

Dharmatā, Dharmadhātu, Dharmakāya and Buddhadhātu

—Structure of the Ultimate Value
in Mahāyāna Buddhism—

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I

Fundamental structure of Buddhism may be summarized in the following way: The Buddha, having realized the Dharma by himself, preached the Dharma for the sake of others. The Dharma realized by the Buddha through introspection is said to be the law of causation (*pratītyasamutpāda*), which is explained through Buddha's voice in the form of the four *āryasatyas* and others.

In this structure, the ultimate value in Buddhism is fundamentally the Dharma, the truth, and the Buddha is merely a mediator who conveyed the truth to the people by means of words understandable to them. As for the religious feeling, however, the Buddha is considered to be the ultimate value, the object of worship, since he is the law-giver and the practical ideal in the sense that one should attain Enlightenment (*bodhi*) (i. e. to become *buddha*) through Buddha's instruction, the Dharma. Thus the Buddha is the first of the *triratna*, and the Dharma comes the second, which is used to be interpreted as the Buddha's instruction (*buddhaśāsa*) of which the authority is in the Buddha himself. But, again, the Buddha's authority lies in the belief that the Buddha revealed the truth, and on this belief the Buddha is called *tathāgata*, thus gone or come, which is interpreted as having become one with the truth or reality (*tathatā*).

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Thus the Buddhist ultimate value is of a combined character of the subjective or practical ideal represented by the Buddha, and the objective or theoretical truth represented by the Dharma, both being inseparable with each other. The best formula to show such a structure is found in a Scripture :

yaḥ prattīyasamutpādaṃ paśyati sa dharmaṃ paśyati, yo dharmaṃ paśyati sa buddhaṃ paśyati | (Śālistambā⁽¹⁾)

II

The investigation of such fundamental structure of the Buddhist ultimate value was the task to be done by the followers after the death of their preceptor. But the Abhidharma Buddhism was not enough to engage in this task since it was mainly aiming at the interpretation of the *dharma*, the Buddha's teaching, which resulted in an objective understanding of the *dharma* and the subjective purpose was neglected. The Buddha has gradually become super-humanised, but the link between the Buddha and the followers has been lost and the link between the Buddha and the truth has been forgotten. The motive of the Mahāyāna Buddhism was to recover these two kinds of links and to make the Buddha the ultimate value which involves both the subjective and the objective aspects.

In the course of making the Mahāyānist system of thought, however, the first efforts were mainly devoted to establish the correct concept of the Buddhist truth against the Abhidharmic '*sarvadharma-asti*' concept. The term *śūnyatā* was its answer, and, being representing *prattīyasamutpāda*, the truth revealed by the Buddha, this *śūnyatā* is called '*dharmaṇaṃ dharmatā*' or '*tathatā*', '*tattvasya lakṣaṇa*', '*bhūtakoti*', etc. Here, '*dharma*'⁽²⁾

(1) Ed. by Aiyaswami Sastri, Adyar, 1950, p. 1. Cf. Pāli SN: *yo kho Vakkali dhammam passati so mam passati/ yo mam passati so dhammam passati/* MN, I, 190-1: *yo paṭiccasamuppādaṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati, yo dhammaṃ passati so paṭiccasamuppādaṃ passati/*

(2) As for the usages of these terms and their inter-relation, see Prof. H.

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in plural means 'sarvadharmāḥ', all things or phenomena, as told in the Abhidharma Buddhism, while the *dharmā* as the truth is meant by the term *dharmatā*. This term meant originally the nature or natural condition and thus it is synonymous with 'prakṛti', 'svabhāva', etc. Such a meaning is common to the Abhidharma Buddhism⁽³⁾, but the Mahāyānist, defining the nature of things as *sūnya* or *niḥsvabhāva*, removed substantial concept from this term. A typical formula to show that *dharmatā*⁽⁴⁾ signifies the truth, i. e. the *pratītyasamutpāda* is found in the *Śālistambā*:

tatra bhagavatā pratītyasamutpāda-lakṣaṇaṃ samkṣepeṇoktam/ idaṃpratyatā -phalam utpādād vā tathāgatānāṃ auutpādād vā sthitaivaiśaṃ dharmāṇāṃ dharmatā yāvad yaiśa dharmatā dharmasthititā dharmaniyāmataḥ pratītyasamutpāda-samatā tathatā aviparīta-tathatā bhūtataḥ satyatā aviparītatā aviparyayataḥ iti||

As easily noticed, this formula has its source in the Agama of the Primitive Buddhism. Namely, in the *Samyutta Nikāya*, we find the following sentences referring to the *pratītyasamutpāda*:⁽⁵⁾

jātipaccayā, bhikkhave, jarāmaraṇaṃ uppādaṃ vā tathāgatānaṃ anuppādaṃ vā tathāgatānaṃ/ titha'va sā dhātu dhammatthitā dhammaniyāmataḥ idappaccayatā/

These sentences are found in a passage where a comparison between the *paṭiccasamuppāda* (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and *paṭiccasamuppannā dhammā* (*pratītyasamutpanna-dharmāḥ*) is discussed, the latter being represented by each *aṅga* of the 12 chains of causation, *avidyā*, etc. The term *pratītyasamutpanna-dharmāḥ* is, however, nothing but a name for all phenomena, mental and material as well, according to the Buddhist truth conception, namely, all the phenomena is made its appearance by cause

Nakamura's article in the "Kegon Shisho", Kyoto, 1960, pp. 95-127, where the research is done around a Chinese term '諸法實相'.

(3) e. g. *Abhidharmakośa-vyākhyā*: *dharmatā dharmaprakṛtir dharmasvabhāvo dharmasāilīty arthaḥ*. (Wogihara's Ed., p. 181)

(4) Aiyaswami Sastri's Ed., p. 4 cf. *Prasannapada* (ed. by. de la Vallée Poussin), p. 40. n. 2.

(5) SN, II, p. 25.

and conditions.

In comparison with this Pāli passage, the term *dharmatā* in the *Śālistamba* is understood to be a word for *sā dhātu*⁽⁶⁾, both being explained as '*dharmasthithitatā*', '*dharmaniyāmatā*⁽⁶⁾', while '*dharmāṇām*' may be interpreted as '*pratītyasamutpannāṇām dharmāṇām*'.

The term *dhātu*, being a derivative from the root \sqrt{dha} , has the meaning 'that which places or sustains something (*adhāra*)', and hence, has a similar concept with *dharma*. It can stand for *dharma* in the sense of rule, principle or truth. But the independent use of this term in this sense as observed here (*ñhitā va sā dhātu*) is rather rare in the Primitive Buddhism, and, throughout the Abhidharma Buddhism, the concept of 'element' 'essence' or 'essential' nature' is predominantly applied to this term as observed in terms such as '18 *dhātus*'⁽⁷⁾, etc. In other words, it was understood as something substantial. This is probably the reason why the Śūnyavāda avoided the use of this term and accepted the term *dharmatā* instead, which is of more abstract character in its verbal construction (*dharma*+*tā*)⁽⁸⁾.

(6) '*dharma*' in these compound words, may be interpreted as 'nature' (*svabhāva*). These terms are often used to show the eternity of the truth. e. g. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka: dharma-sthitiṃ dharmaniyāmatāṃ ca nityasthāpitāṃ loki imāṃ akampyāṃ* (Wogihara's Ed., p: 51) Also noticable is that the phrase '*utpādād vā tathāgatānāṃ anutpādād vā (tathāgatānāṃ)*' is idiomatically used when any statement concerning the truth is expressed. Examples will be seen below.

(7) Pali commentary interprets this '*sā dhātu*' as '*paccaya-sabhāva*'. Various meaning of this term is discussed in the *Vissuddhimagga* (HOS Ed. p. 411-2) Of these informations, see Prof. K. Kawata's article in the *Komaza Daigaku Kenkyu Kiyo* No. 21, pp. 25-31. But notice that '*dhātu*' does not mean literally '*pratyaya*' or '*pratītyasamutpāda*'.

(8) For example, the use of the term *dhātu* as such important sense is not observed in the *Madhyamakakārikā*. (See the index, a supplement to the "*Daijibukkyo no Seiritsushiteki Kenkyu*", Comp by S. Miyamoto, Tokyo, 1954)

III

It was in the Sūtras and Śāstras composed after the establishment of the Śūnyavāda by Nāgārjuna that the term *dhātu* recovered its place among terms which show the ultimate value in objective aspect. A good example is found in the *Sandhinirmocana* :

de la de bshin gśeḡs pa rnams byuñ yañ ruñ/ ma byuñ yañ ruñ ste/ chos gnas par bya baḡi phyir chos ñid gañ yin pa de ni chos ñid kyi rigs pa yin nol/
 (= **tatra utpādād vā tathāgatānām anutpādād vā dharmasthāpanāya yā dharmatā dhātu-sthititā sā dharmatāyuktiḡ*)⁽⁹⁾

The reference is the definition of the *dharmatā-yukti* being a mode of argument in which the *dharmatā* is used as *rukti* (or *nyāya*, *naya*)⁽¹⁰⁾. But the attention should be paid to the use of the term *dhātu-sthititā* (or *-sthitatā*) which seems to be synonymous with '*ḡhitā*' *va sā dhātu*' or '*dharmatḡhitatā*' in the Pāli scripture. A further concrete explanation of this idea is observed in the *Laṅkāvatāra*. Namely, explaining the statement of 'avacana' of the Buddha between the night of Mahābodhi and that of Mahāparinirvāṇa, it refers to the two characteristics of the *dharma* as '*pratyātma-dharmatā*' and '*paurāṇasthiti-dharmatā*'. In the definition of the latter, it says as follows:⁽¹¹⁾

dharmadhātu-sthititotpādād vā tathāgatānām anutpādād vā tathāgatānām sthitaivaiḡḡḡ dharmāṇām dharmatā dharmasthititā dharmaniyāmatā paurāṇanagarapathavat/

And again:⁽¹²⁾

evem eva, Mahāmate, tan mayā taiḡ ca tathāgatair adhigataḡ, sthitai- vaiḡḡ dharmatā dharmasthititā dharmaniyāmatā tathatā bhūtātā satyātā/

(9) Ed. par E. Lamotte, p. 158. (Sanskrit reduction is my own.)

(10) Cf. *Ratnōtravibhāga*, p. 73 (ed. by Johnston, 1950): (—*dharmāṇām dharmatā*—) *yaiva cāsau dharmatā saivātra yuktir yoga upāyaḡ paryāyaḡ/ evam eva tat syāt/ anythā naiva tat syād iti/*

(11) Ed. by Nanjio, p. 143

(12) *ibid*, p. 144

This *paurāṇasthitidharmatā* is no doubt a synonym of ‘*dharmāṇām dharmatā*’ or the truth concerning phenomena, which is revealed by the Buddha as ‘*pratītyasamutpāda*’. Being revealed by introspection, the same *dharmatā* is called ‘*pratyātma-dharmatā*’, i. e., ‘*tathāgatair adhigataṃ svapratyātmagatigocaram*’⁽¹³⁾. This definition of the truth in two aspects is unique to this Sūtra and quite important in showing the subjective-objective relation within the ultimate value. As for the point in discussion, notable is the introduction of the concept *dharmadhātu*.

The term *dharmadhātu*, here, may be interpreted as the nature (*dhātu*) of thing (*dharma*), or the truth concerning things. Any way it is understandable in the same context with the phrase ‘*dharmāṇām dharmatā*’ (a Ṣaṣṭi-tatpuruṣa compound). But the usage and definition of this term in the Abhidharma Buddhism is ‘the element (*dhātu*) called *dharma*’ (a Karmadhāraya comp.), which, being one of the 18 *dhātus*, signifies the object (*viśaya*) of *manas*, or the basis of cognition (*ālabhana*) of *manovijñāna*.’ In the narrow sense, it excludes the *dharmas* belonging to other 17 *dhātus*, but, as everything knowable is perceived by *manas* directly or indirectly, all things all phenomena could be called *dharmadhātu* when they are cognised by the mind. Thus the *dharmadhātu* signifies the whole phenomenal world or the universe, i. e. *sarvadharmāḥ*. In this sense, ‘*dhātu*’ may be translated into ‘sphere’ or ‘region’, of which similar uses are found in such terms as *lokadhātu*, *trāidhātuka*, etc.

Thus the *dharmadhātu* has two characteristics, the one being the *dharmatā*, i. e. the law of *pratītyasamutpāda*, and the other being *sarvadharmāḥ*, i. e. the whole sphere of *pratītyasamutpanna-dharmāḥ*. Remarkable is the combination of the two aspects of *dharma* in one word, such being not the case with the term *dharmatā*. As for the term *dharmatā*, it is used for distinguishing the first aspect from the second as observed in the *Dharmadharmatā-vibhāga*, where the *dharmas* to be abandoned (*prahātavya*), i. e. those belonging to the world of *saṃsāra* is meant by ‘*dharma*’,

(13) *ibid.* p. 143

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while the *dharma* to be realized (*sākṣātkaṛaṇīya*), i. e. the truth or the ideal state of *nirvāṇa* is meant by '*dharmatā*'.⁽¹⁴⁾ Naturally it caused to make use of this term in the sense of 'logical ground' as observed in the example of the *Sandhinirmocana* mentioned above, such use being not found in the case of '*dharmadhātu*'. What is identified with the *dharmata* of this last sense is '*dharmadhātu-sthititā*', but not '*dharmadhātu*' itself, as appeared in the example of the *Laṅkāvatāra*.

Then what is the significance of the use of the term *dharmadhātu* of such double characteristics. It may be summed up in three points. namely 1) the possitive evaluation of the *sarvadharmā*, 2) the emphasis of the subject value behind this evaluation, and 3) reintroduction of a kind of substantial concept in its outlook. These points are inseparable with each other, and are generally created by the reintroduction of the Abhidharmic doctrine, but with modification on the basis of the Śūnyavāda. As for the first point, we must remember first of all a fundamental idea of Indian thought in general that 'that which holds its nature (or quality, attribute), i. e. *dharma*' (*dharmīn*) is also called '*dharma*'. (It may be termed the Bahuvrīhi concept).⁽¹⁵⁾ The definition of '*dharma*' in the Abhidharma Buddhism is just along this line, and the *saṃskṛta dharma* (it stands for *pratītyasamutpanna-dharma*) is claimed its reality (*astitva*) with the same right as the *asaṃskṛta-dharma* which stands for the *prati-*

(14) The opening stanza and the following sentences of the *Dharmadharmatāvibhāga* goes as follows (in Tibetan): */gañ phyir śes nas ḡgaḡ shig spañ bya shin// gshan dag ḡgaḡ shig mñon sum bya baḡi phyir/ |des na de dag mtshan ñid las rnam dbye/ |byed par ḡdod nas bstan bcos ḡdi mdsad do// ḡdi dag tham cad ni ḡñis kyis bsduś de/ chos tañ chos ñid kyis so// chos kyi ñe bar mtshon pa ni ḡkhor baḡo// chos ñid kyis ñe bar mtshon pa ni theḡ pa gsum gyi mya ñan las ḡdas paḡo//* (Edited by J. Nozawa, the "Studies in Indology and Buddhology, presented in Honour of Prof. S. Yamaguchi on the Occasion of his Sixties Birthday, Kyoto, 1955, p. 11.) Cf. S. Takeuchi's article in JIBS, vol. VI-1, p. 205.

(15) e. g. *saṃskṛiyate anena iti saṃskārah; saṃskṛiyate etad iti saṃskārah*. Cf. Th. Stcherbatsky, "The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa", p. 11, fn. 1. The same structnre is observed between cause and result, means and purpose.

tyasamutpāda and by the term *sarvadharma* both kinds of *dharma* are included. Thus *dharmadhātu* being *sarvadharmāḥ* may represent exclusively the *saṃskṛtadharmā* as 'dharmin' on the one hand, and the total of *saṃskṛta* and *asaṃskṛta-dharmas* on the other hand. From the practical or subjective standpoint, however, *saṃskṛtadharmā* which represents *saṃsāra* is denied of its value and distinguished from the *asaṃskṛtadharmā* which represents *nirvāṇa*, while the latter is understood as nothingness in its content. The Mahāyānist conception is quite opposite in this point. It denies the reality of *sarvadharma*, but positively evaluates the latter as expressed in the idea of the oneness of the *nirvāṇa* and the *saṃsāra*, by the reason that everything is nothing but a manifestation of the ultimate reality. Thus the *sarvadharma* is called *dharmadhātu* because it is the manifestation of the latter. To this, again we must remember the Abhidharmic definition that the *dharmadhātu* is the object of the mind. By the denial of the reality of *sarvadharmāḥ*, only the mental element (*citta*, *manas*, or *viññāna*) could remain as the reality. This leads to the idealism of the *cittamātrātā* and the *viññaptimātratā*, to which we will refer later on. To the present concern, notable is that the ultimate reality should be of the mental character or of the subjective value. In other words, there is expected the existence of the ultimate reality of the subjective value which represents the *dharmadhātu*, or the 'dharmin' of the *dharmadhātu*, the truth.

To this last point, notable is the definition of the *dharmadhātu* given in the Mahāyāna texts. The most common one is that the *dharmadhātu* means the origin or cause (*dhātu=hetu*) of the *āryadharmā*, the teaching of the Buddha⁽¹⁶⁾. It seems that here is implied the ultimate value of the

(16) e. g. the *Madhyāntavibhāga-bhāṣya*: *āryadharma-hetutvād dharmadhātuḥ/ āryadharmanān tad-ālambana-prabhavatvāt/ hetv-artho hy atra dhātu-arthāḥ/* (ed. by G. Nagao, Tokyo, 1964, p. 23 f.); Sthiramati on the *Triṃśikā Viññaptimātratā*: *āryadharma-hetutvād dhātuḥ/ hetv-artho hy atra dhātuśabdhaḥ/* (ed. by S. Lévi, p. 44) The latter refers actually to 'anāsravadhātu', which is in its turn, almost synonymous with *dharmadhātu* as the ultimate value.

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Buddha over the *dharma*, since the Buddha as the *dharma*-giver is worth to be called the source of the *dharma*. The term for the Buddha as the source of the *dharma* is the *dharmakāya*. An example to show the *dharma*-*makāya* of this character is observed in a verse of the *Ratnagotravibhāga*:⁽¹⁷⁾

*dharmakāya dvidhā jñeyā dharmadhātuḥ sunirmalaḥ/
tanniṣyandaś ca gāmbhīrya-vaicitryanaya-deśanā*|| (v. I, 145)

Commenting on this, the text explains that the first aspect stands for the *pratyātma-adhigamadharmā*, while the second, for the *deśanādharmā* which is the *niṣyanda* of the *dharmadhātu* as well as the cause to attain it (*tatprāptihetu*). This explanation reminds us of the fundamental structure of Buddhism, to which we referred at the beginning. But the conception involved in the term *dharmakāya* is quite complicated especially in its relation to the *dharmadhātu*. We must go further to investigate this subject in the next paragraph.

IV

The first use of the term *dharmakāya* seems to go back to the Primitive Buddhism, only one example being found in the *Dīgha Nikāya*,⁽¹⁸⁾ where it is used as a synonym (*adhivacana*) of *tathāgata*. Its exact meaning is not clear, but from the context that it appears together with such terms as ‘*dhammaja*’ ‘*dhamma-nimitta*’ *dhamma-dāyāda*’ and ‘*dhamma-bhūta*’, it seems to mean ‘the one whose body is the *dharma*, i. e, the teaching in which is combined the sense of truth’. It matches well with what we referred to above and shows its ‘*dharmin* concept’ by origin. But the Abhidharmic interpretation of this term was ‘the body consisting of the 5 collections (*skandha*), beginning with *śīla*’ being the nature of the Buddha, which distinguishes the Buddha from the ordinary *sattvas* who consist of the 5 *skandhas* beginning with *rūpa*. On the basis of this

(17) Ed. by Johnston, p. 70.

(18) DN III, p. 84: *Bhagavato ‘mhi putto oraso mukhato jāto dhammajō dhammanimittō ti. Taṃ kissa hetu? Tathāgatassa h’etaṃ, Vāseṭṭha, adhivacanam dhammakāyo iti pi brahmakāyo iti pi, dhammabhūto iti pi brahmabhūto iti pi*||

Dharmatā, Dharmadhātu, Dharmakāya and Buddhadhātu (J. TAKASAKI) (87) analysis, the Mahāyāna Buddhism developed its idea to the Buddha as representing the truth itself, in contrast to the *rūpakāya* which signifies the historical Buddha but is considered to be of a secondary value. Thus the *dharmakāya* recovered its original character by the effort of the Mahāyānist.

The systematic investigation on the *dharmakāya* started after Nāgārjuna along with the introduction of the concept of *dharmadhātu*. Identification of the *dharmakāya* with the *dharmadhātu* gave the former many meanings. Of them, the identification in the aspect of the truth may be understandable from what we observed above. One point to be noted here is that there is a kind of substantial character retained by the *dharmakāya* due to its identification with *dharmadhātu* as representing the whole sphere of *dharma*s, as observed in such a phrase as '*dharmadhātuvipulā ākāśadhātu-paryavasāna aparāntakoṭi-niṣṭhā*' which is frequently used in the *Avatamsaka*. This idea is probably a result of religious sentiment of Buddhist who regarded the Buddha as the universal god. Doctrinally it is interpreted to signify the unlimited extension⁽²⁰⁾ of the Buddha's light of *jñāna* in time and space, of which symbolic features are the Buddha Vairocana, the Buddha Amitābha, and so on.

This last point that the *jñāna* is considered to be the essential character of the *dharmakāya* is quite significant since it is unique to the *dharmakāya* being the subjective ultimate value and is not associated in the concept of *dharmadhātu* itself. From this standpoint, the *dharmakāya* may be interpreted as 'the Body consisting of virtuous qualities (*dharma*) required as the result of enlightenment (*bodhi*)'. The *dharma*s as such are to be called generally *buddhadharma*' as used in the case of the 18 *āveṇikabuddhadharmāḥ*. The *jñāna* is no doubt one of them and is often referred to as *buddhajñāna*, *tathāgatajñāna* or *tathāgatabodhijñāna*. At

(19) e. g. *Daśabhūmika* (Rahder's Ed., p. 14)

(20) With reference to this, the character of the *dharmakāya* is often called '*yāvadbhāvikatā*', while that representing truth is the called '*yathāvatbhāvikatā*'. Cf. *Sandhinirmocana*, p. 98, 99; *Ratnagotravibhāga*, pp. 14-15.

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the same time it is the necessary means (*upāya*) of *bodhi*, on the cause of attainment of *bodhi*⁽²¹⁾ in the sense 'that by which is attained'. Thus the *jñāna* has again a double character, means and purpose or cause and result combined in one. Such two aspects of *jñāna* is referred to by terms *prajñā* and *jñāna*, or *avikalpajñāna* and *tatprṣṭhalabdha* respectively. This, structure just corresponds to that of *dharmakāya* and *dharmadhātu* observed above, and applying the latter, the *prajñā* (= *prajñāparamitā*) or *avikalpajñāna* is said to be representing the truth, *adhigamadharmā*, *paramārthasatya*, *jñāna* as *svārthasampatti*, of the *lokottara* character, *yathāvadbhāvikatā*, etc., while the *prṣṭhalabdha-jñāna*, representing the universe or the whole entity, *deśanādharmā*, *saṃvṛti* or *vyavahārasatya*, *karuṇā* as *parārthasampatti*, of *laukita* character, *yāvadbhāvikatā*, etc. from various aspects, respectively.⁽²²⁾

In relation to this, notable here is the idea of the threefold body of the Buddha. (*trividhabuddhakāya*). As easily understood, the division of the *buddhakāya* into the *dharmakāya* and the *rūpakāya* corresponds to the double characteristics of *jñāna*. Namely the latter represents the Buddha for *parārthasampatti* giving *deśanā* for *sattvas*, based on his *karuṇā* while the *dharmakāya* in this sense stands for the Buddha as the *svārthasampatti*, whose essence is the *jñāna*. This *rūpakāya* is again divided into two according to its function, the *sambhoga-kāya* for *bodhi sattvas* and the *nirmāṇakāya* for ordinary *sattvas*. There is, however, many problems about the *trividha-buddhakāya* among Mahāyāna texts, especially around the *sambhogakāya*. To discuss it is rather beyond our purpose here. We will refer to just one point in relation to the concept of the *dharmakāya*.

The *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, referring to the '*dharmadhātu-viśuddha*',

(21) '*prāpyate anena iti prāptiḥ*' (*Ratnagotravibhāga*, p. 79) This is referred to in explaining *jñāna* as representing the *hetu* aspect of the *dharmakāya*. See n. 15 above.

(22) See for example the passages from the *Ratnagotravibhāga* referred to in nn. 17, 20, 21.

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regards the threefold *buddhakāya* as its manifestation (*vr̥tti*), namely:

*svabhāva-dharmasambhoga-nirmāṇair bhinnavṛttikaḥ/
dharmadhātur viśuddho 'yaṃ buddhānāṃ samudāhṛtaḥ||*

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The same set of the threefold *buddhakāya* is explained in the *Ratnago-*
travibhāga as the manifestation of the *dharmakāya*.⁽²⁴⁾ And we know that
the *svabhāva-kāya* (*svābhāvika*) is the name for the *dharmakāya* as repre-
senting the pure *dharmadhātu*. This leads us to remind another kind of
double aspects of the *dharmakāya*, one being the truth itself, and the other
being the acquisition of the realization just the same as the division of
the *dharmatā* into *paurāṇasthiti-* and *pratyātma-* in the *Laṅkāvatara* referred
to above. Also the *Buddhabhūmisūtra*, probably utilizing the verse of the
Mahāyanasūtrālaṅkāra and its explanation of the 4 *buddhajñāna* beginning
with the *adarśajñāna*, regards the pure *dharmadhātu* and the 4 *buddha-*
jñāna together as the 5 *dharmas* (element)⁽²⁵⁾ of the *buddhabhūmi*. It seems
to remove the *jñāna* aspect from the *dharmadhātu*, and this problem relates
to the definition of the second *buddhāya* as *dharmasambhoga*. But the later
Tantric Buddhism regards the 5 *dharmas* of the *Buddhabhūmi* as the fivefold
jñāna of the Buddha Mahāvairocana.⁽²⁶⁾

V

Now we must proceed to the last and most important subject derived
from the concept of the *dharmakāya* as representing the *buddhajñāna*.
This *jñāna* aspect, as observed above, is to be termed 'the result aspect'
in its relation to the *dharmadhātu* aspect. From the religious or practical
point of view, however, there is a quite different kind of relationship
around the *dharmakāya*. Namely being the *buddha*, it stands in opposition
to the *sattvas* who are to be characterized as 'abuddha' or 'bodhya'.⁽²⁷⁾ In

(23) Ed. by S.Lévi, p. 44

(24) The Ratna., p. 85

(25) The *Buddhabhūmisūtra* and its *Vyakhyana*, ed. by K. Nishio, Nagoya, 1940.

(26) The *Mahāvairocanasūtra*. Cf. Kawata, op. cit., p. 38

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this relationship, the *dharmakāya* represents the *nirvāṇa* as the practical purpose of the *sattvas* who are actually wandering in the *saṃsāra*. Being as such, how is it possible to find out the link between the both, or the character common to both? In one sense this is the problem how to understand the idea of the identification of *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*,

The answer is given by introducing the 'dharmadhātu-sarvadharmā relationship' as referred to above (III). Namely, the *dharmakāya* being the universal entity pervades (*pari √sphar*, or *sarvatraga*) or penetrates into (*pra √viś*) every *sattva*, or nobody exists outside of the *dharmakāya*, and hence the nature of the Buddha and the nature of the *sattva* is the same. Therefore the Buddha's nature exists in every *sattva*, only the difference is that this nature is hidden and unknown to *sattvas*. The *Avataṃsakasūtra* explained this structure of the *dharmakāya* and its relation to the *sattva* in the term of *tathāgatajñāna* with analogy of the whole universe concealed within an atom.⁽²⁹⁾ On this basis, the *Tathāgata-garbhāsūtra* gave the *sattva* the name of *tathāgatagarbha* in the sense that the *sattva* is the embryo of the *tathāgata* or he is possessed of the embryo of the *tathāgata* within him. The statement of '*sarvasattvās tathāgatagarbhāḥ*, as the truth (*dharmāṇām dharmatā*) followed to this explanation.⁽³⁰⁾

What is involved in this concept was previously sought for by terms,

(27) e. g. 'abudhabodhanārtham, (The *Ratna*. p. 7, 1. 10, abudha=abuddha); *bodhyaṃ bodhis tadaṅgāni bodhanēti* (ibid. p. 25, 1. 4)

(28) In the Buddhist term on the *hetu-phala* relation, it is to be called '*vipaka*' relation. Doctrinally, however, the Buddha is regarded as '*viśamyoḡa*'-*phala*. While the relation between two aspects of *dharmakāya*, *dharmadhātu*, etc. is to be termed '*niṣyanda*, relation. The answer to be given to this question is to interpret it by this *niṣyanda* relation.

(29) Quoted in the *Ratna*, pp. 22-24. Cf. J. Takasaki: *The Tathāgatotpattism-bhavanirdeśa of the Avataṃsaka and the Ratnagotravibhāga*, JIBS, Vol. VII-1.

(30) Quotation in the *Ratna*; p. 73: *yathoktam| eṣā kulaputra dharmāṇām dharmatā utpādād vā tathāgatajñānam anutpādād vā sadaivaite sattvās tathāgatagarbhā iti*/ See n. 10 above.

Dharmatā, Dharmadhātu, Dharmakāya and Buddhadhātu (J. TAKASAKI) (91)
⁽³¹⁾*cittaprakṛti* and ⁽³²⁾*tathāgatagotra*. The former, standing in contrast to the concept of ‘*āgantuka-kleśa*’, reminds us of the idea of *cittamātra*, in its negation of reality of *kleśa*, while the latter whose literary meaning is the family (*kula*) or the lineage (*vaṃśa*) of the *tathāgata*, reminds us of the concept of *dhātu* as the classifying principle of groups. In these respects and as the logical conclusion of the explanation given above, this *tathāgatagarbha* is duly to be termed ‘*dhātu*’ in any respect. Thus the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, on the basis of the *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra*, modified the statement into ‘*asti buddhadhātuḥ sarvasattveṣu*’.⁽³³⁾ The *buddhadhātu* (or *tathāgataadhātu*) is on the one hand, signifying the nature (*dhātu*=*svabhāva*, *dharmatā*) of the *buddha*, perfectly equal to the *dharma-kāya*, but on the other hand, being the cause (*dhātu*=*hetu*) of the *buddha*, i. e. the cause from which the *buddha* arises (*buddhakā-utpattihetu*), it is quite different from the *dharma-kāya* in its status. More exactly speaking, it is the Buddha in postulation in the sense that the Buddha is to be originated from it. The purpose to state the existence of the *buddhadhātu* in all *sattvas* was no other than this practical postulation to make the link between *sattvas* and the Buddha in order to encourage them to attain the enlightenment. The link between the cause and the

(31) This idea goes back to the idea of *citta-prabhāsavaratā* as told in Pāli AN, I, p. 10

(32) It is often appeared in the *Avatamsakasūtra*. (Tib. *de bshin gśegs paḥi rigs*.) Of this, see J. Takasaki in the “*Kegon Shiso*” (mentioned above), pp. 238-309

(33) Cf. *Abhidharmakośa*, I, 20 (*gotra=dhātu*); *Bodhisattvabhāmi* (ed. by Wogihara), p. 3. (*gotra=bija*), etc. The term *gotra* is used often to classify *sattvas* according to their faculty in relation to the three *yānas*, and there is a difference of interpretation around this term between the ‘*ekayāna*’ theory and the ‘*triyāna*’ theory. The idea ‘*tathāgatagotra=tathāgatagarbha*’ represents the former theory.

(34) Cf. Tib.: *ḥdi na dge sloṅ la la de bshin gśegs paḥi snīn poḥi mdo sde chen-po (Tathāgatagarbhasūtra) ston par byed do|| sems can thams cad la ni saṅs rgyas kyi kham (buddhātu) yod la*……(Peking Ed. Reprint, Vol 31, p. 185-5-6)

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result is the nature (*dhātu*) common to both, which is nothing but the *dharmadhātu*. This structure of triple relation within the *dhātu* is called in the *Ratnagotravibhāga* the '*trividhasvabhāva* of the *tathāgata-dhātu*', namely '*dharmakāya*' representing the result, '*tathatā*' (for *dharmadhātu*) the link, and '*tathāgatagotra*' the cause, respectively.⁽³⁵⁾

There is another example to show this structure of the *dhātu* in a different way.

anādikāliko dhātuḥ sarvadharmasamāśrayaḥ/

tasmin sati gatiḥ sarvā nirvāṇādhigamo 'pi ca//

The significance of this famous verse of the *Mahāyānābhidharmasūtra* may be clear from the above investigations. Namely, the first line shows the structure of the ultimate value in objective aspect, the *dhātu* being the common nature of the *saṃskṛta*- and *asaṃskṛta-dharmas*, but in particular, standing for the *asaṃskṛtadharmas*, i. e. the *dharmadhātu*, while the second line shows the same in subjective aspect, the *dhātu* being the common nature of *sattvas* in *saṃsāra* and in *nirvāṇa*, but in particular, standing for the former, i. e. the *buddhadhātu*. But these two lines signifies finally the same truth, since what is meant by the term *sarvadharmas* in contract to the *dharmadhātu*, i. e. the *saṃskṛtadharmas* in particular, is nothing but the phenomena of *saṃsāra*.

Now we come to face another problem. The interpretation of *dhātu* as *buddhadhātu* mentioned above is actually done by the *Ratnagotravi-*

(35) pp. 69-73. From the aspect of the *tathatā*, the cause and the result are called '*śamālā tathatā*' and '*nirmālā tathatā*', respectively. (ibid. p. 21) Other terms to be noted in this relation are: *gotra*, *prakṛtistha*-and *samudānita*- (for the cause and the result, resp.), p. 71 (cf. *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, p. 3); *āśraya-parivṛttilakṣaṇo dharmakāyaḥ* (*dhātu*, the cause, is meant by '*āśraya*'), p. 79f. For the reference, a set of three terms concerning the structure of the object of faith (*śraddhā*) used among works of the Vijñānavada will be mentioned, since it shows the same triple relation observed here. Namely, 1. *astitva* (*dharmakāya* as *dharmadhātu*), 2. *gñā-vattva* (*dharmakāya* as *tathāgatatajñāna*), and 3. *śaktatva* (*dharmakāya* as *āśraya parivṛtti*, or the result in relation to *buddhadhātu*). Of this, see J. Takasaki in the "Koma-zawa Daigak Kenkyū Kiyō", No. 22, (Faculty of Buddhism). pp. 86-109

dhāg ⁽³⁶⁾ from the standpoint of the so-called Tathāgatagarbha theory. The Vijñānavāda, on the contrary, interprete this *dhātu* as to mean the *alayavijñāna*. ⁽³⁷⁾ This *alayavijñāna*, is, as well known, a name for the *citta* given by the Vijñānavāda in order to interpret the idea of the *cittamātra* on the basis of the epistemological relationship between the mind and its objects, i. e. between *manovijñānadhātu* and *dharmadhātu* in the Abhidharmic terminology. Being thus, it is well to be called '*dhātu*' applying one aspect of the *dharmadhātu-sarvadharmā* relation (see III). But notable is that it is actually the principle or the cause (*dhātu*) of the *saṃskṛtadharmā*, i. e. the cause for the origination of the *saṃkleśadharmā* or *saṃsāra*, and being homogeneous with them, it is by nature of unreal character (*śūnya*, *niḥsvabhāva*). Therefore its relation to the *dharmakāya* is, quite contrary to the case of the *buddhadhātu* or *tathāgatagarbha*, of a negative character in the sense that the realization of the *dharmakāya* is possible only by its negation. ⁽³⁸⁾ In the case of the Tathāgatagarbha theory, such a negative relationship is observed between *cittaprakṛti* and *āgantukakleśa*; the latter being completely outside of the *citta*. On the contrary, by involving the cause of the *saṃkleśadharmā* within the *citta*, the Vijñānavāda seems to recognize such negative relationship in the inside of the *citta* as its fundamental structure.

In this respect, it should be reminded that the *dharmadhātu-sarvadharmā* relationship signifies ultimately the truth of the *pratītyasamutpāda*, within which the *pratītyasamutpāda-dharma* and the *pratītyasamutpanna-dharmāḥ* standing in negative relation. It is quite significant in this point that the *alayavijñāna* is said to stand for the *paratantra-svabhāva*, being

(36) p. 72

(37) e. g. Sthiramati on the *Triṃśikā*, p. 37. Paramārtha, in his translation of the *Mahāyānasamgrahabhāṣya* of Vasubandhu, gives both interpretations side by side. (Taisho, 31, p. 157 a)

(38) The term *āśrayaparivṛtti* (*āśraya* for *alayavijñāna*) implies this sense. As for the different use of terms *āśrayaparivṛtti* and *āśrayaparāvṛtti*, see J. Takasaki in the "*Nihon Bukkyo Gakkai Nenpo*", no. 25, pp. 89-110.

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a name for the *pratītyasamutpāda*, as one of the *trīsvabhāva*, other two being the *pariniṣpanna*- and the *parikalpita-svabhāva*. It is clear that the *pariniṣpanna* represents the *asaṃskṛtadharma* or *nirvāṇa*, while the *parikalpita-svabhāva* represents the *saṃskṛtadharma* or *saṃsāra*, and that, being the link between the both, the *paratantra* is to be called 'dhātu', which is, in its turn, nothing but *citta* itself. By regarding this *citta* as of two aspects standing in neagative relation with each other, the verse of the *Mahāyānābhīdharmasūtra* will be understood more clearly.⁽³⁹⁾

In conclusion, we may say, as the most important point we should never forget, that the ultimate value of Buddhism is, however it may be termed, after all the truth of *pratītyasamutpāda* which is to be established by the negation of all *dharma*s, negation of their reality, and that it was by the introduction of the *dhātu* aspect, be it the *buddhadhātu* or the *ālayavijñāna*, that the structure of the ultimate reality as involving such factor of negation is established.

(39) In the history of the Vijñānavāda, the *trīsvabhāva* theory and the *ālayavijñāna* theory are of different origin. Its combination was probably established by Asaṅga in his *Mahāyānasamgraha*. Present interpretation is according to his opinion. But there are various opinions among the Vijñānavādins before and after him around the interpretation of the *trīsvabhāva* as well as the character of the *ālayavijñāna*.