

## **Chapter IV**

### **‘Person’ in Sautrāntika School of Buddhist Philosophy**

#### 4.1 Historical Development of Sautrāntika

Sautrāntika, a Hinayāna Buddhist school, belongs to Sarvāstivāda. They are called Sautrāntika as adherence to the *Sutta Pitaka* and take their stand on the *Sūtras*. Mādhava in *Sarvadarsanasangrah* wrote on the origin of the term Sautrāntika “The name Sautrāntika arose from the fact that the venerated Buddha said to some of his disciples, who asked what was the ultimate purport (anta) of the aphorism (*sūtra*), be Sautrāntikas” (SDS p.332). Vasumitra wrote the following about Sautrāntika “At the beginning of the fourth century one school, named the Sautrāntika, otherwise called *Samkrāntivāda* issued again from the *Sarvāstivāda*. (The founder of this school declares himself: I take Ānanda as my preceptor.”<sup>1</sup> In *Kathavatthu* two names are found, ‘*Suttavādin*’ and ‘*Saṅkantis*’, Vasumitra used them synonymously and explained that Suttavādins (Sautrāntikas) believe in the theory *santāna* (continuity of *skandhas*).

According to Da La Vallee Poussin, “The Sautrāntika, who considers the seven *Abhidharma* simply as treatise (*Śāstra*) of human inspiration and therefore liable to error, who maintained that Buddha had not composed treatise dealing with *Abhidharma* or given indication for the composition of such treatise under authority, but had taught *abhidharma* doctrines in certain *Sūtras* (or *Sūtrantas*). According to them, the *Sūtras*, the *Arthavinīśchaya*, etc., constitute ‘the Basket of *Abhidharma*’. Hence, their name Sautrāntikas, the philosophers who recognize the authority of the *Sūtrantis* alone (Sautrāntika 214).”<sup>2</sup> However, Sautrāntikas admits that *Vinaya*, like *Sūtra*, is the word of the Buddha.

According to N. H. Samtani, “Sautrāntika did not deny the authority of the *Abhidharma* per se but they said that they accepted only *abhidharma* (extended explanation of the dharma), which was available in the *abhidharma* type of *Sūtras* like- *Arthaviniscaya sūtra*.”<sup>3</sup> He also mentioned two other *sūtras* in *pāli* cannons: *Dasuttare Sutta* and *Sangitisutta*, that contain an enumeration and explanation of Buddhist categories, which is the precise function of the *Abhidharmic* treatises.

Vasumitra mentioned five important characteristics of Sautrāntika in his treatise “A treatise (called) the wheel of the doctrines of different schools.”<sup>4</sup> He wrote, the original doctrines held in common (by all the members) of the Sautrāntika School:

1. The *skandhas* transmigrate from one world to the other (lit. from the former world to the later): here the name “*Saṅkrāntivāda*” (or “the school which maintains the transference of the *skandhas*”)
2. Apart from the *āryan paths* there is no eternal destruction of the *skandhas*.
3. There are the *mūlāntikaskandha* and also the *ekrasaskandha*.
4. An average man (*prthagjana*) also possesses the potentiality of becoming a Buddha (lit. in the state of an average man there are also divine things, *āryadharmas*).
5. There are the *Paramārthapudgalas*.

The remaining views are mostly the same as (those of) the Savāstivāda school.

Thus, according to Vasumitra, Sautrāntikas admit the transmigration of *skandhas*. But what are the *skandhas* that transmigrate? Shu-Chi interprets them as ‘real-dharma-

*ātman*’, which coincides with *ekarasaskandha*. This transmigration is also described by the Sautrāntika with their theory of *Bijas* (seed theory).

Sautrāntika postulated two kinds of *skandhas*: *Mūlāntikaskandha* and *Ekarasaskandha*. Masuda, with reference to Shu-Chi, explained these two kinds of *skandhas*: “.....The *ekarasaskandha* (or the *skandha* of one taste) continues to exist (lit. turns) from time immemorial without changing its nature (lit. in one taste): it is the “subtle consciousness” which is unintermittent and which possesses the four *skandhas*.....The *mūla* (or original) (of the *mūlāntikaskandha*) means the aforementioned subtle consciousness. (This) is the origin (of a sentient being who) transmigrates (lit. abides) in the *samsāra*. Therefore it is called *mūla*. From this origin there arise the five *skandhas*, which are also spoken of by (other) schools. Now the *ekarasaskandha* being the origin is not called *antika* (or end). The other five *skandhas* which are intermittent spring out of this origin: hence the name *mūlāntikaskandha*.”<sup>5</sup>

Sautrāntikas believed that the common people also have the *anāsrva-bija*, that potential elements of becoming a Buddha, before Mahāyana. Sautrāntika postulated the *Paramārthapudgal*, which is the “real *ātman* that is extremely subtle and cannot be comprehended. It is same with the *ekarasaskandha*.”<sup>6</sup>

Masuda referring to K’wei-chi (the commentator of the *Vijñaptimātrasiddhi-Śāstra*) wrote that Kumāralabdha was the original teacher of the Sautrāntika School. He appeared a hundred years after the death of Buddha and was the author of the *Dr̥stāntamālā-śāstra* or the treatise called the Garland of Similes.<sup>7</sup> Masuda also mentioned the Srilabdha, who was born four hundred years after the death of the

Buddha, was well known exponent of this school, and who composed the *Vibhāsā* of Sautrāntika. “Dharmottara, the logician, the Yaśomitra, the author of *Abhidharmakoś Vyākhyā*, the commentary on *Abhidharmakośa* are the followers of the school.”<sup>8</sup> Vasubandhu, formerly a Vaibhāṣika philosopher is also regarded as a Sautrāntika. “Vasubandhu wrote a commentary of his own work *Abidharmakośa* by the name *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, in which he pointed out some of the defects of the Vaibhāṣika from the Sautrāntika point of view.”<sup>9</sup>

As Sarvāstivādins, Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika admit similar views albeit in different contexts, and with some differences. About Sautrāntika Motilal Pandit writes “The Sautrāntika, while being an offshoot of the Sarvāstivāda School, began its career by examining critically the realism as propounded by Sarvāstivādins. The Sautrāntikas attempted to rectify such shortcoming in the realism of the Sarvāstivāda, that they found to be too glaring and self-evident. It is their critical approach that paved the way for the emergence of Māhayāna idealism and accordingly came to be considered as forming a kind of bridge between the realism of early Buddhism and subjectivism of Mahāyāna.”<sup>10</sup> Critically examining the view of Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika reduced the number of elements (*dharmas*) to forty three from the seventy five of Sarvāstivāda. They also applied their critical approach in the theory of epistemology and presented the representationalism in contrast to the Vaibhāṣika theory of presentationalism.

Regarding the philosophy of Sautrāntika, referring Guṇaratna’s *Tarkarahasyadipikā*, Dasgupta writes: “The Sautrāntika, according to Guṇaratna held that there is no soul but only the five *skandhas*. These *skandhas* transmigrated. The past, the future, annihilation, depends on cause, *ākāśa* and *pudgala* are but names (*saṃjñāmātram*), mere assertions

(*pratijñāmātrama*), mere limitations (*samvṛtamātrama*) and mere phenomena (*vyavahāramātrama*). By *pudgala* they mean that which other people called eternal and all pervasive soul. External objects are never directly perceived but are only inferred as existing for explaining the diversity of knowledge. Definite cognitions are valid; all compound things are momentary (*kṣaṇikāḥ sarvasaṃskārāḥ*). The atoms of colour, taste, smell and touch, and cognition are being destroyed every moment. The meaning of the words always imply the negation of all other things, excepting that which is intended to be signified by that word (*anyāpohaḥ*). Salvation (*mokṣa*) comes as the result of the destruction of the process of knowledge through continual meditation that there is no soul.”<sup>11</sup>

To explain karmic continuity Sautrāntika advocated the theory of karmic seed (*bija*). Vaibhāṣika maintains the continuity of karma as the actualization of an existent but previously latent cause, but Sautrāntika conceives it as the transformation of the stream of consciousness (*citta-saṃtāna*). Actions produce karmic seeds within specific stream of consciousness that bear fruits (*phala*) at a later time. “Differentiation between individuals, therefore, was possible on the basis of the different seeds implanted within the various streams of consciousness. Sentient experience on this view is a continuity of transformation (*parināma*) of consciousness caused by the fruition of the seeds of previous action.”<sup>12</sup> Sautrāntika believes that a person cannot perceive an external object directly but rather experience mental image (*ākāra*) of them. They admit the real existence of external objects and believe they are the cause of our experience. However, what we encounter in perception is a mental image of an object and not the object in itself.

## 4.2 Concept of Person

According to Sautrāntika, person is a combination of *Skandhas*, *Āyatans* and *Dhātus*. There is no permanent entity, or self that exists in a person; that person is constituted by physical matter and mental states only. Sautrāntika admits 43 *dharmas* (elements), including 10 physical matters and 33 mental states and these *dharmas* constitute person.

### 4.2.1 Refutation of Vātsīputriyas *Pudgala* Theory

Like other schools of Buddhism Sautrāntika also developed the theory of person by denying the existence of a permanent entity, or self. For it first they reject Vātsīputriyas<sup>13</sup> theory of *pudgala* and the *Brahmanical* theory of self as a permanent entity and substratum of consciousness, it is basically Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory. Here I present Sautrāntika's position on the self and the refutation of Vātsīputriyas and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory on the basis of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*.

Sautrāntika, like Vaibhāṣika, admits that *Nirvāna* is possible through true knowledge about soul, as taught by Buddha, and that other doctrines are corrupted by false conceptions of soul. "By the power of their belief in this soul as a substantial entity, there arises clinging to the soul, the defilements are generated, and liberation is impossible."<sup>14</sup> Direct perception and inference cannot prove the soul to be a separate entity, so self does not exist.

Vātsīputriyas admits the existence of *pudgala* (self) which is neither identical nor different from the *Skandhas*. But what is self? Is it a separate entity, like physical matter, or a designation, only a collection, like milk?<sup>15</sup> If the self is a separate entity, then it would be different from the *skandhas*, and must be caused. And if it is mere designation,

as a collection of aggregates, then Sautrāntikas said that it is the same with their doctrine and Vātsīputriyas abandon their doctrine.

But for Vātsīputriyas *pudgala* is not an entity or a mere designation of *skandhas*. The designation of *pudgala* necessarily occurs in relationship to present internal *skandhas* (*skandhaupādāya*) (AKB p.1314). In response, Vasubandhu argues that if *skandhaupādāya* means *skandhanam lakṣate* (characterized by the *skandhas*) or *skandhān pratity* (conditioned by the *skandhas*), then it is the same as the designation. Milk is formed by the constituents of milk, colour etc; the cause of the designation is the constituent elements.

Vātsīputriyas objected that it is not like the relation between milk and its constituents; it is like the relationship of fire and fuel, where fire is neither identical nor different from fuel (AKB p.1315). *Pudgala* is neither different nor identical with *skandhas*. “Vātsīputriyas explains the term ‘fire and fuel’ like, the fuel (i.e. wood) the thing to be burned, the combustible matter, the consumed. And the fire is the thing that exercises the action of burning, bright, and very hot, in flames, the consumer. The series that constitutes the fuel is ignited by the fire, and it is reduced to ashes. Thus fire exists in relation to fuel. By means of fire, each moment of existence of the series of fuel is made different from the preceding moments.”<sup>16</sup>

Vasubandhu said that if this is the case, then fire is different from fuel, as their time periods are different. Also, it is transitory as it is produced by reason of the fuel.

Vātsīputriyas said, fire in relation means that fire has fuel as its basis, or that fire coexists with fuel. Thus, *pudgala* co-exists with the *skandhas*, or that it depends on it, but is also different from the *skandhas*.

But logic demands, according to Vasubandhu, that because *pudgala* depends on *skandha*, so it does not exist without *skandhas*. Thus, Vasubandhu disputes the theory by saying that “the thesis of Vātsīputriyas that the *pudgala* exists in relation to the *skandhas* as fire exists in relation to fuel, cannot be rationally established in any hypothesis.”<sup>17</sup>

Now the question is by which of the six consciousnesses, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mental consciousness, is the *pudgala* perceived? Vātsīputriyas replied that by all six consciousnesses the *pudgala* is perceived. When the eye recognizes physical matter, it indirectly discerns the *pudgala*; that is to say that the *pudgala* is known by eye consciousness. But the relationship of the *pudgala* with physical matter, be it identical or different, is inexpressible. It is same for the other consciousnesses (AKB p.1319).

If this is the case, then according to Vasubandhu *pudgala* exists as a designation, exactly like milk. When the eye consciousness knows the colour of milk it indirectly discerns the milk. But we do not know if the milk is same thing or different from its colour. So for Sautrāntika *pudgala* is mere metaphorical designation; it has no real existence. Another debate is, “if in the perception of physical matter, whether the physical matter is the cause of the perception of the *pudgala*, or that the perception of physical matter and the *pudgala* takes place symoltenously.”<sup>18</sup>

Vātsīputriyas replied by saying that claiming physical matter is the cause of the *pudgala* implies it is not different from physical matter. Therefore, the conditions in the

perception of physical matter, such as the eye, light etc. are not understood to be different from physical matter. Here Vasubandhu raises another question: whether the *pudgala* is or is not perceived by the same operation as physical matter. If *pudgala* and physical matter are perceived by two different perceptions, it follows that *pudgala* is different from colour, shape etc., which unproved the separate existence of *pudgala* (AKB p.1320).

*Vātsīputriyas* maintained that *pudgala* is known by eye consciousness. According to Vasubandhu, this contradicts the *Sūtra (Samuktya)* which says that in eye consciousness two things are involved: physical matter and shape. If *pudgala* is the cause of eye consciousness then it will be impermanent. As the *Sūtra* says, “All causes and conditions that produce consciousness are impermanent.”<sup>19</sup>

In the *Sūtra* of man (*Ajita-sermon*), Buddha explained that the word *pudgala* designate the *skandhas*. He said “Supported by the eye, having physical matter for its object and condition, the visual consciousness arises; the reason of the coming together of these three, contact arises; at the same time there arises sensation, thought, the act of attention etc.” (Version of *Paramārtha*). Man has given various names to refer, like *sattva*, *nara*, *manuja*, *pudgala* etc. Buddha said these are only manners of speaking words; expressions conforming to the usages of the world, because there are only impermanent things in the *pudgala*, conditional things, born of cause and conditions, and created through deeds (AKB p.1324).

If *pudgala* is the mere designation of the five *skandhas*, *Vātsīputriyas* says that it cannot be the bearer of the burden. “But Blessed One (Buddha) himself said about burden, the

taking up of the burden, the laying down of burden and the bearer of the burden”  
(*Bhārahārasūtra, Sūtralamkāra*, xviii.102).<sup>20</sup>

Vasubandhu replied that as a bearer of burden it is not required to accept the *pudgala* as an ineffable because no one has ascertained the existence as ineffable thing. *Sūtra* says that thirst (desire), is the taking up of the burden, which is a *skandha*. Laying down the burden is the abandoning of thirst. The *skandhas* are designated by Blessed One as *pudgala*, the bearer of the burden. For this one should not understand *pudgala* as an eternal, ineffable and real entity, it is, infact effable, impermanent and without a unique nature (AKB p.1329).

Vātsīputriyas asks what wanders in *samsāra* if *pudgla* does not exist? As Buddha said by ignorance one is bound by thirst and wanders here and there among beings in hell, animal, peats, human or the gods and he suffers for a long time.

Vasubandhu said *pudgala* does not wander in *samsāra*. Wandering does not mean abandon old *skandhas* and taking up new *skandhas*. This is explained by the following analogy: one says that when a flame burns a field, it travels, because it constitutes a series. In the same way the harmony of the *skandhas*, which is constantly repeated, receives, metaphorically, the name of being, supported by thirst, the series of *skandhas* travel in *samsāra* (AKB p.1337).

Again Vātsīputriyas says if only the *skandhas* exist, we cannot explain past experience that ‘I was the teacher Sunetra’. As past *skandhas* are not the same as the present *skandhas*. Thus, for existence of individual the *sakandhas* are metaphorically termed as ‘soul’.

But is the 'soul' called by Blessed one as *pudgala* permanent? Is the past soul identical with present soul? In fact when Buddha said "I was the teacher Sunetra", he teaches us that the *skandhas* that constitute his present 'soul' formed part of the same series as the *skandhas* that constituted Sunetra. In the same way one says "this fire has been burning here."<sup>21</sup>

Without accepting some absolute existence, how is memory possible? How is it able to recognize an object similar to what it has formerly perceived?

Memory and recognition are generated immediately, through a certain type of mind called *Citta-viśesa*. In this mind previous ideas are stored. To recognize/remember an object, the idea related to the thing, which is stored in the mind resembles that thing, and recognized it (AKB p.1339).

But Vātsīputriyas asked how one mind can see while another mind remembers, if every moment mind is changing? There are not two minds; Vasubandhu said: "Indeed we do not say that one mind sees an object and that another mind remembers this object, because these two minds belong to the same series. We say that one past mind, bearing a certain object, brings about the existence of another mind, the present mind capable of remembering this object."<sup>22</sup> Mind's memory is generated from a mind seeing and memory is generated after recognition.

Walking is an action which depends on some individual, Devadatta. Likewise, consciousness (*vijñāna*) and all action depend on a 'base of support' (*āśrya*), 'one who knows' (*vijñātor*), the agent. But Vasubandhu asks who Devadatta is? Devadatta is not a

real individual; it is only the name that one gives to the series of *Samskāras*. As Devadatta walks, likewise Devadatta knows.

*Vijñāna* is simply produced resembling the object as fruits produced resemble to the seeds. “This resemblance of the *vijñāna* consists in that it has the appearance of the object. By reason of this appearance one says that *vijñāna* knows the object which is only one of its cause; the organ is also a cause of the *vijñāna*.”<sup>23</sup>

#### **4.2.2 Refutation of Sāṅkhya-Vaiśeṣika**

Sāṅkhya asks if consciousness is not produced from soul, and present consciousness (*vijñāna*) is produced from past consciousness, why is the later consciousness not similar to the previous consciousness? Why do consciousnesses not succeed themselves in a determined order, as shoots, stems, leaves etc.?<sup>24</sup>

Vasubandhu replied that everything is produced through causes. Transformation (*sthityanyathātva*) is characteristic of conditioned things; in this series the latter always differs from the former.

His second point is that consciousness follows a certain order; a certain mind produces a certain mind. And certain consciousness presents a partial similarity that obliges them to produce one another by reason of the particular character of their *gotra* (AKB p.1345). In the process of producing idea the most important is the ‘numerous’ idea formed in the past. Alive and nearest ideas have strong position as these ideas most strongly impregnated the mental series.

Vaiśeṣika maintains that consciousness is produced from a soul, which is possible by the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of the soul with mind. Vasubandhu replied that no conjunction is proved here between soul and mind. Another reason is that for the conjunction of two things, they should be delaminated, i.e. localized in a distinct place. Their definition of conjunction, ‘possession succeeding upon non-possession’ admits that the soul is delaminated, localized, and that the soul is not omnipresent (AKB p.1346).

As *manas* moves from part to part of the body, the soul should also move to make a place for it. It results that the soul is not *niṣkriya* and *nitya* (eternal). At the same time it cannot be said that the soul has partial conjunction, as it is without parts.<sup>25</sup>

Vaiśeṣika holds that the self is the support of the thought-*saṃskāra* just as earth supports smell, colour, taste, and touch. However, Vasubandhu replied that this establishes the non-existence of the soul, because earth cannot be perceived independently of smell etc.; it is the mere designation of the smell etc. Likewise there is no soul apart from the thought-*saṃskāras*.

Vaiśeṣika asks, if there is no soul, who has suffering and pleasure? Vasubandhu replied “The *āśraya* within which suffering and pleasure is produced, in the same way that a tree to have flower, a forest has fruits. And suffering and pleasure belong to the six internal *āyatana*s” (AKB p.1350).

Vaiśeṣikas again asks if there is no soul, who does a deed and tastes the result? Here Vaiśeṣika is referring to an agent, who is one, who possesses independent power with regard to certain action. According to Vasubandhu, if an individual, Devadatta, is understood to be a soul, it is unproved. “If one understands a certain coming together or

complex of *sakandhas*, then Devadatta is indeed an agent, but he is not an independent agent and creator of the deeds.”<sup>26</sup>

Every action produced depends on some cause. There is no single entity or ‘producer’ of any action, which is independent. Action is three folds: body, speech and mind. And every type of action produced depends on some other action. There is no agent among the causes.

The process of bodily action is explained by Vasubandhu as follows: “Memory causes a wish or a desire for action to surge up; from desire there proceeds imagination, from imagination there proceeds effort, which gives rise to a vapor which sets in motion bodily action”<sup>27</sup> In this process there is no place for soul. Vocal and mental action can be explained in the same way.

Soul does not enjoy the result as it has no role in discerning the result, and in the process of producing consciousness.

Vaiśeṣika admits that past action produces its result; it is generated from merit or demerit (*dharma*, *adharma*), inherent attributes (*guna*) of the soul, and is supported by the soul. Vasubandhu regards this as irrational as he criticizes the idea of a substratum. He also maintains that “future result is not generated from destroyed action; results are generated from the last moment in the evolution of a series that has its origin in action” (AKB p.1352).

How does fruit proceed from the seed? Fruit is not generated from the destroyed seed and at the same time fruit does not arise immediately after the seed (dying seed). “In fact the fruit is generated from the last moment in the evolution of a series that has its origin

in the seed. The seed successively produces a sprout, a stalk, a leaf and finally the flower, that bring the fruit into existence” (AKB p.1353). Thus, the fruit is produced from the seed through a series of intermediate stages that project into the flower the efficacy of producing the fruit. The flower has its origin in the seed; so flower produces the fruit which also has beginning with the seed. “In the same way, one says that although a result is generated from an action, it is not generated from destroyed action, nor is it generated immediately after the action; it is generated from an ultimate moment in the evolution of a series issuing from the action.”<sup>28</sup>

Series (*saṃtāna*) is succeeding moments, without interruption, in a row of material and mental *skandhas*, which has an action for its original cause. These successive moments have different evolutions and transformations throughout the series. The last moment of this evolution has the special ability to produce the result, it is termed as *viśesa*, which is different from other moments (AKB p.1353).

Two kinds of results are produced, according to Sautrāntika, by actions: retributive result and an out-flowing result. In the retributive result the force (action) is abolished after producing the result. “But the force that produces an ‘out-flowing result’, a force projected by a ‘cause similar to its effect’ (*sabhāgahetu*), does not perish by the production of the result; when it is defiled, this force perishes by the force of its opposition; when it is not defile, it perishes through *Nirvāna*, which involves the abolition of the series, both physical and mental.”<sup>29</sup>

Lastly, Vasubandhu summarized that heeding to the teaching of the Buddha regarding the non-existence of the soul is the only way to achieve *Nirvāna*. It is followed by thousands of saints, but it cannot be seen by a person of weak insight (AKB p.1355).

### **4.3 Constituents of Person**

In the formation of person the *dharma* theory of Buddhism plays an important role. Sautrāntika develops their *dharma* theory according to their philosophy. In *dharma* we find three basic divisions, *Āyatana*, *Dhatu* and *Skandha*, which constitute the structure of a person. In the following passages my intention is to give a detailed description of the *dharma* theory in the three divisions of Sautrāntika School in order to understand the concept of the person.

#### **4.3.1 Dharma Theory**

*Dharma* is very important notion for Sutrāntika, like Vaibhāṣika. *Dharma* is that which bears (*dhāraṇa*) self characteristics. Poussin explains the meaning of *Abhidharma* as follows: “The *Abhidharma* is called *abhidharma* because it envisions (*abhimukha*) the *dharma* which is the object of supreme knowledge, or the supreme *dharma*, *Nirvāna*; or rather it is called because it envisions the characteristics of the *dharmas*, both their self-characteristics and their common (or general) characteristics” (AKB p.57). Thus, *dharma* is the means to achieve *prajñā* (supreme knowledge) and *Nirvāna*, the supreme *dharma*. But at the same time, extinguishing of the defilements is possible through the discernment of the *dharmas*.

Sautrāntika does not admit the substantial-existence of *dharma* and rejects the permanent existence of *dharma* in three phases of time. “*Dharma* such as ‘shape’ (*samsthāna*) were

not substantial-existence (*dravya-sat*) nor do dharma-categories such as *prāpti* (possession) refer to anything other than the state of possessing and not possessing certain qualities.”<sup>30</sup> *Dharmas* exist for as long as they manifest themselves, they have no past and future existence. *Dharmas* manifest when they have causal efficacy (*kriyā*) and cease to exist when they do not. “This account of *dharmas* focused upon the immediacy of what is presented to consciousness and explicitly repudiated the Vaibhāṣika analysis which distinguished the existence of *dharmas* from their causal efficacy.”<sup>31</sup>

A critical examination of Sarvāstivāda demonstrates that Sautrāntika reduced the number of elements (*dharmas*) to forty three from seventy five of Sarvāstivāda. First *avijñāpti* is omitted from *Rūpaskandha*. They also reject the existence of ten *Parittakleśas*, *Middha* (torpor), *Vitarka* (discussion), *Vicāra* (judgment), from the list of 49 mental states which come under the *Citta Saṃprayukta Dharma* of *Saṃskāraskandha*. Sautrāntika also eliminate 14 *Cittaviprayuktasaṃskāras* from the *Saṃskāraskandha* and rejected three kinds of Pure (*asaṃskṛta*) *dharmas*: space, *pratisaṃkhyānirodha* and *apratisaṃkhyānirodha*.

*Dharmas* are of two kinds: Pure (*asaṃskṛta*) and Impure (*saṃskṛta*). *Saṃskṛta dharmas* are impure because the defilements adhere to them (AKB I 4c-d), with the exception of the path of the defiled. They are “that which have been created (*kṛta*) by causes in union and combination”. There is no *dharma* which is engendered by a single cause (AKB p.61).

“Conditioned things are the paths, foundations of discourse, ‘possessed of leaving’ and ‘possessed of causes’. Conditioned things are called paths (*advan*) because they are

devoured (*adyante*) by impermanence. Discourse (*kathā*) has either names or words (*nāma*) for its foundation. One should depart from conditioned things; one qualifies them as ‘endowed with leaving’. These things are dependent on causes; they are thus qualified as Savastuka.”<sup>32</sup>

Conditioned things have four characteristics- arising (*jāti*), old age (*jarā*), duration (*sthiti*) and impermanence (*anityatā*) (Takb II 45 c-d). But Sautrāntika admits only three- production (*utpāda*), disappearance (*vyaya*) and duration-modification (*sthityanyathātva*).<sup>33</sup>

#### **4.3.2 Āyatana**

*Āyatana* signifies the ‘gate of entry’ or arising of the mind and of the mental states (*ciatta*). Etymologically, *āyatana* is that which extends (*tanvanti*) the entry (*āya*) of the mind and of the mental states (AKB-I 20ab ii). Twelve *āyatans* are also admitted by Sautrāntika. They are the five sense organs (eye, ear etc.) and their corresponding objects (matter etc), *mana-āyatana* (mind) and *Dharmāyatana*. *Dharmāyata* or *dharmadhātu* includes *vedanā*, *saṃjñā* and *saṃskāra skandha*, *avijñapti* and three unconditioned things.

#### **4.3.3 Dhātu**

*Dhātu* signifies *gotra*, race or lineage. Just as in a mountain there are many ‘families’ of gems, iron, copper, silver, gold etc. when we say ‘to have numerous *dhātus*’, is a similar human complex or series; there are eighteen types of ‘families’ which are called the eighteen *dhātus* (AKB-I 20a-b iii). The five sense organs and their corresponding objects are ten dhātus included in the *Rūpaskandha*. The eleventh one is *dharmadhātu*. The other

seven kinds of *dhātus* are the six classes of consciousness (*cakṣurvijñānadhātu* etc.) and the *manadhātu* (mind).

#### **4.3.4 Skandhas**

In the *Sūtra (Samyukta)* *Skandha* signifies ‘heap’. “Whatever *rūpa* there is, past present or future, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or excellent, far or near, if one puts together all this *rūpa*, that which is past etc., one has that which is called *rūpaskandha*” (AKB-I 20a-b i).<sup>34</sup>

Sautrāntika objected by saying that if *skhandha* signifies ‘heap’ then it has only nominal existence, not a real existence. A collection is not real thing, like a pile of wheat, so is the *puḍgala* (AKB-I 20a-b iv). “The order of the *skandhas* is justified by their grossness, their defilement, the characteristic of the jug, etc., and also from the point of view of their spheres of influence” (AKB-I 22b-d).

##### **4.3.4.1 Rūpaskanda**

Rūpa, in Buddhist philosophy, “signifies that which has resistiveness or the capacity to obstruct the sense organs.”<sup>35</sup> Sautrāntika admits only ten *rūpas* and excluded the eleventh one, *Avijñapti*. These ten categories are: the five sense organs: the organ of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch and five objects of sense organs: matter, sound, odor, taste and tangibles.

The five sense organs point of support for the consciousness of visible matter, sound odor, taste and touch; they are consisted of supersensible subtle material elements (AKB-

I 9 c-d). In fact, the eye (organ of sight) is the subtle matter which serves as the support of the consciousness of sight (AKB 64).

#### 4.3.4.1.1 Objects of Sense Organs

Visible matter is twofold: colour and shape (AKB-I 10a). However, Sautrāntika denies that shape is anything other than colour. Colour is fourfold: blue, red, yellow, white, while another eight colours proceed from these colours. They are: cloud, smoke, dust, mist, shade, hot light, light, darkness. Shape is eight folds-long, short, square, round, height, low, even and uneven. Thus Sautrāntika like Vaibhāṣika admits twenty folds of visible matters.

Vaibhāṣika maintains that visible matter can be colour without being shape (e.g. blue, red etc.) and shape without there being colour (long, short), which constitutes bodily action (*kāyavijñapti*). Sautrāntika asks how a single thing could be twofold because colour and shape are perceived in a single substance. Sautrāntika argued “it should be admitted that bodily action is at one and the same time colour and shape.”<sup>36</sup>

Sound is eightfold (AKB I-10a). It is in four categories, each of which contains agreeable or disagreeable elements. These four categories are- (a) sound caused by the hand or by voice, (b) sound of the wind of the trees, of water, (c) sound of the vocal action and (d) every other sound.

Taste is of six types: sweet, sour, salty, pungent, bitter and astringent. Odor is fourfold: good odor is either excessive or non-excessive. The tangible is of eleven types: the four primary elements, earth, water, fire and wind and seven others: softness, hardness, weight, lightness, cold, hunger and thirst (AKB I-10b-d).

The four primary elements, earth, water, fire and wind are unique and the point of support for all derived matter (AKB I 12 a-b). Existence of these elements is proved by their action of support. Solidity, humidity, heat and motion are the special characteristics of earth, water, fire and wind respectively. Earth is different from earth elements, as earth is seen with colour and shape. It is same with the fire and water, whereas the wind element is simply called wind (AKB I 13 a-b).

These eleven *dharmas* are called *rūpadharma*, according to Buddha, and are incessantly broken; they can be damaged. Their damage is possible by deteriorating, by being transformed. Other masters say that they are called *rūpa*, that which is impenetrable; that which occupies a place.<sup>37</sup>

Sautrāntika objected that if this is so the *rūpa* which is composed of atom, which is indestructible, cannot be *rūpa*. Vaibhāṣika said that an atom is not *rūpa*, atom cannot exist in isolated state, and therefore, its deterioration occurs (AKB 70).

Sautrāntika said that *avijñapti* is not *rūpa* as it is devoid of resistance. According to Vaibhāṣika, *avijñapti* is that which is produced from the *vijñapti*, bodily and vocal action. Thus *avijñapti* is *rūpa*. *Avijñapti* is not subject to modification, and it should perish as *vijñapti* perishes. Vaibhāṣika said *avijñapti* is *rūpa* and is the constituent point of support in the primary elements. According to this principle, Sautrāntika remarked, the five consciousnesses would be *rūpa*, for their point of support is *rūpa*.<sup>38</sup>

#### **4.3.4.2 *Vedanāskandha***

*Vedanā*, or sensation, is that which arises from the contact of senses with an object. According to Sautāntika, contact arises from the coming together of an organ, its object

and consciousness. It is six kinds. As the Sūtra says “The coming together, the encounter, the meeting of these *dharmas* is contact” (*Samyukta* TD 2 p 18a 16) (AKB 424). There are six kinds of sensations that arise from the contact of five sense organs and the *manas*. “The five sensations that arise from the contact of the eye and from other bodily organs for support (*āśraya*) the bodily organs are bodily. The sixth sensation arises from the contact with the *manas*; its support is the mind, so it is mental or *caitasi*” (AKB III 32a-b).<sup>39</sup>

Vaibhāṣika regards sensation and contact as simultaneous, being *sahabhūhetu* ‘reciprocal causes’. But Sautrāntika objected Vaibhāṣika’s position and said that cause and effect cannot be simultaneous. They do not arise together, but sensation arises later than contact.

*Vedanāskandha* is a threefold mode of feeling or sensation, composite of painful, pleasant and neither painful nor pleasant. Sensations are of six kinds arising from five sense organs and mind (AKB I 14c). Sensation in relation to the five sense consciousnesses and which does harm is called *Duḥkhendriya*. Pleasant sensations that do good, comfort and benefit are termed *Sukhendriya* (AKB II 7a-c).

In the third *Dhyāna* the agreeable mental sensation is also the pleasant sensation, which is called ‘pleasure’ (AKB II 7d). Here the agreeable mental sensation is calm and tranquil, because the ascetic is detached from joy, hence it is pleasure. Below the Third *Dhyāna* the agreeable mental sensation is gross and agitated, the ascetic is not detached from joy, and hence it is called ‘satisfaction’.<sup>40</sup> Disagreeable mental sensation is dissatisfaction (AKB II 8b). Intermediate bodily or mental sensation is equanimity that

neither comforts nor harms. Bodily sensation is produced from an external object independently of psychological states. The agreeable and disagreeable mental sensations are produced from a concept, but the sensation of equanimity is free from *vikalpana*, any intellectual operation.

#### **4.3.4.3 *Samjñāskandha***

*Samjñā* is the later stage of *Vedanā*. When one grasps the characteristics of an object, it is the idea or *samjñā* (AKB I 14c-d). The grasping of diverse natures: perceiving that this is blue, yellow, long, short, male, female, friend, enemy, agreeable, disagreeable etc. is *Samjñāskandha* (AKB p.72). Just as there are six kinds of sensation, dependent upon six organs, *samjñā* is also six types.

#### **4.3.4.4 *Samskāraskandha***

*Samskāras* are those conditioned things which are not included in other four *skandhas*, *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *samjñā*, and *vijñāna* (AKB I 15 a-b). The Buddha said in a *Sūtra* (*Samyukta*) “The *Samskāraskandha* is the six classes of volition”. This definition excluded all *Viprayukta* and *Samprayukta Samskāras*.

From the definition provided in this *Sūtra* we find that the mental *dharmas*, all of the *dharmas* of the *Viprayukta* class, with the exception of volition, do not form part of any *skandha*. Thus the collection of mental states and *Viprayuktas* is included within the *Samskāraskandha*. But Sautrāntikas do not admit *Viprayuktas* as dharma. According to them, 33 mental states constitute the *Samskāraskandha*. These 33 mental states can be discussed in five headings.

- (a) *Mahābhūmika Citta* (basic mind state): Like Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika admits ten *Mahābhūmikas* and gives almost the same explanation. These are the generally permeating mental states that are universally present and indispensable for every possible Mind-state composition. The basic mind consists of cognitive, emotive and conative states of consciousness. Basic mind states combine with other *Caitta dharmas* and form various other mind states. These ten *Mahābhūmikas* are: *Vedanā* (feeling), *Cetanā* (volition), *Samjñā* (identification or perception), *Chanda* (desire), *Sparśa* (contact), *Mati* (cognizance), *Smṛti* (memory), *Manasikāra* (attention), *Adhimukti* (approbation), and *Samādhi* (concentration).
- (b) *Kuśala Mahābhūmika Citta* (morally wholesome mind state): Sautrāntika admits nine kinds of *Kuśala Mahābhūmika Cittas* and omits *Upekṣā* (equanimity) from the Vaibhāṣika list. These *dharmas* are always found in all good minds. It includes *Śraddhā* (faith), *Apramāda* (vigilance), *Praśrabdhih* (tranquility), *Hri* (modesty or shame in an internal sense), *Apatrapā* (shame in external sense), *Alobha* (absence of greed), *Adveṣa* (non-hatred), *Avihimsā* (nonviolence) and *Virya* (energy).
- (c) *Akuśala Mahābhūmika Citta* (morally unwholesome mind state): These are the mental states which are always defiling and bad. They are of two kinds: *Ahrikyā* (shamelessness) and *Anapatrāpya* (disregard).
- (d) *Kleśa Mahābhūmika Citta* (impure mind state): These are mental states that exist in all defiled minds. Sautrāntika admits ten *Kleśamahābhūmikas* and omits *styāna* (indolence) from its enumeration. They are *aśrādedya* (disbelief), *kausidya*

(idleness), *muṣitasmr̥titā* (default of memory), *vikṣepa* (distraction), *avidyā* (ignorance), *asaṁprajanya* (non-observation), *ayoniśomanaskāra* (wrong judgment), *mithyādhimokṣa* (wrong resolution), *auddatya* (dissipation), and *pramāda* (diligence) (AKB p.194).

(e) *Akuśalamahābhūmika*: Disrespect (*āhrikya*) and absence of fear (*anapatrāpya*).

These two mental states are always found in bad minds.

(f) *Aniyata Citta* (irregular or neutral mind state): These are the mental operations that are indeterminate, *aniyata*, which are sometimes present in a good mind and sometime with a bad or neutral mind. Sautrāntika acknowledges two types of *aniyata citta*: *kaukr̥tya* (regret) and *middha* (apathy) and omits *Vitarka* (discussion), *Vicāra* (judgment), *Rāga* (affection), *Pratigha* (anger), *Māna* (pride), and *Vicikitsā* (doubt) from the Vaibhāṣika list (AKB p.196).

#### 4.3.4.5 *Vijñānaskandha*

*Vijñānaskandha* is the impression relative to each object, the ‘raw grasping’ of each object (AKB I 16a). It is of six types: visual, auditory, olfactory, taste, touch and mental consciousness. Consciousness is produced through sensation and idea where the mind implements its past impressions. In all consciousness *manas* passes away continuously; for each consciousness *manas* is important. There is no *manas* distinct from consciousness (AKB p.74).

“Consciousness (*vijñāna*) apprehends only the things itself (*vastumātra*); the mental states (*caitasika*) or *dharmas* associated with the consciousness. Visual consciousness apprehends colour and shape; it is associated with a certain mental states called *saṁjñā*

and idea which apprehends a certain characteristics of colour and shape under consideration” (AKB p.139).

#### **4.3.4.5.1 Sautrāntika Theory of Knowledge**

Knowledge is produced by the contact of a sense organ with an object in the appropriate condition having reference previous ideas. According to Sautrāntika, “Knowledge arises on the basis of four conditions, which are: (1) data or *ālambana*, (2) suggestion or *samanantra*, (3) medium or *sahakāri*, and (4) dominant organ or *adhipatirūpa*.”<sup>41</sup> In the knowledge of red rose, the red rose is data. Here the suggestion is the revival of old knowledge relating to the red rose. To apprehend this, an object needs sufficient medium, light etc. as conditions and then this is grasped by dominant organ, eye. This is the *Savikalpaka* or determinate knowledge.

But in indeterminate knowledge, the suggestion is that the revival of old knowledge is not present; it is a mere awareness. “Dharmakirti, in his *Nyāyabindu*, defines perception as a presentation determined exclusively by the object and free from all mental impositions (*kalpanā*)”. This is *Nirvikalpa* or indeterminate knowledge. “This pure perception, free from all traces of conceptual activity, is said to give us the object in its own nature (*svalakṣana*).” “Dharmakirti is of the opinion that names and relations are imposed by the mind, while the senses reveal the objects accurately unless they are themselves perverted by organic or extraneous causes.”<sup>42</sup> Thus, indeterminate knowledge reveals the true nature of the object, where the mind imposes the revival of old knowledge, it is determinate knowledge.

#### 4.3.4.5.2 *Sākārajñānavāda*

Sarvāstivādins maintain that external objects can be directly perceived. Rejecting Sarvāstivādins theory of cognition Sautrāntika argues that external objects cannot be perceived directly because of its momentary nature. They are perceived indirectly. “An object that is momentary can never be reached during the moment it is being perceived. The object ceases to be the moment perception of the object occurs.”<sup>43</sup>

As everything is momentary the object that is perceived is of the past moment rather than of the present one. The object which is perceived now is really the successor member of the series, which become the cause of perception. The member of the series that has ceased leaves impression on the mind, what we cognized in perception exists actually, but the perception of the object does not take place at the time of its actual existing.

The Sautrāntika theory of knowledge is known as *Sākārajñānavāda*, as it holds “that cognition has forms and it is the forms of cognitions that are directly apprehended in our perception. Cognition is both perception (*grāhaka*) as well as the percept (*grāhya*).”<sup>44</sup> But for Sautrāntika, we cannot perceive objects directly, what is perceived is only our own idea having the form of object (*Sākārajñāna*). But we see the diversity of objects, then how is the diversity of form in our ideas produced? It is because of the external object. Since, they are the cause of the diversity of forms in our ideas, Sautrāntika inferred the external object. *Sarvadarsanasāṅgraha* describes “An object coming in contact with a sense produces a cognition to which the object transferred to the cognition that the existence of the object is inferred” (SDS 36). So this theory maintains that we cannot know the external object directly, that the external object is only inferred, thus it

is called *Nityānumeyabāhyārthavāda*. The Sautrāntika theory of knowledge is called representationism. “Representation of idea is a theory of perception that upholds that object is not perceived directly, but indirectly. It is the object that transferred the form of cognition, and the cognition, upon acquiring the form of the object, becomes the representative of the object. In other words the theory tells us that the objects are inferred from cognition to which have been transferred the form of object.”<sup>45</sup>

#### 4.3.4.5.3 Diñnāga’s Theory of Knowledge

According to D. N. Shastri, Diñnāga belongs to Sautrāntika-Yogācāra school. However, most other thinkers believe him to be a Sautrāntika. Diñnāga divides reality into two types. “The one kind of reality is transcendental, thing-in-itself (*paramārthasat*), ultimate particular (*svalakṣaṇa*), the point-instant (*kṣaṇa*), the direct (*pratyakṣa*); and the other is empirical, or phenomenal (*samvṛtīsat*), constructed by imagination (*savikalpaka*) and generalized (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*), the indirect (*parokṣa*).”<sup>46</sup> Thus, for him the scope of knowledge is of two kinds: perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*). Perception cognizes the direct reality, the ultimate particular (*svalakṣaṇa*); thus, it is called pure sensation (*nirvikalpaka*). In this knowledge there is no single element of imagination or inference. On the other hand, the inference cognizes only the indirect (*parokṣa*) reality, the constructed and generalized (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*). Thus, external objects are only inferred, we have no pure cognition of them, only determinate perception cognizes them. “It will now be seen that the world of our experience, which we call phenomenal or empirical world, consisting of external objects as they are presented in our experience is, according to Diñnāga beyond the purview of genuine perception by which only a pure sensation is meant.”<sup>47</sup> Determinate perception is pseudo-perception as objects presented

in it are mere constructions of imagination. The cognition characterized by generalization, for Buddhist logic, belongs to the sphere of inference, what they specifically call ‘*Savikalpaka*’ (constructed by imagination). This *savikalpaka* cognition is erroneous, and is outside the purview of pure sensation.

Diñnāga used inference in a broad sense. It is described by Stcherbatsky as “Every synthetic process of thought is constructed with the direct cognition by the senses, as indirect cognition or inference. Diñanaga’s inference thus embraces, besides our inference, all that we could call judgment, intellection, ideation, thought, reason etc., every cognitive process, except pure passive sensation” (Nirvana footnote 1, p. 141-42).

Thus, for Diñnāga our empirical world consisting of external objects is cognized by the determinate perception, which is constructed by our imagination, implying inference in the wider sense. For this reason “Sautrāntika School to which Diñanāga and Dharmakīrti were supposed to belong was regarded as holding the view that external objects are not directly perceived but only inferred (Bāhyārthānumeyatvavāda).”<sup>48</sup> In this theory the external object is not known by direct perception; it is only known by imagination or idea. Therefore, it is known as representationism. But according to D. N. Shastri, the representationism of Sautrāntika is quite different from the Western representationism of Locke; it is similar with Transcendental Idealism of Kant.

#### **4.4 Person as Moral and Social Being**

In Buddhism morality is very important in relation to the cessation of suffering and attainment of *Nirvāna*. Laymen and monks have followed strict moral code in their way of life. Sautrāntika and Vaibhāṣika advocates almost the same moral theory based

on three fold discipline (*śīla, samādhi and prajñā*). In previous chapter I have discussed the Hinayānist moral philosophy. In this chapter I intend to discuss the nature of morality, different kinds of disciplines, purifications, actions and practices as discussed in *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* by Vasubandhu from the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika standpoint.

Explaining the nature of morality Vasubandhu says bad *rūpa* is called immorality and the renouncing of immorality is morality. Renouncing is of two types: *vijñapti* the action by which one renounces, and *avijñapti*, the fact of abstaining (AKB IV-122a-b). Morality is renouncing of that which is prohibited by Buddha. When one commits to observe the rules preached by Buddha and violates them, they commit immorality.

Morality is pure and impure in nature. Morality is pure when it is endowed with the four pure qualities and impure in the contrary case. They are (1) Not troubled by the immorality, (2) Not troubled by causes of immorality, by the *kleśas* and *upakleśas*, (3) It takes its support from the opposites of immorality, because it relies on the four *smṛtyupasthāna* and (4) It relies on peace, not on rebirth in celestial realms, because it is directed to *Nirvāna* (AKB IV 123 a-b).

According to another opinion, five causes make morality pure: “(1) the purity of the deed itself (the renouncing of the bad deeds), (2) the purity of their attendants (renouncing of the preparation or the means of killing etc.), (3) the absence of disturbance from the *vitāraks* (*kāma, vyāpāda, and vihiṃsāvitraka*) (4) its supervision through mindfulness (Buddha, *Dharma, Saṅghānusmṛti*- which includes the renouncing of undefiled actions) and (5) its application to *Nirvāna*.”<sup>49</sup>

Buddhist morality places importance on grasping good qualities and eradicates bad qualities. Good absorption is called *bhāvanā* because it impregnates the mind to an extreme degree; it grasps the quality of good, in the same way sesame seeds are impregnated by flowers in their grasping the odor of these flowers (AKB IV-123 c-d).

Cultivation of good *dharma*s is necessary to lead a moral life. To practice the ten mental states, which are found in all good minds, *Kuśalmahābhūmikas* (AKB II, 25) are very important regarding the moral life of a person. They are-

- (a) *Śraddhā* (faith): Faith is the clarification of mind. It is the faculty of belief in retribution, the purity of mind, the reverse of passion. Mind is troubled by the *kleśas* and the *upakleśas* and becomes clear by faith. It is adherence to the result of actions, to the Three Precious Ones and to the Truths.
- (b) *Apramada* (diligence): It is *bhāvanā*, the taking possession and the cultivation of good *dharma*s. Diligence is the application to good *dharma*s. It is the cause of *bhāvanā*.
- (c) *Prasrabdhi* (mental dexterity): It is the *dharma* through which the mind is clearer, light and apt.
- (d) *Upekṣā* (equanimity): It is mental indifference. Because of this *dharma* the mind remain equal, even free from modification.
- (e) *Hri* (respect): Respect is veneration. Shyness, modesty, humility, being ashamed with reference to oneself (*gauravam*). Respect with regards to masters, to a person endowed with qualities, respect for humanity.

- (f) *Apatrapā* (fear): Fear of the consequence of transgression. Aversion to things objectionable, feeling disgust with reference to other peoples, objectionable action.
- (g) *Alobha* (absence of desire): It is the control of desire for external objects.
- (h) *Adveṣa* (absence of hatred): It is abstention from hatred to any being.
- (i) *Ahiṃsā* (non violence): Abstention from inflicting any kind of injury to any creature.
- (j) *Virya* (energy): Energy is endurance of the mind. It is the faculty of courage in good actions.

Leading a disciplined life is important for a moral life. Discipline is called *saṃvara* because it contains the flux of immorality; it destroys or arrests the flux of immorality.

There are three types of disciplines (AKB IV-13a-b).

- (1) *Prātimokṣa* discipline: This is the morality of being of this world in the sphere *kāmadhātu*. *Prātimokṣa* is morality, good conduct, action and discipline. Eight types of persons: *bhikṣu*, *bhikṣuni*, *sikṣamānā*, *śrāmaṅcra* (novice), *śramaṅerika*, *upāsaka*, *upāsika* and *upavāsastha* (faster), possess *Prātimokṣa* discipline. But to become an *Upāsaka*, an *Upavāsastha*, a *Śrāmaṅera* or a *Bhikṣu* has to follow some definite disciplines (AKB IV-14-16).<sup>50</sup>

- (i) One becomes *Upāsaka* by undertaking the renouncing of five items (precepts): murder, stealing, illicit sexuality, lying and intoxicating liquors.
- (ii) By undertaking the renouncing the eight items, five precepts and (6) scents, garlands, and unguents, dance, songs, music, (7) high beds, broad

beds and (8) meals at forbidden times, one places himself in the discipline of an *Upavāsastha*.

- (iii) By undertaking the renouncing of the ten items, the eight items of *Upavāsastha* and gold and silver, one becomes *Śramaṇera*.
- (iv) By undertaking the renouncing of all the actions of the body and the voice which should be avoided, one is a *Bhikṣu*.

(2) *Dhyāna* discipline: The discipline through *dhyāna* is morality of the sphere of *Rūpadhātu*. It is arisen not only from four principles (*mula*) *Dhyānas*, but also the absorption of that which are close to them (AKB IV-17b).

(3) Pure discipline: That which arises from the path is pure morality. The *Āryans*, the *Śaikṣas* and *Aśaikṣas* possess pure discipline (AKB IV 17c).

Morality leads to purification. Sutra (*Madyama* TD I p454) says there are three purifications: purification of body, voice and mind (AKB IV-64c-d). All good practices of the body, pure and impure are purification of the body, because they efface the impurity of the defilements and bad practices. Purification of voice and mind are subject to the same points.

To lead an ethical life an ascetic has to avoid some bad practices and cultivate some good practices. Sutra (*Samyukta* TD 2 p94b 16) mentions three bad practices, bad action of body, speech and mind. Bad actions of body and speech are regarded as bad practice of body and speech. Greed, wickedness or harm, anger and false views are regarded as bad practice of mind (AKB IV 65a-d). The opposite of bad practices, good action of body, speech and mind, non-greed, non-wickedness and right views are good practices.

Bad actions arise from the three bad roots: desire, hatred and ignorance. There are three types of killing: killing arising from desire, hatred and ignorance. In the same way three types of stealing and illicit sexuality also arise. Lying, malicious words and false discourses of the Vedas etc. arise from ignorance and these are provoked through false views. Greed, wickedness and false views also arise from the three bad roots, desire etc. (AKB IV 64-69).

Bad courses of actions are not indifferently achieved by the three roots. They are achieved by different bad roots respectively. Killing, wickedness and injurious words are achieved through hate. Adultery, greed and stealing are achieved through desire (AKB IV 70a-b). False views are achieved through ignorance and lying malicious words and inconsiderate words are achieved either through desire, hatred or ignorance.

Good courses of actions, with their preparatory and consecutive actions, arise from non-desire, non-hatred and non-ignorance (AKB IV-69c-d). “The renouncing of a preparation of bad course of action is a preparation of good course of action; the renouncing of the action proper which constitutes a bad course of action is itself a good course of action; the renouncing of a consecutive action of a bad course of action is a consecutive action of a good course of action.”<sup>51</sup>

Thus to cultivate good actions and eradicate bad actions one has to strictly refrain from the three bad roots: desire, hatred and ignorance. Furthermore, one has to develop non-desire and non-hatred for all beings and acquire *Prajñā* (True Knowledge) by the teachings of Buddha and meditations.

#### 4.5 The Supreme End of Life of a Person (*Nirvāna*)

Buddha worried about the suffering of people and presented a way to overcome this suffering. Thus, for Buddhism *Nirvāna* or liberation means freedom from suffering. Accordingly, that they have suggested some paths by which one can get rid of suffering and attain *Nirvāna*. Suffering is produced from the wrong view of body, mind, sensation and *dharmas*, which produce *kleśas* and bind individuals to *samsāra*. To abandon the *kleśas* one needs a right view that can be cultivated through mindfulness and meditation.

According to Sautrāntika, *Nirvāna* is *abhāva* (absence of passion etc.), and is a result produced by the *mārga*. *Pratisamkhyānirodha* is really the destruction of *anuśayas* (desires) already produced and the non-origination of any further *anuśayas*. It is achieved by means of knowledge (*pratisamkhyā*), hence it is called *Pratisamkhyānirodha*. “The *Apratisamkhyā-nirodha* is the absence or non-origination of dharma on account of the complete absence of causes independent of the force of knowledge.”<sup>52</sup> Sthavira Srilabdha maintains that *Pratisamkhyā* is the future non-origination of passions due to knowledge and *Apratisamkhyā* is the future non-origination of *duḥkha* due to the disappearance of passions. But rejecting this distinction of Srilabdha Sautrāntika argues that the future non-origin of *duḥkha* implies *pratisamkhyā*; infact, *apratisamkhyā* is included in the *pratisamkhyā*. By this, Sautrāntika tries to convince that *pratisamkhyā-nirodha* implies an antecedent viz. *pratisamkhyā*, hence it cannot be eternal (*nitya*) because if the antecedent is wanting, the consequence will also become wanting.<sup>53</sup>

#### 4.5.1 The Process of *Nirvāna*

*Nirvāna* is possible only when the ascetic makes his mind pure and follows the actual path. Regarding the nature of *Nirvāna*, though Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika hold different views, to achieve the *Nirvāna* almost same process is admitted by both schools. Vasubandhu presented the process of *Nirvāna* in detail in his *Abhidharmakośabhyāsyam* from the Vaibhāṣika and Sautrāntika standpoint. By acquisition of the roots of good (*mokṣabhāgiya*), the aspirant produces deliverance through thoughts or actions and prepares the path for *Nirvāna* (AKB VI- 24d). To enter into the path he has to develop certain qualities, like *āryavaṃsas*, and *aśubhābhāna*, which make him a perfect monk. *Āryavaṃsas* are those who are non-desirous in nature and from which *Āryans* arise (VI - 7). There are fourfold desires: desires arising by reason of clothing, food, bed and seat and by attachment (VI -8b). The *Āryan* makes himself detached from all desires.

Then the ascetic has “to cultivate contemplation or visualization of loathsome things (*aśubhābhāna*) and practice mindfulness of breathing, through which one can overcome desire and distraction and become capable of entering into *bhāvanā* or *samādhi*, absorption.”<sup>54</sup>

Two types of separation are essential for meditation: separation of body and mind from bad thoughts. “When the ascetic is withdrawn with regard to his body and his mind by separating himself from promiscuity and bad thoughts, he succeeds” (VI 6a).<sup>55</sup>

When an ascetic attains absorption (*samādhi*) by mindfulness, acquires the foundation of mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthānas*). In this stage the ascetic understands the unique characteristics (*svalakṣana*) and the general characteristics (*sāmānyalakṣana*) of the

body, sensation, the mind, and the *dharmas* (VI 14c-d). Unique characteristic refers to its self nature (*svabhāva*) and general characteristics indicate four general Truths. That ascetic understands the *svabhāva* of body, mind, sensation and *dharmas* and sees them under the fourfold aspect of truth impermanence, suffering, emptiness and no-self.<sup>56</sup>

The foundation of mindfulness is called *Prajñā* and proceeds from hearing, from reflection and from meditation. From the foundation of mindfulness the ascetic acquires the four roots of good (*kuśalamūla*): Heat (*uṣmagata*), Summits (*mūrdhan*), Patience (*kṣānti*), and the Supreme Worldly *Dharmas* (*Laukikāgradharmas*).

*Uṣmagata* is the first indication, or the anticipation, of the Noble Path; it is a fire which burns the fuel which are the defilements (AKB VI -17a). The *Uṣmagata* acquires the Four Truths for its object. They are suffering, arising or origination, extinction and the Path. These four truths have sixteen aspects: “The seeing of suffering as suffering, impermanent, empty, and not-self; seeing arising or origin as arising, appearance, cause, and condition; seeing extinction as extinction, calm, excellent, and definitive salvation; and the seeing of the Path as Path, truth, obtaining, and definitive release.”<sup>57</sup>

The Heat develops by weak, medium and strong states, and there finally arises the Summits (*mūrdhan*). They are called summits, because they are the most elevated or the head of the unfixed roots of good (VI- 17d) (AKB 931). Like Heat, the Summits also acquires Four Truths for their objects and include the sixteen aspects.

The Summits by passing through weak, medium, and strong states give way to the Patience. In this stage, the Truths please (*kṣamate*) extremely much, whereas, in the Heat they please weakly, and in the Summits, medium (AKB VI 18c).

Then develop the Supreme Worldly *Dharmas*. They are worldly, impure, supreme *dharmas* among the worldly *dharmas*. “They are Supreme Worldly *Dharmas* because in the absence of any similar cause (*sabhāgahetu*), by their own power, they manifest the path of seeing the Truth” (AKB VI 19c).<sup>58</sup>

These four roots of good are the foundation of mindfulness, and they are called *Nirvedhabhāgiyas* (parts pertaining to the path) (AKB VI 20-a-b). “The first two being non-fixed since one can fall away from them, are weak *nirvedhabhāgiyas*; the Patience is medium *nirvedhabhāgiyas* and Supreme Worldly *Dharmas* are strong *nirvedhabhāgiyas*”.<sup>59</sup>

By obtaining the first two roots of good, heat and summits the ascetic remains connected to the roots of good, so he is not free from the painful realm of rebirth and commits mortal transgression. But when the ascetic obtains Patience, he does not go into the painful realm of rebirth (AKB VI -23a-b).

Cultivating different *nirvedhabhāgiyas*, the ascetic attains a different family or *gotras*: *Śravakas*, *Pratyekabuddhas* and *Buddhas*. When he attains the first two *nirvedhbhāgiyas*, Heat and the Summits he enters into *Śrāvaka* family. Here a person can become a Buddha. “But once Patience is acquired, this is not possible, because future painful rebirths are destroyed by the possession of the Patience”. A person who had acquired the first three *nirvedhabhāgiyas* can become a *Pratyekabuddha* (AKB VI -23d).

*Nirvedhabhāgiyas* are the preparatory path; the ascetic does not come to the path of the abandoning of the *Kleśas* or defilements.

Then the saint enters into the stage of *abhisamya*, or *satyābhisamya*, the comprehension of the truth. This is a pure *prajñā*, free from any error (*viparyasa*) and any defilement (*rāga* etc.), which grasps the general characteristics of the Truths (suffering, origin, extinction and path).

*Abhisamaya* is made up of sixteen moments of thought. In the first moment the ascetic sees the Truth of Suffering relating to *kāmadhātu*. This consists of two moments. The first one is *duhkha dharmajñāna kṣānti*, here the ascetic destroys any doubt relating to the suffering of *kāmadhātu*. This moment is ‘patience’ (*kṣānti*), and expels a certain category of *kleśa*. This is the path of abandoning (*prahāṇamārga*), or an irresistible path (*ānantaryamārga*). This first moment is called *samayktvaniyāmāvakrānti* and makes the ascetic an *Āryan*, a candidate for the first result. The second moment is called *duhkha dharmajñāna*; here all doubt disappeared relating to suffering of *kāmadhātu*. This is perfect knowledge.<sup>60</sup>

In the second moment the ascetic takes possession of the ‘destruction’ relating to the *kleśas*. This moment is called a path of deliverance (*Vimuktimārga*); the ascetic is delivered from these *kleśas* (VI 28).

“In the third and fourth moments the ascetic sees the Truth of suffering relating to Suffering of the two higher spheres.” The same four moments for each four Truths makes sixteen moments. Among them, eight moments are *Kṣānti* and eight moments are *Jñāna*. “The four *jñānas* relating to *kāmadhātu* are called *dharmajñāna*, the four moments relating to the higher sphere are *anvaya-jñāna*.”<sup>61</sup>

The path of meditation, *bhāvana*, is by nature the repeated contemplation, or meditation of Truth. “Through this contemplation, the ascetic will abandon in sequence the nine categories (strong-strong, strong-medium etc.) of the *kleśas* related to *kāmadhātu*, each of the four *Dhyānas*, four existences (*upapatti*) of the so-called formless or non-material absorptions which make up *Ārūpyadhātu*.<sup>62</sup> In this stage the monk abandons all nine categories and makes up two moments: a moment of abandoning or of relinquishment (*prahāṇa* or *ānantryamārga*) and a moment of deliverance (*vimuktimārga*). These two moments are moments of ‘knowledge,’ *jñāna*; there is no patience (*kṣānti*), in the path of meditation (AKB V-65d).

In the process of *Nirvāna* the monk has to detach (*vairāgya*) from *kāmadhātu*, from *Rūpadhātu* and from the first three stages of *Ārūpyadhātu*. These are not possible without having seen Truth through pure *Prajñā*, uproots the wrong views, completely remaining a *Pṛthagjana*. In addition he has to follow the pure (*anasarva*) or transworldly (*lokattana*) or *Āryan* path, which includes: Seeing the Truth (*darśanamārga*), repeated seeing, meditating on the Truth (*bhāvanāmārga*) and worldly path of meditation (*laokika bhāvanāmārga*). “In this path the ascetic becomes disgusted with *kāmadhātu*, detests (*vidūṣanā*) *kāmadhātu*, which is coarse, painful and obstacle; he considers the First *Dhyāna* as excellent etc.”<sup>63</sup> He obtains two successive moments abandoning and deliverance.

A person born in *kāmadhātu*, who is consequently defiled through birth by all the *kleśas* of the sphere of existence, cannot overcome from *kāmadhātu* by means of thoughts pertaining to the sphere of *kāmadhātu*. To become disgusted (*vairāgya*) with *kāmadhātu* the ascetic should raise himself above his natural state. Through disgust of *kāmadhātu*

the ascetic enters into a state of absorption which is called *Anāgmya* and is the ‘threshold’, or the frontier (*samāntaka*) of the First *Dhyāna*. He is delivered from the *kleśas* of *kāmadhātu*. Then he rises above the First *Dhyāna* and becomes free from the *kleśas* of the First *Dhyāna* and enters into Second *Dhyāna*, and so on (AKB Viii.21d).

#### 4.5.2 Three Resultant States of *Nirvāna*

In the process of *Nirvāna* the monk achieves three resultant states and finally acquires the *Arhat* stage.

***Srotaāpanna*:** This is the first resultant state in the order of acquisition. The *Śārdhdhānusārin* (pursuit by reason of faith) and *Dharmānusārin* (pursuit by means of dharma) (AKB VI-29a-b) by abandoning the defilement through meditation enters the state of *Srotaāpanna* and they enter the path of seeing. Through the worldly path they abandon first five categories of the defilement of *kāmadhātu* through meditation.

***Sakṛdāgamīn*:** By abandoning the sixth, seventh and eighth categories of defilement, through meditation, the ascetic become a candidate for second state, *Sakṛdāgamīn*.

***Anāgāmin*:** There are two ways a person can enter into the third state, *Anāgāmin*. (1) Detached from *Kāmadhātu* through the abandoning of the ninth category of defilement through meditation. (2) They may also become detached with respect to the higher sphere, up to an *Ākincanyāyatana*.<sup>64</sup>

***Arhat*:** By following the “Path of Deliverance”, in which the ascetic takes possession of the destruction of all *kleśas*, the saint is endowed with the highest *prajñā* and become an *Arhat*. He becomes immovable (*anutpādajñāna*). He acquires the knowledge of

destruction (*kṣayajñāna*), and there arises the consciousness of the future non-arising of the vices or *āsravas* (*anutpādayñāna*) (AKB VI 50a-b).

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