

I.D RECAPITULATION

88. The second scholastic branch of Mahāyāna, most commonly designated as Yogācāra, is still rather imprecisely defined with regard to its historical outline, not much of a basis exists even in terms of a generally accepted relative chronology of its literature. This situation is due, in part, to a lack of discrimination between traditional uncritical quasi-history and modern demands of writing history on basis of a critical assessment of the available data (in spite of the problematic nature of Indian data in this respect). To some extent this unsatisfactory situation is also due to various assessments of partial areas from specific vantage points that have resulted in mutually contradictory historical views even on a broad scale.

Given this general confusion, it is, naturally, impossible properly to understand a "Yogācāra" text (such as, e.g., the TrBh) in its deeper structure — that is, as a texture of correlated technical concepts constituting hermeneutical responses to philosophical aporias provided at different historical occasions — without first critically reinvestigating the basic historical parameters (*qua* conceptual development) related to the text's literary background.

Thus the urgent need for greater scientific precision required a meaningful demarcation to be drawn within the total text-historical spectrum of what is generally known as 'Yogācāra literature'. The field delineated was named 'Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda' to denominate a particular philosophical trend, the starting-point of which has been investigated and finally determined as one that is historically perceptible. The thesis that has presently been sustained maintains the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* to constitute this point of inception of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda.

The two main alternative theories, both being in essential ways antagonistic to the present *Samdhinirmocana*-theory, were reviewed in their dominant features and shown to be untenable: (1) the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*-theory, (2) the *Ālayavijñāna*-theory.

Although one of Prof. Lambert Schmithausen's main theories had to be rejected in the course of my investigations, it has to be recognized that my researches are fundamentally related to, and essentially presuppose, his groundbreaking insights concerning the basic structure of the largest textual corpus within the Yogācāra literary genre, the *Yogācārabhūmi*. In fact, Schmithausen's organization of the *Yogācārabhūmi* into distinct layers (significantly related to the employment of technical vocabulary) prestructures the broader historical horizon of Yogācāra literature in meaningful ways. Yet, in the course of developing the present historical perspective, I had to differ in my assessment of important details, and with regard to the crucial question concerning the very origin of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda as a distinct event demarcating it.

The evidence that can now be affirmed as the result of my detailed investigations is that the *Samdhinirmocanasūtra* constitutes a significant historical line of demarcation with regard to which it is meaningful to differentiate 'Early Yogācāra' (= pre-*Samdhinirmocanasūtra*) materials from a 'Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda' (= post-*Samdhinirmocanasūtra*) conceptual apparatus. Naturally, this differentiation generally pertains to the broader literary history and philosophical development of the second Mahāyāna branch that unfolded itself in conscious contrast to the Madhyamaka branch. Yet, in particular, it becomes useful, or even essential, to distinguish between 'Early Yogācāra' and 'Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda' materials whenever one is concerned with the *Basic Section* of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (or parts of it) as a textual body that is considered in conscious distinction to later (i.e., post-*Samdhinirmocanasūtra*) conceptual developments, be these developments identifiable as inter-polations inserted into MauBh, or be they elaborated in the *Viniścaya-saṃgrahaṇī* part of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, or employed in any other (post-Saṃdh) Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda text.

Both expressions, Early Yogācāra and Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda, are, however, merely the titles for larger distinguishable fields of philosophical development, the heterogeneous structures of which still invite, at best, the skill of proficient interpreters.