzeptualisierung durch den Prozess statt, der als "Transformation des Bewusstseins" (*vijñānapariṇāma*) innerhalb des *ālayavijñāna* bekannt ist. Während also die *bījas* im *ālayavijñāna* verweilen und sich dort als aktuelles Bewusstsein manifestieren, können die entsprechenden *vāsanās* die *bījas* erneut „befruchten“. Anders als die Tr verwendet das *Triṃśikābhāṣya* (TrBh) den Begriff *vāsanā* häufiger als *bīja*. Die *vāsanā* des Konzeptualisierens (*vikalpavāsanā*), einschließlich der *vāsanā* des Konzeptualisierens des Selbst usw. (*ātmādivikalpavāsanā*) und der *vāsanā* des Konzeptualisierens von Materie usw. (*rūpādivikalpavāsanā*), nährt die *bījas*, die im *ālayavijñāna* vorkommen. Diese Stärkung kann in zwei Arten unterteilt werden: die *vāsanā* einer homogenen Ursache (*niṣyandavāsanā*) und die *vāsanā* der Reifung (*vipākavāsanā*). Erstere erhält das gleiche geistige Kontinuum aufrecht, während letztere die Wiedergeburt von *ālayavijñāna* im nächsten Leben darstellt. Sobald die früheren karmischen Handlungen abgeschlossen sind, wird ein Individuum in das nächste Leben projiziert, indem sich ein neues *ālayavijñāna* in Übereinstimmung mit der karmischen Verwirklichung regeneriert. Das *ālayavijñāna* ist allerdings ebenfalls ein Behälter der *bījas*, der von zwei *vāsanās* beeinflusst

wird und auch als Frucht im nächsten Leben wiedergeboren wird. Für den Prozess der Wiedergeburt nutzt das Tr die *vāsanā* der „zwei [Arten des] Ergreifens“ (*grāhadvayavāsanā*) und die *vāsanā* des *Karman* (*karmavāsanā*). Ersteres ist der Grund, warum Lebewesen irrtümlich die Existenz eines Selbst (*ātman*) und einer realen Entität wahrnehmen. Letzteres ist der Grund, warum das *ālayavijñāna* auf einem bestimmten Pfad wiedergeboren wird. In Anlehnung an die Tr weist das TrBh darauf hin, dass die *vāsanā* des *Karman* einen breiteren Bereich abdeckt als die *vāsanā* der Reifung und sich auf zukünftige Wiedergeburten bezieht. Die *vāsanā* des *Karman* ist die Anhäufung vergangenen Verhaltens, das das *ālayavijñāna* in das nächste Leben nach dem Tod projiziert.

Der dritte Aspekt befasst sich mit den Konzepten der *bījas* und *vāsanās* als Notwendigkeiten zur Erlangung der endgültigen Befreiung. In der YoBh ist das *bīja* identisch zum *gotra* anzusehen, das in einem Individuum als Ursache für das Erreichen der Befreiung natürlich geboren wird. Für die Erzeugung reiner Dharmas stellt die *Śrāvakahūmi* (ŚBh) das „*bīja* der überweltlichen Dharmas“ (*lokottaradharmabīja*) dar, während die *Pañcavijñānakāyasamprayuktā Bhūmi* (eine spätere Ausgabe des YoBh) und die *Manobhūmi* der *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (PMBhVin) eine spezifische Ursache bieten, nämlich das „die Soheit, die als Bedingung eines kognitiven Objekts als deren *Bījas* fungiert“ (**tathatālabhanapratyayabīja*, 真如所緣緣種子). In dieser Hinsicht garantieren sowohl das *bīja* als auch die „Anlage“ (*gotra*) die Möglichkeit, Befreiung zu erlangen.

Bevor jedoch die Befreiung erlangt werden kann, muss ein Praktizierender die beiden grundlegenden Verunreinigungen beseitigen, was zur Transformation der Basis führt. Die zwei grundlegenden Verunreinigungen sind zwei Hindernisse (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*) oder zwei schlechte Verhaltensweisen (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*). Sie werden im *SAVBh als geistige und körperliche, hingegen in der Tr. als subtile Verunreinigungen betrachtet. Die Transformation der Basis (*āśrayaparāvṛtti/ āśrayaparivṛtti*) bewirkt die Reinigung des *ālayavijñāna*. Danach werden die Verunreinigungen vollständig beseitigt und der Praktizierende erlangt Befreiung. Die Konzepte der *bījas* und *vāsanās* werden im *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg) systematisch als eine Funktion des *ālayavijñāna* kategorisiert. Darüber hinaus kategorisiert das MSg das Konzept der *bījas* in sechs Funktionen und das Konzept der *vāsanās* in vier Aspekte. Diese Unterteilungen veranschaulichen den Grund, warum das *ālayavijñāna* in der Lage ist, alle Arten

von aktuellem Bewusstsein zu manifestieren. Das MSg liefert auch die Ursache für die Erlangung der Befreiung, die "*vāsanā* des Hörens [der buddhistischen Lehre]" (*śrutavāsanā*). Diese *vāsanā* wird direkt aus dem überweltlichen Bereich erzeugt, überträgt reine Dharmas von Buddha auf gewöhnliche Menschen und wird als *bīja* des reinen Dharmas bewahrt. Damit löst die Yogācāra-Soteriologie das Problem des reinen Dharmas, das aus dem verunreinigten *ālayavijñāna* entsteht.

Chapter 1 Introduction

The Indian Yogācāra school employs the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* to elucidate the process of conceptualization in the mundane world, the continuity of rebirth in the repetitive behavioural circle (*saṃsāra*), and the potential for obtaining final liberation (*nirvāṇa*). The Sanskrit term, *bīja*, literally translated as “seed” in English,¹ represents a botanical potentiality that will gradually grow over time. For the Yogācāra scholars, *bījas* dwell in the *ālayavijñāna*, the store-consciousness of sentient beings, and manifest in the future.² The Sanskrit term *vāsanā*, often translated as “impression,” “impregnation,” and “perfume,” also conveys a passive sense, as seen in the term *paribhāvita*, meaning “being impregnated”.³ Both *bīja* and *vāsanā* carry various meanings depending on the context. This thesis investigates the specific context in which *vāsanās* cause *bījas* to manifest from the *ālayavijñāna*.

Before addressing the main topic, it is important to note that the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* did not develop in isolation, nor did they originate from a single Buddhist school.

¹ The Sanskrit term *bīja* is translated into Chinese as 種子; *sa bon* in Tibetan. In modern languages, *bīja* is translated into English as “seed” (Jaini 1959; Schmithausen 1987; Waldron 2003); “Samen” in German (Frauwallner 1958; Schmithausen 1969); “semence”, “germe” in French (Lamotte 1936); しゅうじ in Japanese, also written as 種子 in Kanji (Katō 1989).

² The Yogācāra concept of *ālayavijñāna* has been studied thoroughly in modern research. It is translated into Chinese as 阿賴耶識/ 阿梨耶識; *kun gzhi rnam poar shes pa* in Tibetan. Schmithausen (1987: 1, §1.1) summarizes *ālayavijñāna* in two main aspects: 1. As the container or storehouse of the latent residues or impressions of previous *karman* and mind processes; 2. As the basic layer of mind processes or the very basic constituent of the whole living being, which means each living being having its own *ālayavijñāna*. Waldron (2003: 5) shortly concludes: “The *ālayavijñāna* primarily represents this locus of habituated yet unconscious reifications of self and world and hence constitutes the main obstacle to liberation from the bonds of cyclic existence.” To sum up, *ālayavijñāna* is the place where *bījas* and *vāsanās* interact.

³ The Sanskrit term *vāsanā* is translated into Chinese as 習氣, 熏習, 薰習; *bag chag* in Tibetan. In modern languages, *vāsanā* is translated into “Durchtränkung” in German (Frauwallner 1958); “impregnation” in French (Lamotte 1936); くんじゅう in Japanese, also written as 熏習 in Kanji (Ui 1952; Katō 1989; Hyōdō 2010). There are multiple English translations such as: “tendency” (Griffiths 1986); “residue” (Hall 1986); “impregnation” (Pruden 1987, translated from Lamotte’s French translation); “impression”, “after-effect” (Schmithausen 1987); “Biotic Force” (Stcherbatsky 1962); “predisposition” (Waldron 2003); “trace” (Dharmajoti 2015); “habitual tendencies” (Lusthaus 2010); “imprint” (Schmithausen 2014; Kramer 2014); “perfuming” (Dharmajoti 2017). Gao thoroughly analyses *vāsanā* in his PhD dissertation (Gao 2019) and points out that the term *vāsanā* can also correspond to being impregnated (*paribhāvita*; *yongs su bsgom pa*) through cultivations. Overall, this thesis discusses mainly the function of perfuming the current and subsequent *bījas*.

Rather, these concepts are complex and interpreted across various schools. This thesis focuses primarily on the works of two prominent Yogācāra scholars, Vasubandhu⁴ (late 4th to 5th century) and Sthiramati⁵ (6th century), tracing their use of *bīja* and *vāsanā*. The concept of *bīja* has been depicted in Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh), written before he became a Yogācāra scholar, where he uses both *bīja* and *vāsanā* to refute the opponents from other Buddhist schools. In the AKBh, *bīja* is described as a cause stored and manifested only within one’s mental stream,⁶ while *vāsanā* is discussed in the context of cultivation,⁷ referring to its “perfuming of the practitioner’s mind” (*cittavāsanā*).⁸ The concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* became more systematic in the Yogācāra works of Vasubandhu. As one of Vasubandhu’s most renowned successors, Sthiramati revisited these concepts in his commentaries on Vasubandhu’s works, offering an innovative interpretation of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. By comparing their works, this thesis provides a framework for understanding the development of these two concepts within the Indian Yogācāra school.

Although this thesis examines the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* in the works written by Vasubandhu and commented on by Sthiramati, it does not recognize them as historical figures *per se*, but rather as chronological and textual boundary stones to present the scope of this study. Within their works, it becomes evident that the significance of *bīja* diminishes, while the importance of *vāsanā* increases. *Bījas* mainly refers to the possibility of attaining Buddhahood,

⁴ Vasubandhu, Chin. 世親; Tib. *Dbyig gnyen*. For the lifetime of Vasubandhu, see section 1.3.1.

⁵ Sthiramati, Chin. 安慧/ 安惠; Tib. *Blo gros brtan pa*. For the lifetime of Sthiramati, see section 1.3.1.

⁶ Waldron (2003: 75) defines the concept of *bīja* as “a seed (*bīja*), then, is whatever brings about a fruit through a modification or change in the mental stream, in the karmic formations ‘existing as cause and effect’.” In the AKBh, *bījas* are inseparable from a personal “basis” (*āśraya*). Kritzer (2005: 56) notes that, according to the AKBh, once a person has cultivated good *dharma*s through effort, they are said to be endowed (*samanvāgata*) with them, as the power (*vaśitva*) to reproduce these *dharma*s remains undiminished.

⁷ AKBh, p. 273: *kim artham etat bhāvanety ucyate / cittavāsanāt / taddhi samāhitam kuśalam atyarthaṃ cittaṃ vāsayati / guṇais tanmayīkaraṇāt santateḥ / puṣpais tilavāsanāvāt*. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 52): “For what purpose is this called “cultivation” (*bhāvanā*)? [It is] because of the perfuming in thought (*cittavāsanā*). That equipoised wholesome exceedingly perfumes (*vāsayati*) the thought, by means of the qualities [of equipoise], because of making (*tanmayīkaraṇa*) [the thought] in the continuity have the substance of them (i.e. the qualities of equipoise), just like the perfuming of sesames (*tilavāsanāvāt*) by flowers (*puṣpaiḥ*).”

⁸ Sangpo (2012: 1479) translates *cittavāsanā* as “thought being impregnated”, while Gao (2019: 52) renders it as “the perfuming in thought”. They both understand the term *citta* as “thought”. However, through the context, the meditative equipoise (*samāhita*) should work on a practitioner’s mind, rather than his/her thought, so I translate *cittavāsanā* into “the perfuming of [the practitioner’s] mind”.

whereas *vāsanās* serves as a dynamic force essential for achieving final liberation. In this sense, both concepts are regarded as a soteriological strategy in the Yogācāra tradition, a perspective that will be articulated in the thesis.

1.1 Research Questions

Having begun with a simple introduction to the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, this section presents the three research questions: First, why do the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* appear in Vasubandhu's works? Second, what function do *bīja* and *vāsanā* perform for sentient beings? Finally, how do *bīja* and *vāsanā* contribute to the soteriology of the Yogācāra school?

The first research question intends to establish a basic understanding of *bīja* and *vāsanā* through Vasubandhu's works. The concept of *bīja* appears in Vasubandhu's AKBh as a counterpart to the Sarvāstivāda's concept of "possession" (*prāpti*).⁹ It is related to one of the Sarvāstivāda's main doctrines: the three periods of time (*traiyadhvaka*), which explains why *dharma* is able to persist through past, present, and future (Dhammajoti 2018: 5). Regarding this, the Sarvāstivādins assume that *dharma* is a real existence (*dravyadharmā*) and state that the concept of *prāpti* acts as "the cause of the arising of *dharmas*".¹⁰ *Prāpti* serves not only as a cause but also as a connection between *dharmas* and sentient beings. Without *prāpti*, one's mental series is unable to continue.

Vasubandhu, however, rejects the concept of *prāpti* in the AKBh, as he does not agree with the doctrine that *dharmas* can last in three periods of time. Instead, he argues that only the present *dharmas* exist, while the future and past *dharmas* do not. To maintain the continuity of one's mental series without *prāpti*, Vasubandhu introduces the concept of *bījas*, functioning as

⁹ Bayer (2010: 47) explains the term *prāpti* as "a concept which is in earlier Sarvāstivāda sources used to explain the possession of vows, spiritual achievements, or defilements." Park (2014: 408) regards *prāpti* as "glue" to "keep the mental series constantly occupied with a certain mental quality." The concept of *bījas* involves many topics such as the Sarvāstivāda's concept of *prāpti*, the identity of a human being (*āśraya*), the continuum of memory (*smṛtibījas*) (Kapstein 2001: 367–375; Hanner 2016: 97–105), the potency of Buddhahood (*gotra*), and the doctrine of *karman*. These topics will be elucidated respectively in the thesis.

¹⁰ AKBh, p. 63: *utpatti hetur dharmāṇām prāptir iti cet.*

“a specific transformation in the series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*).¹¹ This concept not only explains the continuum of one’s mental series in daily life but also reveals how the mental series continues when a practitioner dwells in the meditative absorptions. When a practitioner enters the meditative absorptions of cessation (*āsaṃjñīsamāpatti*) and non-thought (*nirodhasamāpatti*), his/her mental activities cease, yet he/she does not attain Buddhahood. Following the previous scholars (*pūrvācāryā*), in the AKBh the mental series of the practitioner continues due to the interaction of two kinds of *bīja*: the *bīja* of body (*kāya*) and the *bīja* of mind (*citta*).¹² To defend the authority of the Sarvāstivāda, Saṃghabhadra (4th century),¹³ an orthodox Sarvāstivāda scholar and an opponent of Vasubandhu, refutes the concept of *bījas* in his **Nyāyānusāra* (*Ny).¹⁴ He insists that the concept of *prāpti* distinguishes between an “ordinary nature” (*prthagjana*) and a “noble one” (*ārya-*), and that it is a necessary factor for the Sarvāstivādas’ doctrine of the three periods of time. Sthiramati quotes Saṃghabhadra’s argument of *prāpti* in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyaṭīkā Tattvārthā* (AKTA) and straightforwardly incorporates it into the concept of *bījas*.

Compared to the concept of *bījas*, the concept of *vāsanās* in the AKBh mainly refers to the *bījas* being impregnated (*paribhāvita*) by thought (*cetanā*), and the process of cultivation (*bhāvanā*). According to the AKBh, *bīja* and *vāsanā* are not synonymous. This leads us to reconsider the general assumption of modern scholarship that *bīja* is equivalent to *vāsanā*.¹⁵ Thus, the first research question includes these sub-questions: How does the AKBh present the

¹¹ The Sanskrit term *saṃtānapariṇāmaviśeṣa/ saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*, written as 相續轉變差別 in Chinese; *rgyud 'gyur ba'i bye brag* in Tibetan. There are many modern translations—for instance, Schmithausen (1967: 114) translates it into German: “eine besondere Umwandlung der (Persönlichkeits-) Ströme”; Waldron (2003: 74): “specific modification of the mental stream”; Park (2014: 38): “the special evolution of the karmic series”; Gao (2019: 73): “the specific transformation in continuity”. Since this function is indispensable in both Sautrāntika and Yogācāra, I will further discuss it in section 1.2. and Chapter 2.

¹² AKBh, p. 72: *anyonyabījakam hy etad ubhayam yaduta cittam ca sendriyaś ca kāya iti pūrvācāryāḥ*.

¹³ Saṃghabhadra; Chin. 眾賢; Tib. *Dge 'dun bzang po*. For a more detailed introduction to Saṃghabhadra and the *Ny, see Chapter 2.

¹⁴ It seems that Saṃghabhadra revises the concept of *prāpti* to be more reasonable in order to refute Vasubandhu’s stance. (See Willems, Dessein, and Cox 1998: 249).

¹⁵ Yamabe (2021) has argued that *bīja* is not equivalent to *vāsanā*. He cites old portions of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, such as *Manobhūmi* and the *Vastusaṃgrahaṇī*, to demonstrate that *bīja* corresponds to *dhatu* and *gotra*, but not *vāsanā*. Yamabe’s perspective is further supported by Gao, who considers that the equation of *bīja* and *vāsanā* originated in the **Tattvasiddhīśāstra* (*Chéng Shí Lùn* 成實論, T1646) of a Dārṣṭāntika monk, Harivarman (Gao 2023: 14–16).

Abhidharmic concept of *bīja*? How do *vāsanās* function in one’s mental stream? What is the aim of presenting the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh?

The understanding of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh leads us to our second research question: what function do *bīja* and *vāsanā* perform for sentient beings? In the AKBh, the function of *bījas*, described as “a specific transformation in the series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*) causes various *dharmas* to arise in one’s mental series. In the *Triṃśikā* (Tr), an important Yogācāra text written by Vasubandhu, “the transformation of consciousness” (*viññānapariṇāma*) explains how *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayaviññāna* manifest.¹⁶ Therefore, the concept of *bīja* functions within the process of conceptualization in the Yogācāra school. In the Tr, the concept of *vāsanās* is depicted as the residue of *karman* and the twofold grasping (*grāhadvaya*),¹⁷ which lead the *ālayaviññāna* to be reborn in the next life. Based on Yogācāra doctrine, the *ālayaviññāna*, as a kind of consciousness (*viññāna*), requires an object. However, because it is such a subliminal consciousness, its object—namely, appropriation (*upādi*)—is too subtle to be known (*asaṃvidita*).¹⁸ Kramer (2015: 325) points out that Sthiramati does not follow the Tr, instead opining in his TrBh that the *ālayaviññāna* cognises only the “vessel world” (*bhājana*), appropriates the sense faculties, and contains the *vāsanās*. However, Sthiramati’s explanation in the TrBh appears to contradict his position in the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (PSkV). In the PSkV, the *ālayaviññāna* perceives two kinds of “appropriation”—(*upādāna*): the inner appropriation includes the *vāsanā* of the attachment to the “imagined nature” (*parikalpitasvabhāvābhīniveśavāsanā*); and the external appropriation refers to the “vessel world” (*bhājana*).¹⁹

¹⁶ Tr, p. 147: *ātmadharmopacāro hi vividho yaḥ pravartate / viññānapariṇāme ‘sau pariṇāmaḥ sa ca tridhā*.

¹⁷ Tr, p. 148: *karmaṇo vāsanā grāhadvayavāsanayā saha*.

¹⁸ Tr, p. 147: *asaṃviditakopādīsthānaviññāptikaṃ ca tat*.

¹⁹ PSkV, p. 92: *kiṃ kāraṇaṃ / yasmād ālayaviññānaṃ dvābhyām ālambanābhyām pravartate / adhyātmam upādānaviññāptitaḥ / bahirdhāparicchinākārabhājanaviññāptitāś ca / tatrādhyātmam upādānaṃ parikalpitasvabhāvābhīniveśavāsanā sādhiṣṭhānaṃ cendriyarūpam*. English translation by Engle (2009: 329): “Why? It is because the storehouse consciousness operates in relation to two objects: (1) internally it perceives the condition of grasping and (2) externally it perceives the [vessel] world. However, it does not do so in such a way that [allows] the form [of these two types of awareness] to be discernible.” Kramer (2014: 32, note 39) deems that Vasubandhu uses the term *aparicchina* which implies that it is impossible to define *ālayaviññāna*’s object and the way it perceives. However, when Sthiramati uses the term *aparicchinna*, he considers that the object of *ālayaviññāna* is of a subtle nature, so that the *ālayaviññāna* perceives the vessel world without being explicitly discerned.

It is noteworthy that in both PSkV and the TrBh, the term *vāsanā* is used more frequently than *bīja*. For instance, “the transformation of consciousness” involves not only *bījas* but also the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*). Given the emphasis on *vāsanās* in both PSkV and the TrBh, my hypothesis is that Sthiramati considers *bījas* as immovable causes, containing latent potential for subsequent moments, whereas *vāsanās*, generated by manifested *bījas*, are more dynamic and are able to “project” the *ālayavijñāna* to the next life. Hence, the second research question includes the following two sub-questions: How do the *bījas* and *vāsanās* function in the transformation of consciousness? How is the *ālayavijñāna* reborn in the next life?

We then move on to our final research question: How do *bīja* and *vāsanā* contribute to the soteriology of the Yogācāra school? This theme is mainly discussed in the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (MSA), the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MAV), and the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg). These three texts are regarded as Maitreya’s²⁰ and Asaṅga’s²¹ works, in which the *ālayavijñāna* has been established as the storage of *bījas*—namely, the consciousness of all *bījas* (*sarvabījaka-*). Those *bījas* are basically defilements; thus, annihilating the defiled *bījas* becomes the process of achieving Buddhahood. When a practitioner reaches a certain stage of cultivation, the *ālayavijñāna* undergoes a transformation known as the “transformation of the basis of personal existence” (*āśrayaparivṛtti*). In the MSA, *āśrayaparivṛtti* causes the defiled *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna* to transform.²² The practitioner, undergoing *āśrayaparivṛtti*, is liberated from the defiled *bījas* and transforms the defiled *ālayavijñāna*, thus obtaining the state of uncontamination (*anāsravo dhātuḥ*). Vasubandhu also understands the transformation of the *bīja* as the transformation of the *ālayavijñāna*;²³ thus, in this context, the *bīja* and the *ālayavijñāna* are identical. According to Schmithausen (1987: 81), *āśrayaparivṛtti* occurs in an

²⁰ Maitreya, Chin. 彌勒; Tib. *Byams pa*. Traditionally, Xuánzàng wrote about how Asaṅga received teachings from Maitreya in Tuṣita Heaven (T2087, no. 51, p. 896b21–23). Yet, Westerhoff (2018: 153–154) points out that many modern scholars take Maitreya as a human teacher of Asaṅga, rather than an enlightened Bodhisatva. The authorship of the works between Maitreya and Asaṅga remains unsolved due to the lack of evidence. I do not distinguish them in this thesis but regard their works as the works of Maitreya/ Asaṅga.

²¹ Asaṅga, Chin. 無著; Tib. *Thogs med*. Westerhoff (2018: 150–152) briefly introduces Asaṅga as Vasubandhu’s brother who represents the important connection between the Yogācāra and meditative practices. Asaṅga’s works include Abhidharma and early Mahāyāna thoughts.

²² MSA, pp. 100–102: padārthadehanirbhāsaparāvṛtṭir anāsravaḥ / dhātur bījaparāvṛtteḥ sa ca sarvatragāśrayaḥ.

²³ MSABh, pp. 100–102: *bījaparāvṛtṭer ity ālayavijñānaparāvṛtṭitaḥ*.

Arhat and entirely replaces the *ālayavijñāna* and the rough difficulties (*dauṣṭhulya*). Thus, positive and neutral *dharmas* serve as the antidote to the defiled *ālayavijñāna* and completely transform it into a positive basis of personal existence.

Yet, *bījas* are not always defiled. In the Basic Portion of the YoBh, *bījas* can serve as the cause for attaining Buddhahood. In the *Śrāvakaḥmūmi* (ŚBh), the *bīja* of supramundane *dharma* (*lokottaradharmabīja*) within a person guarantees the eventual attainment of Buddhahood, although additional conditions are required as well. In the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (BoBh), the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālanbanapratyayabīja*) is introduced as an inherent cause in all sentient beings. The MSA, closely related to the BoBh,²⁴ along with Vasubandhu’s *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (MSABh), demonstrates that all sentient beings have the potential to attain Buddhahood (D’Amato 2003: 130). However, in Sthiramati’s **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (SAV), the concept of the “five lineages”²⁵ includes the possibility of a “non-lineage” (*rigs med*), which implies that, for some individuals, attaining Buddhahood is impossible. According to Martin Delhey (2022: 49), the “non-lineage” in the SAV has a positive connotation, as it refers to the Bodhisattva who voluntarily renounced the opportunity for liberation for the benefit of all sentient beings. The question of “non-lineage” is also discussed in the ŚBh and the compendium of the MAV.²⁶ Thus, it is necessary to investigate how the concept of *bījas* functions in Yogācāra texts—whether they are negative and must be eliminated, are positive causes for liberation, or have both negative and positive aspects.

In the MSg, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are systematically organised, with the former classified into six functions and the latter into four aspects.²⁷ The *ālayavijñāna* is defiled due to the stored *bījas* and *vāsanā*. To attain Buddhahood, the defiled *ālayavijñāna* cannot be the cause but an innovative concept: “the *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching” (**śrutavāsanā*, *thos pa'i bag chags*, 聞熏習 *wénxūnxī*). In Vasubandhu’s *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* (MSgBh),

²⁴ Schmithausen (1969: 819–820) argues that the BoBh could not be composed later than the MSA, which follows the explanation of reality (*satya*) from the **Saṃdh*, and in this respect the system differs from the BoBh.

²⁵ The concept of “five lineages” is presented by Xuánzàng as 五姓各別說 in his translations. For a detailed discussion, see Sakuma (2007).

²⁶ The compendium of the MAV refers to Maitreya’s *Madhyāntavibhāga*, Vasubandhu’s *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* and Sthiramati’s *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*. For current studies of this compendium see section 1.4.

²⁷ The six functions of *bīja* and four aspects of *vāsanā* are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

this specific *vāsanā* serves as the cause, giving rise to the mind of supramundane world (*'jig rten las 'das pa'i sems*, 出世心 *chū shìxīn*).²⁸ Although this *vāsanā* coexists with the defiled *ālayavijñāna*, it serves as an antidote and remains pure, just like the metaphor of unmixed milk and water.²⁹ However, in the *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* (MSgU) of Asvabhāva (6th century),³⁰ another commentator of the MSg, the defiled *ālayavijñāna* is like a disease or poison, making it impossible for the mind of supramundane world to arise from it.³¹

In short, the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* have been woven into the fabric of Yogācāra soteriology. Whether *bījas* represent the guarantee of attaining Buddhahood or the defilement

²⁸ MSgBh, p. 137b7: *de'i bag chags gang kun gzhi rnam par shes pa la gnas pa de'i rgyu can de las 'jig rten las 'das pa'i sems 'byung bar 'gyur ro*. The English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 286): “It is due to having the cause that consists of “the *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching”, which dwell in the *ālayavijñāna*, that the mind of supramundane world will arise.” However, in Xuánzàng’s translation, an additional sentence clarifies that this *vāsanā* generates *bīja*, which in turn serves as the cause of the arising of the mind of supramundane world: “即此熏習相續，住在阿賴耶識，為因能起出世間心，是故說言從最清淨法界所流正聞熏習種子所生。” (T1597, no. 31, p. 333c21–23).

²⁹ MSgBh, p. 138a 1–3: *thos pa'i bag chags kyi sa bon de'i gzhi gzhan yin par 'gyur ro // sangs rgyas rnams kyi byang chub la brten nas thos pa'i bag chags 'jug par 'gyur zhes bya ba ni chos kyi dbyings shin tu rnam par dag pa'i rgyu mthun pa thos pa'i bag chags de nyid do brten nas zhes bya ba ni gang gi rgud las 'jug pa ste / de yang lhan cig 'dug pa'i tshul gyis chu dang 'o ma bzhin du ngo bo gcig par 'jug par 'gyur na yang de de'i ngo bo ma yin pa nyid de / kun gzhi rnam par shes pa ma yin no // de'i phyir kun gzhi rnam par shes pa'i gnyen po yin no*. The English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 639): “The phrase ‘the *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching’ refers to the *vāsanā* of hearing that are the natural uncontaminated *dharmas* of the completely pure *dharmadhātu*. ‘In dependence’ refers to the mind stream from which they enter. Though they enter in the manner of coexisting with the [*ālayavijñāna*], just like [a mixture of] milk and water, they are not of its nature, that is, they are not the *ālayavijñāna*. Therefore, they are the antidote (*gnyen po*) of the *ālayavijñāna*.” Xuánzàng’s translation states that the antidote of the *ālayavijñāna* is the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*; 種子性): “此聞熏習者，即是最清淨法界等流正聞熏習。隨在一種所依轉處者，謂隨在一相續轉處，寄在異熟識中，與彼和合俱轉，猶如水乳者。然非阿賴耶識等者，雖復和合似一性轉，然非即是阿賴耶識，是能對治阿賴耶識，種子性故。” (T 1597, no. 31, p. 334a7–13).

³⁰ Asvabhāva, Chin. 無性, Tib. *Ngo bo nyid med pa*. Schmithausen (2014: 44) points out that Asvabhāva’s MSgU is an independent commentary of the MSg and not a subcommentary of Vasubandhu’s MSgBh. Therefore, the MSgU occasionally presents viewpoints that differ from the MSgBh.

³¹ MSgU, p. 213b 2–3: *nad las nad med pa ni nam yang ma mthong na nad lta bu'i kun gzhi rnam par shes pa las nad med pa lta bu'i 'jig rten las 'das pa'i sems ji ltar 'byung bar 'gyur*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 639): “If one never sees health (*nad med pa*) [arising] from a disease (*nad*), how could the supramundane mind (*'jig rten las 'das pa'i sems*) (which resembles health) arise from the *ālayavijñāna* (which resembles a disease)? In Xuánzàng’s Chinese translation (T1598, no. 31, p. 394b25–26): “阿賴耶識猶如毒藥，云何能生出世甘露清淨之心?” The *ālayavijñāna* is referred to “**poison**”, rather than “disease”. So, the English translation of Xuánzàng’s Chinese translation is “The *ālayavijñāna* is like **poison** (毒藥). How can it generate the pure mind that is like **nectar** (甘露) and belongs to the supramundane world?”

that must be transformed, they demonstrate how the Yogācā school develops the soteriological strategy that allows sentient beings to purify their minds. To rationalise that liberation comes from a defiled mind, the Yogācāras present the innovative concept of “the *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching”. Thus, the third research question includes these sub-questions: Do the Yogācāras agree with a kind of *bīja* as the guarantee of obtaining liberation? What should be annihilated during the progress of obtaining liberation? According to the Yogācā contexts, what has been solved by the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the MSg?

By analysing these three research questions and sub-questions, the thesis elucidates the different understandings of *bīja* and *vāsanā* in Vasubandhu’s and Sthiramati’s works. This development in the Yogācāra school can be investigated from the aspects of the process of conceptualisation, the continuity of rebirth, and the possibility of liberation.

1.2 Previous Research

The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are crucial topics in modern Buddhist studies, though most scholars focus primarily on Vasubandhu’s interpretation, giving less attention to Sthiramati’s perspective. Although Nguyen wrote a PhD dissertation about Sthiramati’s soteriology in 1990, he mainly explained the three bodies of the Buddha and did not pay corresponding attention to the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā*. To comprehend Sthiramati’s perspective more fully, it is necessary to establish a foundation based on Vasubandhu’s perspective.

According to Vasubandhu’s works, his teachings include both Abhidharma and Mahāyāna schools. Schmithausen (1967: 112) indicates that when Vasubandhu composed the AKBh, he followed Sautrāntika’s views but later became a Yogācāra scholar. Scholars have had lively debates about whether Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmic position aligns with the Sautrāntika school.³² Katō (1989) opines that Vasubandhu uses the term “*Sautrāntikāḥ*” to express his own understandings as part of a loosely connected group, despite being heavily influenced by Śrīlāta, the founder of the Sautrāntika school. In response to Katō’s argument questioning whether Vasubandhu is a Sautrāntika, Harada (1996; 1997; 1998) explains that the representative Sautrāntika concepts, such as *bījas* and the “specific transformation in the series”

³² The name of “Sautrāntika” first appears in the AKBh (Katō 1989: 87). The contemporary studies of Sautrāntikas until early 21st century are introduced by Kritzer (2003b: 201–224).

(*saṃtatipariṇāmaśeṣa*), can be traced back to the *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBh), indicating that Vasubandhu actually adheres to Yogācāra doctrines. Also, Kritzer (2003b) juxtaposes passages from the AKBh and the YoBh to highlight doctrinal similarities, noting that the name “Sautrāntika” literally means “*sūtra* master”, which could indicate Vasubandhu’s self-identification as a follower of *sūtras* (Kritzer 2003b: 331). Based on these findings, Kritzer (2005: xxx) concludes that, in the AKBh, “Vasubandhu uses the term Sautrāntika to designate a position in the *Yogācārabhūmi* that he prefers to those of orthodox Sarvāstivāda.”

Park (2014: 15–28) refers to the results of Harada and Kritzer as the “Kritzer-Harada hypothesis”, which denotes that Vasubandhu disguises himself as a Sautrāntika in the AKBh to facilitate a smooth transition from Abhidharma to Yogācāra school. Drawing from the **Nyāyānusāra* (*Ny) of Saṃghabhadra, written in response to the AKBh, Park points out that Vasubandhu is viewed as “a proponent” (同見者 *tóngjiànzhě*) of Śrīlāta, a Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika scholar. Meanwhile, Park examines the concept of *bīja* and the “specific transformation in the series” in the *Ny and notes that Śrīlāta uses these two concepts to explain his concept of **anudhātu* (see section 2.3.5.), which serves as a precursor to Vasubandhu’s concept of *bījas* (Park 2014: 463). Consequently, Park deems that in the AKBh, Vasubandhu does not hide his Yogācāra identity under the guise of Sautrāntika; rather, he should be regarded as a Dārṣṭāntika-Sautrāntika scholar just like Śrīlāta.

Although scholars have taken the concept of *bījas* as evidence for examining Vasubandhu’s stance, I do not aim to define *bījas* or determine whether Vasubandhu aligns with the Sautrāntika, the Dārṣṭāntika, or both. Likewise, I do not explore the origins of the concept of *vāsanās*. Instead, this section seeks to clarify my research questions in light of previous research. Based on these established results, I am able to further focus on the analysis of *bījas* and *vāsanās* within Vasubandhu and Sthiramati’s works.

1.1.1 *Bījas* in the AKBh

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Vasubandhu incorporates several Abhidharmic teachings in the AKBh and, similarly, the concept of *bījas* is not introduced for the first time in this text. Scholars mainly regard the concept of *bījas* as a representative teaching of the Sautrāntika school (Jaini 1959: 236). However, according to Cox (1995: 103), this concept is

not limited to the Sautrāntika. It also appears in the Sarvāstivāda's **Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* and the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahrdayaśāstra*. Initially depicted in the AKBh and the *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* (KP) by Vasubandhu, it is attributed to the Dārṣṭāntikas in the *Ny. Thus, Cox concludes that the concept of *bījas* “has a much broader function within the interpretative models of Vasubandhu and the Dārṣṭāntikas or Sautrāntikas.”³³

However, Dhammajoti (2006: 184) refutes Cox’s view by arguing that certain teachings of the Sautrāntikas in the AKBh, especially the concept of *bījas*, cannot be found in the Dārṣṭāntikas but rather in the YoBh. Based on Śrīlāta’s concept of **anudhātu* in the *Ny, Park (2014: 472) further argues that both the Dārṣṭāntikas and the Yogācāras contributed to the development of the concept until it became a complete teaching in their respective tradition.³⁴ As the concept of *bījas* develops and varies across texts, it seems rather impossible to definitively trace its original formulation to any specific Buddhist school. Moreover, pinpointing the origin of the concept is not the goal of this thesis. Rather, this thesis aims to investigate what kind of question the concept of *bījas* solves in the AKBh.

The primary opponent in the AKBh is the Sarvāstivāda school, which holds that all *dharmas* have always existed in their essential nature (Dhammajoti 2003: 19). For the Sarvāstivādins, the five aggregates (*skandha*), the spheres (*āyatana*), and the realms (*dhātu*) are real entities (*dravyadharmā*), while the Sautrāntikas take only the realms to be real entities and regard the aggregate and the spheres as designation (*upacāra*). In the AKBh, both the realms and the spheres are viewed as real entities, yet the aggregates are considered designated (Willems, Dessein, and Cox 1998: 28). Regarding this, *bīja* in the AKBh is not a real existence but a consistency of “name and matter” (*nāmarūpa*)—namely, the “psycho-physical complex” which arises in an individual’s mental series (*saṃtati*).

These *bījas* substitute the Sarvāstivāda’s concept of *prāpti* in the AKBh (Jaini 1959: 239). *Prāpti* belongs to the group of the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*), making the mental series remain associated with *dharmas*

³³ The discussion about Vasubandhu as a Dārṣṭāntika or a Sautrāntika cf. Cox (1995: 103) and Park (2014: 245–246).

³⁴ Park (2014: 472) states: “However, the situation rather seems to be those two ancient Buddhist traditions, the Dārṣṭāntikas and the Yogācāras, had developed their identities over a long period of time, mutually interacting with one another, sharing some ideas and disagreeing on others, before the advent of their own relatively fixed dogmatics for each tradition.”

throughout the doctrine of three periods of time (*traiyadhvaka*) (Park 2014: 408). Although *bījas* deny the existence of real existing entities, they encounter a problem that they must have the same moral quality (*kuśala/akuśala*) as their fruition. To solve this problem, *bījas* in the AKBh have the function that can immediately cause unwholesome *dharma* even if the previous moment was a good one, and vice versa. This function is so-called a “specific transformation in the series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*).

1.1.2 *Bīja*, *Vāsanā* and A Specific Transformation in the Series

The “specific transformation in the series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*) is known as a concept of the Sautrāntikas which aims to refute the Sarvāstivāda’s teaching of *avijñapti* and *cetanā* (Dhammajoti 2018: 16). Since the Sautrāntikas do not consider *avijñapti* and *cetanā* as real entities, they opine that a *bīja* changes its characteristic through a specific transformation in the series. This function is also highly related to the Buddhist doctrine of *karman*, such as the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*).

To keep the continuity of *karman*, the Sarvāstivādins present the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*), which is one of their six causes and is regarded as a real entity through the three periods of time (*traiyadhvaka*). In contrast, the Sautrāntikas utilise the “specific transformation in the series” to keep the karmic process in one’s present mental stream as a single continuum (Kondō 2015). The Yogācāras, on the other hand, suggest that the *bīja* arises and generates new *bīja* by its *vāsanā*, which allows the cause and fruition to co-exist in the same moment (Yamabe 2017).

The “specific transformation in the series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*) is not only a process of maturing *karman* but also the arising of consciousness. Odani (1975) points out that the concept of the “specific transformation in the series” is the pre-understanding of “the transformation of consciousness” (*vijñānapariṇāma*), which works as a perception in the Yogācāra school. Ueda (1967) elaborates that Sthiramati understands the transformation of consciousness as changing to the present consciousness from the previous consciousness. Sharing a similar concept of the “specific transformation in series”, the “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparivṛtti*) replaces the defiled *ālayavijñāna* with the supramundane mind (*jig rten las 'das pa'i sems*) in an Arhat, leading to the state of purification. The concept of “specific

transformation in series” will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

1.1.3 *Bīja* and Lineage (*gotra*)

In the *Śrāvakabhūmi* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, the term *bīja* is equivalent to “lineage” (*gotra*) (Yamabe 1990). The term *gotra*, according to Seyfort Rugg (1976), is rather a clan, a family, or a genus, so it can be a socio-biological metaphor (*gotra* = *kula*, “family”), or a botanical metaphor (known as *bīja*). In the Chinese Yogācāra school, Xuánzàng enumerates the concept of “five lineages” (五姓各別說)—namely, the lineage of hearers (*śrāvakagotra*), the lineage of solitary realizer (*pratyekabuddhagotra*), the lineage of Bodhisattva (*bodhisattvagotra*/*tathāgatagotra* in the YoBh), the lineage of non-determined (*aniyatagotra*), and the lacking lineage (*agotra*) (Okada 2016: 1217).

The concept of five lineages is presented in Sthiramati's *SAV. D'Amato (2003: 116, 135) concludes that certain specific *gotras* are unable to attain liberation from *samsāra*. Meanwhile, Sakuma (2006) compares the concept of lacking *gotra* (*agotra*) in the works of Sthiramati and Xuánzàng and deems that, from Sthiramati's perspective, some lineages lack the requisite cause for attaining liberation. However, Delhey (2022) argues that, although Sthiramati is aware of the concept of lacking lineage from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* and quotes it in his *SAV, it does not necessarily indicate that Sthiramati accepts this presumption. Through an analysis of Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (MAVT), Delhey (2022) attests that Sthiramati still endorses the doctrine of one vehicle.

The concept of lacking lineage does not appear in the PSkV and the TrBh. However, Okada (2016) finds out that the concept of five lineages was developed in the *Āryākṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā*, a text composed after the time of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati. Therefore, the existence of the five lineages within the Yogācāra school suggests the need for further investigation regarding how the concept of lacking *gotra* relates to Sthiramati's works. This topic will be discussed in Chapter 4.

1.1.4 *Ālayavijñāna* and *Bīja*

In the Yogācāra school, the *ālayavijñāna* is regarded as a container of *bījas*. In this respect, the

ālayavijñāna and *bījas* are inseparable. Schmithausen (1987: 21) opines that the *ālayavijñāna* aims to keep *bījas* and give rise to the involving consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*) during the two meditative absorptions of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) and non-thought (*āsaṃjñīsamāpatti*). In these two states, mental activities do not manifest; thus, to further give rise to consciousness, the *ālayavijñāna* is established. Yamabe (2018) considers that the *ālayavijñāna* is not only a subconscious that supports the mind but also a latent physiological basis of the body (*āśraya*). Therefore, its *bījas* do not refer to the material body, but the overall state of individual existence. Gao (2022) states that Yogācāra scholars present the *vāsanā* of all *dharma*s (**sarvadharmavāsanā*) in the *ālayavijñāna* to give rise to involving consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*) in the meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought. This thesis therefore investigates whether *bījas* and *vāsanās* cooperate in a particular meditative state to maintain the mental stream in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati.

The *ālayavijñāna* causes the arising of consciousness because of the “*bīja*-state” (*bījabhāva*). Each moment of consciousness is itself a resultant state, an effect of past *karman*, and a fruition of *bīja* (Waldron 2003: 112). A similar notion is “the basis of *bīja*” (*bījāśraya*), which states that the *ālayavijñāna* allows the latent *bīja* and fruition to coexist, which is the simultaneous causality of the Yogācāra school (Yamabe 2017). Delhey (2016) suggests that the concept of mind in Sthiramati’s MAVṬ includes involving consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*), the afflicted mind which generates the notion of I (*kliṣṭa-manas*), and the *ālayavijñāna*. Without the *ālayavijñāna*, obtaining liberation becomes impossible because one lacks the cause to transform the defiled *ālayavijñāna*. The relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and *bījas* is further discussed in Chapter 3.

1.1.5 *Vāsanā* and *Bīja* as Synonyms

The concepts of *vāsanās* and *bījas* are considered synonyms by Saṃghabhadra in his *Ny.³⁵ However, Yamabe (1989) lists seven kinds of *bīja* in the YoBh and disagrees that *bīja* and

³⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 398b26–29: “復有諸師，於此種子，處處隨義，建立別名，或名隨界、或名熏習、或名功能、或名不失、或名增長”。 For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 197): “There are certain masters who give different names to these *bījas*, each according to his own understanding. Some call them subsidiary element (**anudhātu*), others call them *vāsanā*, still others call them capability (*sāmarthyā*), or non-disappearance (*avipranāśa*), or accumulation (*upacaya*).”

vāsanā are synonyms in the early Yogācāra texts. The concept of *vāsanās* has been thoroughly studied by Gao (2019), who concludes four basic meanings of *vāsanā* in Abhidharmic and early Yogācāra texts: 1. *vāsanā* of wholesome cultivation; 2. *kleśavāsanā* from defilements; 3. *vāsanā* of *karman*; 4. *vāsanā* of memory.

In the early Yogācāra texts, Yamabe (2021) argues that the term *vāsanā* was used for a much narrower range of meaning than *bījas*—namely, only in the sense of *vāsanā* of affliction and the *vāsanā* of *karman*. Gao (2021) shares the same position as Yamabe: in the oldest layer of the YBh, the term *vāsanā* has no potency to produce karmic retribution or the capability for bringing about conditioned *dharma* (*saṃskṛta*); thus, the association of *vāsanās* and *bījas* was developed later. This development should happen in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī*, because the simultaneous causality allows the *vāsanās* to dwell in the *ālayavijñāna* and is then similar to *bījas*. According to Yamabe’s and Gao’s investigations, we find out that *bījas* and *vāsanās* are not synonyms in the early YoBh.

The concept of *vāsanās* is divided into the *vāsanā* of linguistic expression (*mngon par brjod pa’i bag chags*; 名言熏習), the *vāsanā* of self-view (*bdag tu lta ba’i bag chags*; 我見熏習), and the *vāsanā* of existence factor (*srid pa’i yan lag gi bag chags*; 有支熏習) in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg); yet this understanding originates from the **Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra* (*Saṃdh). As the *vāsanā* of linguistic expression, one can conceptualise the world, which is similar to proliferation (*prapañca*). Through the linguistic function, this thesis aims to further discuss the “*vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching” (**śrutavāsanā*; *thos pa’i bag chags*; 聞熏習) in the compendium of the MSg. Since this particular *vāsanā* represents a power of positive *dharma* outside one’s mental stream, I propose that the system of the MSg does not allow the *ālayavijñāna* to purify itself but requires an external power. This aspect will be discussed in Chapter 4.

1.3 Methodology

This thesis aims to investigate the doctrinal development of the Yogācāra school by employing textual comparison to analyse the application of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in Sthiramati's works, thus providing a basis for further research. The application of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* cannot be understood as a single doctrine. As I have discussed in the

"Previous research" section, these concepts encompass multiple aspects in Abhidharma and early Yogācāra texts. In the Yogācāra school, they become more systematic as they are integrated with other aspects, including the process of conceptualisation, the continuity of rebirth, and the obtainment of final liberation.

Since the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati have been preserved in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese, this thesis aims to translate passages that correspond to the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* into English. My English translations are mainly based on published academic works, but some terminologies have been changed by me to suit the discussion of *bīja* and *vāsanā*. If the original English translations are not given in the footnotes, the paragraph has been translated by me.

Taking the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati as the philological foundation of the thesis, a crucial question must be addressed: Who is the writer Vasubandhu and the commentator Sthiramati? As I state at the beginning of the Introduction, this thesis does not consider these individuals as historical figures but rather as symbols representing specific texts and time periods. Thus, it cannot be claimed that Sthiramati simply “interprets” Vasubandhu’s works, as this implies that Sthiramati authored all commentaries attributed to him and followed Vasubandhu's writing structure. This thesis takes a different stance. To further clarify the stance of this thesis, we must shed light on the authorship of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati.

1.3.1 The Authorship of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati’s Works

Many scholars have devoted much work to charting the biographies of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, and their studies should not be ignored. Frauwallner (1958) proposes his famous theory that there were two Vasubandhus in Buddhist history: one lived in the 4th century and was a Mahāyāna Buddhist and the brother of Asaṅga; the other one lived in the 5th century, was a Sarvāstivāda scholar, and wrote the *Abhidharmakośakārikā* and *Bhāṣya*. His theory is strongly opposed by Sakurabe (1952) and Jaini (1958). Hirakawa (1973: II-III) presents two main assumptions among Japanese scholars regarding Vasubandhu’s lifespan: Ui (1932) dates it to 320–400 CE, while Hikata (1954) refutes Ui’s dating, arguing that it is chronologically distant from other contemporary Indian Buddhists, such as Saṃghabhadra, and proposes a date of 400–480 CE for Vasubandhu. According to when Vasubandhu’s works were translated, Katō (1989:

61–68) finds a middle ground between Ui and Hikata’s proposals by dating Vasubandhu to 350–430 CE. Kritzer (2005: xxv) notes that Japanese scholars generally state there is only one Vasubandhu, who changes his thoughts gradually. On the other hand, Willemen, Dessein, and Cox (1998: 240–241), based on Chinese sources, date Vasubandhu to the late 4th to 5th century.³⁶

As in the case of Vasubandhu, there are two main estimates of Sthiramati’s dates. Sakuma (2013: 39–40) presents two possible options: 470–550 CE, dated by Ui (1965), and 510–570 CE by Frauwallner (1958). Ui’s argument is based on *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* (大唐西域記, T 2087, no. 51) of Xuánzàng and the inscriptions from Valabhī. On the other hand, Frauwallner (1958) considers Sthiramati as a contemporary of King Guhasena (558–566 CE). Kajiyama (1963) endorses Frauwallner’s argument. By speculating that Dharmapāla died in 561 CE, and Bhāviveka in 570 CE, Kajiyama surmises that Sthiramati could not have lived longer than 570 CE., since he predates Dharmapāla and Bhāviveka. Nguyen (1990: 13–23) provides detailed research on Sthiramati’s lifetime in his PhD dissertation. Due to the difficulty in accurately determining the lifetime of Sthiramati with any certainty, I will consider his active period to be in the 6th century.

Just as it is difficult to confirm the lifetime of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, it is also difficult to define their works. While many texts are attributed to Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, the authorship remains unresolved. According to Kritzer (2005: xxvi), most scholars agree that Vasubandhu composed the AKBh, the *Vyākhyāyukti*, the KP, the *Pratītyasamutpādayākhyā*, the *Pañcaskandha*, the *Viṃśatikā*, and the *Triṃśikā*.

Based on Tibetan sources, Nguyen (1990: 13) points out that Sthiramati’s works are: a commentary on the *Ratnakūṭasūtra*, a commentary on the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, a commentary on the AKBh, and on the eight treatises of Vasubandhu. Sakuma (2006: 39–61) studies the works of Kuījī (632–682 CE), a disciple of Xuánzàng and the commentator of the Chinese Yogācāra school, and then discovers that Kuījī’s critiques of Sthiramati are inconsistent with Sthiramati’s thoughts. Likewise, Ueno (2011: 449–445) surmises that the Sanskrit translation of *SAVBh is not written by Sthiramati. By studying the three natures (*svabhāva*),

³⁶ These Chinese sources are Vasubandhu’s biography (婆藪槃豆法師傳, T2049, no. 50) by Paramārtha (499–569 CE), *The Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* (T 2087) by Xuánzàng’s (602–664 CE) and the journal (T2125, no. 54) by Yijing (635–713 CE).

Kramer (2017: 47–63) concludes that not all the commentaries attributed to Sthiramati are composed by the same person. Hence, scholars question the identity of Sthiramati in three aspects: Anhui (Chinese translation for Sthiramati: 安惠/安慧) in the Chinese Yogācāra school; the Sthiramati who writes Sanskrit commentaries; and the Sthiramati who composes the *SAVBh. The works that can be attributed to Vasubandhu and Sthiramati are therefore: the *Pañcaskandha* and commentary, and the *Triṃśikā* and commentary. Although Sthiramati may not be the author of the commentaries of the AKBh, the MSA, and the MAV, they are nonetheless considered in this thesis as one of the interpretations of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. For a detailed discussion of the textual sources, see section 1.4.

Readers may question how they can understand the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* through the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, given that they were not the sole authors. However, the aim of this thesis is to investigate the development of these concepts rather than to attribute them to a particular individual. Ancient scholars often did not record all the sources they drew from, making it difficult to determine authorship. Therefore, it would be incorrect to assume a specific chronological order or authors for these concepts. Instead, we should observe the differences between all the texts and remain aware of the potential for overlap or borrowing. As Kramer (2016a: 61) says:

Leaving aside the question of common authorship, it should be noted that the author(s) of all the commentaries under discussion appear(s) as a creative and original thinker(s), enriching the root texts with a great number of additional terms and concepts not mentioned or even indicated in the texts commented on.³⁷

Based on a hermeneutic perspective,³⁸ I will not produce a chronological theory and label it as

³⁷ Kramer 2016a, “Some Remarks on Sthiramati and his Putative Authorship of the Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīka, the *Sūtrālamkāravṛttibhāṣyā and the Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyā”, *Buddhist Studies Review*, vol. 33.1–2, pp. 47–63.

³⁸ The hermeneutic problem of the Yogācāra school can be traced back to Thurman’s research. Through his analysis of the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* and Tsong Khapa’s description, Thurman (1978) identifies two main issues with Yogācāra (*Vijñānavāda*) hermeneutics: first, literal interpretations cannot accurately represent the intricacies of the teachings, and second, Yogācāra scholars’ analytical approaches are inadequate and tend to use a text as evidence to prove its own definitiveness, resulting in the “obvious circularity of invoking a Scripture’s own claim of definitiveness as proof of its own definitiveness.” Thus, according to Thurman, Yogācāra scholars work on the basis of exegesis rather than a hermeneutic approach. However, Maraldo (1986) questions Thurman’s

Sthiramati's “new” creative idea but rather juxtapose the texts to investigate the formation of the entangled concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the Yogācāra texts. In other words, the different explanations should be understood individually in separate works. For instance, we should not say Sthiramati's *SAVBh influenced his TrBh unless we find a parallel paragraph.

1.3.2 Contextual Investigation

The main method of this thesis is “contextual investigation” (Tzohar 2018),³⁹ which prevents us from falling into a presumption:

Broadly speaking, the deeply contextual investigation of an idea across primary textual sources and sectarian lines seems to demand a diachronic perspective, at least as a safeguard against anachronism and an ahistorical, essentializing approach to the realm of ideas. This need is all the more pronounced in view of the tendency of the scholarship of Indian thought in the not-so-distant-past toward perennialism.⁴⁰

Even though it is also very difficult to prove the explicit date of any Buddhist work, we still can collect explanations about *bīja* and *vāsanā* among those commentaries attributed to Vasubandhu and Sthiramati. The time gap between Vasubandhu and Sthiramati is indeed huge, yet their works are capable of representing the development of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* and

critique by combining exegesis and hermeneutic exercises and considers them to be interpretative action. Therefore, all commentaries are written through an interpretative lens, only emphasizing different perspectives. This idea appears to satisfy critics of Thurman. Yet, Maraldo does not address Thurman's first argument regarding the question of literal acceptability. If Yogācāra scholars cannot express their doctrines through Buddhist terminology, how can they complete exegetical and hermeneutic exercises? To address the complex terminology problem in this thesis, I leave *bīja* and *vāsanā* untranslated and provide a footnote whenever they are quoted. Every passage of *bīja* and *vāsanā* has its meaning. From the hermeneutic perspective, assuming an influence or chronic heritage is dangerous. Therefore, the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* in Vasubandhu's and Sthiramati's works should be discussed in their context.

³⁹ I do not use the term “intertextuality” in this thesis, as it requires a historical background before applying it. However, we should keep in mind that Sthiramati's commentaries have a title after Vasubandhu's works. As Kramer (2015: 282) points out, there are seven types of commentaries: *vṛtti*, *vārttika*, *bhāṣya*, *pañjikā*, *tīkā*, *paspaśa*, and *upodghāta*, with *vṛtti* being the oldest. These Indian commentators follow their tradition, which cannot be introduced in the concept of “intertextuality” or “transtextuality”. Moreover, it is challenging to track down the original texts that those commentators followed, as well as other works that they cited but did not mention.

⁴⁰ Tzohar (2018: 11).

also signifying the paradigm shift in the Yogācāra school. From that, a doctrinal pattern can be depicted.

To investigate the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, this thesis analyzes paragraphs in three stages. The first stage is to find the relevant paragraphs in Vasubandhu’s works. For instance, Vasubandhu introduces the function of “specific transformation in the series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*) in the AKBh and the KP. In the AKBh, Vasubandhu ascribes this function to *bīja*:

What is the so-called “*bīja*”? The [*bīja*] is [the complex of] name and matter (*nāmarūpa*), which is able to immediately or mediately arise fruition due to a specific transformation in series (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*).⁴¹

However, this function is ascribed to *vāsanā* in the KP:

The *vāsanā* (熏習) causes the series that it perfumes to transform itself and acquire some special potentialities... Without *vāsanās*, no specific transformation (轉變差別功能) is possible.⁴²

The “specific transformation” is equivalent to a specific transformation in the series, yet it belongs to *vāsanā* in the KP. By comparing this with similar paragraphs in Vasubandhu’s works, we can notice that the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* were still developing and sometimes contradict each other.

The second stage is to compare similar passages in Vasubandhu’s and Sthiramati’s works. For example, in the MSABh, Vasubandhu explains that the transformation of *bīja* (*bījaparāvṛtti*) is identical to the transformation of *ālayavijñāna* (*ālayavijñānaparāvṛtti*):

[The verse:] “Because of the transformation of *bīja*” means “because of the

⁴¹ AKBh, p. 64: *kiṃ punar idaṃ bījaṃ nāma / yan nāmarūpaṃ phalotpattau samarthaṃ sākṣāt pāraṃparyeṇa vā / saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣāt*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 544).

⁴² Lamotte translated this passage into French based on the Chinese translation, and Pruden (1987: 70) translated it into English. I changed the term “impregnation” into *vāsanā*. Chinese translation cf. Xuánzàng (T1609, no. 31, p. 785, b16–23): “夫熏習者，令彼所熏相續變成功能差別...若無熏習，則無轉變差別功能”.

transformation of *ālayavijñāna*”⁴³

Sthiramati agrees with Vasubandhu, but he further explains what the *bīja* is within the *ālayavijñāna* in the *SAVBh:

The *ālayavijñāna* is *bīja*, together with the *vāsanā* of the afflictive and intellectual hindrance (*nyon mongs pa dang shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags*), or with the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped (*gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i bag chags*).⁴⁴

The paragraph discusses the concept of *ālayavijñāna* as the container of *bījas*, and Sthiramati's perspective on the fundamental afflictions as *vāsanās*, which includes two hindrances and the grasper and the grasped. Sthiramati agrees with Vasubandhu that the defiled *bījas* are damaged by the power of the noble paths of seeing and cultivation (*darśanabhāvanāmārga*). Since the transformation of *ālayavijñāna* occurs in an Arhat, the defiled *bījas* should have been damaged, so the fundamental afflictions can only exist as a kind of *vāsanās*. This indicates that, even if practitioners transform the *ālayavijñāna*, they have not yet attained the final liberation.

The third stage is to compare similar paragraphs in Sthiramati's works. For instance, the same passages of the appreciation of *ālayavijñāna* have been quoted in the PSkV and the TrBh:

The PSkV:

*adhyātmam upādānavijñaptitaḥ / bahirdhā aparicchinnākārabhājanavijñaptitaś ca /
tatrādhyātmam upādānaṃ parikalpitasvabhāvābhīniveśavāsanā sādhiṣṭhānaṃ
cendriyarūpam.*⁴⁵

The TrBh:

*adhyātmam upādānavijñaptito bahirdhāparicchinnākārabhājanavijñaptitaś ca /
tatrādhyātmam upādānaṃ parikalpitasvabhāvābhīniveśavāsanā sādhiṣṭhānam*

⁴³ MSABh, p. 101: *bījaparāvṛtter ity ālayavijñānaparāvṛttitaḥ*.

⁴⁴ *SAVBh, p. 112: *nyon mongs pa dang shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags dang bcas pa'am / gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i bag chags dang bcas pa'i kun gzhi la sa bon zhes bya ste*.

⁴⁵ PSkV, p. 92.

*indriyarūpaṃ nāma cai.*⁴⁶

English translation:

(1) internally it perceives the condition of grasping and (2) externally it perceives the [physical] world. However, it does not do so in such a way that [allows] the form [of these two types of awareness] to be discernible. “Inner grasping” refers to the imprints of the mistaken belief that those entities which are [in fact only] mental constructs [are independent and real substances], as well as the form that makes up the sense faculties together with their seats.⁴⁷

The meaning between the PSkV and the TrBh is roughly the same. These three stages take Vasubandhu’s stance as the basic understanding and then examine Sthiramati’s interpretations. Although we cannot know the authorship of these works, we can collect the different paragraphs to surmise the possible development of the concept of *bīja* and *vāsanā*. We can figure out which doctrinal problem Yogācāra scholars want to solve and examine whether the concept is accepted by later works. For the relationship between commentaries and original texts, Kramer (2015: 285) argues that it shows innovation and creativity:

Thus, a commentary might, on the one hand, have the purpose of transferring a text from the past to the present, thereby recovering and reconfirming it by adapting it to the modern, present-day vocabulary and perspective. On the other hand, it might be used as a tool to incorporate an old authoritative source into a new context, for instance, a newly established tradition, in order to authorise the latter and its newly developed ideas.⁴⁸

In other words, this thesis encompasses three aspects: the basic understanding of Vasubandhu’s works, the parallel paragraphs in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, and the interpretation of Sthiramati’s work. From Sthiramati’s perspective, this thesis attempts to investigate the paradigm shift of the demise of *bīja* and the growth of *vāsanā* in the Yogācāra

⁴⁶ TrBh, p. 50.

⁴⁷ For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 329).

⁴⁸ Kramer 2015, “Innovation and the Role of Intertextuality in the *Pañcaskandhaka* and Related Yogācāra Works”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 36/37, p. 285.

school.

1.4 Main Textual Sources

To provide a focused comparison of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* between Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, this thesis primarily examines the works written by Vasubandhu and annotated by Sthiramati, as not all of their extensive writings can be covered. The goal is to discuss these concepts within a cohesive framework. While these works can be positioned in relative periods according to the doctrines they represent, it is impossible to date them precisely.

1.4.1 The Compendium of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*

To build a basic understanding of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, the thesis starts with an investigation of the AKBh. The purpose of the AKBh is to criticise the doctrines of “Kāśmīra Sarvāstivādin-Vaibhāṣika orthodoxy” (Willemen, Dessein, and Cox 1998: 240), and it is written before Vasubandhu becomes a Yogācāra scholar (Kritzer 2005: xii).

To focus on the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, the compendium of the AKBh in this thesis includes Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and Sthiramati’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyatīkā Tattvārthā*.

1.4.1.1 Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*

According to historical research, the AKBh was not composed as an innovative work. Many works had appeared before and became the basis of AKBh. They can be divided into three groups:

The first group contains the Sarvāstivāda texts. Since the main target of the AKBh is the Sarvāstivāda school, it is reasonable for Vasubandhu to acknowledge and review the Sarvāstivāda doctrines. Those doctrines, mostly from Kāśmīra masters, are preserved in seven Sarvāstivāda scriptures.⁴⁹ Among them, Vasumitra’s **Prakaraṇapāda* (T 1542, no. 26)

⁴⁹ The detailed discussion of Sarvāstivāda scriptures can be found in Willemen, Dessein, and Cox (1998: 177–229). Also, Kritzer (2005: xx–xxi) briefly introduced the connection between the AKBh and these seven works.

establishes a special category, namely the five categories in its first chapter, the *Pañcavastuka*. Vasumitra classified all the *dharma*s as i) matter, ii) mind, iii) mental factors, iv) mental activities dissociated with the mind, and v) unconditioned. These five categories, according to Lin (2015: 64–66), also appear in the Sarvāstivāda texts, and are then accepted by the AKBh.

The second group consists of the “western” masters in the Gandhāra area. Even though Gandhāra masters had been influenced by the *Prakaraṇapāda*, the *Jñānaprasthāna* (T1544, no. 26) and its commentary, the **Mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (*MVŚ, T1575, no. 27), they were still widely known by all Sarvāstivādins. For this reason, Vasubandhu named his opponents as Vibhāṣikas (毘婆沙師 *Pipóshā Shī*), masters of the **MVŚ*, and quoted many Sarvāstivāda doctrines from the **MVŚ*. In addition, the term “Sarvāstivādin” is used in this thesis to refer to the Vibhāṣikas in the AKBh.

Finally, there is the group of *Hṛdaya* treatises. Most scholars have acknowledged that the AKBh is dominantly influenced by the treatise **Abhidharmahṛdaya* and adapts its structure (Frauwallner 1995: 137–140; Kritzer 2005, xxi; Dhammajoti 2015: 121–123). Dharmasīrī’s **Abhidharmahṛdaya* (T1550, no. 38), as a systemized Abhidharmic work, creates a style of presenting the doctrines in verse and comments on them in following prose, as can be seen in the AKBh⁵⁰ There are two commentaries on the **Abhidharmahṛdaya*: Upāsānta’s **Abhidharmahṛdayaśāstra* (T1551, no. 28) and Dharmatrāta’s **Samyuktābhidharmahṛdaya* (T 1552, no. 28). The latter is recognised as a direct influence on Vasubandhu’s AKBh (Hirakawa 1973; Willemen, Dessein, and Cox 1998: 271.)

The treatise of *Hṛdaya* is confirmed as a Sautrāntika text, revised under an Abhidharmic system. Therefore, having adapted to the structure and stance of *Hṛdaya*’s treatise, the AKBh is also considered a Sautrāntika text (Willemen, Dessein, and Cox 1998: 271) or highly associated with Sautrāntika (Kritzer 2005: xxi).

In the AKBh, Vasubandhu composes verses and prose. The verses can be separated as the *Abhidharmakośakārikā*. The Sanskrit manuscripts of *kārikā* and AKBh were found by Rāhula Sāṃkṛtyāyana in the Tibetan monastery of Ngor in 1934 and 1936. The *kārikā* were edited and

⁵⁰ By investigating the first chapter “element (*dhātu*)” and the second one “mental activities (*samskāra*)” of the *Abhidharmahṛdaya*, Dhammajoti (2012: 4) asserted that “the first two chapters fully accomplish the task of a general exposition on what the ultimate reals are and their dynamic functions.” Also see Frauwallner (1995:137–140); Willemen, Dessein, and Cox (1998: 269–274); Kritzer (2005: xxi).

published by Gokhale.⁵¹ Later, Pradhan edited and published both verses and prose.⁵² The AKBh has been translated into Tibetan by Jinamitra and Dpal brtsegs.⁵³ The AKBh has been translated into Chinese twice—the first version by Paramārtha (6th century)⁵⁴ and the second by Xuánzàng.⁵⁵

As the fundamental text for the Sarvāstivādins, the Sautrāntikas, and the Yogācāras, the AKBh has been studied by many scholars and translated into several modern languages—for example, into French by de La Vallée Poussin.⁵⁶ More recently, Gelong Lodrö Sangpo (2012) published a new English translation in which he quotes parallels from other Buddhist texts to compare with the AKBh. In this thesis, I utilise Pradhan’s second edition (1975) as the Sanskrit source for the AKBh. In cases of ambiguity, I will refer to the Derge and Peking edition as the Tibet translations, and Xuánzàng’s edition as the Chinese translation to support the English translation.

1.4.1.2 Sthiramati’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyatīkā Tattvārthā*

As a commentary on the AKBh, Sthiramati’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyatīkā Tattvārthā* (AKTA) is a hard nut to crack due to an incomplete text and ambiguous translations. Before the Sanskrit manuscript was discovered, the AKTA was preserved in a Tibetan translation from around the late 15th or early 16th century.⁵⁷ Although the translator aimed to precisely follow the original Sanskrit structure, he failed to translate the AKTA as a readable text. However, according to Shōgaito’s comparison, the Tibetan version of TA basically conforms to the Uighur manuscript; thus, Shōgaito states that both Tibetan and Uighur express the original Sanskrit text.⁵⁸

⁵¹ Gokhale (1946).

⁵² P. Pradhan (1967). The second edition was published in 1975.

⁵³ The Tibetan version of the *kārika*: *Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi tshig le'ur byas pa*, Peking 5590; Derge 4089, and the Tibetan version of the prose: *Chos mngon pa'i mdzod kyi bshad pa*, Peking 5591; Derge 4090.

⁵⁴ Paramārtha, 阿毘達磨俱舍釋論, T1559, no. 29.

⁵⁵ Xuánzàng, 阿毘達磨俱舍論本頌 (*kārikā*), T1560, no. 29; 阿毗達磨俱舍論 (AKBh), T1558, no. 29.

⁵⁶ La Vallée Poussin (1923–1931); second edition (1971).

⁵⁷ The Tibetan version of the AKTA: *chos mngon mdsod kyi bshad pa'i rgya cher 'grel pa don gyi de kho na nyi ces bya pa*, translated by Dharmapālabhadra, Peking 5875; Derge 4421.

⁵⁸ Shōgaito (1991: 6): “しかし、ウイグル語訳『実義疏』と比べてみれば、両者の内容には基本的な一致がみられ、共に安慧のサンスクリット原典の内容を伝えていることに間違いはない”。English translation

The Uighur translation of the AKTA, according to Zhang’s research, includes five manuscripts.⁵⁹ The first and most important one was discovered by Marc Aurel Stein in the Dunhuang grotto in 1907 and was labelled as Or. 8212–75 A/B and preserved in the British Library. Shōgaito (1991; 1993) thoroughly studied this manuscript and published the results, pointing out that the Uighur version separates the introduction and main paragraph of the AKBh and gives a concluding sentence at the very end. Moreover, the Uighur version often quotes a long sentence from the AKBh and then explains it in a question-and-answer period, which does not appear in the Tibetan version (Shōgaito 1991: 6).

The Sanskrit manuscript of the AKTA was discovered in 1980 in the Potala Palace in Tibet. This manuscript contains two bundles: Bundle A, containing 58 folios, and Bundle C, containing 79 folios, while Bundle B is missing. (Matsuda 2014: 10). Written around the 8th–9th centuries, they are considered the oldest manuscripts preserved in Tibet (Matsuda 2014: 11). These three bundles correspond to chapters 1–8 of the AKBh, but chapters 3 and 4 are missing, perhaps belonging to the long-lost bundle B. It is important to note that chapter 9, the *Pudgalapraṭiṣedhaprakaraṇa*, is not in the manuscript. Matsuda (2014: 12) surmises that the 9th chapter was not part of the AKBh when this manuscript was written. Thus, the additional 9th chapter was probably added to the AKBh after Sthiramati’s AKTA. Japanese scholars began studying and translating this manuscript into Japanese in 2007 and their work is still ongoing.⁶⁰ Studying the Sanskrit AKTA provides evidence to correct the Tibetan translation; for instance, the Tibetan version has “*mdo sde pa*” as Sautrāntikas, yet the Sanskrit manuscript has “*sūtrakāra*,” just like the “master of *sūtras*” in Saṃghabhadra’s *Ny (Minoura 2010: 861–860). Thus, this Sanskrit manuscript provides an opportunity to further investigate both Sthiramati’s works and other Abhidharma texts. Current research on the AKTA focuses on the 4th chapter,

is offered by me: “However, comparing the Uyghur version with [the Tibetan version], their content is basically the same, and they undoubtedly express the content of Sthiramati’s original Sanskrit text.”

⁵⁹ Zhang (2011: 291–293) writes that the second manuscript is preserved in the Gansu Province Museum. It is in book-roll form and corresponds with the first volume of Or. 8212 - 75 A/B. The third version is No. B52 (B): 17 in the Dunhuang Academy China and studied by Shōgaito (2000: 65–152). The fourth version is No. B128:13 in the Dunhuang Academy China (Shōgaito 2004: 261–270). The fifth version is No. B157:15 in the Dunhuang Academy China. The sixth version is probably translated from Chinese (Zhang 2011: 291–306).

⁶⁰ Led by Odani Nobuchiyo, Akimoto Masaru, Fukuda Takumi, Honjō Yoshifumi, Matsuda Kazunobu and Minoura Akio, who together translated the first chapter, namely the “Exposition of the Elements” (*Dhātunirdeśa*) into Japanese (2007: 21–28; 2012: 1–32; 2016: 115–143; 2017: 99–120).

led by Kazuo Kano and Jowita Kramer (2020; 2021a; 2021b; 2022). They analyse the concepts of *karman* and restraint (*saṃvara*) in the AKTA and provide the English and Japanese translations.

There is an incomplete translation into Chinese preserved in the Taishō Tripiṭaka.⁶¹ This Chinese translation does not mention the translator and contains only part of the first and second chapters. There are also manuscripts of the Chinese version discovered in Dunhuang, yet none of them are as long as the Sanskrit or Uighur manuscripts. Since I do not have access to the Sanskrit manuscript and am unable to read Uyghur texts, I rely on the Tibetan translation and the Japanese translation when citing the AKTA in this thesis.

1.4.2 The Compendium of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*

The *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* (MSA) is believed to have been transmitted by Maitreya and written down by Asaṅga.⁶² The main content of the MSA concerns the practice of Bodhisattva. The Sanskrit manuscript of the MSA was first edited and translated into French by Sylvain Lévi (1907–1911).⁶³ Based on Lévi's work, the text was re-edited by Bagchi (1970).⁶⁴ The Tibetan translation preserves individually the part of the *Kārikā*.⁶⁵ There are three English translations of the MSA, and some with Vasubandhu's commentary or Tibetan teachers' sub-commentaries.⁶⁶

⁶¹ 俱舍論實義疏 *Jù Shè Lùn Shí Yì Shù*, T1561, no. 29.

⁶² Hakamaya (1993: 17–18) summarizes four different perspectives: 1. S. Lévi: Asaṅga wrote both verses and prose sentences. 2. Hakuju Ui: Maitreya wrote the verses and Vasubandhu wrote the prose sentences. 3. A. Wayman: The verses were not written by Asaṅga. The prose sentences perhaps were written by Asaṅga or Vasubandhu. 4. Susumu Yamaguchi: Asaṅga wrote the verses and Vasubandhu wrote the prose sentences. D'Amato (2003: 115, note 3) referred to the colophon of the Derge edition of the MSA and found that the verses were composed by Maitreya. Although D'Amato annotated that the Chinese translation referred to Maitreya, the authorship of the MSA (T1604, no. 31) is ascribed to Asaṅga.

⁶³ Lévi, Sylvain ed. and trans, 1907–1911, *Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra*, 2 vols, Paris: Librairie Honoré Cahpion.

⁶⁴ Bagchi, Sitansusekhar ed., 1970, *Mahāyāna-sūtrālaṅkāra of Asaṅga*, India : Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning.

⁶⁵ Tibetan translation by T. Śākyasimha, Dpal brtsegs: *Theg pa chen po mdo sde'i rgyan zhes bya ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa*, Peking 5521; Derge 4020.

⁶⁶ Jamspal, L., R. Clark, J. Wilson, L. Zwillig, M. Sweet, and R. Thurman (2004); Dharmachakra Translation Committee (2014); Gethin (2018).

1.4.2.1 Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāṣya*

Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārahāṣya* (MSABh) quoted the MSA, and its manuscript was also edited by Lévi (1907–1911). The Tibetan translation preserves the MSA and the MSABh together.⁶⁷

The Chinese translation ascribes the authorship to Asaṅga, yet the content should be Vasubandhu's MSABh.⁶⁸ Nagao (2007) used Lévi's Sanskrit edition and translated the verses and the MSABh into Japanese. He also partly quoted Asvabhāva's **Mahāyānasūtrālamkāraṭīkā* and Sthiramati's **SAV*, as a reference to explain the meaning in the MSA. To explicitly understand the MSA, I use Nagao's edition in this thesis.

1.4.2.2 Sthiramati's **Sūtrālamkāravṛttihāṣya*

The Sanskrit version of Sthiramati's **SAV* has been lost. The Tibetan translation⁶⁹ preserves the whole SAV and has been partly edited and published by Hayashima.⁷⁰

Following the structure of the MSA, Sthiramati explained what Bodhisattvas train in, how they train, and those who do the training (Dharmachakra Translation Committee 2014: 8). The SAV aims to introduce the *gotra* of Bodhisattva (*bodhisattva-gotra*), the Bodhisattva's mind of enlightenment (*bodhicitta*), and the Bodhisattva's practice (*bodhisattvacaryā*). As there are no modern language translations available, I use the Hayashima edition for chapter 11 of the SAV, and the other chapters are based on the Derge edition, with the Peking edition as a supplement.

1.4.3 The Compendium of the *Madhyāntavibhāga*

The *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MAV) represents the comprehensive early philosophical stage of Yogācāra thought. The Sanskrit manuscript was edited by Pandeya (1971).⁷¹ Like the MSA, the authorship of verses of the *Madhyāntavibhāga* is ascribed to Maitreya in the Tibetan

⁶⁷ Tibetan translation by Śākyasimha, Dpal brtsegs: *Mdo sde'i rgyan gyi bshad pa*, Derge 4026; Peking 5527.

⁶⁸ Chinese translation by Prabhākaramitra: 大乘莊嚴經論, T1064, no. 31.

⁶⁹ Tibetan translation by Muncandra, Lce bkra sis: *Mdo sde rgyan gyi 'grel bshad*, Derge 4034; Peking 5531.

⁷⁰ Hayashima (1977: 19–61; 1978: 73–119; 1979: 37–70; 1982: 55–98; 1983 a: 11–23. 1983 b: 11–23).

⁷¹ Pandeya, Ramchandra, 1971, *Madhyantavibhagashastram*. Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass.

translation⁷² and Asaṅga in the Chinese translation.⁷³ Stcherbatsky (1936) translated the Sanskrit version into English, and he denoted the authorship of verses to Maitreya, the *bhāṣya* to Vasubandhu, and the *ṭīkā* to Sthiramati.⁷⁴

1.4.3.1 Vasubandhu's *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya*

The Sanskrit manuscript of Vasubandhu's *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* (MAVBh) was edited by Nagao in 1964. The Tibetan⁷⁵ and Chinese⁷⁶ translations are juxtaposed by Yamaguchi (1966). The MAVBh, as the work of the early Yogācāra school, focuses on five main topics: characteristic, hindrance, truth, antidote, and superior vehicle. This classification is accepted in other Yogācāra works (Yamaguchi 1966: 36).

1.4.3.2 Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*

The Sanskrit manuscript of Sthiramati's *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (MAVṬ) was found in Nepal by Sylvain Lévi in 1928. Bhattacharya and Tucci edited the MAVṬ in 1932.⁷⁷ Then, Yamaguchi edited it again in 1934, which was reprinted in 1966. There is a Tibetan translation⁷⁸ but no Chinese translation of the MAVṬ.

In the MAVṬ, there are seven forms of active consciousnesses arising from *bījas*, which are stored in the *ālayavijñāna*. When the consciousnesses arise, they leave *vāsanās* in the *ālayavijñāna* as new *bījas* (Friedmann 1937: x–xi; Stanley 1988). In this thesis, I use Nagao's edition as the basis of the MAVBh and Yamaguchi's edition of the MAVṬ.

⁷² Tibetan translation by Jinamitra, Śīlendrābodhi, Ye shes sde, *Dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*, Derge 4021.

⁷³ Chinese translation by Xuánzàng, 辯中邊論頌, T1601, no. 31.

⁷⁴ Stcherbatsky, Theodore trans., 1936, *Madhyāntavibhāga Discourse on Discrimination Between Middle And Extremes: ascribed to Bodhisattva Maitreya and commented by Vasubandhu and Sthiramati*, Moscow: Academy of Sciences of USSR Press.

⁷⁵ Tibetan translation by Jinamitra, Śīlendrābodhi, Ye-shes-sde, *Dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel pa*, Derge 4027; Peking 5528.

⁷⁶ Chinese translation: Paramārtha, 中邊分別論, T1599, no. 31.

⁷⁷ V. Bhattacharya and G. Tucci ed., 1932, *Madhyāntavibhāgasūtrabhāṣyaṭīkā*, London: Luzac & Co..

⁷⁸ Tibetan translation by Jinamitra, Śīlendrābodhi, Ye-shes-sde, *Dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i 'grel bshad*, Derge 4032; Peking 5534.

1.4.4 The Compendium of the *Pañcaskandhaka*

By reconciling new teachings such as *ālayavijñāna* and the definitions of the five aggregates, Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhaka* (PS) represents an integration from the early Abhidharma system to the Yogācāra school (Kramer 2013a: x–xiii). As its sub-commentary, Sthiramati's PSkV sheds light on the concept of consciousness and explains the concept of *vāsanās*.

1.4.4.1 Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhaka*

The Sanskrit manuscript of the PSk, edited and published by Li and Steinkellner (2008), is kept in the library of the China Tibetology Research Center (CTRC, Box 120, No.2). This manuscript is dated to the early 12th century. There is a Tibetan translation⁷⁹ and a Chinese translation⁸⁰ of the PSK. As an important work for systematically understanding basic categories in the Yogācāra school, this thesis takes PSk as the fundamental explanation of the relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and *bījas*.

1.4.4.2 Sthiramati's *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*

The Sanskrit manuscript of the PSkV is also kept in the CTRC (Box 120, No 3). It has been edited and published by Kramer in 2013. The Chinese translation⁸¹ of the PSkV is much more concise than the Tibetan translation.⁸² Based on the Tibetan translation, Engle (2009) translated the PSkV into English. In this thesis, I use Li and Steinkellner's Sanskrit edition as the fundamental text of the PS and Kramer's edition of the PSkV. For the English translation, my translation takes Engle's work as the reference even though it is translated from Tibetan.

⁷⁹ Tibetan translation by T. Jinamitra, Śilendrabodhi, Dānaśīla, Ye-shes-sde, *Phung po lnga'i rab tu byed pa*, Derge 4059; Peking 5560.

⁸⁰ Chinese translation by Xuánzàng: 大乘五蘊論, T1613, no. 31.

⁸¹ Chinese translation by Divākar, 大乘廣五蘊論, T1612, no. 31.

⁸² Tibetan translation by T. Jinamitra, Śilendrabodhi, Dānaśīla, Ye-shes-sde: *Phung po lnga'i rab tu byed pa bye brag tu bshad pa*, Derge 4066; Peking 5567.

1.4.5 The Compendium of the *Triṃśikā*

The *Triṃśikā* (Tr) is regarded as Vasubandhu's masterpiece of the Yogācāra philosophy. It is composed of 30 verses, explaining the phenomena in the universe, the characteristics of all phenomena, and the states of practice.

Sthiramati's *Triṃśikābhāṣya* (TrBh) applies the concept of *vāsanās* more than the concept of *bījas*, which continues from his PSkV, strengthening the doctrinal coherence between the TrBh and PSkV.

1.4.5.1 Vasubandhu's *Triṃśikā*

The Sanskrit manuscript of the Tr was discovered and edited by Sylvain Lévi in 1925. It has been translated twice into Chinese⁸³ and once into Tibetan.⁸⁴ According to Li and Steinkellner (2008, viii), the PSK is clearly related to the Tr, and those terms can also be found in the AKBh. The Tr is, thus, more or less a response to the Abhidharmic works that preceded the Yogācāra school.

1.4.5.2 Sthiramati's *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya*

During his visit to Nepal, Lévi (together with Rāj-Guru Hemrāj Śarman) discovered the TrBh in an 8th-century Sanskrit manuscript written on palm leaves. Lévi later edited and published it with the *Viṃśatikā* in 1925.⁸⁵ Based on Lévi's result and the Tibetan translation,⁸⁶ Hartmut Buescher (2007) published a critical edition of the TrBh in both Sanskrit and Tibetan.

The TrBh was translated into Japanese by Teramoto (1933). He used Lévi's Sanskrit edition, with the Peking edition of the Tibetan translation and Vinītadeva's *Triṃśikaṭīkā* as supplements. Ui (1952) then juxtaposed Sthiramati's TrBh and Dharmapāla's commentary (based on Xuánzàng's *Cheng Wei Shi Lun*, T 1585) and translated them into Japanese. Huo

⁸³ Chinese translation by Paramārtha, 轉識論, T1587, no. 31; Xuánzàng, 唯識三十論頌, T1586, no. 31.

⁸⁴ Tibetan translation by Jinamitra, Śīlendrābodhi, Ye-shes-sde, *Sum cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa*, Derge 4055; Peking 5556.

⁸⁵ Buescher (2007: 1–34) describes the discovery in detail in his work.

⁸⁶ Tibetan translation by Jinamitra, Śīlendrābodhi, Ye-shes-sde: *Sum cu pa'i bshad pa*, Derge 4064; Peking 5565.

(1980) translated the TrBh into modern Chinese with interpretation.

Since the TrBh is “the only commentary on the Tr that has survived in its entirety in Sanskrit” (Buescher 2007: 2), the comparison between the Tr and the TrBh allows us to understand the development of Yogācāra school from Vasubandhu to Sthiramati. In this thesis, I utilise Buescher's appendix for quoting the Sanskrit version of the Tr (Buescher 2007: 147–149) and his critical edition for the TrBh.

1.5 Thesis Structure

For examining the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, this thesis is divided into four main chapters. The structure is as follows:

Chapter 2 deals with the preliminary concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in Vasubandhu's AKBh. On the one hand, to reject the Sarvāstivādin's concept of *prāpti*, the AKBh presents the concept of *bījas*. By declaring that the term *bīja* is merely name and matter (*nāmarūpa*), the AKBh refutes the existence of a real existing entity (*dravyadharmā*) in one's mental continuum (*saṃtati*). Moreover, to maintain the mental continuum, the AKBh deems that the concept of *bījas* and the cause of homogeneity (*sabhāgahetu*) serve as homogeneous causation, while the “specific transformation in a series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaśeṣa*) and the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*) represent the heterogeneous causation. On the other hand, the concept of *vāsanās* is utilized as a subtle power that allows the consciousness to arise from the first moment after the cultivation of two meditations—namely, the meditation of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) and the meditation of non-thinking (*asaṃjñāsamāpatti*). But Saṃghabhadra argues the necessity of the concept of *prāpti* in his *Ny. Without *prāpti*, it is impossible to distinguish an ordinary person (*prthagjana*) and a noble one (*ārya*). Furthermore, the *Ny summarily states that the terms *bīja*, *vāsanā* and **anudhātu* are synonyms. Based on the Sarvāstivādin's perspective, the *Ny states that a real entity exists in the three periods of time, whereas the AKBh refutes any real entities. In his AKTA, Sthiramati further clarifies that the concept of *bījas* makes it possible to distinguish the difference between an ordinary person and a noble one. The AKTA emphasises the “*bīja* of memory” (*smṛtibīja*) which is a “specific potency” (*nus pa; śakti/ sāmarthyā*) that allows the consciousness to arise again from the cultivation of two meditations. The preliminary concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh focus on the replacement of the

concept of *prāpti* and then lead to the Yogācāra's explanation of the process of conceptualisation.

Chapter 3 elucidates the process of conceptualisation along with the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. In the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (VinSg) of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBh), *bījas* and the *ālayavijñāna* are inseparable, and serve as the cause to give rise to actual consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*). These actual consciousnesses arise when one cognises objects. In the MAV, the conceptualisation is termed “unreal imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpita*), which encompasses twofold: the defiled grasper (*grāhaka*) and the grasped (*grāhya*), as well as the pure emptiness (*śūnyatā*). Whereas, the Tr suggests a “transformation of consciousness” (*vijñānapariṇāma*) occurs in the *ālayavijñāna*, where *bījas* manifest actual consciousness and re-perfume themselves. Unlike the Tr, the TrBh utilizes the term *vāsanā* more than *bīja*. The *vāsanā* of conceptualising (*vikalpavāsanā*), including the *vāsanā* of conceptualising self, etc. (*ātmādivikalpavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of conceptualising matter etc. (*rūpādivikalpavāsanā*), nourishes the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*. The nourishment can be divided into two types: the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of maturation. The former maintains the same mental continuum, while the latter represents the *ālayavijñāna* as a fruition. Once the previous karmic actions are completed, an individual will be projected to the next life by regenerating a new *ālayavijñāna* in accordance with *karman*. The PSkV delineates the two *vāsanās* in the framework of the *ālayavijñāna*. The *ālayavijñāna* is a container of *bījas*, perfumed by two *vāsanās* as a cause, and is also reborn to the next life as a fruition. For the process of rebirth, the Tr presents the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping (*grāhadvayavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*). Following the Tr, the TrBh signifies that the *vāsanā* of *karman* encompasses a broader scope than the *vāsanā* of maturation and pertains to the future rebirth.

Chapter 4 investigates the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* as the necessities for attaining final liberation. In the YoBh, the term *bīja* is aligned with the term *gotra*, which is naturally born within an individual as a cause of attaining liberation. For generating the pure dharmas, the *Śrāvaka* *bhūmi* (ŚBh) presents the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*” (*lokottaradharmabīja*), while the *Pañcavijñānakāyasamprayuktā Bhūmi* (a later layer of the YoBh) and the *Manobhūmi* in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* propose a specific cause: the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālambanapratyayabīja*, 真如所緣緣種

子). In this regard, the *bīja* as well as the lineage (*gotra*) ensure the possibility of attaining liberation. However, before attaining liberation, a practitioner must remove the two fundamental defilements—and there occurs the transformation of the basis. The two fundamental defilements are two hindrances (*klesajñeyāvaraṇa*) or two rough difficulties (*dvidhādaṣṭhulya*). They are regarded as mental and physical defilements in the *SAVBh, but as subtle defilements in the Tr. The transformation of the basis (*āśrayaparāvṛtti/ āśrayaparivṛtti*) causes the *ālayavijñāna* to be entirely changed. After that, the defilements are completely removed, and the practitioner attains liberation. The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are systematically categorised as the function of the *ālayavijñāna* in the MSg. The six functions as *bījas* and four aspects as being perfumed represent the reasons why the *ālayavijñāna* is able to manifest all kinds of actual consciousness. The MSg also provides the cause for attaining liberation, the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (*śrutavāsanā*). This *vāsanā* is directly generated from the supramundane realm, transferring pure dharmas from the Buddha to ordinary people and being preserved as the *bīja* of pure dharma. Therefore, the Yogācāra soteriology solves the problem of pure dharma arising from the defiled *ālayavijñāna*.

Chapter 5 summarises the research findings and provides suggestions for further studies based on these results. The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* delineate the process of conceptualisation, the process of rebirth, and the process of attaining liberation in the Yogācāra school. According to those works ascribed to Sthiramati, the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* are not always synonymous. They are synonymous depending on specific situations—for instance, the two rough difficulties (*dvidhādaṣṭhulya*) and the two hindrances (*klesajñeyāvaraṇa*) can be regarded as *bījas* or *vāsanās*. The function of *bīja* and *vāsanā* also differs in the compendium of the MSg. Therefore, the concept of *bījas* or *vāsanās* is worthy of further investigation.

Chapter 2 The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in the

Abhidharmakośabhāṣya

This chapter aims to explore the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh) of Vasubandhu,⁸⁷ focusing on the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, and their associated themes. By examining these concepts in detail, we can establish an understanding of *bījas* and *vāsanās* which will serve as the groundwork for subsequent chapters.

The AKBh covers a diverse range of themes from Abhidharma Buddhism.⁸⁸ This chapter will focus on four specific arguments that are relevant to the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. These arguments are:

1. The refutation of the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti*;
2. The common function shared by *bījas* and *vāsanās*;
3. The comparison between the concept of *bījas* and *anūśaya*;
4. The consciousness arises again in the two meditative absorptions, i.e., the meditative absorption of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*), and the meditative absorption of non-thought (*asamjñāsamāpatti*).

Underpinning these four arguments is the question of how to maintain a mental continuum without acknowledging a real entity (*dravyadharmā*) within the past, present, and future. The doctrine of the existence of three periods of time (*traiyadhvika*) is the core of the

⁸⁷ To avoid distracting the focus on the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, “the AKBh” and not the name Vasubandhu will be used in this thesis to represent the position.

⁸⁸ The historical background of the composition of the AKBh is introduced in section 1.4.1. The AKBh critiques the Sarvāstivāda’s doctrines and adapts them to the Sautrāntika’s perspective (Willemen, Dessein, Cox 1998: 270). In the AKBh, Vasubandhu aims to refute the existence of a real entity (*dravya*) (Maas 2020: 970). According to Yamabe (2003: 243), Vasubandhu in the AKBh is influenced by the meditation tradition of the Dārṣṭāntikas or the Sautāntikas. Dhammajoti (2006: 195) points out that “the early Dārṣṭāntikas and the Yogācāras all belonged to the same Sarvāstivāda tradition originally.” The perspectives of the Sautāntikas and the Yogācāras are almost inseparably interconnected before the composing of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (Sangpo 2012: 182). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the utilization of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh before we further discuss them in the Yogācāra texts.

Sarvāstivādas,⁸⁹ who combine it with the doctrine of momentariness (*anityatā*) to prove all conditioned *dharmas* exist as real entities (Maas 2020: 968). To contest the position of the Sarvāstivādas, the concept of *bījas* is introduced in the AKBh.

To investigate these four arguments, we can compare the position of the AKBh along with other Buddhist scholars, such as Saṃghabhadra,⁹⁰ Śrīlāta,⁹¹ as well as Sthiramati in the following paragraphs. By doing so, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the early utilisation of *bījas* and *vāsanās* and how they were perceived by different Buddhist scholars during that time, which serves as a foundation of the Yogācāra’s concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*.

2.1 The Preliminary Concept of *Bīja* Before the AKBh

Before delving into the four arguments, it is necessary to introduce the Sanskrit term “*bīja*” in the context of Abhidharmic texts. In early Buddhist texts, such as the *Samyuktāgama*⁹² (the *Bījasutta* of the Pāli Canon), *bīja* simply refers to a seed of a plant. There are five different seeds: root seeds (*mūlabīja*), stem seeds (*khandhabīja*), joint seeds (*aggabīja*), cutting seeds (*phalubīja*) and germ seeds (*bījabīja*). Their names refer to the places where new buds grow—for example, root seeds will bud from the root, stem seeds will bud from the stem, etc. It stands to reason, therefore, that the understanding of *bīja* within the *Samyuktāgama* is to generate the

⁸⁹ There are four Sarvāstivāda masters who have established the doctrine of the existence of three periods of time. According to Dassein (2007), they are 1. Dharmatrāta, who suggests that there is a difference in mode (*bhāvānyathātva*); 2. Ghoṣaka, who asserts that there is a difference in mark (*lakṣaṇānyathātva*); 3. Vasumitra, who assumes that there is a difference in state (*avasthānyathātva*); and 4. Buddhadeva, who presents that there is mutual difference (*anyonyathātva*). Mass (2020) compares the views the four Sarvāstivāda masters with the Sāṃkhya-Yogācāra’s concept of transformation (*pariṇāma*), and finds that Patañjali, who Maas categorizes as a Sāṃkhya-Yogācāra scholar, incorporates the views of Ghoṣaka and Vasumitra into his concept of transformation (*pariṇāma*).

⁹⁰ Saṃghabhadra (late 4th or early 5th century) was a contemporary of Vasubandhu (Willems, Dessein, Cox 1998: 254–255). He is regarded as a master of Kāśmīra Sarvāstivāda-Vaibhāṣika orthodoxy.

⁹¹ Śrīlāta; Chin. 室利邏他 *Shililuótā*. As the Sautrāntika master in the **Nyāyānusara* by Saṃghabhadra, Śrīlāta’s perspectives have been strongly criticized for maintaining the orthodox Sarvāstivāda position. Śrīlāta’s thoughts have been studied thoroughly by Park (2014). For a discussion between Śrīlāta’s concept of *anudhātu* and the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh see section 2.2.4.

⁹² *Samyutta Nikāya* 22.54., *Upavagga* 6. *Bījasutta: Pañcimāni, bhikkhave, bījajātāni. Katamāni pañca? Mūlabījaṃ, khandhabījaṃ, aggabījaṃ, phalubījaṃ, bījabījaññeva pañcamāṃ.* The same passage is quoted by Yasomitra, who wrote the sub-commentary of the AKBh named *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā: pañca bījajātāni mūlabījādāni. mūlabījaṃ phalubījaṃ bījabījaṃ agrabījaṃ skandhabījaṃ* (Wogihara 1971: III 98–99).

same characteristic from the previous moment to the next moment.

The concept of *bīja* was adopted by an Abhidharma school, the so-called Sautrāntika.⁹³ The complete teaching of the Sautrāntikas remains unclear. However, part of their teaching is preserved in the **Samayabhedoparacanacakra* (*SBhUC), a text composed as a means of recording the various branches of the schools during the four hundred years following the Buddha's passing.⁹⁴ It is important to know that the *SBhUC was composed later than the AKBh; thus, it should not be considered the standard of Sautrāntika teaching. However, the *SBhUC described the concept of *bīja* as the doctrine of the Sautrāntikas, which may represent an understanding after the AKBh.

According to the *SBhUC, the Sautrāntikas shared these common teachings:

1. Because they taught that the aggregates transmigrate from a previous existence to the next existence, they (i.e., the Sautrāntikas) were also called “those who teach transmigration” (說轉).
2. Without following the noble path, definitive cessation of the aggregates cannot be obtained.
3. There are aggregates that have arisen from the root (根邊). There are “aggregates of one-taste” (一味).⁹⁵
4. In the state of ordinary nature (異生) there are also noble *dharmas*.

⁹³ For a detailed introduction of the Sautrāntika, see section 1.2. According to Kritzer (2005: xxvii): “Vasubandhu also agrees with the Sautrāntika rejection of the reality of past and future, the insistence that one cannot fall out of arhatship, and the theory of seeds (*bīja*) that appears in many Sautrāntika explanations.” Although the debate over whether the Sautrāntika existed as a school or merely as a group remains unresolved, the term Sautrāntika in this work refers to the “so-called Sautrāntika” in order to avoid any historical dispute.

⁹⁴ The Sanskrit version of the **Samayabhedoparacanacakra* (*SBhUC) is unavailable (lost), and the text is only preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translations. It was translated three times into Chinese, namely the 十八部論 (T2032, no. 49) by Kumārajīva, 部執異論 (T2033, no. 49) by Paramārtha, and 異部宗輪論 (T2031, no. 49) by Xuánzàng. The *SBhUC is translated into French by Bareau (1954, 1956), also into English by Masuda (1925) and Tsukamoto (2004). The Tibetan version was translated by Dharmakara, and its title is *gzhung lugs kyi bye brag bkod pa'i 'khor lo* (Derge 4138), which suggests the Sanskrit title was **Samayabhedoparacanacakra*. The *SBhUC is ascribed to Vasumitra, who was translated in Chinese as 天友 by Paramārtha and 世友 by Xuánzàng.

⁹⁵ According to Bareau (1955: 156), 根邊 should refer to *mūlānta*, and 一味 is the translation from *ekarasa*.

5. The person (*pudgala*) as absolute reality exists (勝義補特伽羅).⁹⁶

The so-called “Sautrāntika” school is a branch of the Sarvāstivāda school and, while they share some doctrines, the former has teachings that distinguish it from the latter. One such crucial teaching is that the Sautrāntikas attest there is an aggregate transmigrating from the previous life to the next life. As the fundamental Buddhist doctrine is “non-self” (*anātman*), which refutes the existence of any unchangeable and permanent substance, the problems are, as Waldron (2003: 56) concludes, “the diachronic dimension of samsaric continuity and its ultimate cessation.” To account for the rebirth of sentient beings in the next life with their previous *karman*, or a practitioner possessing previous merits of cultivation, the Sautrāntikas posit the existence of an “aggregate of one-taste” (一味蘊) that transmigrates from past to present. This is also why they are known as the “scholars who speak of transmigration” (說轉).

Xuánzàng’s disciple, Kuījī,⁹⁷ wrote a sub-commentary (*Shùjì*) to address this aggregate issue thus:⁹⁸

Masters [of this school] regard the *sūtras* as correct evidence (正量), not the Vinayas and the Abhidharmas. Whatever [they] cited is proved by [*sūtras*]. They are the *sūtra* Masters (經部師). From what [they] have established, [they call themselves] the “Sautrāntikas” (經量部), or the “*Saṃkrāntivādins” (說轉部). These masters attest to the existence of *bījas* (種子), which means [that] a *bīja* continues [to exist] in the present [and then] transmigrates (轉) to the next life; hence, they are called the “scholars who

⁹⁶ *SBhUC, T2031, no. 49, pp. 17b2–6: “其經量部, 本宗同義, 謂: 說諸蘊有, 從前世轉至後世, 立說轉名. 非離聖道, 有蘊永滅. 有根邊蘊, 有一味蘊. 異生位中, 亦有聖法, 執有勝義補特伽羅. 餘所執多同說一切有部.” For the English translation cf. Masuda (1925: 66–69) and Tsukamoto (2004: 133). Some terminologies are translated by me.

⁹⁷ Kuījī (632–682 CE); Chin. 窺基. As the most famous disciple of Xuánzàng, Kuījī composed many sub-commentaries according to Xuánzàng’s translations. By these sub-commentaries, Kuījī established the fundamental understanding of Chinese Yogācāra system, which became the Faxiang school (Chin. 法相宗 *Fǎxiàng Zōng*) in the Song dynasty.

⁹⁸ 異部宗輪論疏述記 *Yìbù Zōnglún Lùn Shùjì* (X844, no. 53) is the Sub-commentary of the *SBhUC, read as *Shùjì* in the following passage.

speak of transmigration”.⁹⁹

From what we read in Kuījī’s *Shùjì*, he deems this aggregate is nothing but *bījas*. Regarding this, Kuījī explains the two dimensions of this aggregate:

The “aggregate of one-taste” (一味蘊) mutually transmigrates (展轉) in the form of one-taste in beginningless time; it is the subtle consciousness (**sūkṣmavijñāna*, 細意識) that is uninterrupted and has four aggregates. [It] contains “the aggregate [arising from] the edge of root” (根邊蘊), of which the “root” (根) is the mentioned subtle consciousness that dwells in death and birth as the basis, and therefore it is called the “root”. From this “root” arise the five aggregates. [They] are equivalent to the five aggregates claimed by other schools. However, “the aggregate of one-taste” is the [central] basis [of sentient beings], not the edges. The other interrupted *dharmas* of the five aggregates arise from the edges, so this aggregate is called “the aggregate [arising from] the edge of root.”¹⁰⁰

Masuda (1925: 68) expands on Kuījī’s explanation, adding that subtle consciousness (**sūkṣmavijñāna*, 細意識) is equivalent to the “aggregate of one-taste” and is a precursor of *ālayavijñāna*. Regarding this, the “aggregate [arising from] the edge of root” refers to the group of actual consciousnesses, which are the consciousness of seeing and so on, arising from the *ālayavijñāna* when they meet the faculty and the object.

According to Bareau (1955: 34), the **SBhUC* considers that the Sautrāntika originates from the Sarvāstivāda, and they share common doctrines. However, the subtle consciousness belongs to the teaching of the Mahāsāṃghikas.¹⁰¹ Yinshun (1944: 159–160) disagreed with Kuījī’s explanation and quoted a paragraph from the Chinese-translated Abhidharmic text of the

⁹⁹ *Shùjì*, X844, no. 53, pp. 577b15–20: “述曰：此師唯依經為正量，不依律及對法。凡所援據，以經為證，即經部師。從所立以名經量部，亦名說轉部者。此師說有種子，唯一種子現在相續，轉至後世，故言說轉。”

¹⁰⁰ *Shùjì*, X844, no. 53, p. 589c20–590a1: “一味者，即無始來展轉和合一味而轉，即細意識，曾不間斷，此具四蘊。有根邊蘊者，根謂向前細意識，住生死根本，故說為根。由此根故，有五蘊起，即同諸宗所說五蘊。然一味蘊是根本故，不說言邊，其餘間斷五蘊之法，是末起故，名根邊蘊。”

¹⁰¹ The concept of subtle consciousness (**sūkṣmavijñāna*, 細意識) originates from the Mahāsāṃghika. Based on disputations of Vinaya, the Mahāsāṃghikas and the Sthaviravādas split and became two early Buddhist schools (Westerhoff 2018: 45–49).

Sarvāstivādins, namely the *MVŚ:

There are two aggregates: the aggregate of basis (根本蘊) and the aggregate of efficacy (作用蘊). The former is permanent, and the latter is impermanent. Some scholars say that although the aggregate of basis and the aggregate of efficacy are different, they combine to make a sentient being. Therefore, [this sentient being] is able to remember what has been done because the aggregate of basis is able to remember what has been done by the aggregate of efficacy.¹⁰²

Yinshun argues that the aggregate of basis is actually the aggregate of one-taste, and so likens it to the doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda—namely, a constant essence which persists through the three times (*sarvāstitva*),¹⁰³ just as Jaini (1959: 236) defined the aggregate of one-taste as one which “continues to exist from time immemorial without changing their nature.” Then, the aggregate of efficacy is equivalent to the aggregate of [arising from] the edge of root. Although Yinshun (1968: 160) disapproves of Kuījī’s explanation, which regarded the “aggregate of one-taste” as *bīja*, he still considered these two aggregates in the *MVŚ—the aggregate of basis and the aggregate of efficacy—as the precursors to the concept of *bīja*.¹⁰⁴

The Mahāsāṃghika is the accepted origin for the notion of the subtle consciousness or the aggregate of basis,¹⁰⁵ and it is therefore beneficial to gain an understanding of their common

¹⁰² According to Yinshun (1968: 159–160), the quotation of the *MVŚ is from Xuánzàng’s Chinese translation (T 1545, no. 27, pp. 55b22–26): “何緣能憶本所作事? 或復有執蘊有二種: 一根本蘊; 二作用蘊. 前蘊是常, 後蘊非常. 彼作是說, 根本作用, 二蘊雖別, 而共和合, 成一有情. 如是可能憶本所作. 以作用蘊所作事, 根本蘊能憶故.” The Sanskrit terms are reconstructed by me.

¹⁰³ Further discussion on “everything exists” (*sarvāstitva*) can be found in Dhammajoti (2015: 132–135) and Westerhoff (2018: 60–62).

¹⁰⁴ Yinshun (1968: 160): “說轉部主張有常住的一味的根本微細五蘊……這一味的根本蘊, 確乎是種子思想的前身. 在間斷的五蘊作用背後, 還潛伏著一味恒存的五蘊; 一味的五蘊, 是生起間斷五蘊的根本. 這二蘊, 拿種子思想來說, 就是種子與現行.” The first edition was published in 1944; however, I have only been able to find the re-printed edition in 2003. The English translation is provided by me: “The *Saṃkrāntivādas (說轉部) propose that there is always the one-taste, fundamental and subtle five aggregates... This one-taste ‘aggregate of basis’ (根本蘊) is the very preliminary notion of the concept of *bījas*. Behind the interrupted efficacy of the five aggregates, the five aggregates dwell as always one-taste. The one-taste five aggregates are the basis of generating the interrupted five aggregates. These two aggregates, in accordance with the concept of *bījas*, are the *bīja* and the manifestation.”

¹⁰⁵ The Mahāsāṃghikas present the concept of “the foundational consciousness” (**mūlavijñāna*, 根本識) that

teachings on this topic in the *SBhUC:

The *anuśaya* (隨眠) is neither the mind nor a mental factor, and it has no object. The *anuśaya* differs from envelopment (*pariyavasthāna*, 纏). The manifesting differs from the *anuśaya*. [One] shall understand the *anuśaya* does not correspond to the mind, [while] the manifesting corresponds to the mind.¹⁰⁶

This paragraph illustrates the pair of *anuśaya* and *pariyavasthāna* in the context of Mahāsāṃghika. Coincidentally, the concept of *anuśaya* is discussed as a chapter in the AKBh. As the “non-manifesting” element, the *anuśaya* has many commonalities with *bījas*, which are outlined in section 2.4.

In Kuījī’s sub-commentary, the teachings of the Mahāsāṃghikas are somehow more close to the Sautrāntikas:

*SBhUC: The [noble] Path and afflictions together appear in front of [the practitioner].

Kuījī’s *Shùjì*: Although the [Mahāsāṃghika] school proves the existence of *anuśaya* (隨眠), *anuśaya* does not [arise] in the same moment as the noble path (**āryamārga*; Chin. 聖道). Here, [I] explain that *anuśaya* is permanent and that when the noble path arises, they appear separately in front of [a practitioner], just as afflictions are together with the noble path. Here, [I] say, affliction is *anuśaya*.¹⁰⁷

According to Kuījī’s *Shùjì*, the Mahāsāṃghikas do not allow the *anuśaya* and the noble path to arise at the same moment. If we look back at one of the teachings of the Sautrāntikas, they describe that the aggregates should be annihilated on the noble path. In other words, the noble

persists in the two meditative absorptions (*nirodhasamāpatti* and *asaṃjñāsamāpatti*) and serves as the basis for other consciousnesses, which is regarded as the preliminary notion of the *ālayavijñāna* in the Yogācāra school (Westerhoff 2018: 48).

¹⁰⁶ *SBhUC, T2031, no. 49, p. 15c28–16a4: “隨眠非心，非心所法，亦無所緣。隨眠異纏，纏異隨眠。應說隨眠與心不相應，纏與心相應。” For the English translation cf. Masuda (1925: 30); Tsukamoto (2004: 100).

¹⁰⁷ *Shùjì*, X844, no. 53, pp. 583b4–6: “本計雖許別有隨眠，然道時不言同念。今說隨眠，既許恒有，故聖道起，各俱現前，如煩惱得與道俱故。今言煩惱，即是隨眠。”

path arises only after the afflictions are removed. Thus, the stance of the Mahāsāṃghikas is closer to the Sautrāntikas, rather than to the Yogācāra as Kuījī claimed.

The situation of coexisting is further involved in the topic of *karman* and its fruit, as below:

The *SBhUC: The *karman* and fruit arise simultaneously.

Kuījī’s *Shùjì*: Since there is no past time, *karman* and fruition [arise] at different times. When *karman* is not exhausted, it exists permanently in the present time (恒有現在). When the fruition is matured (熟), it exists together with *karman*. If the fruition has been exhausted, *karman* and fruition may not be at the same time. Unlike other schools, they prove that [*karman* and fruition] exist at different times.¹⁰⁸

The Mahāsāṃghikas refute Sarvāsivādas’ doctrine of the existence of the three periods of time; therefore, they deem that *karman* and its fruition arise at different times, which is known as the position of successive causality. However, Kuījī points out that the Mahāsāṃghikas accept unexhausted *karman* coexisting with its fruition at the moment. In other words, *karman* exists in the present, coexists with its fruition, and perishes before its fruition. This is a teaching unique to the Mahāsāṃghikas.¹⁰⁹

Moreover, the discussion of coexisting refers to *bīja* and its sprout, as below:

The *SBhUC: A seed is a sprout.

Kuījī’s *Shùjì*: What is acceptable is that when the matter grows, there is arising and perishing, and so the existence of *bīja* (種子體) becomes a sprout (芽). What is not accepted is that when the *bīja* perishes, the sprout arises. Other schools assume when the *bīja* perishes, the sprout grows. This is not what [I] am talking about here.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ *Shùjì*, X844, no. 53, pp. 583b7–10: “既無過去, 業果異時. 業未盡時, 恒有現在. 果既現熟, 故與業俱. 受果若盡, 未必同世, 不同餘宗, 定不同世.”

¹⁰⁹ The notion of *karman* co-existing with its fruition is connected with the second of the six functions as *bījas* in the *Mahāyānasamgraha*. The second function is “arising simultaneously” (俱有, *lhan cig 'byung ba*), which allows a *bīja* to co-exist with its fruition. For a detailed discussion, see section 4.4.3.2.

¹¹⁰ *Shùjì*, X844, no. 53, pp. 583b11–14: “許色長時, 方有生滅, 故種子體即轉為芽. 非種滅時, 方有芽起. 餘宗種滅其芽乃生故, 此不同今敘之也.”

The Mahāsāṃghikas equate *bīja* with its sprout. However, Kuījī further explains that a *bīja* becomes its sprout so that *bīja* is the cause of its sprout, thereby implying that the cause and its effect are inseparable. If one says the effect arises after its cause perishes, the effect is a lack of cause. Through these three teachings, we can draw attention to the debate of successive causality and simultaneous causality. The simultaneous causality is, according to Dhammajoti (2018: 143), the faculty of seeing (*caḅsurindriya*), the object of seeing (*caḅsurviṣaya*) and the consciousness of seeing (*caḅsurvijñāna*) arising simultaneously to generate a visual conceptualisation.¹¹¹ The successive causality is, as Yamabe (2017: 22) denotes, a *bīja* manifesting as an actual consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*). This controversy concerning two different causalities provides preliminary discussions of the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh.

Both Sautrāntikas and Mahāsāṃghikas attempt to solve the problem (namely, the continuity of the mind) by assuming a subtle consciousness. Hence, the Sautrāntikas propose the “aggregate of one-taste”, and the Mahāsāṃghikas attest to the foundational consciousness. However, the Sarvāstivādins disapprove of the existence of subtle consciousness and insist there are only six consciousnesses in one’s mental continuum (*saṃtāna*). In the AKBh, the concept of *bīja* is the solution to assure the continuity of mind. It also relates to the concept of *anuśaya* and the ripening (*vipāka*) of *karman*.

We have introduced the related discussion of *bīja* in the *SBhUC, yet it may have been noticed that the *SBhUC does not mention the term *vāsanā* in any schools. As the *SBhUC was composed later than the AKBh, it is quite unusual that the concept of *vāsanās* was omitted in the *SBhUC. In this regard, I surmise that the concept of *vāsanās* was not a major teaching in the Abhidharma schools yet became integral in the AKBh and the Yogācāra texts.

Yinshun (1944: 134) observed that the notion of *vāsanā* originates from the Mahāsāṃghika, especially from the **Tattvasiddhi* of Harivarman.¹¹² Remarkably, the famous

¹¹¹ Dhammajoti (2018: 10): “Sarvāstivādins rely on visible examples: two bundles of straws mutually supporting each other; many people crossing a river by joining hands together.”

¹¹² In her dissertation, Lin (2015) conducts an in-depth study of Harivarman and his work, the **Tattvasiddhi*. According to her research, Harivarman (3rd-4th century) is recorded as a great master of the Sarvāstivāda in Xuánzàng’s biography. However, Harivarman criticises most of the teachings of the Sarvāstivādins and then deems them to be far away from the original teachings of the Buddha. Therefore, he is “marginalized by the Sthavira traditions and finds companionship in the Mahāsāṃghikas.” (Lin 2015: 17). Harivarman’s **Tattvasiddhi* represents the debates among the early Buddhist schools and preserves early *sūtras* materials as

example of *vāsanā* has already been used in the **Tattvasiddhi*:

Dharma has various inconceivable [functions]. [When a *dharma*] is left on the object, the different matters, flavours and touching arise, just as the flower perfumes (熏) sesames and then the flavour of spicy and bitter arise.¹¹³

The example of flowers and sesames has been used as the explanation of the term *vāsanā* in the Yogācāra school. Through this quotation, a possible connection between the Mahāsāṃghikas and the Yogācāra on the topic of *vāsanā* is apparent. Mizuno (1959: 463) points out that those groups who use the term *vāsanā* for developing merits and restraint, later connect with the Theravāda in the Pāli tradition.

In the **MVŚ*, the term *vāsanā* is used as a metaphor for the remaining odour:

Again, it is said that through the force (勢力) of wholesome factors, one's body is strongly perfumed (威猛熏習), [so that it] causes the negative path and all *karman* and afflictions never arise in that body. Since they do not arise, [one] does not fall into the negative path. As if the lion king's den, even if the lion king were not in the den, the rest of the odour (餘氣) [of him] would still be there. [Therefore,] all small animals are unable to enter it.¹¹⁴

The *vāsanā* of wholesome factors can stop the afflictions from arising again, which implies the concept of *vāsanās* is not only a tendency but also a dynamic function that can surpass negative *karman*. Gao (2019, 43–45) found the meaning of *vāsanā* in Pāli texts—the *Peṭakopadesa* and the *Mahāvastu* of Mahāsāṃghikas—to be similar, and he understood it as “the habitual influence of the cultivation of wholesome meritorious actions and restraints.”

For the meaning of cultivation, Waldron (2003: 205) emphasised the verb *paribhāvita* (“to be infused”) that is used in the AKBh and Yogācāra texts in connection with the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. Regarding this, the concept of *vāsanās* is as meditative absorption in Abhidharma

well as Abhidharma treatises (Lin 2015: 3). Kumārajīva translates the **Tattvasiddhi* into Chinese (T1646, no. 32), and this version is the only one that has survived to this day.

¹¹³ **Tattvasiddhi*, T1646, no. 32, p. 271b7–8: “法有種種不可思議，餘物得生異色味觸。如華熏麻，生辛苦味。”

¹¹⁴ **MVŚ*, T1545, no. 27, p. 625, c4–8: “由此善根勢力威猛熏習身故，令招惡趣諸業煩惱於此身中，永不復起。因不起故，不墮惡趣。如師子王所居窟穴，王雖不在，餘氣尚存，諸小禽獸無能入者。此亦如是。”

texts, while it is broadly used in the *Yogācārabhūmi* (Gao 2021; 2022). Moreover, even though Vasubandhu was not a Yogācāra scholar when he composed the AKBh, he was a Mahāyānist since the debates between the AKBh and the Sarvāstivādins can be traced back to the *Yogācārabhūmi*.¹¹⁵ Hence, in this chapter, we shall investigate the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh and relevant texts.

2.2 The Debate of the Sarvāstivāda Concept of *Prāpti*

The concept of *bīja* is described in the AKBh as an alternative to the concept of *prāpti* (Katō 1987: 286). As this is a significant criticism, it is imperative to first understand what the concept of *prāpti* is and why it is replaced in the AKBh.

The term *prāpti* belongs to the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*). This group of *dharma* does not exist as matter, nor as mental activities. It is disassociated from thoughts, is the most subtle among the *dharmas*, and is the last to be suppressed before *nirvāṇa* (Stcherbatsky 1923: 24). In early Buddhism, however, the term *prāpti* refers to obtaining the fruition of cultivation and the attainment of *nirvāṇa* (Fukuda 1991).¹¹⁶ Chou (2012: 22–23) found the notion of *prāpti* first appears as one of the sixteen “*dharmas* disassociated with the mind” in the **Dharmaskandha* (T 1537) and *Prakaraṇapāda* (T 1542). Then, in the **Amṛtarasaśāstra* (T 1553), the concept of “ordinary nature” (*prthagjana*) was added.¹¹⁷ While those treatises belong to the Sarvāstivāda, we can say that *prāpti* is an established concept in the Sarvāstivāda.

In the AKBh, however, the “ordinary nature” is replaced with *aprāpti*, so that its own

¹¹⁵ Kritzer (2003a: xix): “In addition, certain Sarvāstivādin positions are refuted in the *Yogācārabhūmi*. Most important is the doctrine of Sarvāstivāda itself, namely, the idea that past, present and future *dharmas* all really exist. The real existence, accepted by Sarvāstivāda, of various other items, such as the *cittaviprayuktasaṃskāras* and *avijñaptirūpa*, is denied in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, which frequently appeals to the operation of *bījas* to explain phenomena that, according to Sarvāstivāda, result from real *dharmas*.” For a discussion of the concept of *prāpti* and the conditioned factors disassociated from the mind (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāras*), see section 2.2.1. For a discussion of the non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*), see section 2.3.1.

¹¹⁶ Cox (1995: 79) points out that, in early Buddhism, the function of *prāpti* is to acquire certain things, such as fruitions or meditative states, and the function of accompaniment (*samanvāgama*) refers to virtuous or unvirtuous factors. The term *prāpti* and *samanvāgama* become distinct in early Abhidharma texts, such as the **Abhidharmāmṛtara*.

¹¹⁷ For the development of the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāras*) in the Abhidharmic texts, see Cox (1995: 70–72).

fourteen “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasamskāra*) are built.¹¹⁸ Stcherbatsky (1923: 24) defined the function of *prāpti* as to control the collection of *dharmas* composing a personal life, and *aprāpti* is to prevent any *dharmas* that disagree with its general characteristic. Park (2014: 408) compared *prāpti* to glue, which keeps “the mental series constantly occupied with a certain mental quality.” Waldron (2003: 72) noted that *prāpti* can persist in the mental stream by continuously replicating itself. From these scholars, we simply understand that *prāpti* connects *dharma* with a sentient being and proceeds from the past to the future.

As the opposite of *prāpti*, *aprāpti* means to disconnect a sentient being from *dharma*. Moreover, Chou (2012: 28) argued that *aprāpti* is a different name for the “ordinary nature” (*prthagjana*) by which the noble path does not arise. It is noteworthy that the substitution of *aprāpti* for “ordinary nature” shows a shift in focus, implying a shift from obtaining the noble path to disconnecting afflictions (Fukuda 1991; Chou 2012).

Following the doctrine of the existence of three periods of time, the Sarvāstivādins confirm that *prāpti* and *aprāpti* are real entities, while in the AKBh they are merely designations (*prajñāpti*). To strengthen this position, the concept of *bīja* is introduced in the AKBh. Fukuda (1997: 12) stated that this is the first time that the Sarvāstivāda’s concept of *prāpti* is juxtaposed with Sautrāntika’s concept of *bīja*. Katō (1986) argued that the function of *bīja* is more flexible and broader than *prāpti*. To compare the concept of *bīja* and the concept of *prāpti*, we then delve into the AKBh.

2.2.1 The Sarvāstivāda Concept of *Prāpti* in the AKBh

Despite the concept of *prāpti* belonging to the orthodox Sarvāstivāda, it is still preserved in the AKBh. First, the definition of *prāpti* was written in a verse:

¹¹⁸ In the AKBh, the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasamskāras*) are: 1. possession (*prāpti*); 2. non-possession (*aprāpti*); 3. homogeneity (*sabhāgatā*); 4. the state of non-ideation (*āsamjñika*); 5. the meditative absorption of non-thought (*asamjñāsamāpatti*); 6. the meditative absorption of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*); 7. vitality faculty (*jīvita*); 8–11. characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) of arising, dwelling, changing, and perishing; 12. collection of names (*nāmakāya*); 13. collection of phrases (*padakāya*); 14. collection of syllables (*vyañjanakāya*). But, in the Yogācāra school, for instance the *Pañcaskandhaka* of Vasubandhu, the “ordinary nature” (*prthagjana*) is included instead of *aprāpti*, and the fourteen “*dharmas* dissociated with the mind” are composed.

[The concepts of] *prāpti* and *aprāpti* apply only (1) to the *dharmas* that fall within one’s self-continuum (*svasaṃtāna*) and (2) to the two cessations (*nirodha*).¹¹⁹

In this verse, *prāpti* and *aprāpti* merely exist in self-continuum and two cessations, which are the cessation through deliberation (*pratisaṃkhyānirodha*) and the cessation independent of deliberation (*apratisaṃkhyānirodha*). Then, there are two aspects of *prāpti*:

There are two aspects of *prāpti*: [One is] “acquisition” (*lābha*) of that which has not been attained or of that which has been lost [and re-acquired]. [One is] “accompaniment” (*samanvāgama*) of that which, having [already] been attained or acquired (*pratilabdha*), has not been lost. [It is established that] *aprāpti* is the opposite of [*prāpti*].¹²⁰

By considering these two aspects, it becomes apparent that the “acquisition” pertains to a *dharma* that has not been possessed or has been lost in the past moment and is now “acquired”, whereas the “accompaniment” is attaining a *dharma* in the present moment and not losing it in the future. Meanwhile, *prāpti* only exists in one’s continuum, so the “acquisition” and the “accompaniment” represent the continuity from the past to the future.

As the connection between a *dharma* and a sentient being, the concepts of *prāpti* and *aprāpti* cannot exist in a continuum of others:

Prāpti [and] *aprāpti* [belong to] those who have fallen into one’s own continuum (*svasaṃtāna*), not to those who have fallen into the continuum of others. Indeed, no one is endowed with others, nor with what has not fallen into non-continuum (*asaṃtati*). Indeed, no one is endowed with what is connected to non-sentient beings. This is the certain definition regarding the conditioned [*dharmas*].¹²¹

This suggests that a conditional *dharma* in one’s own continuum of a sentient being has *prāpti*

¹¹⁹The verse is separated by prose, here I put it together for clear reading. AKBh, p. 62: *prāptyaprāptī svasaṃtāna patitānām...nirodhayoḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 537–538).

¹²⁰AKBh, p. 62: *dvividhā hi prāptir aprāptavihīnasya ca lābhaḥ pratilabdheṇa ca samanvāgamaḥ / viparyayād aprāptir iti siddham / kasya punar ime prāptyaprāptī*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 537–538).

¹²¹AKBh, p. 62: *kasya punar ime prāptyaprāptī / prāptyaprāptī svasaṃtānapatitānām / na parasamānāpatitānām / na hi parakīyaīḥ kaścit samanvāgataḥ nāpy asaṃtatipatitānām / na hy asaṃtvasaṃkhyātaiḥ kaścit samanvāgataḥ / eṣa tāvat saṃskṛteṣu niyamaḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 538).

and *aprāpti*, enabling the sentient being to possess or discard it. However, the sentient being cannot possess or discard conditioned *dharmas* for another being, just as one cannot quit smoking on behalf of someone else. The concepts of *prāpti* and *aprāpti* also do not apply to a non-continuum such as a deceased body. Furthermore, they do not apply to non-sentient beings, such as stones or grass. For unconditioned *dharmas*, a mere two cessations (*pratisamkhyānirodha* and *apratisamkhyānirodha*) can be considered under the concepts of *prāpti* and *aprāpti*. Hence, *prāpti* and *aprāpti* happen when conditioned *dharmas* dwell in the continuum of a sentient being and the two cessations of unconditional *dharmas*.

The two cessations, however, are not possessed by all the sentient beings:

Then, with regard to the unconditioned *dharmas*, *prāpti* and *aprāpti* [belong to] the two cessations. All the sentient beings are endowed with the cessation independent of deliberation (*apratisamkhyānirodha*).¹²²

The cessation through deliberation involves disconnection from afflictions by a specific understanding.¹²³ However, not all sentient beings possess this understanding and thus cannot attain the cessation through deliberation. Nevertheless, all sentient beings are accompanied by the cessation independent of deliberation which serves as the absolute hindering to prevent the arising of future *dharmas*.¹²⁴ Dhammajoti (2015: 584) noted that *prāpti* and *aprāpti* represent an experience of *nirvāṇa* because they are the connection between sentient beings and cessations, even though they exist neither as matter nor as mental activities.

¹²² AKBh, p. 62: *asaṃskṛteṣu punaḥ prāptyaaprāptī / nirodhayoḥ / sarvasattvā apratisamkhyānirodhena samanvāgatāḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 538).

¹²³ AKBh, pp. 3–4: *pratisamkhyānirodho yo viśaṃyogaḥ / yaḥ sāsravair dharmair viśaṃyogaḥ sa pratisamkhyānirodhaḥ / duḥkhādīnām āryasatyānām pratisamkhyānaṃ pratisamkhyā prajñāviśeṣas tena prāpyo nirodhaḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 209): “Cessation through deliberation (*pratisamkhyānirodha*) or *nirvāṇa* is disconnection (*viśaṃyoga*) from the impure *dharmas* (*asrava-dharma*). *Pratisamkhyāna* or *pratisamkhyā* means a specific kind of understanding (*prajñāviśeṣa*), [i.e.,] the pure (*anāsrava*) understanding, the deliberation of the noble truths [of satisfactoriness, etc.]”

¹²⁴ AKBh, p. 4: *utpādātyantavighno 'nyo nirodho 'pratisamkhyayā / anāgatānām dharmānām utpādasyātyantavighnabhūto viśaṃyogād yo 'nyo nirodhaḥ so 'pratisamkhyānirodhaḥ / na hy asau pratisamkhyayā labhyate / kiṃ tarhi / pratyayavaikalyāt*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 211): “The cessation which is different from disconnection, and which consists of the absolute hindering (*ātyantavighna*) of the arising of future *dharmas* is the cessation not through deliberation. (This cessation) is called thus because it is obtained, not by the deliberation (*pratisamkhyā*) of the truths, but by the deficiency of the [necessary] causes and conditions of arising (*pratyayavaikalyāt*).”

Unlike the Sarvāstivādins, the Sautrāntikas did not regard *nirvāṇa* as a real entity but as an absence of suffering—namely, the annihilation of *bīja* of afflictions; moreover, they deemed that the cessations are designation (*prajñapti*) (Dhammajoti 2015: 539). Thus, the argument in the AKBh states that *prāpti* is not a real entity:

[Sautrāntikas' argument:] In this case, “mastery” is “accompaniment” (*samanvāgama*); also, it is another real entity (*dravyāntara*) in other cases. Why is this so, and what is this disjunction? This disjunction is that the intrinsic nature of [real entity] is not perceived (*prajñāyate*), like matter, sound, etc., or like attachment, hatred, etc. Nor does it have an activity like the faculty of seeing, the faculty of hearing and so on. Therefore, [*prāpti*] does not exist as a real entity.¹²⁵

There are two justifications for rejecting *prāpti* as a real entity. First, *prāpti* cannot be directly perceived, unlike material elements or afflictions. Second, *prāpti* lacks the capacity to perceive any activities—for instance, the faculty of seeing perceives an object and the consciousness of seeing simultaneously arises. As *prāpti* does not function as either an object or subject, the Sautrāntikas posit that it is not a real entity.

However, the Sarvāstivādins vehemently oppose the Sautrāntikas' argument:

[Sarvāstivādins' argument:] This is a disjunction. If so, *prāpti* is the cause of the arising of *dharmas*.¹²⁶

This argument is based on the doctrine of the existence of three periods of time. A cause must exist in the previous moment for a result to arise in the present. Hence, as a cause of arising *dharmas*, *prāpti* must be a real entity. However, by identifying this vulnerable aspect of the Sarvāstivādins, the Sautrāntikas can call into question whether *prāpti* can always serve as the cause of arising *dharmas*:

¹²⁵ AKBh, p. 63: *atra vaśitvaṃ samanvāgamo 'nyatra punar dravyāntaram iti / kuta etat kaḥ punar evam ayogaḥ / ayam ayogaḥ yad asyā naiva svabhāvaḥ prajñāyate rūpaśabdādivad rāgadveśādivad vā na cāpi kṛtyaṃ cakṣuḥ śrotrādivat / tasmāt dravyadharmāsambhavā*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 540).

¹²⁶ AKBh, p. 63: *ayogaḥ / utpattihetur dharmāṅgāṃ prāptir iti cet*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 540).

Those *dharmas* that have not yet attained, and those that have not yet abandoned due to the transition of the stage or the “detachment”. How could their arising be possible?¹²⁷

For the Sautrāntikas, obtaining two cessations is to change the stage of existence (described as a basis in subsequent paragraphs) and to abandon all worldly desires. According to the Sautrāntikas, achieving these two cessations involves *aprāpti*, not *prāpti*, and hence, *prāpti* cannot be the arising cause of unconditioned *dharmas*. To defend the correct understanding of *aprāpti*, the Sarvāstivādins argue:

Then, who indeed has addressed *prāpti* as “the cause of arising” (*utpattiḥetu*)? However, [it is] the cause of establishment (*vyavasthāhetu*). It is indeed false concerning *prāpti* of a noble one (*ārya*) and an ordinary person (*prthagjana*) possessing the thought of mundane world, there will be no establishment between this noble one and this ordinary person.¹²⁸

By arguing that both a noble and an ordinary person can possess thoughts of a mundane world, the Sarvāstivādins refuse to consider *prāpti* as “the cause of arising” and instead identify it as “the cause of establishment”, establishing the distinction between a noble one and an ordinary person. Dhammajoti (2015: 545) explains that, due to *prāpti*, even when a noble one possesses worldly thoughts, he/she is not an ordinary person because he/she has already obtained noble *dharmas*.

However, by refuting *prāpti* as a real entity, the Sautrāntikas argue that the distinction of basis (*āśrayaviśeṣa*) differentiates a noble one and an ordinary person:

[The Sarvāstivādins:] Then, how will this [*prāpti*] be? For some of them, a defilement is abandoned, [but] for some of them, [a defilement] is not abandoned. Concerning *prāpti* as true, this is established due to the disappearance and non-disappearance of this

¹²⁷ AKBh, p. 63: *ye ca dharmā aprāptā ye ca tyaktā bhūmisamcāravairāgyatas teṣāṃ katham utpattiḥ syāt*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 540).

¹²⁸ AKBh, p. 63: *kaś caivam āhotpattiḥetuḥ prāptir iti / kiṃ tarhi / vyavasthā hetuḥ / asatyāṃ hi prāptau laukikamānasānām āryaprthagjanānām āryā ime prthagjanā ima iti na syād vyavasthānam*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 541).

[defilement]. [Moreover,] it is established due to the different basis.¹²⁹

They equate the basis with the self-continuum, and both pertain to a sentient being. Thus, the practitioner does not need extra *dharmas*, such as *prāpti* or *aprāpti*, because his/her basis changes when he/she obtains noble *dharmas*.

The AKBh regards *aprāpti* as the ordinary nature of a person; therefore, it is also not a real entity:

What is the ordinary nature of a person? It is written in the Śāstra that it is the non-acquisition of the noble *dharmas*. Non-acquisition means *aprāpti*. Also, the ordinary nature of a person is not able to be uncontaminated.¹³⁰

For the Sarvāstivādins, the ordinary nature of a person marks the distinction between a noble one and an ordinary person, while the Sautrāntikas maintain that the ordinary nature of a person is without arising noble *dharmas* and is equal to *aprāpti*. Thus, by focusing on the theme of noble *dharmas*, the Sautrāntikas redefine *aprāpti* as “non-acquisition” of every noble *dharma*. The AKBh quotes the explanation from the orthodox Sautrāntikas:

However, the good explanation is that of the Sautrāntikas. Then, what [is the explanation] of the Sautrāntikas? [For them,] the self-continuum which has not yet given rise to noble *dharmas* (*anutpannāryadharmasantati*) is the nature of an ordinary person.¹³¹

Once the ordinary nature of a person continues in one’s continuum, this person cannot produce any noble *dharmas*, as established by the Sautrāntikas. However, the Sarvāstivādins regard the ordinary nature of a person as a real entity, from which one needs *aprāpti* to attain liberation. In general, the Sarvāstivādins use *aprāpti* as a *dharma* to disconnect from afflictions, while the Sautrāntikas insist that the basis (*āśraya*) transforms and surpasses all

¹²⁹AKBh, p. 63: *etac caiva katham bhaviṣyaty eṣāṃ prahīṇaḥ kleśa eṣāṃ aprahīṇa iti / praptau satyām etat sidhyati tadvigamāvigamāt / āśrayaviśeṣād etat sidhyati*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 541–542).

¹³⁰AKBh, p. 66: *prthagjanatvaṃ katamat / āryadharmāṇām alābha iti śāstrapāṭhaḥ / alābhaś ca nāmāprāptiḥ / na ca prthagjanatvaṃ anāsravaṃ bhavitum arhati*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 551).

¹³¹AKBh, p. 66: *evaṃ tu sādhu yathā sautrāntikānām / katham ca sautrāntikānām / anutpannāryadharmasantatiḥ prthagjanatvaṃ iti*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 553).

afflictions.

To further clarify the concept of transformation of the basis (*āśraya-parāvṛtta*),¹³² the Sautrāntikas use a metaphor of *bīja*:

Indeed, the basis is that of the noble ones due to the potency of the paths of seeing (*darśana*) and cultivation (*bhāvanā*), and thus it becomes transmuted in such a way that it is no longer capable of growing the defilement of the abandoned one.¹³³

The personal basis is the foundation of a sentient being and is similar to a self-continuum, both of which pertain to an individual's uninterrupted existence. The “transmuted personal basis” occurs when the paths of seeing and cultivation arise. Through the power of the noble paths, afflictions are surpassed and do not arise again. The AKBh compares the harmed basis of afflictions to burnt (*agnidagdha*) *bījas*, which cannot sprout in the future. In this context, it is important to bear in mind that the characteristic of *bīja* is defiled.¹³⁴ These *bījas* are *bījas* of afflictions (*kleśabīja*) and can be surpassed by the power of two noble paths.

Yet, unlike the noble one who annihilates *bījas* of afflictions by the power of two paths, the ordinary person is only able to surpass these defiled *bījas*:

Then, when the personal basis of defilements becomes the existence without *bīja* (*abījībhūta*), just as when rice has been burnt by fire, this is called “abandoned defilement” (*prahīṇakleśa*), or when the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*) is damaged by the mundane path. In the opposite case, [this is called] non-abandoned defilement. It should be known that the one who is non-abandoned, is accompanied with this [*bīja*]; the one who is abandoned,

¹³² For the “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparivṛtti/ āśrayaparāvṛtti*) in the Yogācāra school, see section 4.3.

¹³³ AKBh, p. 63: *āśrayo hi sa āryānām darśanabhāvanāmārgasāmarthyāt tathā parāvṛtto bhavati yathā na punas tatpraheyānām kleśānām prarohasamartho bhavati*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 542).

¹³⁴ Park (2014: 247) points out that the *bījabhāva* involves the seeds of defilement (*kleśabīja*) that constitute the state of one’s psycho-physical basis (*āśraya*). Here, Park translates the term *bījabhāva* into “seed-state”; however, according to the context, it should refer to the defiled characteristic of *bīja*, so I translate it into “characteristic of *bīja*”. The term *bījabhāva* explains the difference of latent tendency (*anuśaya*) and the outburst of defilement (*pariyvāsthāna*), which is discussed in detail in section 2.3.2.

is not accompanied with this [*bīja*].¹³⁵

Just as grains of rice, being burnt by fire, become different from what they were before and are no longer capable of germinating, in the same way, one says that the noble ones have abandoned defilements, because their whole personal basis no longer contains the *bījas* capable of producing the defilements. As the paths of seeing and cultivation do not arise in the mundane path, the ordinary person only damages the defilements insofar as their basis has not yet transmuted, because the ordinary person lacks the power of the noble paths. The defilements that have been damaged still exist in the mental continuum as a *bīja*-state, which refers to an unmanifested situation. The *bīja*-state accompanies the person because the defilements are not yet annihilated, whereas the defilement does not accompany the person because it cannot arise again. Since the *bīja*-state is merely a situation, the accompaniment and non-accompaniment are considered designations (*prajñapti*) in the AKBh.

In contrast to the *bījas* of defilements (*kleśabīja*), the AKBh also presents positive *bījas*:

Wholesome *dharmas* are also twofold: not through effort and through effort. These are said to be those that are acquired at birth, and those that are acquired through preparatory effort.¹³⁶

There are two kinds of wholesome *dharmas*—one is naturally born within the person, and another one is produced through effort, such as meditation, cultivation and so on. The inherent wholesome *dharmas* are not produced through effort:

In this context, the one [whose wholesome *dharmas*] have not been produced through effort has accompanied [the first wholesome *dharma*], because the *bīja*-state of the wholesome *dharmas* within the personal basis has not been damaged. [On the other hand,] because [the *bījas*] have already been damaged, it is said that this person has not

¹³⁵ AKBh, p. 63: *ato 'gnidagdhavṛhivad avījībhūte āśraye kleśānāṃ prahīṇakleśa ity ucyate / upahatabījabhāve vā laukikena mārgena / viparyayād aprahīṇakleśaḥ / yaś cāprahīṇas tena samanvāgato yaḥ prahīṇas tenāsamanvāgata iti prajñāpyate*. As Sangpo's English translation does not literally fit the Sanskrit text, I translated myself.

¹³⁶ AKBh, pp. 63–64: *kuśalā api dharmā dviprakārā ayatnabhāvino yatnabhāvinaś ca ye ta ucyante utpattipratilambhikāḥ prāyogikāśceti*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 543).

been accompanied [with the wholesome *dharmas*].¹³⁷

The *bījas* of wholesome *dharmas* dwell in the personal basis as a *bīja*-state,¹³⁸ so that this person is accompanied with wholesome *dharmas* without effort. However, the person is not accompanied with wholesome *dharma*, because the *bījas* are damaged. Although it is possible that the person does not accompany wholesome *dharmas* due to their damage, wholesome *dharmas* will not be annihilated:

The one whose wholesome root has been eradicated, yet its harm should be understood as wrong view (*mithyādr̥ṣṭi*). However, the excessive *bīja*-state of wholesome *dharmas* in the mental continuum has not been completely destroyed.¹³⁹

Unlike the *bījas* of defilement which are annihilated by the power of the noble paths, the *bījas* of wholesome *dharmas* can be damaged by wrong view. However, the wholesome qualifications still exist, and the *bīja*-state of wholesome *dharmas* is able to arise in the future. Regarding this, we acknowledge that the *bīja*-state refers to the capacity of reproducing, while *bījas* represent an unmanifested situation of a *dharma* dwelling in the self-continuum.

The wholesome *dharmas* produced through effort prevent the person from not being accompanied by wholesome *dharmas*:

Moreover, those who [produced wholesome *dharmas*] through effort are said to be accompanied with the produced [*dharmas*] that arise due to capability (*vaśitva*) and

¹³⁷ AKBh, pp. 63–64: *tatrāyatnabhāvibhir āśrayasya tadbījabhāvānupaghātāt samanvāgata upaghātād asamanvāgata ucyate*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 543).

¹³⁸ The term *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*) has two meanings in the AKBh: the specific potency (*śakti*) to generate new defilements and to be a *bīja* of something (Park 2014: 452). Schmithausen (1987: 158) notes that in the AKBh, the *bīja* is inseparable from the personal basis (*āśraya*) and serves as designations—namely, the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*) that is able to reproduce the person basis in the future. According to Park, Vasubandhu utilizes the term *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*) to signify the distinctive capacity of *bīja*, namely attachment to the mental continuum. Westerhoff (2018: 202) considers that the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*) has a specific power to generate the defilement and that it resembles the idea of the *ālayavijñāna*.

¹³⁹ AKBh, pp. 63–64: *samucchinna kuśalamūlaḥ / tasya tūpaghāto mithyādr̥ṣṭyā veditavyaḥ / na tu khalu kuśalānāṃ dharmānāṃ vijabhāvasyātyantaṃ santatau samudghātāḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 543).

destruction within the continuum.¹⁴⁰

Through practice, a person has the capability to give rise to wholesome *dharmas*. It is worth noting that both defilements and wholesome *dharmas* produced without effort dwell in one's personal basis as a *bīja*-state, which represents the capacity for future regeneration. However, the wholesome *dharmas* produced through effort have the capability to arise again. This "capability" is similar to the concept of *vāsanās* in the Yogācāra school, where the *vāsanā* of the arising actual consciousness perfumes the *bīja* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*.

These two kinds of wholesome *dharmas* illustrate that "accompaniment" does not mean to connect with a real entity:

Thus, the *bīja* here is neither uprooted (*anapoddhṛta*) nor harmed; rather, it is increased¹⁴¹ at the time of capacity and attains the so-called "accompaniment", which is not a separate real entity.¹⁴²

Neither the term "accompaniment" nor "non-accompaniment" are real entities. The AKBh clearly utilizes the concept of *bījas* to replace the concept of *prāpti*. The *bīja*-state also represents the dwelling as only a situation, rather than a real entity that lasts through three periods of time. The capability within *bījas* is similar to "the specific potency" (*śakti*) mentioned in the AKBh, where the *bīja* of memory is introduced. It may imply the coexisting of *vāsanās* and *bījas* in the same moment (see section 2.4.1.).

The arguments between the Sarvāstivādas and the Sautrāntikas seem to be at odds. The Sautrāntikas refute the Sarvāstivādas' doctrine of the existence of three periods of time and, as such, disagree that *prāpti* is the cause of arising *dharmas*. They deem *aprāpti* as the ordinary nature of a person, which is a continuum without noble *dharmas*. On the other hand, the

¹⁴⁰ AKBh, pp. 63–64: *ye punar yatnabhāvinas tair utpannais tadutpattir vaśitvā vighātāt santateḥ samanvāgata ucyate*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 543).

¹⁴¹ The term *pariprṣṭa* means "inquired, questioned", which does not fit the context here. However, both the Tibetan translation, "rgyas par gyur pa" (Derge 4050: 71b), and the Chinese translation, "增長" (T1558, no. 29, p. 22c10) refer to the meaning of "increasing". Thus, I surmise that the correct Sanskrit word should be *paripuṣṭi*, rather than *pariprṣṭa*.

¹⁴² AKBh, pp. 63–64: *tasmād bījam evātrānapoddhṛtam anupahatam pariprṣṭam ca vāśitvakāle samanvāgamākhyāṃ labhate nānyad dravyam*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 543).

Sarvāstivādas establish the distinction between a noble one and an ordinary person by *prāpti*, and disconnect afflictions by *aprāpti*. For them, keeping *dharmas* in one’s continuum from the past to the present is the function of accompaniment. However, the Sautrāntikas claim that the transmuted personal basis removes afflictions, and the accompaniment of the defiled or positive *bījas* is merely an occasion. It changes when the two noble paths arise, or wrong views harm the *bīja* of wholesome *dharma*. Regarding this, the Sautrāntikas consider *prāpti* and *aprāpti* not to be real entities.

We have now built an understanding of the background views of *prāpti* and how they differ, which allows us a solid foundation on which to explore the concept of *bīja* in the AKBh in the next section.

2.2.2 The Introduction of the Concept of *Bīja* in the AKBh

The term *bīja* encompasses several essential concepts in Buddhism. As Katō (1987: 286–287)¹⁴³ noted, the Sautrāntikas adopted the concept of *bīja* among the early Indian Buddhist schools to explain issues such as affective, practical, karmic, and causal issues. As discussed in the previous section, the Sarvāstivādins aim to annihilate defilement through the concepts of *prāpti* and *aprāpti*, which involves obtaining disconnection; while the Sautrāntikas deem that defilements can be annihilated by cutting off defiled *bījas*. In opposition to the Sarvāstivādins’ doctrine of the existence of three periods of time, the concept of *bījas* works with the basis. On the one hand, *bījas* maintain the identity of continuity, such as *bījas* of memory; on the other hand, *bījas* of *karman* persist as perfumed *bījas*. Waldron (2003: 74) asserted that both *karman* and defilement are represented by *bījas* dwelling in the mental continuum. Park (2014: 245) claimed that Vasubandhu uses *bīja* as “his systematic incorporation of the simile into his theory of causation and psychology in general and of karmic retribution in particular”.

The concept of *bīja* in the AKBh is described as:

What is the so-called “*bīja*”? The [*bīja*] is [the complex of] name and matter (*nāmarūpa*), which is able to immediately or mediately give rise to fruition due to a specific

¹⁴³ I cannot reach Katō’s article so I read the quotation from Park (2014: 248), in which he translates the Japanese into English.

transformation in series (*santatipariṇānaviśeṣa*). What is the so-called “transformation” (*pariṇāma*)? [It is] a changing in mental states [that occurs within] a series. What is a “series” (*santati*)? [It denotes] the mental activities that exist as causes and results over three periods of time.¹⁴⁴ [What is “specific” (*viśeṣa*)? It is that which is capable in the production of a fruition immediately].¹⁴⁵

To underscore that *bīja* is not a real entity, the AKBh defines it as “name and matter”. In this context, “name and matter” can be interpreted as “psycho-physical complex”; however, it is important to note the significance as an individual. In terms of biological function, Schmithausen (1987: 37) translated “*nāmarūpa*” as “mind and matter”. When consciousness enters a mother’s womb, it coagulates the father’s semen and mother’s blood and generates the *nāmarūpa* in the form of proto-embryo (*kalala*).¹⁴⁶ Waldron (2003: 14) quoted the Palī canon, the *Dīgha Nikāya*, to explain that the term *nāmarūpa* is the psychological and physiological aspect of becoming human in the intra-uterine stage and then continuing during a lifetime. As the AKBh proposes the existence of a sentient being as the basis, rather than the Sarvāstivāda notion of self-continuum, the dwelling *bījas* in the basis implies the continuity of an individual. Consequently, Park (2014: 247) translated “*nāmarūpa*” as “psycho-physical organism”.

The function of a specific transformation in series is to generate fruition immediately or mediately through *bījas*. The metaphor of *bīja* and its fruition represents a successive causality. In the *Tattvasiddhi* of Harivarman, the successive causality is described as a *bīja* generating a

¹⁴⁴ AKBh, p. 64: *kiṃ punar idaṃ bījaṃ nāma / yan nāmarūpaṃ phalotpattau samartham sākṣāt pāramparyeṇa vā / santatipariṇānaviśeṣāt / ko 'yaṃ pariṇāmo nāma / santater anyathātvam / kā ceyam santatiḥ / hetuphalabhūtastraiyadhvikāḥ saṃskārāḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 544).

¹⁴⁵ The explanation of “*viśeṣa*” is missing here in Pradhan’s version, yet both Xuánzàng and Paramārtha included it in their translation. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 800, no.470); Cox (1995: 215).

¹⁴⁶ The relationship between “*nāmarūpa*” and “*vijñāna*” serves as evidence of the existence of the *ālayavijñāna* in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg). Schmithausen (1987: 170) characterizes this relationship as two reed bunches mutually supporting each other. (MSg, T1594, no. 31, pp. 136a16–17: “若離異熟識，識與名色，更互相依，譬如蘆束相依而轉，此亦不成。” The English translation is provided by me: “If the consciousness of maturation does not exist, the consciousness, name, and matter depend mutually and arise [another consciousness], just as the reed bunches depend on each other. This is unacceptable.”) However, the interaction of consciousness, names, and matters alone cannot give rise to consciousness. Schmithausen (1987: 171) notes that the term *nāma* is “the immediately preceding moment of *vijñāna*”, and the term *rūpa* is “the corresponding material sense faculty”. Through the *ālayavijñāna*, the faculty of seeing (*caḥsur-indriya*) perceives an object and immediately gives rise to a consciousness, which is the process of conceptualization.

sprout, stem, leaf, flower and fruit, so that consciousness arises in an order (Lin 2015: 260).¹⁴⁷ According to Stcherbatsky (1923: 20–26), the term “*santati*” refers to a stream of personalities and is synonymous with *karman*; whereas the term “*santāna*” of the Sarvāstivāda encompasses both mental elements and the physical ones, as well as the elements of one’s own body and the external objects. Hence, in the AKBh, the term “*santati*” pertains solely to the series of mental continuums within a sentient being. The cause and fruition in this series occur through the conventional presupposition of the three periods of time—therefore, it is peculiar that the AKBh strongly refutes the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of three periods of time.

In order to resolve this inconsistency, Park (2014: 365) quotes the commentary of Yaśomitra. Within this commentary, Yaśomitra explains that, by applying the Sāṃkhya’s concept of transformation and the Sarvāstivāda concept of *dharma*,¹⁴⁸ what exists in the three periods of time is a capacity of causality, rather than an individual (Park 2014: 365). In other words, the function of generating causes and fruitions as conditioned *dharmas* works uninterruptedly from the past to the future. The AKBh still attests that the three periods of time are not composed by real entities.

In the AKBh, the concept of “transformation” plays an important role in the changing of mental states. The function of “transformation” can be traced back to the Sāṃkhyas, a non-Buddhist philosophy school. Jhaveri (1990: 32–38) investigated the *Sāṃkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, an early work of the Sāṃkhya school in the 2nd to 3rd centuries. The Sāṃkhyas categorise the universe into 25 elements, which can themselves be divided into two groups: primal matter (*prakṛti*), comprising manifest (*vyakta*), and unmanifest (*avyakta*), and the unchanging subject (*puruṣa*) which is knowledge (*jñā*). Īśvarakṛṣṇa describes the process of changing a primal matter through the transformation of the three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*).

¹⁴⁷ **Tattvasiddhi*, T1646, no. 32, pp. 276b8–10: “又佛說甚深因緣法中，是事生故是事得生。又如穀子牙莖枝葉花實等，現見因果相次。故有識等，亦應次第而生。” For the English translation cf. Lin (2015: 260): “Moreover, the Buddha teaches the profound (*gambhīra*) doctrine of dependent origination (*prāṭītyasamutpāda*): when this thing arises, that thing arises. It is also like a grain plant: one sees that its seed, sprout, stem, branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, and so forth, appear one after another as causes and results. In the same manner, consciousness (*vijñāna*), and so forth, should also arise successively.”

¹⁴⁸ The Sarvāstivāda concept of *dharma*, as described by Waldron (2003: p50–53), denotes a momentary cognitive awareness that serves as a basic “unit” for analysing the processes of mind. By analysing experience, the term “*dharma*” provides the ultimate explanation of “how things truly are” (*yathābhūtam*). With respect to this, *dharmas* are nothing but metaphors.

An example of this transformation is observable in the diversity of organs, which emerges from the distinct transformation of the *guṇas*, ultimately leading to the diversity of their corresponding objects. Transformation, by definition, holds that everything evolves from a primary substratum and only manifests through the process of transformation. Hence, the causation of *Īśvarakṛṣṇa* is a manifestation of what already pre-exists. The fruition exists in its cause and shares the same essence as the cause.

Furthermore, Maas (2020: 979–988) examined the concept of transformation in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, considered a work of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga system. The transformation occurs when the primal matter is influenced by a subject and transforms into perceptible elements, such as the senses of living beings, as well as mental events. Thus, all these phenomena are transformations of the permanent by changeable matters, and the transformation is merely a transformation of the substrate. In this regard, the concept of transformation is limited to a conventional level of truth. The concept of transformation later became an important doctrine in the Yogācāra school—namely, the transformation of the basis. It allows the sentient being to remove the defilements in the *ālayavijñāna* and then attain liberation. This soteriological perspective is discussed in Chapter 4.

The AKBh employs the term “specific” (*viśeṣa*) to describe the transformation in series that can generate fruition immediately. However, in the preceding section we learned that “*viśeṣa*” pertains to the difference between a noble one and an ordinary person, such as the distinction of basis by the Sautrāntikas, and that practitioners obtain the cessation through deliberation (*pratisamkhyānirodha*) by a specific kind of understanding. In these cases, “*viśeṣa*” signifies “specific”. Nevertheless, when “*viśeṣa*” is employed as the transformation in a series, it denotes a specific function that can immediately generate fruition. By comparing the basic description of *bīja*, which can generate fruition mediately or immediately, the “*viśeṣa*” marks the specific function of the transformation, implying the possibility of a simultaneous causality.

Remarkably, although the AKBh juxtaposes the concept of *prāpti* and the concept of *bījas*, the *Pañcaskandhaka* (PSk), a Yogācāra text composed by Vasubandhu, considers *bījas* to be a constituent of *prāpti*:

What is *prāpti*? [It is] obtainment and accomplishment (*samanvāgama*). Furthermore,

it associates with the *bījas*, the mastery and the manifestation.¹⁴⁹

Since the Yogācāras sought to replace the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti*, they integrate it within the concept of *bīja* in the PSk. Although the Yogācāras cannot remove *prāpti* because it is the initial one of the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*), the PSk replaces *aprāpti* with the ordinary nature. In this regard, the PSk follows the Sautrāntika teaching in the AKBh that equates the ordinary nature with *aprāpti*.

On the one hand, the AKBh introduces the concept of *bīja* as a metaphor of the continuity of an individual (in this way, *bījas* are “psycho-physical complex”) and, on the other hand, it introduces *bīja* as the cause of transformation, saying that *bījas* can generate fruition mediately and immediately. Based on a specific transformation in series, the AKBh refutes the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time, arguing that only the capacity of causation, namely, cause and fruition, exists from the past to the future, rather than a real entity. Moreover, the AKBh rejects the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti*, as the specific transformation in the series occurs in a series without requiring any *dharma* to connect with other *dharmas*. The meaning of *bīja* refers to all transformations occurring in the mental continuum. However, this position of the AKBh is severely critiqued by the Sarvāstivāda scholar Saṃghabhadra. These critiques are discussed and examined in the following section.

2.2.3 Safeguarding the Concept of *Prāpti* in the **Nyāyānusara* (*Ny) by Saṃghabhadra

When facing the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh, Saṃghabhadra aims to defend the concepts of *prāpti* and *aprāpti* as real entities. The **Nyāyānusara* (*Ny) describes the stance of the AKBh as that of a “*sūtra* Master” (經主).¹⁵⁰ Therefore, in order to present the argument but not to

¹⁴⁹ PSk, p. 14: *prāptiḥ katamā / pratilambhaḥ samanvāgamaḥ / sā punar bījaṃ vaśitā saṃmukhībhāvaś ca yathāyogam.*

¹⁵⁰ To refute the AKBh of Vasubandhu, Saṃghabhadra first composes the “*Hail Stones upon the Abhidharmakośa*” (俱舍雹論), which is retitled as “*Conformance to Correct Principle*” (**Nyāyānusara*, 順正理論 *Shùnzhènglǐ Lùn*) by Vasubandhu (Willems, Dassein. Cox 1998: 244). Only the Chinese version of the **Nyāyānusara* has been preserved (T1562, no. 29), in which the contents of the earlier Dārṣṭāntikas and Sautrāntikas are preserved

include specific historical figures, I refer to the *Ny and the AKBh as representatives of the different points of view. Cox (1995: 82) argued that the major difference between the AKBh and the *Ny is that the former assumes that the “acquisition” (*lābha*) and the “accompaniment” (*samanvāgama*) are different aspects of *prāpti*. In other words, the state of *prāpti* changes according to a specific moment in one’s series. For instance, at this present moment, *prāpti* connects an individual with a lost or never-attained *dharma*, which is the “acquisition”. However, neither *prāpti* nor the “acquisition” can be regarded as a real entity; rather, they are both descriptions of this very moment.

On the contrary, the *Ny attests that *prāpti* represents one moment, while “accompaniment” represents the subsequent moment (Cox 1995: 82). Moreover, this successive relation is compatible with the doctrine of momentariness, since *prāpti* arises and perishes at this moment, and the “accompaniment” arises in the next moment, as do *aprāpti* and the “non-accompaniment”. The *Ny also disagrees with the stance in the AKBh that the *aprāpti* is the ordinary nature. According to the *Ny, *aprāpti* refers to a factor that has never been attained by *prāpti*; whereas the non-accompaniment denotes a factor that was once maintained by “accompaniment” but is now lost (Cox 1995: 83– 85). Thus, *prāpti* and the “accompaniment” have their own intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*) and persist through the three periods of time.

In this regard, the primary reason for maintaining *prāpti* is to establish the legitimacy of the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time. Cox (1995: 85) clarified that according to the *Ny, the first moment of *prāpti* builds a connection with the continuum of a sentient being, thereby rendering the existence of *prāpti* necessary. Without it, this continuum lacks a cause to arise.

To defend the existence of the concept of *prāpti*, Katō (1983: 349) denoted that the *Ny presents three reasons—namely, the cause of establishment (*vyavasthāhetu*), the cause of the non-disappearance *dharma* (*dharmāvipraṇāśakāraṇa*) and the mark of knowledge (*jñānaciḥna*). These will be examined individually in the following paragraphs.

(Dhammajoti 2018: 2). To avoid distracting the focus on the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, the title “*Ny” rather than the name Saṃghabhadra is used in this thesis to represent the position.

2.2.3.1 The Cause of Establishment (建立因, *vyavasthāhetu)

First, the function of the cause of establishment has been proposed in the *Ny:

Without the concepts of accompaniment (成就, *samanvāgama*) and non-accompaniment (不成就, *asamanvāgama*), it would be impossible to identify or establish [the differences between] ordinary people (異生), noble ones (聖者), those with knowledge, those without knowledge, those with positive qualities, and those without positive qualities.¹⁵¹

In this context, it should be noted that this cause of establishment is the cause that differentiates an ordinary person from a noble one. The Sarvāstivādins in the AKBh consider *prāpti* as the cause of establishment rather than the cause of arising. Due to this, they argue that the existence of *prāpti* must be a real entity (Katō 1984: 564; Cox 1995: 188–189).

2.2.3.2 The Cause of Non-disappearance (不失因, *avipranāśakāraṇa)

The second reason is the cause of non-disappearance, which upholds the *dharma* that has been acquired and prevents it from disappearing:

From [what has been] permitted, the *prāpti* is the *dharma* that has been acquired. This is the cause of non-disappearance (不失因, **avipranāśakāraṇa*).¹⁵²

It is evident that there is a clear difference between *prāpti* and the “accompaniment”. At any given moment, the acquired *dharma* is referred to as “*prāpti*”, and if it is possessed in the next moment, it is called the “accompaniment”. Thus, *prāpti* is the cause of non-disappearance as its connection with *dharma* is what leads to the arising of the next moment.

¹⁵¹ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 463b16–18: “若無成就不成就性, 異生, 聖者, 有學, 無學, 斷善根者, 不斷善者, 決定建立, 皆不得成。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995:189).

¹⁵² *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397b4–5: “由所許得是已得法, 不失因故。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 189).

2.2.3.3 The Mark of Knowledge (智標幟, *jñānacihna)

The third reason is the mark of knowledge, which lets sentient beings understand the *dharmā*, or gives them a clue to understanding the *dharmā*. In the *Ny:

Further, it should be known that this [*dharmā*] belongs to (繫屬) that [continuum] due to the mark of knowledge.¹⁵³

The mark of knowledge plays a crucial role in ensuring that the noble one attains the noble *dharmā*, whereas the ordinary person does not. Therefore, the *Ny suggests that the concept of *prāpti* must exist:

Aside from this [*prāpti*], is there any [an]other great [factor] that can transcend it [and] claim[s] that this [*prāpti*] does not exist?¹⁵⁴

Having addressed the three reasons, the concept of *prāpti* represents a successive causality and momentariness in one's continuum. It is the means by which a noble one is differentiated from an ordinary person, the mark of one who possesses the noble *dharmā*, and the cause of keeping the *dharmā* for the next moment.

Nevertheless, the *Ny quotes the disagreement from the AKBh:

If you (i.e., the author of the *Ny) said so, what is necessary to maintain this *prāpti*? [These two functions can serve merely as] the basis (所依) that contains all *bījas* which should not be plucked out or damaged, [but rather,] nourished (增長) and having master. On this occasion, it is established as “accompaniment”. Because of these [*bījas*], the *dharmas* that have been acquired will not be lost, and [the awareness that] these [*dharmas*] belong to that [basis], [is known as] the mark of knowledge.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397b5–7: “又是知此繫屬於彼, 智標幟故。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 189).

¹⁵⁴ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397b6–7: “除此更有何別大用能過於此? 說此為無。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 189).

¹⁵⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397b4–10: “若爾, 何用執此得? 為唯所依中有諸種子, 未拔, 未損, 增長, 自在, 於如是位, 立成就名. 由斯不失已得諸法, 亦此屬彼智之標幟。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 189).

It appears that the AKBh attests that these three reasons can be undoubtedly included in the concept of *bījas*. Since the transformations occur on the basis of *bījas*, these *bījas* serve as both the causes for the arising of *dharmas*, as well as the potential for preserving them as the “accompaniment”. Additionally, the characteristics of *bījas* will change after attaining the noble *dharmas*, which is the mark of a noble one. Therefore, the concept of *bījas* can effectively encompass the functions of *prāpti*.

Furthermore, the AKBh refutes the necessity of *prāpti* by switching the occasion:

[The AKBh:] The *bījas* (種子) of negative and neutral [*dharmas*] are damaged by the path of antidote (對治道), or lack the activities to manifest, which is so-called “non-accompaniment”. The opposite of this is “accompaniment”, so that the posited *prāpti* is ineffective.

[The *Ny:] These various kinds of distortions (顛倒所執) are fake speech without any real meanings.¹⁵⁶

From this, it is apparent that the definitions of the “accompaniment” and “non-accompaniment” in the AKBh differ from those in the *Ny. In the AKBh, the “non-accompaniment” refers to the moment when the *bīja* is damaged or unable to manifest. However, in the *Ny, the “non-accompaniment” is based on *aprāpti*, which refers to something that was connected in the past but is now disconnected and has not been obtained again in the present moment. Regarding this, the *Ny supports the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time and the concept of intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*). According to them, *prāpti* and the “accompaniment” cannot be mixed.

To refute the concept of intrinsic nature as a real entity of the Sarvāstivādins, the AKBh proposes the *bīja*-state to explain the continuity of *dharmas*:

Oh! You foolish people (天愛)! You do not comprehend the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*, 種子性). Due to the previous mind, [which] gives rise simultaneously (俱生) with a specific thought, the subsequent mind arises a specific capability. This

¹⁵⁶ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397b18–21: “不善無記, 由對治道斷伏種子, 或無功力可生現行, 名不成就; 與此相違, 名為成就. 故所執得便為無用. 如是種種顛倒所執, 但有虛言而無實義.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 189).

specific capability in the subsequent mind is called a *bīja*. Through the specific transformation in series (相續轉變差別, *santatipariṇāmaśeṣa*), the future fruition is generated.¹⁵⁷

The *bīja*-state is capable of changing due to a specific transformation in series, since all activities occur at the basis. Thus, the previous mind is allowed to be distinguished uninterruptedly from that of the subsequent mind, because both moments arise immediately.

However, the *Ny regards the explanation of “*sūtra* Master” (經主. i.e., the AKBh) as a fallacy:

Regarding this, [you assume that] in a negative mind, the positive [*dharmas*] arise as a specific capability of immediate transformation (展轉隣近功能差別), which are considered as *bījas*, from which the positive *dharmas* arise immediately (無間). Or, [you assume that] in a positive mind, the negative [*dharmas*] arise as a specific capability of immediate transformation, which is considered as *bījas*, from which the negative *dharmas* arise immediately.¹⁵⁸

Notably, the *Ny understands the function of “a specific transformation in series” (*santatipariṇāmaśeṣa*) as “a specific capability of immediate transformation”. With regard to this, the *Ny endeavours to argue that the concept of *bījas* merely represents a potency that can arise in the following moment. Furthermore, the *Ny denotes that a *bīja* can transform its characteristic in series, therefore the manifestation of a positive *dharma* from a negative *dharma* is feasible in the AKBh. However, the *Ny refutes this stance according to the concept of intrinsic nature. The *Ny therefore poses the question of how a negative mind can transform its nature through a specific transformation of *bīja*, resulting in the generation of positive *dharmas*. Based on this inquiry, the *Ny presents five criticisms against the

¹⁵⁷*Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 397b29–c2: “天愛! 非汝解種子性. 前心俱生思差別故, 後心功能差別而起, 即後心上功能差別, 說為種子. 由此相續轉變差別, 當來果生.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 190–191).

¹⁵⁸*Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 397c2–6: “此中意說, 不善心中, 有善所引展轉隣近功能差別, 以為種子, 從此無間善法得生. 或善心中, 不善所引展轉隣近功能差別, 以為種子, 從此無間不善法生.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 191).

concept of *bījas*.¹⁵⁹

The first one is the debate of whether the entities of *bīja* and mind are separable or not.

In the *Ny:

[The *Ny:] Now, you posit this *bīja* as having a specific capability (功能差別種子). Does it exist as a separate entity from the positive and negative mind, or is it an inseparable entity of them?

[The AKBh:] [*Bīja* and the positive and negative mind are] an inseparable entity.

[The *Ny:] Wouldn't [you then] admit that a positive [*dharma*] can be the *bīja* of negative [*dharma*], and that a negative [*dharma*] can be the *bīja* of positive [*dharma*]? What intellectual (有心者) would comprehend that heat and fire are inseparable entities, but suggest that only heat can burn, not fire? How can [positive *bījas*] generate fruitions of maturation (異熟果), such as Naraka and so on?

[The AKBh:] In the negative mind, *bījas* with a specific capability are settled, [and they] can generate pleasing maturations that are attracted by specific positive thoughts.

[The *Ny:] So, how can [negative *bījas*] generate fruitions of maturation, such as *Manuṣya* and so on?

[The AKBh:] In the pure positive mind (淨善心), *bījas* with a specific capability are settled, [and they] can generate unpleasing maturations that are attracted by specific negative thoughts (惡思差別).

[The *Ny:] [Objection!] Because negative minds are unable to (無堪能) generate pleasing fruitions of maturation. Because pure and positive minds are unable to generate unpleasing fruitions of maturation.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ I have divided the arguments of the *Ny according to Cox (1995: 191–197).

¹⁶⁰*Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397c6–16: “今汝所執功能差別種子, 與彼善不善心, 為有別體, 為無別體? 此無別體. 豈不許善為不善種, 及許不善為善種耶? 誰有心者執煖與火無有別體, 而復執言唯煖能燒, 火不

The *Ny assumes that, in the AKBh, due to a specific transformation in series, a negative *bīja* can generate positive *dharma* in the future without the need for any other *dharmas*. Following the perspective of the Sarvāstivādins, the *Ny holds the view that each *dharma* has an intrinsic nature that cannot be changed. To eliminate a negative *dharma*, one has to give rise to *aprāpti* in the first moment, and in the next moment, they can disconnect themselves from this negative *dharma*. Thus, the *Ny disagrees that a negative mind can generate pleasing fruition of maturation through a specific transformation in series and vice versa.

The second debate refers to the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time. In the *Ny:

[The *Ny:] Then, [as you said,] how can the specific thought (思差別) in the previous mind and in the subsequent mind arise with specific capability (功能差別) and be regarded as cause and fruition for each other?

[The AKBh:] Why do you doubt this? It is the causality (因果法). Due to the specific thought in the previous [moment], a subsequent mind arises with a specific capability. If there was no specific thought in the previous [moment], the subsequent mind would not arise with specific capability. Thus, these two can be regarded as cause and fruition for each other.

[The *Ny:] If only a part of the moment of thought arises, this explanation is acceptable. However, the moment of thought cannot arise if you assume that there is no future moment. [Thus,] the previous thought and the subsequent mind do not exist and cannot arise together. [Hence,] how can they be regarded as cause and fruition for each other? These explanations, which refer to the past, future and present, must be carefully considered and distinguished (思擇).¹⁶¹

能燒? 云何能感那落迦等諸異熟果? 不善心中, 安置能感可愛, 異熟, 善思差別所引功能差別種子. 復云: 何感末奴沙等諸異熟果? 淨善心中, 安置能感非愛, 異熟, 惡思差別所引功能差別種子. 諸不善心, 於感可愛, 諸異熟果, 無堪能故, 諸淨善心, 於感非愛, 諸異熟果, 無堪能故.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995:191–192).

¹⁶¹ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 397c29–398a10: “又前所起思差別與後功能差別心, 云何作因果更互相應義? 此何

Even though the AKBh argues that the previous moment is the cause of the subsequent moment, the *Ny vehemently opposes this view. This is because the AKBh disagrees with the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time. The *Ny, therefore, argues that it is impossible for a subsequent moment to arise if there is no future moment in the AKBh’s statement. Furthermore, according to the doctrine of momentariness, the previous and subsequent moments cannot coexist in a single moment. According to the concept of real entity, it is also impossible for the previous moment and the subsequent moment to arise simultaneously. For the *Ny, the causality must be successive. The AKBh, however, does not mean to deny the existence of times but argues, by refuting the concept of *prāpti*, that times are not real entities. The *bīja*-state can generate new *dharma* by a specific transformation, which means that the *bīja* has neither an intrinsic nature nor a real entity. Hence, *bījas* can be transformed from the previous moment to the subsequent moment, and therefore times are not real entities. Otherwise, the situation of the *bīja* should be determined by its activity (*kāritra*).¹⁶² It seems that the *Ny adopts the concept of “specific capability”, which has the potency to arise in the future, whereas the AKBh presents the concept of “specific transformation in series”, which signifies the capacity of regenerating the *bīja*-state. The result of this is that these two scholars actually focus on different aspects of the issue.

The third argument outlined is that the AKBh cannot distinguish the power of mundane or supramundane paths. In the *Ny:

Then, as you said, “As a *bīja* being burnt by fire, its transformation (轉變) differs from the previous moment and is unable to generate capabilities, just as the basis of a noble one has no capability to generate afflictions, which is called ‘the annihilation of affliction’. Similarly, if the afflicted *bīja* (煩惱種子) in the basis is damaged by the mundane path, it is also called ‘the annihilation’. The opposite of the above [statements]

所疑? 因果法爾, 要有前思差別故, 方有後心功能差別生. 若無前思差別者, 後心功能差別則不起. 是故此二得有因果更互相應. 若有思時, 少有所起, 可有此義; 然有思時, 都無所起, 未來無故. 前思後心, 有無不並, 云何可說因果相應? 如是等義, 辯過未中, 當更思擇.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 192).

¹⁶² Maas (2020: 975) points out that Vasumitra’s concept of *avasthā* is a *dharma* that is decisive for its temporal existence—as a shift of the position of the *dharma* in time. However, Sarvāstivādins interpret Vasumitra’s concept of *avasthā* as the situation that is determined by its activity (*kāritra*). This interpretation is widely accepted by the Sarvāstivādins.

is called ‘non-annihilation’”. Now, [we] shall ask, what is the difference between annihilating all afflictions by the supramundane path or the mundane path?¹⁶³

According to the AKBh, the power of the paths of seeing (*darśanamārga*) and cultivation (*bhāvanāmārga*) can annihilate the afflicted *bījas*, yet the power of mundane path can only damage them. Based on this, the *Ny questions whether the AKBh distinguished the powers of the mundane and supramundane paths. In response, the *Ny criticises the AKBh’s statement in his fourth argument:

[The term] “damaged *bīja*” (種被損) refers to [a *bīja* that is] unable to generate sprouts. If [a *bīja*] is capable of generating sprouts, it cannot be called “damaged”, just as afflictions are only cut by the mundane path. If the afflicted *bījas* (惑種) are damaged, they should not generate [afflictions]. If [they] can still generate [afflictions], it cannot be called “damage”. If it cannot be called “damage”, how can it be called “annihilation”? Moreover, the [one who] annihilates and the [thing] being annihilated shall not coexist in a [moment of] mind, so the meaning of annihilation is not established.¹⁶⁴

In terms of the power of the mundane path, *bījas* are only damaged and surpassed, meaning that they may not arise again in the future. However, they are not annihilated by the power of the supramundane path. The *Ny argues that these damaged *bījas* may arise again in the future, and therefore cannot be considered as “annihilation”. Additionally, he reinforces the doctrine of momentariness, which asserts that the one who is able to annihilate, and the object being annihilated should not coexist at the same moment. Based on two arguments, the *Ny attests that the “annihilation of afflicted *bījas*” does not exist in the context of the AKBh.

The fifth argument is to refute the concept of *bījas*:

¹⁶³*Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 398a27–b2: “然彼所言: 猶如種子, 火所焚燒, 轉變異前, 無能生用. 如是聖者, 所依身中, 無生惑能, 名煩惱斷. 或世間道損所依中煩惱種子, 亦名為斷. 與上相違名未斷者, 此今應說, 以無漏道斷諸煩惱, 與世間道斷諸煩惱, 有何差別?” For the English translation cf. Cox (Cox 1995: 195).

¹⁶⁴*Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 398b3–10: “種被損者, 謂不生芽. 若能生芽, 不名被損. 由世俗道斷惑亦爾. 若損惑種, 應不能生. 後既能生, 不應名損. 若不名損, 如何名斷? 又一心中, 能斷所斷理不俱有, 斷義不成.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 195).

Based on [the concept of] the Dārṣṭāntikas (譬喻者),¹⁶⁵ [however,] there is no difference in one's continuum (相續) from the previous to the subsequent [moment], no cause and fruition as mental activities in the three periods of time, and no capability (功能) of immediately generating fruitions.¹⁶⁶

Since the *Ny dismisses the function of a specific transformation in series, according to its argument, the nature of *dharma* ought not change over time. As the AKBh refutes the existence of three periods of time, the *Ny argues that the causality is dissolved due to the lack of temporal order. By denying the concept of *bīja*, its capability of immediately generating fruitions is deemed irrational. Remarkably, the *Ny ascribes the statement in the AKBh to the Dārṣṭāntikas. Hence, we can surmise that these concepts are shared by many Buddhist schools as well as non-Buddhist schools such as the Sāṃkhyas.¹⁶⁷

After these five arguments, Saṃghabhadra concludes his position:

Although the *sūtra* Master (經主, i.e., the AKBh) proposes many arguments on this [topic], [he] does not achieve [his goals] because the *bīja* presented [by him] is irrational. Since the *bīja* does not exist, [we] know that the posited *prāpti* is the acquired *dharma*, because of the cause of non-disappearance (不失因, **avipranāśakāraṇa*). Then, [we] know that this [*dharma*] belongs to that [being] due to the mark of knowledge (智標幟, **jñānaciḥna*). The capability is determined, and with the established capability, [we] know that *prāpti* is a separable entity. Therefore, the entity (體) and capability (用) of this posited *prāpti* are established.¹⁶⁸

The *Ny reiterates that the concept of *bījas* is unnecessary and instead emphasises the

¹⁶⁵ In the *Ny, the Dārṣṭāntikas refers to Śrīlāta and his followers (Katō 1989: 21). Śrīlāta is known as the second Sautrāntika master (Cox 1995: 41). However, the *Ny does not distinguish between the Dārṣṭāntikas and the Sautrāntikas (Park 2014: 61).

¹⁶⁶ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, pp. 398b16–17: “以譬喻者, 無有相續前後異性, 亦無因果三世諸行, 亦無無間生果功能。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 196).

¹⁶⁷ The concept of *pariṇāma* is from the Sāṃkhya, see section 2.2.4.

¹⁶⁸ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 398b20–24: “經主於中, 雖隨自執多有所說而無所成, 所執種子理不成故。種子既無, 知所許得是已得法, 不失因故。又是知此繫屬於彼, 智標幟故。決定有用, 用有既成, 知別有體。故所許得, 體用極成。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 197).

importance of the concept of *prāpti*. He regards the capabilities of *prāpti* as the cause of non-disappearance and the mark of knowledge. The nature of *prāpti* is a real entity that is separable from other *dharmas*. As such, terms such as *prāpti*, *aprāpti*, the accompaniment, and the non-accompaniment hold specific temporal meanings. The *Ny uses these concepts to establish the doctrine of the existence of three periods of time and the principle of momentariness.

2.2.4 Responds as Echoes in the *Abhidharmakośaṅkā Tattvārthā* (AKTA) by Sthiramati

As the commentary of the AKBh, the AKTA engages in the discourse on the concept of *prāpti* and the concept of *bīja*, offering a response that is situated a hundred years after the contributions of the AKBh and the *Ny.¹⁶⁹

Although the position of the *Ny is in contrast with the AKBh, its explanation of *prāpti* is accepted by other Buddhist scholars (Katō 1984: 349; 1985: 45; Chou 2012: 38). The AKTA, for instance, adapted the cause of establishment (**vyavasthāhetu*):

In this regard, the abandonment of affliction is to draw its root from the afflicted *bījas*, then the afflictions do not arise. The non-abandonment of afflictions is not to draw its root from the afflicted *bījas*, then the afflictions become arising. In this way, those who are together with mundane thought possess *dharmas* that do not give rise to afflictions due to the absence of *bījas*. Therefore, they are [considered as] the noble ones. [In contrast,] because those who have not cut off the continuum of *bījas* and will arise again, they are classified as ordinary people, which is posited as the cause of establishment (*rnam par gzhang ba, *vyavasthāhetu*).¹⁷⁰

According to the AKBh, the difference between a noble one and an ordinary person is their basis and the specific kind of understanding; whereas the *Ny proposes the term “the cause

¹⁶⁹ As discussed in section 1.3.1., the authorship of Sthiramati’s works remains unsolved. Thus, the title “AKTA”, not the name Sthiramati, is used in this thesis to avoid dispute.

¹⁷⁰ AKTA, pp. 206a6–7: *de la nyon mongs pa spangs pa nyid ni nyon mongs pa'i sa bon rtsa ba nas bton pa las nyon mongs pa rnam kyang mi skye ba'o // nyon mongs pa ma spangs pa nyid ni nyon mongs pa'i sa bon rtsa ba nas ma bton pa las nyon mongs ba yang skye ba srid pa'o // de ltar na 'jig rten pa'i yid dang ldan pa yin yang gang la sa bon med pas nyon mongs pa nam yang mi skye ba'i chos can yin pa de dag ni 'phags pa yin la / gang dag la sa bon rgyun ma bcad pas kyang skye bar 'gyur ba de dag ni so so'i skye bo yin pas rnam par gzhang ba grub po.*

of establishment” to describe the difference due to the concepts of accompaniment and non-accompaniment. The AKTA, on the other hand, accepts the term “the cause of establishment” but attempts to focus on the annihilation of afflicted *bījas*. Those who are free from afflictions are considered noble ones, while those who still possess afflictions are referred to as “various kinds of beings”, or “ordinary persons”.

According to the Yogācāras, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* refers to the process of conceptualisation. Since “conceptualisation” (*vikalpa*) must be a false understanding with regard to the dichotomy of subject and object, the subsequent question arises: if a noble one annihilates all afflicted *bījas*, how can they maintain their mental continuums and perceive the world? If the noble ones do not perceive the mundane world, they should be in the supramundane world or enter the cessation and are unable to teach Buddhist teachings to ordinary people.

To answer this question, the AKTA explains that even if noble ones remain in the mundane world, they are still noble ones because they do not have afflicted *bījas* and do not cause any afflictions to arise. In this context, the AKTA simply considers the term *bīja* as “affliction”. Moreover, after the afflicted *bījas* are annihilated by the paths of seeing and cultivation, noble ones remain in the mundane world by continuing with pure mental activities. This allows them to perceive the mundane world in a pure way—namely, without conceptualisation, which may imply the existence of pure *bījas*.

Following the position of the AKBh, the AKTA equates the concept of *prāpti* with the concept of *bījas*:

Here, *prāpti* is simply a *bīja*. Due to this reason, unlost *prāpti* is also a *bīja* itself. This is the so-called “mark of knowledge” (*shes pa*, **jñānacihna*).¹⁷¹

The unlost *prāpti* refers to the cause of non-disappearance in the *Ny. Since *bījas* dwell in one’s mental continuum, the noble *dharmas* could arise from corresponding *bījas*. These *bījas* of noble *dharmas* distinguishing noble ones from ordinary people are understood as the “mark of knowledge”. Sthiramati incorporates these aspects that the *Ny ascribes to *prāpti* to the concept

¹⁷¹ AKTA, p. 206b1: *thob pa ni 'dir sa bon kho na'o // de'i phyir thob pa chud mi za ba yang sa bon nyid de de'i zhes bya ba shes pa'o*. For the English translation cf. the Japanese translation from Katō (1987: 64).

of *bījas*.

Furthermore, Sthiramati redefines the term “various kinds of beings” in the AKTA:

The basis from which the noble path arises, [where] the afflicted *bījas* are to be abandoned by the [power of paths of] seeing and cultivation and therefore become the cause other than the basis that always connects with [*dharmas*]. In this context, the so-called “various kinds of beings” (*so so skye bo, pṛtagjana*) exists because the afflictions in three times period [remain as] *bījas* without exception, and because another moment, which is always connected with [*dharmas*], arises from [these *bījas*].¹⁷²

The AKTA depicts the basis of a noble one as a basis that is not associated with any conditioned *dharmas*. Since the *bījas* are completely destroyed by the power of the two noble paths, the basis no longer contains defiled *bījas*; therefore, a noble one does not bring forth conditioned *dharmas*. In contrast, the “various kinds of beings”, namely ordinary people, still have the afflicted *bījas* that can give rise to conditioned *dharmas*. This paragraph highlights the idea that an ordinary person’s basis serves as the cause of the next moment and possession of *bījas*. Although the *ālayavijñāna* is not mentioned in this paragraph, the relationship between the basis and the *bījas* is similar to the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*.

The AKTA further elaborates on what the “annihilation of *bījas*” means:

The antidote (*gnyen po*) to afflictions is the manifestation of the paths of seeing or the path of cultivation. The basis (*rten*) of the arising of the manifestation is the abandoned afflicted *bījas* and it is not the cause of other moments that always connects with [*dharmas*], because the attainment of the condition which is in contradiction to the ordinary person.¹⁷³

The AKTA further explains the power of the two noble paths as “antidotes”. Through the

¹⁷² AKTA, pp. 207a1–2: *'phags pa'i lams skyes pa'i rten ni mthong ba dang bsgom pas spang bar bya ba'i nyon mongs pa'i sa bon dang / rjes su 'brel ba'i rten gzhan gyi rgyur 'gyur pas gnas skabs der ni so so skye bo zhes bya ste / khams gsum pa'i nyon mongs pa ma lus pa'i sa bon dang rjes su 'brel pa'i skad cig gzhan skyed par byed pa yin pa'i phyir ro.*

¹⁷³ AKTA, pp. 207a2–3: *nyon mongs pa'i gnyen po ni mthong ba'i lam mam bsgom pa'i lam mngon du gyur la / de mngon du gyur na rten de dag gi spang bar bya ba'i nyon mongs pa'i sa bon dang rjes su 'brel pa'i skad cig ma gzhan gyi rgyu ma yin te da skye ba dang 'gal ba'i rkyen thob pa'i phyir ro.*

manifestation of the two noble paths, the afflicted *bījas* are abandoned and the basis of a noble one is no longer the cause of bringing forth conditioned *dharmas*. Having attained the power of the two noble paths, the basis of a noble one is thus different from that of an ordinary person. The metaphor of the “antidote” is used in the *Mahāyānasamgraha*, where the pure *dharmas* coexist in the defiled *ālayavijñāna* like an antidote and a poison (see section 4.1.1).

Regarding this, the AKTA states that the abandonment of afflicted *bījas* cannot be reversed. In the AKTA:

The abandoned afflicted *bījas* is irreversible [and] exactly uninterrupted; therefore, the attainment of the condition is in accordance with that ordinary person, the nature of this cause exists even in the past. For this reason, because of the basis, afflictions are opposed by the [power of the paths of] seeing and cultivation and are unable to arise; thus, *bījas* do not exist. The absent *bījas* (*sa bon med pa rnams*) are not possible to arise; therefore, it [leads to] an extreme consequence.¹⁷⁴

The AKTA points out that an ordinary person has the possibility of abandoning afflicted *bījas*. Once the afflicted *bījas* are removed, the basis contains no *bījas* and the ordinary person becomes a noble one. The possibility of abandoning *bījas*—in other words, becoming a noble one—relates to the concept of lineage (*gotra*) in other texts. Lineage categorises sentient beings into different groups so that they can engage in different practices (see section 4.1). As the basis of the noble one contains no *bījas*, the AKTA does not present the existence of pure *bījas*. Hence, the concept of *bījas* in the AKTA is defiled and has to be removed.

To strengthen the possibility of the two noble paths arising, the AKTA supports the existence of positive *dharmas* without any effort:

As for the positive roots being completely undamaged, this is due to the absence of wrong view. By this [absence], the *bīja*-state (*sa bon gyi dngos po, bījabhāva*) is thus

¹⁷⁴AKTA, pp. 207a3–5: *spang bar bya ba'i nyon mongs pa'i sa bon mi ldog pa'i bdag nyid kho na bar ma chad du de skye ba dang rjes su mthun pa'i rkyen thob pas rgyu'i ngo bo ste 'das pa yang ngo // de'i phyir rten des mthong ba dang bsgom pas sdang bar bya ba'i nyon mongs pa rnams kyang bskyed par mi nus te / sa bon med pa'i phyir ro // sa bon med pa rnams ni skye bar mi rigs te ha cang thal ba'i phyir ro*. The Derge version reads "mchad du", but it does not make sense in this context. Therefore, I have corrected it to "ma chad du" in accordance with the Narthang version. (N4673, p. 243b–4).

undamaged and does not arise through preparatory effort (*ma 'bad bar skyes pa, ayatnabhāvin*), endowed with these completely undamaged positive roots.¹⁷⁵

Although the AKTA does not present the idea of pure *bījas*, it considers the positive roots to be the *bīja*-state that exists without preparatory effort and is capable of generating pure *dharmas* in the future. Both the AKBh and the AKTA regard the *bīja*-state as the capacity of future regenerating, especially for reduplicating the positive roots. In this regard, the term *bīja* in the AKBh and the AKTA refers to afflictions, while the *bīja*-state signifies the capacity to regenerate and exists even after the abandonment of afflicted *bījas*.

The AKTA quotes several passages from the AKBh and clearly acknowledges the botanical function of *bījas*, which is to generate fruition:

[The AKBh] states: “fruition is generated” and so on. The fruition (*'bras bu*) encompasses wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral *dharmas*. Then, the capacity (*nus pa*) of name and matter to “generate” is the *bīja* of these [fruits].¹⁷⁶

According to the definition in the AKBh, *bījas* are name and matter, which refers to linguistic expressions and objects and also represent a sentient being (see section 2.1.2). The fruitions are wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral, which can be regarded as karmic fruitions. This capacity, differing from the capacity of manifesting the two noble paths, is the dynamic power to mature *bījas*.

The AKTA then comments on a *bīja* generating its fruition “directly or indirectly”:

[The AKBh] states: “due to direct or indirect”. The “direct” is without intermediate spaces. The “indirect” refers to interruption by other moments classified as series. Due to other complete transformation, the translation into distinction is specific

¹⁷⁵ AKTA, pp. 208a1–2: *dge ba'i rtsa ba kun tu ma chad pa rnams la ni log par lta ba med pa'i phyir de dag gis sa bon gyi dngos po nyams par ma byas pas ma 'bad bar skyes pa rnams dang ni dge ba'i rtsa ba kun tu ma chad par ldan no zhes bya'o.*

¹⁷⁶ AKTA, pp. 208b2–3: *'bras bu bskyed bar bya ba la zhes bya la sogs pa la / 'bras bu ni dge ba dang / mi dge ba dang / lung du ma bstan pa'i chos rnams te / de la bskyed par bya ba la nus pa'i ming dang gzugs gang yin pa de ni de dag gi sa bon no zhes bya'o.*

transformation ('gyur ba'i bye brag, pariṇāmaśeṣa).¹⁷⁷

The term “direct” refers to the process that sustains one’s mental continuum. It reduplicates *bījas* and fruitions with the same characteristic. On the other hand, the term “indirect” represents the specific transformation. Since the term “indirect” involves other moments classified as a continuum, it may denote the rebirth of a sentient being. In the *Triṃśikā*, the matured *karman* project the *ālayavijñāna* to the next life and start a new life-continuum (see section 3.4). The interruption of other moments perhaps expresses the moment of death and the mental continuum continues in the next life.

Notably, the AKTA ascribes the original concept of specific transformation to the *Sāṃkhya* school:

In this context, the capacity (*nus pa*) of generating fruition, which is to generate the fruition immediately. Therefore, [the concept of a specific transformation] is divided from the “transformation” ('gyur ba) of *Sāṃkhyas* (*grangs can pa*).¹⁷⁸

The idea of condition *dharmas* in Buddhism can be traced back to the non-Buddhist *Sāṃkhya* school as the conception of *rajas* (Stcherbatsky 1923: 22). Thus, the AKTA defines the term “transformation” as:

Because of such [transformation], it is called “transformation [in] a series” (*rgyud gzhan nyid du 'gyur ba*). The result of generating non-identical fruitions is because of the different causes in a series. [The AKBh] states: “series” and “what can it be”. The established meanings are two: the true meaning and the designation (*btags pa*).¹⁷⁹

Through this passage, we acknowledge that the reason why various *dharmas* arise from one’s

¹⁷⁷ AKTA, pp. 208b2–3: *mngon sum mam brgyud pas zhes bya ba la/_mngon sum ni bar med pa'o // brgyud pa ni rgyun tu gtogs pa'i skad cig gzhan gyis bar chod pa'o // yongs su 'gyur ba gzhan las khyad bar du gyur ba ni 'gyur ba'i bye brag go*. Park (2014: 350) provided the English translation for the first two sentences.

¹⁷⁸ AKTA, pp. 208b 3–4: *de ni 'bras bu bskyed par byed pa'i nus pa zhis gang gi mjug thogs su 'bras bu skye ba'o // grangs can pa'i 'gyur ba las rnam par dbye bar bya ba'i phyir*.

¹⁷⁹ AKTA, pp. 208b 4–5: *de nyid kyi phyir rgyud gzhan nyid du 'gyur ba'i zhes bya ba smos te / rgyud tha dad pa'i rgyu las mi 'dra ba'i 'bras bu 'byung ba zhes bya ba'i don to / rgyud ces bya ba 'di yang ci zhis yin zhes bya ba ni dngos po rnam kyis rnam par gzhas pa ni gnyis te / don dam pa dang / btags pa'o*. For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 365).

mental continuum is because of the different causes. These different causes generate different fruitions so the process is called “transformation”. However, the AKTA does not assume that the characteristic of the *bīja* changes during the transformation. Instead, it deems that there are different causes in a series that generate non-identical fruitions. Then, the AKTA divides the “series” into two aspects:

So, if one explains that the true meaning is a series, in this way there is no difference from the Sāṃkhya. Again, their perspective is that the transformation is the alternation which exists as an entity (*rdzas*), this is the [concept of] transformation.¹⁸⁰

In this context, the term “true meaning” pertains to the substantial entity posited by the Sāṃkhya school (Mass 2020: 977). The Sāṃkhya school asserts that there exists an entity that can undergo transformation and shift from one time to another, whereas this assumption contradicts the Buddhist doctrine of non-entity.

This explanation is preserved in the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*, in which Patañjali borrows the Sarvāstivādains’ arguments of the existence of three periods of time to defend the Sāṃkhya’s concept of transformation. According to Mass (2020: 976), Patañjali provides two arguments, the first one is that present knowledge validates past and future knowledge, and the second one is that karmic actions must occur based on past actions and vindicate present and future actions. Hence, Patañjali deems that the transformation changes the real entities of the outside world and mental activities. Nevertheless, the AKTA rejects the idea of regarding the “transformation in a series” as a real entity. He, therefore, denotes it as a designation:

Or, if one considers [a series] as a designation (*btags par 'dod pa*), someone may ask this question because they want to know: “How does transformation [serve] as [a designation]?” [The series as a designation] is known as “the conditioned *dharmas* (*'du byed*) as cause and fruition in the three periods of time”. Referring to these two aspects, [namely, cause and fruition], which arise simultaneously because of the nature of cause and fruition, and because those which do not arise as cause and fruition still remain in

¹⁸⁰AKTA, pp. 208b5–6: *de la gal te don dam pa rgyud du 'don na ni / de lta na grangs can pa rnam dang khyad par med de / de dag gi ltar na yang rnam par gnas pa'i rdzas kyi gzhan du 'gyur ba nyid 'gyur ba yin no*. For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 365).

the three periods of time.¹⁸¹

To respond to the reasons why conditioned *dharmas* occur in a series through three periods of time, the AKTA explains that *bījas* and fruitions arise simultaneously. According to the Sarvāstivādins, real entities cannot exist in the same moment,¹⁸² so when the *bījas* and fruitions arise as cause and fruition simultaneously, it suggests that they are not real entities. Moreover, the AKTA points out that *bījas* can preserve condition *dharmas* and dwell in one's mental continuum through three periods of time. Regarding this, the AKTA argues that the series is a designation, because *bījas* and fruitions within it are designated, so that the specific transformation occurs in the mental continuum.

Having deemed the series as designation, the AKTA states that two functions happened in a series:

In this way, according to the teaching [in the AKBh:] “those conditioned *dharma* continue without interruption is a series”, [or] those conditioned *dharmas* which arise to benefit an intimate series [when] they arise differently in previous and subsequent [moments] is called “the transformation in series” (*rgyud gzhan du gyur pa*).¹⁸³

The uninterruptedly conditioned *dharmas* can refer to “the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause” (*niṣyandavāsanā*), and the conditioned *dharmas* which arise differently refer to “the *vāsanā* of maturation”. Both *vāsanās* play an important role in Sthiramati's commentaries, which are discussed in Chapter 3.

In conclusion, the concept of *prāpti* in the AKBh is replaced by the concept of *bījas* and the function of a specific transformation in a series, while in the *Ny it is vigorously defended

¹⁸¹AKTA, pp. 208b6–7: 'on te btags par 'dod pa yin na ni / ji ltar de bzhin gyur pa nyid yin no snyam du shes par 'dod pas 'dri ba'o // 'du byed dus gsum rgyu dang 'bras bur gyur pa rnams so zhes gnyis ka smos pa ni lhan cig skyes pa rnams kyang rgyu dang 'bras bu'i dngos po yin pa'i phyir dang / rgyu dang 'bras bur ma gyur pa rnams kyang dus gsum pa yin pa'i phyir ro. For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 365–366).

¹⁸²Westerhoff (2018: 62): “The Sarvāstivāda also claims that a mental event (*citta*) cannot be simultaneous with another *citta*, and if the craving cannot be simultaneous with the mind knowing it, the craving must be past relative to it, and, if it is correctly known, must exist.”

¹⁸³AKTA, p. 208b8–209a1: de ltar na 'du byed rgyun ma chad par 'jug pa rnams rgyud yin no zhes bstan par 'gyur te / rgyud kyi nye bar phan par gyur ba'i 'du byed rnams snga ma dang // phyi mar mi 'dra bar skye ba ni rgyud gzhan du gyur pa nyid do zhes bya'o. For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 366).

as the representation for the doctrines of the existence of three periods of time and the real entity. Since *prāpti* is the initial “conditioned factor disassociated from the mind”, it is preserved in the Yogācāra school. However, it is simply regarded as the concept of *bījas* in the AKTA by Sthiramati. The three aspects of *prāpti*—namely, the cause of establishment, the cause of non-disappearance and the mark of knowledge—can be included in the concept of *bījas*. The concept of *bīja* in the AKBh, the *Ny, and the AKTA is equivalent to afflictions, while the term *bīja*-state represents the function of reproduction in the future moment. As a result, the Yogācāras establish *bījas* and fruitions through a specific transformation in a series that occurs merely in one’s mental continuum.

2.3 The Concept of *Bījas* as the Cause of Maturation (*vipākahetu*)

This section discusses the concept of *bījas*, which serves as both a replacement for the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti* and a new explanation of the doctrine of *karman*. *Bījas*, with their function of specific transformation in series, demonstrates the core karmic function in the AKBh, namely, “maturation”.

The function of maturation is to allow a previous cause to generate a fruition that has a different characteristic (Dhammajoti 2015: 162).¹⁸⁴ In the AKBh, a specific transformation in the series causes the function of maturation to give rise to a fruition that has a different moral quality from its cause. However, the function of maturation does not originate from the AKBh; it is introduced as one of the six causes in the Sarvāstivāda tradition.¹⁸⁵ Kondō (2015: 19–23) stated that the cause of maturation represents the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time, while a specific transformation in series shows the “present only” philosophy of the AKBh.

¹⁸⁴ Dhammajoti (2015: 162): “...the retribution cause (*vipāka-hetu*) which is established in respect of its (an unskillful or a skillful but with-outflow *dharma*) projecting a fruit which is different in moral nature...”

¹⁸⁵ AKBh, p. 82: *kāraṇaṃ sahabhūś caiva sabhāgaḥ samprayuktakaḥ / sarvatrago vipākākhyāḥ ṣaḍvidho hetur iṣyate*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo 2012: 607: “Cause is considered as sixfold: efficient cause, co-existent cause, homogeneous cause, associated cause, pervasive cause, ripening cause.” My translation of the sixfold cause follows after Dhammajoti (2003: 17): the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*), the co-existence cause (*sahabhūhetu*), the cause of association (*samprayuktakahetu*), the cause of homogeneity (*sabhāgahetu*), the cause of pervasion (*sarvatragahetu*) and the cause of efficacy (*kāraṇahetu*).

2.3.1 The Cause of Maturation (*vipākahetu*) in the Abhidharma Texts

In the *MVŚ, the definition of the cause of maturation is:

[Someone] asks: “What is the nature (自性) of the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*, 異熟因)?”

[We] answer: “[The nature of the cause of maturation] encompasses all unwholesome and wholesome contaminated *dharmas*.”

Having explained the nature [of the cause], we reply to [someone who] asks “Why do you call it the cause of maturation? What does the term “maturation” mean?”

[We] answer: “The meaning of “maturation” (異熟義) is to mature [fruits that are] different from [the causes]. In other words, the wholesome and unwholesome causes generate neutral fruits, which are considered “matured”. As previously stated, the cause of maturation definitely exists in three periods of time and possesses the fruition of maturation.¹⁸⁶

The cause of maturation includes all the unwholesome and wholesome contaminated *dharmas*, which means that the characteristic of the fruition differs from that of its cause. The Sarvāstivādins deem that neutral fruits are generated from the unwholesome and wholesome contaminated *dharmas*. This perspective is compatible with their doctrine of momentariness, as explained by von Rospatt (1995: 1)—“When an entity perishes, a similar new entity arises immediately, creating an uninterrupted continuum.” As previously stated, the cause of maturation exists in three periods of time and possesses the fruition of maturation. Thus, karmic actions arise and mature karmic fruits in one’s mental continuum, composing an interrupted flow as a sentient being.

¹⁸⁶ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, pp. 103c11–15: “問: 異熟因以何為自性? 答: 一切不善, 善, 有漏法, 已說自性. 所以今當說, 問: 何故名異熟因? 異熟是何義? 答: 異類而熟是異熟義. 謂善不善因, 以無記為果, 果是熟義. 如前已說, 此異熟因, 定通三世, 有異熟果.”

The Sarvāstivādins recognise two types of “ripening”:¹⁸⁷

There are two types of “ripening” (*pāka*, 熟): one is the homogenous [ripening]; another one is the heterogeneous [maturation]. Homogenous ripening refers to the fruition of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandaphala*, 等流果), where a wholesome [cause] generates a wholesome [fruition], an unwholesome [cause] generates an unwholesome [fruition], and a neutral [cause] generates a neutral [fruition]. Heterogeneous maturation refers to a fruition of maturation (*vipākaphala*, 異熟果), where a wholesome and unwholesome [cause] generates a neutral fruition. The neutral fruition arises from different causes (異類因)—wholesome and unwholesome—hence it is termed “maturation”.¹⁸⁸

Although the cause of maturation emphasises neutral fruitions—namely, the fruition of maturation which refers to heterogeneous maturation—it still allows for homogenous ripening, which gives rise to the fruition of a homogenous cause. In the commentaries of Sthiramati, the causes of maturation become the *vāsanā* of maturation, indicating that the sentient beings are reborn to a corresponding path in accordance with their *karman*. Moreover, the fruition of a homogenous cause is ascribed to the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause, demonstrating why sentient beings dwell in the mundane world by reproducing negative *bījas*. The *vāsanā* of maturation ensures that *karman* are matured and can project new *ālayavijñāna* in the future, and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause maintains the reproduction of positive *bījas*. Sthiramati’s understandings of these two *vāsanās* are further discussed in Chapter 3.

The concept of the cause of maturation is not exclusive to the Sarvāstivādins, as it is also interpreted by other schools, albeit with differing views. Through the lens of the Sarvāstivādins’ “corrections”, we can investigate how the cause of maturation has been adapted in various schools, thereby providing us with a fundamental concept of the cause of maturation before delving into the AKBh. The first school that Sarvāstivādins disagrees with on this issue is the Dārṣṭāntikas:

¹⁸⁷ In the Chinese translation, the term 熟 refers to both homogenous or heterogeneous result. To distinguish these two meanings, I translate the homogenous result as “ripening”, while the heterogeneous result as “maturation”.

¹⁸⁸ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, pp. 98b5-10: “熟有二種: 一者同類; 二者異類. 同類熟者, 即等流果. 調善生善, 不善生不善, 無記生無記. 異類熟者, 即異熟果, 調善不善, 生無記果. 此無記果, 從善不善異類因生, 故名異熟.”

Why do [Sarvāstivādins] want to make this statement? [The Sarvāstivādins answer:] “To prevent other schools (止他宗) from [wrong understanding] and demonstrate the correct teaching (顯正理).”

Some believe that despite the thought (*cetanā*, 思), there is no cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*, 異熟因), and despite the feeling (*vedanā*, 受), there is no fruition of maturation (*vipākaphala*, 異熟果), as [believed by] the Dārṣṭāntikas. In order to stop their [wrong understanding], [we] demonstrate that both the cause of maturation and the fruition of maturation exist in the five aggregates.¹⁸⁹

In this context, the concept of thought should not be understood as “volition”, which is one of the Sarvāstivāda’s *mahābhūmikas*—i.e., the *dharmas* that are present in every thought that arises. Rather, it is the mental factors used by the Dārṣṭāntikas. According to Dhammajoti (2018: 26), Vasubandhu’s contemporary, the Dārṣṭāntika scholar Śrīlāta (4-5th century), deems that only three mental factors exist: feeling, reflecting, and thought; others are distinct thoughts (*cetanāviśeṣa*). For Śrīlāta, thought is distinct from *vijñāna* (Dhammajoti 2018: 133), and the cause of maturation exists only in the thought and the feeling. However, the Sarvāstivādins disagree with the Dārṣṭāntika’s concept of thought. For the Sarvāstivādins, both the feeling and the thought belong to aggregates, so they deem that the cause of maturation exists overall in the five aggregates.

The mental factors are highlighted further in this excerpt explaining their differences of opinion compared to the Mahāsāṃghikas:

Some believe that only the mind (*citta*, 心) and mental factors (*caitasika*, 心所) have the cause of maturation and the fruition of maturation, as [believed by] the Mahāsāṃghikas (大眾部). In order to prevent them from [wrong understanding], [we] demonstrate that the cause and fruition [of maturation] also exist in all matter and the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*, 不相應

¹⁸⁹ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, pp. 96a24-27: “問: 何故作此論? 答: 為止他宗, 顯正理故. 謂或有執: 離思無異熟因, 離受無異熟果, 如譬喻者. 為止彼執, 顯異熟因及異熟果俱通五蘊.”

行).¹⁹⁰

The fundamental doctrine of the Sarvāstivāda is that all *dharmas* are real entities. According to the doctrine of momentariness, an entity perishes and gives rise to a new entity immediately. As one of the six causes, the cause of maturation maintains this continuum by maturing the unwholesome and contaminated wholesome *dharmas* to neutral fruition. Thus, not only matter but also the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” possess the cause of maturation. The other two refutations refer to the Mahāsāṃghikas, too:

Some believe that the causes of maturation have to abandon their existence, so that their fruitions mature. They state that the causes of maturation have to perish in the past, then [they] give rise to their fruition. As the past moment has ceased, [they] do not have existence. In order to stop their [wrong understanding], [we] demonstrate that the cause of maturation still has real existence until the state of matured fruition.¹⁹¹

By emphasising that the cause of maturation also exists in “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind”, the Sarvāstivādins explain that the cause of maturation has its real entity when its fruition appears. This statement refers to successive causality, which is the diachronic order in which a cause in the prior moment generates a fruition in the next moment.

The coexisting of cause and fruition is also refuted by the Kāśyapīyas,¹⁹² as shown here:

Some believe that when the fruition has not yet matured, the cause of maturation has its existence. When its fruition matured, its existence decayed, as [believed by] the Kāśyapīyas (飲光部). They state that as the *bīja*, when the sprout has not yet grown, there is the existence [of the *bīja*], while [the existence] is rotten when the sprout grows,

¹⁹⁰ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, pp. 96a27-29: “或復有執: 唯心心所, 有異熟因及異熟果, 如大眾部. 為止彼執, 顯此因果亦通諸色, 不相應行.”

¹⁹¹ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, p. 96b1-5: “或復有執: 諸異熟因, 要捨自體, 其果方熟. 彼作是說: 諸異熟因, 要入過去, 方與其果. 過去已滅, 故無自體. 為止彼執, 顯異熟因至果熟位, 猶有實體.”

¹⁹² The Kāśyapīya school is mentioned in the *SBhUC: “至三百年末, 從說一切有部, 復出一部, 名飲光部, 亦名善歲部.” (T2031, no. 49, pp. 15b17-18). For the English translation cf. Masuda (1925: 17) and Tsukamoto (2004: 95): “At the end of the 3rd century, a school derived from the Sarvāstivādins called the Kāśyapīyas, or Suvarṣakas”. However, the detail concepts of the Kāśyapīya school are remained unknown.

just as the cause of maturation. In order to stop their [wrong understanding], [we] demonstrate that the existence of the cause of maturation remains even though the fruition matured.¹⁹³

According to Yamabe (2017: 14), the metaphor of a lamp and light is used to explain simultaneous causality, while a *bīja* and a sprout are for successive causality. The Kāśyapīyas clarify that a *bīja* should be decayed when its sprout grows, meaning that the cause of maturation should cease when the fruition of maturation appears. Although this statement of the Kāśyapīyas seems convincing from a botanic perspective, the Sarvāstivādins argue that the cause of maturation exists when the fruition appears. Regarding the doctrine of the existence of three periods of time, the past moment must be a real entity to give rise to the next moment, so the cause of maturation must exist to generate the fruition of maturation. Remarkably, the Kāśyapīyas' example of *bīja* is not equivalent to the Yogācāras' concept of *bījas*, which signifies the unmanifested *dharmas*.

The last refutation is directed toward non-Buddhists:

Some believe that the produced wholesome and unwholesome [bring forth] no unwholesome and wholesome fruitions, as [believed by] the non-Buddhists. In order to stop their [wrong understanding], [we] demonstrate that wholesome and unwholesome *karman* encompass unwholesome and wholesome fruitions.¹⁹⁴

The Sarvāstivādins speak again of two types of maturation: homogeneous (*niṣyanda*) and heterogeneous (*vipāka*). The unwholesome *dharmas* can generate unwholesome or neutral fruition, and vice versa. From this, it is clear that the cause of maturation exists in the five aggregates and possesses a real entity according to the Sarvāstivādins.

A specific transformation in series in the AKBh depicts the process of karmic maturation through the concept of *bījas* (Park 2014: 464, also see section 2.2.2). Similar to the concept of

¹⁹³ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, pp. 96b6–10: “或復有執: 諸異熟因, 果若未熟, 其體恒有. 彼果熟已, 其體便壞. 如飲光部, 彼作是說: 猶如種子, 芽若未生, 其體恒有, 芽生便壞. 諸異熟因亦復如是, 為止彼執, 顯異熟因, 果雖已熟, 其體猶有.”

¹⁹⁴ *MVŚ, T 1545, no. 27, pp. 96b10–12: “或復有執: 所造善惡, 無苦樂果, 如諸外道. 為止彼執, 顯善惡業, 有苦樂果.”

maturation, the concept of **anudhātu* operates the karmic series in Śrīlāta's thought (Park 2014: 184). However, the concept of **anudhātu* is only partly preserved in the *Ny. Dhammajoti (2018: 22) pointed out that Śrīlātas' concept of **anudhātu* is related to the concept of *bījas* in the YoBh. Therefore, this section sheds light on the concept of *bījas* as a cause of maturation in the AKBh and compares it to the concept of **anudhātu* in the *Ny. For a further discussion of **anudhātu*, see section 2.3.5.

2.3.2 The Cause of Maturation and Moistened *Bījas* (**abhiṣyandabīja*)

Accepting the Sarvāstivāda concept of the cause of maturation, the AKBh further explains the cause of maturation through the *bījas* as a metaphor:

[The verse:] The cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*) is impure, and also wholesome and contaminated [*dharmas*].

[The AKBh:] Only unwholesome and wholesome contaminated *dharmas* belong to the cause of maturation, because their nature is to mature.

[Someone asks:] “Why do neutral *dharmas* not bring out [the fruition of] maturation?”

[The AKBh:] It is because their power is weak, akin to fetid *bījas* (*pūtibīja*).

[Someone asks:] Why do uncontaminated *dharmas* not [bring out the fruition of maturation]?

[The AKBh:] Because they have not been moistened by desires, just as intact *bīja* without moisture. Being unbound from [the three realms], how can [the uncontaminated *dharmas*] give rise to maturation that is bound with [the three realms]? However, the remaining [*dharmas*] give rise to [maturations] because they have both [strong power and desires], just as intact *bījas* that have been moistened (*sārābhiṣyanditabījavat*).¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ AKBh, p. 89: vipākahetur aśubhāḥ kuśalās caiva sāsraṇvāḥ / akuśalāḥ kuśalasāsraṇvāś ca dharmā vipākahetuḥ / vipākadharmatvāt / kasmād avyākṛtā dharmāḥ vipākaṃ na nirvarttayanti / durbalatvāt / pūtibījavat / kasmān

The cause of maturation can generate the fruition of maturation for unwholesome and wholesome contaminated *dharmas*, resulting in a neutral fruition, so that negative *dharmas* are not passed to the next moment. Moreover, the AKBh uses metaphorical *bījas* to respond to two questions. On the one hand, neutral *dharmas* do not give rise to fruitions of maturation because their power is too weak, just like fetid (rotten) *bījas*. Through this metaphor, we acknowledge that the power of neutral *dharma* is less strong than that of wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Therefore, the term maturation implies that the power of a *dharma* will be weaker during the process of maturation. The neutral *dharma* does not have enough power to generate the fruition of maturation. On the other hand, uncontaminated *dharmas* also do not give rise to the fruition of maturation because they are as steady as intact *bījas* that cannot be conditioned by desires. The AKBh considers these desires as water, which moistens afflicted *bījas* and causes afflictions. However, when the practitioners attain the uncontaminated *dharmas*, they no longer have desires, so the afflicted *bījas* are unable to arise. On the contrary, *dharmas* other than the uncontaminated *dharmas* will generate fruitions of maturation by moistening the afflicted *bījas*. In this context, both fetid *bījas* and intact *bījas* represent a negative meaning. Although *bījas* do not arise again when one attains the uncontaminated *dharmas*, they still dwell in one's mental continuum, and will only be annihilated at the time when the noble paths of seeing and cultivation arise.

To further discuss the metaphor of moistened *bījas* (**abhiṣyandabīja*), we shed light on the relationship between “the basis of the cause of *vāsanā*” and the cause of moistened *bījas* in the *Savitarkasavicārādibhūmi* (SavBh). As Gao (2019: 151) noted, these two causes do not result in the same fruitions, so the early concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* lead to different results. In the SavBh:

Then, on “the basis of the cause of *vāsanā*” (*vāsanāhetvadhiṣṭhāna*),¹⁹⁶ the cause of projection (*adhiṣṭhāyākṣepahetu*) is designated. Why? Because mental activities, which

nānāsravāḥ / tṛṣṇānabhiṣyanditatvāt / anabhiṣyanditasārābījavat / apratisaṃyuktā hi kiṃ pratisaṃyuktam vipākam abhinirvarttayeyuḥ / śeṣās tūbhayavidhatvān nirvarttayanti / sārābhiṣyanditabījavat. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 633).

¹⁹⁶ The term *hetvadhiṣṭhāna* in the SavBh combines ten causes in the BoBh and the ŚrBh. The fifteen bases of the cause (*hetvadhiṣṭhāna*) in the SavBh systematically establish a causality between ten causes, four conditions, and five fruitions (Gao 2019: 149–151).

are impregnated (*paribhāvita*) by wholesome and unwholesome *karman* in the desired and undesired planes of existence in the three realms, project the desired and undesired self-entities. Then, external existences turn out well [or] ruined by this dominant condition. Hence, based on [the cause of *vāsanā*], which [includes] wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* and mental activities, the cause of projection is designated.¹⁹⁷

The basis of the cause literally means ‘the place to establish a cause’. As the foundation of causality, the basis of the cause represents different kinds of causes, which correspond to specific causes and bring about corresponding fruitions. The basis of the cause of *vāsanā*, for instance, demonstrates how mental activities are impregnated by wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Through the basis of the cause of *vāsanā*, a sentient being is attracted to the desired and undesired paths. This explanation is similar to the process of rebirth in Vasubandhu’s *Triṃśikā*, where the *ālayavijñāna* is projected to a new group-homogeneity by completed previous *karman* (see section 3.4). The function of the cause of projection together with the dominant condition determines the manifestation or non-manifestation of the object. In other words, the dominant condition of the *vāsanā* strengthens or weakens the manifestation of mental activities that arise from *bījas*.

The basis of the cause of moistened *bījas* is explained thus:

Then, based on the basis of the cause of moistened *bījas*, the cause of production is designated. Why? Because the manifestation [of *dharmas*] generates from its own *bīja* when the *dharmas* are bound with the realms of desire, matter, and non-matter. So, the desire is said to moisten the *bījas*. Thus, by the desires, the moistened *bīja* exists to produce the projected self-entity. As said [in the *sūtra*:] “*Karman* is the cause for arising, while desire is the cause for production.” Therefore, based on the basis of the cause of

¹⁹⁷ SavBh, T1579, no. 30, pp. 107–108: *tatra vāsanāhetvadhīṣṭhānam adhiṣṭhāyākṣepahetuḥ prajñāpyate / tat kasya hetoḥ / tathā hi / śubhāśubhakarma paribhāvitāḥ saṃskārās traidhātuke [ṣṭāniṣṭagatiṣv] iṣṭāniṣṭātmabhāvān ākṣipanti / bāhyānāṃ ca bhāvānāṃ tenaivādhipatyena sampanna vipannatā / tasmāt saṃskārānāṃ śubhāśubhakarma vāsanām adhiṣṭhāyāpekṣāhetuḥ *(ākṣepahetuḥ) prajñāpyate*. For the English translation cf. Yamabe (2021: 474–475); Gao’s translation (2019: 151–152), some terminology terms are translated by me.

moistened *bījas*, the cause of production is designated.¹⁹⁸

The metaphor of moistened *bījas* in the AKBh becomes the basis of a cause in the SavBh. It is agreed in both the AKBh and the SavBh that those *bījas* are moistened by desires. The basis of the cause of moistened *bījas* in the SavBh generates corresponding *dharmas*, in the same way as the homogenous ripening. This is the function of the cause of production. Since the *bīja* brings about the *dharma* as its fruition, it serves as the “condition as a cause”.

Hence, we acknowledge that the early concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* generate different fruitions. In the SavBh:

Then, based on the cause of *vāsanā*, the fruition of maturation and the fruition of a homogenous cause are designated. Based on the cause of truth, the fruition of disjunction is designated. Based on the cause of manly efficacy (*puruṣakārahetu*), the fruition of manly efficacy (*puruṣakāraphala*) is designated. Based on other causes, the fruition of domination is designated.¹⁹⁹

The basis of the cause of *vāsanā* involves the cause of projection and the dominant condition, resulting in the fruition of maturation and the fruition of emanation, which corresponds to homogeneous ripening and heterogeneous maturation. On the other hand, the basis of the cause of moistened *bījas* involves the cause of production and the condition as a cause, resulting in the fruition of domination. Despite being related to the doctrine of *karman* and the concept of maturation, the two bases of *bīja* and *vāsanā* bring about different fruitions. Gao (2021: 12) suggests that *vāsanā* can be considered a specific mode of *bīja*, referring to the continuity of unmoistened karmic *bījas*. However, I argue that the moistened and unmoistened *bījas* were initially used as metaphors to help explain why neutral and uncontaminated *dharmas* would not

¹⁹⁸ SavBh, T1579, no. 30, p. 108: *tatra sābhiṣyandaṃ bījaṃ hetvadhiṣṭhānaṃ adhiṣṭhāyābhinirvṛttihetuḥ prajñāpyate / tat kasya hetoḥ / tathā hi / kāma pratisaṃ yuktānāṃ dharmānāṃ rūpārūpya pratisaṃ yuktānāṃ svakasvakād bījāt prādurbhāvo bhavati / tṛṣṇā punar bījābhiniṣyanda ity ucyate / tatas tayābhiṣyanditaṃ bījaṃ ākṣiptānāṃ ātmabhāvānāṃ abhinirvṛttaye bhavati / yathoktaṃ / karma hetur upapattaye / tṛṣṇā hetur abhinirvṛttaya iti / tasmāt sābhiṣyandaṃ bījaṃ adhiṣṭhāyābhinirvṛttihetuḥ prajñāpyate. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 151–152).*

¹⁹⁹ SavBh, T1579, no. 30, p. 107: *tatra vāsanāṃ ānukūlyam ca hetvadhiṣṭhānaṃ pratyayādhiṣṭhānaṃ cādhiṣṭhāya vipākaphalaṃ niṣyandaphalaṃ ca prajñāpyate. Gao (2019: 150) creates a chart of ten causes (hetu), fifteen cause bases (hetvadhiṣṭhāna), four conditions (pratyaya) and five effects (phala).*

lead to the fruition of maturation. Moistened *bījas* then become the basis of a cause, producing corresponding *dharmas*, whereas the basis of the cause of *vāsanā* causes mental activities to be impregnated and attracts an individual to desired and undesired paths. As discussed, in the SavBh, the basis of the cause of *vāsanā* replaces the meaning of moistened *bījas* in the AKBh. This may indicate the gradual shift of importance from *bīja* to *vāsanā*. Furthermore, the two bases of a cause reveal that moistened *bījas* and *vāsanā* have different causes, conditions, and fruitions, indicating that the early understanding of *bījas* and *vāsanās* does not consider them synonymous.

2.3.3 The Cause of Maturation and a Specific Transformation in the Series (*santatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*)

The cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*) involves not only *bījas* but also the function of a specific transformation in the series. The AKBh argues with the Sarvāstivāda concept of the cause of maturation according to the Sautrāntikas:²⁰⁰

So, what is the meaning of “maturation” (*vipāka*)? Ripening (*pāka*) is dissimilar to maturation. But, for other causes, ripening is similar. The Vaibhāṣikas (i.e., Sarvāstivāda), both [dissimilar and similar] are of one cause. However, the “ripening” of them is not acceptable. The “ripening” is the conclusion of the fruition, which is called “born from the specific transformation in the series” (*santatipariṇāmaviśeṣajaḥ*), whereas the fruition of the causes of co-existent and association, arising from the specific transformation in the series, does not exist. Also, the fruition of the cause of homogeneity and so on does not exist. Therefore the sole explanation of *vipāka* is the following: “transformation and maturation.”²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ The Sanskrit version does not mention any school here, yet Sangpo ascribes this to the Sautrāntikas.

²⁰¹ AKBh, pp. 89–90: *atha vipāka iti ko 'rthaḥ / visadrśaḥ pāko vipākaḥ / anyeṣāṃ tu hetūnāṃ sadrśaḥ pākaḥ / ekasyobhayatheti vaibhāṣikāḥ / naiva tu teṣāṃ pāko yuktaḥ / pāko hi nāma santatipariṇāmaviśeṣajaḥ phalaparyantaḥ / na ca sahābhūsamprayuktahetvoḥ santatipariṇāmaviśeṣajaṃ phalam asti / na cāpi sabhāgahetvādīnāṃ phalaparyanto 'sti*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 895, note. 913). According to the Chinese translation “由此但應作如是釋，變異而熟是異熟義”，Sangpo adds: “Therefore the sole explanation of *vipāka* is the following: “transformation (*vipariṇāma*) and maturation”.

The Sarvāstivāda's cause of co-existent means: if A causes B, both A and B must exist at the same time; though they may belong to different time periods with respect to their own temporal frame of reference (Dhammajoti 2003: 18). From the perspective of the Sautrāntikas, the ripening fruition applies only to the cause of maturation, and not to other causes. The co-existent cause and the cause of association, on the one hand, generate their fruitions simultaneously and do not cause a specific transformation in series to occur. On the other hand, the causes of efficacy, homogenous, and pervasion arise and perish in the three periods of time, and thus do not meet the definition of the fruition of maturation, which will not regenerate due to its weak power. Therefore, the Sautrāntikas in the AKBh define the cause of maturation as a cause that must experience a specific transformation in series and generate a neutral fruition, which eventually stops generating due to its weak power. Thus, a specific transformation in series becomes a necessary condition for the cause of maturation to function. Through this function, the cause of maturation produces dissimilar fruition in the next moment.

The process of maturation occurring in a self-series is explained by Vasubandhu in relation to different moments in the AKBh:

The maturation (*vipāka*) does not mature together with *karman*, nor immediately, because it is attracted by the equal-immediate condition of the equal-immediate moment.

The cause of maturation is in regard to the stream.²⁰²

According to the AKBh, *karman* appears after a cause of maturation, such as unwholesome *dharmas* or contaminated wholesome *dharmas*, and then the fruition of maturation is generated—for instance, if someone engages in negative behavior, it produces negative *karman*, and then the neutral fruition of maturation is generated. Thus, the production of *karman* and fruition is not simultaneous. Moreover, the fruition of maturation is not immediately generated after *karman*, because this fruition is attracted by the equal-immediate condition. The process of maturation cannot occur outside a sentient being and is neither simultaneous nor immediate.

When the AKBh introduces the concept of *bījas*, it states that *bījas* can arise with their fruition either immediately or otherwise. Like the cause of maturation, *bījas* can only exist in one's

²⁰²AKBh, p. 90: na ca karmaṇā saha vipāko vipacyate nāpy anantaram samanantarapratyayākṛṣṭatvāt samanantarakṣaṇasya / pravāhāpekṣo hi vipākahetuḥ. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 637).

mental continuum. In the AKBh, *bījas* exist as a potency:

The *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*) is placed in this continuum by the twofold defilement for the arising of the future. Due to the abandonment of the [twofold defilement], the [*bīja*-state] is also abandoned, just as *karman* is destroyed due to exhausted maturation.²⁰³

The concept of *bījas* refers to a potency for future afflictions. In this context, the *bīja*-state refers to a seed-like situation where previous and present afflictions are hibernating in one's mental continuum. If those *bījas* are annihilated, future afflictions will not arise, and this sentient being will be free from afflictions. As the fruition of maturation will not arise in the next moment, the *karman* of the cause of maturation is exhausted. Therefore, the annihilation of afflictions is based on the absence of the *bīja*-state:

Then, due to the absence of the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*), the complete non-arising of the future suffering or defilement is [so-called] abandonment.²⁰⁴

The AKBh uses the *bīja*-state to ensure that afflictions dwell in one's mental continuum during the three periods of time but refutes that the *bīja*-state is a real entity or a *dharma*. It is merely a designation (*prajñapti*).

In conclusion, the explanation in the AKBh highlights the possibility of the cause of maturation generating a dissimilar fruition. The concept of *bījas* serves as moistened *bījas* that can give rise to afflictions. The neutral fruition of maturation does not arise in the next moment, just as fetid *bījas* with weak power. While the process of maturation depends on a specific transformation in series and cannot exist in the three periods of time, the *bīja*-state serves as potency for giving rise to future afflictions. Hence, the interaction between the concepts of *bījas* and the cause of maturation illustrates that the concept of *bījas*, as a designation, acts as both cause and fruition in the three periods of time to maintain continuity, while denying any real entities.

²⁰³ AKBh, pp. 92–93: tena ca kleśadvayenāsyām santatau bījabhāva āhito 'nāgatasyotpattaye / tasya prahāṇāt tad api prahīṇaṃ bhavati / yathā vipākakṣayāt karmaṃ kṣīṇaṃ bhavati. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 645).

²⁰⁴ AKBh, p. 93: *anāgatasya punar duḥkhasya kleśasya vā bījābhāvāt atyantam anutpādaḥ prahāṇam*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 645).

2.3.4 The Refutation in the *Ny

The AKBh deems that the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*) has two functions—namely, the specific transformation in series (*santatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*), and the strength of the cause within a limited time. However, the *Ny disagrees with the AKBh and suggests two different functions of the cause of maturation.

For the time order, the *Ny says that the cause of maturation should exist in the past:

Or, there are some causes that deliver their fruition in dependence upon a time period, as in the case of causes of maturation (*vipākahetu*, 異熟因) or as in the case of causes leading to liberation (*mokṣabhāgīya*, 解脫分), which deliver their fruition only when they are in the past time period.²⁰⁵

This statement implies successive causality, in which the cause and the fruition cannot exist at the same moment. As Park (2014: 288) points out, “the original *karman* initiates an extended process of maturation starting from the subsequent moment all the way up to the final moment of fruition.”

Thus, the *Ny argues that the AKBh’s understanding of the Sarvāstivādins is wrong:

However, the *sūtra*-master (經主) states that the Sarvāstivādins’ (毘婆沙師) explanation of maturation as “the cause of maturation” alone gives forth only a ripening fruition that is not similar to itself. The causes such as co-existent cause (*sahabhūhetu*, 俱有因) and so on give forth only a ripening fruition similar to themselves. The cause of efficacy (*kāraṇahetu*, 能作因) gives forth a similar or dissimilar fruition. Thus, only one can be called the cause of maturation and any further explanation is fallacious. The Sarvāstivādins (毘婆沙師) do not assert that the six causes are referred to as ‘ripening’. Even if they did, “ripening” would simply be another term for fruition and not a fallacy. The cause of maturation has two functions: the ability to project (*ākṣepa*, 牽弓) and the ability to complete (*paripūraka*, 圓滿). Therefore, the group-homogeneity

²⁰⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 409b22–23: “或復有因待世與果, 如異熟因順解脫分, 要在過去方能與果。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 332).

(*nikāyasabhāga*, 眾同分) and the faculty of life (*jīvita*, 命根) should not be projected only by “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasamskāra*, 不相應行).²⁰⁶

The *Ny argues that the term “ripening” refers to the result of a karmic action and does not mean “maturation”. Kritzer (2005:110) notes that neither Paramārtha’s nor the Tibetan translation contains passages that refer to this topic, and therefore the *Ny does not provide any explanation of the cause of maturation. However, in the following passage, the *Ny ascribes two functions to the cause of maturation: the ability to project and the ability to complete. These two functions focus on establishing the group-homogeneity, the similarity of sentient beings, and the faculty of life, which are regarded as karmic results in the *Ny.

From this paragraph, the *Ny clearly refutes the function of a specific transformation in series and also disagrees with the notion that the strength of the cause will reduce in a limited time. To support his arguments, the *Ny utilizes *sūtras* as evidence:

According to the *sūtras*, *karman* is the cause of generating (*utpatti*, 生因). Or, it is said that *karman* causes rebirth and death to operate. Or, it is also said that the power of *karman* can distinguish the sentient beings. Or, it is said that the inferior realm is projected by the *karman* of thought (*cetanā*, 思業). One should know that the inferior realm belongs to desires. Or, it is said in the **Prakaraṇapāda* (品類足) that all faculties of life are the maturation of *karman*, because they are not *karman*. The statement in the **Prakaraṇapāda* that “the ‘conditioned factors disassociated from the mind’ do not have *karman*” is explained as meaning that all faculties of life are the maturation [of karmic fruition]. The power of *karman* is superior in projecting the maturations [of karmic fruition]. Based on these meanings, it is said.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 427b18–26: “然經主言: 毘婆沙師作如是釋, 異類而熟, 是異熟義. 謂異熟因, 唯異類熟, 俱有等因唯同類熟. 能作一因兼同異熟, 故唯此一名異熟因. 乃至廣說, 皆不應理. 毘婆沙師非決定說六因所得皆名熟故. 設許爾者, 是果異名, 亦無有失. 此異熟因總說有二: 一能牽引; 二能圓滿. 且眾同分及與命根, 非不相應行獨所能牽引.” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 332–333).

²⁰⁷ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 427b26–c3: “如契經說: 業為生因. 又說: 業令生死輪轉. 又言: 業力能別有情. 又言劣界, 思業所引. 應知劣界即是欲有. 又《品類足》說: 諸命根是業異熟, 非是業故. 不相應行無是業者, 諸有釋此《品類足》言: 一切命根皆是異熟, 於招異熟業力最勝, 由此意趣故作是說.”

In this context, the term “maturation” refers to “the karmic fruition”, rather than the difference between cause and fruition. Hence, the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity are the basis of a sentient being and the fruitions from previous *karman*. The *Ny explains why the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” cannot project the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity by quoting the **Prakaraṇapāda*.²⁰⁸ Since the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” are not involved with thoughts, they do not accompany *karman* and do not produce the maturations of karmic fruition.

Dharmas with *karman* have the superior power to project and complete the maturation of birth, while *dharmas* without *karman* cannot project it. This distinction occurs in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought:

It is not *karman* alone that is the projector (*ākṣepaka*) of a birth. Then how? Others are also having maturation with it [i.e., *karman*] (*savipāka*). However, by all means, [the verse:] [although they “have a [karmic fruition] of maturation”,] neither the two meditative absorptions without mind nor *prāpti* project [a birth]. The group-homogeneity will not project [a birth] from the two meditative absorptions without mind even though they do have a [karmic fruition] of maturation, because they do not coexist with *karman*. [The group-homogeneity will not project [a birth]] through the *prāpti* because they do not have the same karmic fruition of *karman*.²⁰⁹

The two meditative absorptions without mind refer to the meditative absorptions of non-thought and cessation (i.e., *asaṃjñāsamāpatti* and *nirodhasamāpatti*), which are considered as the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” and lack *karman*. Thus, these two meditative absorptions do not have the superior power of *karman* to project a birth, even though they still

²⁰⁸ **Prakaraṇapāda*, T1562, no. 26, p. 714c14–17. The English translation is offered by me: “What is the “*dharma* that operates without being accompanied by *karman*”? It is said that this *dharma* does not arise, dwell, or perish together with the thought (*cetanā*). It includes matters (*rūpa*) that are accompanied by physical or linguistic *karman*, the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktvasaṃskāra*) that are accompanied by *karman*, the thought (*cetanā*), and the unconditioned *dharmas* (*asaṃskṛta*), which are all considered to be “*dharmas* that operate without accompanying *karman*”.

²⁰⁹ AKBh, p. 259: *na ca kevalaṃ karmaivākṣepakaṃ janmanaḥ / kiṃ tarhi / anyad api savipākaṃ / sarvathā tu nākṣepike samāpattī acitte prāptayo na ca / savipākābhyāmapyacittasamāpattibhyāṃ nikāyasabhāgo nākṣipyate / karmāsahabhūtatvāt / prāptibhiś ca karmaṇo ’nekaphalatvāt*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1446–1447).

generate maturation. In the AKBh, the maturation generated by the two meditative absorptions is considered to be the neutral fruition, while the maturation that results from *karman* is the karmic fruition, such as the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity—namely, the basis of a sentient being in accordance with the *Ny. Regarding this, the AKBh states that even if a practitioner possesses (*prāpti*) the two meditative absorptions, they cannot project a birth because the cessations, which are contaminated wholesome *dharmas*, will mature as neutral fruitions and are too weak to project a birth.

To refute the stance in the AKBh that “all *dharmas* which have a [karmic fruition] of maturation can project a birth”, the *Ny argues that only *karman* is the superior cause for maturation:

Karman is the superior cause for maturation. The faculty of life and the group-homogeneity are the superior [fruition of] maturation. *Karman* must be allowed to project the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity, so that *karman* can be stated as “the superior cause for the maturation”. There should not be any other reasons.²¹⁰

For the *Ny, the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” do produce *karman*, so they should not project the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity. This stance is in accordance with the **Mahāvibhāsā*, which states, “Only *karman* can project the group-homogeneity. The meditative absorption of cessation does not have *karman*.”²¹¹ However, the question is: If the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought cannot project a birth, how can a practitioner continue life? Thus, the *Ny assumes that the opponent suggests the neutral *karman* can also project the maturation:

[The opponent:] When this *karman* projects the faculty of life and the group-

²¹⁰ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 427c4–6: “業於異熟是勝因故。命，眾同分是勝異熟。許唯業招命，眾同分，方可得說於招異熟業力最勝。異不應爾。”

²¹¹ *MVŚ, T1545, no. 27, p. 782c29–783a2: “問：滅盡定於眾同分為亦能引？為但滿耶？答：此但能滿而不能引。所以者何？唯業能引眾同分。此非業故。” The English translation is provided by me: “One asks, ‘Does the meditative absorption of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) project or complete (*paripūraka*) the group-homogeneity?’ The answer is, ‘It can only complete (*paripūraka*) but not project the group-homogeneity (*nikāyasabhāga*).’ [Then, one further asks], ‘So what is it?’ [The answer is], ‘Only *karman* can project the group-homogeneity. The meditative absorption of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) does not have *karman*.’”

homogeneity, the neutral *karman* can also project the superior maturation.

[The *Ny:] If you insist that neutral *karman* can also project the maturation, then you cannot claim that the power of *karman*, which projects the maturation, is superior. Thus, your explanation is fallacious. The *karman* of the body and speech do not involve the mind, and therefore cannot project (弓) the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity. To state otherwise would contradict the *sūtras* (違契經正理).²¹²

It should be noted that in the AKBh, neutral *karman* cannot generate maturation as it only generates neutral fruition. Therefore, the opponent to this view should be Śrīlāta, a Sautrāntika scholar whose concept of **anudhātu* allows the neutral fruition to further perfume (*vāsanā/bhāvita*) wholesome and unwholesome *dharma*s. The *Ny asserts that only *karman* involving the mind can project maturation. The opponent further argues:

[The opponent:] According to the *sūtra*: “The inferior realm (*kāmadhātu*, 劣界) is projected by the *karman* of thought (*cetanā*, 思).” This statement assumes that only the *karman* of intention (*manaskarma*, 意業) can project the faculty of life and the portion of sameness, not the *karman* of the body and speech.

[*Ny:] The *karman* of body and speech (身語表業) is like many atoms (*paramāṇu*, 極微) arising from one mind. Only one [*karman*] within them can project the group-homogeneity and the faculty of life, while others have no ability [to do so]. This assertion is fallacious. If it is allowed to project fruition simultaneously, then the [*karman*] and [the fruition] should be the co-existent cause. [However,] the obstructive matters (*sapratigharūpa*, 對造色) as the co-existent cause is not accepted by the teachings (非宗所許), and it is not generated by the power of transformation.²¹³

²¹² *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 427c7–10: “若執非業，亦能牽引勝異熟者，則不應說於招異熟業力最勝。是故彼釋定非應理。要業牽引命，眾同分時，非業緣斯，亦能招異熟。非心隨轉身語二業，定不能引命，眾同分，不爾便違契經正理。”

²¹³ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 427c10–16: “經言：劣界，思所引故。此說欲有命，眾同分，唯意業感，非身語業。身語表業，眾多極微，一心所起，於中唯一引眾同分及與命根，餘無此能，不應理故。若許同時共感一果，則應更互為俱有因。有對造色為俱有因，非宗所許，此非展轉力所生故。”

The opponent disagrees that the *Ny assumes that the physical and linguistic *karman* involving the mind can project the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity. For the opponent, only the *karman* of thought can project a sentient being to the realm of desire, whereas the *Ny elaborates on the stance of the Sarvāstivādins that the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity are real entities, which can be projected by *karman* involving the mind, not only the *karman* of thought.

Furthermore, the *Ny disagrees that atoms arise simultaneously because they cannot be the co-existent cause, nor occur by the power of transformation. The co-existent cause, according to Dhammajoti (2003: 19), represents the causation in which a distinct A generates a distinct B—both existing simultaneously. The Sarvāstivādins consider the relationship between the cause of homogeneity and the fruition of a homogenous cause as an exception that involves not two ontologically distinct entities, but the arising of a given entity itself in the next moment of its series. Then, the Yogācāras utilise this causation argument and state explicitly that there is no other real causality outside that represented by the co-existent cause and the cause of homogeneity. The refutation in the *Ny is one of the eight arguments that items coexist but are not considered as the co-existent cause in the AKBh, because the elements that offer obstruction cannot be the co-existent cause.²¹⁴ Moreover, as they are real entities, they will not change their characteristics by the specific transformation in series. Hence, the *Ny states:

If so, with what as the supporting basis does the faculty of life operate? Its operation has the projecting *karman* in a previous life and the group-homogeneity of the present life as its supporting basis.²¹⁵

In this paragraph, the *Ny clearly illustrates the faculty of life as a real entity that operates from previous *karman* and the present group-homogeneity. Whereas the AKBh does not consider the faculty of life as a distinct real entity, but rather as “the momentum of the duration of the group-

²¹⁴ Sangpo (2012: 614) points out that derivative material elements or forms (*upādāyarūpa*), i.e., blue, etc., susceptible to offering obstruction (*sapratigha*) and, in addition, arisen together (*sahaja*), are not co-existence cause with one another.

²¹⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 404c23–25: “若爾，命根依何而轉？此依先世能引業轉，及依現世眾同分轉，其眾同分亦准命根。” For the English translation cf. Dharmmajoti (2009: 305).

homogeneity, projected by *karman* in the three spheres of existence.”²¹⁶ However, the *Ny follows the Sarvāstivādin's stance and deems that only one *karman* projects the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity at one moment, while other *karman* complete the circumstance of a sentient being (Dhammajoti 2015: 421).

In discussing maturation, the *Ny posits that the cause of maturation operates solely in the faculty of life and the group-homogeneity as the fruition of *karman*. He argues that this process of maturation is projected by a single *karman* at a particular moment, thus refuting that wholesome and unwholesome contaminated *dharma*s can generate maturation. The *Ny also disputes that the “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind”, namely the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, can project the faculty of life. While the *Ny defines the functions of maturation as the ability to project and the ability to complete, it is important to note that this understanding of maturation does not fully correspond to that in the AKBh, where maturation represents the different characteristics between cause and fruition.

2.3.5 The Cause of Maturation and The Concept of **Anudhātu*

The discussion of maturation includes the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh and the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*) in the *Ny. In this section, we shed light on the concept of **anudhātu*²¹⁷ as introduced by Śrīlāta,²¹⁸ a Dārṣṭāntika scholar, to refute the concept of *bījas*. The concept of **anudhātu* allows the past *karman* to be linked through an uninterrupted series.²¹⁹ This is considered a precursor to the concept of *bījas* in the YoBh (Dhammajoti 2018: 22). According

²¹⁶ Dhammajoti (2015: 305). Dhammajoti translates *traiyadhvaka* into “three spheres of existence”, while I translated it into “three periods of time” in this thesis.

²¹⁷ The concept of **anudhātu* introduced by Śrīlāta has been thoroughly studied by Park (2014). In this section, my focus is solely on the distinction between maturation (*vipāka*) and **anudhātu*.

²¹⁸ Śrīlāta, according to Katō (1989: 58ff) and Park (2014: 65–66), was about 20 years senior to Vasubandhu and 40 years older than Saṃghabhadra. According to Xuánzàng's record (T 2087, no. 51, p. 896b18–19): “昔經部室利邏多(唐言勝受)論師於此製造經部《毘婆沙論》。” “In the previous time, the Śāstra-master, Śrīlāta (know as Shengshou in the Tang Dynasty) composed the *Vibhāṣā-śāstra* of the Sautrāntika school.” The English translation is mine.

²¹⁹ Park (2014: 182): “Śrīlāta puts forth the novel concept of **anudhātu*, a causal medium of transmission over time by which the past *karman* and its later result can be linked with one another through an uninterrupted series. In fashioning this peculiar definition of *hetupratyaya*, Śrīlāta exhibits his great interest in explaining the diachronic continuity of the cause and effect of karmic retribution by way of the subsidiary karmic elements.”

to Park (2014: 137), Vasubandhu likely combines the concept of *bījas* from Sautrāntikas with the concept of **anudhātu* from Dārṣṭāntikas as his foundational concept, and then he creates the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the Yogācāra school.²²⁰

**Anudhātu* has been translated in various ways into English by modern scholars and represents the interpretations in academic thought. Cox (1995: 205) translated **anudhātu* as “subsidiary elements”. Park (2014), however, translated it as a “subsidiary karmic element”.²²¹ Dhammajoti (2018: 104) translated the **anudhātu* as a “pursuant element” which has been transmitted in the mental continuum.²²² The term *dhātu* is understood as “element” rather than “realm” in this compound word. According to Park (2014:193), the term *dhātu* signifies a product of perfuming—i.e., an invisible trace or impression (*vāsanā*) left behind by *karman*. According to the various translations of **anudhātu*, it is related to the doctrine of *karman* and most of the discussions are preserved in Saṃghabhadra’s *Ny. The basic understanding of the concept of **anudhātu* is:

Thus, what is stated by the Sthavira (i.e., Śrīlāta, 上座) as the condition of cause (*hetupratyaya*, 因緣性) is the so-called **anudhātu* (隨界), serving as the cause which allows the sentient beings to mutually continue.²²³

As a cause of maintaining the continuum, the concept of **anudhātu* is similar to the concept of *bījas*, which also serve as the basis of a sentient being. Its characteristic, as that of the *bījas*, is determined by *vāsanā*:

If **anudhātu* (隨界) [produced from] past [*karman*] were to serve as causes by the

²²⁰ Park (2014: 137): “The notion of **anudhātu* exhibits a strikingly similar motivation and functional features to such quasi-synonyms as seed (*bīja*), element (*dhātu*), and spiritual lineage (*gotra*), terms that are attested in the pre-*ālayavijñāna* layers of the *Yogācārabhūmi*”.

²²¹ Park's translation is based on Katō's Japanese article (Park 2014:133).

²²² Dhammajoti (2018: 104): “The term **anudhātu* may be rendered as “pursuant element”. The prefix *anu-* signifies 'following' /'pursuing' 隨逐, *anu-√gam*/**anu-√bandh*; or 'accompanying' 隨俱行, *anu-saha-√gam*. The *anudhātu* is also sometimes called **pūrva-anudhātu* (舊隨界); the component “**pūrva*” signifying the fact that these causal efficacies have been transmitted within the serial continuity from a previous time: they have always been 'accompanying' the serial continuity.” In this thesis, I keep the Sanskrit term **anudhātu* untranslated.

²²³ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 440b3–4: “然上座言因緣性者，謂舊隨界，即諸有情相續展轉能為因性。”

mutual continuum, one should be able to determine their nature, just as in the case of matter, and so forth. As for these **anudhātu* [produced from] past [*karman*], [however,] what serves as their characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*, 相)? These [**anudhātu*] have the characteristics of elements (*dhātu*, 界) that are perfumed (*vāsanā/ paribhāvita*, 所薰) by various kinds of *dharmas*.²²⁴

In this passage, the characteristic of **anudhātu* cannot be determined because it is changed through being perfumed (*paribhāvita*) by various kinds of *dharma*; thus, **anudhātu*, as the object of being perfumed, is “constituted of impression (*vāsanā*) generated by a variety of *karman*” (Park 2014: 192).

However, the *Ny refutes the concept of **anudhātu* by questioning the process of maturation:

If the Sthavira (i.e., Śrīlāta, 上座) agrees that only the self-continuum (*svasaṃtāna*, 自相續), which arises as the determination, is able to serve as the condition of cause (*hetupratyaya*, 因緣), why does [he] further state that wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* serve as condition of cause for producing neutral fruition? The wholesome and unwholesome *anudhātu* cannot produce neutral fruitions because they have a different continuum. If wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* serve as the condition of equal-immediate (*samanantarapratyaya* 無間) for producing neutral fruitions, [the Sthavira] should explain the reason.²²⁵

The *Ny first argues that if **anudhātu* serves as the condition of cause of the self-continuum, it cannot be the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* since they belong to different continuums. It is worth noting that the *Ny rejects the function of a specific transformation in series, so it does not accept the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* as being in the same continuum. Secondly, the *Ny argues that, even if the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* are regarded as conditions of equal-immediacy, they still produce only dominant fruition, not

²²⁴ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 440b13–15: “若舊隨界是有相續展轉為因, 應如色等有體可得. 此為何相? 是種種法所薰成界以為其相.” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 192).

²²⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 442a11–15: “若上座許唯自相續生起決定得為因緣, 云何復許善不善法為因緣生無記異熟? 非善不善隨界為因可生無記, 相續異故. 若善不善無間能生無記異熟, 此中應說何故?” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 215–216).

the fruition of maturation. Only the fruition of maturation can bring out the neutral fruition from the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Thus, the concept of **anudhātu* cannot account for why the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* produce neutral fruitions in the self-continuum.

Moreover, the **Ny* refutes the function of *vāsanā*:

Why does [the Sthavira] state that wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* serve as the condition of cause for producing neutral fruition? If [he] states that wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* are perfumed (熏) by neutral *dharmas* so that the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* serve as the causes of neutral [maturation], I (i.e., Saṃghabhadra) have already refuted the concept of *vāsanās* (熏習) several times as fallacious. If one says that [wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*] are perfumed by previous maturation (**pūrvavipākabhāvita*, 先時異熟熏), then the fruition of maturation should serve as the cause of maturation. If the fruition of maturation arises because wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* serve as causes, it is fallacious to say that they do not have the condition of cause and have only the dominant condition (*adhipatipratyaya*, 增上).²²⁶

For the **Ny*, the neutral fruition is too weak to bring forth any fruition of maturation, so it is impossible for the neutral fruition to perfume the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Additionally, the **Ny* considers the concept of *vāsanās* to be false, so it cannot be the reason why **anudhātu* produces neutral fruition from the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Following the successive causality, even if Śrīlāta argues that the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* are perfumed by previous *karman*, in the next moment, they should become the cause of maturation, rather than the fruition of maturation. Furthermore, Saṃghabhadra defines the cause of maturation as the ability to project and the ability to complete. Therefore, the fruition of maturation implies that the rebirth of a sentient being must have the condition of cause, so that when he/she is reborn, he/she will have common characteristics with other sentient beings,

²²⁶ **Ny*, T1562, no. 29, p. 442a11–21: “云何善不善為因生無記異熟? 若言無記熏善不善, 故善不善為無記因, 此亦非理, 前已數辯彼熏習言無實義故. 又彼云何善不善法無記熏故成異熟因? 若謂先時異熟熏故, 則應異熟為異熟因. 若異熟果, 善不善法為因故生, 而言此中無因緣用, 唯增上攝, 甚為非理.” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 215–216).

namely, the group-homogeneity, and will possess the faculty of life.

The concept of **anudhātu* is applied to the concept of *anuśaya*:

On this point, the Sthavira (i.e., Śrīlāta, 上座) states that the Buddha himself said that those envelopments (*pariyavasthāna*, 纏) are different from *anuśaya* (隨眠), which means that [when] afflictions manifest, they are called “envelopments” because they can arise within the mental continuum of what was previously bound [with afflictions]. The **anudhātu* of afflictions (**kleśānudhātu*, 煩惱隨界) is called “proclivities”. The state of being a cause of having causal capability always accompanies (**anu*) and remains latent or dormant (**√śī*).²²⁷

Śrīlāta clearly utilizes the **anudhātu* of afflictions (**kleśānudhātu*) as the dormant state of afflictions, which is equal to the term *anuśaya*. However, unlike **anudhātu* as the cause in the continuum of a sentient being, the **anudhātu* of afflictions refers to an inactive situation. This may imply that the concept of **anudhātu* includes many aspects and its meaning may change when it is modified by a noun, such as the **anudhātu* of afflictions. The concept of *anuśaya* is discussed in section 2.5.

We have observed that Śrīlāta's concept of **anudhātu* bears similarity to the concept of *bījas* when it serves as the cause in the self-continuum. It also relates to the concept of *vāsanās*, where its element can be perfumed (*vāsanā*) by various kinds of *dharmas*. However, the concept of **anudhātu* falls short in explaining why neutral *dharmas* can bring forth wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*, leading to Saṃghabhadra's vigorous criticism. It is worth noting that the concept of **anudhātu* is not included in the AKBh of Vasubandhu nor the AKTA of Sthiramati. It could be argued that many aspects of **anudhātu* are incorporated into their concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, thereby making it unnecessary to preserve it within these texts (Dhammajoti 2018: 102–106).

As discussed, through the cause of maturation, the moistened *bījas* in the AKBh serve as causes that can be infused by desires and generate corresponding *dharmas*. The contaminated wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* bring forth neutral fruitions that are as weak as fetid

²²⁷ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 597b26–c1: “上座於此謂佛世尊自說諸纏與隨眠異，謂諸煩惱現起名纏，以能現前縛相續故；煩惱隨界說名隨眠，因性恒隨而眠伏故。” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 155).

bījas. This process of producing fruitions that differ from their causes by the specific transformation in series is called “maturation”. However, the *Ny rejects the AKBh's explanation of the cause of maturation, instead deeming that it refers to the ability to complete and the ability to project, which then generates fruitions as the group-homogeneity and the faculty of life. Furthermore, the *Ny criticises Śrīlāta's concept of **anudhātu* because it cannot properly explain the process of maturation, in which neutral fruition regenerates wholesome and unwholesome *dharma*s. This means that in providing an answer for why neutral *dharma*s can bring forth wholesome and unwholesome *dharma*s, the concept of **anudhātu* became too limited and was incorporated into that of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. As Cox (1995: 104 note 48) points out, the concept of *bījas* is used in the fruition of a homogenous cause and the cause of homogeneity, while the specific transformation in a series is used in cases of heterogeneous causation, as the fruition of maturation from causes of maturation.

2.4 The Concept of *Vāsanās* in the AKBh

The term *vāsanā* is significant in the AKBh in relation to cultivation (*bhāvanā*) and consciousness re-arising in meditative states. A strong understanding of this concept is also imperative to discussions surrounding non-informative action (*avijñapti*) in this chapter. The interaction between *bījas* and *vāsanās* as thought (*citta*) and form (*rūpa*) from the Sautrāntika's perspective is also explored.

The concept of *vāsanās* encompasses the terms *bhāvita*, *paribhāvita* and *bhāvanā* in the AKBh.²²⁸ The term *vāsanā* mostly refers to the cultivation, in contrast to *bījas*, which dwell in one's mental continuum as a cause of future *dharma*s (Gao 2022: 3). Yamabe (1989: 212-213) pointed out that, in the early Yogācāra texts, the term *vāsanā* refers to “the impression of defilement” (*kleśavāsanā*), or “the impression of action” (*karmavāsanā*). Katō (1989: 253) noted that Vasubandhu deems the thought repeatedly perfumes the *bījas*, which manifest and mature in the uninterrupted mental stream through the specific transformation in series.

²²⁸ According to Waldron (2003: 213, note 103), the verbal root is $\sqrt{\text{bhū}}$, which means “to be, producing”, and then derives its nominal form *bhāvanā*, referring to “cultivation” in the mind, and its past participle, *bhāvita*, which also means “produced, perfumed, infused”. With the prefix *pari-*, *paribhāvita* means “being impregnated, completely pervaded”. In the Sarvāstivāda texts, cultivation (*bhāvanā*) refers to the term *vāsanā* as “perfuming or habitual influence” (Gao 2019: 49).

The concept of *vāsanās* plays a crucial role in the AKBh's refutation of the Sarvāstivāda concept of non-informative action. While Saṃghabhadra's *Ny argues that the mental stream cannot continue without non-informative action, the AKBh disputes that non-informative action exists as a real entity. However, the AKBh encounters the problem of how consciousness arises again during the two meditative absorptions. The AKBh explains that, when mental activities do not arise, the *vāsanās* cause the *bījas* of thought and form to become the cause of maturation, and then the consciousness arises again. This understanding predates the establishment of the *ālayavijñāna* and is attributed to the Sautrāntikas (Schmithausen 1987: 250).

By investigating these two discussions, we can gain a better understanding of how the concept of *vāsanās* interacts with the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh. It is noteworthy that the AKBh rejects the real entity and utilizes the terms *bījas* and *vāsanās* to articulate its position.

2.4.1 The Concept of *Vāsanās* and the Non-Informative Action (*avijñapti*)

In this section, we focus on the discussion between the concept of *vāsanās* and the non-informative action of the Sarvāstivādins in the AKBh. The term *avijñapti* refers to non-information, regarded as non-informative action (*avijñaptikarman*) and non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*). According to Dhammajoti (2015: 590), the non-informative action is projected by the *karman* of body or speech and then exists in the self-series. The non-informative matter, on the other hand, is a special designated matter (*ūpādāyarūpa*) which is an invisible (*anidarśana*) and penetrable (*apratigha*) matter arising from informative action or meditative absorption (Kramer 2013b: 92).²²⁹

In general, the actions produced by the body (*kāya*), speech (*vāc*), and mental activity (*manas*) can be categorised as actions of thought (*cetanākarman*) and actions of subsequent thought (*cetayitvākarman*).²³⁰ Both actions of the body and actions of speech produce

²²⁹ According to Kramer (2013b: 92), the non-informative action (*avijñapti*) is also mentioned in the *Pañcaskandhaka* as “an invisible and penetrable matter arisen from *vijñapti* or meditative absorption” (PSk, p. 3,8f: *vijñaptisamādhijaṃ rūpam anidarśanam apratigham*).

²³⁰ Dhammajoti (2015: 422) creates a table for mental and physical actions. I slightly change some terminologies.

Two-fold	Three-fold	Informative (<i>vijñapti</i>) action / Non-informative (<i>avijñapti</i>) action
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informative and non-informative action; however, the action of mental activities only produces non-informative action. For the Sarvāstivādins, the non-informative action is a real entity, while the AKBh refutes this assumption.

There are three arguments presented in the AKBh to reject the idea that the non-informative action is a real entity. The first argument is that the matter which is invisible and penetrable is not equivalent to non-informative matter:

Now, as for what was stated, “the matter is of three kinds.” The Yogācāras²³¹ say: “Due to the power of cultivation, the matter is generated as the object-field of cultivation of those engaged in meditation. This matter is not seen with the eyes: it is thus invisible. It does not “cover”, it does not occupy a place (*deśānāvaraṇa*): it is thus non-resistant (*apratigha*). Now, if one thinks, “Now, what is this matter?” It is the same in the [case of] non-informative (*avijñapti*).²³²

Based on experiential evidence, the AKBh denotes that the matter perceived by practitioners in the meditations cannot be seen by the eyes and does not occupy physical space. This special type of matter cannot be equated with non-informative matter. As a result of non-informative matter not existing, non-informative action also does not exist.

Furthermore, the Sarvāstivādins assume that the uncontaminated matter is equivalent to

action of thought (<i>cetanā-karman</i>)	action of mental activities (<i>manas-karman</i>)	No informative or non-informative action
action of subsequent thought (<i>cetayitvā-karman</i>)	action of body (<i>kāyā-karman</i>)	Informative action of body
		Non-informative action of body
	action of speech (<i>vāc-karman</i>)	Informative action of speech
		Non-informative <i>karman</i> of speech

²³¹ Sangpo (2012: 1512–1513, no. 77) stated that the term *Yogācāra* does not refer to a specific school, but rather to practitioners who can see matters (*rūpa*) in meditation (*samādhi*). A similar passage is noted by Kritzer (2005:189), in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* on the *Pañcavijñānakāyamanobhūmi*, which states that the matters as the object of meditation (*samādhi*) arise on the basis of the great elements (*mahābhūta*) associated with that meditation (*samādhi*), and also arise based on meditation in the mundane world (*laukikasamādhi*), whether contaminated (*sāsrava*) or uncontaminated (*anāsrava*).

²³² AKBh, p. 197: *yat tāvad uktam trividharūpokter iti / tatra yogācārā upadiśanti / dhyāyinām samādhiviśayo rūpaṃ samādhiprabhāvād utpadyate / cakṣurindriyāviśayatvāt anidarśanam / deśānāvaraṇatvād apratigham iti / atha matam / katham idānīm tat rūpam iti / etad avijñaptau samānam*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1300).

non-informative matter. However, the AKBh argues that the Sarvāstivādins are overinterpreting the meaning of the *sūtra*:

Also, as for what was stated, “there is an uncontaminated matter (*anāsravarūpa*).” The Yogācāras describe: “The matter that is exactly produced by the power of cultivation in uncontaminated cultivations is uncontaminated.”²³³

The Sarvāstivādins deem that the non-informative matter is a real entity because they consider the uncontaminated matters to be real. However, the AKBh disagrees with the existence of uncontaminated matters in the meditations. The AKBh argues that the uncontaminated matters are a result of the power of cultivation. In other words, when a practitioner enters the meditations, the matter produced by their power is uncontaminated (Kritzer 2005: 188). These uncontaminated matters are equivalent to the non-informative matter in Sthiramati’s *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (Kramer 2013b: 92).

Moreover, the Sarvāstivādins state that the non-informative action is produced by the action of mental activities. In contrast, the AKBh explains that the mental stream is perfumed (*bhāvita*) by actions and gradually changes as a specific transformation:

As for what was said, “due to the statement regarding the increase of merit,” the ancient masters (*pūrvācārya*)²³⁴ also explain: “This is indeed the nature of *dharmas*, just as the gifts of donors are enjoyed, so too, due to the special merit and the special favour of the receivers, even when the donors whose mind has different [ideas], the continuums which are the intention of giving that object are perfumed (*bhāvita*) [and] attain the subtle specific transformation through which they become capable (*samartha*) of producing greater fruition in the future.”²³⁵

²³³ AKBh, p. 197 *yad apy uktam anāsravarūpokter iti tad eva samādhiprabhāvasaṃbhūtaṃ rūpam anāsrave samādhāv anāsravaṃ varṇayanti yogācārāḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1301).

²³⁴ Sangpo (2012: 1513, no. 84) quotes Saṃghabhadra’s Ny and identifies the “ancient masters” (*pūrvācārya*) as referring to Vasubandhu, while Kritzer (2005: 190) attributes the “ancient masters” (*pūrvācārya*) to the Sautrāntikas.

²³⁵ AKBh, p. 197: *yad apy uktam puṇyābhivṛddhivacanād iti tatrāpi pūrvācāryā nirdiśanti dharmatā hy eṣā yathā dātṛṇām dāyāḥ paribhujante tathā tathā bhoktṛṇām guṇaviśeṣād anugrahaviśeṣāc cānyamanasām api*

The ancient masters clarify this case using the metaphor of giving a gift. When a donor gives a gift, the merits increase even if the recipient utilises it inappropriately, or if the donor develops evil intentions later. This is because the mental stream of the donor has been perfumed at the moment of giving the gift, and a subtle specific transformation occurs that will bring forth many fruitions. Thus, the non-informative action is not the main cause of increasing merits. Rather, the merits increase due to the action being repeatedly perfumed.

Then, an opponent questions how the donor can be perfumed by other people's actions. The AKBh answers the question by mentioning that the non-informative action faces the same problem:

Then, if one thinks: "In this case, due to the difference in another continuum, how can the transformation of another continuum occur even the mind is different?" This is the same in the [case of] non-informative. [One asks:] "In this case, due to the difference in another continuum, how can a non-informative [matter] occur as other *dharma* in another continuum? In this case, how can [a non-informative matter] exist in immaterial meritorious works?" It is due to the constant repetition of the intention of that object, even in dreams, these [actions] as a consequence.²³⁶

From the AKBh's perspective, the idea that the non-informative action can arise as a real entity from one person to another is unacceptable. An opponent then questions how immaterial meritorious works can continue without the existence of non-informative action. In response, the AKBh clarifies that the thoughts serve as objects in the mental stream, allowing immaterial meritorious works to continue increasing merits. In the AKBh:

Therefore, the specific transformation in the series is indeed a universal rule.²³⁷

dātṛñāṃ tadālambanadānacetanā bhāvitāḥ saṃtatayaḥ sūkṣmaṃ pariṇāmaviśeṣaṃ prāpnuvanti yenāyatyāṃ bahutaraphalābhiniṣpattaye samarthā bhavanti. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1302).

²³⁶AKB, p. 197: *atha matam katham idānīm saṃtānāntaraviśeṣād anyamanaso'pi saṃtānāntarasya pariṇāmaḥ setsyatīti / etad avijñaptau samānam / katham idānīm saṃtānāntaraviśeṣāt saṃtānāntare dharmāntaram avijñaptiḥ setsyatīti nirūpadhikeṣv idānīm puṇyakriyāvastuṣu katham bhaviṣyatīti / abhīkṣṇaṃ tadālambanacetanābhyāsāt svapneṣv api tā anuṣaṅgīnyo bhavanti.* For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1302).

²³⁷AKBh, p.198: *tasmāt saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa eva nyāyaḥ.* For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1303).

As Sangpo (2012: 1303) notices, this is an opinion of the ancient masters, which explains how the donors offer the benefit to the receivers even though they have a different continuum. The AKBh argues that the non-informative matter does not exist because of the perfuming of the thought and the function of a specific transformation in the series. The matter which is invisible and penetrable is nothing but the thoughts. This position is similar to the Dārṣāntikas' stance, which is the Buddha's own teaching: "The bodily, vocal and mental *karman* are all none other than volition."²³⁸ (Dhammajoti 2015: 437)

While the Sarvāstivādins include the non-informative matters in the matter subsumed under conceptualisations, the AKBh explicitly denies the existence of non-informative matters and also non-informative actions. By emphasising the action being repeatedly perfumed in the meditations and the perfuming of the thought, the concept of *vāsanās* in the AKBh explains why non-informative matters continue in one's mental stream.

2.4.2 The Sautrāntikas' Concept of Producing Consciousness (*vijñāna*) After the Meditative Absorptions of Cessation and Non-Thought (*nirodhāsaṃjñāsamāpatti*)

As mentioned in section 2.2.3., the meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsaṃjñāsamāpatti*) are categorised as "conditioned factors disassociated from the mind" (*cittaviprayuktasamskāra*), so they project neither the group-homogeneity (*nikāyasabhāga*) nor the faculty of life (*jīvita*). However, practitioners who enter these two meditative absorptions do not die. Since the first moment of mind ceases in these two meditative absorptions, there is no subsequent immediate moment of mind that can serve as the condition of equal-immediacy (*samanantarapratyaya*). The question then arises: how can a practitioner preserve the mental continuum and how can consciousness arise again after the two meditative cultivations?

To address these questions, the Sarvāstivāds utilise the concept of *prāpti* which possesses all past *dharma*s throughout the three periods of time. The mind at the final moment when a practitioner enters these two meditative absorptions serves as the cause of homogeneity and the condition of equal-immediacy and can give rise to the first moment of mind in these two meditative absorptions (Waldron 2003: 79). This statement is preserved in the AKBh:

²³⁸ *MVŚ, T1545, no. 27, p. 587a11: "如契經說故, 思所造身三種業."

Now, how can the mind arise again even from the suppressed mind after a long time? Because the condition of equal-immediate of the past also [has] existence, which is accepted by the Vaibhāṣikas (i.e., Sarvāstivādins).²³⁹

When a practitioner enters the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, the mind ceases to operate, and no consciousness is produced. Hence, there should be a lack of conditions for cognitive objects, and the mind and consciousness cannot arise again. According to the Sarvāstivādins, the arising of consciousness depends upon a sense faculty (*indriya*) that serves as the basis (*āśraya*), its object (*viśaya*)—that is the cognitive object (*ālambana*)—and the condition of equal-immediacy, which is the first moment of mind. Sangpo (2012: 824, note 617) noted that the Sarvāstivādas attest that, although the activity of the final moment of the mind ceases when a practitioner enters the two meditative absorptions, its intrinsic nature still exists and is able to exert potency, which serves as the condition of equal-immediacy for the first moment of mind after a long period of inactivity.

However, the possession (*prāpti*) of the intrinsic nature is not accepted by other Abhidharmic schools. Waldron (2003: 216, note 124) points out that the Sautrāntikas consider the stream of the mind to ensure the continuity of a sentient being and their actions. During the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, the Sautrāntikas explain the re-arising of consciousness through the concept of *vāsanās*. The notion of perfuming the mind is mentioned in the context of cultivation:

For what purpose is this called “cultivation”? [It is] because of “the perfuming in mind” (*cittavāsanā*). That equipoised wholesomeness exceedingly perfumes (*vāsayati*) the thought, by means of the qualities [of equipoise], because of making [the thought] in the continuity has the substance of them (i.e. the qualities of equipoise), just like the perfuming of sesames by flowers.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ AKBh, p. 72: *katham idānīm bahukālam niruddhāc cittāt punar api cittaṃ jāyate / atītasyaṅgy astivād iṣyate vaibhāṣikāiḥ samanantarapratyayatvam*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 572).

²⁴⁰ AKBh, pp.273–274: *kim artham etat bhāvanety ucyate / cittavāsanāt / tad dhi samāhitaṃ kuśalam atyarthaṃ cittaṃ vāsayati / guṇais tan mayīkaraṇāt saṃtateḥ / puṣpais tilabhāvanāvāt*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1479) and Gao (2019: 52).

The cultivation involves perfuming the mind with wholesome *dharmas*, which leads to the mental series becoming similar to merits. As in the metaphor, the mind and the mental series are like sesame seeds, and the fragrance of the flower represents the wholesomeness that is cultivated. Through the cultivation, the mind gradually becomes wholesome, just as sesame seeds are perfumed by flowers. Regarding this, Sangpo (2012: 1643, note 113) noted that “*bhāvanā* is equivalent to *vāsanā*” in relation to this process.

The Sautrāntikas utilise the notion of perfuming the mind to explain why matter and mind arise again after a long interruption. In the AKBh:

Then, how do those who are furnished with matter give rise to the matter again even when the matter has been long suppressed? Indeed, it arises from the mind and not from the matter. In the same way, the mind arises from the body with sense faculties, not from the mind [itself]. The mutual *bījas* (*anyonyabījaka*) are indeed these two called mind and body with sense faculties, according to the ancient masters.²⁴¹

In this context, the term *rūpa* refers to the physical matter—namely, the body. Regarding the question, If the mind ceases in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, how can it arise again when one leaves the two meditative absorptions? According to Sangpo (2012: 573), the mind emerging from the cultivation does not arise from the mind just prior to the cultivation, it arises only from a body possessed with sense faculties. Through presenting the mutual *bījas*, the Sautrāntikas state that the mind and the body, which is a type of matter, can be *bījas* for each other. The *bījas*, as causes, allow the mind and the body to arise again.

A similar problem is addressed again in the *Samāpattinirdeśa* in the AKBh, where it is solved by the impregnation of the cause of maturation:

Now, how can the arising of the matter [occur] again from a matter that has been completely cut off after numerous great aeons, or from those who have been separated [from it]? [Verse:] The arising of the matter is from the mind. The arising of matter

²⁴¹ AKBh, p.72: kathaṃ tāvad rūpopapannānāṃ ciraniruddhe ’pi rūpe punar api rūpaṃ jāyate / cittād eva hi taj jāyate na rūpāt / evaṃ cittam apy asmād eva sendriyāt kāyāj jāyate na cittāt / anyonyabījakaṃ hy etad ubhayaṃ yad uta cittam ca sendriyaś ca kāya iti pūrvācāryāḥ. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 573).

[occurs] only from the mind because it has acquired activity through being impregnated by the cause of maturation.²⁴²

In Xuánzàng’s translation, “the impregnation of the cause of maturation” remains in the mind and arises again from the mind when it is mature.²⁴³ As the matter once impregnated the mind, it remains as the cause of maturation in the continuum of the mind. According to Xuánzàng’s translation, when one is reborn in the realm of desire or matter, the efficacy (*kāritra*, 功能) is matured, and the matter arises from the mind. We can therefore understand that the Sautrāntikas utilise the concept of *bījas* to describe the cause dwelling in the mental series and the concept of *vāsanās* to explain the process of mind and matter re-arising from each other, even though they are not the cause of homogeneity.

The main disagreement between the Sarvāstivādas and the Sautrāntikas, according to Katō (1989: 262), is that the Sarvāstivādins separate the mind from the body, and they state that the mind can be purified but the body is always defiled. On the contrary, the Dārṣṭāntikas, the Sautrāntikas, and the Sthaviras (i.e., Śrīlāta) argue that both the mind and the body can be purified, placing the matter and the mind in the same category.²⁴⁴

The idea of the mind and the body perfuming each other is adopted in the early Yogācāra school. Sangpo (2012: 824, note 618) quotes a passage from the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* in the YoBh: “If the faculties and the great elements (*mahābhūta*) that support them did not contain the *bījas* of consciousness and of the mental factors, consciousness could not resume after the unconsciousness trances or birth in heaven.”²⁴⁵ On the contrary, according to Schmithausen (1987: 19), the *Śrāvaka bhūmi* in the YoBh supports the Sarvāstivāda understanding that all

²⁴² AKBh, p. 435: *katham idānīm analpakaḥpocchinnād rūpāt punar api rūpotpattis tataḥ pracyutānām / rūpotpattis tu cittataḥ / rūpasya cittād evotpattis tad vipākahetuparibhāvitā labdhavṛttitaḥ*. From “In the past...” until “from the mind” is translated from For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 2383).

²⁴³ AKBh, T1558, no. 29, p. 146a29–b3: “彼多劫色相續斷，後歿生下色從何生？此從心生，非從色起。謂昔所起色異熟因熏習在心，功能今熟，是故今色從彼心生。”

²⁴⁴ Katō (1989: 262): “有部は心と肉体を切り離し，心は悟っても肉体は常に汚れたものと考えた。これに対して譬喩者・經量部・上座は，心が悟れば肉体も浄らかになるとみなした。そしてごく限られた問題ではあるが，色を心と同列に置いて論じもした。” I translated this Japanese paragraph into English.

²⁴⁵ *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (T1579, no. 30, p. 583c2-6): “復次，若諸色根，及自大種，非心心所種子所隨逐者，入滅盡定，入無想定，生無想天。後時不應識等更生。然必更生，是故當知：心心所種子隨逐色根，以此為緣，彼得更生。” For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 824).

kinds of mind and mental factors are interrupted in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought. Hence, there are two kinds of understanding in the YoBh.

The AKBh deems that the mind and the body possess *bījas* for each other and disagrees about the existence of a “subtle mind” (*sūkṣmacitta*) in the two absorptions (Yinshun 1944: 680). The Sautrāntikas’ teaching of arising consciousness after the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought are established before the *ālayavijñāna* appears in the Yogācāra school (Schmithausen 1987: 250, note 37). When the concept of *ālayavijñāna* is recognised in the Yogācāra school, it fully replaces the explanations of the Sarvāstivādins and the Sautrāntikas. As Schmithausen points out, the specific character of *ālayavijñāna* may be taken to be virtually included in the traditional group of six *vijñānas* because it stores the seeds of all of them.²⁴⁶ Then, the *ālayavijñāna* with all *bījas* exists in the two absorptions, and thus the consciousness can arise again.

2.4.3 The Refutations in the *Ny

To maintain the Sarvāstivāda position, the *Ny argues that the non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*) should be considered a real entity, as well as the non-informative action (*avijñaptikarman*). Therefore, it rejects the statement that the concept of *vāsanās* can replace the non-informative matter and action. However, the *Ny does not completely deny the term *vāsanā*, but instead considers it as defilement (Fukuda 2003: 277), or non-defiled ignorance (*akliṣṭājñāna*) (Dhammajoti 2015: 294). Consequently, the *Ny disagrees with Rāma, a disciple of Śrīlāta and a Sautrāntika scholar, who suggests that the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas* (*śukladharma*) remains when one attains Buddhahood (Fukuda 2003: 259).

According to the AKBh, the *bījas* of mind and matter perfume each other and manifest consciousness in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought. However, the *Ny argues that the *bījas* of mind and matter are not the cause of homogeneity (*sabhāgahetu*), so they cannot be the cause of each other. Additionally, the mind should entirely vanish in the two cultivations, making the idea of a “subtle mind” unacceptable.

²⁴⁶ Schmithausen (1987: 283, note 159) quotes the *Xiǎn Yáng Shèng Jiào Lùn* (顯揚聖教論): “種類差別者有二種: 一阿賴耶識; 二轉識. 依差別者, 謂六識身. 問: 阿賴耶識, 於六識中, 何識所攝? 答: 通六識所攝, 藏彼種故, 由此識密記攝故.” (T 1602, no. 31, p. 505b20–23).

2.4.3.1 The Existence of Non-informative Action (*avijñaptikarman*)

According to Kritzer (2005: 184), the *Ny refutes the Sautrāntika position that all action can be considered as thoughts. Kritzer's arguments can be divided into three aspects.

Firstly, the AKBh presents that the mental stream continues during dreams because of the repetition of thoughts as their cognitive object. However, the *Ny deems that this cognitive object is nothing but a non-informative matter. In the *Ny:

Moreover, [the matter] as the cognitive object in dreams should be [the matter which is] invisible and penetrable, because it is the object [for the arising of] the mental consciousness.²⁴⁷

The Sarvāstivādas attest that even matter in a dream is based on visible matter (Kritzer 2005: 186). Even though this matter is invisible and penetrable, it is not only thoughts but rather the non-informative matter that serves as the object of the sixth faculty, namely the mental faculty, and gives rise to mental consciousness. For instance, in a dream, the mental faculty is the basis that perceives the non-informative matter as the cognitive object, and then the mental consciousness arises. Thus, the *Ny insists that the non-informative matter should be a real entity.

Secondly, the *Ny maintains the Sarvāstivāda position that the uncontaminated matters in the cultivation are the non-informative matter:

Except for the non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*, 無表色), what other kinds of *dharma* can be considered as the uncontaminated matters in the *sūtras*? The *sūtra* master (經主, i.e., Vasubandhu in the AKBh) explains that “The Yogācāras (瑜伽師) maintain: The matter which arises through the power of cultivation is uncontaminated, since cultivation is uncontaminated”. I do not know where the *sūtra* master encounters the Yogācāra, what [specific teachings] he learns from them, and [why] he quotes them

²⁴⁷ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 541a6–8: “又於夢中所緣色處, 應無見無對, 唯意識境故。” 意識 (mental consciousness) is equivalent to mind in this context. According to the Sarvāstivādas, the sixth faculty, the faculty of mind (*manendriya*) can cognize objects.

several times to explain the Buddha's teachings.²⁴⁸

In the AKBh, the uncontaminated characteristic is given by the power of cultivation, and therefore no non-informative matter exists. However, the *Ny vigorously denies this understanding. He does not consider *anāsrava* as a characteristic that can be produced by power, but rather as a specific kind of matter. According to Saṃghabhadra, the uncontaminated matter is invisible and penetrable, which suggests that it must be the non-informative matter.

Third, the *Ny refutes the concept of *bījas* and the function of a specific transformation in the series:

You (i.e., Vasubandhu) state that the transformation (*pariṇāma*, 轉變) is the continuum of the mind which generates different [aspects] in subsequent moments. It is fallacious. When a wholesome activity immediately regenerates an unwholesome activity, are they the transformation of a homogeneous cause or a heterogeneous cause? If it is the transformation of a homogeneous cause, the wholesome and unwholesome activities have no difference. If it is the transformation of a heterogeneous cause, there should be another mind. Based on what character can it be considered as the transformation of wholesome activity? What character can be considered as the transformation of unwholesome activity? For these reasons, the specific transformation in series [you] believe is contradictory to the principles of the Buddha's teachings.²⁴⁹

Based on the cause of homogeneity, the *Ny disagrees with the idea that wholesome activities bring forth the unwholesome activities. *Ny argues that the transformation from wholesome activities to unwholesome activities lacks a connection, which is provided by the non-informative matter. The AKBh refutes the existence of non-informative matter and, as a result, cannot explain the characteristics of wholesome and unwholesome activities. Therefore, the

²⁴⁸ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 541a10–15: “除無表色, 何法名為此契經中諸無漏色? 此中經主亦作釋言: 諸瑜伽師作如是說, 即由定力所生色中, 依無漏定者即說為無漏. 未審經主曾於何處, 逢事何等諸瑜伽師, 數引彼言會通聖教?”

²⁴⁹ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 542a23–b2: “又彼所說, 一心相續, 於後後位, 別別而生, 名為轉變. 定不應理, 且如有造福行無間, 即復造作非福行者, 此二為是一類轉變, 為是異類而轉變耶? 若言此是一類轉變, 是則應無罪福差別. 若言異類而轉變者, 應說更有何第三心, 依之何相名福行轉變? 復說何相名罪行轉變? 由如是等種種推徵, 所計相續轉變差別, 一切不順聖教正理.”

transformation cannot be established.

Then, the *Ny concludes that non-informative matter must be a real entity:

Moreover, you (i.e., Vasubandhu) assume that only the present moment exists, which cannot be a series [continuing from] one moment [to the next]. However, without such a series, how can you explain [the occurrence of] transformation? Therefore, [according to this understanding], there is no specific aspect [of transformation], and your claims are fallacious. There must be another *dharmā* that always continues and gradually increases when thoughts arise or perish. This other *dharmā* is the non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*, 無表), which is reasonable to accept.²⁵⁰

According to the *Ny, only non-informative matter exists and increases when thoughts arise or perish. Therefore, if one denies the existence of non-informative matter, the mental series would be interrupted because it cannot possess (*prāpti*) non-informative matter as an object from the former moment to the subsequent moment. Without this continuity, there can be no corresponding transformation or specific fruition. This is how the *Ny refutes the concept of a specific transformation in series in the AKBh.

2.4.3.2 The Concept of *Vāsanās* as Non-Defiled Ignorance (*akliṣṭājñāna*)

Although the *Ny refutes the replacement of the concept of non-informative matter with that of *vāsanās*, it does not deny the existence of *vāsanās* altogether.

According to Dhammajoti (2015: 294 – 295), the *Ny deems that there is a kind of *vāsanā* called “non-defiled ignorance”. In the *Ny:

The discernment (慧) which does not strive diligently to discern the understanding [of *dharmas*]. This discernment again does not strive diligently to discern, becoming the cause for the arising of another discernment which does not strive diligently to discern.

Such a successive cause-effect series from beginningless time gives rise to a tendency,

²⁵⁰ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 542b2–6: “又彼所宗唯現在有, 於一念法相續不成. 相續既無, 說何轉變? 轉變無故, 差別亦無. 由此彼言, 都無實義. 故有別法, 若起餘心或無心時, 恒現相續漸漸增長, 說名無表, 故無表色實有理成.”

acquired through practice (習). Thus, it is this inferior knowledge—induced [through a succession] by previous knowledge which repeatedly becomes accustomed to being incapable of understanding—that is called “non-defiled ignorance” (不染無知). The mind and mental factors are known collectively as *vāsanā* (習氣).²⁵¹

Even an Arhat who attains the knowledge to understand suchness may still not comprehend everything that exists in both the mundane and supramundane worlds. However, this ignorance does not hinder their understanding of suchness. For instance, an Arhat may not know the taste of vanilla ice cream, but this ignorance does not impede the manifesting of the noble path. This ignorance referred to here is the mind and mental factors that have existed from the very beginning, which can be understood as *vāsanās*—namely, a residue of non-defiled ignorance.

Fukuda (2003: 277) regarded the *vāsanā* of non-defiled ignorance as “the mental factors that arise together with lesser wisdom.” The *Ny considers the term *vāsanās* as defilements, which is the main difference between an Arhat and a Buddha. Since an Arhat still has the *vāsanā* of non-defiled ignorance, he does not perceive objects purely like a Buddha.

2.4.3.3 The Notion of the *Vāsanās* of White *Dharmas* (*sukladharma*) of Rāma

The concept of *vāsanās* does not always refer to defilement—the *Ny records the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas*. This special *vāsanā* presented by Rāma represents the possibility of an uncontaminated *dharma*.

In the *Ny, the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas* is equivalent to the neutral fruition produced by unwholesome cause:

Bhadanta Rāma (大德邏摩) makes this sort of statement: there are undefiled *dharmas* called *vāsanās* (習氣), which are like the maturation produced by the unwholesome cause. When the Buddha was a Bodhisattva, he did various preparatory practices for an astronomically long period of time. Although he had afflictions, he gradually abandoned

²⁵¹ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 502a22–27: “此慧於解又不勤求，復為因引生不勤求解慧，如是展轉無始時來，因果相仍習以成性故。即於彼味等境中，數習於解無堪能智，此所引劣智，名不染無知。即此俱生心心所法，總名習氣，理定應然。” For the English translation cf. Dhammajoti (2015: 294–295).

the undefiled *vāsanās* (不染習氣) produced from the afflictions and instead gradually increased the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas* (白法習氣). Afterward, when the lasting abandonment of all contaminated had been accomplished, some of those *vāsanās* disappeared, but others remained. [That is to say], even when the supreme and everlasting abandonment of all defilements had been achieved as a result of extended practice, the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas* still remained with the Buddha [while the undefiled *vāsanā* had disappeared], since it is said that there are both perishable *vāsanās* and imperishable ones. [Saṃghabhadra answers:] Of course, such an explanation may also be possible, but Rāma could never demonstrate their nature as truly existent.²⁵²

Rāma explains that a Bodhisattva annihilates afflictions through diligent practices and cultivations; however, the uncontaminated *vāsanās* remain even until the Buddhahood. This uncontaminated *vāsanā* differs from the *vāsanā* of non-defiled ignorance previously discussed. This uncontaminated *vāsanā*—namely, the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas*—does not refer to knowledge or ignorance, but rather to positive *dharmas*. According to Yinshun (1944: 572), the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas* is the preliminary notion of the uncontaminated *bījas* in the *Mahāyanāsamgraha* (MSg), a fundamental Yogācāra text. Moreover, the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas* implies that the uncontaminated *bījas* are newly perfumed by practices, which is an innovation concept in the MSg. The content of uncontaminated *bījas* is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

While the *Ny does not straightforwardly deny the existence of the *vāsanā* of white *dharmas*, it raises doubts regarding Rāma's ability to examine its nature and characteristics. Therefore, it is difficult to agree with Rāma's statement. From the Sarvāstivādin position, when *aprāpti* arises and disconnects the sentient being with afflictions, there should be nothing left.

²⁵² *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 502b13–19: “大德邏摩作如是說: 有不染法名為習氣, 如不善因所招異熟. 世尊昔在菩薩位中, 三無數劫修諸加行, 雖有煩惱, 而能漸除煩惱所引不染習氣, 白法習氣漸令增長. 後於永斷諸漏得時, 前諸習氣有滅不滅, 以於長時修加行故, 證得無上諸漏永盡. 然佛猶有白法習氣, 言習氣有滅不滅故. 如是所說理亦可然, 而彼不能顯其體性.” For the English translation cf. Fukuda (2003: 277).

2.4.3.4 The Re-arising Thoughts in the Two Meditative Absorptions in the *Ny

As discussed, the *Ny rejects the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh. Thus, it also disagrees that the mutual *bījas* (*anyonyabījaka*) of the mind and the body can give rise to consciousness in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsaṃjñāsamāpatti*).

The *Ny cites Rāma's statement, which implies the existence of a "subtle mind" (*sūkṣmacitta*):

Here, Bhadanta Rāma (大德邏摩) presents his own interpretation: [The mental and tactile faculties] are established [as sense bases], when they have passed over [the state of] name and matter. Indeed, the mind exists permanently [from the beginning of one's life], but it is not equivalent to the mental base, [since] it necessarily has to contact the [external sense] base (i.e., the object) to be called a "[mental] base". [For example,] in the meditative absorption of cessation, one's mental base does not vanish. Therefore, it is allowed that mental consciousness will be produced once again [after one exists the meditative absorption of cessation]. However, it cannot contact [external object] due to the absence of other conditions [that make the activity of mental perceptual consciousness possible]. For the same reason, the two faculties of the body and mind in the state of "consciousness" and "name and matter" cannot be accepted as [sense] bases. Hence, it is said [by the scriptures] that name and matter precede the six sense bases, and that, depending on name and matter, the six sense bases arise.²⁵³

According to Fukuda (2003: 273), Rāma's interpretation corresponds to that of the *Dārṣṭāntikas* and *Śrīlāta* in the *Ny. The *Dārṣṭāntikas* deem that in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, only mental factors are extinguished, such as thinking and feeling, but not the mental base. Therefore, according to Rāma, the mental consciousness can arise again. The faculties of body and mind serve as the basis of name and matter (*nāmarūpa*), which produce the six sense bases. It is obvious that Rāma regards the mental consciousness, which

²⁵³ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 485c24–486a2: “大德邏摩率自意釋，度名色已方立處名。意體雖恒，有非意處，要是觸處方得處名。滅盡定中意處不壞，由斯亦許有意識生，然闕餘緣故無有觸，是故非識。名色位中，身意二根可得名處，故說名色在六處前。名色為緣生於六處，此唯率意妄設虛言，都無正理及正教故。” For the English translation cf. Fukuda (2003: 273).

always exists from the beginning of one's life, and the faculties of body and mind as separate parts. His statement differs from that of the Sautrāntikas in the AKBh, who claim that consciousness arises because of the interaction of mutual *bījas* of body and mind.

However, the *Ny refutes these similar statements by asking:

If [this interpretation] were accepted, from what would the moment of thought after [equipoise] arise? [The *sūtra* master] states that the [moment of thought after equipoise] arises in dependence upon the body possessed of sense organs, because the body possessed of sense organs and thought contain each other's seeds.²⁵⁴

If one attests that the subsequent moment of thought arises because the body possesses the *bījas* of sense organs and the mind, they will face a problem of needing to explain why only mental consciousness arises, rather than all consciousnesses simultaneously. The *Ny presents the question like this:

How is this teaching reasonable, since, [if it were], the perceptual consciousness of all objects [present before one] would arise simultaneously at all times, [even when one is in the equipoise without thought]. For those who claim that the moment of thought after [cessation] arises in dependence upon the moment of thought prior [to cessation], even though the bodily basis and the object-field exist at the same time, there is no simultaneous arising of [the perceptual consciousness of] all objects. This is due to the fact that there is no [moment of thought], other than [that moment of thought just prior to cessation that could act as a] condition of equal-immediate (*samanantarapratyaya*, 等無間緣) [in producing that perceptual consciousness within cessation]. [However,] if one maintains that perceptual consciousness arises in dependence, not on causes and conditions of its own kind, but rather on the body possessed of sense organs, what *dharma* constitutes the obstruction to the simultaneous arising of the perceptual

²⁵⁴ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 404a1–4: “若爾，後心從何而起？彼說此依有根身起，以有根身與心展轉為種子故。”

For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 273).

consciousness of all objects at all times?²⁵⁵

There are two main points discussed in this paragraph. The first one is related to the Sautrāntikas in the AKBh, who state that the last moment of thought before entering cessation is the first moment of thought after cessation. However, the *Ny argues that if they assume that thought exists during cessation, all consciousnesses such as feeling or thinking should arise simultaneously after cessation because the bodily base still exists. Whereas due to the lack of a condition of equal-immediacy, the subsequent moment of thought cannot contact the object, and hence consciousness cannot arise. This position is unacceptable for the Sarvāstivādins, who deem that consciousness arises because of the combination of a sense faculty and an object with a condition of equal-immediacy. The second point is related to the assumption that if the body possesses the *bījas* of the mind and sense organs, which is not the cause of homogeneity, all consciousness should arise simultaneously, yet they do not. By questioning these two points, the *Ny further refutes the related assumptions that all consciousnesses arise from the body:

I have heard that there are other masters (餘師) who have proposed [precisely] this [false] view, maintaining that there is the simultaneous arising of many types of perceptual consciousness in one body. Now if one examines [the *sūtra* master's statements], it seems that since [their view] resembles his own inherited tradition, he has made these statements with the desire to be consistent with their view.²⁵⁶

According to Cox (1995: 288, note 96), the same statement also appears in the *MVŚ,²⁵⁷ where the Sarvāstivādins insist that only one consciousness arises in each moment. Therefore, the *Ny asserts that the assumption that the former thought produces the subsequent thought cannot

²⁵⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 404a3–7: “何有此理? 應一切時一切境識俱時起故。說依前心後心起者, 以無第二等無間緣, 雖有同時所依境界, 而無一切境識俱起。若執不待自類因緣待有根身識便起者, 彼一切位一切境識, 何法為礙, 起不俱時?” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 273).

²⁵⁶ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 404a7–9: “聞有餘師起如是見, 執有多識一身俱起; 今觀仁者似已稟承, 故說此言欲符彼執。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 273).

²⁵⁷ *MVŚ, T1545, no. 27, p. 563a7–9: “或復有執, 多識俱生多智並起, 為遮彼執, 顯一有情一剎那中, 唯起一識。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 288, no. 96): “There are masters who claim that many types of perceptual consciousness are produced simultaneously; many types of knowledge arise conjointly. In order to refute this position, it is made clear that one sentient being only gives rise to one type of perceptual consciousness in each moment; knowledge is also so.”

avoid the fallacy of all consciousnesses arising simultaneously.

Moreover, the *Ny again refuses the notion of mutual *bījas*, which is not a cause of homogeneity:

Moreover, [to maintain that thought arises, not from causes of its own kind, but from seeds in the body possessed of sense organs] is like maintaining that sprouts of wheat or rice, and so on, are capable of being produced from [the assisting conditions of the] ground, and so on, alone, without depending upon seeds of their own kind (自類種子) as their cause. What wise person (智人) could hear this and not roar with laughter? ²⁵⁸

The *Ny uses the metaphor that the sprouting of wheat or rice seeds depends on the condition of the earth, rather than the seeds themselves, to demonstrate that the assertion that consciousness arises through the interaction of mutual *bījas* of body and mind is unacceptable. Additionally, the *Ny has already refuted the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh, whose function is fully covered by the concept of *prāpti*.

To summarise the discussion, the *Ny denies that the concept of *vāsanās* in the AKBh, which intends to replace the concept of non-informative matter that produces non-informative action. The *Ny maintains its existence by stating that it is a necessary condition for the mental series. Without non-informative matter, the mental series cannot continue, and the specific transformation in the series is impossible. The *Ny then rejects the notion that the mutual *bījas* of body and mind interact to make consciousness arise after the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought. It follows the Sarvāstivādin stance that only one consciousness arises at any one moment, and should be the cause of homogeneity. Even though the *Ny refuses the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, it accepts that the term *vāsanā* serves as defilement, or non-defiled ignorance that does not hinder the actualised knowledge of the Buddha. Meanwhile, Rāma's *vāsanās* of white *dharmas* imply the possibilities of positive *bījas* that exist until attaining Buddhahood. Nevertheless, the *Ny utilises the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti* to explain that nothing should be left after one enters the final liberation.

²⁵⁸ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 404a18–20: “又如有執不待自類種子為因, 穀麥等芽但由地等而得生起. 何有智人聞不嗤笑?” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 274).

2.4.4 The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in the *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa*

The *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* (KP)²⁵⁹ by Vasubandhu was composed later than the AKBh and was regarded as a Mahāyāna work, providing insights into the concept of re-arising consciousness in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsamjñāsamāpatti*) and serves as a bridge between Abhidharmic schools and the Yogācāra school.

In the KP, the existence of subtle mind (*sūkṣmacitta*)—namely, the consciousness of fruition of maturation—is accepted as the reason for giving rise to the consciousness after the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought:

In this case, according to you, do the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, constitute a state (*avastha*) lacking mind or endowed with mind? We answer that this state is endowed with a mind: the subtle mind (細心) admitted by a group of the Sūtraprāmāṇikas.²⁶⁰ The consciousness of fruition of maturation (*vipākaphalavijñāna*, 異熟果識), endowed with all of the *bījas*, from the time of coming into existence until death, continues in series without being interrupted. In such-and-such an existence, from the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*, 異熟因), it flows on in the series under different aspects until *nirvāṇa* where it is definitively destroyed. Since this consciousness is not interrupted [during these cultivations], these states which are called lacking mind are also called endowed with mind.²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ The *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* (KP) was written by Vasubandhu. Its Sanskrit version has been lost. There are two Chinese translations: 業成就論 (*Yè Chéng Jiù Lùn*, T1608, no. 31) was translated by Vimokṣaprajñā (毘目智仙 *Pimùzhixiān*) in the Eastern Wei Dynasty (451 CE), and 大乘成業論 (*Dà Shèng Chéng Yè Lùn*, T1609, no. 31) was translated by Xuan Zang in the Tang Dynasty (651 CE). One Tibetan translation, *Las grub pa'i rab tu byed pa* (Derge 4062), was translated by Viśuddhasiṃha. In 1936, Étienne Lamotte translated the KP from Tibetan to French, and then Pruden (1987) translated the French version into English. This chapter uses the English translation of Pruden.

²⁶⁰ According to Pruden's note (1987: 110, note 100), the term *Sūtrāpramāṇika* (Tib. *mdo sde pa kha cig*), refers to those who regard the sutras as an authority, but not the Sautrāntikas. It is also appeared as “經為量者” in Xuánzàng's translation.

²⁶¹ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 784b28–c5: “若爾，云何許滅定等諸無心位亦有心耶？應如一類經為量者，所許細心彼位猶有，謂異熟果識具一切種子，從初結生乃至終沒，展轉相續曾無間斷，彼彼生處，由異熟因，品類差

As the consciousness of fruition of maturation possesses all *bījas*, it is produced by the cause of maturation from a sentient being's beginning up until death. As discussed in 2.2., the cause of maturation brings forth neutral fruition from contaminated *dharmas* and contaminated wholesome *dharmas*, similar to how moistened *bījas* are impregnated by mental activities. Since the consciousness of the fruition of maturation is the fruition of the cause of maturation, its characteristics should be neutral. It serves as a container for all *bījas*, which function as the cause of maturation within the consciousness of fruition of maturation and keep the mental series uninterrupted. Depending on the different kinds of *bījas*, different aspects manifest in the mental series. Thus, the “subtle mind”—i.e., the consciousness of fruition of maturation—permanently exists in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought.

If there is always a subtle mind, why are these two absorptions called “cessation” and “non-thought”? The KP answers that it is because of the surpassing of the six consciousnesses:

As the six consciousnesses no longer operate in these states, they are called lacking mind. Through the force of the mind preparatory (*prāyogikacitta*, 加行入心增上力) from the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, it happens that the *bījas* of the six consciousnesses are temporarily surpassed, and no longer manifest themselves; thus, the cultivation is called a cultivation lacking mind. But it is not lacking any mind at all.²⁶²

In this paragraph, the KP clearly distinguishes between the six consciousnesses and the mind. Through the force of the mind preparatory to the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, the *bījas* of the six consciousnesses are temporally surpassed. This can be understood as the state without mind, because the six consciousnesses belong to mental activities.

The KP further explains that there are two kinds of mind:

There are two types of mind: a store-mind (集起心), because it is the place where

別, 相續流轉, 乃至涅槃, 方畢竟滅, 即由此識無間斷故, 於無心位, 亦說有心。” For the English translation cf. Pruden (1987: 64).

²⁶² KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 784c4–7: “餘六識身, 於此諸位, 皆不轉故, 說為無心. 由滅定等加行, 入心增上力故, 令六識種, 暫時損伏, 不得現起, 故名無心, 非無一切.” For the English translation cf. Pruden (1987: 64).

innumerable *bījas* are stored; and a multiple mind, because it involves various objects and aspects. Since this second mind is lacking in these states of cultivation, they are called lack of mind. Thus, when a chair has only one foot and when the other feet are missing, one says that it is without any feet.²⁶³

The store-mind contains innumerable *bījas* and is equivalent to the consciousness of fruition of maturation and the subtle mind. The store-mind always dwells in the mental series, and the *bījas* in it serve as the cause of maturation for maintaining the mental series. The multiple mind refers to the six consciousnesses, which engage differently with various objects and aspects. Since the latter is surpassed in cessation, the KP utilises a metaphor of the one-foot chair to explain why the store-mind exists in the state without mind.

However, the *bījas* of the six consciousnesses are not surpassed forever. The force is reduced by time:

In the states wherein the *bījas* of the consciousnesses are surpassed, the consciousness of fruition of maturation [undergoes] from instant to instant a specific transformation and the force which surpassed (能損伏力) [the *bījas* of the consciousnesses] diminishes gradually until it disappears entirely, like boiling water or the speed of the movement of an arrow, which also diminish gradually until they entirely disappear.²⁶⁴

Like boiling water and shooting an arrow, the force is gradually reduced over time. Thus, the *bījas* of the six consciousnesses will arise again when the force of cessation becomes weaker. These *bījas* serve as the cause of maturation and then bring forth fruition:

Then, the *bījas* of the consciousnesses (識種) give forth their fruitions: first, by virtue of these *bījas*, the mental consciousness comes into existence; then and following in accord with conditions, the other consciousnesses successively arise. The consciousness

²⁶³ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 784c7–10: “心有二種: 一集起心, 無量種子集起處故; 二種種心, 所緣行相差別轉故. 滅定等位第二心闕故名無心, 如一足床闕餘足故亦名無足.” For the English translation cf. Pruden (1987: 64–65).

²⁶⁴ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 784c10–13: “彼諸識種被損伏位, 異熟果識剎那剎那轉變差別, 能損伏力漸劣漸微乃至都盡, 如水熱箭引燒發力, 漸劣漸微至都盡位.” For the English translation cf. Pruden (1987: 65).

of fruition of maturation of which we have spoken above and wherein the *bījas* of different *dharmas* (諸法種子) stored, is perfumed (熏發) by such-and-such another consciousness and by their coexisting *dharmas*, wholesome and unwholesome. According to circumstance, the force of *bījas* (種力) increases. Through a specific transformation in the series, considering the maturation of *bījas* and the coming together of its capacity of cooperation, this [consciousness of fruition of maturation] brings forth the future fruitions of desire or non-desire.²⁶⁵

The consciousness of fruition of maturation serves as the basis for arising consciousnesses. The mental consciousness is the first consciousness to arise at the first moment after cessation, followed by the other consciousnesses. This statement differs from Rāma's interpretation, which regards the mental consciousness as the subtle mind, rather than as one of the six consciousnesses. These consciousnesses again perfume the *bījas* in the consciousness of fruition of maturation and give it wholesome and unwholesome characteristics. Through the specific transformation in the series, the force of *bījas* is strengthened. When the *bījas* encounter conditions, such as the condition of equal-immediacy, they will generate wholesome or unwholesome fruitions. Regarding this, we should notice that the cause of maturation in the AKBh only brings forth neutral fruition. However, this definition is changed in the KP, where the cause of maturation can generate wholesome and unwholesome fruitions. This new definition is adopted by Yogācāra texts and becomes one of the necessary conditions to generate pure *dharmas*, which is discussed in Chapter 4.

The specific transformation in the series plays an important role not only in the AKBh but also in the KP. In fact, the KP ascribes this function to *vāsanās*:

Vāsanās (熏習) cause the series that it perfumes to transform itself and to acquire some specific potentialities (功能差別). In the same way, the paint (紫礦汁), applied on the flower of the citron tree (枸櫞花), permits the series of flowers to transform themselves [and to give forth a fruit whose pipi are red]. Without *vāsanās*, no specific

²⁶⁵ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 784c13–18: “識種爾時得生果便, 初從識種意識還生, 後位隨緣餘識漸起, 即前所說異熟果識, 攝藏種種諸法種子. 彼彼餘識, 及俱有法, 善不善性數熏發時, 隨其所應種力增盛, 由此相續轉變差別. 隨種力熟隨遇助緣, 便感當來愛非愛果.” English translated cf. Pruden (1987: 65).

transformation is possible.²⁶⁶

The term *vāsanā* in the AKBh refers to the cultivation that perfumes the mind (see section 2.3.2.). However, in the KP, the concept of *vāsanās* serves as the dynamic force for the specific transformation in the series, and the *bījas* become the object for the arising consciousness. The *bījas* possess the specific transformation in the series in the AKBh, whereas the KP further focuses on the specific potentialities from the *vāsanās*, just as the white citron flower is infused with red dye and then becomes a red pip. In this metaphor, the white citron flower represents the mental series, which is infused with red dye as *vāsanās*, and the red pip represents the fruition of maturation. The *bījas* are invisible in this metaphor, but they are not removed. Since the characteristic of *bījas* cannot be changed, the *bījas* of the white citron flower continue the colour when the red dye as *vāsanās* is added in. The specific transformation in the series happens when the new *bījas* of the red colour are more than the white ones, and the pip becomes red at the end. Thus, this metaphor demonstrates the necessity of *vāsanās* in the specific transformation in the series; meanwhile, it implies the notion of newly perfumed *bījas*.

The KP ascribes the consciousness of fruition of maturation to the *ālayavijñāna* by citing the **Samdh.*²⁶⁷ The citation conveys the impression that the concept of *ālayavijñāna* is already established in the KP:

Moreover, we should know that today, within each school (餘部), innumerable *sūtras* have disappeared, as is explained in detail in the *Vyākhyāyukti* (釋軌論)²⁶⁸. This is why one cannot say that *sūtras* have never spoken of the *ālayavijñāna* (阿賴耶識) for there are reasons for it to exist.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁶ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 785b20–23: “夫熏習者，令彼所熏相續變成功能差別，如紫礦汁熏拘櫟花，令彼相續功能轉變。若無熏習，則無轉變差別功能。” English translated cf. Pruden (1987: 70).

²⁶⁷ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 784c24–26: “世尊依此，於解深密大乘經中說如是頌：‘阿陀那識甚深細，一切種子如暴流，我於凡愚不開演，恐彼分別執為我。’” For the English translation cf. Pruden (1987: 65–66).

²⁶⁸ Peter Skilling (2000: 297) refers to the *Vyākhyāyukti*, which is preserved in Tibetan translation. The work is enormously influential in both India and Tibet.

²⁶⁹ KP, T1609, no. 31, p. 785b1–5: “由此已釋餘部，經中唯說六識身為有分識等，隨其所應，皆無違害。又於今時，一一部內無量契經皆已隱沒，如《釋軌論》廣辯應知。故不應計阿賴耶識定非經說，理必有故。” For the English translation cf. Pruden (1987: 68–70).

Therefore, the question of re-arising consciousness after the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought is solved. The Sarvāstivādas' position on the concept of *prāpti* is first replaced with the mutual *bījas* of body and mind of the Sautrāntikas. Then, the notion of the subtle mind is fully explained and marked as the *ālayavijñāna* in the KP. Through the *ālayavijñāna*, which always serves as the basis of the sentient being, consciousnesses can arise again after cessation.

2.4.5 The Concept of *Vāsanā*s in Sthiramati's AKTA

According to Gao (2019: 72), the AKTA defines the term *vāsanā* as a “specific potency”:

What is the so-called “*vāsanā*”? The specific potency (**sāmarthyaviśeṣa; nus pa'i khyad pa*) as the cause of certain bodily and vocal agitation and perturbation (**vikāra; 'gyur ba*), [on account] of that defilement which has been conducted previously, is said to be *vāsanā*.²⁷⁰

The term *vāsanā*, as a “specific potency”, refers to previous defilement. This statement is similar to Saṃghabhadra's position, where he regards the term *vāsanā* as an affliction in the Ny. Moreover, the AKTA appears to agree with Saṃghabhadra's argument concerning the mutual *bījas* (*anyonyabīja*). Then the AKTA presents the two mutual *bījas*:

These two are mutual *bījas* (*phan tshun sa bon*): the *bījas* as the sense organ together with the mental faculty, and the mental *bījas* (*sems kyi sa bon*) together with the faculty of body. They are *bījas* which [interact] mutually.²⁷¹

The AKTA argues that the *bījas* in the sense organ can give rise to mental consciousness because it contains the mental faculty, and vice versa.

However, according to Waldron (2003: 214, note 112), the AKTA strongly rejects the

²⁷⁰ AKTA, p. 324b4: *bag chags zhes bya ba 'ang ci zhe na / gang snga ma nyon mongs pa spyad pa de'i nges pa'i lus dang ngag gi g.yo ba dang 'gyur ba'i rgyur gyur pa'i nus pa'i khyad par ni bag chags yin no*. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 72).

²⁷¹ AKTA, p. 229a 3–4: *'di gnyis ni phan tshun sa bon can yin no zhes bya ba ni sems la yang dbang po dang bcas ba'i yul gyi sa bon yod la / lus la yang dbang po dang bcas pa'i sems kyi sa bon yod de / de lta na gnyis ka phan tshun gyi sa bon can yin no*.

notion of mutual *bījas*:

In this case, the consciousness arising from the faculty together with the body is not a view of the cause of homogeneity. When the basis and object dwell simultaneously as the object for all [consciousness], the consciousness will arise. Depending on the former [moment of] mind, the subsequent [moment of] mind does not arise. This leads to the consequence that the basis and object exist but do not arise simultaneously, because the similar two [mutual *bījas*] (*gnyis pa la mtshungs pa*) do not have the condition of equal-immediate. In this case, [the basis and object] are not endowed with mind, because they are from the bodily *bījas* which are together with the force without mind. Therefore, it is unreasonable because [the ancient masters] do not know the difference between [two mutual *bījas*].²⁷²

The AKTA and the *Ny both question the notion of mutual *bījas*, arguing that the mental and bodily *bījas* are different and lack the cause of homogeneity. Even though the Sautrāntikas propose that mutual *bījas* contain corresponding faculties, they cannot give rise to mental consciousness or sense organs due to their difference. The AKTA's second argument is based on the lack of the condition of equal-immediacy. The basis represents the series of a sentient being, and the object refers to the mutual *bījas*. Although they dwell together at the first moment, due to the lack of the cause of homogeneity, they cannot arise simultaneously in the subsequent moment. Hence, the AKTA concludes that the mutual *bījas* have the force from the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, which implies that the *vāsanās* of cessation perfume the mutual *bījas* and cause them to be unable to dwell with the mind. Therefore, the notion of mutual *bījas* cannot be established.

To summarise, the concept of *vāsanās* in the AKBh demonstrates two aspects. Firstly, it replaces the Sarvāstivāda concept of non-informative matter. The concept of *vāsanās* includes

²⁷² AKTA, p. 229a 4–6: *gal te ris mthun pa'i rgyu la ma bltos par dbang po dang bcas pa'i lus las rnam par shes pa skye ba nyid yin na / rten dang dmigs pa cig car gnas pa na yul thams cad la rnam par shes pa skye bar 'gyur ro // sems snga ma gang yin pa de la rag las pas sems phyi ma skye bas na gnyis pa la mtshungs pa de ma thag pa'i rkyen med pas rten dang dmigs pa yod kyang cig car mi skye bar thal bar 'gyur ro // gal te sems yod pa ma yin yang sems med pa'i dbang po dang bcas pa'i lus kyi sa bon las so zhe na 'di yang mi rigs te khyad par gyi rgyu med pa'i phyr ro. For the English translation cf. Waldron (2003: 214).*

terms such as *bhāvanā* and *bhāvita* in the context of meditation, emphasising how the practitioner keeps merits by the specific transformation in the series. Secondly, it explains why the consciousness arises again after the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought. According to the Sautrāntikas, the interaction of mutual *bījas* of body and mind generates consciousness after cessation. The Sautrāntika notion of mutual *bījas* is replaced by the notion of the subtle mind in the KP, which equates the subtle mind as the consciousness of fruition of maturation and then admits the existence of the *ālayavijñāna*.

However, the *Ny disagrees with the concept of *vāsanās*. The term *vāsanā* as defilement or non-defiled ignorance remains until one attains Buddhahood but does not hinder the actualised knowledge. Given the defiled characteristic of Saṃghabhadra’s definition of *vāsanā*, he, therefore, rejects Rāma’s *vāsanā* of white *dharma*s as a positive force. The AKTA accepts part of the arguments in the *Ny but disagrees with the mutual *bījas* due to the lack of the cause of homogeneity and the condition of equal-immediate. Thus, according to the AKTA, the *ālayavijñāna* is a necessary condition when the Yogācāras explain that consciousness arises again within the two cessations.

2.5 The Comparison Between the Concept of *Bījas* and the Concept of *Anuśayas*

The concept of *anuśaya*²⁷³ responds to the problematic question in Abhidharma Buddhism: How can afflictions exist at all times? According to Cox (1995: 96), the Sarvāstivādins present the concept of non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*) to account for this, while the Vibhajyavādins, Mahāsāṃghikas, and Vātsīputrīyas utilise the concept of *anuśayas*.

With regard to the topic of an unmanifest, invisible mental force of affliction, the AKBh defines the term *anuśaya* as a crucial basis of *karman*:

²⁷³ In the Sanskrit term *anuśaya*, according to *Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, the prefix “*anu*” means “one after another”, and the word-root of “*śaya*” is √śī-1, which means “sleeping”. The basic meaning of this term is “one after another sleeping state”. Xuánzàng translates this term into Chinese “隨眠”, which literally means “following with the sleeping state”. There are many English translations of *anuśaya*, such as “dissociated latent contaminants” (Cox 1995: 96), “latent defilement” (Kritzer 2003: 332; 2005: xxvii), “latent proclivities” (Sangpo 2012: 1655), “latent dispositions” (Park 2014:255), “latent impressions” (Kramer 2017: 15). All translations aim at one meaning, namely, a “potential power”. In this thesis, I decide to directly use the Sanskrit term *anuśaya*.

It is said that the diversity of the world arises from *karman*. These *karman*, due to the power (*vaśa*) of the *anuśaya*, come to accumulation. Then, without the *anuśaya*, they have no capacity to produce the existence.²⁷⁴

According to this statement, the term *anuśaya* serves as an accumulation or a dynamic force that causes *karman* to produce fruitions. The latter seems similar to the concept of *vāsanās*. For the Sarvāstivādins, the concept of *anuśayas* is connected to the mental series through the concept of *prāpti* (Park 2014: 443) and is considered as one of the synonyms for affliction, while the Sautrāntikas regard the term *anuśaya* as a latent defilement, and the envelopment as a *bīja* (Sangpo 2012: 1762, note 2). The Sautrāntikas' position is approved by Vasubandhu, who defines *anuśaya* as affliction in the state of seed and says that it is not a separate real entity as the Sarvāstivādins assert (Kritzer 2005: 272).

Thus, this section focuses on the concept of *anuśayas* and the state of *bīja*, which has been discussed in section 2.1. Moreover, to solve the question of how knowledge transmits through time, the *bīja* of memory (*smṛtibīja*) is presented in the AKBh. Through the state of *bīja* and the *bīja* of memory, the concept of *anuśayas* is recomposed in the AKBh.

2.5.1 The Concept of *Anuśayas* and the *Bījabhāva*

Let us begin with an argument about how to understand the term *kāmarāgānuśaya*—namely, the *anuśaya* of the “attachment to sensuality”.²⁷⁵ On the one hand, the *anuśaya* is equivalent to the “attachment to sensuality”, meaning the late tendency in one’s mind; on the other hand, there are many kinds of *anuśaya*, and *kāmarāgānuśaya* is a particular kind of *anuśaya*. In the AKBh, both assumptions have mistakes:

How should this be understood: is it that [the term] “*kāmarāgānuśaya*” means the “attachment to sensuality” itself is the *anuśaya*, or [the term] “*kāmarāgānuśaya*” means

²⁷⁴ AKBh, p. 277: *karmajaṃ lokavaicitryam ity uktam / tāni karmāṇy anuśayavaśād upacayaṃ gacchanti antareṇa cānuśayān bhavābhinirvartane na samarthāni bhavanti*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1655).

²⁷⁵ Vasubandhu’s AKBh enumerates 98 types of *anuśayas* in the Abhidharmic tradition, but I do not delve into their specifics. However, it’s worth noting that in Vasubandhu’s concept of *bījas*, the significance of *anuśaya* is diminished.

the *anuśaya* of the “attachment to sensuality”? What is it then? If the “attachment to sensuality” itself is the *anuśaya*, then there is a contradiction with the *sūtra* (*sūtravirodha*)..... Thus, the envelopment (*pariyavasthāna*) of “attachment to sensuality” gradually possesses rightness, and the *anuśaya* of it is eradicated. If [it is] the *anuśaya* of the “attachment to sensuality”, due to the evidence that *anuśaya* is a disassociated [*dharmā*], then there is a contradiction with the Abhidharmic teaching: “the *anuśaya* of attachment to sensuality is associated with three kinds of faculties.”²⁷⁶

If *anuśaya* was equivalent to “attachment to sensuality”, then it would be annihilated when “attachment to sensuality” is removed. However, *anuśaya* is more subtle than attachment and remains latent in one’s mind. Therefore, *anuśaya* cannot simply be regarded as an “attachment to sensuality”. Furthermore, the Sarvāstivādins consider *anuśaya* as a potency of defilements, classified under “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind”. Disagreeing with this view, the AKBh provides evidence from the *Jñānaprasthāna*, indicating that *anuśaya* is associated with pleasure, satisfaction, and equanimity.²⁷⁷ To further clarify, the Sarvāstivādins define *anuśaya* as *prāpti*:

“With *anuśaya*” means “with the sequence” (*sānubandha*)..... In the *sūtra*, the term *anuśaya* is used metaphorically to mean *prāpti*..... However, in the Abhidharma, the term *anuśaya* indirectly refers to defilements. Therefore, only the defilements that are associated with *anuśayas*.²⁷⁸

In this paragraph, the Sarvāstivādins prove that their understanding of *anuśaya* works on both *sūtras* and Abhidharma teachings. Referring to the concept of *prāpti*, the Sarvāstivādins understand the term *anuśaya* as a continuum of defilement, which exists in the past, present,

²⁷⁶ AKBh, p. 278: *katham idaṃ jñātavyaṃ kāmarāga evānuśayaḥ kāmarāgānuśayaḥ āhosvit kāmarāgasyānuśayaḥ kāmarāgānuśayaḥ / kiṃ cātaḥ / kāmarāga evānuśayaś cet sūtravirodhaḥ ... tasya tat kāmarāgapariyavasthānaṃ sthāmaśaḥ samyaktvasamavahataṃ sānuśayaṃ prahīyata” iti / kāmarāgasyānuśayaś ced viprayuktānuśayaprasaṅgād abhidharmavirodhaḥ kāmarāgānuśayas tribhir indriyaiḥ samprayukta iti.* For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1659).

²⁷⁷ Sangpo (2012: 1658) denotes that this Abhidharma text is the *Jñānaprasthāna* (T1544, no. 26, p. 931b11).

²⁷⁸ AKBh, p. 278: *sānuśayaṃ sānubandham ity arthaḥ / ... aupacāriko vā sūtre ’nuśayaśabdaḥ prāptau / ... lākṣaṇikas tv abhidharme kleśa evānuśayaśabdaḥ / tasmāt samyuktā evānuśayaḥ.* For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1659).

and future. Through *prāpti*, the *anuśaya* connects with a sentient being. On the other hand, the Sautrāntikas in the AKBh systemise the *anuśaya* as a *dharma* that is associated with the mind and is the defilement itself. According to Sangpo (2012: 1771, note 37), the Sarvāstivādins utilise the concept of *prāpti* and *aprāpti* to explain how defilements exist throughout the three periods of time. *Anuśaya*, according to the Sarvāstivādins, is a metaphorical way to describe *prāpti*.

However, the Sautrāntika position is accepted in the AKBh, since the Sarvāstivādins deem that *anuśaya* is a real entity:

Thus, it is proper in the manner of the Sautrāntikas. How [is the view of] the Sautrāntikas? [They say:] “The [term] *kāmarāgānuśaya* means the *anuśaya* of the “attachment to sensuality.” And *anuśaya* is neither associated nor disassociated [from the mind], because there it has no other real entity.”²⁷⁹

The Sautrāntikas argue that the Sarvāstivādins misunderstand them. They do not regard the *anuśaya* as a *dharma* that is associated with the mind, nor dissociated with the mind. In fact, they understand the term *anuśaya* as a nominal designation that is not a real entity, refuting the Sarvāstivāda understanding of *anuśaya-prāpti*.

Following the understanding of the Sautrāntikas, the AKBh introduces two aspects of the concept of *anuśaya*:

A sleeping defilement is called *anuśaya*. When it is awakened, it is called envelopment. What is its sleeping state? It is the *bīja*-state when it is not manifested. What is its awakening? It is the state of being manifest.²⁸⁰

Unlike the Sarvāstivādins, who regard the term *anuśaya* as a sequence that can be connected by *prāpti*, the AKBh signifies the concept of *anuśayas*, including the sleeping state and the

²⁷⁹ AKBh, p. 278: *evaṃ tu sādhu yathā sautrāntikānām / katham ca sautrāntikānām / kāmarāgasyānuśayaḥ kāmarāgānuśaya itī / na cānuśayaḥ samprayukto na viprayuktas tasyādravyāntaratvāt*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1660).

²⁸⁰ AKBh, p. 278: *prasupto hi kleśo ’nuśaya ucyate / prabuddhaḥ paryavasthānam / kā ca tasya prasuptiḥ / asaṃmukhībhūtasya bījabhāvānubandhaḥ / kaḥ prabodhaḥ / saṃmukhībhāvaḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1660).

awakened state. The former *anuśaya* refers to “latent defilement” that dwells unmanifested as a *bīja*-state; the latter represents “envelopment” that manifests with a specific characteristic in one’s mental series. Regarding this, we should notice that the AKBh tries to combine the concept of *anuśayas* with the concept of *bījas* and emphasises that there are no other *dharmas* that exist outside the mental series, nor anything that can exist as a real entity. The *bīja*-state explains why the wholesome *dharmas* manifest after the unwholesome *dharmas*. It is not because they are the cause of maturation for each other, rather it is because they dwell as a *bīja*-state in one’s mental series. When the condition is fulfilled, the wholesome *dharmas* are awakened and manifested. Therefore, the *bīja*-state is the preliminary notion of the *ālayavijñāna*, or the consciousness of fruition of maturation with all *bījas*, as we discussed in section 2.3.4., which demonstrates that the Yogācāras consider the *bījas* as potentialities.

The term *bījabhāva*, according to Katō (1987: 198), can be understood as the nature of *bīja* with reference to the specific potency (*śakti*). However, the term *vāsanā* is also regarded as a “specific potency” by the AKTA (see section 2.4.5). Thus, it is necessary to investigate the definition of *bījabhāva* in the AKBh:

What is this so-called *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*)? It is the specific potency of producing defilement, generating defilement of the self-existence. Just as the specific potency of producing memory (*smṛtyutpādanaśakti*), generating experiential knowledge, and just as the specific potency of producing rice fruit, generating rice fruit from the rice sprouts, etc.²⁸¹

In this context, the *bīja*-state is the same as the memory and the rice, serving as the specific potency and the cause of generating fruitions in the future. As Park (2014: 247) points out, the *bīja*-state refers to the *bījas* of defilement that constitute the basis of someone's mental continuum. The specific potency within the *bīja*-state will generate defilement in the future. This capacity is further explained by a metaphor that the seed of rice will produce the seed of rice. In this case, the *bīja*-state represents the cause of homogeneity and ensures that sentient

²⁸¹ AKBh, p. 278: ko 'yaṃ bījabhāvo nāma / ātmabhāvasya kleśajā kleśotpādanaśaktiḥ / yathānubhavajñānājā smṛtyutpādanaśaktir yathā cāṅkurādīnāṃ śāliphalaajā śāliphalotpādanaśaktir iti. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 1660).

beings will continue to exist in the mundane world. From this metaphor, the *bīja*-state and the subsequent defilement serve as a seed and a sprout, respectively, forming a successive causality (Yamabe 2017).

The specific potency does not only regenerate defilements, but it can also regenerate memories that relate to cultivations in one's mental series. The *bīja* of memory implies that even memory is a special type of the mind, rather than a real entity (Park 2014: 448). This understanding is explained in the AKBh:

However, those who²⁸² conceived of *anuśaya* as *bīja* which is a separate entity dissociated [from the mind] would then also have to think of the *bīja* of memory (*smṛtibīja*) as a separate entity.²⁸³

To maintain their doctrine of the existence of three periods of time, the Sarvāstivādins assert that *dharmas* exist as real entities and can be connected with a sentient being by *prāpti*. In contrast, the ABKh argues that the concept of *anuśayas* exists as a *bīja*-state that is a part of the concept of *bījas*, which is designated as name and matter. Moreover, the ABKh rejects the notion of memory as a real entity, instead considering it as a special type of the mind. According to Jaini (1992: 285), memory is a representative cognition of the past object, so it is unnecessary to postulate a *dharma* called memory. Regarding this, the metaphor of a plant producing fruit is used to illustrate that memory is transmitted through a specific potency rather than as a real entity.

The relationship between *bījas* and *anuśayas* is clearly stated in the *Basic Section* in the *Yogācārabhūmi*:

Because it is followed by all the seeds that increase in the mundane world, it is the *anuśaya*.²⁸⁴

Unlike the definition in the AKBh, which regards the term *anuśaya* as the sleeping state and

²⁸² According to Sangpo (2012: 1773, note 51), here refers to the Mahāsāṃghikas.

²⁸³ AKBh, pp. 278–279: : yas tu kleśānāṃ bījārtham arthāntaraṃ vīprayuktam anuśayaṃ kalpayati tena smṛtibījam apy arthāntaraṃ kalpayitavyaṃ jāyate. This passage is also translated into English by Yamabe (2003: 231–232) and Park (2014: 447).

²⁸⁴ SavBh, p. 167: sarvalaukikotkarṣabījānuḡamyatvād anuśayāḥ.

bīja-state, the *Basic Section* equates the term *anuśaya* straightforwardly with defiled *bījas* in the mundane world. This suggests that the significance of *anuśaya* has been diminished, and the concept of *bījas* has taken on its role.

Hence, in this context, a specific potency refers to the original force of *bījas* while, in the context of *vāsanās*, it only appears when actions of body or speech manifest. Since the AKTA offers the latter explanation (see section 2.3.5), the contents of *bījas* and *vāsanās* may have changed in the Yogācāra school. The presumption in the KP suggests that, without *vāsanās*, the function of a specific transformation in the series cannot be applied in one's mental series. Therefore, we can surmise that, like the concept of *anuśaya* and *bīja*-state in the AKBh, the term *bīja* gradually becomes a dormant designation, while the specific potency becomes *vāsanās*.

2.5.2 The Definition of *Anuśaya* in the *Ny

As for the Sarvāstivādins, the terms *anuśaya* and *paryavasthāna* are synonyms for defilement (*kleśa*), indicating a subtle and tenacious nature (Sangpo 2012: 1762, note 2). This does not imply that the Sarvāstivādins disregard the term *anuśaya*. On the contrary, the *Ny elaborates on the 16 aspects of *anuśayas*, explaining that they can serve as the basis of defiled existence (Sangpo 2012: 1764, note 9).

To reject the two aspects of *anuśaya* in the AKBh, the *Ny defines the term *anuśaya* as having two meanings:

The concept of *anuśaya* (隨眠) can be understood in two ways: as a nurture (隨增) or as an accompaniment (助伴). It is called “together with *anuśaya*” because of its nurtured aspect. An object that corresponds with *anuśaya* (相應隨眠) can be either interrupted or uninterrupted. Only the uninterrupted mind is called “together with *anuśaya*”.²⁸⁵

In line with the Sarvāstivāda's fundamental understanding of *anuśaya* as a continuum, the *Ny explains that the term *anuśaya*, as a continuum, nurtures defilements and operates as an

²⁸⁵ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 637c13–16: “依二義立有隨眠名，一是隨眠所隨增故，二以隨眠為助伴故，由隨眠故名有隨眠。相應隨眠通斷未斷，所緣唯未斷心名有隨眠。” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 425).

uninterrupted accompaniment with the mind. Utilising the concept of *prāpti*, the *Ny demonstrates that *anuśaya* can connect and disconnect with the mind:

How can a defilement which is associated with the mind—and thus following [it] during the stage when it has still not been cut off—nurture itself and lodge in the mind? [Answer:] Those *anuśaya* are able to give rise to [their] “*prāpti*” in the mental series and they are therefore able to bind and obstruct [the mental series].²⁸⁶

As the *anuśaya* projects the function of possession, the defilement together with the *anuśaya* corresponds to the mind and connects with the mental series. The term “obstruct” refers to the *anuśaya* as a penetrable matter which serves as a cause of rising defilement. Thus, the *Ny does not regard *anuśaya* as a special type of the mind like the Sautrāntikas do, but rather as matter—that is, a real entity.

The concept of *anuśaya* aims to maintain the existence of the three periods of time and serves as the cause of homogeneity:

Further, [they] act as the cause of homogeneity for future [*dharmas* of the same moral type] because they give rise to the fruition of a homogeneous cause in the [mental] continuum. Also, it is said that as long as they have not been cut off, they nurture themselves and lodge in the mind, but when they have been cut off, this is no longer the case; that is to say, they [then] no longer nurture themselves and lodge in the mind.²⁸⁷

The discussion of the cause of homogeneity refers to how wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* reproduce in one’s mental series. The *Ny deems that the *anuśaya* serves as the cause of homogeneity and brings forth the fruition of a homogeneous cause in the future. Thus, if one does not cut the *anuśaya*, which means that one does not prompt *aprāpti* to disconnect the *anuśaya*, the defilement will continue and be nurtured. However, even though one cuts off the *anuśaya*, it does not mean the *anuśaya* is annihilated:

²⁸⁶ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 637c16–18: “云何與心相應煩惱，乃至未斷於心隨增？謂彼隨眠能引起得，於心相續能為拘礙。” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 425).

²⁸⁷ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 637c18–20: “又與來世為同類因，引相續中心等流起故，乃至未斷，說於心隨增，斷則不然，無隨增義。” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 425).

[However], it is not the case that [latent dispositions] are cut off and thereby are made to separate from the mind. For this reason, although the [*anuśaya*] have been cut off, [the mind] is [still] referred to as “having them”, because their nature of concurring with [the mind] cannot be eliminated.²⁸⁸

Since the *anuśaya* is an accompaniment or concurring with the mind, it cannot be annihilated even when one cuts it off from the mental series. This situation is similar to what we have already discussed in section 2.3.3.4. When the practitioner enters the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought, the mind at the final moment serves as the cause of homogeneity and the condition of equal-immediate to give rise to the first moment of mind after these two cultivations. Thus, even though the mind does not act in cessation, it still exists and can be possessed after cessation. The same applies to the *anuśaya*; when it is cut off, it remains and can be possessed again.

In this regard, will the *anuśaya* always be attached to the mental series? The *Ny then presents the power of antidote:

That is, the power of the antidotes (對治力) [to the defilement] within the mental continuum is able to prevent both the *anuśayas* and the *prāpti* they produce from arising, so that they no longer function as bondages and hindrances in the mental series. Hence, it is said that already abandoned *anuśayas* associated with [the mind] (相應隨眠) are not able to nurture themselves and lodge in [the mind]. Yet, it is not correct to say that the power of antidotes (對治力) is able to deprive the *anuśayas* of their nature of concurring with [the mind] and for this reason though they have been already cut off, the mind is referred to as “having latent defilements”.²⁸⁹

The power of antidote can surpass the arising of *anuśaya* and *prāpti*, so that they do not serve as the cause of defilement in the mental series—just as, in the last paragraph, the *anuśaya* does

²⁸⁸ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 637c20–21: “非由斷故令彼離心, 故雖已斷, 而名有彼, 以助伴性不可壞故。” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 425).

²⁸⁹ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 637c21–25: “謂對治力, 於相續中, 能遮隨眠, 令不現起, 及能遮彼所引起得, 於心相續不為拘礙故, 說已斷相應隨眠, 無隨增理, 非對治力能遮隨眠俱行伴性故。彼雖已斷心, 名有隨眠。” For the English translation cf. Park (2014: 425).

not nurture defilement after being cut off. However, the *Ny reiterates his position that the mind can always connect with the *anuśaya* again and that the *anuśaya* still exists. Based on this statement, it is evident that, in Saṃghabhadra’s understanding, the *anuśaya* is a *dharma* that exists outside the mind.

The *Ny rejects the concept of *anuśayas* as a special type of the mind and extends this refutation to memory as well. For the Sarvāstivādins, the term memory belongs to the “mental factors that operate everywhere”; thus, it should serve as the cause of homogeneity:

For our school [我宗, i.e., the Sarvāstivādins], the *bīja* of memory (念種子) is based on the actual memory immediately after the attainment of knowledge [by the practitioner in the first stage] and simultaneously gives rise to a subsequent memory. When the subsequent [memory] arises, both the memory and knowledge serve as [the *bīja* of] memory. This [*bīja*] manifests as memory, and the former moment [of memory] projects the subsequent moment.²⁹⁰

When a practitioner attains actualised knowledge, this knowledge immediately becomes a *bīja* of memory that simultaneously arises again as actualised knowledge in the subsequent moment due to the condition of equal-immediacy. Thus, for the *Ny, the *bīja* of memory is equivalent to the cause of homogeneity. On the other hand, the AKBh considers the *anuśaya*, as the *bīja*-state, to naturally have a specific potency and not be a real entity. The *Ny, however, disagrees with this view:

[You state that there is] a specific potency (*śakti*, 功能) that arises simultaneously from its intrinsic nature, but there are no [*anuśayas* together with] defilements as real entities. [However, the process of] arising from the former envelopment and generating the subsequent envelopment is still called *anuśaya*, as the *bīja* of defilements (煩惱種子). Thus, if [you] use it as a metaphor, it is far away [from the Buddhist teaching].²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 597b12–14: “以我宗言念種子者, 即於證智後, 初重緣實念, 從先證智俱起念生, 能生後時憶智俱念. 此顯即念前後相引.”

²⁹¹ *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 597b15–16: “為能赴感差別功能, 彼自體俱生, 無別實煩惱, 從前纏起, 能生後纏, 可名隨眠煩惱種子, 故喻於法相去極遙.”

In the *Ny’s perspective, the term *anuśaya* is not a mental event, so it does not include the sleeping state or the awakened state as “envelopment”. Additionally, the term *anuśaya* should not have a specific potency that can give rise to the former fruition and the subsequent fruition.

The concept of *anuśaya* is explained as the concept of **anudhātu* by the Sthaviras (i.e., Śrīlāta). He deems that when defilements manifest, they are called “envelopments” because they can cause the continuum of what was previously bound with afflictions to arise, while the **anudhātu* of afflictions is called *anuśaya*. The state of being a cause of having causal capability always accompanies and remains latent or dormant.

Nevertheless, the *Ny regards those concepts as the same fallacies, concluding in a famous paragraph:

In the arguments among the various Ābhidharmikas (對法諸師), the Dārṣṭāntikas (諸譬喻者) often appeal to their own [concept] of *bījas* (諸法種子) and thereby pervert the correct meaning and cause it to become unclear. There are certain masters who give different names to these *bījas*, each according to his own understanding. Some call them **anudhātu* (subsidiary element, 隨界), others call them *vāsanā* (perfuming, 熏習); still others call them *sāmarthya* (capacity, 功能), *avipranāśa* (non-disappearance, 不失), or *upacaya* (accumulation, 增長).²⁹²

How do concepts such as *bījas*, **anudhātu*, and *vāsanās* etc. attempt to solve the question of how mental series can continue without connecting with a real entity? The Sautrāntikas in the AKBh also reject the existence of three periods of time and deem that only the present moment manifests wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Thus, they utilise the concepts of *bījas* to maintain unmanifested mental events in the mental series, whereas the *Ny insists on the Sarvāstivāda’s position that *dharmas* exist through the three periods of time. In terms of their different statements, we observe that the concept of *bījas* integrates into the concept of *anuśayas* as well.

²⁹² *Ny, T1562, no. 29, p. 398b25–29: “對法諸師議論宗處，諸譬喻者，多分於中，申自所執諸法種子，惑亂正義令不分明。復有諸師，於此種子，處處隨義建立別名，或名隨界，或名熏習，或名功能，或名不失，或名增長。” For the English translation cf. Cox (1995: 197).

2.5.3 The *Bīja* of Memory (*smṛtibīja*) in the AKTA

The *bīja* of memory (*smṛtibīja*) is presented in the AKBh as a rejection of considering the concept of *anuśaya* as a real entity (*dravya*). Through the *bīja* of memory, the term “memory” no longer serves as the “mental factor that operates everywhere” (*mahābhūmikadharmā*), but rather as a mental event (*cittaviśeṣa*). Therefore, the AKBh once again denies the existence of a real entity that can connect with the mental series of a sentient being.

Following the stance of the AKBh, the AKTA explains that the term “memory” arises again in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsaṃjñāsamāpatti*) due to the *bīja* of memory:

In this way, the *bīja* of memory means on account of the [past] actualised knowledge in the continuity of memory, that which takes its [previous] own object as cognitive object. Therefore, it should be asserted that “[by] taking its own object of experience as the cognitive object, the memory comes about”.²⁹³

The first moment of the actualised knowledge becomes the *bīja* of memory that is the object of the subsequent moment. Therefore, the AKTA does not consider the actualised knowledge as *dharma* outside the mental series, but rather a manifestation that operates because of the transformation of basis through cultivation.

The AKTA further explains that the actualised knowledge does not belong to mind and mental factors:

If it was not like that, the actualised knowledge would be meaningless. Moreover, if “actualised knowledge” is perceived as that very group of all coexisting mind and mental factors, then it is not a single knowledge alone, but an entire group of mind and mental factors.²⁹⁴

²⁹³ AKTA, p. 102a2: *'di ltar nyams su myong ba'i shes pas dran pa'i rgyud la rang gi yul dmigs pa ni dran pa'i sa bon te / de'i phyir nyams su myong ba'i yul la dmigs te dran pa skye'o zhes khas blang bar bya'o*. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 139).

²⁹⁴ AKTA, p. 102a3–5: *de lta ma yin na nyams su myong ba'i shes pas don med do // gzhan yang nyams su myong*

For the Yogācāras, the term memory belongs to “the mental factors which operate based on specific object”. Therefore, the function of memorising only operates while attaining the fruition of practising, such as the actualised knowledge that preserves as *bīja* of memory. Since the basis of the practitioner has been transformed, the manifesting actualised knowledge does not belong to the group of the mind and mental factors, from which the AKTA considers the function of memory to be their foundation:

The memory that takes its own object as a cognitive object is the foremost in generating the entire group of the mind and mental factors; it is called “the specific potency (*nus pa*) of its own support basis”. For that reason, [how could] there be [any] contradiction in this by [claiming] the arising of memory? It is to be stated that the *bīja* of memory etc. is not different from the cause of its own kind. On [this point], some say that those [facts explain] how memory arises in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought.²⁹⁵

According to this paragraph, the *bīja* of memory serves as the cause of homogeneity that generates the same *dharma* as the previous moment. However, this function of memorising is a “specific potency from its own kind”, which is related to the understanding in later Yogācāra texts that a manifested *bīja* perfumes the next *bīja*. This continuation is discussed in Chapter 3. Through the *bīja* of memory, the AKTA proposes that consciousness arises again from the two cessations because the practitioner preserves memories from the previous moment. Therefore, it is unnecessary to hold on to the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti* or the Sautrāntikas’ mutual *bījas*.

Hence, the concept of *anuśaya* demonstrates two different understandings. On the one hand, the AKBh presents the term *anuśaya* as equivalent to *bīja*-state, which is a dormant

ba’i shes pa zhes bya ba thams cad lhan cig skyes pa’i sems dang sems las skyes pa’i tshogs pa de nyid du gzung ba na / shes pa kho na ’ba’zhig ma yin gyi / sems dang sems las byung ba’i tshogs pa de mtha’ dag nyid do. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 139–140).

²⁹⁵AKTA, p. 102a5–6: *rang gi yul la dmigs pa’i dran pa ni sems dang sems las byung ba’i tshogs pa mtha’ dag skyed pa la gtso bo ste rang gi rten gyi nus pa zhes bya’o// de’i phyir yang dran pa skye bas ’di la ’gal ba ci zhig yod / dran pa’i sa bon la sogs pa ni rang gi rigs kyi rgyu ba las tha dad ma yin par brjod par bya la / kha cig ni de dag ’gog pa dang ’du shes med pa’i snyoms par ’jug pa la ji ltar dran pa skye bar brjod ces zer ro.* For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 140).

situation, while the envelopment arises as an active situation. AKBh then introduces the *bīja* of memory that has a specific potency to grow to similar fruition. On the other hand, the *Ny argues that the concept of *anuśaya* is a nurture or an accompaniment. It will always combine with the mind due to its nature of accompaniment and will not stop from growing if it does not disconnect with the mind. Hence, we notice that the AKBh actually extends the concept of *anuśaya* by adding the envelopment and refutes the concept of *anuśaya* as a real entity by regarding it as a *bīja*, whereas the *Ny focuses on explaining why the concept of *anuśaya* exists as a real entity in the three periods of time. The AKTA agrees with the AKBh and emphasises that, through the *bīja* of memory and its specific potency, consciousness arises again in the two cessations.

2.6 Short Conclusion

Returning to the questions we proposed at the beginning of this chapter, the stance of the AKBh attempts to utilise the concept of *bījas* to reject the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the existence of three periods of time and real existence.

The Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti* consists of the initial “conditioned factors disassociated from the mind” (*cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra*) and a function to connect a sentient being with a *dharma*. To insist there is no *dharma* outside the mental series, the AKBh proposes that *bījas* operate a specific transformation in the series (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*) and manifest all phenomena. Since the concept of *bījas* is name and matter as a designation, it is not a real entity.

Surrounding the argument of whether the mind connects with real entities, the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*) plays an important role in explaining the unequal moral in two moments. The AKBh utilises the cause of maturation to demonstrate that wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas* only generate neutral fruitions. However, the *Ny points out that the cause of maturation should project (*ākṣepa*) fruitions as the group-homogeneity (*nikāyasabhāga*) and the faculty of life (*jīvita*). On the one hand, the AKBh considers that the cause of maturation grows and is infused by desires in one’s mental series, just as the moistened *bījas* (**abhiśyandabīja*). On the other hand, the *Ny argues that the concept of *bījas* should be a cases of the cause of homogeneity (*sabhāgahetu*) and bring forth the fruition of a

homogeneous cause (*niṣyandaphala*).

As the “infusion” from desires, the concept of *vāsanās* in the AKBh includes terms such as *bhāvanā* (cultivated) and *bhāvita* (perfumed) in the context of meditation, and is presented as an alternative to the Sarvāstivāda concept of non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*). Moreover, the Sautrāntikas deem that the interaction of mutual *bījas* (*anyonyabīja*) of the body and mind generates consciousness in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsamjñāsamāpatti*). This assumption is not accepted in the KP, but the notion of the subtle mind (*sūkṣmacitta*) becomes the preliminary idea of the *ālayavijñāna*.

For the Sarvāstivādins, the concept of *prāpti* ensures one’s series connects with *dharmas*. *Anuśaya* is therefore a defiled accompaniment that will not be annihilated. However, the AKBh divides the concept of *anuśayas* into two aspects: *anuśaya* as a dormant situation that is equivalent to *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*), and active situation that is the envelopment (*paryavasthāna*). The AKBh then proposes that the *bīja* of memory (*smṛtibīja*) with a specific potency (*śakti*) appears when the practitioner attains the actualised knowledge (**adhigamāvabodha*). Through the *bīja* of memory, the *anuśaya* has no reason to dwell in series, since the *bīja* of memory serves as a cause of the next moment.

In this chapter, we have acknowledged that the AKBh utilises the concept of *bījas* and the function of a specific transformation in series to refute the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of the three periods of time and the existence of a real entity. For the AKBh, the specific potency within *bījas* may imply the coexisting of *vāsanās* and *bījas* in the same moment. Now that we have built a basic understanding of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, we can further discuss them in relation to the Yogācāra texts.

Chapter 3: The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in the Process of

Conceptualisation

As discussed in the second chapter, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are independent in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh), and the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* are not synonymous. Prior to

the AKBh, the Sarvāstivāda doctrines of the existence of three periods of time, as well as the existence of a real entity (*dravya*) which is mainly presented through the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti* (which serves as a bridge to connect a sentient being and a *dharma*), were commonly regarded as definitive (see section 2.2). The concept of *prāpti* also maintains the connection of *anuśaya* as a continuum of defilement with a sentient being (see section 2.5). However, this changed with the concept of *bīja*.

The concept of *bīja* in the AKBh appears to refute the Sarvāstivāda position. Vasubandhu argues that *bījas* dwell in one's series and only manifest in the present time (see section 2.2.2). To maintain *bījas* in one's series, Vasubandhu therefore introduces the function of a specific transformation that ensures *bījas* regenerate from the present to the future. This renders the concept of *prāpti* unnecessary. The term *vāsanā* is regarded as a "specific potency" (*śakti*) and is utilized by the "Sautrāntikas" to bring the mutual *bījas* (*anyonyabīja*) together in the two meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsaṃjñāsamāpatti*), enabling consciousness to arise again (see section 2.4.2). For Vasubandhu, *vāsanās* serve as a replacement for the Sarvāstivāda concept of non-informative matter (*avijñaptirūpa*), transmitting the merits of cultivation from the previous moment to the subsequent moment (see section 2.4). Therefore, the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh mainly functions as a refutation of the Sarvāstivāda concept of *prāpti* and the concept of non-informative matter. These two concepts represent the position that there is no entity existing through the three periods of time and therefore assert that only the present time exists (see section 2.4.1).

According to King (1998: 6), the Sautrāntikas accept that one perceives only the form (*akāra*) or representation (*vijñapti*) of an object, whereas the Yogācāras reflect the existence of external objects as causes (*nimitta*), asserting that external objects cannot be directly perceived. The Yogācāra position seeks to rectify ignorance accumulated over time, which leads one to mistakenly regard objects as independent and external, thereby causing the dichotomy of false conceptualisation—namely, grasper (*grāhaka*) and grasped (*grāhya*). The Yogācāras utilise the concept of *trīsvabhāva* to explain the process of conceptualisation. When the faculty perceives an object, consciousness manifests and conceptualisation is generated. Regarding this, the dependent nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*) implies that all kinds of *dharmas* arise successively dependent (*pratītyasamutpāda*) on each other, while the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*)

signifies false conceptualisations that arise from one’s mind. Once the defiled *ālayavijñāna* is transformed (*āśrayaparivṛtti*), the perfect nature (*pariniṣpannasvabhāva*) brings forth pure understanding. In the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MAV), the dependent nature and the imagined nature are represented by “unreal imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpita*). Sthiramati’s commentary, the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (MAVṬ), identifies that the term *abhūtaparikalpa* is defiled when it is associated with error, whereas it is undefiled when it pertains to emptiness. Odani (2017: 94) deems that *abhūtaparikalpita* is defined as the grasper and the grasped in the MAVṬ. The two aspects, the grasper and the grasped, dwell as *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna* and manifest as the experiential world of phenomena. In the *Triṃśikā* (Tr) and the *Triṃśikābhāṣya* (TrBh), when “the transformation of consciousness” (*vijñānapariṇāma*) occurs, the grasper refers to the inner mind perceiving the object (namely, the grasped). The division of these two aspects establishes the false conceptualisation held by ordinary people, who believe that entities exist outside their *ālayavijñāna*.

The process of conceptualisation is based on the *ālayavijñāna* that generates actual consciousnesses from its *bījas*. The *ālayavijñāna* as a storage of *bījas* is delineated in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (VinSg) of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBh). Notably, the YoBh was not composed by a single author at one time; rather, it contains layers that represent different concepts.²⁹⁶ Therefore, this dissertation does not imply that the *ālayavijñāna* as a storage of *bījas* originated from the VinSg, but rather acknowledges that the description of the *ālayavijñāna* in the VinSg is more comprehensive than in other sections of the YoBh. In this chapter, we focus on the process of conceptualisation in the compendium of the MAV and the Tr, including the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (PSkV). The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are investigated from four perspectives:

1. The relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and the concept of *bījas*.

²⁹⁶ The *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBh) focuses on the different stages of Buddhist practice. Schmithausen (1987: 13) states that the YoBh is “a compilation consisting of several (or at least two) heterogenous (or at any rate chronologically distinct) layers”. Many scholars agree with Schmithausen that the authorship and compilers cannot be identified (Kritzer 1999: 13–17; 2005 xvii). There is no surviving complete Sanskrit version of the YoBh. The published articles related to the Sanskrit fragments are listed by Silk (2001: 153–158). Xuánzàng translated the entire YoBh into Chinese (T 1579, no. 30). However, the order of chapters does not correspond with the Tibetan translation (Derge 4035), even though the included material is almost the same (Silk 2001: 152).

2. In the MAV, the “unreal imagination” involves the mental activity being impregnated by speech, while the concept of *bījas* represents the grasper and the grasped.
3. The transformation of consciousness in the TrBh mainly involves the concept of *vāsanās*.
4. The function of the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping and the *vāsanā* of *karman* in the Tr and the TrBh.

In the MAV, the “unreal imagination” generates false conceptualisations, while the Tr explains this process by “the transformation of consciousness”. The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* function as the grasper and the grasped in accordance with previous experience. On the other hand, the PSkV highlights the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause and the *vāsanā* of maturation to emphasise this process. Through these perspectives, this chapter aims to acknowledge how the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are utilized in the Yogācāra process of conceptualisation.

3.1 The *Ālayavijñāna* and the Actual Consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*) in the VinSg

The concept of the *ālayavijñāna* is thought to be indispensable only in the *Samāhitābhūmi* in the Basic Section (*Maulībhūmi*) (Schmithausen 1987: 13), but it also plays a crucial role²⁹⁷ in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (VinSg).²⁹⁸ Schmithausen (1987: 299–300, note 226) divides the VinSg into three portions—namely, the *Proof Portion*, the *Pravṛtti Portion*, and the *Nivṛtti Portion*. He then points out that the *Proof Portion* introduces eight proofs to establish the existence of the *ālayavijñāna*.²⁹⁹ The proof *bīja*, which explains the function of the

²⁹⁷ According to Schmithausen (1987: 12–13), the *ālayavijñāna* has already been mentioned in the *Basic Section* (*Maulībhūmi*) of the YoBh. However, the *ādānavijñāna* is utilized as a key term mainly in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī*, which quotes almost the entire context of the **Samdh*. Therefore, Schmithausen believes that the *ālayavijñāna*, as the new kind of consciousnesses, is composed after the *Basic Section* but before the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī*.

²⁹⁸ The *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (VinSg) explains the concept of the *ālayavijñāna* in great detail and presents eight logical proofs to examine the existence of the *ālayavijñāna* (Kritzer 2005: xix). The development of the *ālayavijñāna* in the VinSg is thoroughly studied by Schmithausen (1987). For current research on Sanskrit fragments of the VinSg see Choi (2015).

²⁹⁹ I compile the chart according to Schmithausen (1987: 194–196). For the English translations of Sanskrit terms cf. Kramer (2016b: 147). In this article, she also points out that the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* includes an

ālayavijñāna, is already presented in the Basic Section of the YoBh. Those *bījas* allow the neutral *ālayavijñāna* to manifest wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral actual consciousnesses (Schmithausen 1987: 195). These actual consciousnesses compose false conceptualisations for ordinary people.

Waldron (2003: 104) points out that the Abhidharma system faces a problematic question: how can an unwholesome *dharma* be succeeded by wholesome *dharma*s? Since the condition of equal-immediacy only brings forth homogeneous results, and the cause of maturation only generates neutral fruition, it is impossible to produce any heterogeneous result in one's mental series. The concept of *bījas* provides the transmission from one moment to the next. As the *ālayavijñāna* contains all kinds of *bījas*, it is possible that, when a positive *bīja* ceases in the present moment, a negative *bīja* manifests in the next moment. This process is explained as seed (*bīja*) in the VinSg.³⁰⁰

For what reason is it impossible for the six groups of consciousnesses to be each other's seeds? Because an unwholesome [*dharma*] occurs immediately after a wholesome one, a wholesome one immediately after an unwholesome one, a neutral one immediately after both of these.... These [six groups of cognitive awareness] cannot properly be seeds [of each other] in this way. Moreover, the mental stream continues for a long time,

identical list.

A1: The somatic aspect of the <i>ālayavijñāna</i>	Proof i appropriating (<i>upātta</i>); Proof vi corporeal sensation (<i>kāyiko 'nubhavaḥ</i>); Proof vii two unconscious absorptions (<i>acitte samāpattī</i>); Proof viii death (<i>cyuti</i>)
A2: The function of the <i>ālayavijñāna</i>	Proof iv seed (<i>bīja</i>)
B1: The system of the *Saṃdh	Proofs ii beginning (<i>ādi</i>); iii clarity (<i>spaṣṭatva</i>)
B2: The continuity of the <i>ālayavijñāna</i>	Proof v function (<i>karman</i>)

³⁰⁰ The Sanskrit version of the VinSg has been lost, but the passage is preserved in the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* (ASBh), p. 11,15–11,18: *tad etad ālayavijñānam astīti katham vijñāyate / yasmāt tena vinā upāttam ādi spaṣṭatvaṃ bījaṃ karma na yujyate / kāyiko 'nubhavo 'citte samāpattī cyutis tathā // etasyāś coddānagāthāyā vibhāgas tadyathā viniścayasamgrahanyām aṣṭābhir ākārair ālayavijñānasyāstītā pratyetyavā*. The English translation is offered by me: “How to know that this *ālayavijñāna* exists? [It exists] because when it does not exist, [its characteristics such as] appropriating (*upātta*), beginning (*ādi*), clarity (*spaṣṭatva*), seed (*bīja*), function (*karman*), also corporeal sensation (*kāyiko 'nubhavaḥ*), two unconscious absorptions (*acitte samāpattī*) and death (*cyuti*) become impossible. The content of these [characteristics], just like the eight proofs within the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇi*, which is known as the establishment of the *ālayavijñāna*.”

having long been cut; for this reason, too [the mutual seeding of the six groups of consciousnesses] is not tenable.³⁰¹

The six groups of consciousnesses refer to the consciousness of seeing, the consciousness of hearing, the consciousness of smelling, the consciousness of tasting, the consciousness of body, and the consciousness of thinking. They are also actual consciousnesses that should be ceased during the two mediative absorptions of cessation and non-thought. Hence, the six groups of consciousnesses cannot be *bījas* for each other; otherwise, the mental continuum would be interrupted. The arising of wholesome *dharma* immediately after an unwholesome one and the continuum of the mental stream is due to the *ālayavijñāna* possessing all *bījas*.

According to Schmithausen (1987: 45), the *ālayavijñāna* in the Basic Section is equivalent to an uninterrupted series of *bījas* that demonstrates a new, subliminal kind of mind. The *ālayavijñāna* can exist simultaneously with actual consciousness, so it does not go against the simultaneous occurrence of the series of consciousness. The Yogācāras attempt to combine the *ālayavijñāna* with the Sautrāntikas' concept of *bījas*, in order to solve the question of how a single *ālayavijñāna* can give rise to various kinds of actual consciousnesses. On the one hand, the *ālayavijñāna* serves as the basis of *bījas*, and the actual consciousness, in terms of the six groups of consciousnesses, arises from it. On the other hand, the *ālayavijñāna* represents as the subliminal kind of mind, which continues during the two meditative absorptions because it contains all *bījas*, just as seeds hibernate during winter and sprout when spring comes.

3.1.1 The Function of Generating Actual Consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*)

As the container of all *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* manifests all actual consciousnesses in the present time:

How is it established that [*ālayavijñāna*] arises by reciprocal conditionality?

³⁰¹ ASBh, p. 12,25–13,3: *kena kāraṇena bījatvaṃ na saṃbhavati saṃṇām vijñānakāyānām anyonyam / tathā hi kuśalānantaram akuśalam utpadyate akuśalānantaram kuśalam tad ubhayānantaram avyākṛtaṃ na ca teṣām tathā bījatvaṃ yujyate / dīrghakālasamucchināpi ca saṃtatiś cireṇa kālena pravartate tasmād api na yujyate*. For the English translation cf. Waldron (2003: 105).

The *ālayavijñāna* functions (*kāritra*) as the condition of [the forms of] actual consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*) in two ways: by being their *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*), and by serving as their basis.

Of these, “being a *bīja*” means that whichever wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral [forms of] actual consciousnesses occur, they all have the *ālayavijñāna* as *bījas*.

“Serving as their basis” means that the five groups of consciousnesses will arise based upon the material sense faculties that are appropriated by the *ālayavijñāna*, but not from those that are not appropriated [by the *ālayavijñāna*].

Like the [material sense faculties, such as] the seeing, etc., which are the basis of the five groups of consciousnesses, the *ālayavijñāna* is the basis of the mental faculty and mental consciousness. When there is [the *ālayavijñāna*], the mental faculty and mental consciousness will also arise, but not when there is not.³⁰²

According to Waldron (2003: 92), in the Basic Section of the YoBh, the *bījas* dwell in the *ālayavijñāna* during the two meditative absorptions and arise as actual consciousnesses³⁰³ which correspond to objects with their respective sense faculties. It is worth noticing that, in the Chinese translation, the *ālayavijñāna* serves as *bījas*, while Waldron (2003: 181) reconstructs the Sanskrit term as *bīja*-state and translates it as “being a *bīja*”. As we have discussed in 2.4.1, the *bīja*-state is equivalent to *anūsāya*, which is the sleeping state of un-

³⁰² The *Pravṛtti Portion* of the VinSg, T1579, no. 30, p. 580b9–17: “云何建立互為緣性轉相? 謂阿賴耶識與諸轉識作二緣性: 一為彼種子故; 二為彼所依故。為種子者, 謂所有善, 不善, 無記轉識轉時, 一切皆用阿賴耶識為種子故。為所依者, 謂由阿賴耶識執受色根, 五種識身依之而轉, 非無執受。又由有阿賴耶識故, 得有末那, 由此末那為依止故, 意識得轉。譬如依止眼等五根, 五識身轉, 非無五根, 意識亦爾, 非無意根。” For the English translation cf. Waldron (2003: 181-182). According to Waldron, the Sanskrit terms are reconstructed by Schmithausen.

³⁰³ Waldron (2003: 92) translates the term *pravṛttivijñāna* as “manifesting forms of cognitive awareness”. Kramer (2014: 314) translates it as “actual perception”. As an influence on mental factors, *pravṛttivijñāna* can be translated as “transforming consciousness”, which fits with the Chinese translation of Xuánzàng (*pravṛttivijñāna*, 轉識 *zhuǎnshì*) (Chien 2023: 69). In this thesis, *pravṛttivijñāna* is especially focused on the dwelling *bījas* arising from the *ālayavijñāna*. In other words, *pravṛttivijñāna* is in contrast to the *ālayavijñāna*, which is the basis of all *pravṛttivijñāna*. I, therefore, translate it as “actual consciousness” to emphasis that it is the consciousness other than the *ālayavijñāna*, rather than simply referring to the meaning of cognition.

manifesting defiled *dharmas*. If the *ālayavijñāna* serves as a *bīja*-state, then it includes all *bījas*. On the other hand, if the *ālayavijñāna* is the *bīja*, this implies that the *ālayavijñāna* is able to manifest wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral *dharmas*. In this context, the *ālayavijñāna* should be understood as the *bīja*-state; thus, it is the container of *bījas*, rather than a *bīja* itself. The manifestation of wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral actual consciousnesses from the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* suggests that the character of the *bījas* is homogeneous with that of the actual consciousnesses. This consciousness is also significant in Sthiramati's thought, where he deems that the actual consciousness differs depending on its various objects (Kramer 2014: 314).

Since the *ālayavijñāna* serves as the basis, it encompasses both the human corpus and the mind. The *ālayavijñāna*, as the human corpus, grows the five sense faculties, appropriates matter, and generates actual consciousnesses. For instance, the faculty of seeing contacts the sense object of seeing, leading to the consciousness of seeing. As the mind, the *ālayavijñāna* is the basis of the mental faculty, from which the mental consciousness arises. Therefore, the *ālayavijñāna* is essential for both actual consciousness and mental consciousness.

3.1.2 The Relationship Between *Bījas* and the *Ālayavijñāna* in the *Pañcaskandhaka* (PSk) and the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (PSkV)

In the Yogācāra school, the *ālayavijñāna*, which contains the *bījas* of all the mental conditions is explained as the aggregate of consciousness in Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhaka* (PSk), a book of the categories of *dharmas*:

What is [the aggregate of] consciousness? It is the cognition of an object. It is also [referred to as] thought and mental faculty, because it [has the function of] accumulating³⁰⁴ and because mental faculty serves as its support. Then, the thought with

³⁰⁴ Lee and Steinkellner (2008: 16) point out that the AKBh (Pradhan 1975: 61) supports the term “*citraṃ (citraṃ)*” in the sentence “*citraṃ (citraṃ) śubhāśubhair dhātubhir iti cittam.*” Schmithausen (1987: 536, no. 1433) writes that “when the term *citta* is specifically referred to *ālayavijñāna*, it is usually etymologized in an intrinsically passive sense, *ālayavijñāna* being called *citta* on account of its being an accumulation of, or filled, covered, ‘set’ with, Impressions (*vāsanā*) or Seeds (*bīja*)”. Schmithausen also compares *citta* with Chinese and Tibetan translations. On the one hand, when it is *citta*, Tibetan gives it as “*bsags pa*”, and “所增長” in Chinese. On the

predominance³⁰⁵ is the *ālayavijñāna*, because that is where the *bījas* of all the mental conditions are accumulated.³⁰⁶

The aggregate of consciousness in the PSk encompasses three terms: consciousness, thought, and mental faculty. We should first return to the AKBh, where these three terms refer to the same thing but with different functions:

Citta is so-called because it gathers; *manas* is so-called because it thinks; *vijñāna* is so-called because it discerns. *Citta* refers to the mind influenced by wholesome and unwholesome realms, and therefore is called *citta*. Also, the element of basis is called *manas*. For some others, the element of depending (*āśritabhūta*) is called *vijñāna*. In this way, *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna* refer to the same entity.³⁰⁷

In this passage, *manas* serves as the basis for *citta* to accumulate pure and impure elements and as the mental faculty needed for *vijñāna* to arise. These three terms designate the same object-referent before the doctrine of the *ālayavijñāna* appears in the Yogācāra school. In the PSk, Vasubandhu considers these three terminologies as the functions of the *ālayavijñāna*; therefore, the *ālayavijñāna* is the thought with predominance and with the *bījas* of all the mental conditions.

As the core of a sentient being, the PSk states that the *ālayavijñāna* operates as always:

Moreover, that consciousness [i.e., the *ālayavijñāna*] does not have a discernible object

other hand, when it is *citraṃ*, it is translated as “種種差別” in Chinese. Thus, according to Xuánzàng’s translation of the PSk, “採集” (accumulation), the Sanskrit term should be understood as *cittaṃ*, rather than *citraṃ*, even though the manuscript uses *citraṃ*. Moreover, the last sentence *tathā hi tac cittaṃ sarvasaṃskārabījaiḥ*, also supports the term *citta* as accumulation of all *bījas*.

³⁰⁵ According to the Tibetan translation “*ngos su na sems ni*” (Derge 4066, 231b6), Engle (2009: 239) translates it as “primarily, thought”. Additionally, the Chinese translation “最勝心” (T1612, no. 31, p. 849c28) means “a predominant thought”. Therefore, I translate it as “the thought with predominance.”

³⁰⁶ PSk, p. 16: *vijñānaṃ katamat / ālambanavijñāptiḥ / cittaṃ mano 'pi tat / citratām manaḥsanniśrayatām copādāya / prādhānyena punaś cittaṃ ālayavijñānam / tathā hi tac cittaṃ sarvasaṃskārabījaiḥ*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 239). Although Engle’s English translation is based on the Tibetan version of the PSk, I still use his work for translating.

³⁰⁷ AKBh, p. 61–62: *cinotīti cittaṃ / manuta iti manaḥ / vijñānātīti vijñānam / cittaṃ śubhāśubhair dhātubhir iti cittaṃ / tad evāśrayabhūtaṃ manaḥ / āśritabhūtaṃ vijñānam ity apare / yathā cittaṃ mano vijñānam ity eko 'rthaḥ*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 535).

or aspect; it is of a single type; and it occurs in the continuum—because, after coming out the meditative absorption of cessation, the meditative absorption of non-thought and the meditative absorption [of being born as a worldly god] that has no conception, the actual consciousness, which is referred to as “consciousness of sense objects” (*viṣayavijñapti*)³⁰⁸ arises again. It operates as different kinds in regard to the condition of a cognitive object, [because of] their occurrence after having been interrupted, and [because] samsara is both set in motion and brought to an end.³⁰⁹

The *ālayavijñāna* cannot exist without *bījas*, and *bījas* cannot exist independently of the *ālayavijñāna*. In contrast to the concept of *bījas* in the AKBh, where they serve as possibilities for manifesting or preserving wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral *dharma*s, and are dispersed within the mental stream, the Yogācāras’ concept of *bījas* in the VinSg and the PSk is collected and accumulated by the *ālayavijñāna*, which functions as the agent of accumulation.

3.1.3 The Relationship Between *Bījas* and the *Ālayavijñāna* in the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (PSkV)

Kramer (2014: 316-319) highlights this passage as the four proofs for the existence of the *ālayavijñāna*, which are explained in Sthiramati’s PSkV and can be paraphrased as follows:

1. Actual consciousness reappears after a person has arisen from unconsciousness states as for instance the meditative absorption of cessation.
2. Actual consciousness appears in different modes depending on different kinds of conditions of cognitive objects.

³⁰⁸ My translation based on Yamabe (2018: 287–288). To explain the eight proofs of the *ālayavijñāna*, Yamabe quotes the VinSg: *yathoktam indriyaviṣayamanaskāraśāḍ vijñānānām pravṛttir bhavatīti vistareṇa* and provides a translation: “As has been said: ‘Consciousness operates based on a sense faculty (*indriya*), sense objects (*viṣaya*), and attention (*manaskāra*),’ and so on”. Thus, the term *viṣaya* in the PSk should also be understood as “cognitive object”. Meanwhile, the Chinese translation uses “了別境” (T1612, no. 31, p. 850a3) which also places emphasis on the function of conceptualizing. Regarding to them, I, therefore, translate the term *viṣayavijñapti* as “consciousness of [conceptualizing] objects”.

³⁰⁹ PSk, pp. 16,11–17,4: *tat punar aparicchinnāmbanākāraṃ vijñānam ekajātīyaṃ santānānuvṛtti ca / yato nirodhasamāpattiyasañjñāsamāpattiyāsañjñīkebhya vyutthitasya punar viṣayavijñāptyākhyam pravṛttivijñānam utpadyata ālambanapratyayāpekṣam prakārāntaravṛttitām chinnaṣṭāpūnarvṛttitām saṃsārapravṛttinivṛttitām copādāya*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 239). Some terminologies are translated by me.

3. Actual consciousness reappears after it has been interrupted by sleep or a swoon.
4. Without the *ālayavijñāna* an individual could not be liberated from *samsāra*, because, on the one hand, the process of rebirth would not be possible and, on the other hand, the contaminations could not be removed.

Within these four proofs, the concept of *bījas* is utilized as an aspect of the *ālayavijñāna*. This aspect is dwelling within and inseparable from the *ālayavijñāna*, allowing for the arising of actual consciousnesses.

The question is: How can actual consciousness arise differently from the *ālayavijñāna*, such as the consciousness of seeing, hearing, and so on? Sthiramati then provides an explanation by stating that the arising of actual consciousness depends on various conditions of cognitive objects:

This is why [the root text] states, “In regard to the condition of a cognitive object, the arising of [actual consciousness] is in a different way.” Hence, the different arising of [actual consciousness] is not unrelated to the condition of a cognitive object, it is also not unrelated to the condition of cause.³¹⁰

The actual consciousness arises based on the cooperation of the faculty and the sense object. Thus, the condition of a cognitive object brings forth different actual consciousness. For instance, when a practitioner wakes up from the state without thought, hearing a voice will give rise to the actual consciousness of hearing. The term “actual consciousness” is used as a general term before it arises as a specific consciousness.

For actual consciousness to arise, the condition of cause is necessary. In the PSkV, Sthiramati states that the *ālayavijñāna* is the condition of cause for the arising of actual consciousness:

That [*ālayavijñāna*] fulfilled with *bījas* of [actual consciousness] is the condition of

³¹⁰ PSkV, p. 100, 54b6–55a1: *ata etad evam uktam / ālambanapratyayāpekṣāṃ prakārantaravṛttitām upādāya / [sā ca dr̥ṣṭā ato vipākavāsanā] prakārantaravṛttitā yathā nālambananirapekṣā yujyate / tathā hetupratyayanirapekṣāpi naiva yujyate*. According to Kramer (2013b: 100, no. 5), the additional parts, *sā ca*, are probably mixed up with fol. 55a, line 3, and *dr̥ṣṭā ato vipākavāsanā*, folio 54a, line 6. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 336).

cause. But the actual consciousness cannot mutually serve as one another's *bījas* (*parasparabīja*), since they occur in [widely varying] gradations, such as wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral; those that pertain to the lesser, intermediate, and superior realms; those that are mundane and supramundane; as well as those that are related to the contaminated and those that are uncontaminated.³¹¹

This paragraph raises two crucial questions: Even if the *ālayavijñāna* contains all *bījas* as the condition of cause and then gives rise to actual consciousness in a different way, what happens in the next moment? Can the actual consciousness in the previous moment serve as the cause for the subsequent moment? Sthiramati argues that the actual consciousness cannot be the *bīja* for each other. Otherwise, it would be difficult to explain why a beneficial perception can turn into a non-beneficial perception (Kramer 2014: 318). Therefore, this statement implies that *bījas* denote a homogeneous process, similar to how a plant grows from its seed, which is a botanical function. Park (2014: 291) suggests that the botanical function of *bījas* demonstrates the extended process of the original *karman* until the final moment of fruition. As a result, according to the Sarvāstivādins, this process should remain in the three periods of time. However, the Yogācāras refute the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of three periods of time and utilise the concept of *vāsanās* to address the issue related to the botanical function of *bījas*.

The concept of *vāsanās* differs from the *bījas* and the condition of a cognitive object:

The *vāsanā* of that [actual consciousness] is not seen through that [actual consciousness], nor through another [actual consciousness] existing at a different time, or through the unrelated [the actual consciousness]. Then how? The *vāsanā* of sesame seeds, etc., is seen through the flowers arising and ceasing simultaneously [with the sesame seeds].³¹²

³¹¹ PSkV, p. 100, 55a1–2: *yaś ca yeṣāṃ bījair anugataḥ sa teṣāṃ hetupratyayaḥ / na ca pravrttivijñānānāṃ parasparabījatvaṃ yujyate / kuśalākuśalāvyākrtānāṃ hīnamādhya-praṇītadhātūnāṃ laukikalokottarāṇāṃ sāsra-vānāsravāṇāṃ vijñānānāṃ paryāyeṇā* (read: *paryāyeṇa*) *bhāvāt*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 336–337).

³¹² PSkV, p. 100–101, 55a2–3: *na hi tenaiva tasya vāsanā drṣṭā nāpy anyena bhinnakālena asambaddhena vā / kiṃ tarhi sahotpādavinaśair eva puṣpādibhis tilādīnāṃ vāsanā drṣṭā*. I do not follow Engle's English translation (2009: 337) because I consider the term *tenaiva* as “with the same as...”, which refers to all the instrumentals in this sentence. Also, I translate the term *tilā* as “sesame seeds”, rather than “oil”; thus, it corresponds to the famous metaphor, namely, the sesame seeds are perfumed by the flowers in the Yogācāra school.

The *vāsanās* discussed in the previous sections can be understood as “specific potentialities” in the *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* (KP), where *vāsanās* have the ability to influence other objects (see 2.3.4), and as “specific potency” within the *bīja*-state to generate defilement in the future (see 2.4). Sthiramati also regards *vāsanā* as a capacity, which is neither *bījas* nor an independent entity existing in a different time. Using the metaphor, *vāsanās* can be likened to the infusion of fragrance from flowers. In other words, the flowers represent the actual consciousness, which leaves fragrance to permeate the sesame seeds, namely, the *bījas*. Therefore, *vāsanā* and *bījas* arise and perish together.

Regarding this perspective, Sthiramati considers the *ālayavijñāna* as the “consciousness of maturation”:

Therefore, the actual consciousness arises and perishes in dependence on the “consciousness of maturation” (*vipākavijñāna*) and they exist simultaneously. This maturation consciousness is recognised as having the capacity (*samartha*) to cause the similar self-characteristic to generate. That capacity is referred to as “*vāsanā*”.³¹³

The concept of maturation, discussed as the cause of maturation (see 2.2), refers to the karmic process in one’s mental series. In the AKBh, maturation aims to produce neutral fruitions from wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. Sthiramati utilises the concept of *vāsanās* as the capacity to generate a similar characteristic from the previous moment to the subsequent moment.³¹⁴ Based on the function of maturation and the various kinds of *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna*, the actual consciousness can arise differently.

Sthiramati then concludes that the *ālayavijñāna* exists as the consciousness of maturation:

³¹³ PSkV, p. 101, 55a3–6: *tato vipāka[vāsanā]vijñānena *[sā ca vijñānena] samakālaṃ tata evotpadyamānāni nirudhyamānāni ca pravṛttivijñānāni svānurūpakāryotpādanasamarthaṃ vipākavijñānaṃ kurvanti / tasya sāmartyaṃ vāsanety ucyate*. Kramer (2013 b: 101, note 1) notices that the sentence *vāsanā / sā ca vijñānena* is mixed from folio 54a, line 6 and folio 55a, line 3. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 337).

³¹⁴ AKBh, p. 477: *tat punaḥ puṣpānniṣpannaṃ kasmāt tasya bījasya phalam ity ucyate / tadāhitaṃ hi tat parayāpuspe sāmartyam / yadi hi tatpūrvikān na bhaviṣyat tat tādrśasya phalasyotpattau na samarthamabhaviṣyat*. For the English translation cf. Sangpo (2012: 2577): “Why is it said that the fruit arises from that *bīja*, which is produced from the flower? Because the *bīja* contains capacity, which was infused by the superior flower. If it had not been preceded by that, it would not have been capable of producing such a fruit.” The ninth chapter is composed after the original AKBh. In the ninth chapter, the capacity (*sāmartya*) represents the function just as *vāsanā*. Thus, the capacity (*sāmartya*) helps the flower generate the fruit of the *bīja*.

It should be admitted that the actual consciousnesses based on [different] objects arise in a different way, such as wholesome, unwholesome, and so on. [They arise differently] also due to the consciousness of maturation that is infused (*vāsita*) by the actual consciousnesses which arise in a different way. Consequently, it is established that there must exist a maturation consciousness that contains all *bījas* of all conditioned *dharmas* and is different from the actual consciousness.³¹⁵

When actual consciousnesses arise differently based on their objects, they also leave *vāsanās* in the *bījas* for the subsequent moment (Kramer 2014: 318). Those infused *bījas* are stored in the *ālayavijñāna* which can be called the consciousness of maturation due to the function of maturation. For instance, the consciousness of hearing arises when a sharp squeaking sound is present, and the mental activity dislikes that sharp squeaking, leaving a *vāsanā* of dislike in the *bīja* of hearing. After repeated occurrences, the person develops a deep dislike of the sharp squeaking sound. This proof not only illustrates why actual consciousness arises in diverse ways but also represents how *vāsanās* operate within the mental series. According to Sthiramati's PSkV, *bīja* and *vāsanā* have different functions and are not synonymous.

The arising of actual consciousness constitutes conceptualisations concerning the world. Thus, the Yogācāra school establishes the concept of *trīsvabhāva* to explain how these conceptualisations falsely arise from the *ālayavijñāna*.

3.2 The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in “Unreal Imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpita*)

To conceptualise an object, an individual assumes that there is a substance to be comprehended and that they are subject to comprehend that substance. This conceptualisation is termed as “unreal imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpita*) in the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MAV).

The term *abhūtaparikalpita*, derived from the Sanskrit root √kṛp, refers to unreal objects that are phenomenally marked by a distinction between subject and object (Urban and Griffiths,

³¹⁵ PSkV, p. 101, 55a5–6: *taiś ca prakārāntaravṛttibhiḥ pravṛttivijñānair vāsītād vipākavijñānāt punar apy ālambanāpekṣāni kuśalākuśalādīprakārāntaravṛttīni pravṛttivijñānāny utpadyanta ity avaśyam abhyupagantavyam / tataś ca vipākavijñānaṃ sarvasaṃskṛtadharmabījanūgataṃ pravṛttivijñānebhyo 'nyad iti siddham.*

1994: 12). The “subject and object” represent the grasper (*grāhaka*) and the grasped (*grāhya*), respectively. The former can perceive/grasp the latter—namely, the grasped object. Hyōdō (2010: 90–91) deems that, in the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (MAVṬ), the grasper and the grasped are mutually dependent, and if one of them does not exist, the other does not exist either. However, “unreal imagination” exists.

The “unreal imagination” has two aspects: defiled and pure. In the MAV:

There is “unreal imagination” in which duality does not exist. But emptiness exists there, and the [unreal imagination] also exists in it.³¹⁶

In this context, the “unreal imagination” is related to the concept of *trisvabhāva* in the Yogācāra school. According to Hayashima (2018: 22), the “unreal imagination” refers to the “dependent nature”. When it is associated with duality—namely, the grasper and the grasped—it is defiled and is equated to the “imagined nature”. It derives from the grasper and the grasped and turns into the emptiness, it transforms into the “perfect nature”.

Vasubandhu further explains what is so-called “emptiness” in the commentary, the *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* (MAVBh):

One clearly observes that if a thing does not exist there, in regard to this, it is empty. Also, one clearly knows that if a thing remains here, it is now real, [and] the undistorted characteristic of emptiness is revealed.³¹⁷

The emptiness in the MAVBh is thus defined as the unreliability of the notions of the grasper and the grasped (Garfield and Westerhoff 2015: 200). The undistorted characteristic of emptiness is regarded as “real”, while the grasper and the grasped serve as the defiled source of all conceptualisations.

In the MAVṬ, the metaphor of magician and elephant is used to illustrate the meaning of the “unreal imagination”:

³¹⁶ This verse is quoted by the MAVBh, p. 17, 16–17: *abhūtaparikalpo 'sti dvayaṃ tatra na vidyate / śūnyatā vidyate tv atra tasyām api sa vidyate*. For the English translation cf. Shulman (2015: 199).

³¹⁷ MAVBh, p. 18, 2–6: *evaṃ yad yatra nāsti tat tena śūnyam iti yathābhūtaṃ samanupaśyati yat punar atrāvaśiṣṭaṃ bhavati tat sad ihāstīti yathābhūtaṃ prajānātīty aviparītaṃ śūnyatālakṣaṇam udbhāvitaṃ bhavati*.

The “conceptualisation of the grasper and the grasped” (*grāhyagrahakavikalpa*) is like the form of an elephant etc. (*hastyākārādi*) in a magic [illusion] empty of the form of an elephant etc. (*hastyādyākārasūnyamāyā*).³¹⁸ The unreal (*abhūta*) in this is conceptualised (*parikalpyate*) as twofold or through this, [the conceptualisation happens]. This is the “unreal conceptualisation”. The word “unreal” (*abhūtavacana*) is shown what in this way is conceptualised (*parikalpyate*), does not exist in such a way due to the state of grasped and grasper (*grāhyagrāhakatva*). However, the word “conceptualisation” is shown how meaning is conceptualised, so the meaning does not exist. Thus, the characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*) of this, which is liberated from grasping and grasper, is explained.³¹⁹

When the magician shows the audience an elephant, this elephant is nothing but an illusion; however, for the audience, the illusion of this elephant is a real existence. Those audience members mistake themselves as the grasper with the ability to grasp the illusion of an elephant and to regard it as an object. To comprehend the characteristic of the “unreal imagination”, one must remove the conceptualisations through the grasper and the grasped and understand the objects are merely illusions.

The MAVṬ further describes the function of the “unreal imagination”. In this context, the “unreal imagination without discrimination” is equivalent to the emptiness:

Then, what is that [unreal imagination]? The “unreal imagination without discrimination” (*aviśeṣeṇābhūtaparikalpaḥ*) is the existence of cause and fruition in past, future, and present, the beginningless time in the three realms, as the following of the cycle of life and the ascertainment of liberation.³²⁰

As a synonym of emptiness, the “unreal imagination without discrimination” exists as the basis

³¹⁸ According to Yamaguchi (1934: 13, no. 2), the Tibetan version refers to “*māyāyā hi hastyādinā sūnyatāpi hastyādyābhāsam iva*”.

³¹⁹ MAVṬ, p. 13, 17–23: *grāhyagrahakavikalpaḥ / hastyādyākārasūnyamāyāyām iva hastyākārādayaḥ / 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 / evam asya grāhyagrāhakavinirmuktaṃ lakṣaṇaṃ paridīpitaṃ bhavati*.

³²⁰ MAVṬ, p. 13, 23–25: *kaḥ punar asāu / atītānāgatavartamānā hetuphalabhūtās traidhātukā anādikālikā nirvāṇaparyavasānāḥ saṃsārānurūpās aviśeṣeṇābhūtaparikalpaḥ*.

of everything. Although there are many categories in the world, including time, realm, mind, life and more, they all obey the doctrine of emptiness. The “unreal imagination without discrimination” serves as a medium for our sense faculty to perceive. Compared to the Sarvāstivādins, who assume a “real entity” is connected with a sentient being through the possession (*prāpti*), the compendium of the MAV aims to depict an unreal imagination which is actually emptiness but appears as false conceptualisation due to the interplay of the grasper and the grasped.

The MAVṬ clearly defines the grasper and the grasped:

However, due to the “discrimination”, the conceptualisation [has the characteristic of] the grasper and the grasped. In this context, the “conceptualisation of the grasped” is the consciousness as the manifestation of the object and the sentient being. The “conceptualisation of the grasper” is [the consciousness as] the manifestation of self and cognition.³²¹

Normally, people tend to perceive an object as separate from themselves; for instance, they believe they see a real elephant existing independently. This is referred to as the “conceptualisation of the grasped”. On the other hand, within those people, their mind operates in the mental continuum and cognises this illusion as an elephant, assigning it a label. This is known as the “conceptualisation of the grasper”.

Through the concept of “unreal conceptualisation”, the MAV expresses how conceptualisations falsely arise. While the grasper and the grasped need to be removed, the “unreal conceptualisation” itself always exists because when it is freed from these two, it transforms into emptiness.

3.2.1 The Concept of *Bījas* as the Realm (*dhātu*)

The grasper and the grasped in the MAV are expressed through the concept of *bījas*. The term *bīja* is equivalent to “realm”, which refers to a perceived object. In the MAV:

³²¹ MAVṬ, p. 14, 1–3: *viśeṣatas tu grāhyagrāhakavikalpaḥ / tatra grāhyavikalpaḥ / arthasattvapratibhāsam vijñānam / grāhakavikalpa ātmavijñāptipratibhāsam.*

With regard to the next one, [it refers to] the meaning of the *bījas* of the grasper (*grāhaka*), the grasped (*grāhya*), and the grasping of those (*tadgrāha*).³²²

The concept of *bījas* in the MAV has three aspects: as the grasper, the grasped, and the grasping of those. In the MAVBh, when those *bījas* manifest from the *ālayavijñāna*, they perceive corresponding objects (namely, realms):

What is next is the “realm”. In the [realm], the meaning of the *bīja* of the grasper (*grāhakabīja*) is the realm of seeing, etc. The meaning of the *bīja* of the grasped is the realm of matter, etc. The meaning of the *bīja* of the grasping of those (*tadgrāhabīja*) is the realm of the consciousness of seeing, etc.³²³

According to the Sarvāstivādins, conceptualisation arises due to the combination of sense faculty, object, and consciousness. However, the Yogācāras disagree with the concept that an object is a substance. The Yogācāras argue that the grasper and the grasped must be removed, so that their objects do not exist, yet the “unreal imagination” exists and serves as the basis of false conceptualisations. In terms of this, the term *bīja* refers to a designated meaning that dwells in the *ālayavijñāna*. The MAVBh, which equates the realm of seeing with the *bīja* of the grasper, aims to emphasise that only consciousness exists. Since the terms *bīja* and realm are designated, the meaning of the grasper, the grasped, and the grasping of those are not real. Hence, Gold (2014: 163) points out that the mind-only doctrine of the Yogācāra school refuses to imagine that the sensory faculty and its object are the actual causes of perception and experience. According to this view, there are no sensory faculties and no objects, only consciousnesses.

In the MAVT, the terms *bīja* and realm are understood as a specific quality:

The meaning of *bīja* is the meaning of realm. As this [*bīja*] exists in regard to [the quality of] gold (*svarṇe*), it is said as the realm of gold. It can be understood as “the *bīja* of gold”

³²² MAVBh, p. 45: *grāhakagrāhyatadgrāhabījārthas cāparo mataḥ*.

³²³ MAVBh, p. 45: *katamo 'paro dhātus tatra grāhakabījārthaḥ cakṣurdhātvādayaḥ / grāhyabījārtho rūpadhātvādayas / tadgrāhabījārthas cakṣurvijñānadhātvādayaḥ*.

(*svarṇabīja*).³²⁴

A matter can be regarded as a piece of gold because it possesses the *bīja* of gold. Therefore, this *bīja* of gold serves as the object for perceiving. Without this *bīja* of gold, a piece of gold cannot be distinguished from other matters.

According to the example of the *bīja* of gold, the *bīja* of the grasper exists as the realm of seeing:

In this context, [these three kinds of *bīja*], the meaning of the *bīja* of the grasper refers to the realm of seeing, etc. Beginning with the realm of seeing, etc. up to the thinking, is “the realm of seeing, etc.” Thereupon, because the sense objects of matter, etc. become the basis of grasping, it is [the meaning of] graspers. The same kind of seeing, etc. are called the realms due to [the same] causes.³²⁵

In this context, the term “realm” is synonymous with “cause”. When one perceives the realm of seeing in the first moment, the cause of the realm of seeing will generate the same realm in the next moment; therefore, the continuum of the realm of seeing within one’s mental continuum remains uninterrupted. The term “grasper” refers to an agent capable of perceiving sense objects. According to the Yogācāra school, only the *ālayavijñāna* has the ability to perceive objects and makes the function of grasping dwell in the *ālayavijñāna* as the *bīja* of the grasper. Similarly, the function of being grasped also exists as the *bīja* of the grasped, which manifests as the realm of matter up to the realm of *dharmā*.³²⁶

Last but not least, the MAVṬ considers the realm of the consciousness of seeing as the *bīja* of the grasping of those:

The meaning of the *bīja* of the grasping of those is the realm of the consciousness of seeing, etc. The grasping of the matter, etc. is due to the intrinsic nature that is known

³²⁴ MAVṬ, p. 143, 13–14: *bījārtho dhātvarthaḥ / tadyathā svarṇe sati svarṇadhātur ucyate / svarṇabījam iti gamyate.*

³²⁵ MAVṬ, p. 143, 16–19: *tatra grāhakabījārthāś cakṣurdhātāvādayaḥ / cakṣurdhātur ādir yeṣāṃ manaḥparyantās te cakṣurdhātāvādayaḥ / teṣāṃ ca rūpādiviṣayagrāhāśrayabhūtatvād grāhakāḥ / sajātīyānāṃ cakṣurādīnāṃ hetutvād dhātava ucyante.*

³²⁶ MAVṬ, p. 143, 19–20: *grāhyabījārtho rūpadhātāvādayo dharmadhātuparyantāḥ.*

inside the matter, etc., which [includes] the consciousness of seeing, etc. up to the consciousness of thinking. The same kind of consciousness of seeing, etc. are called the realms because of [their] existing causes.³²⁷

Remarkably, the term “intrinsic nature” should be understood as the quality within a matter, rather than a substance. Since the matter possesses the quality—for instance, the *bīja* of gold—it can be grasped by the grasper who generates the ideation of grasping a piece of gold. This ideation encompasses the realm of consciousness, from the seeing to the thinking.

Unlike the original understanding of conceptualisation, which includes a faculty, an object, and a consciousness, the MAVṬ interprets the process of conceptualisation through the *bīja* of the grasper, the *bīja* of the grasped, and the *bīja* of the grasping of those. This interpretation may suggest that the concept of *bījas* becomes integrated into the process of conceptualisation as a designation, thus emphasising the doctrine of mind-only.

3.2.2 The Concept of *Vāsanās* as Origin (*samudaya*)

The concept of *vāsanās* in the MAV mainly refers to affliction. In Buddhism, the Buddha’s teaching can be summarised by the Four Noble Truths: suffering (*duḥkha*), origin (*samudaya*), cessation (*nirodha*), and path (*mārga*). Suffering encompasses all afflictions that can be sorted in accordance with corresponding origins. A practitioner then cultivates to cease those origins and eventually attains the noble path. Hence, acknowledging the structure of origin is the first step to free oneself from suffering. In the MAV, the origin encompasses threefold:

The meaning of origin (*samudayārtha*) is threefold: *vāsanā*, rising, and also non-disjunction.³²⁸

Regarding this verse, the concept of *vāsanās* in the MAV is something that must be removed. In the MAVBh, the *vāsanās* are further explained:

³²⁷ MAVṬ, p. 144, 1–4: *tadgrāhabījārthaś cakṣurvijñānadhātvādayaḥ / rūpādipratipattisvabhāvatvād rūpādigrāhāś cakṣurvijñānādayo manovijñānaparyantāḥ / te ‘pi sabhāgānām eva cakṣurādivijñānānām hetubhūtatvād dhātava ucyante.*

³²⁸ MAVBh, p. 40: *trividhaḥ samudayārthaḥ / vāsanātha samutthānam avisamyoga eva ca.*

The origin of *vāsanā* (*vāsanāsamudaya*) is the *vāsanā* with a strong attachment to the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*).³²⁹

As mentioned in 3.2, the “unreal imagination” contains the imagined nature as the false aspect. In this paragraph, the imagined nature is expressed by the term *vāsanā*. After ceasing these three origins, the ultimate truth of cessation can be attained.³³⁰

The relationship between the *vāsanā* and the imagined nature is further explained in the MAVṬ:

In this context, the origin of *vāsanās* (*vāsanāsamudaya*) is known as the imagined nature. It is said [in the MAVBh], “the *vāsanā* with a strong attachment to the imagined nature.” In regard to the imagined nature, it does not exist (*asati*), [while] the strong attachment exists. The *dharmas* of mundane world are established by means of the *vāsanā* of conceptualisations and afflictions (*vikalpakeśavāsanā*).

However, [the *dharmas* of] supramundane world are yet free from attachment. Thus, the imagined nature is called the origin of *vāsanā* (*vāsanāsamudaya*).³³¹

Although the imagined nature serves as the reason why one perceives false illusions and mistakes them as real, the imagined nature itself does not truly exist. It is designated as a terminology to elucidate the process of conceptualisation. Hence, the MAVṬ holds that only the strong attachment exists as affliction. For sentient beings living in the mundane world, the *vāsanā* of conceptualisations and afflictions based on the imagined nature influences their understanding of the world. Meanwhile, sentient beings in the supramundane world are freed from this strong attachment, enabling them to perceive their surroundings accurately.

At the moment of perceiving, the *bīja* of the grasper, the *bīja* of the grasped, and the *bīja* of the grasping of those cooperate to give rise to conceptualisation, while the *vāsanā* and the

³²⁹ MAVBh, p. 40: *vāsanāsamudayaḥ parikalpitasvabhāvābhiniveśavāsanā*.

³³⁰ MAVBh, p. 40: *trividhena nirodhena nirodhasatyam*.

³³¹ MAVṬ, p. 120, 20–25: *tatra vāsanāsamudayaḥ parikalpitasvabhāvo veditavyaḥ / ata āha / parikalpitasvabhāvābhiniveśavāsaneti / asati hi parikalpita svabhāve 'stīty abhiniveśam upādāya lāukikā dharma vikalpakeśavāsanāṃ vyavasthāpayanti / na tu vigatābhiniveśā lokottarā / tataḥ parikalpitasvabhāvo vāsanāsamudaya ucyate*. The bold font is added by me to mark the quotation from the MAVBh.

imagined nature operate in each moment to shape the process of conceptualisation. To embody the imagined nature, the MAV introduces the mental activity triggered by linguistic expression.

3.2.3 The Function of Mental Activity of Speech (*jalpamanaskāra*)

The concept of *vāsanās* in the MAV includes the function of impregnation. The term *paribhāvita* derives from the Sanskrit root $\sqrt{bhū}$ as the causative past participle, and is prefixed with *pari-*, meaning to soak or to contain. In this context, *paribhāvita* is translated as “impregnated”,³³² which interacts with the mental activity of speech.

The mental activity in the MAV is not equivalent to the always active mental factors in the Tr.³³³ Instead, it refers to the excellent mental activity, determined by the discernment of a Bodhisattva, and associated with the unsurpassed vehicle in the MAV.

To attain excellent mental activity, the MAV points out that the delusion caused by speech must be investigated:

The mental activity of speech (*jalpamanaskāra*) is perfumed (*bhāvita*) by that speech; it is the basis of that [speech]. It is the non-delusion in regard to the mental activity, as the cause for the manifestation of duality.³³⁴

Since the speech is associated with conceptualisation by labelling an object, such as a dough mixture, with a sweet smell and creamy colour as a cake. By saying “cake”, one’s mental activity has been impregnated by that speech and has assumed a specific description of cake. Therefore, the practitioner should investigate the impregnation of speech.

In the MAVBh, speech is characterised by the grasped and the grasper:

The “mental activity of speech” (*jalpamanaskārah*) is impregnated (*paribhāvita*) by the speech [characterised by] the grasped and the grasper. This [mental activity of speech],

³³² Compared with *paribhāvita*, Gao (2019: 8) juxtaposes another term *vāsita*, derived from root $\sqrt{vās}$ as the past passive participle, while the noun is *vāsanā*. He therefore translates *vāsita* as “perfumed”.

³³³ The *Chéng Wéi Shì Lùn* (CWSL), as the commentary on the Tr, explains that the always active (*sarvatraga*) mental factors are: sensory contact (*sparśa*), attention (*manaskāra*), sensation (*vedanā*), conceptualization (*saṃjñā*), and volition (*cetanā*) (Chien 2023: 66).

³³⁴ MAVBh, p. 66: *tajjalpabhāvito jalpamanaskāras tadāśrayaḥ manaskāre 'viparyāso dvayaparakhyānakāraṇe*. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 182).

being the basis for conceptualisations of the grasped and the grasper, is accordingly the non-delusion in regard to the mental activity.³³⁵

Within the false duality, the grasped and the grasper are established by one's mind. In this context, one assumes that there is an agent capable of grasping an object. The "mental activity of speech" refers to the process of labelling an object. When one perceives an object, the mental activity arises but is impregnated by previous speech. For instance, if one sees a pile of mixture in the kitchen, they may consider it a cake based on the previous linguistic experience. However, understanding that the process of labelling is produced by the grasped and the grasper, one can observe non-delusion (*aviparyāsaḥ*).

Then, the MAVBh further explains the function of the mental activity without delusion:

In regard to which mental activity [is the non-delusion]? In regard to the cause for the manifestation of the grasped and the grasper. For that mental activity of speech, because of being impregnated by ideation of linguistic expression (*abhilāpasamjñā*), is to be understood as the basis of the conceptualisation of the grasper and the grasped.³³⁶

Although the practitioner seeks the correct understanding of mental activity, their current place, the mundane world, is established by the mental activity of speech. The MAVBh suggests a twofold classification of mental activity: the false mental activity of speech and the correct mental activity devoid of delusion. The former is impregnated by the ideation of linguistic expression; the latter is free from the grasper and the grasped. This twofold mental activity is similar to the "unreal imagination", which is false when associated with the grasper and the grasped and becomes correct when grounded in emptiness.

In the MAVT, the concept of *bījas* is added in the commentary:

"The mental activity (*jalpamanaskāra*) is impregnated (*paribhāvita*) by the speech of

³³⁵ MAVBh, p. 66: *grāhyagrāhakajalpaparibhāvito jalpamanaskāras tasya grāhyagrāhakavikalpasyāśrayo bhavātīty ayaṃ manaskāre 'viparyāsaḥ*. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 182).

³³⁶ MAVBh, p. 66: *katamasmīn manaskāre grāhyagrāhakaśamprakhyānakāraṇe sa hy asau jalpamanaskāro 'bhilāpasamjñāparibhāvitatvāt grāhyagrāhakavikalpāśrayo veditavyaḥ*. For the English translation cf. Gao (2019: 182).

the grasper and the grasped” in relation to the meaning of the characteristic for the manifestation of the grasper and the grasped; [thus,] the grasper and the grasped are [manifested] due to the thinking (*man-*) and the voice (*vāc-*) [respectively.] This linguistic expression (*abhilāpana*) is called speech. The nourished *bīja* (*bījaparipoṣaṇa*) impregnated by the speech, bringing forth the same kind of speech in the future, is called “being perfumed” (*bhāvita*).³³⁷

The manifestation of the mental activity of speech involves cooperation between the grasper, which operates through the thinking, and the grasped, represented by the voice. When one thinks about a specific term that exists in their mental continuum and can be vocalised, this constitutes the mental activity of speech. Consequently, the mental activity is impregnated by speech which is also known as linguistic expression. Moreover, the linguistic expression serves as *vāsanās*, impregnating the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* and causing them to bring forth the same kind of speech in the future. The concept of “being perfumed” shares a similar concept with the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause in the PSkV and the TrBh, which is discussed in section 3.3.2. Both concepts emphasise the function of producing consistent manifestation from the present to the future to sustain the continuum of mental activity. The linguistic expression, on the other hand, is closely related to the *vāsanā* of linguistic expression in the *Mahāvāyanasamgrāha* (MSg), which is further discussed in Chapter 4.

Although the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are utilized in the MAVṬ, they clearly signify two different aspects:

It is [called] the mental activity of speech (*jalpamanaskāra*) because it is impregnated by speech (*jalpaparibhāvita*), in regard to being called as the fruition due to the cause of proliferation. So, the *vāsanā* of speech (*jalpavāsanā*) here is the speech [itself]. The [*vāsanā* of] speech exists there, [so] the indifference of the holder and the held is made, yet due to the non-acceptance of the holder of the sound, it is called the mental activity of speech. Thereupon, the so-called “speech” is in terms of the conceptualisation of the

³³⁷ MAVṬ, p. 218, 17–20: *grāhyagrāhakajalpena paribhāvito jalpamanaskāra iti tasmin grāhyagrāhakaprakhyānalakṣaṇe 'rthe 'yaṃ grāhyo 'yaṃ grāhaka iti vānmanobhyāṃ yad abhilāpanaṃ sa jalpa ity ucyate / anena jalpena paribhāvito 'anāgatatajjātīyajalpotpādāya bījaparipoṣaṇam iti bhāvita ity ucyate.*

grasper and the grasped due to the holder of *bīja* (*bījādhāra*).³³⁸

In this context, the mental activity of speech is the fruition of proliferation. Proliferation represents a false understanding of the world, mistakenly perceiving objects outside oneself. Remarkably, the MAVṬ highlights that the *vāsanā* of speech cannot be held; attempting to hold onto a sound is deemed unacceptable. What can indeed be held or grasped is the *bīja*, rather than the *vāsanā*. Since the *vāsanā* is the residual effect of verbal action, such as linguistic expression, the *bījas* of the grasper and the grasped serve as the place for manifesting the mental activity of speech.

The entire process of composing a mental activity of speech is concluded in the MAVṬ:

Through its association with this [linguistic expression], it is called the impregnated (*paribhāvita*) mental activity of speech (*jalpamanaskāra*) due to the self-*bījas* nourished (*svabījaparipoṣaṇa*) within the mental activity of speech.³³⁹

If we comprehend this process from one moment to the next, the self-*bījas* are nourished through the linguistic expression, subsequently giving rise to the manifestation of the mental activity of speech. Through the residual effect of this mental activity of speech, the self-*bījas* within it are impregnated, enabling the generation of the same speech in the future. This repetitive cycle ensnares sentient beings in the myth of proliferation and renders them unable to free themselves from acting out the grasper and the grasped.

According to the MAV/MAVBh, the unreal imagination embodies both the process of conceptualisation through the imagined nature and the correct understanding in terms of emptiness. This twofold unreal imagination encompasses the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, especially in the MAVṬ. The MAV/MAVBh expounds that the conceptualisation is generated through the *bījas* of the grasper and the grasped; also, the origin of *vāsanā* serves as the imagined nature. The MAVṬ provides a more precise interpretation, stating that the process of

³³⁸ MAVṬ, p. 218, 21–25: *so 'yaṃ jalpaparibhāvitatvāj jalpamanaskāra ity ākhyāyate kārye kāraṇopacārāt / jalpavāsanā tv atra jalpaḥ / jalpo 'trāstīty ādhārādheyayor abhedam kṛitvā ādhāraśabdasya vāgrahaṇāj jalpamanaskāra ity ucyate / tasya grāhyagrāhakavikalpasya jalpākhyasya bījādhāratvāt.*

³³⁹ MAVṬ, p. 219, 13–15: *tayā sasamprayogayā jalpamanaskāre svabījaparipoṣaṇāj jalpamanaskāraḥ paribhāvita ucyate.*

conceptualisation is a result of the cooperation between the *bīja* of the grasper, the *bīja* of the grasped (*grāhyabīja*), and the *bīja* of the grasping of those. Moreover, the proliferation that gives rise to the mental activity of speech is connected to the *bījas* of mental activity being impregnated by the *vāsanās* of speech. Hence, within the MAVṬ, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* denote a process that involves both causation and nourishment. Devoid of *vāsanās*, *bījas* cannot manifest and, without *bījas*, the function of *vāsanās* is impeded.

The progress of conceptualisation in the Tr no longer adheres to the twofold unreal imagination. Instead, it takes the concept of the transformation of consciousness.

3.3 The Concept of the Transformation of Consciousness (*vijñānapariṇāma*) in the *Triṃśikā*

In Vasubandhu’s *Triṃśikā* (Tr), eight kinds of consciousnesses have been established—namely, the six consciousnesses, the contaminated mind (*kliṣṭamanas*), and the *ālayavijñāna*.³⁴⁰ The Tr suggests that a transformation of consciousness occurs in the *ālayavijñāna*, which represents the process of consciousness arising. According to Odani (1975: 445-446), the AKBh incorporates the Sautrāntikas’ concept of a specific transformation in the series to explain how intention as *vāsanā* infuses *bījas* and produces results different from the previous moment. This serves as an early version of the Yogācāras’ concept of the transformation of consciousness. Based on this transformation, Ueda (1967) proposes two streams of thought in the Yogācāra school. He cites the *Chéng Wéi Shì Lùn* (CWSL), an exceptional commentary on the Tr, translated and edited by Xuánzàng, where Dharmapāla demonstrates that the seeing part (**darśanabhāga*) and the seen part (**nimittabhāga*) arise after the transformation of consciousness (Ueda 1967: 157).³⁴¹ On the other hand, Sthiramati, in his TrBh, asserts that the

³⁴⁰ Delhey (2016: 18) states that Sthiramati presupposes eight kinds of consciousness in his PSkV and the Tr, “the personality constituent consciousness [consists of] the eight forms of consciousness: the six manifest forms of mind, the *ālayavijñāna* and the defiled mind” (PSkV, p. 112, 3–5: *aṣṭau vijñānāni vijñānaskandhaḥ ṣaṭ pravṛttivijñānāni ālayavijñānaṃ kliṣṭam ca manah*).

³⁴¹ CWSL, T1585, no. 31, p. 38c18–21: “論曰：是諸識者，謂前所說三能變識及彼心所，皆能變似見相二分，立轉變名。所變見分，說名分別，能取相故。所變相分，名所分別，見所取故。” For the English translation cf. Cook (1999: 233): “The Treatise says that the various consciousnesses means the previously discussed three transforming consciousnesses and their mental activities. The term transform is established because all are able

transformation of consciousness means that “the present consciousness is different from the previous consciousness” (Ueda 1967: 161).³⁴²

The transformation of consciousness operates through the cooperation between *bījas* and *vāsanās* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*. In the TrBh, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are utilised to elucidate how conceptualisations are generated. Moreover, in the PSkV, the arising of actual consciousness from the *ālayavijñāna* encompasses both the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*). By delving into the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, the process of conceptualisation can be investigated.

3.3.1 The Transformation of Consciousness (*vijñānapariṇāma*) and the Consciousness of All *Bījas* (*sarvabījaka*)

The Tr is the first text to introduce the concept of transformation of consciousness within the Yogācāra school (Ueda 1967: 157). The transformation of consciousness signifies the dichotomy of a substantial self (*ātman*) and the objects this self perceives (Westerhoff 2018: 213). This section primarily centres on the substantial self—namely, the *ālayavijñāna*, where all *bījas* are stored. Through the maturation of these *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* gives rise to various kinds of actual consciousnesses, thus constituting the conceptualisation of the mundane world.

The transformation of consciousness in the Tr can be divided into three aspects:

[Verse 1:] The designation (*upacāra*) of the self and phenomena (*dharma*), which is indeed various, arises concerning the transformation of consciousness

to transform to resemble the two parts that are seeing part (**darśana-bhāga*) and seen part (**nimitta-bhāga*). That which transforms into the seeing part is called conceptualizing, because it is able to grasp conceptualization. That which transforms into the seen part is called the conceptualized, because it is grasped by the seeing part.” Some terminologies are translated by me.

³⁴² The differing interpretations have sparked a significant debate among Japanese scholars. Nagao deems that the dependent nature (*paratantaravabhāva*) should have an inner imagination (*parikalpya*) to act as a bridge connecting the grasper (*grāhya*) and the grasped (*gāhaka*). Conversely, Ueda asserts that the inner imagination (*parikalpya*) does not imply an image (*ākāra*) but rather signifies the manifestation of the dependent nature. The former perspective is known as the *sākārajñānavāda*, wherein cognition is associated with image, while the latter is termed the *anākāra- /nirākārajñānavāda*, speaking of cognition endowed without image. For in-depth explanations, see Chen (2000) and Liu (2020). However, Keng (2014, 2015) seeks to clarify that both these understandings exist in Yogācāra texts. Due to the limitation of this dissertation, a comprehensive discussion of this topic is beyond its scope.

(*vijñānapariṇāma*). That transformation (*pariṇāma*), moreover, is threefold.³⁴³

[Verse 2:] The consciousness of maturation (*vipāka*), afflicted mind, and cognitive object. Among them, the so-called *ālaya* is [the consciousness of] maturation and [the consciousness whose nature is] all-seeds (*sarvabījaka*).³⁴⁴

Even though the substantial self might appear as a substantial entity, it is in fact a designated proliferation. The object is juxtaposed with the substantial self, which reflects the Tr's perspective of conceptualisation as the substantial self-grasping the object being grasped. From this designated substantial self, we observe the transformation of consciousness—namely, the consciousness of maturation, the consciousness of thinking, and the consciousness of perception of sense object. Regarding this, the *ālayavijñāna* is equivalent to the consciousness of maturation and the consciousness of all *bījas*. The consciousness of thinking refers to the seventh consciousness that remains contaminated and intricately dependent upon the *ālayavijñāna*, constructing an illusionary sense of self.³⁴⁵ The consciousness of perception of sense objects represents the actual consciousnesses, such as the consciousness of seeing.

The concept of the cause of maturation has been discussed in section 2.2. In the AKBh, the cause of homogeneity maintains the same action in the mental stream, while the cause of maturation allows unwholesome *dharmas* to produce neutral fruition. However, the concept of maturation in the Tr differs from that in the AKBh. In the Tr, the consciousness of maturation highlights the term *ālaya* as a “storehouse” where the *bījas* of all previous moments are stored and from which the future originates (Nagao 1991:79).

The consciousness of all *bījas* is further elaborated in verse 18 of the Tr:

The consciousness is only all *bījas* (*sarvabīja*), and transformation (*pariṇāma*) [occurs] in such-and-such a way. Due to the mutual power (*anyonyavaśa*), that-and-that

³⁴³ All the verses in the Tr are quoted by the TrBh and edited as a separate portion by Buecher. TrBh, p. 147: *ātmadharmopacāro hi vividho yaḥ pravartate / vijñānapariṇāme 'sau pariṇāmaḥ sa ca tridhā*. For the English translation cf. Cook (1999: 377) and Anacker (2005: 186).

³⁴⁴ TrBh, p. 147: *vipāko mananākhyas ca vijñaptir viśayasya ca / tatrālayākhyam viñānam vipākaḥ sarvabījakam*. For the English translation cf. Cook (1999: 377) and Anacker (2005: 186).

³⁴⁵ Kramer (2014: 313) talks about the “contaminated notion” (*kliṣṭam manaḥ*) which continuously takes the *ālayavijñāna* in the form of the self (*ātman*) as its object.

conceptualisation (*vikalpa*) may arise.³⁴⁶

The reason the *ālayavijñāna* can give rise to various kinds of actual consciousness is that it contains all *bījas*. For instance, the *bīja* of the consciousness of seeing arises in this very moment as the consciousness of seeing when the requisite conditions align. In the subsequent moment, the consciousness of seeing continues to arise due to the mutual power.

The mutual power is a crucial concept for the arising of actual consciousness from the *ālayavijñāna*. In the TrBh, the mutual power is equivalent to power (*śakti*):

There, the “consciousness of all *bījas*” refers to the *ālayavijñāna* because of the arising power (*śakti*) of producing all *dharmas*. The consciousness without all *bījas* indeed exists, so [the term] “all *bījas*” [should be further] explained.³⁴⁷

The consciousness without all *bījas* refers to actual consciousnesses that arise as the fruition of the transformation of consciousness or, more precisely, the transformation of the consciousness of maturation. The term *śakti*, according to Odani (1975: 445–444), is synonymous with *vāsanā*. Therefore, the TrBh utilises the concept of *vāsanās* in terms of mutual power and power to elaborate the maturation of *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna*.

Remarkably, the concept of mutual power is distinct from the notion of mutual *bījas*. As discussed in section 2.3, the Sautrāntikas proposes the notion of mutual *bījas* to give rise to a consciousness after the meditative absorption of cessation. However, Sthiramati and Saṃghabhadra disagree with the notion of mutual *bījas* because it lacks both the cause of homogeneity and the condition of equal-immediacy, making it impossible to give rise to a consciousness.

This mutual power is actually *vāsanā* in the TrBh:

[The quotation:] “due to the mutual power” (*anyonyavaśa*), even the consciousness of seeing, etc., in regard to nourishing by its own power in the present time, still serves as

³⁴⁶ TrBh, p. 148: *sarvabījaṃ hi vijñānaṃ pariṇāmas tathā tathā / yāty anyonyavaśād yena vikalpaḥ sa sa jāyate*. For the English translation cf. Cook (1999: 380) and Anacker (2005: 188).

³⁴⁷ TrBh, p. 110: *tatra sarvadharmotpādanaśaktyanugamāt sarvabījaṃ vijñānam ity ālayavijñānam / vijñānaṃ hy asarvabījaṃ apy astīty ataḥ sarvabījaṃ ity āha*. The bold is added by me to mark the quotation from the Tr.

the cause of the transformation of the *ālayavijñāna* with its distinguished power; [on the other hand,] the transformation of the *ālayavijñāna* also becomes the cause of the consciousness of seeing, etc. Thus, due to this mutual power, both [of them] arise; therefore, the *ālayavijñāna* is not influenced by other [power], that-and-that conceptualisation may arise, not just one kind.³⁴⁸

The concept of mutual power represents the actual consciousness and the *ālayavijñāna* serving as each other's cause to maintain the mental continuum. For instance, when the consciousness of seeing arises from the *bīja* in the present moment, its own power nourishes its *bīja*. As a result, this nourished *bīja* becomes the cause for the transformation of the *ālayavijñāna* in the subsequent moment. This dynamic interplay of mutual power can be illustrated as follows:³⁴⁹

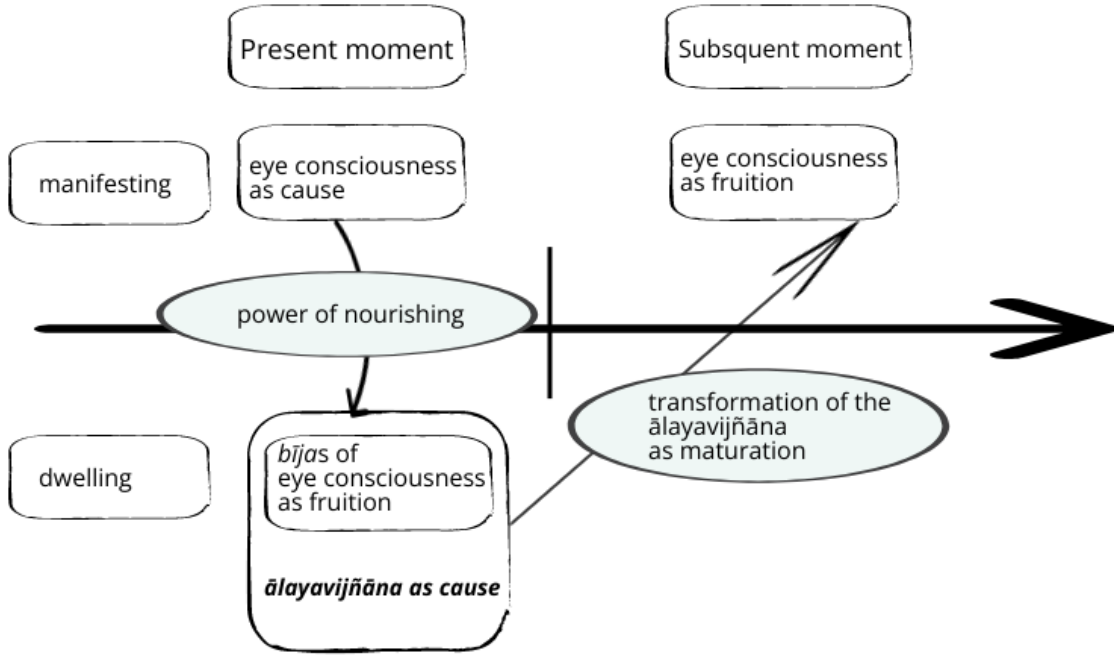


Fig. 1

Therefore, the *ālayavijñāna* is only influenced by the power of actual consciousness leading to the manifestation of diverse consciousnesses through their respective *bījas*. The *ālayavijñāna*

³⁴⁸ TrBh, p. 112, 1–5: *anyonyavaśād iti / tathā hi cakṣurādivijñānaṃ svaśaktiparipoṣe vartamāne śaktiviśiṣṭasyālayavijñānapariṇāmasya nimittam so 'pi ālayavijñānapariṇāmaś cakṣurādivijñānasya nimittam bhavati / evam anyonyavaśād yasmād ubhayaṃ pravartate tasmād ālayavijñānād anyenānadhiṣṭhitād anekaparakāro vikalpaḥ sa sa jāyate.*

³⁴⁹ Fig. 1 - created for this thesis by the author.

and the actual consciousness serve as each other's cause in different moments due to the mutual power. This elaboration represents the arising of actual consciousness in the present life.

In its exploration of the transformation of consciousness, the TrBh employs a broader application of *vāsanās* compared to *bījas*. The concept of *vāsanās*, encompassing power and mutual power, signifies a more dynamic functionality than *bījas*, which predominantly reside within the *ālayavijñāna* as a cause.

3.3.2 The Concepts of *Vāsanās* in the *Triṃśikābhāṣya* (TrBh)

The concept of *vāsanās* is extensively applied in the TrBh. The *vāsanā* of conceptualising (*vikalpavāsanā*) functions dynamically in the process of conceptualisation, while the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of maturation ensure the continuity of the *ālayavijñāna*.

According to Odani (1975: 443), the Sautrāntikas and the Yogācāras share the same understanding. Sthiramati deems that the concept of the transformation of consciousness has two aspects: the transformation of cause and the transformation of fruition, which involve the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause and the *vāsanā* of maturation. Therefore, the arising of conceptualisation is based on the mind being perfumed by these two *vāsanās*.³⁵⁰

As mentioned in section 3.3.1, the concept of *vāsanā* is more dynamically functional than that of *bījas*. Yamabe (2021: 481) states that, when one can conceptualise any thinkable objects, “the *vāsanās* of all *dharmas*” are considered the fundamental cause of *saṃsāra*; therefore, the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* are equated. However, the TrBh has not yet equated the concepts of *vāsanās* and *bījas*. This section further investigates the possible reasons why the TrBh emphasises the term *vāsanā* over *bīja*.

3.3.2.1 The *Vāsanā* of Conceptualizing (*vikalpavāsanā*)

The transformation of consciousness in the TrBh includes two aspects: the conceptualisation of

³⁵⁰ Odani (1975: 443) : “また唯識派の *vijñānapariṇāma* も安慧に依れば等流と異熟の習気の因轉變と果轉變なる二面をその概念内容としている。従つて心の中に等流と異熟の習気を熏習し、それらが活動することによつて現象世界が生起するという考え方は、經量部と唯識派に共通している。”

self, etc., and the conceptualisation of matter, etc. They both generate from the *ālayavijñāna* during the transformation of consciousness. Thus, the TrBh explains the term “transformation” as “changing”:

What is this so-called “transformation” (*pariṇāma*)? It is becoming different. At the same moment when the momentary cause is ceased, the momentary cause obtains the dissimilar nature of fruition, which is [so-called] “transformation.”³⁵¹

In this paragraph, the transformation from a cause to a fruition occurs at the same moment. The fruition possesses the characteristic differing from the cause. Therefore, the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* serve as a momentary cause and the conceptualisation arises as fruition. It is regarded as a simultaneous causality. Yamabe (2017: 22) states that before the concept of *ālayavijñāna* appears, a *bīja* and its fruition must necessarily be successive.

The transformation operates in the *ālayavijñāna*, where the *bījas* are nourished by the *vāsanā*. In the TrBh:

In this context, because of the nourishment (*paripoṣa*) of the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing self, etc. (*ātmādivikalpavāsanā*), and the nourishment of the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing matters, etc. (*rūpādivikalpavāsanā*), the conceptualization, [namely,] the manifestation of the self, etc. (*ātmādinirbhāsa*) and the manifestation of matter, etc. (*rūpādinirbhāsa*), arise from *ālayavijñāna*.³⁵²

The term “nourishment” refers to the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* and being nourished by these *vāsanās*. These *vāsanās* originate from the currently manifesting conceptualisations. Therefore, the *bīja* and the *vāsanā* coexist at the same moment. When the transformation of maturation occurs, the momentary cause—such as *bīja* of the consciousness of seeing being perfumed by the *vāsanā* of the consciousness of seeing from the previous moment—immediately manifests the momentary fruition, which is the consciousness of seeing in the

³⁵¹ TrBh, p. 40, 11–12: *ko'yaṃ pariṇāmo nāma / anyathātvam / kāraṇakṣaṇanirodhasamakālah kāraṇakṣaṇavilakṣaṇaḥ kāryasyātmalābhah pariṇāmah.*

³⁵² TrBh, p. 40, 13–14: *tatrātmādivikalpavāsanāparipoṣād rūpādivikalpavāsanāparipoṣāc cālayavijñānād ātmādinirbhāso vikalpo rūpādinirbhāsaś cotpadyate.*

subsequent moment. As the newly generated consciousness of seeing arises, it is not the *bīja* of the consciousness of seeing, indicating a different characteristic. In this process, the *vāsanā* of the consciousness of seeing includes two dimensions: the *vāsanā* of conceptualising matter, etc. and the *vāsanā* of conceptualising self, etc. The transformation of consciousness divides the self and the object. Thus, the two *vāsanās* of conceptualising signify that every conceptualisation implies the dichotomy of self and the object.

The *ālayavijñāna*, a component of the aggregation of consciousness, must have objects and images. However, objects and images of the *ālayavijñāna* cannot be clearly determined due to their subtle nature. The Tr:

[Verse 3:] It [the *ālayavijñāna*] has a perception of appropriation (*upādi*) and place, which are unknown (*asamvidita*), [arising] always with sensory contact, mental activity, sensation, thinking, and volition.³⁵³

Perceptions are images of the *ālayavijñāna*, while states and appropriations are objects of the *ālayavijñāna*. The CWSL defines states as the external world, and appropriations as the *bījas* and the body provided with sense faculty.³⁵⁴ Unlike the CWSL, the TrBh deems that the external appropriation refers to consciousness of the external world, while the inner appropriation denotes the *vāsanā* of the imagined nature, the matter of sense faculties together with its gross basis and name.³⁵⁵

In this regard, the TrBh clarifies the reason appropriations are marked as “difficult to understand”:

Moreover, it includes the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing self, etc. (*ātmādivikalpavāsanā*),

³⁵³ Tr, p. 147: *asamviditakopādīsthānavijñāptikam ca tat / sadā sparśamanaskāravitsamjñācetanānvitam*. For the English translation cf. Anacker 2005: 186.

³⁵⁴ CWSL, T1585, no. 31, p. 10a11–14: 了謂了別，即是行相，識以了別為行相故。處謂處所，即器世間，是諸有情所依處故。執受有二，謂諸種子及有根身。” For the English translation cf. Cook (1999: 60): “Perceptions (*vijñāpti*) are its image of activity (*ākāra*), because the image of activity (*ākāra*) of the *ālayavijñāna* is to perceive. State (*sthāna*) means “place”. It is the external world (*bhājana*), because it is the supporting place of all sentient beings. Appropriation (*upādi*) is twofold: the *bījas* and the body provided with sense faculty.” I have rendered some terminologies and added Sanskrit terms.

³⁵⁵ The nearly identical elaboration of the two appropriations appears in the PSkV. For a more detailed discussion, see Kramer (2014: 315).

and the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing phenomena, [such as] matter, etc. (*rūpādidharmavikalpavāsanā*). Because of its existence, the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing the self, etc., and the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing matter, etc., are grasped by the *ālayavijñāna* as its fruition. Therefore, the *vāsanā* of conceptualizing the self, etc., and of conceptualizing matter, etc., is called “appropriation” (*upādi*). Thus, within the [*ālayavijñāna*], [the statements] “this is it” (*idaṃ tad*) [and] the image of clear perception remain unknown; hence, this is termed “the appropriation which is difficult to understand”.³⁵⁶

For the inner appropriation, the *vāsanā* of the imagined nature refers to the *vāsanā* of conceptualising self, etc. and the *vāsanā* of conceptualising *dharmas* such as matter, etc., as they both signify the false dichotomy of self and object. These two *vāsanās* strengthen the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*, marked as “nourishment”. Through the nourishment of two *vāsanās*, the conceptualisation of self, etc. and the conceptualisation of matter, etc. arise as fruition. These two *vāsanās* are the residue of conceptualisation; hence, even though the *ālayavijñāna* possesses them as objects, they are difficult to be understood due to their subtle nature:

Moreover, the appropriation refers to the basis (*āśraya*): The “appropriation” (*upādi*) is [defined as] having [the function of] appropriating the basis. The basis includes the existence of self, the matter of sense faculty together with its gross basis and name. Again, of this, the appropriation (*upādāna*), which is perceiving by the single conjunction of safety, is “appropriation”.³⁵⁷

This elaboration is akin to the explanation of “the body provided with sense faculty” in the CWSL. The *ālayavijñāna* appropriates the existence of self as its object, forging a single conjunction of safety. This relationship ensures the coexistence of the physical existence and

³⁵⁶ TrBh, p. 52, 9–13: *sa punar ātmādivikalpavāsanā rūpādidharmavikalpavāsanā ca / tatsadbhāvād ālayavijñānenātmādivikalpo rūpādivikalpaś ca kāryatvenopātta iti tad vāsanātmādivikalpānām rūpādivikalpānām copādir ity ucyate / so’asmin idaṃ tad iti pratisaṃvedanākāreṇāsaṃvidita ity atas tad asaṃviditakopādir ity ucyate.*

³⁵⁷ TrBh, p. 52, 14–16: *āśrayaopādānām copādih / āśraya ātmabhāvaḥ sādhiṣṭhānam indriyarūpaṃ nāma ca / tasya punar yad upādānam upagamanam ekayogakṣematvena tad upādih.*

the mind, facilitating manifestations of behaviours and mental activities. The *ālayavijñāna* and the existence of self are inseparable, with the *ālayavijñāna* only departing from a sentient being upon death.

The existence of self can be denoted as “name and matter”,³⁵⁸ which merely exists in the realms of desire and matter:

In this context, the appropriation (*upādāna*) of name and matter [occurs] in the two realms, [namely,] desire and matter. However, in the realm of non-matter (*ārūpyadhātu*), which is freed from the matter, because [of that], the maturation of matter is not a reproduction, [and] it is merely the appropriation of name. Nevertheless, the matter [exists] there as the situation of *vāsanā* (*vāsanāvastha*) rather than the situation of maturation. So, the appropriation of this [*vāsanā*] is impossible to be clearly perceived; hence, it is called “unknown”.³⁵⁹

Although the realm of non-matter only appropriates name, matter still exists as *vāsanā*. Hence, the situation of *vāsanā* in this paragraph represents an immature, immovable and unmanifest situation. Contrastingly, the situation of maturation refers to a manifesting, perceivable matter. Regarding this, the situation of *vāsanā* is akin to the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*. However, the matter existing as the situation of *vāsanā* should be regarded as a residue from the previous matter. Therefore, even for the one who is reborn in the realm of non-matter, they still have *vāsanā* of matter remaining in their mental continuum. When one is reborn in the realms of desire and matter again, it becomes possible for them to arise as matters again.

The *vāsanā* of conceptualising matter, etc. and the *vāsanā* of conceptualising self, etc. not only nourish the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* and cause them to manifest as fruition (namely, conceptualisations) but also serve as the inner appropriation for the *ālayavijñāna*. Through these two *vāsanās*, the process of conceptualisation in the TrBh distinctly represents a dichotomy of self and object.

³⁵⁸ For the discussion of the term *nāmarūpa* see above section 2.1.2.

³⁵⁹ TrBh, p. 52, 17–21: *tatra kāmarūpadhātvor dvayor nāmarūpayor upādānam / ārūpyadhātau tu rūpavītarāgatvād rūpavipākānabhinirvṛtter nāmopādānam eva / kin tu vāsanāvastham eva tatra rūpaṃ na vipākāvastham / tat punar upādānam idantayā pratisaṃvedayitum aśakyam ity ato 'saṃviditam ity ucyate.*

3.3.2.2 The *Vāsanā* of a Homogeneous Cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) and the *Vāsanā* of Maturation (*vipākavāsanā*)

As the *vāsanā* of conceptualisation denotes how the conceptualisation of self and matter manifests from the *ālayavijñāna*, the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause signify how the process of the transformation of consciousness continues in one's mental continuum.

In the TrBh, the transformation of consciousness is divided into two aspects:

In this context, the transformation of cause (*hetupariṇāma*) is the nourishment of the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause (*niṣyanda*) and maturation (*vipāka*) within the *ālayavijñāna*. Moreover, the transformation of fruition (*phalapariṇāma*) [occurs] due to the arising of the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) within the *ālayavijñāna*, at the time when the previous actions are completed and projected, that is the reproduction in another group-homogeneity (*nikāyasabhāgāntara*).³⁶⁰

On the one hand, the *ālayavijñāna* serves as the cause for bringing forth actual consciousness and is nourished by the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause, constituting what is known as the transformation of cause. On the other hand, the *ālayavijñāna*, now as a fruition, is reborn in another [new] group-homogeneity when previous actions have been projected and completed. This is termed the transformation of fruition. According to Yamabe (2021: 314), the term “group-homogeneity” refers to a “category of beings”; hence, the *ālayavijñāna* is projected into a new category of beings in the next life based on accumulated karmic actions. In this context, the transformation of cause operates within the present lifetime, while the transformation of fruition pertains to the next life.

The function of these two *vāsanās* is further elucidated in relation to wholesome, unwholesome, and neutral qualities:

Then, due to the arising of the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*), it is

³⁶⁰ TrBh, p. 48, 16–20: *tatra hetupariṇāmo ālayavijñāne vipākanīṣyandavāsanāparipuṣṭiḥ / phalapariṇāmaḥ punar vipākavāsanāvṛttilābhād ālayavijñānasya pūrvakarmākṣepaparisamāptau yā nikāyasabhāgāntareṣv abhinirvṛttiḥ.*

the reproduction (*abhinirvṛtti*) of the actual consciousness and the afflicted mind from the *ālayavijñāna*. Among them, the wholesome and unwholesome actual consciousness places the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause inside the *ālayavijñāna*, [while] the neutral [actual consciousness] and the afflicted mind only [place] the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause.³⁶¹

To maintain one's mental continuum, manifested wholesome and unwholesome actual consciousness leaves behind two *vāsanās* in the *ālayavijñāna*. However, as the neutral actual consciousness and the afflicted mind arise, they generate merely the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause, which simultaneously once again perfumes (*vāsita*) the *bījas* of actual consciousness and the afflicted mind, causing them to manifest in the next moment. The quality of neutral actual consciousness and the afflicted mind remains unchanged, leading to the interrupted recurrence of the same neutral actual consciousness and the afflicted mind due to the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause.

To bring forth karmic fruitions, the *vāsanā* of maturation refers to the projection in accordance with accumulated karmic actions:

In this context, due to the ripening power [working on] wholesome and unwholesome *vāsanā* of *karman*, in this way, the projection (*ākṣepa*), which is the establishment of fruition (*phalābhinirvṛtti*), is [the transformation of] maturation.³⁶²

The *vāsanā* of maturation is generated from the wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. As discussed in section 2.2, the concept of maturation does not entail transforming wholesome qualities into unwholesome; instead, it gives rise to a neutral fruition, as the ripening power diminishes the wholesome and unwholesome qualities. Therefore, as projected by previous actions, the fruition of maturation is neutral. In the TrBh, the *vāsanā* of maturation pertains to all kinds of rebirth:

³⁶¹ TrBh, p. 48, 19–22: *niṣyandavāsanā vṛtilābhāc ca yā pravṛtti vijñānānām kliṣṭasya ca manasa ālayavijñānād abhinirvṛtīḥ / tatra pravṛttivijñānaṃ kuśalākuśalam ālayavijñāne vipākavāsanāṃ niṣyandavāsanāṃ cādhatte / avyākṛtaṃ kliṣṭaṅ ca mano niṣyandavāsanāṃ eva.*

³⁶² TrBh, p. 50, 5–6: *tatra kuśalākuśalakarmavāsanāparipākavaśād yathākṣepaṃ phalābhinirvṛttir vipākah.*

In regard to the existing overall [four kinds of] birth, [five kinds of] paths and [four kinds of] realms, it is [termed] “maturation” due to the matured wholesome and unwholesome actions.³⁶³

The *ālayavijñāna* reborn in a new group-homogeneity remains neutral, despite being projected by previous matured wholesome and unwholesome actions.

Hence, the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause are both placed in the *ālayavijñāna*. The TrBh primarily considers the *vāsanā* of maturation as a reborn fruition in the next life, while the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause sustains the presence of manifested actual consciousness and the afflicted mind in one’s mental continuum. However, in the PSkV, both *vāsanās* are explained as causes and fruitions, varying according to circumstance.

3.3.3 Two Kinds of *Vāsanā* in the PSkV

In the PSkV, the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) are expounded in the moment of perceiving an object. According to Szanyi (2023: 255), two kinds of conceptualisation (*vikalpa*) occur at this moment. The “conceptualisation being a recollection” (*anusmaraṇavikalpa*) is in relation to memory (*smṛti*), which preserves the image of an object previously experienced by the mind. As discussed in section 2.4, the *bīja* of memory (*smṛtibīja*) in the AKBh serves as the cause of homogeneity that generates the same *dharma* as the previous moment. Likewise, in the AKTA, the function of memory is a “specific potency (*śakti/ sāmarthya*) from its own kind”. The PSkV shares a similar stance with them.³⁶⁴ Another shared stance is the “conceptualisation being an examination” (*abhinirūpaṇāvikalpa*) which refers to insight or intention. While there should be a third one, the conceptualisation of natural thought, it is not explained in the PSkV (Kramer 2013b: 316).

When one perceives an object, the mental consciousness arises based on three successive stages: “investigating” (*paryeṣaka*), “classifying” (*vyavasthāpaka*), and “conceptualising”

³⁶³ TrBh, p. 50, 17–18: *sarvadhātugatīyonijātiṣu kuśalākuśalakarmavipākatvād vipākaḥ*.

³⁶⁴ Kramer (2013b: 293) highlights that while the attribution of the quotation of two conceptualizations (*vikalpa*) in the PSkV is to Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, it actually finds a parallel in Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*.

(*vikalpaka*) (Kramer 2013b: 324). The conceptualisation brings forth discrimination in the mind:

This is the moment when, depending on the sense object (*viṣaya*), [this consciousness] is either contaminated (*saṃkliśyate*) or leads to purification, and the moment when the mental activity of intention begins to form as meritorious, non-meritorious or neutral.³⁶⁵

As the “conceptualisation being an examination” (*abhinirūpaṇāvikalpa*) arises, the mental activity of intention discriminates the object as meritorious, non-meritorious, or neutral; thus, it determines whether this consciousness is contaminated or pure. This conceptualisation creates two *vāsanās*:

When these enacted [mental activity of intention] cease, they nourish the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) in the *ālayavijñāna*. Therefore, wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral mental activities are produced from the *ālayavijñāna* with reference to the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause.³⁶⁶

As in the TrBh, the actual consciousness leaves behind the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause in the *ālayavijñāna*. Similarly, in the PSkV, the ceased mental activity also nourishes these two *vāsanās* in the *ālayavijñāna*. The *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause in both TrBh and the PSkV sustains the quality of wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral.

For the rebirth of the *ālayavijñāna* in the next life, the *vāsanā* of maturation in the PSkV serves as a crucial condition, similar to its role in the TrBh:

From the *ālayavijñāna* with reference to the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*), the matured *ālayavijñāna* regenerates in another [new] group-homogeneity (*nikāyasabhāgāntare*). In this context, for them, [namely,] those other wholesome and unwholesome contaminated *dharmas*, this is how [the process] leads. However, the neutral [*dharmas*] nourish the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*), rather

³⁶⁵ PSkV, p. 91, 49b5–6: *tatra ca viṣayāt saṃkliśyate / vyavadāyate vā / tadavasthāś ca puṇyāpuṇyāniñjyān saṃskārāṃś cetanātmakān abhisamskaroti*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 328) and Kramer (2015: 314).

³⁶⁶ PSkV, p. 91 49b6–50a1: *te 'bhisamskṛtā nirudhyamānā ālayavijñāne vipākavāsanām vā puṣṇanti / niṣyandavāsanām vā / tatra niṣyandavāsanām āgamyālayavijñānāt puṇyāpuṇyāniñjyāḥ saṃskārāḥ pravarttante*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 328).

than the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*), because [the neutral *dharmas*] cannot be matured by those [*vāsanā* of maturation].³⁶⁷

The *ālayavijñāna* in this life will be projected to the next life as fruition due to wholesome and unwholesome *dharmas*. This is the function of the *vāsanā* of maturation, which matures the contaminated *dharmas* and brings forth fruition. Since neutral *dharmas* cannot be matured but remain neutral, they can only be nourished by the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause.

Based on these two *vāsanās*, the PSkV signifies that the *ālayavijñāna* is twofold:

Thus, the *ālayavijñāna* is twofold: the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) is with regards to both fruition and cause. Also, mental activities arise in the place of their own *bījas* (*svabījādhāne*) and are established by the cause, which is a superior nature within the *ālayavijñāna*. This [*ālayavijñāna*] becomes the fruition of all mental activities.³⁶⁸

The term “twofold” refers to two perspectives of causality. One perspective is that the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause serves as the fruition, created by mental activities, while it is a cause when it perfumes the *bījas*. Therefore, as the container of all *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* is the cause manifesting mental activities, yet it becomes the fruition when it is projected by mental activities.

Another perspective refers to the *vāsanā* of maturation:

Because of the *ālayavijñāna* and its appropriation of *bījas*, all mental activities are generated; the *ālayavijñāna* is [therefore] the cause of all mental activities. Then, the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) is regarding the fruition of wholesome and unwholesome mental activities. However, the *vāsanā* of maturation refers to a cause, such as [the cause of] the consciousness of maturation in another [new] group-

³⁶⁷ PSkV, p. 91, 50a1–3: *vipākavāsanām āgamyālayavijñānāt nikāyasabhāgāntare 'py ālayavijñānam eva vipākātmakam nirvarttate / tatra ye 'py anye 'kuśalāḥ kuśalasāsravāś ca dharmās teṣāṃ apy ayam eva nayaḥ / avyākṛtās tu niṣyandavāsanām eva puṣṇanti na vipākavāsanām teṣāṃ avipākatvāt*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 328–329).

³⁶⁸ PSkV, p. 91, 50a3–4 : *tad evam ālayavijñānam dviprakāraṃ niṣyandavāsanām upādāya kāryaṃ kāraṇaṃ ca / tathā hi sarvasaṃskārāḥ svabījādhāne varttamānā ālayavijñānātmāṣayahetubhāvena vyavatiṣṭhanta iti / sarvasaṃskārāṇām tat kāryaṃ*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 329).

homogeneity.³⁶⁹

The *vāsanā* of maturation is a fruition created by wholesome, unwholesome *dharmas*. The consciousness of maturation is, namely, the *ālayavijñāna*, reborn as a fruition in another new group-homogeneity; however, it is a cause when it is the appropriation of all *bījas*.

The twofold *ālayavijñāna* can be illustrated as follows:³⁷⁰

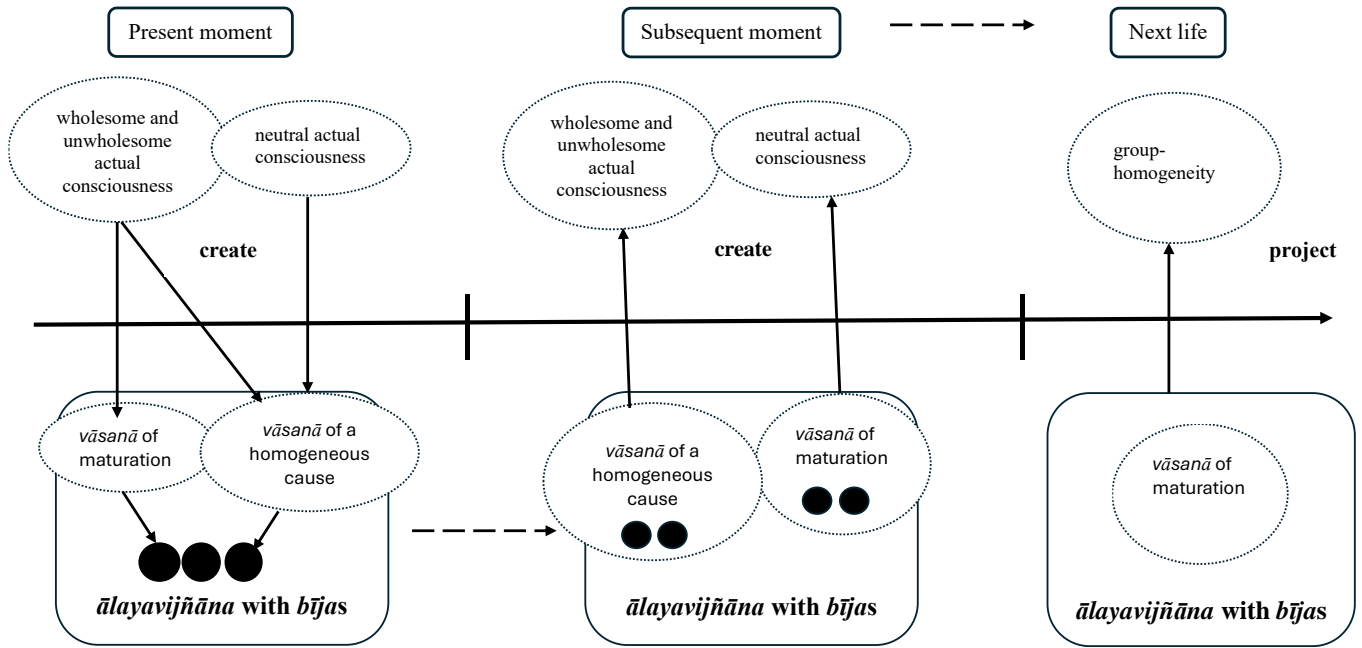


Fig. 2

Following the time frame, the *ālayavijñāna* only serves as a cause in this life, as it contains all *bījas*. Mental activities create the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause as fruitions. These two *vāsanās* perfume *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna* and cause them to manifest. In this context, *bījas* possess qualities in accordance with *vāsanās*; however, the PSkV does not state that *vāsanās* become *bījas* during perfuming. Thus, the statement of “two *vāsanās* becoming causes to manifest mental activities in a subsequent moment” should be regarded as perfumed *bījas*, since only the *bījas* can manifest mental activities. The *ālayavijñāna* serves as fruition after it is projected by previous actions and reborn in another group-homogeneity.

³⁶⁹ PSkV, p. 91, 50a4–6: *sarvasaṃskārās ca tadbījopādānād ālayvijñānād utpadyanta iti sarvasaṃskārāṇāṃ ālayavijñānaṃ kāraṇaṃ / vipākavāsanāṃ tv adhikṛtya kuśalakuśalānāṃ saṃskārāṇāṃ kāryam eva tat na kāraṇa / kāraṇaṃ tu tad vipākavāsanāṃ upādāya nikāyasabhāgāntareṣu vipākavijñānasyaiveti*. For the English translation cf. Engle (2009: 329).

³⁷⁰ Fig.2 - created for this thesis by author.

Therefore, the two *vāsanās* exist in the present lifetime and signify the process of mental activity arising from the *ālayavijñāna*.

The concept of the transformation of consciousness encompasses three aspects: the transformation of maturation, the consciousness of thinking, and the consciousness of perception of sense objects. Through them, the process of conceptualisation is established. The *ālayavijñāna*, as the consciousness of maturation, contains all *bījas* that can manifest as actual consciousness. These actual consciousnesses create power (*śakti*) to nourish the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*, thus sustaining the continuity of actual consciousnesses in one's mental continuum. Due to the mutual power, the *ālayavijñāna* and the actual consciousness serve as each other's cause in different moments. In the TrBh, the mutual power is explained as *vāsanā*.

The concept of *vāsanās* is more prominently utilised in the TrBh than *bījas*. The *vāsanā* of conceptualising self, etc., and the *vāsanā* of conceptualising matter, etc. signify the dichotomy of the transformation of consciousness—namely, self and object. These *vāsanās* of conceptualising are the inner appropriation of the *ālayavijñāna*, denting the basic false dichotomy in the mundane world. On the other hand, the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause pertain to the fruitions of mental activities and the causes of arising mental activities from perfumed *bījas*. Hence, the PSkV indicates that the *ālayavijñāna* is twofold. Firstly, it serves as a cause and a container of *bījas*, perfumed by two *vāsanās*. Secondly, it functions as fruition, projected by previous actions and reborn in a new group-homogeneity. By delving into the concept of *vāsanās* in the TrBh and the PSkV, *bījas* exist primarily as causes, while *vāsanās*, as residues of inner appropriation and manifested activities, possess the power to perfume *bījas* and facilitate the continuity of the transformation of consciousness from the present life to the next life.

The rebirth of the *ālayavijñāna* is explained in the Tr. However, the Tr utilises the *vāsanā* of *karman* and the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping, which should be compared with the *vāsanā* of maturation in the TrBh.

3.4 The Concept of the *Vāsanā* in the Process of Rebirth

In the TrBh and the PSkV, the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) denotes that the *ālayavijñāna* will be projected to the next life when all actions will have matured. As the

consciousness of all *bījas* (*sarvabījaka*), the rebirth of *ālayavijñāna* is closely related to the concept of *bīja*. Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (AS), a Yogācāra text to analyse Buddhist terminologies, signifies the “accompaniment of *bīja*”:

What is “the accompaniment of *bīja*” (*bījasamanvāgama*)?

The one who is reborn in the realm of desire is bound together with afflictions and sub-afflictions associated with [the realm of] desire, affliction and sub-afflictions associated with [realms of] matter and non-matter, which is the accompaniment, [achieved] through the accompaniment of *bīja*; also, [it is] possible to attaining wholesome [*dharmas*].³⁷¹

Bījas, holding both positive and negative potencies, determine the realm into which a sentient being will be reborn. In the realm of desire, sentient beings are bound with afflictions and sub-afflictions associated with [the realm of] desire, matter, and non-matter. The term “accompaniment” refers to the result of rebirth. Since the *bījas* possess both positive and negative potencies, the arising of wholesome *dharma* is still possible, even though sentient beings in the realm of desire are bound with afflictions from the three realms.

On the other hand, the Tr applies the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping and the *vāsanā* of *karman* to explain the process of rebirth. The “twofold grasping” is the grasper and the grasped. The MAV/MAVBh explain the conceptualisation through the *bījas* of the grasper and the grasped, and the MAVṬ further elaborates on the *bīja* of the grasper, the *bīja* of the grasped and the *bīja* of the grasping of those. These twofold grasping represent the false dichotomy of self and object in the Yogācāra school.

However, the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping in the Tr pertains to the process of rebirth, while in the TrBh it is explained by the consciousness of maturation and the *vāsanā* of maturation. Hence, this section aims to investigate how the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping and the *vāsanā* of *karman* function in the process of rebirth.

3.4.1 The *Vāsanā* of Twofold Grasping (*grāhadvayavāsanā*) and the *Vāsanā* of *Karman*

³⁷¹ AS, pp. 29–30: *bījasamanvāgamaḥ katamaḥ / kāmādhātau jāto bhūṭḥ kāmāpratisaṃyuktaiḥ kleśopakleśaiḥ rūpārūpyaprasaṃyuktaiś ca kleśopakleśaiḥ bījasamanvāgamena samanvāgama upapattilābhikaiś ca kuśalaiḥ.*

(*karmavāsanā*) in the Tr

The 19th verse of the Tr discusses the termination of the current life and the subsequent rebirth in the next life:

The *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*), along with the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping (*grāhadvayavāsanā*), cause another maturation to occur when the former maturation has been exhausted.³⁷²

From the Yogācāra's perspective, there is no substantial entity to undergo rebirth in the next life. Once all *karman* of this life have manifested from *bījas* and been exhausted, the *ālayavijñāna*, as a subtle consciousness, is projected into the next life by the *vāsanā* of *karman*, along with the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping. These two *vāsanās* represent residual power from previous actions. The *vāsanā* of *karman* is the residue of previously manifested actions, while the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping is the residue of the basic dichotomy between self and object. As this *ālayavijñāna* is still bound by the mundane world, it cannot be free from these two *vāsanās*.

The 19th verse of the Tr is the sole verse that explicitly addresses the concept of *vāsanās* and clearly describes their role in projecting the *ālayavijñāna* into the next life. Following the Tr, the TrBh further expounds upon the process of rebirth by delving into these two *vāsanās*.

3.4.2. Sthiramati's Response to the TrBh

As discussed in section 3.3.2.2, the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) in the TrBh represents the transformation of fruition, which explains the reproduction of the *ālayavijñāna* in the new group-homogeneity. However, the TrBh does not consider the *vāsanā* of maturation as the *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*):

Karman encompasses meritorious, non-meritorious, or neutral intention. Through *karman*, the potencies (*sāmarthya*) are placed in the *ālayavijñāna* for the establishment

³⁷² TrBh, p. 148: *karmaṇo vāsanā grāhadvayavāsanayā saha / kṣīṇe pūrvavipāke 'nyam vipākaṃ janayanti tat*. For the English translation cf. Anacker 2005: 188.

of the future self-existence, which is the *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*).³⁷³

The term “potency” accurately captures the essence of the term *vāsanā* in this context. The *vāsanā* of *karman* essentially represents potencies generated from meritorious, non-meritorious, or neutral intention. Conversely, the *vāsanā* of maturation indicates the potencies placed in the *ālayavijñāna* through meritorious and non-meritorious mental activities in the present moment. Therefore, the *vāsanā* of *karman* encompasses a broader scope than the *vāsanā* of maturation and pertains to the future rebirth.

Moreover, the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping should not be understood as the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause:

Among them, the grasping of an object is the adherence that there is an object placing in one’s continuum as well as separating from consciousness. Then, this determination that is grasped, perceived, and understood by consciousness, is the grasping of a subject.³⁷⁴

The TrBh defines the “grasped” as existing in one’s mental continuum; however, it is distinct from the consciousness. This consciousness refers to the actual consciousness, such as the consciousness of seeing. According to the Yogācāra school, the external world is constructed by the *ālayavijñāna*, so the “grasped” cannot be inherently separate from the *ālayavijñāna*. Nonetheless, the actual consciousness mistakenly perceives the “grasped” as a real existent object; therefore, it is called “attachment”. On the other hand, the grasper has the function of determination, which is able to conceive, understand, and hold the grasped.

The *vāsanā* of twofold grasping perfumes the *bījas* to always construct the dichotomy of the grasper and the grasped in the mental stream.³⁷⁵ Some scholars, like Kanabishi, aim to

³⁷³ TrBh, p. 112, 11–12: *punṅāpunṅāneṅjyacetanā karma / tena karmanā yad anāgatātmabhāvābhinirvṛttaye ālayavijñāne sāmāthyam āhitam sā karmavāsanā.*

³⁷⁴ TrBh, p. 112, 13–14: *tatra vijñānāt prthag eva svasantā nādhyāsitaṃ grāhyam astīty adhyavasāyo grāhyagrāhaḥ / tac ca vijñānena pratīyate vijñāyate grhyata iti yo ‘yam niścayaḥ sa grāhakagrāhaḥ.*

³⁷⁵ TrBh, p. 112, 16–17: *pūrvotpannagrāhyagrāhakagrāhākṣiptam anāgatatajjātīyagrāhyagrāhakagrāhotpattibījaṃ grāhadvayavāsanā.* The English translation is provided by me: “The seed (*bīja*) of the arising of the grasping of an object and the grasping of a subject of the same kind (*tajjātīya*) in the future is the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping, projected by the grasping of an object and the grasping of a subject that has previously arisen.”

equate the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping to the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause.³⁷⁶ However, in the TrBh, the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause is generated by wholesome, unwholesome, or neutral intention and subsequently gives rise to the same mental activities. On the other hand, the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping represents the fundamental dichotomy of self and object. Thus, they cannot be considered the same.

The TrBh offers two metaphors to explain the relationship between the *vāsanā* of *karman* and the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping:

In this context, due to the differing *vāsanā* of *karman*, the self-existence is different according to different paths, [much like how] different seeds (*bīja*) [yield] different sprouts. All *vāsanā* of *karman* (*sarvakarmavāsanā*), each [of them] projects to bring forth self-existence; [meanwhile,] the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping (*grāhadvayavāsanā*) is understood as cooperation [of the *vāsanā* of *karman*]. This is just like water and so on [contributing to] the growth of a sprout from a seed (*bījasyāṅkurotpatti*).³⁷⁷

As the sprout grows distinctively from its seed, sentient beings are projected into the path in accordance with their previous *karman*. Just as the sprout's growth is aided by water, sun, and air, the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping, which refers to the fundamental dichotomy of self and object, cooperates with the *vāsanā* of *karman* to shape the sentient being in the next life. In this paragraph, the term “seed” does not equate to the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*. Although the term *bīja* inherently provokes the idea of growth, it primarily pertains to the function of storing and being perfumed.

The process of rebirth is explicitly explained in the TrBh:

Those *karman* accumulated from a previous life lead to a maturation (*vipāka*) that has reproduced (*abhinirvṛtta*). At this [time], [the maturation] becomes exhausted, coinciding with the time of projecting, where [the maturation] is placed at the end. In

³⁷⁶ Kanabhisshi (2011: 1229): “This *niṣyanda-vāsanā*, however, can be said to have a function similar to *grāhadvaya-vāsanā*, in that it helps the evolution of *vijñāna-pariṇāma*, namely the generation of *ālayavijñāna* further on.”

³⁷⁷ TrBh, p. 112, 17–18, p. 114, 1–3: *tatra karmavāsanābhedād gatibhedenātmabhāvabhedo bījabhedād aṅkurabhedavat / grāhadvayavāsanā tu sarvakarmavāsanānām yathāsvam ākṣiptātmabhāvotpādane pravṛttānām sahakāritvaṃ pratipadyate / tad yathā abādayo bījasyāṅkurotpattāv iti.*

the way of [following] this power, the *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*), together with the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped (*grāhadvayavāsanāśahitā*), generate another *ālayavijñāna* that is another maturation arising from the previous maturation. Apart from the *ālayavijñāna*, there is no other maturation.³⁷⁸

The term “maturation” refers to the manifestations from *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* in the present time and the reborn *ālayavijñāna* in the next life. When the current *karman* are matured and exhausted, the *vāsanā* of *karman* along with the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped project the *ālayavijñāna* into the next life. In the progress of rebirth, the *ālayavijñāna* is the sole maturation. This progress of rebirth can be illustrated as follows:³⁷⁹

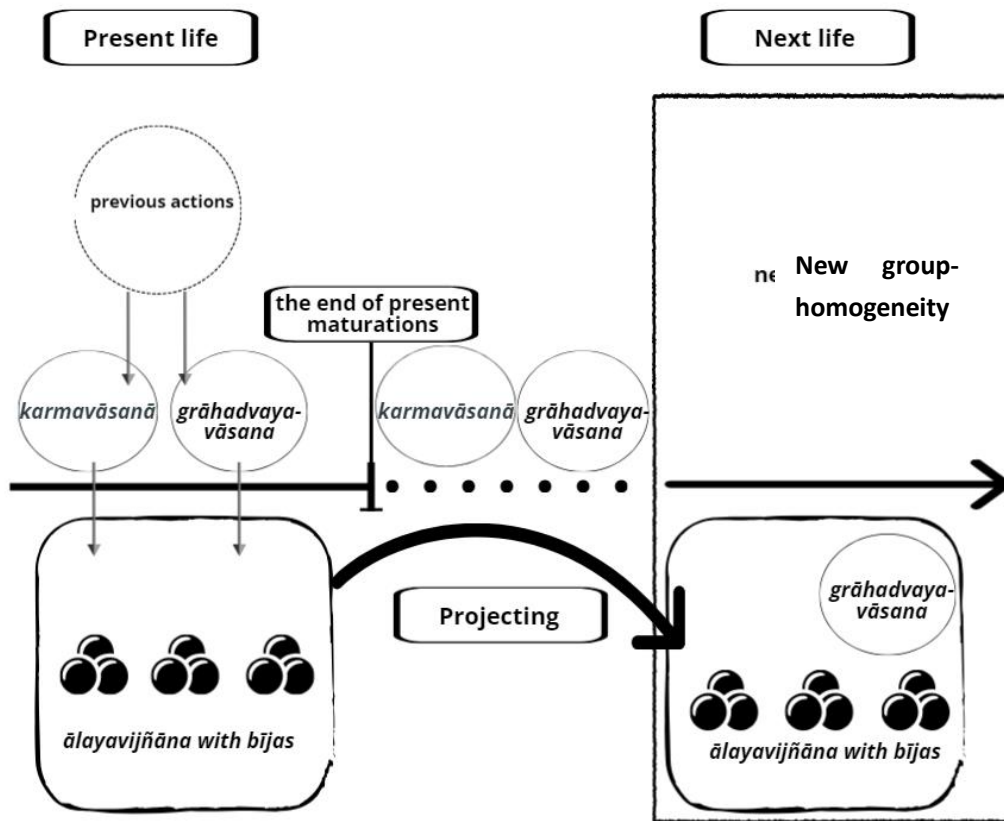


Fig. 3

According to Gao (2019: 213), the concept of *bīja* in the Tr and the TrBh is regarded as a cause that simultaneously arises along with manifested *dharmas*, whereas the concept of *vāsanā* aims

³⁷⁸ TrBh, p. 114, 7–10: *pūrvajanmopacitena karmaṇā ya iti vipāko 'bhiniṛvṛttas tasmin kṣṇa ity ākṣepakāle paryantāvasthite yathābalaṃ karmavāsanā grāhadvayavāsanāśahitā upabhūktād vipākād anyam vipākaṃ tad evālayavijñānaṃ janayanti / ālayavijñānavyatirekeṇānyasya vipākasyābhāvāt.*

³⁷⁹ Fig. 3 - created for this thesis by the author.

to maintain one's mental continuum. By investigating the Tr and the TrBh, the *bījas* are inseparable from the *ālayavijñāna*. The concept of *vāsanās* is divided into two timeframes: in the present time, the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause maintain the manifestation of mental activities and the mental continuum, while in the future time, the *vāsanā* of *karman* and the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped accumulate the power from previous *karman* and then project the *ālayavijñāna* into the new group-homogeneity.

3.5 Short Conclusion

In this chapter, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are discussed in relation to the *ālayavijñāna*. The relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and the concept of *bījas* illustrates that the *ālayavijñāna* serves as the consciousness of all *bījas* (*sarvabīja*). Without *bījas*, actual consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*) cannot arise in various forms from the *ālayavijñāna*.

The concept of *bījas* signifies the grasper (*grāhaka*) and the grasped (*grāhya*) in the compendium of the MAV. The “unreal imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpita*) involves both the false dichotomy between the grasper and the grasped and the pure emptiness. This false dichotomy established on the proliferation denotes the impregnation (*paribhāvita*) of the *vāsanās* of speech.

Moreover, the conceptualisation (*vikalpa*) of the world is termed as “the transformation of consciousness” in the Tr. On one hand, the TrBh utilises the *vāsanā* of conceptualising (*vikalpavāsanā*) to explain the dichotomy between self and object; also, the TrBh applies the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavijñāna*) and the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) to manifest the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* and the PSkV regards the *ālayavijñāna* as a cause perfumed by these two *vāsanās*. On the other hand, the TrBh utilises the *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped (*grāhadvayavāsanāśahitā*) to explain the process of rebirth, aligning with the perspective of the PSkV, where the matured *ālayavijñāna* becomes fruition in the next life.

In general, both the TrBh and the PSkV demonstrate a shared comprehension of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. Upon analysing these two texts, it becomes apparent that there is a decrease in the emphasis on the importance of *bījas*, while the significance of *vāsanās* becomes more pronounced. The way these two works divide the *ālayavijñāna* into a relationship of cause and fruition and establish the *vāsanā* of maturation and the *vāsanā* of a

homogenous cause signifies that they share a specific interpretation.

Chapter 4: The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in the Process of Liberation

The previous chapter unveiled the interplay of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, along with the *ālayavijñāna*, depicting the process of conceptualisation (*vikalpa*) in one's current existence and the process of rebirth in the next. This chapter delves deeper, with the purpose of investigating how the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* function in the process of liberation.

The YoBh ascribes the attainment of Buddhahood to a significant term: *gotra*. According to Seyfort Rugg (1976: 354), when the term *gotra* is associated with “origin” in Buddhist usage, it emerges as a synonym for *bīja*.³⁸⁰ The *Śrāvakabhūmi* (ŚBh), which is the oldest layer within the YoBh (Schmithausen 1987: 14), describes the ‘*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*’ (*lokottaradharmabīja*) as the cause of attaining Buddhahood. Nonetheless, the ŚBh also contains the concept of non-lineage (*agotra*), meaning those devoid of the *dharma* of ultimate liberation (*aparinirvāṇadharmaka*).³⁸¹ However, in the *Pañcavijñānakāyasamprayuktābhūmi* (a later layer of the YoBh) and the *Manobhūmi* in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* (PMBhVin), *bīja* functions as a metaphor and is equated with *gotra*. Yamabe (1990: 84) emphasizes that the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālambanapratyayabīja*; 真如所緣緣種子) does not imply that suchness arise from *bīja*.³⁸² Yet, Okada (2013: 138) clarifies that the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* presents a different

³⁸⁰ Quoting from Edgerton’s *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, Seyfort Rugg (1976: 354) concludes four meanings of the term *gotra* in Buddhist usage: 1. ‘family’; 2. ‘mine’; 3. ‘origin’, ‘basis’, ‘cause’, ‘seed’ (*bīja*); 4. ‘kind’, ‘class’, ‘category’. In a quest to comprehend the topic, this chapter focuses on meanings 3 and 4—namely, ‘seed’ (*bīja*) and ‘kind’—in order to discuss how *gotra* functions in the process of liberation.

³⁸¹ Delhey (2022: 48) considers the term *aparinirvāṇadharmaka* as a morphological variation of the theoretically **aparinirvāṇadharman*. The compounds ending in *dharman* express the natural condition with a future reference and express inevitability.

³⁸² The translation of **tathatālambanapratyayabīja* varies among scholars due to its inherent ambiguity. The first perspective is offered by Schmithausen (1987: 78), who translates this term as “seed consisting in True Reality [working as] the objective condition [of supramundane insight].” Yamabe (1990: 80–82) explains that True

perspective, suggesting that supramundane *dharmas* arise from this *bīja*, which thereby becomes the cause of attain the ultimate liberation (*parinirvāṇa*). Moreover, this **tathatālambanapratyayabīja* is considered a preliminary formulation of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (*śrutavāsanā*) (Yamabe 1990: 63–65; 82–83). Thus, in the context of the path to liberation, the concept of *bīja* is functionally equivalent to *gotra*, as both signify an inherent causal potential for Buddhahood within sentient beings.

Since those *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* are defiled, the process of liberation occurs when the *ālayavijñāna* transforms. This is referred to as the transformation of the basis (*āśrayaparivṛtti*). This transformation is named as *āśrayaparāvṛtti* in the compendium of the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (MSA), explicitly delineating that this transformation is the transformation of *bījas* (*bījaparāvṛtti*). As these defiled *bījas* are transformed, the perception of consciousness becomes pure. The transformation of the basis in the *Triṃśikā* (Tr) especially focuses on the removal of the two rough difficulties (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*). These difficulties correspond to the afflicted and cognitive hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*) expounded in the MSA. Following the transformation of the basis, the defiled *bījas* are annihilated, leading to the subsequent annihilation of the *bījas* of rough difficulties. Based upon this premise, both rough difficulty and hindrance come to be regarded as *vāsanā*—a subtle residue persisting within one’s mental stream. In light of this, the distinction between *bīja* and *vāsanā* becomes less apparent.

The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are expanded upon with greater clarity in Asaṅga's

Reality is equated with the objective condition and considers “seed” as a metaphor. Schmithausen (2014: 570–573) further elaborates that suchness (i.e., True Reality) serves as a basic condition for the arising of non-conceptual insight and as a constitutive condition for the supramundane insight. Consequently, he refines his translation of **tathatālambanapratyayabīja* to “Suchness [functioning as] object-condition as their seed.” The second perspective is referred to Matsumoto (2004: 199) and Okada (2013: 125), who interpret **tathatālambanapratyaya* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound and render the sentence as “Supramundane *dharmas* take seeds which have suchness as their object-condition” (出世間の諸法は、真如を所縁縁とするものを種子として). The third perspective, presented by Gao (2025) from an Abhidharmic perspective, also treats **tathatālambanapratyaya* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound but reads it with *bīja* as a *karmadhāraya* compound. Thus, he translates it as “the seed as [the cognition] that takes Suchness as an object-condition.” As my focus is solely on the passage from the PMBhVin, my interpretation aligns most closely with those of Schmithausen and Yamabe. Accordingly, I translate this term as “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” to best fit the context.

Mahāyanāsaṃgraha (MSg).³⁸³ As one of the founders of the Yogācāra school and the brother of Vasubandhu, Asaṅga offers an authentic and systematic explanation of Yogācāra doctrines within his MSg. In relation to the *ālayavijñāna*, the concept of *bījas* is categorised into six kinds, while the concept of *vāsanās* encompasses four aspects. These intricate explanations are illustrated in detail in Vasubandhu’s commentary, the *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* (MSgBh).³⁸⁴

In the pursuit of liberation, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are intertwined with the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]”. This *vāsanā* is considered as an innovative notion that is presented in the MSg, enabling all sentient beings to obtain the cause of liberation, even though the *ālayavijñāna* is filled with defiled *bījas*. Asvabhāva’s commentary, the *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* (MSgU),³⁸⁵ is known for its comprehensive clarity surpassing the MSgBh (Brunnhölzl 2018: 22), and it argues that the defiled *ālayavijñāna* cannot generate any uncontaminated *dharmas*; thus, it is the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” that gives rise to uncontaminated *dharmas*.

Hence, this chapter investigates the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in regard to the process of liberation, focusing on the following aspects:

1. The relationship between *bīja* and *gotra*.
2. *Bījas* as two rough difficulties (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*) or two hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*).
3. The progress of the transformation of the basis (*āśrayaparivṛtti*).
4. The six functions as *bījas* and the four aspects as perfumed (所熏, *sgo bar byed*) in the MSg.
5. The *vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching] in the MSg.

³⁸³ The *Mahāyanāsaṃgraha* (MSg) by Asaṅga (4th century) exists in one Tibetan version (Derge 4048) and three Chinese translations by Buddhaśānta (531 CE, T1592, no. 31), Paramārtha (563 CE, T1593, no. 31), and Xuánzàng (648–649 CE, T1594, no. 31). The MSg has been translated into modern language. Xuánzàng’s translation was rendered into French by Lamotte (1973). Nagao’s Japanese translation (1982, 1987) is based on Tibetan translation and also includes a reconstruction of the Sanskrit.

³⁸⁴ The *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* (MSgBh) by Vasubandhu (4th century) exists in one Tibetan translation (Derge 4050) and three Chinese translations by Paramārtha (563-564 CE, T1595, no. 31), Dharmagupta (609 CE, T1596, no. 31), and Xuánzàng (648–649 CE, T1597, no. 31). According to Brunnhölzl (2018: 21), the Chinese translations are more complete and have less misplaced passages, but translators “sometimes add significant amounts of material to MSgBh, especially Paramārtha’s translation”.

³⁸⁵ The *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* (MSgU) by Asvabhāva (5th–6th century) exists in one Tibetan translation (Derge 4051) and one Chinese translation by Xuánzàng (647–649 CE, T1598, no. 31). Schmithausen (2014: 440) deems that the MSgU is not a sub-commentary on the MSgBh, but a commentary directly on the MSg.

Through these investigations, this chapter aims to unveil how the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* function in the Yogācāra's soteriology.

4.1 Guarantee of Attaining Liberation

In relation to the Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine that all sentient beings can be liberated from *saṃsāra*, the Yogācāra school frequently utilised the term *gotra* to denote categories of people classified in accordance with their merit and actions from their previous lives.

Gotra, translated as “lineage” in this dissertation, is closely related to the concept of *bīja* in the ŚBh. The ŚBh is “a text dedicated to the exposition of the spiritual cultivation practised by the followers of the conservative path of *Śrāvakayāna*” (Deleanu 2012: 3). Considered an old layer in the YoBh, the ŚBh, along with the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (BoBh) as well as the *Vastusamgrahaṇī* (VaSg), does not contain any reference to the *ālayavijñāna* (Schmithausen 1987: 14). The lineage naturally exists within the sentient being, even though the concept of the consciousness with all *bīja* (*sarvabīja*) has not been fully formed.

The ŚBh illustrates that, even though the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharmas*” (*lokottaradharmabīja*) dwells in a person's lineage, it still requires certain conditions to arise. In contrast, the PMBhVin emphasises the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālambanapratyayabīja*) and regards it as a guarantee of attaining liberation. These divergent perspectives reflect the discourse within Mahāyāna Buddhism regarding who can be liberated from *saṃsāra*.

In the context of attaining liberation, the concept of *bījas* can be pure and enable the arising of supramundane *dharmas*, which differs from the basic meaning of defiled *bījas* of affliction (*kleśabīja*). This section aims to investigate the lineage and the *bīja* as a guarantee of attaining liberation.

4.1.1 The *Bīja* of Supramundane *Dharma* (*lokottaradharmabīja*) in the *Śrāvakabhūmi* (ŚBh)

As the cause of attaining liberation and the cause of rising supramundane *dharmas*, *gotra* and *bīja* are used interchangeably. In the ŚBh, *gotra* is equivalent to the *bīja* of *dharma* (*sa bon gyi chos*):

In this [context], what is the lineage (*rigs, gotra*)? So, to say, the lineage is the *bīja* of *dharma* (*sa bon gyi chos*) that exists together with a person. The lineage within a person is that which exist and is not non-existent. If [the lineage] encounters conditions, the liberation is attained and perceived, [thereby] affirming the potency (*nus*) and the capacity (*mthu*).³⁸⁶

Both lineage and *bīja* dwell in a person and only manifest when certain conditions are met. However, unlike the designated *bīja*, the lineage in the ŚBh truly exists and possesses the potency and capacity to attain liberation (*nirvāṇa*). These terms—potency and capacity—mostly refer to *vāsanā*, which signifies a dynamic power to cause a *dharma* to manifest. Thus, the *bīja* of *dharma* in this paragraph indicates the unmanifested *dharma* dwelling in a person’s mental stream, while the lineage determines whether this person attains liberation or not.

Similarly, to the *bīja* of *dharma*, the ŚBh depicts a special lineage that possesses the *bīja* of supramundane *dharma*:

Thus, who is the person in a state of lineage, whose state of lineage is neither comprehended nor transcended? As there is a person who is accompanied by the *bīja* of supramundane *dharma* (*lokottaradharmabīja*), but neither attain nor engages with the wise man, and thus is unable to hear the pure *dharmas*, nor [develop] belief in regard to the Vinaya and the Dharma expressed by Buddha, nor undertakes any vows, nor accepts many hearing [*dharmas*], nor advances in relinquishment, nor sets right views. This is the state of lineage which is neither comprehended nor transcended.³⁸⁷

The ŚBh emphasises that the process of attaining liberation is not a simple causality but rather a complex interplay of various conditions. Even if a person possesses the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*”, without certain conditions they still cannot comprehend Buddhist teachings and are

³⁸⁶ ŚBh, p. 2: *de la rigs gang zhe na / smras pa / rigs la gnas pa'i gang zag gi sa bon gyi chos gang yin pa ste / gang yod cing med pa ma yin la rigs la gnas pa'i gang zag rnam kyī rkyen yang rnyed na mya ngan las 'das pa 'thob pa dang reg par nus shing mthu yod par 'gyur ba'o.*

³⁸⁷ ŚBh, p. 30: *tatra katamo gotrasthaḥ pudgalo gotra eva sthito nācatiṇo na niṣkrāntaḥ / yathāpīhaikatyaḥ pudgalo lokottaradharmabījaḥ samanvāgato bhavati / na ca punar adyāpī labhate satpuruṣasaṃsevāṃ vāgamyā saddharmaśravaṇaṃ vā tathāgatapravedīte dharmavinaye śraddhām, na śīlaṃ samādādāti, na śrutam udgrhṇātim na tyāgaṃ brṃhayati, na drṣṭim rjūkaroti / ayaṃ gotra eva sthito nāvatiṇo na niṣkrāntaḥ.*

unable to transcend the *saṃsāra*. In this regard, the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*” is evidently not a guarantee of attaining liberation; it merely serves as a cause for generating supramundane *dharma*. Remarkably, this paragraph highlights the importance of hearing the pure *dharma*s, as well as the *Vinaya* and the *Dharma*, expressed by the Buddha, which is closely related to the significant concept of hearing [the Buddhist teaching] in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (see section 4.5 for more on this).

Hence, the concept of *bīja* in the ŚBh is not synonymous with the lineage, because it signifies unmanifested *dharma*s rather than the lineage leading to liberation. The stance in the ŚBh provides a clear explanation for why certain individuals might be unable to liberate from the *saṃsāra* despite possessing the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*”. However, the later layer of the YoBh, the PMBhVin, offers a more resolute guarantee for sentient beings.

4.1.2. The **Tathatālambanapratyayabīja* As the Inherent Cause of Liberation

The concept of *bīja* is synonymous with the lineage and the realm in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* in the YoBh according to Yamabe (2021: 469).³⁸⁸ Yamabe further expands that the lineage and the realm both represent the inherent nature. As illustrated by the metaphor in the MAVṬ, the golden *bīja* possesses a realm of gold (*svarṇadhātu*) within it (see section 3.2.1). The lineage is akin to the gold inside a sentient being; thus, Yamabe (2021: 470) deems that “in the Yogācāra *gotra* theory, if one has no lineage, one is hopeless in one’s pursuit of supramundane attainments.”

Before the concept of the *ālayavijñāna* is established, the *Manobhūmi* in the YoBh utilises the consciousness associated with all *bījas* as the cause to attain ultimate liberation:

The consciousness associated with all *bījas* of those who are destined for ultimate liberation, has the completed *bījas* (*paripūrṇabīja*). Those who are not destined for *parinirvāṇa* lack the *bījas* of the three kinds of awakening.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ BoBh, p. 3, 1–8: *tat punar gotraṃ bīja mity apy ucyate dhātuḥ prakṛtir ity api*.

³⁸⁹ MoBh, p. 25, 1–2: *tat punaḥ sarvabījakam vijñānam parinirvāṇadharmakāṇām paripūrṇabījam aparinirvāṇadharmakāṇām punas trividhabodhibījavikalam*. For the English translation cf. Yamabe (2021: 470). Some terminologies are rendered by me.

Okada (2013: 128) indicates that the completed *bīja* encompasses uncontaminated *dharmas* as well as the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*”. Thus, those who cannot attain ultimate liberation are hindered by lacking completed *bīja*. The concept of completed *bījas* is closely related to the idea of the “primordial *bīja*” (Yamabe 2021: 470).

The PMBhVin, a more modern text than the ŚBh, delineates the concepts of *vāsanās* and *bījas*:

Then, I (i.e., the author) am going to succinctly explain the establishment of *bīja* (*bījasamāsavyavathāna*). What constitutes the establishment of *bīja*? It pertains to the *vāsanā* attached to the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) of all *dharmas* in the *ālayavijñāna*. Then, because this *vāsanā* is a real entity (*dravya*) and a conventional existence, it is just like suchness [and] incapable of classifying these characteristics as either equivalent or disparate from those *dharmas*. This can be likened to the always active rough difficulty.³⁹⁰

In this paragraph, *bīja* is synonymous with *vāsanā*, which is attached to the imagined nature and dwells in the *ālayavijñāna*. This kind of *vāsanā* is also described in the MAV, as the origin of the Four Noble Truths (see section 4.2.2). Although *bīja* is defined as a designation, the *vāsanā* in this paragraph is categorised as a real existence and a conventional existence. However, Yamabe (1990: 68–70) explains that this “real entity” does not refer to the concept of *dravyasat* and *paramārthasat* in the Sarvāstivādins. Instead, this *vāsanā* should be understood as a conventional existence, as well as a designation. Similarly, suchness is regarded as a conventional existence for ordinary people, yet as emptiness for the ultimate truth. Furthermore, the *vāsanā* and those *dharmas* are either equivalent or disparate because the *vāsanā* exists conventionally like these *dharmas*. Regarding this, the *vāsanā* is the always active rough difficulty, and it is defiled.

³⁹⁰ Schmithausen (1987: 364) partly translates this paragraph into English from the Tibetan translation (Derge 4035, 30a5–8). However, this dissertation uses the reconstructed Sanskrit version by Yamabe (1990: 67): *punar aparaṃ bījasamāsavyavathānaṃ vakṣyāmi / bījasamāsavyavasthānaṃ katamat / yālayavijñāne sarvadharmāṇāṃ parikalpitasvabhāvābhīniveśavāsanā / sā ca vāsanā dravyato 'sti saṃvṛtitaś ca tebhyo dharmebhyo 'nyānanyalakṣaṇā na vaktayvā tadyathā tathatā / sā ca sarvatragadauṣṭhulyaṃ vaktavyam*. For the English translation cf. Yamabe’s Japanese translation (1990: 67).

Due to the presence of the defiled *vāsanā*, which equates to the always active rough difficulty, the PMBhVin offers another kind of *bīja* to generate supramundane *dharmas*:

If all *bījas* are possessed by the *vāsanā*, they are referred to as “always active rough difficulty” (*sarvatragadauṣṭhulya*). In this case, what then is the *bīja* from which the supramundane *dharmas* arise? It is impossible for those *bījas* which contain the nature of rough difficulty. [The answer is that] supramundane *dharmas* arise from [their] “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālanbanapratyayabīja*, 真如所緣緣種子); they do not arise from the *bīja* accumulated through *vāsanā* (*upacitavāsanābīja*).³⁹¹

In the ŚBh, the supramundane *dharmas* are generated from the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*”, whereas in the PMBhVin, they arise from the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*”. Schmithausen (1987 I: 79) explains that the supramundane *dharmas* cannot arise from any mundane *bījas* as their homogeneous cause, but can only arise from their own *bīja*, which is the condition as cognitive object for suchness. Hence, there are two kinds of *bījas* in the PMBhVin: the *bījas* accumulated through *vāsanās*, and the *bījas* of suchness. The former are always defiled, while the latter remain consistently pure.

Although the *bīja* accumulated through *vāsanā* represents the mundane world, the *bīja* of suchness still exists in all sentient beings:

If [the supramundane *dharma*] does not arise from the *bīja* accumulated through *vāsanā* (*upacitavāsanābīja*), then how can the person who has three kinds of lineage associated with ultimate liberation and the person whose lineage is devoid of ultimate liberation (*aparinirvāṇadharmakagotra*) be established? Thus, it is said that the “suchness which is the condition as cognitive object” (*tathatālanbanapratyaya*) exists in all [sentient

³⁹¹ Schmithausen (1987: 368) translates this paragraph from a Tibetan translation (Derge 4035, 27b3–5). The Sanskrit version is reconstructed by Yamabe (1990: 71): *yadi tayā vāsanayā sarvāṇi bījāni samgrhītāni sā ca sarvatragadauṣṭhulya ucyata evaṃ lokottaradharmāḥ kimbījā utpadyante, na hi te dauṣṭhulyasvabhāvabījā iti yujyate ity āha / lokottaradharmās tathatālanbanapratyayabīja utpadyante na tūpacitavāsanābījāḥ*. For the English translation cf. Schmithausen’s work and Yamabe’s Japanese translation.

beings].³⁹²

This paragraph implies that the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” inherently exists within all sentient beings, even though they may be covered by *bījas* accumulated through *vāsanā*.

The primary reason for categorising individuals into those with three lineages and non-lineage is the hindrance:

It is also due to the hindrance and non-hindrance. When the absolute *bīja* of a hindrance (*āvaraṇabīja*) exists in the comprehension of “the suchness which is the condition as cognitive object”, the lineage devoid of ultimate liberation (*aparinirvāṇadharmakagoṭra*) is established. Other than that, the lineage associated with ultimate liberation (*parinirvāṇadharmakagoṭra*) is established. For those whose absolute *bīja* of a cognitive hindrance (*jñeyāvaraṇabīja*) is situated in the basis, rather than the *bīja* of an afflictive hindrance (*kleśāvaraṇabīja*), part of them is established as the lineage of hearer (*śrāvakagoṭra*), while part of them is the lineage of solitary realiser (*pratyekabuddhagoṭra*). Apart from these, those are established as the lineage of the Buddha (*tathāgatagoṭra*).³⁹³

The lineage devoid of ultimate liberation is hindered by the absolute *bīja* of hindrance; therefore, this lineage cannot comprehend ultimate liberation. The other three lineages associated with ultimate liberation are categorised by the *bīja* of cognitive hindrance. When the *bīja* of cognitive hindrance dwells in one’s basis—namely, the *ālayavijñāna*—this person becomes either the

³⁹² The Sanskrit version of the PMBhVin is reconstructed by Yamabe (1990: 73): *yadi nopacitavāsanābīja utpadyanta evaṃ kasmāt parinirvāṇadharmakagoṭratrayāḥ pudgalā vyavasthāpitāś cāparinirvāṇadharmakagoṭrāḥ pudgalāḥ, tathā hi sarveśāṃ api tathatālambanapratyayo ’stīty āha*. For the English translation cf. Yamabe’s Japanese and Okada’s Japanese translation (2013: 126) based on the Tibetan translation (Derge 4035, 24b5–25a2).

³⁹³ The Sanskrit version of the PMBhVin was reconstructed by Yamabe (1990: 73): *āvaraṇānāvaraṇaviśeṣāt / yeśāṃ tathatālambanapratyayaprativedha ātyantikam āvaraṇabījam asti te ’parinirvāṇadharmakagoṭra vyavasthāpitāḥ / ye’nye te parinirvāṇadharmakagoṭrā vyavasthāpitāḥ / yeśāṃ jñeyāvaraṇbījam ātyantikam āśrayasanniviṣṭaṃ na tu kleśāvaraṇabījaṃ teśāṃ kecic chrāvakagoṭrā vyavasthāpitāḥ kecic ca pratyekabuddhagoṭrāḥ / ye’nye te tathāgatagoṭrā vyavasthāpitāḥ*. For the English translation cf. Yamabe’s Japanese and Okada’s Japanese translation (2013: 126–127) which is based on the Tibetan translation (Derge 4035, 25a3–28a2).

lineage of hearer or the lineage of solitary realiser. Although the concept of hindrance encompasses afflictive hindrance and cognitive hindrance, only the latter is able to determine the lineage. The lineage with non-hindrance is free from two hindrances and is known as the lineage of the Buddha.

Notably, the concept of two hindrances refers to fundamental defilements that should be annihilated. Also, the two hindrances are synonymous with the rough difficulty in Yogācāra texts. As fundamental defilement, the two hindrances and the rough difficulty are often related to the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, which are discussed in section 4.2.

Through Jinamitra's *Yogācārabhūmivyākhyā* (YoBhVy), Okada (2013: 128-138) summarises four perspectives in the YoBh. The first one refers to the MBh, where the completed *bīja* represents the existence of uncontaminated *bījas*. This *bīja* equates to the lineage but differs from the *vāsanā*. The second one supports the PMBhVin, where the "Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*" is the uncontaminated *bīja*. The third one agrees with both perspectives 1 and 2. The fourth one states that the first perspective is the principle of teaching, whereas the second perspective is the principle of reason.

Those who cannot attain liberation are classed as non-lineage (*agotra*) in the ŚBh and the lineage devoid of ultimate liberation in the PMBhVin, expressing the idea that some sentient beings cannot attain Buddhahood, which is actually against the doctrine of Mahāyāna Buddhism.³⁹⁴ According to Delhey (2022: 48), the concept of *agotraka* also appears in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*. Furthermore, the concept of non-lineage becomes part of the concept of five lineages (五姓各別說) in the Fāxiàng school (法相宗), a Yogācāra school founded by Xuánzàng and his disciples in the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE).³⁹⁵

The controversy surrounding the non-lineage and the concept of five lineages has prompted scholarly discourse. D'Amato (2003: 135) suggests that Asaṅga's *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (MSA) and Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārabhāṣya* (MSABh) clearly encompass the idea that some sentient beings never attain liberation. In this context,

³⁹⁴ The ŚBh (p. 25–29) lists six kinds of person who have non-lineage.

³⁹⁵ According to Okada (2016: 175), the concept of five-lineage includes: the lineage of hearers (*śrāvaka-gotra*); the lineage of solitary realizers (*pratyekabuddha-gotra*); the lineage of Bodhisattva (*bodhisattva-gotra*); the lineage of the undetermined (*aniyata-gotra*); and non-lineage (*agotra*). For the Chinese resource cf. the *Buddhabhūmiśāstra*, translated by Xuánzàng (佛地經論 *Fó Dì Jīng Lùn*, T 1530, no. 26, p. 298a12–15).

Sthiramati's **Sūtralaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (*SAVBh) offers two interpretations of the lineage. On one hand, different lineages are inherent and dwell beginningless in different individuals; on the other hand, all sentient beings have the lineage of the Buddha (D'Amato 2003: 134). Sakamura (2008) deems that the term *agotra* was first presented alongside the indeterminate lineage and the three vehicles in Sthiramati's *SAVBh. From this perspective, Sakamura considers Sthiramati as the founder of the concept of five lineages. Sakamura (2007) initially points out that the concept of five lineages was not a prevalent idea in India but gained prominence through the Fǎxiàng school in China. By examining Xuánzàng's translation of the *Buddhabhūmiśāstra*, the origin of the concept of five lineages, Sakamura (2007: 86) states that Xuánzàng's translation was based on Śīlabhadra's commentary, which exists in Tibetan translation where the concept of five lineages cannot be found.

However, Okada (2016) disagrees with Sakamura's conclusion that Sthiramati created the concept of five lineages. Okada (2016: 176–177) identifies the concept of five lineages in the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā*. This work exists solely in Tibetan translation and quotes both Vasubandhu's and Sthiramati's works. Unlike the SAVBh, where the term *agotra* was juxtaposed alongside the indeterminate lineage and the three vehicles, the concept of five-lineages is comprehensively expounded in the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā*. Consequently, Okada (2016: 178) concludes that the concept of five lineages was developed within the Yogācāra school subsequent to Vasubandhu's and Sthiramati's contributions. Delhey (2022) compares the concept of non-lineages in the SAVBh and the MVṬ, asserting that Sthiramati only acknowledges people with an indefinite lineage, indicating that they may be in a situation where they cannot attain liberation. The MVṬ does not reference the concept of five lineages (Delhey 2022: 57). According to those scholars, the concept of five lineages was not originated by Sthiramati, and the acceptance of the concept of non-lineage is evident in Yogācāra texts. Given the constraints of this dissertation, the issue of non-lineage and the concept of five lineages can only be briefly addressed.

In summary, the ŚBh equates the concept of *bīja* with the lineage. However, even if an individual possesses the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*”, certain conditions are still required to attain liberation. Following the **Samdh*, the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* equates *bīja* with *vāsanā* (Yamabe 2021: 481). Thus, the PMBhVin delineates two kinds of *bījas*: the “*bīja* accumulated

through *vāsanā*” and the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*”. The former is equivalent to the always active rough difficulty, while the latter is the cause of attaining liberation. The lineage can be categorised into four kinds due to the two hindrances. Those covered by the *bījas* of hindrance belong to the lineage devoid of ultimate liberation. Those with the *bīja* of cognitive hindrance dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* become either the lineage of hearer or the lineage of solitary realiser. Those devoid of hindrance are the lineage of the Buddha. Thus, concerning the lineage, the concept of *bījas* shifts from the pure “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*” to the defiled “*bīja* accumulated through *vāsanā*”, while the concept of *vāsanā* remains defiled, attached to the imagined nature.

4.2 The Concept of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* as the Afflictive and the Cognitive Hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*)

The term *vāsanā*, in the *MVŚ, is employed to refer to residual defilements within the vehicle of hearer and the vehicle of solitary realiser. Even after these two vehicles have terminated all afflictions, some residue is left, just like ashes remain after a fire. In contrast, a Buddha does not have such residues due to his sharp discernment.³⁹⁶

Ikeda (2003: 361) considers this kind of *vāsanā* as non-defiled ignorance (*akliṣṭājñāna*) (see section 2.4.3.2). Non-defiled ignorance is described as “the mental factors that arise together with lesser wisdom” (Fukuda 2003: 277). Moreover, Ikeda (2003: 361) highlights that non-defiled ignorance is synonymous with the cognitive hindrance in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* in the YoBh. As discussed in the PMBhVin, both the cognitive hindrance and the afflictive hindrance dwell in one’s basis (i.e., *ālayavijñāna*) as *bījas*. The cognitive hindrance determines whether an individual becomes part of the lineage of hearer or the lineage of solitary realiser. Hence, the cognitive hindrance remains as subtle residues in the hearer and the solitary realiser.

³⁹⁶ *MVŚ, T1545, no. 27, p. 77c4–8: “問: 何緣獨覺及諸聲聞, 雖斷煩惱而有餘習, 佛不爾耶? 答: 聲聞獨覺慧不猛利, 雖斷煩惱而有餘習. 如世常火, 雖有所燒, 而餘灰燼. 佛慧猛利, 斷諸煩惱, 令無餘習. 如劫盡火, 隨所燒物, 無餘灰燼.” The English translation is provided by me: “Someone asks: ‘By what reason that even after the annihilation of afflictions, residual *vāsanā* remains in the solitary realizer (*pratyekabuddha*) and the hearer (*śrāvaka*), while the Buddha remains free from it?’ The answer is: ‘The solitary realizer and the hearer lack sharp discernment (*prajñāna*), much like how mundane fire consumes and leaves behind ashes. The Buddha has sharp discernment to annihilate all afflictions, leaving no residual *vāsanā*, much like the fire at the end of world-period (*kalpa*) that burns everything to completion without leaving any remnants.’”

The rough difficulty (*dauṣṭhulya*) in the PMBhVin, conversely, is accumulated through *vāsanās* and preserved as *bījas* as well. This *bīja*, characterised by always active rough difficulty, is incapable of giving rise to suchness. Thus, the rough difficulty should be recognised as a mundane affliction. Despite the fact that the two hindrances exist as *bījas*, the **Sūtralaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (*SAVBh) regards them as *vāsanās*. Moreover, the *Triṃśikābhāṣya* (TrBh) equates the two hindrances with the rough difficulty. Thus, this section endeavours to explore how the concept of *bījas* and *vāsanās* functions as the rough difficulty and the hindrances.

4.2.1 The Concept of the Afflictive and the Cognitive Hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*) in the MSA

In the process of attaining Buddhahood, the afflictive and the cognitive hindrances are *bījas* that always dwell in the *ālayavijñāna*. They are regarded as fundamental defilements that must be eliminated. In the MSA, verse 12 in chapter 10 (*Bodhyadhikāra*) represents the necessity of removing the *bījas* of two hindrances:

The *bīja* of the afflictive and the cognitive hindrance (*kleśajñeyāvṛtīnām*)³⁹⁷ has been always accompanied for an extremely long time, until [the *bīja*] becomes perished and vanished by means of greatly extensive destruction of all kinds.³⁹⁸

The *ālayavijñāna*, as the consciousness of all *bījas*, is persistently accompanied by the *bījas* of the afflictive and the cognitive hindrance; thus, the characteristic of the *ālayavijñāna* remains defiled. However, when the *bījas* have perished and vanished, the greatly extensive destruction of all kinds occurs. This destruction is referred to as the transformation of the basis.

The MSABh also implies that the annihilation of *bījas* serves as the groundwork for the transformation of the basis:

In this verse, “the transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparivṛtti*) has been elucidated

³⁹⁷ Nagao (2007, vol. I: 198) corrects the original text *jñeyāvṛtīnām* into *jñeyāvṛtīnām*.

³⁹⁸ MSA, p. 198: *kleśajñeyāvṛtīnām satatam anugataṃ bījam utkr̥ṣṭakālaṃ yasminn astaṃ prayātaṃ bhavati suvipulaiḥ sarvahānīprakāraiḥ*.

because of the separation from the *bīja* [of the two hindrances], [which is described as] the counterpart, and the integration [which is described as] the fulfillment of the antidote (*pratipakṣa*).³⁹⁹

The MSABh presents two methods for eliminating the *bījas* of two hindrances: the separation and the integration. The former is the counterpart which is able to remove the defiled *bījas* from the *ālayavijñāna*, while the latter employs the antidotes to purify the defiled *bījas*. Both methods will be expounded upon in the subsequent discussion in the *SAVBh.

Unlike the MSA/MSABh, the *SAVBh equates the *bījas* of two hindrances to the *vāsanās*:

In relation to the two aspects: the “*bījas (sa bon)* of the afflictive and cognitive hindrances (*nyon mongs shes bya'i sgrib pa*) always accompanied for a long time” and with respect to the “it becomes purified” (*gang la byang 'gyur*). The term *bīja* refers to *vāsanā (bag chags)*. The *bīja* of afflictive hindrance is the *vāsanā* of afflictive hindrance. The *bīja* of cognitive hindrance (*shes bya'i sgrib pa'i sa bon*) is the *vāsanā* of cognitive hindrance. The phrase “for a long time” denotes the meaning that the accumulation of these *vāsanās* [starts] even from the beginningless time of the *saṃsāra*.⁴⁰⁰

For the method of separation in the MSABh, the *SAVBh utilises it to remove the *bījas* of the afflictive and cognitive hindrances, while the method of integration refers to purification. In this context, *bījas* and *vāsanās* are synonyms when referring to the two hindrances. Nagao (2007: 199) investigates this and suggests that the *SAVBh assumes the existence of *vāsanās* and *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna* from the very beginning. In this regard, the *SAVBh may share the same perspective with the PMBhVin, where the *bīja* is accumulated through *vāsanā* (see section 4.1.2). However, this kind of *bīja* is regarded as always active rough difficulty, rather than the two hindrances. In this context, the *vāsanā* of two hindrances exists within an individual from the beginningless time and will persist until liberation is attained.

³⁹⁹ MSA, p. 198: *anena vipakṣabījavīyogataḥ pratipakṣasampattiyogataś cāśrayaparivṛtīḥ paridīpitā*.

⁴⁰⁰ *SAVBh, pp. 113b6–114a2: *nyon mongs shes bya'i sgrib pa'i sa bon dus ring rtag ldan pa // zhes bya ba dang / gang la byang 'gyur zhes bya ba'i tshig gnyis su sbyar te / sa bon ni bag chags la bya'o // nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa'i sa bon ni nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa'i bag chags so // shes bya'i sgrib pa'i sa bon ni shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags so // dus ring zhes bya ba ni bag chags de dag kyang 'khor ba thog ma med pa'i dus nas bsags pa zhes bya ba'i don to*.

Then, the *SAVBh explains what the method of separation is:

In this [verse], it is taught that the *bījas* of disharmony aspect will be separated. If these *vāsanās* are destroyed through the counterpart, it is due to the “great destructions”, indicating “the transforming to purity for all kinds”, which is referred to as the “destruction”. For those who inquire about how to produce the “destruction”, the term “great” encompasses the first stage up to the tenth stage, including the path of supramundane knowledge. Through these [paths of] knowledge, it is stated that the “destruction” is produced. [The phrase] “for all kinds” means the destruction by knowledge that becomes multiple and greater and greater and so on in each [of the ten] stages.⁴⁰¹

In this paragraph, the method of separation in the MSABh pertains to the eradication of the *bījas* of disharmony aspect, specifically referring to the *vāsanā* of two hindrances. The counterpart, capable of destroying these *vāsanās* accompanying an individual since beginningless time, signifies the “great destructions”. The “destruction” unfolds progressively throughout stages of cultivation, spanning from the first stage up to the tenth stage. Through the knowledge cultivated at each stage, the *vāsanā* of two hindrances will be destroyed; simultaneously, the power of knowledge multiplies and intensifies, eventually leading to the purification of all. This transformative process is referred to as the “transforming to purity for all kinds”.

Furthermore, the *SAVBh explains the method of integration (*yogatas*):

“Therein, it becomes purified” means, by that knowledge, having served as an antidote (*gnyen po*), when the cognitive and the afflictive hindrances transform to purity in one’s

⁴⁰¹ *SAVBh, p. 114a2–3: *'dis ni mi mthun pa'i phyogs kyi sa bon dang bral ba bstan to / bag chags de dag gnyen po gang gis spangs she na / de'i phyir / spong ba rgya che rnam pa kun gyis byang gyur pa // zhes bya ba smos te / spong ba zhes bya ba ston to // de dag ji ltar spong bar byed ce na zhes bya ba ston te / rgya che ba zhes bya ba ni sa dang po nas sa bcu pa man chad kyi 'jig rten las 'das pa'i ye shes kyi lam la rgya che ba zhes bya ste / ye shes des spong bar byed ces byas ba'i don to / rnam pa kun gyis zhes bya ba ni sa re re la yang ye shes chen po'i chen po la sogs pa dgu dgu yod pas spong ngo zhes bya ba'i don to.*

mind, the “transformation of the basis” (*gnas gzhan du gyur pa*) is obtained.⁴⁰²

This antidote is actualised through the knowledge gained at each stage of cultivation. As the cognitive and afflictive hindrances, which have always been present, undergo a process of purification, the *ālayavijñāna*, serving as the original basis, is likewise purified by the knowledge in accordance with stages of cultivation. Ultimately, the entire *ālayavijñāna* undergoes a complete purification which is referred to as the “transformation of the basis”.

Hence, concerning the cognitive and the afflictive hindrances, the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* are employed interchangeably in the *SAVBh. Both these terms indicate the subtle potencies within the *ālayavijñāna* for a long time. These subtle hindrances can only be purified through advances in knowledge that grow stronger with each stage of cultivation. Once the cognitive and the afflictive hindrances are purified, the *ālayavijñāna* undergoes the “transformation of the basis”, marking the ultimate phase of attaining liberation.

4.2.2 The Concept of Two Rough Difficulties (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*) in the Tr

The removal of two hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*) constitutes the final stage prior to the “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*) in the compendium of the MSA whereas, in the Tr, the “transformation of the basis” is achieved upon the abandonment of the two rough difficulties (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*).

In verse 29 of the Tr:

It is the transformation of the basis because of the abandonment of twofold rough difficulty.⁴⁰³

The rough difficulty is regarded as *bīja* in the TrBh:

Here, the basis (*āśraya*) is the *ālayavijñāna* associated with all *bījas* (*sarvabījaka*).

⁴⁰² *SAVBh, p. 114a3–5: *gang la byang 'gyur ba zhes bya ba ye shes de dag gi gnyen po byas nas gang gi sems la nyon mongs pa dang / shes bya'i sgrib pa byang bar gyur na gnas gzhan du gyur pa thob par 'gyur na zhes bya ba'i don to.*

⁴⁰³ Tr, p. 149: *āśrayasya parāvṛttir dvidhā dauṣṭhulyahānitaḥ* (XXIX. cd). For the English translation cf. Cook (1999: 383) and Anacker (2005:189).

Therein, the transformation, with regard to the non-existence of two rough difficulties (*dauṣṭhulya*), the maturation (*vipāka*) and the *vāsanā* of twofold [grasping], which is the actual cessation; with regard to the existence of flexibility, the body of *dharma*, and the knowledge of non-duality, is the transformation (*parāvṛtti*).⁴⁰⁴

The “transformation of the basis” comprises two dimensions. Firstly, it involves the elimination of two rough difficulties, the maturation, and the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping. In this context, rough difficulties signify fundamental defilements, while the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping, namely the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped, pertains to the false dichotomy of self and object; both dwell in the *ālayavijñāna* and will manifest through maturation. Consequently, their removal is termed the “actual cessation”, which is closely aligned with the method of separation in the *SAVBh, where the *bījas* of the afflictive and cognitive hindrances are destroyed by the knowledge of non-duality. The second dimension involves the obtainment of flexibility, the body of *dharma*, and the knowledge of non-duality. This signifies that after the “transformation of the basis”, the practitioner does not cease to exist entirely. These obtainments align with the method of integration in the *SAVBh, wherein the *ālayavijñāna* transforms into purity.

As Yamabe (2018: 299) mentioned, the *bījas* of *kleśas* are sometimes also called rough difficulty. In the TrBh, the rough difficulties are the two hindrances:

“Two” refers to the rough difficulty of an afflictive hindrance (*kleśāvaraṇadauṣṭhulya*) and the rough difficulty of a cognitive hindrance (*jñeyāvaraṇadauṣṭhulya*). [The term] “rough difficulty” [represents] the lack of flexibility within the basis; also, [the rough difficulty] serves as the *bīja* for both the afflictive and the cognitive hindrance. This “transformation of basis” (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*) obtains the body of disjunction since the hearers and so on destroy the rough difficulty. As the Bodhisattva destroys the rough difficulty, the so-called *dharma* of great Muni is obtained. In regard to the distinction in hindrance, the dual transformation of basis can be categorised as “with superiority” and

⁴⁰⁴ TrBh, p. 140, 5–7: *āśrayo 'tra sarvabījakam ālayavijñānam / tasya parāvṛttir yā dauṣṭhulyavipākadvayavāsanābhāvena nivṛttau satyām karmaṇyatādharmakāyādvayajñānabhāvena parāvṛtṭiḥ.*

“without superiority”.⁴⁰⁵

The rough difficulty exists as a *bīja* and, similarly, the afflictive hindrance and the cognitive hindrance are also present as *bījas*. Even though the *SAVBh explicitly equates the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* as synonyms in the context of hindrance, the TrBh does not seem to consider these terms equal. This is evident as the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping is juxtaposed next to the rough difficulty. In the PMBhVin, the three vehicles are determined by the cognitive hindrance; however, in the TrBh, the cognitive hindrance is equated with the rough difficulty. In contrast to the PMBhVin, where the Buddha lineage is devoid of the cognitive hindrance, in the TrBh the Bodhisattva retains the cognitive hindrance. By removing the rough difficulty, the hearer and the solitary realiser attain the body of disjunction, signifying the “transformation of basis” with superiority. On the other hand, the Bodhisattva attains the *dharma* of great Muni, representing the “transformation of basis” without superiority. In the TrBh, the rough difficulty corresponds to the two hindrances, presenting a viewpoint distinct from that of the *SAVBh. Nevertheless, the *SAVBh offers an explanation that contrasts with the perspective of the TrBh regarding the rough difficulty.

For explaining the “transformation of the basis”, the MSA highlights the importance of removing the rough difficulty:

This mind arises together with rough difficulty, bounded by the view of self. However, it is considered as cessation through fixing the inner mind within this [mind].⁴⁰⁶

This mind represents an ordinary person in the mundane world, who gives rise to conceptualisation in accordance with the view of self. The term “cessation” means to annihilate

⁴⁰⁵ TrBh p. 140, 10–16: *dvidheti kleśāvaraṇadauṣṭhulyaṃ jñeyāvaraṇadauṣṭhulyaṃ ca / dauṣṭhulyaṃ āśrayasyākarmaṇyatā / tat punaḥ kleśajñeyāvaraṇayor bījam / sā punar āśrayaparāvṛttiḥ śrāvakādigatadauṣṭhulyahānitaś ca prāpyate yad āha vimuktikāya iti / bodhisattvagatadauṣṭhulyahānitaś ca prāpyate yad āha dharmākhyo ‘yaṃ mahāmuner iti / dvidhā āvaraṇabhedenā sōttarā niruttarā cāśrayaparāvṛtti uktā.*

⁴⁰⁶ MSA, p. 107: *cittaṃ etat sadauṣṭhulyaṃ ātma darśanapāśitaṃ / pravartate nivṛttis tu tadadhyātmasthiteḥ matā.* The English translation cf. Nagao’s Japanese translation. For “*tadadhyātmasthiteḥ*”, Kramer (2016: 59) translates it as “through fixing the [mind]”.

the rough difficulty so that the mind is corrected to mind only.⁴⁰⁷

The rough difficulty is comprehended as both bodily and mental afflictions in the *SAVBh:

The [quotation,] “together with rough difficulty” [refers to] two kinds of rough difficulties. The rough difficulty is associated with the body and the rough difficulty is associated with the mind. With respect to the rough difficulty associated with the body, [it includes] killing and stealing, etc. [With respect to] the rough difficulty associated with mind, [it includes] the mind of desire, the mind of hatred and [the mind of] thinking nothing (*yod med du rtog pa*, i.e., the mind of ignorance), etc. Also, the two rough difficulties are the *vāsanā* of an afflictive hindrance (*ngon mongs pa'i sgrib pa'i bag chags*) and the *vāsanā* of a cognitive hindrance (*shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags*).⁴⁰⁸

The rough difficulty of the body pertains to negative actions, such as killing or stealing, while the rough difficulty of the mind encompasses afflictions like desire, anger, and ignorance. It is worth noting that the *SAVBh also correlates the rough difficulty with the *vāsanā* of afflictive hindrance and the *vāsanā* of cognitive hindrance. Nevertheless, Kramer (2016 a: 58–59) drew a distinction in the concept of rough difficulty between the TrBh and the *SAVBh. In the TrBh, the rough difficulty refers to the lack of flexibility in the basis and exists as the *bīja* of two hindrances whereas, in the *SAVBh, the rough difficulty is twofold and is considered as the *vāsanā* of two hindrances.

In the paragraphs concerning the two hindrances and the two rough difficulties, these two concepts seem to be used interchangeably. In this regard, the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* are synonymous in the *SAVBh, while the TrBh maintains both concepts as *bīja*. The cognitive hindrance, which determines the distinctions between the three vehicles, involves discourse about non-cognising and ignorance, as well as non-defiled ignorance and non-defiled illusion. However, due to the constraints of this dissertation, this topic will be reserved for further

⁴⁰⁷ MSABh, p. 107: *tasya cittasya citta evāvasthānāt*. Kramer (2016: 59) translates it as “because of fixing this mind in the mind only.”

⁴⁰⁸ *SAVBh, p. 117: *gnas ngan len dang bcas pa zhes bya ba la gnas ngan len rnam pa gnyis te / lus kyi gnas ngan len dang / sems kyi gnas ngan len to // de la lus kyi gnas ngan len ni srog gcod pa dang ma byin par len pa la sogs pa'o // sems kyi gnas ngan len ni chags sems dang gnod sems dang yod med du rtog pa la sogs pa'o // yang na gnas ngan len rnam pa gnyis te / ngon mongs pa'i sgrib pa'i bag chags dang shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags so.*

exploration in future projects.

4.3 The Concept of *Bīja* as the Process of Attaining Liberation

The “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparivṛtti/ āśrayaparāvṛtti*) holds significant importance within Yogācāra soteriology. Sakamura (2016: 47–49) summarises five aspects in the YoBh:

1. In the ŚBh and the BoBh, the “transformation of the basis” refers to “a psycho-physical transformation in the practitioner” through cultivation. Particularly, the ŚBh regards this transformation as an exchange from rough difficulty (*dauṣṭhulya*) to lightness (*praśrabdhi*).
2. In the *Basic Section* and the VinSg, the “transformation of the basis” involves the “entire basis of the practitioner's existence”. This perspective also resonates within the CWSL.
3. The *Nirupadhikā Bhūmi* in the *Basic Section* discusses the persistence of the “transformation of the basis” even after the physical death of the practitioner, signifying suchness (*tathatā*).
4. In the VinSg, the “transformation of the basis” embodies suchness and stands in contrast to the *ālayavijñāna*.
5. The **Samdh* characterises the “transformation of the basis” as the body of *dharma* (*dharmakāya*). This innovative perspective is firmly embraced within the Yogācāra school.

Based on Sakamura’s research, the concept of the “transformation of the basis” developed in the YoBh. The early version is preserved in the ŚBh, where the rough difficulty is to be transformed. The established version is found in the SNS and the VinSg, where the “transformation of the basis” is akin to suchness and the body of *dharma*.

The Sanskrit term “transformation of the basis” exists as both *āśrayaparivṛtti* and *āśrayaparāvṛtti*. According to Sakamura (2016: 49), the YoBh (including derivative texts like the AKBh and the AS) exclusively employs *āśrayaparivṛtti*. Conversely, the MSA, derived from the BoBh, uses both *āśrayaparivṛtti* and *āśrayaparāvṛtti*. In this regard, the SAVBh states that these two terms are interchangeable:

“The complete transformation accepted by the Tathāgāta” is the transformation of the basis. It is said to be endowed with a specific aspect of merits which has been explained above.⁴⁰⁹

As can be seen in this excerpt, the Tibetan translation for *āśrayaparāvṛtti* is *gnas gzhan du gyur pa*, yet for *āśrayaparivṛtti*, it uses *yongs su gyur pa*. Their meanings, however, are identical (Nagao 2007: 203). Sakamura (2016: 49) deemed that the MSg eliminates differences between *āśrayaparivṛtti* and *āśrayaparāvṛtti*. Thus, later texts such as the MSABh and the *SAVBh, as well as the Tr and the TrBh, employ these two terms synonymously.

As this is such a pivotal concept in Yogācāra soteriology, this section delves into the application of the concept of *bījas* in the context of the “transformation of the basis”. Given that the *ālayavijñāna* contains all *bījas* that mature and manifest as *dharmas*, the inquiry arises as to whether these *bījas* transform into purity or are eradicated during the process of transformation. This raises the question of how the Buddha perceives the surrounding reality after the “transformation of the basis”.

4.3.1 The Transformation of the Basis in the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (MAVṬ)

Continuing the exploration of dual existences in the MAV, the “unreal imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpa*), for instance, represents emptiness (*śūnyatā*) from another perspective (see section 3.2). The discourse on the “transformation of the basis” unfolds within the framework of affliction and purity:

The affliction (*saṃkliṣṭa*) and the purity are stains and vanished stains.⁴¹⁰

When the purity coexists with afflictions, it becomes tainted and cannot manifest true reality. However, once afflictions are removed, the purity resurfaces.

The MAVṬ labels this process as the “transformation of the basis”:

⁴⁰⁹ *SAVBh, p. 115: *de bzhin gshegs pa yongs su gyur pa 'dod // ces bya ba ni / de bzhin gshegs pa'i gnas gzhan du gyur pa gong du bshad pa'i yon tan gyi bye brag dang ldan par 'dod do zhes bya ba'i don to.*

⁴¹⁰ MAV, p. 24: *saṃkliṣṭā ca viśuddhā ca samalā nirmalā ca sā.*

In terms of the cause of the “non-transformation of the basis” (*āśrayāparāvṛtti*) and the “transformation of the basis” (*parāvṛtti*), the stain and the vanished stain are established. Herein, those ignorant ones, whose mental continuums (*cittasantāna*) are impure due to afflictions such as desire and so on, [exhibit] adherence to the grasped and the grasper (*grāhyagrāhakābhiniveśa*), because [they have] the fault of non-comprehending and mistaken comprehending, the emptiness does not manifest; these [aspects] are established in the sense of stains.⁴¹¹

The affliction is understood as a stain, which represents the “non-transformation of the basis”, while the purity refers to vanished stains, signifying the “transformation of the basis”. One who is immersed in defilement cannot manifest the emptiness because their mental continuum is entangled with false conceptualisations marked by adherence to the grasped and the grasper. This defiled mental continuum is characterised as “stains”.

On the other hand, the “transformation of the basis” aims to erase stains. In the MAVṬ:

Therein, the undistorted mind of the noble one is due to their realisation of truth, [specifically] the emptiness, as the space, always manifests free from dust; these are explained in the sense of vanished stains. With regard to the emptiness, it is to be considered as two references, [namely,] the affliction and the purity. Through its luminous nature, the impure self-nature is absent.⁴¹²

The noble one does not possess any defiled mental continuum, but rather an undistorted mind. When the noble one realises the ultimate truth, the emptiness is free from stains or dust and manifests continuously. Just as the “unreal imagination” coexists with the emptiness, the emptiness encompasses the affliction and the purity and is akin to the luminous nature, where the impure self-nature cannot exist.

In this regard, the “transformation of the basis” in the MAVṬ signifies the process through

⁴¹¹ MAVṬ, p. 51.19–51.22: *āśrayāparāvṛttiparāvṛttypaṅkṣayā samalā ca prahīṇamalā ca vyavasthāpyate / yeṣāṃ aviduṣāṃ grāhyagrāhakābhiniveśarāgādikleśamalinānāṃ cittasantānānāṃ apratipattivipratipattidoṣāc chūnyatā na prakhyāti tān prati samalā vyavasthāpyate.*

⁴¹² MAVṬ, p. 51.23–52.1: *yeṣāṃ āryāṇāṃ tattvajñānād aviparītacetasāṃ śūnyatā nirantaram ākāśavad virajaskā prakhyāti tān prati prahīṇamalety ucyate / evaṃ śūnyatāyā āpekṣikā saṃkleśaviśuddhāyora draṣṭavyā / na malinasvarūpatvena prakṛtyā prabhāsvaratvāt.*

which a defiled mental continuum transforms into purity. Sakamura (2016: 53) highlighted that the MAVṬ regards the “transformation of the basis” as “the transformation of the religious practitioner”. Notably, the transformation described in the MAVṬ does not explicitly reference suchness and stands in contrast to the *ālayavijñāna*. Instead, the MAVṬ emphasises that emptiness always exists in one’s mental continuum and manifests continuously once the stains are removed.

4.3.2 The Transformation of the Basis (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*) in the *Mahāyānasūtrāḷaṅkārabhāṣya*

In the MSA, the “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*) is explained as the transformation of seeds:

Because of the transformation of seeds (*bījaparāvṛtti*), the undefiled realm is the transformation (*parāvṛtti*) of the appearances of abode, object, and subject (*padārthadehanirbhāsa*), This is the basis of the omnipresent ones.⁴¹³

As the container of all *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* transforms during the transformation of *bījas*, resulting in the manifestation of the undefiled realm. Subsequently, one’s abode, object, and subject manifest differently. Notably, the terms *pada*, *artha*, and *deha* should not be conventionally understood as “word”, “meaning”, and “form” respectively. This is because the verse explains the transformation of *ālayavijñāna*, which serves as the basis of three vehicles.

In the *SAVBh, the *bīja* is clarified together with the *vāsanās*:

The *bīja* is regarded as the *ālayavijñāna* (*kun gzhi*, i.e., *kun gzhi rnam par shes pa*) along with *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped (*gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i bag chags*), as well as the *vāsanā* of afflictive hindrance and cognitive hindrance (*nyon mongs pa dang shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags*). Because the *ālayavijñāna* is free from the stain of the grasper and the grasped, it is the “transformation of the basis”; also, the three *dharmas*

⁴¹³ MSA, p. 100–102: *padārthadehanirbhāsaparāvṛttir anāsravaḥ / dhātur bījaparāvṛtteḥ sa ca sarvatragāśrayaḥ*.

[experience] the “transformation of the basis”.⁴¹⁴

The defiled *bījas* encompass the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped and the *vāsanā* of afflictive hindrance and cognitive hindrance. The former serves as the cause of false conceptualisation as self and object, while the latter represents the fundamental defilement that consistently dwells in one’s mental continuum. The SABh regards the *bīja* as the basis that can be perfumed by *vāsanās*; thus, the *bīja* here equates to the *ālayavijñāna*, rather than *vāsanā*. The “transformation of the basis” pertains to the separation from stains, leading to the new manifestation of “abode”, “object”, and “subject”.

The *SAVBh denotes that the “abode” is the vessel world. Following the transformation of the *ālayavijñāna*, the perception of the world shifts from cliffs to crystals and precious stones.⁴¹⁵ The “object” refers to the transformation of six objects, which then manifest as enjoyments, such as the wish-fulfilling trees in the Buddha's stage.⁴¹⁶ The “subject” represents the transformation of six faculties which, after transformation, can be perceived by a single faculty.⁴¹⁷

Before the transformation of the basis operates, the practitioner obtains four masteries in the last three stages:

There are four masteries in [the last] three stages, [namely] the immovable [stage] and beyond. It is considered that this [immovable stage] has two masteries; other [stages] than this [immovable stage] have one each.⁴¹⁸

As discussed in section 4.2.1, the cognitive and the afflictive hindrances are purified through

⁴¹⁴ *SAVBh, p. 112: *'byung bar sngar smos la je bshad par bya ste / nyon mongs pa dang shes bya'i sgrib pa'i bag chags dang bcas pa'am / gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i bag chags dang bcas pa'i kun gzhi la sa bon zhes bya ste / kun gzhi gzung 'dzin gyi dri ma dang bral bas gnas gzhan du gyur na chos rnam pa gsum du yang gnas gzhan du gyur te.*

⁴¹⁵ *SAVBh, p. 112: *de la gnas ni snod kyi 'jig rten sa gzhi chen po ste / de gnas gzhan du gyur na ngam grog gam g.yangs sa la sogs pa thag thug tu mi snang gi shel dang baiḍūrya la sogs pa'i sa gzhi snang bar 'gyur ro.*

⁴¹⁶ *SAVBh, p. 112: *don ni gzugs nas chos kyi bar du yul drug la bya ste / de rnam s gzhan du gyur na sangs rgyas kyi sa'i dus kyi tshes dpag bsam gyi shing la sogs pa'i longs spyod sna tshogs su snang bar 'gyur ro.*

⁴¹⁷ *SAVBh, p. 112: *lus ni mig gi dbang po nas yid kyi dbang po'i bar du dbang po drug la bya ste / dbang po drug gnas gzhan du gyur na dbang po gcig gis kyang dbang po thams cad kyi don byed nus pa dang / yon tan brgya rtsa bcu gnyis 'thob pa dang / sangs rgyas kyi sku lta bur snang bar 'gyur ba'o.*

⁴¹⁸ MSA, p. 103: *acalāditribhūmau ca vaśitā sā caturvidhā / dvidhaikasyāṃ tadanyasyāṃ ekaikā vaśitā matā.*

knowledge that is strengthened at each stage of cultivation. The four masteries enable the practitioner to attain liberation.

The MSABh elaborates on the content of the four masteries:

[The immovable stage has: the first mastery] is non-conception, which [arises] due to the non-conception and non-conceptualisation. [The second mastery] is the land, which is a result of the purification of Buddha's land. Other stages have one mastery each. The stage of excellent wisdom has the mastery of knowledge (*jñānavasītā*) because it obtains the four abilities of superb discernment. The stage of *dharma* cloud (*dharmameghāyāṃ*) has the [mastery of] *karman* because one can recognise *karman* without hindrance.⁴¹⁹

The practitioner in the eighth stage of immovability obtains the mastery of non-conception and the mastery of the purification of Buddha's land. The mastery of knowledge, known as superb discernment, is obtained in the ninth stage of excellent wisdom. In the final stage, the stage of *dharma* cloud, the mastery of *karman* is attained, allowing for the recognition of *karman* without hindrance.

The *SAVBh further explains the mastery in the stage of *dharma* cloud:

The tenth stage, known as the stage of *dharma* cloud (*sa bcu pa chos kyi sprin*), obtains the mastery of *karman*. Emanations of seeing, hearing and others relate to the karmic cause (*las byed pa, karmakaraṇa*) of higher knowledge; therefore, they are not interrupted and enter into the non-hindrance.⁴²⁰

This passage emphasises the importance of knowledge, which enables the practitioner to understand karmic actions and not be led by them. After reaching this highest stage, the transformation of the basis occurs, enabling the practitioner to enter liberation.

From the Yogācāra perspective, the liberation is to enter the truth. Verse 47 in chapter 11 of the MSA:

⁴¹⁹ MSABh, p. 103: *avikalpe cānabhisaṃskāranirvikalpatvāt / kṣetre ca buddhakṣetrapariśodhanāt / tadanyasyāṃ bhūmāvekāikā vaśitā sādhumatyāṃ jñānavasītā pratisaṃvidviśeṣalābhāt / dharmameghāyāṃ karmanṣyabhijñākarmaṇāmvayāghātāt.*

⁴²⁰ *SAVBh, p. 115: *sa bcu pa chos kyi sprin la ni las la dbang 'thob ste / 'phrul gyi mig dang rna ba la sogs pa mngon par shes pa'i las byed pa la bar du gcod pa med cing thogs pa med par 'jug pa'i phyr ro.*

Having realised here the twofold non-self, [which are] found in the worlds (*bhavagata*) and having known [that they] are equal, the wise one enters from grasping into the truth (*tatva*). Then, in this context, due to the state of the mind, this [truth] even does not manifest here, the unmanifested [truth] is liberation (*mukti*), which is the highest cessation of the mental perception.⁴²¹

The state of the mind refers to the realisation of the twofold non-self. According to Keng (2016: 45), in this context the “mind” should be understood as the dependent nature. This dependent nature is part of the concept of three natures (*trisvabhāva*) in the Yogācāra school, which include the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*), the dependent nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*), and the perfect nature (*pariniṣpannasvabhāva*), delineating the progress of conceptualisation. D’Amato (2005: 195) states that “when there is the transformation of these seeds—of the store-consciousness—the result is a transformation of the object-aspect of the dependent characteristic.” Therefore, upon attaining liberation, the Buddha does not give rise to any conceptualisations, and the imagined nature is annihilated. However, the question arises: does the MSA accept a “pure” dependent nature for correctly perceiving objects?

To answer this question, Keng (2015: 44) investigates the “unmanifested mind” in the MSABh:

Then, in this context, when the truth is consciousness-only (*viññaptimātra*) due to the state of the mind, the truth even does not manifest, which is consciousness-only. “The unmanifested [truth] is the liberation [and] the highest object of perception” represents the cessation due to the non-perception of individual and *dharma*.⁴²²

The “unmanifested truth” refers to the consciousness-only, which remains unmanifested due to the cessation of the non-perception of the individual and *dharma*. Thus, the state of

⁴²¹ MSA, pp. 104–105:

*viditvā nairātmyaṃ dvividham iha dhīmān bhavagataṃ
samaṃ tac ca jñātvā praviśati sa tatvaṃ grahaṇataḥ /
tatas tatra sthānān manasa iha na khyāti tad api
tadakhyaṇaṃ muktiḥ parama upalambhasya vigamaḥ.*

⁴²² MSABh, p. 105: *tatas tatra tatve viññaptimātre sthānān manasas tad api tatvaṃ na khyāti viññaptimātraṃ /
tadakhyaṇaṃ muktiḥ parama upalambhasya yo vigamaḥ pudgaladharmayor anupalambhāt.*

consciousness-only not only gives rise to the realisation of the non-existence of the individual and *dharma*, but also eradicates the concept of non-perception. Since there is no perception within liberation, the notion of the pure dependent nature cannot exist in the context of the MSA (Keng 2015: 45).

The SAVBh maintains the same stance as the MSA/MSABh:

As in the quotation, the imagined individual and the imagined *dharma* (*kun tu brtags pa'i chos rnams*) do not exist; “emptiness” should not be understood as the annihilation of everything, and the perfect nature (*gzhan yang yongs su grub pa*) should not be considered as non-existent. With this regard, one is instructed to free oneself from the error of extreme deprecation.⁴²³

The *SAVBh emphasises that cessation should not apply to everything. The perfect nature must be preserved; otherwise, one will fall into the error of extreme deprecation. Obviously, the *SAVBh asserts the need to annihilate both imagined nature and dependent nature, retaining only the perfect nature in liberation. This standpoint implies that the perfect nature always exists in one’s mental continuum but is covered by the other two natures. Once these are removed, the perfect nature manifests, aligning with the stance of the MAV that purity is the result of vanished stains.

Furthermore, the *SAVBh analyses the process of annihilating the dichotomy of the grasper and the grasped:

The quotation “it does not manifest in the state” implies that, during the state of patience, realisation does not [operate] on the object of the grasped (*gzung ba'i chos phyi'i yul*). In the highest mundane state, the grasped (*gzung ba*) does not exist, consequently the mind of the grasper (*'dzing par byed pa'i sems*) does not exist either; therefore, the grasper of the consciousness-only (*sems tsam du 'dzin pa*) is devoid. Hence, it is stated

⁴²³ *SAVBh, p. 116: *ji ltar zhes na / kun tu brtags pa'i gang zag med pa dang / kun tu brtags pa'i chos rnams med cing stong pa zhes bya bar zad kyi rnam pa thams cad du med pa ni ma yin par shes te / gzhan yang yongs su grub pa ni med pa ma yin par shes par bya ste / 'dis ni skur pa'i mtha' ltung ba dang bral bar bstan to.*

that “it does not manifest in the state”.⁴²⁴

In the state of patience, which is the final stage prior to liberation, the practitioner does not perceive any object of the grasped. Then, in the highest mundane state, the transformation of the basis has been completed and is free from the mind of the grasper. Therefore, in liberation, neither the grasper nor the grasped exists. According to the *SAVBh, only the perfect nature exists in liberation. Nevertheless, Keng (2015: 56) highlighted that the MSA/MSABh was not composed all at once by a single author. Instead, there are two layers of consciousness-only within the MSA, involving the MAV and the MSg.⁴²⁵ Therefore, further research is required to fully understand the extinction of the dependent nature in the Yogācāra school.

In summary, the “transformation of the basis” thoroughly purifies the *ālayavijñāna* in the process of liberation. In the MAVT, the “transformation of the basis” refers to the revelation of purity; while in the MSA, it denotes the transformation of *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna*. Concerning the external world, the contents of abode, object, and subject manifest as pure. For the inner mental continuum, the practitioner ceases the continuum of the mind—namely, the dependent nature—and enters the consciousness-only. Simultaneously, the imagined nature is annihilated through the masteries obtained in the final three states of cultivation. Hence, the “transformation of the basis” in the compendium of the MSA correlates with the concept of three natures and asserts that only the perfect nature remains in liberation. This perspective represents a significant aspect of Yogācāra soteriology.

4.4 The Concepts of *Bījas* and *Vāsanās* in the Compendium of the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg)

The *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg), composed by Asaṅga, offers a detailed explanation of the *ālayavijñāna* in earlier Yogācāra literature, as outlined in its first chapter (Schmithausen 1986: 139). Focusing on the *ālayavijñāna*, the MSg explains the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*.

The *ālayavijñāna*, as the core of the MSg, is displayed in the first verse:

⁴²⁴ *SAVBh, p. 116: *de la de mi snang zhes bya ba la / bzod pa'i dus na gzung ba'i chos phyi'i yul med par khong du chud pa dang / 'jig rten gyi chos mchog gi dus na gzung ba med na de la 'dzing par byed pa'i sems kyang med do zhes sems tsam du 'dzin pa dang yang bral te / de bas na de la mi snang zhes bya'o.*

⁴²⁵ For detailed discussion, cf. Keng (2015).

The realm (*dhātu*) of beginningless time is the basis of all *dharmas* (*sarvadharmasamāśraya*). Due to its existence, all kinds of sentient beings and also liberation are obtained.⁴²⁶

This verse originates from the *Abhidharmasūtra*, which has been long lost but is often quoted by other texts. According to Brunnhölzl (2018: 489–490), this verse is preserved in the TrBh. The *ālayavijñāna* as the “realm” for all *dharmas* is akin to the position of the **Samdh*. The term “realm” has already been discussed in section 4.1.2 as synonymous with lineage and *bīja* in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* in the YoBh (Yamabe 2021: 469). Likewise, this paragraph also clarifies that the existence of the *ālayavijñāna* enables sentient beings to survive and attain liberation. Thus, the term “realm” is equivalent to the term “basis”, which has been discussed as a necessity in the process of attaining liberation—namely, the “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparāvṛtti/āśrayaparivṛtti*) (see section 4.3).

Vasubandhu's MSgBh utilises the metaphor of a golden mine to explain the term “realm”:

“Realm” (界) refers to the cause upon which all *dharmas* depend. Regarding the mundane world, as in the golden mine (金鑛) and so on, it is termed the “realm”. Due to this reason, it is the dependent cause for all *dharmas*.⁴²⁷

In this paragraph, the term “realm” is equated to cause and denotes that the *ālayavijñāna* always exists with sentient beings, just like the golden mine. The metaphor of golden was brought out as the golden *bīja* in MAVṬ, where the *bīja* and the realm serve as the specific quality within a sentient being (see section 3.2.1). However, the “realm” here represents the *ālayavijñāna* as the cause for manifesting all *dharmas*.

⁴²⁶ The Sanskrit version of this verse is quoted in the TrBh, p. 116, 1–2: *anādikāliko dhātuḥ sarvadharmasamāśrayaḥ / tasmin sati gatiḥ sarvā nirvāṇādhigamo 'pi ca*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 157). Some terminologies are rendered by me.

⁴²⁷ This quotation is translated by me from the Chinese translation of the MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 324a21–25: “界者謂因，是一切法等所依止。現見世間，於金鑛等，說界名故。由此是因故，一切法等所依止因。” The punctuation has been added by me. Brunnhölzl (2018: 263) translates this paragraph from the Tibetan translation: “*Dhātu* refers to cause. The phrase “is the foundation of all phenomena” means that that which is this cause is therefore the foundation of all phenomena.” (MSgBh, Derge 4051, p. 162a3–4: *dbyings zhes bya ba ni rgyu'o // chos rnams kun gyi gnas yin te // zhes bya ba ni gang rgyu yin pa des na chos thams cad kyi gnas yin no zhes bya ba'i don to*). However, the Chinese translation clearly differs from the Tibetan translation and adds the example of golden mine to explain the meaning of *dhatu*.

While Vasubandhu asserts that the *ālayavijñāna* possesses all kinds of *dharmas*, Asvabhāva, who comments on the MSg and composes the *Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana* (MSgU), specified that the *ālayavijñāna* is always defiled:

“Realm” (*dbyings*) refers to cause (*rgyu*), and also to *bīja* (*sa bon*). But for whom? For all *dharmas* of every affliction, but not for the pure [*dharmas*]. In a subsequent [context], this impregnation of hearing great [Buddhist teaching] (*mang du thos pas bsgos pa*)⁴²⁸ is not accumulated by the *ālayavijñāna*. To explain properly in accordance with the *ālayavijñāna*, it pertains to the *bījas* of all *dharmas*, accumulated through mental activities.⁴²⁹

The MSgU asserts that the *ālayavijñāna* is defiled, since it accumulates all *dharmas* of mental activities and is impossible to be the cause of pure *dharmas*. Moreover, the defiled *ālayavijñāna* cannot accumulate the impregnation of hearing great [Buddhist teaching]. In this regard, how can a sentient being obtain supramundane *dharmas*?

The VinSg and the PSkV (see sections 3.1 and 3.1.3) both present proof that actual consciousnesses must arise from the *ālayavijñāna*, and an individual cannot be liberated from the *samsāra* without the *ālayavijñāna*. Hence, this section aims to investigate the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* within the *ālayavijñāna* as the cause of manifesting all *dharmas* and the cause of attaining liberation in the compendium of the MSg.

4.4.1 The Relationship Between the *Bīja* and the *Ālayavijñāna*

After defining the *ālayavijñāna* as the basis of whatever may be cognised, the MSg further introduces the relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and the *bījas*:

⁴²⁸ The term *bsgos pa* refers to *paribhāvita*, “impregnation”. Normally, this dissertation translates *śrūtavāsanā* as the *vāsanā* of hearing great [Buddhist teaching], yet in this paragraph, *mang du thos pas bsgos pa* is translated as the impregnation of hearing [Buddhist teaching].

⁴²⁹ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 383a6–8: “界者，因也。即種子也。是誰因種，謂一切法此唯雜染，非是清淨故。後當言多聞熏習所依，非阿賴耶識所攝。” For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 603), the last sentence is translated by me from the Tibetan translation (MSgU, Derge 4051, p. 195a4–5: *kun gzhi rnam par shes pa ltar tshul bzhin yid la byed pas bsdus pa'i chos rnam kyī sa bon gang yod pa'o zhes 'byung ngo*).

The consciousnesses that contain all *bījas* of every *dharmā* (一切種子識) is the “storehouse” (阿賴耶). Therefore, it is the *ālayavijñāna*, which I explain [only] to the superior ones.⁴³⁰

For “the consciousnesses that contain all *bījas* of every *dharmā*”, which denotes that the MSg terms the *ālayavijñāna* as the “basis of whatever may be cognised”, also describes it as “being the *bīja* of *dharmas*”, or “being *bījas* for *dharmas*” (Schmithausen 2014: 302). A similar stance is also presented in the TrBh, where the *ālayavijñāna* is *sarvabījaka* because it is the support of the “seeds of all *dharmas*”. As Schmithausen (2014: 301) highlights, the “*ālayavijñāna*, being the *bīja* of X”, or the “*ālayavijñāna* contains the *bīja* of X”, represents the fundamental theoretical difference in the Yogācāra school.⁴³¹ Thus, in the MSg, the *ālayavijñāna* serves as the “storehouse” of all *bījas*, yet it only receives *bījas* through *vāsanās* (Schmithausen 2014: 302).

Regarding the inseparable relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and *bījas*, Asvabhāva indicates that *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* are defiled; the pure *dharmas*, therefore, cannot arise from the defiled *ālayavijñāna*:

Regarding the aspect of disharmony, purified *dharmas* possess the nature of all afflictions, just as the storehouse (*bang ba*) or the treasury house of all afflictions. [These purified *dharmas*] are not established as fruitions, but rather as antidotes (*gnyen po*).⁴³²

The MSgU of Asvabhāva often provides vivid metaphors to explain the text. In this paragraph, the purified *dharmas* cannot be the fruitions of the defiled *bījas*, just as the treasure house cannot store afflictions. In this regard, the *ālayavijñāna* refers to a collection of defiled *bījas*; thus, the

⁴³⁰ MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 133b18–19: “由攝藏諸法，一切種子識故，名阿賴耶，勝者我開示。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4048, 3a7–3b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 157).

⁴³¹ For a more detailed discussion cf. Schmithausen (2014: 300–307).

⁴³² This paragraph is based on the Tibetan translation, while it does not exist in the Chinese translation. MSgU, Derge 4051, p. 195b1–2: *rnam par byang ba'i chos rnam ni rang bzhin gyi kun nas nyon mongs pa can nyon mongs pa thams cad kyi bang ba dang mdzod lta bur gyur pa mi mthun pa'i phyogs la 'bras bu'i dngos por sbyor ba ma yin te / de'i gnyen po yin pa'i phyir ro*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 604). This verse does not exist in the Chinese translation, so it may be a translation from Asvabhāva's MSgU, which has a different Sanskrit version than the Chinese translation, or this may be an additional understanding, supplied by the Tibetan translators.

purified *dharmas* should coexist with the *ālayavijñāna* as its antidote.

The MSgU further explains the coexisting of the *ālayavijñāna* and antidotes by another metaphor:

The meaning of coexistence (*lhan cig 'jug pa*) is the meaning of “to dwell” (*gnas*). [Medicinal] drops of myrobalan [fruit]⁴³³ may coexist with poison in a pot, [but] it is unacceptable for them to arise from the poison as their cause.⁴³⁴

The defiled *ālayavijñāna* is like a pot filled with poison, yet it is still possible for medical drops of the myrobalan fruit to coexist. Thus, it explains the reason why sentient beings remain in the mundane world but are able to give rise to supramundane *dharmas*.

Although the *bījas* are dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna*, they are received through the function of *vāsanās*. The MSgU asserts that the *vāsanās* also dwell in the *ālayavijñāna*:

This phrase “to it” indicates the dwelling of *vāsanās* (*bag chags kyi gnas*). However, a single *vāsanā* (*bag chags tsam*) is not [equal to] the *ālayavijñāna*, rather, [the *ālayavijñāna*] is together with the dwelling *vāsanās*, just like [the *ālayavijñāna* is together with] other mental consciousnesses.⁴³⁵

In this paragraph, the *vāsanās* are regarded as mental consciousnesses, which are equated to actual consciousness that manifests from the *ālayavijñāna* and then re-perfumes the *bījas* dwelling within it. If one divides the timeline, the mental consciousness, when manifested, produces residues known as *vāsanā*. When this *vāsanā* re-perfumes the *ālayavijñāna*, the *bījas* are then produced. Thus, it is acceptable that the *bīja* possesses *vāsanās* and they are synonymous in certain situations. Nevertheless, in the compendium of the MSg, the concept of *bīja* is dormant and immovable, whereas the concept of *vāsanā* is a dynamic capacity that can

⁴³³ According to Brunnhölzl (2018: 941, no. 45), the myrobalan fruit is used as a strong purgative in Ayurvedic and Tibetan medicine.

⁴³⁴ MSgU, Derge 4051, p. 195b3: *lhan cig 'jug pa'i don ni gnas kyi don te / sman nad med kyi thigs pa dug gi bum pa dang lhan cig gnas pa ni dug gi rgyu las 'byung bar mi rung ngo*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 604).

⁴³⁵ MSgU, Derge 4051, p. 195b3–4: *der zhes bya ba ni bag chags kyi gnas ston te / bag chags tsam ni kun gzhi rnam par shes pa ma yin gyi / bag chags kyi gnas dang bcas pa la bya ste / dper na gzhan dag gi yid kyi rnam par shes pa lta bu'o*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 604).

infuse *bījas*. Both concepts dwell and operate only within the *ālayavijñāna*.

Hence, the relationship between the *bījas* and the *ālayavijñāna* is concluded by the MSgU:

[The *ālayavijñāna*] is termed as “all *bījas*” (*sa bon thams cad pa*), because it arises and perishes together with all these *bījas*.⁴³⁶

The *ālayavijñāna* and the *bījas* arise and perish together. In fact, by using the concept of *bījas*, the compendium of the MSg interprets the reason why the *ālayavijñāna* can manifest *dharmas* and is the basis of attaining liberation.

4.4.2 The Twofold *Bījas* in the MSg

The MSg designates the existence of twofold *bījas*, namely, the external *bīja* and the internal *bīja*.

The external [*bīja*] and the internal [*bīja*], and [both of them are] undifferentiated. Of these two [*bījas*], [the first] is conventional, and [the second] is ultimate truth.⁴³⁷

The *ālayavijñāna* is composed of the conventional external *bījas* and the internal *bījas* of ultimate truth, yet their characteristics are neutral. These two *bījas* are explained further in the MSgBh:

As for [the quotation] “external, internal”, the external *bīja* is the wheat (稻穀), etc.;⁴³⁸ the internal *bīja* is the *ālayavijñāna*. “Undifferentiated” is the external [*bīja*], which means being neutral. This is not taught in the *Āgama*.⁴³⁹ “Twofold” refers to the *ālayavijñāna* being wholesome and unwholesome. Another meaning is being afflicted

⁴³⁶ MSgU, Derge 4051, p. 195b5–6: *sa bon thams cad pa zhes bya ba smos te / sa bon thams cad dang lhan cig 'byung ba dang 'gag pa'i phyir ro*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 604).

⁴³⁷ MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 135a23–24: “外, 內, 不明了, 於二唯世俗勝義諸種子.” The punctuation is added by me.

⁴³⁸ This sentence is omitted in the Tibetan translation; I added it according to the Chinese translation (MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329b20–21: “此中外者, 調稻穀等.”).

⁴³⁹ This sentence only exists in the Tibetan translation (MSgBh, Derge 4050, p. 132a4: *lung du ma bstan pas zhes bya ba'i don to*). Brunnhölzl (2018: 440, no.111) surmises that this sentence may originate from Vasubandhu's *Pratītyasamutpādavyākhyā*; however, it cannot be located.

and being purified.⁴⁴⁰

Similar to wheat, the external *bīja* represents the function of maturation, illustrating that a *bīja* can grow and manifest corresponding *dharma*. This external *bīja* is comparable to the “botanical *bīja*” suggested by Park (2014: 262). He indicates that “a specific transformation in series” (*saṃtatipariṇāmaviśeṣa*, see section 2.1.2) in the AKBh signifies the continuity of the karmic force in one’s mental continuum (Park 2014: 264). On the other hand, the internal *bīja*, such as the *ālayavijñāna*, signifies the process of rebirth. It suggests that the *ālayavijñāna* is projected to the next life by previously completed *karman* (see section 3.4). The twofold *bījas* represent the *ālayavijñāna*, manifesting *dharma* in the present life and being projected to the next life. The characteristic of the *ālayavijñāna* presents itself as wholesome and unwholesome in accordance with the presence of afflictions or pure *dharmas* at any given time.

Moreover, the MSgBh divides the twofold *bījas* by the aspects of conventional and ultimate truth:

The “conventional” [aspect] refers to the external [*bīja*] (*phyir rol*), describing this *bīja* in the context of conventionality. Therefore, these [*bījas*] are the transformation (變現) of the *ālayavijñāna*. The ultimate truth is that the *ālayavijñāna* is the *bīja* of all *dharmas*.⁴⁴¹

In this paragraph, “the transformation” is equated with the transformation of consciousness, which manifests *dharmas* of the mundane world. However, the ultimate truth is that the *ālayavijñāna* is the nature of all *bījas* and the cause for all kinds of *bījas*, including supramundane *dharmas*.

Therefore, the *ālayavijñāna*, appearing as the *bīja*, encompasses six functions, and as the *vāsanā*, it relates to the four aspects as being perfumed (所熏). These functions and aspects

⁴⁴⁰ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329b20–24: “此中外者, 謂稻穀等. 內者, 即是阿賴耶識. 不明了者, 謂外種子無記義. 言於二者, 阿賴耶識於善不善二性, 明了通有記故. 復有別義, 謂於雜染, 清淨明了.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 132a4–5. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 274).

⁴⁴¹ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329b24–27: “唯世俗者, 謂外種子, 唯就世俗說為種子. 所以者何? 彼亦皆是阿賴耶識所變現故, 勝義即是阿賴耶識. 所以者何? 是一切法真種子故.” The punctuation has been added by me. Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 132a6–7. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 274).

delineate the specific ability of the *ālayavijñāna* and explain why it lies at the core of the Yogācāra school.

4.4.3 The Six Functions as *Bījas*

The *ālayavijñāna*, serving as a collection of *bījas*, encompasses six functions. These six functions do not exist within the *ālayavijñāna* as distinct six *bījas*; rather, they signify the unique inherent abilities that the *ālayavijñāna* possesses. In other words, the *ālayavijñāna* is intrinsically endowed with the six functions due to its role as *bījas*.

The six functions as *bījas* are first listed in the MSg:

[They are established as] “momentary” (剎那滅), “arising simultaneously” (俱有), “proceeding in a continuum” (恒隨轉), “determination” (決定), “dependent on conditions” (待眾緣) and “originator of a self-fruit” (引自果).⁴⁴²

These six functions elucidate how the *ālayavijñāna* serves as *bījas* and generates fruitions. While the MSg does not provide detailed explanations of the six functions, the MSgBh and the MSgU offer commentary on them. Their commentaries are discussed in the section below.

4.4.3.1 Momentary (剎那滅, *skad cig pa*)

The first function is “momentary”. According to Waldron (2003: 203, note 18), the term “momentary” refers to “that which ceases immediately after it attains its existence”. However, in the context of the MSg, “momentary” does not signify the attainment of existence, but rather indicates that no real existence can be considered as a *bīja*.

In the MSgBh, the function “momentary” refers to immediate arising and perishing:

Also, these (*de dag*) [*bījas*] are “momentary” (剎那滅), because both [external and internal *bījas*] perish immediately upon having arisen, because the intrinsic nature of *bīja* (種子體) is unable to be permanent and because they would be without a difference

⁴⁴² MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 135a25–27: “剎那滅, 俱有, 恒隨轉應知, 決定, 待眾緣, 唯能引自果.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4048, p. 7a7–7b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 165).

at all times in the case of [being permanent].⁴⁴³

When the external *bījas* give rise to *dharmas*, they immediately cease. In this regard, the *bījas* lack intrinsic nature as they do not persist permanently in one's mental continuum. However, during the momentary arising and perishing, the characteristic of *bījas* remains consistent. This statement implies that the basic continuum of *bījas* is homogenous.

The MSgU further explains that the function of “momentary” does not imply permanent cessation:

[However,] it is not that their being momentary refers to having already ceased, it refers to their fruition not being suitable to arise after they have ceased, similar to [the non-arising of] the voice of a dead bird (死雞鳴).⁴⁴⁴

Using the example of a dead bird, the function of “momentary” denotes that which is incapable of generating fruition because the *bīja* has already perished in the present moment. However, it regenerates as a new *bīja* and further generates fruition in the following moment. Thus, the function of “momentary” signifies that the *bījas* are designations. Although they arise in a single moment, they perish immediately, thereby lacking any real existence.

4.4.3.2 Arising Simultaneously (俱有, *lhan cig 'byung*)

The second function is “arising simultaneously”, which especially signifies the relationship between *bījas* and their fruitions. In the MSgBh:

[*Bījas*] are “arising simultaneously” [with their fruition] (俱有), without being past, future, or dissociated [from the fruition]. Because at the time when *bījas* exist is [also]

⁴⁴³ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329, b28–c1: “剎那滅者, 調二種子, 皆生無間, 定滅壞故。所以者何? 不應常法為種子體, 以一切時, 其性如本, 無差別故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 136a6. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 274).

⁴⁴⁴ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389a29–b1: “雖剎那滅, 然非已滅。何者俱有已滅生果? 不應理故。如死雞鳴。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205a6–7. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 622).

the fruition that is produced.⁴⁴⁵

Under the function of “momentary”, the *bīja* manifests its fruition as *dharma* and then immediately perishes. However, its fruition is not produced in the subsequent moment, but in the very same moment. This paragraph demonstrates that, within an instantaneous moment, the *bīja* arises and perishes, while the *dharma*, as its fruition, produces a new *bīja* through *vāsanā*.

The MSgU provides the example of a lotus:

Consequently, since it is not contradictory [for the time of the *bīja*] to be the time of the fruition, it is asserted that the *bīja* (種子) arises simultaneously with the fruition, just like the root of a lotus (蓮華根) and so on.⁴⁴⁶

The *bīja* and its fruition arise simultaneously, akin to the coexistence of a root and a lotus. This example highlights the botanic aspect of *bīja* and fruition. When the *ālayavijñāna* is projected into the next life, it represents the fruition of previously completed *karman*. Nevertheless, the *ālayavijñāna* is reborn as a consciousness with all *bījas*, exemplifying the function of “arising simultaneously”.

4.4.3.3 Proceeding in a Continuum (恒隨轉, *rgyun chags 'byung ba*)

The third function, known as “proceeding in a continuum” pertains to the annihilation of the *bījas*. The *bījas* and the *ālayavijñāna* exist until the antidotes arise. Remarkably, the compendium of the MSg acknowledges that the defiled *bījas* and antidote coexist within the *ālayavijñāna*.

The MSgBh points out that the external *bījas* proceed in a continuum with the *ālayavijñāna*:

They are asserted as “proceeding in a continuum” (恆隨轉), and their support, the *ālayavijñāna*, [remains] until its antidote (治) has arisen. [The *bījas*] of what is external

⁴⁴⁵ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329, c1–4: “言俱有者，謂非過去亦非未來，亦非相離得為種子。何以故？若於此時種子有，即於爾時果生故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 136a6–7. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 274–275).

⁴⁴⁶ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389a29–b4: “是故，應許種子與果俱時而住，以此與果不相違故，如蓮華根。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205a7. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623).

[remain] as long as there is their root and until maturation.⁴⁴⁷

Following the functions of “momentary” and “arising simultaneously”, the external *bījas* exist as long as their root remains embedded in the *ālayavijñāna*. Once the antidotes arise and eliminate the root of external *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* no longer serves as their basis. The function of “proceeding in a continuum” comes to an end.

The MSgU describes this process as including the function of “arising simultaneously”:

Arising simultaneously refers to not remaining for one, two, or three moments, just like lighting (電光), but continuing from one moment to the next. Therefore, since [the *bījas*] arise continuously for a long time, they are “proceeding in a continuum”.⁴⁴⁸

In contrast to lightning, which exists for only a brief moment, the *bījas* and fruitions arise simultaneously and proceed in a continuum within the *ālayavijñāna* for a long time. Moreover, the MSgU illustrates this function using the metaphor of roots and branches:

What is [the evidence of] “proceeding in a continuum”? To benefit or harm the root [of a tree] will also benefit or harm its branches and so on because [the tree] possesses the [branches].⁴⁴⁹

Regarding the function of “arising simultaneously”, a root and a lotus coexist as a *bīja* and its fruition, while the function of “proceeding in a continuum” involves an extended process of benefiting or harming the roots, thereby strengthening or diminishing the fruition. If an antidote arises, through the function of “proceeding in a continuum”, it continues until the defiled external *bījas* are destroyed and the *ālayavijñāna* undergoes a transformation. These three functions illustrate the interplay between the *ālayavijñāna*, external *bījas* and antidotes. The

⁴⁴⁷ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c4–5: “恒隨轉應知者，謂阿賴耶識乃至治生。外法種子乃至根住，或乃至熟。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 136a7. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

⁴⁴⁸ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389a29–b4: “雖復俱有，然非一二三剎那住，猶如電光。何者？應知此恒隨轉，剎那轉轉，經於多時，恒隨轉故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205a7–205b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623).

⁴⁴⁹ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389b5–6: “所以者何？其根損益枝等同故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623).

remaining three functions address the process of generating fruition from a *bīja*.

4.4.3.4 Determination (決定, *ngeś*)

The fourth function is “determination”, which references to *bījas* not being universal causes for every *dharmā*; instead, they only generate corresponding fruition. In the MSgBh:

As for their being “determination” (決定), it is not that everything arises from all *bījas*, but [only] certain [*dharmā*] arise from their *bījas* that are defined individually. Each substance⁴⁵⁰ is born from the *bīja* that corresponds to it.⁴⁵¹

This paragraph denotes, for instance, that a *bīja* of desire only brings forth a fruition of desire. Likewise, the supramundane *dharmās* cannot arise from defiled *bījas*. This implies that homogenous causality applies to both *bījas* and fruitions; thus, antidotes, coexisting with the *ālayavijñāna*, arise from pure causes.

In the MSgU, the term “capacity” serves as a dynamic power to manifest *bījas*:

If [it is said here that] they are “proceeding in a continuum”, it is the designation that is claimed to be *bījas* (種子). Therefore, why are not all [fruitions] arising simultaneously from all [*bījas*] at once? The answer is “determination”, as the capacity (功能) [of *bīja*] is determined, despite “proceeding in a continuum”, it is not the case that all [fruitions] arise from all [*bījas*] at once.⁴⁵²

The MSgU highlights that even though *bījas* and fruitions arise simultaneously, they do not arise all at once. The “capacity” refers to the residual power from actions in the previous moment and has the ability to manifest fruition in the subsequent moment. The *bīja* that can manifest is determined by the “capacity” (i.e., *vāsanā*). For instance, the *bīja* of desire only

⁴⁵⁰ This sentence exists only in the Chinese translation, “從此物種還生此物” (MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c7).

⁴⁵¹ MSgBh, T1598, no. 31, p. 329c5–7: “言決定者, 謂此種子各別決定, 不從一切一切得生, 從此物種還生此物。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 136a7–136b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

⁴⁵² MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389b5–7: “若恒隨轉, 非許少分樂為種子, 何因緣故, 不從一切一切俱生? 為避此難, 故說決定。雖恒隨轉, 以諸種子功能定故, 不從一切一切俱生。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b1–2. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623).

generates the fruition of desire and regenerates the *bīja* of desire. It is impossible for it to generate a *bīja* of discernment. However, the arising of *bīja* does not solely depend on capacity, but also on conditions. While the *bīja* functions as a cause, it requires specific conditions to come forth.

4.4.3.5 Dependent on Conditions (待眾緣, *rkyen la ltos pa*)

The fifth function is “dependent on conditions”, corresponding with the fourth function “determination”. In the MSgBh, the arising of *bīja* operates in a particular moment:

They are “dependent on conditions” (待眾緣): these *bījas* demand their own conditions in order to produce their fruition.⁴⁵³ It is not that [*dharmā*] arises from all *bījas* at all times, certain [*dharmas*] arise [only] when certain conditions are obtained. When *bījas* encounter their proper conditions, at these places and times, their fruit takes birth.⁴⁵⁴

In Buddhism, a cause cannot bring a result without the presence of conditions, much like seeds sprouting in the presence of sunlight, air, and water. Therefore, if specific conditions are absent, the *bījas* remain dormant and do not manifest, just as antidotes remain concealed in the *ālayavijñāna* in the absence of pure causes.

The MSgU states that, without the necessary conditions, the *bīja* cannot manifest.:

“In that case, why are fruitions not brought forth at all times?” The answer given is “being dependent on conditions”, there is no flaw because the [necessary] conditions [for the arising of certain fruitions] are not always present close by.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵³ This sentence exists only in the Chinese translation: “謂此種子待自眾緣, 方能生果” (MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c7–8).

⁴⁵⁴ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329, c7–10: “待眾緣者, 謂此種子, 待自眾緣, 方能生果. 非一切時能生一切. 若於是處是時, 遇自眾緣, 即於此處此時, 自果得生.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 136b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275). The last sentence “若於是處是時, 遇自眾緣, 即於此處此時, 自果得生,” exists only in the Chinese translation.

⁴⁵⁵ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389b9–11: “雖爾, 何故不一切時常能生果? 為避此失, 言待眾緣. 非一切時, 會遇眾緣故, 無過失.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b2–3. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623).

As the ŚrBh denotes that the lineage within a person must encounter conditions for liberation to be attained (see section 4.1.1), the MSgU asserts that it is no flaw that a *bīja* generates a fruition dependent on certain conditions. In this regard, while the *ālayavijñāna* contains all *bījas*, the manifestations are determined by the particular type of *bīja* and whether requisite conditions are present.

4.4.3.6 Originator of a Self-fruition (引自果, *rang gi 'bras bus bsgrubs pa*)

The sixth function, known as the “originator of a self-fruit”, is similar to the fourth function of “determination”. However, while the fourth function focuses on the consistent type of *bīja* in the subsequent moment, such as the *bīja* of desire having to originate from the previous *bīja* of desire, the sixth function relates to the correlation between *bījas* and fruition.

In the MSgBh, this function is explained using the metaphor of wheat:

As for the “originator of a self-fruit” (引自果), a specific fruition arises from its specific *bīja* - the *ālayavijñāna* [arises] from the *bīja* of the *ālayavijñāna* (阿賴耶識種子) and a grain [arise] from a grain. Thus, fruitions arise from *bījas*.⁴⁵⁶

The *ālayavijñāna* arising from the *bīja* of the *ālayavijñāna*, serving as a collection of *bījas*, is still identified as a *bīja*. In other words, the *ālayavijñāna* solely gives rise to the *ālayavijñāna*, making the continuum of the *ālayavijñāna* in the next life feasible.

The MSgU emphasises the time order of *bījas* and fruition:

⁴⁵⁶ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329, c10–13: “唯能引自果者，謂自種子但引自果，如阿賴耶識種子，唯能引生阿賴耶識，如稻穀等，唯能引生稻穀等果。如是且顯種果生義。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 136b1–2. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

to the nature of *bījas* are eliminated.⁴⁵⁷

The *bījas* and what possesses the *bījas*—namely, the *ālayavijñāna*—coexist from beginningless time. When a *bīja* manifests, its fruition is produced, subsequently becoming the *bīja* for the following moment. Nevertheless, *bījas* are not equivalent to *dharmas*; they lack intrinsic nature and exist as designations. The MSgU asserts that even though *bījas* and fruitions continue in one’s mental continuum, they cannot be understood as a real existence.

By addressing the six functions of a *bīja*, the *ālayavijñāna*, as a collection of *bījas*, arises and perishes momentarily, simultaneously producing its fruition and proceeding in a continuum. The *bīja* of the *ālayavijñāna* that determines and generates its fruition is nothing but the *ālayavijñāna*, which manifests depending on certain conditions. According to the six functions of *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* is exempt from the controversy of being a real existence. To clarify the relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and the actual consciousness, the MSg employs the four aspects as being perfumed.

4.4.4 The Four Aspects as Being Perfumed (所熏, *sgo bar byed*)

In the concept of *vāsanās*, the term “perfumer” (能熏) represents manifested *dharmas*—namely, actual consciousnesses (*pravṛttivijñāna*)—which have the capability of perfuming the *ālayavijñāna*. On the other hand, the term “what is being perfumed” pertains to the *ālayavijñāna*, where the perfumed *bījas* are placed.⁴⁵⁸

In the MSg, the four aspects are signified as being perfumed:

“Stable” (堅), “neutral” (無記), “perfumable” (可熏), and “in a strict relationship with the perfumer” (與能熏相應), and “not being other than that” (所熏非異此). These are

⁴⁵⁷ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389b11–14: “今此種子是誰種子? 答此問言: 唯能引自果. 所言唯者, 若於此時, 能生自果, 即於爾時, 說名種子. 種與有種, 並無始故. 由此唯言遮相續等, 為種子體.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b2–3. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623).

⁴⁵⁸ The term “所熏 *sgo bar byed*” in the MSg corresponds to Sanskrit *paribhāvita*, “impregnation”. This section relates to the function of *dharma* perfuming the *ālayavijñāna*. Thus, the term “所熏/ *sgo bar byed*” is translated as “being perfumed” and the term “能熏, *sgo byed*” is rendered as “perfumer”.

the characteristics of the *vāsanā* (熏).⁴⁵⁹

These four aspects do not exist as specific *vāsanās*. Instead, they delineate the characteristics of the *ālayavijñāna* when it is perfumed by *dharmas*.

The MSgU points out the dichotomy between the *bījas* and what possesses the *bījas*, which relies on the interplay between what can be perfumable by the perfumer and what is being perfumed.⁴⁶⁰ Through perfuming, the *bījas* are able to obtain *dharmas*. Thus, both the *ālayavijñāna* and *bījas* cannot exist without the concept of *vāsanās*.

4.4.4.1 Stable (堅, *brtan pa*)

The first aspect is “stable”. The *vāsanās* only perfume something that is immovable and stable. The MSgBh explains this aspect through the example of wind:

The characteristics of the *vāsanā* (*bag chags kyi mtshan nyid*) is taught as these: That is, they are to be perfumed into (受熏) what is “stable” (堅) but not into what is moving, like the wind. The wind is unable to grasp what it is perfumed with because what is perfumed into it does not follow it for a *krośa*.⁴⁶¹ As for how far [what is perfumed into the wind can follow it], odour [can] follow the wind up to one hundred *yojanas*.⁴⁶²

As the wind is movable and unstable, it is incapable of retaining odour for more than a *krośa*. However, the *vāsanās* are strong enough to permeate one hundred *yojanās*. In this regard, the power of *vāsanās* is not diminished by the wind; rather, it is that the wind cannot be perfumed by the *vāsanās*.

⁴⁵⁹ MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 135a27–29: “堅, 無記, 可熏, 與能熏相應, 所熏非異此, 是為熏習相.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4048, p. 7b1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 165).

⁴⁶⁰ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389b14–15: “如所說種子法不相應故, 要待所熏能熏相應, 種與有種其性方立.” For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 623): “The *bījas* and the nature of *bījas* depend on the connection between what is perfumable by the *vāsanā* and what perfumes them.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b4.

⁴⁶¹ The term “一踰膳那” in the Chinese translation refers to “*rgyang grags*” (*krośa*) in the Tibetan translation. According to the Glossary of the 84000 Translation Project, four *krośa* equal one *yojana* (<http://www.84000.co>).

⁴⁶² MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c13–17: “堅者, 堅住方可受熏, 非如動風, 所以者何? 風性踈動, 不能任持所有熏氣一踰膳那, 彼諸熏氣亦不隨轉. 占博迦油能持香氣百踰膳那, 彼諸香氣亦能隨轉.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 132b2–3. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

The MSgU questions this scenario according to daily experience. Normally, the wind brings the flower scent, so for what reason can it not keep the scent? The MSgU explains this question by refuting the *vāsanā* as a substance:

“Is not the wind something that is perfumable by flowers and so on?” If [the wind] was something perfumable (*bsgo bar bya*), just like the scent that is another substance and is connected to a sesame seed that is perfumed [by the scent of a flower], a substantial scent connected with [the sesame seed] would be observable (*dmigs par 'gyur*).⁴⁶³

The wind is one of the four great elements (*mahābhūta*).⁴⁶⁴ According to the Abhidharmic tradition, the four elements represent perceptible provisional existence. Therefore, if the wind could be perfumed, the corresponding *vāsanā* should be observable, and one should detect an aroma adhering to sesame seeds. As this statement contradicts our everyday experience, the MSgU asserts that the wind cannot be perfumed by *vāsanās*.

4.4.4.2 Neutral (無記, *lung ma bstan*)

The second aspect, known as “neutral”, refers to the characteristic of the *ālayavijñāna*. The MSgBh offers two vivid examples:

“Neutral” (無記) means that odour [is perfumed] into something neutral. It is not perfumed into what is of unpleasant odour, such as garlic, and what is of pleasant scent but only into what is of neutral odour.⁴⁶⁵

In this paragraph, items with intensely repulsive odours like garlic, as well as those with extremely pleasant scents such as musk (沈麝, *gla rtsi*), and even substances like stone or gold,

⁴⁶³ This paragraph is translated from the Tibetan translation, while the Chinese translation (T1597, no. 31) is too brief. MSgU: Derge 4051, p. 205b5: *rlung yang me tog la sogs pas bsgo bar bya ba ma yin nam zhe na / gal te bsgo bar bya ba yin na ni bsgos pa'i til dang 'brel pa can gyi rdzas gzhan gyi dri bzhin du de dang 'brel pa can gyi rdzas kyi dri yang dmigs par 'gyur ro*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018:623).

⁴⁶⁴ The four great elements: the earth (*pṛthivī*), the water (*ap*), the fire (*agni*) and the wind (*vāyū*).

⁴⁶⁵ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c17–20: “言無記者, 是不可記極香臭義. 由此道理, 蒜不受熏, 以極臭故. 如是香物亦不受熏, 以極香故. 若物非極香臭所記, 即可受熏.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p.132 b3–4. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

cannot be perfumed. All of these possess robust characteristics that resist being influenced. Only the *ālayavijñāna*, being neutral in nature, can be perfumed by *vāsanās* of *dharmas*.

4.4.4.3 Perfumable (可熏, *bsgo ba*)

The MSgBh further clarifies the reason items like stone and gold cannot be perfumed. This is the third aspect—“perfumable”—and it distinguishes which items are suitable for perfuming. In the MSgBh:

[Odour] is only perfumed into what is suitable to be perfumed, while it is not perfumed into what is not perfumable, such as stone, silver and gold. It is what retains perfumes that are called “what is perfumable by what perfumes it”, which refers to [being perfumed] into what is suitable to be perfumed (可熏物).⁴⁶⁶

Items that can possess *vāsanās* are labelled as “perfumable”. However, items like stone, gold, and silver are too robust to retain *vāsanās*, rendering them unable to be perfumed. Additionally, something “perfumable” exists in conjunction with something that perfumes it. In other words, the aspect of “perfumable” cannot exist in isolation as a solitary function.

Conversely, the MSgU outlines a process of “mutual infusing” that takes place among perfumable items:

“What is perfumable (可熏)” refers to what is capable of perfuming (物可熏) or what may be perfumed (能受熏); as the parts mutually infuse each other (分分展轉, 更相和糅), this is perfumable. Stones and so on are not [perfumable] because [they and other things] do not mutually infuse each other.⁴⁶⁷

The items that are “capable of perfuming” and those that “may be perfumed” mutually infuse

⁴⁶⁶ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c17–20: “言可熏者, 謂應受熏方可熏習, 非不受熏如金石等, 不應受熏, 名不可熏. 若於此時能受熏習, 即於爾時名為可熏, 如可熏物.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 132b4–5. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

⁴⁶⁷ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p. 389b19–22: “言可熏者, 若物可熏, 或能受熏, 分分展轉, 更相和糅, 乃名可熏. 非金石等, 能受熏習, 不可分分相和糅故, 非唯可熏.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b6–7. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 624).

each other. For instance, consider clothes and lavender hung in a closet: the clothes are perfumed with the lavender scent while also emanating the fragrance of lavender. This “mutual infusing” aligns with the aspect of “perfumable” in the MSgU. Thus, items like stone and gold are not deemed “perfumable” as they cannot retain any scents nor mutually infuse each other.

4.4.4.4 In a Strict Relationship with the Perfumer (與能熏相應, *'brel pa la sgo byed*)

The fourth aspect is “in a strict relationship with the perfumer”. All the aspects of being perfumed must coexist with the perfumer and not exist independently at any time. In the MSgBh:

“In a strict relationship with the perfumer” (與能熏相應) means that [the *vāsanā*] are not [perfumed] into what is unconnected [with them], which means that [they are perfumed] into what arises without interruption.⁴⁶⁸

In the process of perfuming, both the being perfumed and the perfumer should arise without interruption. If only the perfumer exists, there is nothing to be perfumed, resulting in the failure of the perfuming process; and vice versa.

The MSgU further empathises with this aspect:

What is being perfumable is also something that is “in a strict relationship with the perfumer” (*'brel pa la sgo byed*), such that “what is perfumable” (*sgo bar byed*) is not what exists separately and has no connection.⁴⁶⁹

The quality of being perfumable exists inseparably and in connection with the perfumer. This strict relationship ensures the continuum between the *ālayavijñāna* and actual consciousnesses, maintaining causality. The *ālayavijñāna*, as the being perfumed, embodies these four aspects. Consequently, the *ālayavijñāna* is stable, neutral, perfumable, and in a strict relationship with

⁴⁶⁸ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c17–20: “與能熏相應者, 能熏相應方名可熏, 非不相應, 當知即是無間生義.” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p.132b5. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

⁴⁶⁹ This paragraph is translated from the Tibetan translation, while the Chinese translation (T1598, p. 389b22–23) is too brief. MSgU: Derge 4051, p. 205b7: *bsgo bar bya ba yang sgo bar byed pa dang 'brel pa gang yin pa de la sgo bar byed de so sor gnas shing 'brel pa med pa la ni ma yin no*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 624).

the perfumer.

4.4.4.5 Not Being Other Than That (所熏非異此, *sgo byed de las gzhan*)

In addition to the four aspects, being perfumed is tantamount to the *ālayavijñāna*. Likewise, the *ālayavijñāna* is the sole item capable of being perfumed. In the MSgBh:

“Not being other than that” (非異此) refers to being free of being other than the [*ālayavijñāna*], [the *vāsanās*] are not perfumed (非所熏) into anything other than the *ālayavijñāna*.⁴⁷⁰

The *ālayavijñāna* with all *bījas* is the basis of that being perfumed. The perfumer, as *vāsanā*, is signified as actual consciousness in the MSgU:

As for “not being other than that” (非異於此), this phrase refers to actual consciousnesses (轉識) because they are the opposite of what is perfumable.⁴⁷¹

The actual consciousnesses arise from the *bījas* dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* and subsequently function as the perfumer, perfuming the *ālayavijñāna*. Thus, the actual consciousnesses are the opposite of the perfumed *ālayavijñāna*.

Hence, the compendium of the MSg offers a systematic structure for understanding the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, while further emphasising the inseparable relationship among *bījas*, *vāsanās* and the *ālayavijñāna*. Their relationship is revealed from different perspectives. As the twofold *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* serves as the internal *bīja* containing external *bījas*. These external *bījas* act as the cause of actual consciousness and coexist with the antidotes in the *ālayavijñāna*. On one hand, as a collection of *bījas*, the *ālayavijñāna* embodies six functions that demonstrate its nature as non-real existence through the aspect of “momentariness”, while also coexisting with determined fruitions depending on certain conditions. On the other hand, the *ālayavijñāna* functions as the being perfumed, showcasing aspects of stability, neutrality,

⁴⁷⁰ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 329c27–28: “非異此者, 謂若離此阿賴耶識餘非所熏, 是故所熏即此非異。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 132 b5–6. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 275).

⁴⁷¹ MSgU, T1598, no. 31, p.389 b24-26: “非異於此, 非聲為遮一切轉識是所熏性, 如上所說義相違故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4051, p. 205b7–206a1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 624).

perfumability, and a strict relationship with the perfumer—i.e., the actual consciousness.

Through the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, the MSg compendium interprets why the *ālayavijñāna* can manifest mundane *dharmas* while still retaining the potential for attaining liberation. The antidotes existing alongside the *ālayavijñāna* do not perceive the *ālayavijñāna* as the source of pure *dharmas*. Instead, they emerge from the *vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teachings] (*śrutavāsanā*).

4.5 The *Vāsanā* of Hearing [Buddhist Teaching] (*śrutavāsanā*)

Since the *ālayavijñāna* associated with defiled *bījas* cannot serve as the cause of supramundane *dharma*, the MSg presents a suitable pure cause: the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (*śrutavāsanā*, 聞薰習, *thobs pa'i bag chags*). Through hearing the teachings of the Buddha, the antidotes dwelling in the *ālayavijñāna* gain the ability to manifest and cause the practitioner to attain liberation.

According to Schmithausen (1987: 80), the first moment of giving rise to supramundane *dharmas* becomes the *bīja* of supramundane *dharmas* and arises in the subsequent moment. However, this process exclusively pertains to the mental continuum of a noble one (*ārya*), not an ordinary person (*pṛthagjana*). In order to help ordinary people, the noble one transfers the supramundane *dharma* by expressing Buddhist teachings. Therefore, the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” originates directly from the supramundane realm and is “capable of becoming the seed or cause of the factors leading up to supramundane insight and finally of supramundane insight itself” (Schmithausen 1987: 80).

The MSg expands on this and explains that, while the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” exists within the mundane world, it functions as the cause of supramundane *dharma*:

Now, the small, medium, and great *bījas* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (正聞薰習種子) are regarded as the *bījas* of the body of *dharma* (法身種子). Since they are the antidote (*gnyen po*) of the *ālayavijñāna*, they are not the nature of the *ālayavijñāna*. They are something mundane, but since they are homogeneous causes of complete purity (最淨法界等流) just as the realm of supramundane *dharma*, they serve

as the *bījas* of the supramundane mind (出世心種子).⁴⁷²

The antidotes dwelling in the mental continuum of an ordinary person are considered the *bīja* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]”, as well as the *bīja* of the body of *dharma*. According to the MSg, the manifestation of *dharma* must correspond with a relevant *bīja*, aligning with the sixth function “originator of a self-fruit”. Given that Buddhist teaching originates from the realm of supramundane *dharma*, this *vāsanā* perfumes ordinary people and is preserved as the *bījas* of the supramundane mind.

However, an ordinary person does not attain liberation immediately upon receiving the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]”. Instead, the process of attaining liberation is a gradual one. In the MSg:

Inasmuch as the weak, medium, and great [*vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching] gradually increase, so much does the consciousness of maturation (異熟果識) diminish, and the basis is transformed (轉所依). When the basis is transformed in all aspects, the consciousness of maturation possessing all the *bījas* (一切種子) also becomes without *bījas* and is eliminated in all aspects as well.⁴⁷³

The consciousness of maturation refers to the function of maturing defiled *bījas* in the *ālayavijñāna* and manifesting actual consciousness. Thus, as the *bījas* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” gradually increase, the manifestation of the defiled *bījas* is decreased until the transformation of the basis occurs in an ordinary person’s mental continuum. Through this transformation, all defiled *bījas* are annihilated and do not exist at all. Consequently, for the noble ones, only the *bījas* of the body of *dharma* or the *bījas* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” remain in their mental continuum, allowing them to perceive their surroundings as purified.

⁴⁷² MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 136c13–16: “又此正聞熏習種子下中上品，應知亦是法身種子，與阿賴耶識相違，非阿賴耶識所攝，是出世間最淨法界等流性故，雖是世間而是出世心種子性。” Tibetan translation Derge 4048, p. 10b7–11a1. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 172).

⁴⁷³ MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 136 c22–25: “如如熏習，下中上品次第漸增，如是如是，異熟果識次第漸減，即轉所依。既一切種所依轉已，即異熟果識及一切種子無種子而轉，一切種永斷。” Tibetan translation Derge 4048, p. 11a3–4. For the English translation cf. Waldron (2003: 156) and Brunnhölzl (2018: 172).

The MSgBh further explains the metaphor of water and milk in the MSg:

“Like [a mixture] of milk and water” (猶如水乳) referring to the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (聞熏習) and the consciousness of maturation,⁴⁷⁴ enters in the manner of coexisting with the [*ālayavijñāna*], just like [a mixture] of milk and water, they are not of its nature, that is, they are not the *ālayavijñāna*. Therefore, they are the antidote of the *ālayavijñāna*.⁴⁷⁵

The antidote, functioning as the *bījas* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]”, dwells in the *ālayavijñāna*. This is akin to the coexistence of milk and water as a mixture, wherein they do not serve as each other’s causes. The nature of the *bīja* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” acts as the antidote to the *ālayavijñāna*.

The MSgU utilises the metaphor of poison and medicine to expound upon the relationship between the *ālayavijñāna* and the *bīja* of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]”:

For example, even though many diseases have entered the inside [of the body] or one has drunken all kinds of poisons, [those diseases] can be treated with medical elixirs (*smān bcud*) or one drink antidote (*smān*) for [these] poisons, diseases and [poisons]. [These antidotes] coexist with these diseases [or poisons] until a certain other time. However, [the antidotes] neither have [these diseases or] poisons as their *bījas* (*sa bon*) nor are they of the nature of [these diseases or] poisons. The same goes for [the way in which] the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (*thos pa'i bag chags*) serve as the *bīja* [of supramundane *dharmā*].⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷⁴ Based on the Chinese translation: “猶如水乳者，此聞熏習與異熟識” (MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 334a7).

⁴⁷⁵ MSgBh, T1597, no. 31, p. 334a7–13: “猶如水乳者，此聞熏習與異熟識，雖不同性而寄識中，猶如水乳和合俱轉。然非阿賴耶識等者，雖復和合似一性轉，然非即是阿賴耶識，是能對治阿賴耶識種子性故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4050, p. 138a2–3. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 286).

⁴⁷⁶ This paragraph is translated from the Tibetan translation, while the Chinese translation (T 1598, no. 31, p. 394c16–26) is too brief. MSgU, Derge 4051, p. 214a1–3: *dper na khong du nad du ma zhugs sam dug sna tshogs 'thungs pas na yang rung / smān bcud kyis len dang dug smān 'thungs na nad dang lhan cig tu dus gzhan gyi bar du 'dug kyang dug gi sa bon can yang ma yin la / dug gi ngo bo nyid kyang ma yin pa ltar thos pa'i bag chags sa bon du gyur pa yang de bzhin no // de la bag chags chung ngu la brten nas zhes bya ba la sogs pa ni bshad pa nyid gsal bas brda phrad par sla'o*. For the English translation cf. Brunnhölzl (2018: 640).

The diseases and poison represent sentient beings dwelling in the mundane world with defiled *dharmas*. However, they can be healed by medical elixirs or antidotes. Even though they obtain these medicines while living in the mundane world, the medicines do not serve as the cause of mundane *dharmas* or have the nature of mundane *dharma*. They generate from the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]”, originating from the supramundane realm.

Compared with the four aspects as being perfumed, the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” is clearly a perfumer, rather than something being perfumed. Thus, this *vāsanā* can cause the *ālayavijñāna* to decrease and trigger the transformation of the basis. However, the concept of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” is closely related to the frequency and devotion to the practices of hearing, contemplating and cultivation (*śruta-cintā-bhāvanā*). In the MSg:

Depending on the weak *vāsanā* (下品熏習) [it] becomes a medium *vāsanā* (中品熏習); depending on the medium *vāsanā*, it becomes a great *vāsanā* (上品熏習), because [the *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teaching] is accompanied by repeatedly practising hearing (聞), contemplating (思), and cultivation (修).⁴⁷⁷

Since the process of attaining liberation is gradual, the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” increases from weak to great. They are practised through hearing, contemplating, and cultivation.

In regard to this practice, the idea of “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” may have already appeared in the MSA.⁴⁷⁸ As a positive cause that leads to the attainment of Buddhahood, the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” is mentioned in the MSA/MSABh in verse 1 of chapter 11 (*Dharmaparyeṣṭyadhikāra*) in the MSA:

A threefold or twofold basket (*piṭaka*) is, in short, approved by nine reasons. It liberates (*vimocayati*) due to impregnation (*vāsanā*), due to enlightenment (*bodhana*), due to

⁴⁷⁷ MSg, T1594, no. 31, p. 136c11–13: “此中依下品熏習成中品熏習, 依中品熏習成上品熏習, 依聞思修多分修作得相應故。” Tibetan translation cf. Derge 4048, p. 10b6–7. For the English translation cf. Waldron (2003: 156) and Brunnhölzl (2018: 172).

⁴⁷⁸ I would like to thank Dr. Mingyuan Gao for kindly sharing this insight with me.

calm (*śamana*), and due to realisation (*prativedha*).⁴⁷⁹

To reach the final liberation, the *vāsanās* serve as a possibility for practitioners. The MSABh further explains how the sentient beings attain liberation:

So how does it liberate? Due to impregnation (*vāsana*), due to enlightenment, due to calm and due to realisation, it liberates. Due to impregnation of one’s mind (*cittavāsanatas*) by hearing (*śruta*); due to enlightenment by reflecting; due to calm by the cultivation which is clam abiding; due to realisation due to insight.⁴⁸⁰

The *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teachings continues to impregnate the mind and prevents the mind from producing false conceptualisations. Thus, these *vāsanās* become one of the causes of attaining liberation. This paragraph may imply a preliminary idea of the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” in the MSg. It is noteworthy that Kramer (2019: 76) considers “calm abiding” and “insight” as antidotes to certain mental states in the MSA. According to Schmithausen (1969: 819–821), the composition of the MSA was later than that of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, but it is related to the SNS. Therefore, the MSA/MSABh encompasses a fourfold method for attaining liberation—namely, the impregnation, the enlightenment, the calm, and the realisation. However, only the impregnation becomes the crucial *vāsanā* of hearing Buddhist teachings in the MSg, which implies that the MSA/MSABh and the MSg may share the common idea of impregnation and hearing.

The “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” serves as a crucial theme in the MSg. The *ālayavijñāna*, as the consciousness of maturing all *bījas*, including the *vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching], can serve as the ever-present condition of cause for the arising of the supramundane mind (Waldron 2003: 153). Coexisting with the *ālayavijñāna* like milk and water, poison and antidote, the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” generates a cause that dwells in one’s mental continuum from the beginningless cycle and can attain liberation even while living in the mundane world.

⁴⁷⁹ MSA, p. 19: *piṭakatrayaṃ dvayaṃ vā saṃgrahataḥ kāraṇair navabhir iṣṭam / vāsanabodhanaśamanaprativedhais tad vimocayati.*

⁴⁸⁰ MSABh, p. 19: *kathaṃ punas tad vimocayati / vāsanabodhaśamanaprativedhais tad vimocayati / śrutena cittavāsanataḥ / cintayā bodhanataḥ / bhāvanayā śamathena śamanataḥ / vipaśyanayā prativedhataḥ.*

4.6 Short Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the process of attaining liberation in the Yogācāra texts. The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* involve three important elements: the lineage (*gotra*), the transformation of the basis (*āśrayaparāvṛtti/āśrayaparivṛtti*), and the “*vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (*śrutavāsanā*).

For the relationship between *bīja* and *gotra*, the ŚrBh equates the concept of *bīja* with the lineage and presents the “*bīja* of supramundane *dharma*” (*lokottaradharmabīja*), while the VinSg equates *bīja* with *vāsanā* and offers the “*bīja* accumulated through *vāsanā*” (*upacitavāsanābīja*) and the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālambanapratyayabīja*) in the PMBhVin. The latter represents the *vāsanā* attached to the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) and divides the concept of *bījas* into purification and defilement. The lineage denotes that the practitioners are naturally born within the lineage of a hearer (*śrāvaka*gotra) or the lineage of solitary realiser (*pratyekabuddha*gotra), or the lineage of the Buddha (*tathāgata*gotra).

Even though practitioners naturally possess a lineage, they are covered by the two rough difficulties (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*) or the two hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*). These two terms are used interchangeably, but the contents are different. The *SAVBh equates the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* as synonymous in the context of two hindrances, while the TrBh considers the two rough difficulties as *bījas*. Moreover, the two rough difficulties in the *SAVBh are considered as the *vāsanā* of two hindrances and represent the negative bodily and mental activities. Whereas in the TrBh, the rough difficulty refers to the lack of flexibility (*akarmaṇyatā*) in the basis and exists as the *bīja* of two hindrances.

Once the two rough difficulties or the two hindrances are purified, the transformation of the basis occurs. By the transformation of seeds (*bījaparāvṛtti*), the perception manifests as pure in the MSA. On the other hand, the transformation of the basis signifies the revelation of purity in the MAVṬ. Furthermore, the concept of the three natures is associated with the transformation of the basis in the MSA. According to the *SAVBh, the dependent nature (*paratantrasvabhāva*) and the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) are annihilated during the transformation of the basis, while the perfect nature (*pariṇiṣpannasvabhāva*) remains solely after the attainment of liberation. Nevertheless, since the MSA was not composed at one time

and by one author, the relative topics of the concept of the three natures require further observation.

The compendium of the MSg presents a systematic construction of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. The six functions as *bījas* and the four aspects as being perfumed reveal the *ālayavijñāna* as a collection of *bījas* as well as the basis of receiving *vāsanās* from actual consciousness. In order to annihilate defiled *bījas*, the compendium of the MSg presents the *vāsanās* of hearing [Buddhist teachings], which dwell as *bījas* within the *ālayavijñāna* from the beginningless time and then arise as the supramundane *dharmas*. Through gradually strengthening this *vāsanā*, the transformation of the basis operates and annihilates all defiled *dharmas*.

The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* serve as causes of defiled *dharmas* and also causes of pure *dharmas*. They represent the stored possibility of attaining liberation and the dynamic power originating from the supramundane realm. Without the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, it would be impossible to reveal the process of attaining liberation in Yogācāra soteriology.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

After investigating the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* as presented in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, this chapter offers conclusions that respond to the three research questions articulated in Chapter 1 (see section 1.1). The chapter will also identify the limitations of this thesis and then propose related topics for future research.

5.1 Responding to the Research Questions

As outlined in Chapter 1, this thesis has focused on three main research questions and corresponding sub-questions. The first question is as follows: **Why do the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* appear in Vasubandhu’s works?** Chapter 2 described the preliminary concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (AKBh): *bīja* is the complex of name and matter (*nāmarūpa*) that brings forth fruition due to the function of a specific transformation in series (*santatipariṇāma*) (see section 2.2.2), and *vāsanās* in the AKBh relate to cultivation and consciousness re-arising in meditative states (see section 2.4).

The sub-questions derived from this first main issue are: **How does the AKBh present the Abhidharmic concept of *bīja*? How do *vāsanās* function in one’s mental stream? What is the aim of presenting the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh?** The concept of *bījas* is a replacement for the Sarvāstivādins’ concept of *prāpti*, which serves as a real entity (*dravya*) within the fundamental doctrine of the three periods of time (see section 2.2.1). To deny the presumption of real entity, the AKBh introduces the concept of *bījas*. *Bījas* are not real entities but designations (*prajñapti*). They exist in one’s mental continuum as a cause that manifests *dharma*s; thus, a sentient being does not need a *prāpti* to connect with a *dharma*. In other words, there are no real entities that exist outside the mental continuum, from which every *dharma* arises. As a cause, *bīja* manifests *dharma* through the function of a specific transformation in series. According to this function, the term “transformation” (*pariṇāma*) allows a *bīja* to mature and bring forth its fruition. In this regard, *bīja* is identified as the cause of maturation (*vipākahetu*), including all the unwholesome and wholesome contaminated *dharma*s, which brings forth a fruition with different characteristics—namely, a neutral fruition (see section

2.3.3). The cause of maturation cooperates with a specific transformation in series and signifies heterogeneous causation, while the *bīja* denotes a cause of homogeneity (see section 2.3.2 about the moistened *bījas* (**abhiṣyandabīja*)). In the AKBh, the concept of *bījas* encompasses the *bīja*-state (*bījabhāva*), referring to the function of reproduction in the future moment (see section 2.2.4) and unmanifested defilements such as *anuśaya* (see section 2.5).

Compared to the *bījas*, *vāsanās* in the AKBh are intended to refute the Sarvāstivāda concept of non-information matter (*avijñapti-rūpa*), which is an invisible and penetrable real entity (section 2.4.1.). In this case, the AKBh asserts that the thought perfumes (*bhāvita*) one's mental continuum. Through this perfuming by thoughts (*cetanāvāsanā*), the non-informative matters continue in one's mental continuum. Thus, the non-information matter does not exist as a real entity. Moreover, the AKBh utilises the *vāsanās* to explain why consciousness arises from the first moment after the meditative absorptions of cessation and non-thought (*nirodhāsamjñāsamāpatti*). Before Yogācāra's concept of the *ālayavijñāna* appears, the AKBh deems that the *vāsanās* deriving from the mutual *bījas* (*anyonyabījaka*) of mind and the body impregnate (*paribhāvita*) each other, and then consciousness arises in the subsequent moment of the meditative absorptions (see section 2.4.2). After the *ālayavijñāna* is established, the *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* (KP) by Vasubandhu explains the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* by a metaphor of white flower and red dye, representing the *vāsanās* as the force of *bījas* (*bījabala*), which gradually changes the *ālayavijñāna* (see section 2.4.4). Hence, the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* are not synonymous in the AKBh. The concept of *bījas* in the AKBh focuses on maintaining the mental continuum in the present time, while the concept of *vāsanās* pertains to “specific potency” in one's mental continuum (see section 2.4.5). The concept of *bīja* in the AKBh also aims to refute similar concepts from other Buddhist schools, such as the concept of *prāpti* and the concept of *anudhātu* (see section 2.3.5). Moreover, the term *bīja* integrates concepts that dwell in one's mental continuum as fundamental defilements, just like the concept of *anuśaya* (see section 2.5). The AKBh considers the *bīja* of memory (*smṛtibīja*) as the *anuśaya*, which exists always in one's mind but is not a real entity (see section 2.5.3).

Based on this preliminary understanding of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the AKBh, Chapter 3 responded to the second research question: **What is the function of *bīja* and *vāsanā* for sentient beings?** Conceptualisation arises in accordance with the actual consciousness

(*pravṛttivijñāna*), which is stored as a *bīja* in the *ālayavijñāna*. Thus, the *ālayavijñāna* is the so-called “storehouse consciousness” (see section 3.1.1). As the *ālayavijñāna* contains the *bījas* of all the mental conditions (*sarvasaṃskārabīja*), Vasubandhu’s *Pañcaskandhaka* (PSk) proposes that the *ālayavijñāna* and the *bījas* are inseparable. The *bījas* mature and manifest as actual consciousness, which designates the *ālayavijñāna* as “consciousness of maturation” (*vipākavijñāna*). Sthiramati’s commentary, the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (PSkV), indicates that the “consciousness of maturation” has a capacity (*samartha*, i.e., *vāsanā*) to duplicate self-characteristics (see section 3.1.3). Hence, the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* coexist with the *ālayavijñāna* and then the process of conceptualisation becomes possible.

The process of conceptualisation is further depicted as “unreal imagination” (*abhūtaparikalpita*) in the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (MAV). The “unreal imagination” has two main aspects: defiled grasper (*grāhaka*) and grasped (*grāhya*) and pure emptiness (see section 3.2). Vasubandhu’s commentary, the *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya* (MAVBh), explains that, once the grasper and the grasped are removed, pure emptiness will manifest and then the defiled “unreal imagination” will be replaced by correct understanding. Sthiramati’s commentary, the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā* (MAVṬ), defines the grasper as self and cognition (*ātma vijñāpti*), while the grasped is the object and the sentient being. In the compendium of the MAV, the term *bīja* is regarded as “realm” (*dhātu*), which refers to a designated perceived object for the grasper (see section 3.2.1). The term *vāsanā*, on the other hand, refers to affliction with a strong attachment to the imagined nature (*parikalpitasvabhāva*) (see section 3.2.2). Moreover, the concept of *vāsanās* also signifies the function of impregnation, especially the function of mental activity of speech (*jalpamanaskāra*) impregnating mental activities. The “mental activity of speech” causes one to place a name on an object, which is known as the “unreal imagination” (see section 3.2.3).

The sub-question connected to this broader issue relates to the process of conceptualisation in Vasubandhu’s *Triṃśikā* (Tr): How do *bīja* and *vāsanā* function in the transformation of consciousness (*vijñānapariṇāma*)? Unlike the “unreal imagination” in the MAV, the Tr presents “the transformation of consciousness” as the process of conceptualisation (see section 3.3). Serving as the consciousness of maturation and the consciousness of all *bījas* (*sarvabījaka*), the *ālayavijñāna* constantly gives rise to conceptualisations (*vikalpa*) in the mental continuum by

mutual power. According to Sthiramati's *Triṃśikābhāṣya* (TrBh), this mutual power is equivalent to the term *vāsanā* (see section 3.3.1; Diagram 1). Remarkably, the TrBh emphasises *vāsanās* over *bījas*. On the one hand, the TrBh interprets “the transformation of consciousness” by means of the *vāsanā* of conceptualising (*vikalpavāsanā*), referring to self and matter (see section 3.3.2.1). On the other hand, the TrBh presents the *vāsanā* of maturation (*vipākavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of a homogeneous cause (*niṣyandavāsanā*) as the transformation of cause (*hetupariṇāma*), maintaining the mental continuum in the present time, whereas the transformation of fruition (*phalapariṇāma*) signifies the rebirth of the *ālayavijñāna* (see section 3.3.2.2). The PSkV offers a more detailed explanation of these two *vāsanās*. The *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause is the fruition of mental activities and the cause of perfuming the *bījas*. The *vāsanā* of maturation is the fruition of meritorious and non-meritorious *dharma*s and the cause of the consciousness of maturation (see section 3.3.3; Diagram 2).

The consciousness of maturation leads to another sub-question: **How is the *ālayavijñāna* reborn in the next life?** The Tr elucidates the process of rebirth by presenting the *vāsanā* of *karman* (*karmavāsanā*) and the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping (*grāhadvayavāsanā*) (see section 3.4). Once the *ālayavijñāna* has already manifested all *karman*, the *vāsanā* of *karman* projects the *ālayavijñāna* to the next life. The *vāsanā* of twofold grasping maintains the defiled grasper and the grasped because the sentient being has not yet abandoned all defilements (see section 3.4.1). It is worth noting that the TrBh does not mix the *vāsanā* of a homogenous cause and the *vāsanā* of maturation with the *vāsanā* of *karman* and the *vāsanā* of twofold grasping. The TrBh clearly distinguishes the former group, associating it with the present mental continuum, and the latter, which is connected with the future life (see section 3.4.2; Diagram 3).

Last but not least, the third research question is: **How do *bīja* and *vāsanā* contribute to the soteriology of the Yogācāra school?** This question focuses on the function of *bīja* and *vāsanā* in promoting the liberation of sentient beings. Thus, the sub-question is: **Do the Yogācāras agree with a kind of *bīja* as the guarantee of obtaining liberation?** In Chapter 4, the *Śrāvakabhūmi* (ŚBh) of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBh) affirms that the lineage (*gotra*) of a Bodhisattva possesses the *bīja* of supramundane *dharma* (*lokottaradharmabīja*), which is able to attain liberation (see section 4.1.1). However, in a later layer of the YoBh, the *Pañcavijñānakāyaśaṃprayuktābhūmi* and the *Manobhūmi* in the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī*

(PMBhVin), the cause of rising supramundane *dharmas* becomes the “Suchness functioning as the condition of a cognitive object as their *bījas*” (**tathatālambanapratyayabīja*)” (see section 4.1.2).

The related sub-question is: **What should be annihilated during the progress of obtaining liberation?** The concept of *bījas* is equivalent to the afflictive and cognitive hindrances (*kleśajñeyāvaraṇa*) and the two rough difficulties (*dvidhādauṣṭhulya*). In the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (MSA) and the *Mahāyānasūtrālamkārabhāṣya* (MSABh) of Vasubandhu, the afflictive and cognitive hindrances accompany the *ālayavijñāna* as *bījas*, whereas the **Sūtralamkāravṛttibhāṣya* (*SAVBh) of Sthiramati regards them as *vāsanās* (see section 4.2.1). The two rough difficulties, on the other hand, are described as the fundamental defilements in the Tr, while the TrBh equates them with the two hindrances. Nevertheless, the content of the two rough difficulties is different in the *SAVBh. There they pertain to bodily or mental actions and are considered as the *vāsanā* of two hindrances (see section 4.2.2). Despite these differences, the importance of *vāsanās* is strengthened in both the TrBh and the SAVBh. By focusing on how to annihilate two rough difficulties/ hindrances, the Yogācāras present the “transformation of the basis” (*āśrayaparivṛtti/ āśrayaparāvṛtti*). In the MAVT, for example, the practitioner naturally realises emptiness when the “unreal imagination” is removed (see section 4.3.1). In the MSABh, the “transformation of the basis” is explained as the transformation of seeds (*bījaparāvṛtti*), since the *ālayavijñāna* contains all *bījas*. Furthermore, the *SAVBh argues that the defiled *bījas* constitute the *vāsanā* of the grasper and the grasped and the *vāsanā* of afflictive hindrance and cognitive hindrance. After abandoning all defiled *bījas*, the practitioner attains liberation by entering consciousness-only (*vijñaptimātra*) and realising the perfect nature (*pariniṣpannasvabhāva*) (see section 4.3.2).

Once the content of fundamental defilements is understood, the last sub-question is: **According to the Yogācā context, what do the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the MSg solve?** The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* are listed systematically in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSg). Thus, the next sub-question is as follows: **What kinds of *bīja* and *vāsanā* have been established in the MSg?** The *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* (MSgBh) of Vasubandhu divides the *bījas* into two categories: the external *bīja*, representing the function of maturation, and the internal *bīja*, signifying the process of rebirth (see section 4.4.2). *Bījas* and *vāsanās* also become

the functions of the *ālayavijñāna*. The *ālayavijñāna* contains six functions as *bījas*. It operates momentarily (*skad cig pa*) and continuously (*rgyun chags 'byung ba*) depending on certain conditions (*rkyen la ltos pa*) and simultaneously (*lhan cig 'byung ba*) generates a determined (*nges*) fruition from itself (*rang gi 'bras bus bsgrubs pa*) (see section 4.4.3). The *vāsanās* existing in the *ālayavijñāna* have four aspects that can be perfumed (*sgo bar byed*). The *ālayavijñāna* is stable (*brtan pa*), neutral (*lung ma bstan*), perfumable (*bsgo ba*), and stays in a strict relationship with the perfumer (*'brel pa la sgo byed*), so that it can be perfumed by manifested *dharmas* (see section 4.4.4).

Because the *ālayavijñāna* is regarded as the consciousness of all *bījas* of every *dharma*, constantly perfumed by defiled *dharmas*, the *Mahāyānasamgrahopaniṣandhāna* (MSgU), composed by the Yogācāra scholar Asvabhāva, argues that the *ālayavijñāna* is essentially defiled, so no positive *dharmas* or antidote (*pratipakṣa*) can arise from it (see section 4.4.1). To solve this problem, the MSg presents “the *vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” (*śrutavāsanā*) as the cause of attaining liberation. The Buddha directly expresses this *vāsanā* in the realm of supramundane *dharma* and serves as an antidote to annihilate the defiled *dharma* in the *ālayavijñāna*, thus becoming the *bījas* of the supramundane mind in ordinary people (see section 4.5).

Having investigated the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati on the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*, this thesis reveals that, in general, these terms are not synonymous. *Bīja* refers to the potency in one’s mental continuum, while *vāsanā* represents a dynamic power that is produced by *karman* or manifested *dharma*. In the works ascribed to Sthiramati, it is clear that the importance of *bīja* decreases, whereas *vāsanā* appears more often. Although both *bīja* and *vāsanā* are described as defilements, the latter has more power to affect the subsequent moment than the former. Hence, the MSg presents “the *vāsanā* of hearing [Buddhist teaching]” to ensure the Buddha’s teaching can be transmitted to ordinary people, becoming the cause of attaining liberation. The practice of hearing Buddhist teaching may have been introduced in the MSA, where the mind is impregnated by hearing Buddhist teachings (see section 4.5).

The Yogācāra school also utilises the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* to explain the process of conceptualisation, of rebirth, and of attaining liberation, representing the mental continuum of ordinary people: the past, the present, and the future. By expressing the relationship between

the *ālayavijñāna*, *bījas*, and *vāsanās*, the Yogācāras establish their soteriology through the *vāsanā* that connects the supramundane realm and the mundane realm and the *bīja* as the cause of attaining liberation.

5.2 Limitations of This Thesis

Although this thesis aims to offer a thorough investigation of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, it is limited by the scope of the source material and the intricate historical transmission of the Yogācāra texts.

First of all, the development of the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* is more complicated than has been presented here. The main research texts in this thesis are works that Vasubandhu wrote and Sthiramati commented on. As a result, this study does not include works ascribed to Vasubandhu but not commented on by Sthiramati, or Sthiramati's commentaries on other authors, which limits the scope of the findings.

Second, this thesis does not contend with related texts, such as the CWSL by Xuánzàng. This study quotes only a few passages from the CWSL on the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās*. However, as a commentary collecting statements of Indian Buddhist scholars, the CWSL does preserve diverse perspectives that can expand our understanding of these concepts.

Third, the translation of Sanskrit terminology to English, while accurate, is not always literal, and at times it does not capture layers of complexity due to my limited skills. On a related note, to avoid reducing their multiple meanings, I leave the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* untranslated, which does not build on the efforts of previous scholars. Furthermore, terminology in the works of Sthiramati that are preserved only in Tibetan—namely, the AKTA and the SAVBh—is ambiguous because there are no Sanskrit texts or Chinese translations to serve as references.

Finally, the transmission of the Yogācāra texts is another gap in the research. Although this thesis sets a time frame between Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, it is difficult to examine the relationship between their texts. Also, the different contents of *bīja* and *vāsanā* cannot be traced back to specific origins due to the lack of clear historical text transmission. For instance, the six functions as *bījas* (*sa bon*) and the four aspects as being perfumed (*sgo bar byed*) presented in the *Mahāyānasamgraha* (MSA) cannot be found in other texts.

In sum, this thesis solely addresses fundamental conceptions of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the

works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati. The broader, more specific aspects pertaining to other aspects of these concepts remain unaddressed, providing the basis for further investigation.

5.3 Further Research

The concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* have many implications in Buddhist thought. To investigate these influential principles further, future research might focus on three directions.

First, the concepts of *bīja* and *vāsanā* in Vasubandhu or Sthiramati's other works, such as the *Vyākhyāyukti* of Vasubandhu or the *Dasheng Zhong Guan Shi Lun* of Sthiramati, both of which deserve further attention. As works like these may only be preserved in Tibetan or Chinese, we may also acknowledge the implications of understanding *bīja* and *vāsanā* in the scope of translation studies.

Second, an investigation of the usage of the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā* in other Buddhist works is also necessary. For instance, in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, Dignāga asserts that the process of conceptualisation (*vikalpa*) is based on the *vāsanā* left by conceptualising certain objects. Similarly, in his *Pramāṇavārttika*, Dharmakīrti asserts that the object appearing in conceptualisation is the *vāsanā* deposited (*āhita*) in one's mental continuum. The connection between the process of conceptualisation and *vāsanās* is worth further exploration.

Third, how did non-Buddhists use the terms *bīja* and *vāsanā*? The Śaivism scholar Abhinavagupta (10th–11th century), for example, ascribes the term “reawakened *vāsanā*” (*vāsanāprabodha*) to the Vijñānavādins (i.e., the Yogācāras) in his *Paramārthasāra*. He then denies the claim of the Vijñānavādins that the pleasure feeling and so on are due to the *vāsanā* from beginningless time.

This thesis sheds light on the concepts of *bījas* and *vāsanās* in the works of Vasubandhu and Sthiramati, revealing their significance within this specific scope. However, future research can move forward and analyse these important concepts from wider perspectives in Buddhist or non-Buddhist texts.

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