

On the Vijñānavāda of the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*

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The text used: The *Laṅkāvatāra-Ratna-Sūtram: Sarva-Buddha-Pravacana-Hṛdayam* — a *Sanskrit Restoration* —

(Published by me in 2003, a reconstruction made from the Nanjio edition, 1923, which was critically revised according to the Guṇabhadra Chinese version, Taishō vol. 16, no. 670. Of this text 100 plus extra copies were privately printed, and have been given to fellow researchers. The whole text is divided into 120 divisions: Fascicle-Chapter I. Divisions 1–37; II. Ds. 38–84; III. Ds. 85–105; IV. Ds. 106–120. Pages and lines are shown for the N (anjio) Sanskrit edition and the (Guṇabhadra) T (aishō) Chinese edition. The underlined words show the author’s revision, and dotted lines in the square brackets indicate the words lacking in the Guṇabhadra version.)

1. The nirvāṇa thought of the mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra* seen in Faxian’s six-fascicle Chinese version is what marked a historic step forward from the understanding of nirvāṇa as a historically memorable past event, toward the understanding of it as the realization in each person of the self-awakening of human history itself, as it were. That was a conclusion reached by me after writing a paper in Japanese (and English, unpublished) with the title, “Wasn’t the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* a Central Self-Expresser in the Compilation of the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*?” (*Rinzaishū Myōshinji-ha Kyōgaku Kenkyūkiyō* no. 5, Kyoto May 2007, five chapters, 22 pp. “The Benevolently Hearted Won’t Eat Meat,” in *The Journal of the Nippon Buddhist Research Association*, vol. 72, September 2007, 12 pp., constitutes the first three chapters of the former.) The *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* (LK) has unmistakably succeeded this direction shown by the mahāyāna Nirvāṇa sūtra and made it a footing upon which to establish its own thought. That is known from the contents unfolded in the scripture:

“sarva-svabhāva-vāsanālaya-mano-manovijñāna-dṛṣṭi-vāsanā-parāvṛttir nirvāṇam ity ucyate sarva-buddhair mayā ca nirvāṇa-gati-svabhāva-śūnyatā-vastu-gocaram.” (II. D56; N98, 17-19; T492b,

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7-9) “nirvāṇam āryajñāna-pratyātmagati-gocaram śāśvatoccheda-vikalpa-bhāvābhāva-vivarjitam.”
(II. D56; N99, 1-2; T492b, 9-10)

[mahāpari-] nirvāṇam na nāśam na maraṇam vināśa-cyuti-vigatam śaraṇam adhigacchanti yogi-
naḥ / (II. D56; N99, 10; T492b, 14-15)

2. The *LK* compilers, for the purpose of summarizing important terms of Asaṅga-Vasubandhu’s vijñaptimātra thought like “pañcadharmāḥ, trayāḥ svabhāvāḥ, aṣṭau vijñānāni, and dve nairātmye” (see 2a), used such unique expressions as “svacittadrśya-” and “svacittadrśyamātra-” (2b, c). Also used were expressions related somehow to Vasubandhu’s *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣyam* (2c, d). It took up Verses Twentieth and Twenty-eighth from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptikārikāḥ* as words uttered by the Buddha and discussed them in a unique way. Introducing the contents of Verse 28, the questioner used terms of Sāṃkhya affinities in asking the reason why knowledge should not be identified with ignorance when it does not obtain any object to lean on (2e). Through the Buddha’s response difference between the Buddhist and Sāṃkhya thoughts stood out in relief. The term “svacittadharmatā,” which appears twice in Sthiramati’s *Bhāṣya* under the *Triṃśikā* Verse 28, is worth noting as an evidence that he paid such an attention to the *LK*’s viewpoint.

What attracts our attention in considering the origin of the *LK*’s “svacitta” is the fact that the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, 5 Muktakāḥ, treats it as its central term. But its usage is different; there “svacitta (one’s own mind)” is something to be brightened with the tathāgata’s ten powers, whereas in the *LK* “svacitta (mind as oneself)” stands for “ālayavijñāna” (2c. I. D16), and by “cittamātra” it means “niścitta” (2f: “acitta” in *Triṃśikā* Verse 29). In the *LK* are there only a few cases of “svacittam” (2g), while almost all other cases are either “svacittadrśya” or “svacittadrśyamātra” (2d. Frequencies). The latter means: “What appear to be external beings are nothing but the mind as oneself, discriminated and clung to as such; both the external appearances and the mind as oneself are free from their own self-nature.” Thus, the *LK* makes it its own standpoint to urge people to realize that kind of understanding as their own and to pray to have others get free from their rootless delusion.

2a. pañcadharmāḥ svabhāvāś ca vijñānāny-aṣṭa eva ca /
dve nairātmye bhavet kṛtsno mahāyāna-parigrahaḥ // (IV k56, D113; NVI k5, X k638; T511b)
nāma-nimitta-saṃkalpāḥ svabhāva-dvaya-lakṣaṇam /
samyagjñānaṃ tathātvaṃ ca pariniṣpanna-lakṣaṇam // (IV k57, D113; NVI k6, X k156; T511b)
Cf. *Madhyāntavibhāga-bhāṣyam*, ed. Gadjin Nagao, 1964, III. 13 (13b,1).

2b. pañcadharma-svabhāva-vijñāna-nairātmyadvaya-svacittadrśya-bāhyabhāva-anavabodhād vikal-

paḥ pravartate bālānāṃ na tv āryānāṃ // (IV. D113; N225, 2-4; T511a, 1-2)

2c. “ālayavijñānaṃ svacittadṛśya-deha-pratiṣṭhā-bhoga-viṣayaṃ yugapad vibhāvayati” (I. D16; N56, 7-8; T486a,13)

svacittadṛśya-dehālaya-bhoga-pratiṣṭhā ’cintya-viṣaya-deśyamāne nottrasati na samtrasati na samtrāsam āpadyate veditavyam ayam tathāgatayānābhisamaya-gotraka iti / (I. D24; N64, 15; T487b, 3-4)

svacittadṛśyam abhiniviśyamānaṃ vikalpo ’ṣṭadhā bhidyate / yaduta ālayavijñānaṃ mano manovijñānaṃ pañcavijñānakāyās ca / (IV. D113; N227, 18-19; T511b, 7-8)

Cf. *Madhyāntavibhāga-bhāṣyam*, under III. 22 (16a,1).

svacittadṛśya-bāhyārtha-parijñānād vikalpasyāśraya-parāvṛttir mahāmate mokṣo na nāśaḥ / (IV. D116; N233, 15-16; T512a, 16-17)

“svacittadṛśya-nirābhāsāvātāreṇa prajñāpāramitā-vihārānuprāptāḥ.” (I. D10; N42, 14; T483c, 23)

2d. “svacittadṛśya-mātratā ’vabodhād deha-bhoga-pratiṣṭhā-gati-vikalpātmātmīya-grāha-viviktadarśanāt...” (III. D87; N140, 1; T498b, 7-8)

“svacittadṛśyamātra-anavatāreṇa,” “-anavabodhān,” “-anavadhārīta-matayaḥ,” “-akuśalā”; “-adhigame,” “-anusāritvād,” “-avabodhād,” “-avatāraḥ,” “-avasthānād,” “-mātraṃ sampaśyan,”...

(Frequencies: “svacittam” 3; “svacittadṛśya” 49; “svacittadṛśyamātra” 44; “svacitta-vikalpa-” etc. 17: in all, 113; “cittamātra” 26: 5 in prose & 21 in verses)

2e. punar api mahāmatir āha / yat punar idam uktaṃ bhagavatā

yadā tv ālambyam arthaṃ nopalabhate jñānaṃ tadā prajñāpti (N. vijñāpti) -mātra-vyavasthānaṃ bhavati prajñāpter (N. vijñāpter) grāhyābhāvād grāhakasyāpy agrahaṇaṃ bhavati / tad-agrahaṇān na pravartate jñānaṃ prajñāpti-saṃśabdita-mātraṃ (N. vikalpa-saṃśabditaṃ) / tat kiṃ punar bhagavan bhāvānāṃ svasāmānya-lakṣaṇānyānānya-anavabodhān nopalabhate jñānaṃ / atha svasāmānya-lakṣaṇa-vaicitrya-bhāva-svabhāvābhāvān nopalabhate jñānaṃ / atha giri-parvata-kuḍya-bhū-jala-pavanāgni-vyavahitān nopalabhate jñānaṃ / athātidūra-sāmīpyān nopalabhate jñānaṃ jñeyam / atha bālāndha-vṛddha-yoga-vaikalyād indriyānāṃ jñeyārthaṃ nopalabhate jñānaṃ / ... tad yad evaṃ nopalabhate na tad bhagavan jñānaṃ ajñānaṃ eva tad vidyamānaṃ arthaṃ buddhi-vaikalyāt //

bhagavān āha / na hi tan mahāmate evaṃ ajñānaṃ bhavati jñānaṃ eva / ... svacittadṛśya-mātrāvabodhāt sadasator bāhya-bhāvābhāvāj jñānaṃ apy arthaṃ nopalabhate tad anupalambhāj jñāna-jñeyayor apravṛttir vimokṣa-trayānugamāj jñānasāpy anupalabdhiḥ / (III. D100; N169, 4-13; N170, 5-13; T502c, 8-15; T502c, 21-27)

Cf. Sthiramati: *Triṃśikāvijñāptibhāṣyam*, Sylvain Lévi, 1925, p. 43, 10-15; 19-20.:

yadā tv ālambanaṃ jñānaṃ naivopalabhate tadā /

sthitam vijñānamātratve grāhyābhāve tad-agrahāt // 28 //

iti / yasmin kāle deśanālambanaṃ avavādālambanaṃ prākṛtaṃ vā rūpa-śabdādyaḥ lāmbanaṃ vijñānaṃ bahiś-cittāt nopalabhate na paśyati na grhṇāti nābhiniśate / yathābhūtārtha-darśanāt na

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tu jātyandhavat / tasmin kāle vijñāna-grāhasya prahāṇaṃ svacitta-dharmatāyāṃ ca pratiṣṭhito bhavati / ... svacitta-dharmatāyāṃ ca cittaṃ eva sthitaṃ bhavati /

Cf. *Sāṃkhyakārikāḥ* Gauḍapāda-viracita-bhāṣya-sahitāḥ, Poona Oriental Series no. 9, 1972:

atidūrāt sāmīpyād indriya-ghātān mano 'navasthānāt /
saukṣmyād vyavadhānād abhibhavāt samānābhīhārāc ca // 7 //
saukṣmyāt tad-anupalabdhir nābhāvāt kāryatas tad-upalabdhīḥ /
mahad-ādi tac ca kāryaṃ prakṛti-virūpaṃ sarūpaṃ ca // 8 //

2f. ālambālambya-vigataṃ yadā paśyati saṃskṛtaṃ /

niścittaṃ cittaṃ mātraṃ hi cittaṃ mātraṃ vadāmy aham // *Laṅkā* III, k. 25 (NIII k25, X k479)
Gaṇḍavyūhasūtram, 5 Muktaḥ, Vaidya ed. 1980, pp. 66-67.

“svacittam evāvabhāsavitavyaṃ daśa-tathāgata-balaiḥ” (p. 67, 11)

Cf. NAMAI Chishō: 〈svacittādhiṣṭhāna〉 *ni tsuite-Kegongyō ni okeru Bodaishin-setsu to yū kanten kara* — *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* vol. 43, no. 2, March 1995, pp. 66-67.

2g. “svacittaṃ samādhāya” (I. D18; N58, 8)

“apravṛtti-vikalpasya svacittaṃ paśyate jagat” (III, D104, k65cd; N182, III k66, X k660)

3. The *LK* concept “tathāgatagarbha-śabda-saṃśabdītālayavijñānam” is considered to have been composed so as to clarify the standpoint unique to the Buddhist thought through criticizing the Sāṃkhya dualism centered on the two principles, puruṣa and prakṛti (pradhāna). The term “tathāgatagarbha” means the womb or source for all the buddha-tathāgatas (“garbhas tathāgatānām,” IV. Verse 52a; NVI. Verse 1a), which further means “tathatā” (thusness, as the true way of being). Then the whole concept means “ālayavijñāna as the unawakened tathatā.” In the case of the awakened tathatā the *LK* has the expression, “pariṇiṣpanna-svabhāvas tathāgatagarbha-hṛdayam (“essence attained”).” (I. D27; NII, 68,1; T487c, 14-15)

Meanwhile, there has been a pseudo-Sāṃkhya interpretation which identifies tathāgatagarbha with puruṣa, and separates it from ālayavijñāna, as a shining “tathāgata-embryo” hidden in the dark clouds of ālayavijñāna. The *LK*, at the beginning of Fascicle II, rejects that kind of interpretation (3a), and in Fascicle IV introduces the above concept in detail (3b), as if it had directly come from the *Srīmālādevī-simhanāda-sūtra* (3c).

3a. na hi mahāmate tīrthakarātma-vāda-tulyo mama tathāgatagarbhopadeśaḥ / kiṃ tu mahāmate tathāgatāḥ sūnyatā 'nimittāpraṇihita-tathatā-bhūtakoṭi-dharmatā-dharmakāya-nirvāṇa-niḥsvabhāvānutpādānirodha-prakṛtīvivikta-prakṛtiparinirvṛtādyānām mahāmate padārthānām tathāgatagarbhopadeśaṃ kṛtvā tathāgatā arhantaḥ samyaksambuddhā bālānām nairātmya-saṃtrāsapada-vivarjitārthaṃ nirvikalpa-nirābhāsa-gotraṃ tathāgatagarbha-mukhopadeśena deśayanti / ... ātma-vādābhiniṣṭhānām tīrthakarānām ākarṣaṇārthaṃ tathāgatagarbhopadeśena nirdiśanti / kathaṃ vata abhūtātma-vikalpa-dṛṣṭi-patitāśayā vimokṣa-traya-gocara-patitāśayopetāḥ kṣipram

anuttarāṃ samyaksaṃbodhim abhisambudhyerann iti / ...

anyathā etan bhavet tīrthakarātma-vāda-tulyam / tasmāt tarhi mahāmate tīrthakara-drṣṭi-vinivṛty-arthaṃ tathāgata-nairātmya-garbhānusāriṇā ca te bhavitavyam // (II. D38; N78, 5-11; N79, 1-5; N79, 7-9; T489b, 3-10; T489b, 15-17; T489b, 18-20)

3b. bhagavān tasyaitad avocat /

tathāgatagarbho mahāmate kuśalākuśala-hetukaḥ sarva-gati-janma-kartā pravartate naṭavad gati-saṃkātāḥ / ātmātmīya-varjitas tad-anavabodhāt trisaṅgati-pratyaya-kriyāyogaḥ pravartate/ na ca tīrthyā avabudhyante kāraṇābhiniveśābhiniṣṭāḥ / anādikāla-vividha-prapañca-dauṣṭhulya-vāsanā-vāsita ālayavijñāna-saṃśabdito 'vidyā-vāsa-bhūmi-jaiḥ saptair vijñānaiḥ saha mahodadhi-taraṅga-van nityam avyucchinna-śarīraḥ pravartate anityatā-doṣa-rahita ātmavāda-vinivṛtto atyanta-prakṛty- [amala-] pariśuddhiḥ / ...

tathāgatagarbhaḥ pañcadharma-svabhāva-pudgala-dharma-nairātmya-darśanān nivartate / ...

tasmāt tarhi mahāmate tathāgatagarbha ālayavijñāna-saṃśabdito viśodhayitavyo viśeṣārthibhir bodhisattva-mahāsattvaiḥ //...

mahāmate ayam tathāgatagarbhālayavijñāna-gocaraḥ sarva-śrāvaka-pratyekabuddha-vitarkadarśanānāṃ prakṛti-viśuddho 'pi sann aśuddha ivāgantukleśopakliṣṭatayā teṣāṃ ābhāti na tu tathāgatānāṃ / tathāgatānāṃ punar mahāmate karatalāmalaka-vat pratyakṣa-gocaro bhavati // (IV. D112; N220, 9 ~N221, 1; N222, 6-8; N222, 14-18; T510b, 4-10; T510b, 26-27; T510c, 1-4)

3c. etad evārthaṃ mahāmate saṃdhāya mayā śrīmālāṃ devīm adhiḥkṛtya [deśanā-pāṭhe] 'nyāṃś ca sūkṣma-nipuṇa-viśuddha-buddhīn bodhisattvān adhiṣṭhāya tathāgatagarbha ālayavijñāna-saṃśabditāḥ saptabhir vijñānaiḥ saha pravartata ity upadiṣṭo 'bhiniṣṭānāṃ śrāvakānāṃ pudgala-dharma-nairātmya-pradarśana-arthaṃ / śrīmālāṃ devīm adhiṣṭhāya tathāgata-viśayo deśito na śrāvaka-pratyekabuddhānya-tīrthakara-tarka-viśayaḥ / (IV. D112; N222, 19-N223, 1-5; T510c, 4-8)

3d. III. D105; N182~186; T504c~505a: nos. 8 & 17 / IV. D109; N205~209; T508b~509c: nos. 1 & 2

(4. Omitted are details of my consideration on the date of the *Vyākhyāyukti*, whose author did not know Guṇabhadra's four-fascicle text, translated in 443. The date must have been after some time before 513 when Bodhiruci's version came out, and before 700-704 when Śikṣānanda's translation was made.)

Reference book for 2: TAKASAKI Jikidō: *Ryōgakyō*, Daizōshuppan, Buttenkōza vol. 17, 1979, Introduction IV.

⟨Key words⟩ nirvāṇa, svacittadrśya, svacittadrśyamātra, tathāgatagarbha

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