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The Soul theory of the Buddhists.

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In that magnificent compendium of Buddhist doctrine, which the illustrious Vasubandhu compiled at the close of the Vth century A. D. under the title of *Abhidharmakośa* we find attached to the last chapter, as a kind of conclusion of the whole work, a special appendix devoted to the much controverted question about the Buddhist denial of the existence of Soul¹. The work opens with the statement that in order to attain Salvation a thorough discrimination of the Elements (dharma) which are active in the process of life is indispensable, and then proceeds to make an exposition of these Elements, their classification and characteristics (I and II chapters). It then goes on in the III chapter to enumerate the different kinds of living beings or worlds produced by the play of the elementary forces just described. The following two chapters (IV and V) are devoted to an investigation into the general cause which brings the world into movement and the special causes that are feeding the process of life (karma and *anuçaya*). Thus these five chapters represent what may be termed the statics and dynamics of the ordinary world process (*duḥkha* and *samudaya*). The remaining three chapters are concerned with the purification of this life or, more precisely, with the pacification of its movement (*nirodha* and *mārga*). Chapter VI contains a picture of the Buddhist Saint (*āryapudgala*) and the last two chapters (VII and VIII) are dealing with the general and the special causes of saintliness, viz. immaculate wisdom (*prajñā amalā*) and transic meditation (*samādhi*). Among all the analysed elements of existence no Soul i. e. no permanent principel, representing some unity between the separate elements of

¹ Its full title is: *aṣṭamakośasthānasambaddhaḥ pudgalaviniçayaḥ*.

life, is mentioned. Consciousness (vijñāna), it is true, occupies a central position, but it is likewise impermanent, and the final extinction of its working is likewise aimed at. Some of the elements necessarily follow upon one another, some are necessarily coexisting i. e. appearing always simultaneously, this process constituting their «mutually interdependent origination» (pratitya-samutpāda) or life considered as a play of interdependent elementary forces. In concluding his exposition Vasubandhu feels himself called upon to devote, in the special appendix mentioned above, some considerations to the negative part of the whole system, viz. the negation of Soul.

Viewed as a step in the evolution of Indian philosophical thought Buddhism was probably preceded by a fully developed form of the Sāṃkhya system in the elaborate thoroughly consistent shape of an Indian science (śāstra). We are not aware of any cogent argument for submitting to doubt the tradition according to which Buddha studied systematical philosophy under the guidance of two celebrated teachers of that doctrine. From the same traditional source we gather that these teachers probably had already rejected the doctrine of the three primary constituents of matter. Buddha's denial of Soul was a further step in the same direction towards a higher degree of consistency. The position of an eternal passive Soul alongside with an active but unconscious intellect (buddhi) is indeed a very weak point in the Sāṃkhya system, a point which invites criticism. The one eternal matter of the Sāṃkhya whose manifestations are in a constant process of change (nitya-pariṇāmi) was converted by Buddha into separate elements which appear into life like momentary flashings without being backed by any eternal substance. Both doctrines are sometimes called radical systems (ekāntadarśana), because the one adheres to the doctrine of eternal existence only (sarvaṃ nityam), while the other maintains universal impermanence (sarvaṃ anityam). It is out of place here to go into a more detailed comparison of both systems. Their close affinity has not escaped the attention of scholars. What I should like here to insist upon is the fact that a close connexion may be expressed not only by points of similarity, but also by opposition, nay by protest. When Buddha calls the doctrine of an eternal Self «a doctrine of fools» it is clear that he is fighting against an established doctrine. Whenever in his Sermons he comes to speak about Soullessness or Wrong Personalism (satkāyadr̥ṣṭi) a sense of opposition or even animosity is clearly felt in his words. This doctrine along with its positive counterpart — the separate elements that are active in life and whose activity must gradually be suppressed till Eternal Repose is attained — is the central point of the whole bulk of

Buddhist teaching and Mrs. Caroline Rhys Davids rightly remarks, «how carefully and conscientiously this antisubstantialist position had been cherished and upheld». We may add that the whole of the history of Buddhist philosophy can be described as a series of attempts to penetrate more deeply into this original intuition of Buddha, what he himself believed to be his great discovery.

When considering the general lines of the later evolution of Buddhist philosophy one is involuntarily reminded of what has been said by one of the leaders of modern thought with respect to philosophy in general. «The more we try to penetrate into the main idea of a philosopher. . . . we feel that it imperceptibly becomes transfigured at our hands». The original intuition of a philosopher may be very simple, but he spends the whole of his life in bringing it into a clear formula. No sooner has he expressed what he had in his mind as he feels himself obliged to correct his formula, then to correct this correction and so on. «All the complexity of his doctrine which thus is capable of an infinite evolution is nothing else than an incommensurability between his primitive intuition and the means to express it which were at his disposal»¹. The oldest schism in the Congregation had already a bearing upon these abstruse philosophical questions. The Kathāvattu begins its exposition of divergent views by a long discussion of the question about the possible reality of Soul. The schools of the Āryasammitīyas and Vatsīputrīyas were inclined to interpret the doctrine of Soullessness in a sense which admitted some, albeit very feeble, unity in the elements of a personality. Their opponents the Sarvāstivādins denied even that. They maintained that separate elements were really existing in all the three times, i. e. not only were the momentary flashings of some elements composing the present moment really existing, but the past and future flashings were also somehow existent. Soullessness for them was equal to the whole infinite mass of elements past, present and future. Nāgārjuna made a further step in erecting this Soullessness or Voidness into an entity *sui generis*. The consequence was that the elements whose interdependence was an acknowledged fact were denied any real substantial existence (niḥsvabhāva). This voidness developed (vivarta) in an inconceivable manner into the manifoldness of phenomenal life. Aṣṭvāghoṣa² conceived

¹ H. Bergson. *L'intuition philosophique*. Revue de Metaph. 1911, p. 810.

² The author of *Mahāyānaśraddhotpādaśāstra*. The chronological argument which Prof. H. Jacobi and myself have drawn from the fact that Buddhist Idealism is alluded to in the *Nyāyasūtras* must be corrected, since, as it would seem, idealistic views emerge in the run of Buddhist philosophy more than once.

Soullessness as a kind of general consciousness (*alayavijñāna*) of whom the separate elements were so many aspects, thus giving to the primitive teaching an idealistic interpretation. With Vasubandhu Buddhist philosophy receives once more an idealistic interpretation to which the greatest buddhist philosophers Dignāga and Dharmakīrti adhered with slight modifications. Soullessness was later on conceived in a pantheistic sense and personified as the primeval Buddha Vairocana. The same can be maintained with regard to its theistic conception personified as Buddha Amitābha whos worship gave rise to a new religion.

All the different forms in which Buddhism presents itself at present and in the past may be viewed as so many attempts to reach by sympathetic intuition the original idea of the Master. An analysis of the elements of life is presupposed by all of them. Vasubandhu composed his treatise according not to his own views, but mainly (*prāyeṇa*) in accordance with the teaching of the *Vaibhāṣikas* of Kachmere. His plan was to expose his own views in a later work of which he only succeeded in composing the mnemonic verses. The appendix mentioned above seems to be a kind of intermediate part, a link between both these works.

It seemed desirable to give a translation of it at present, without awaiting the time when a translation of the whole of the *Abhidharmakośa* could be carried through press. It deals with the central point of all Buddhism and is remarkable for its precision and the beautiful style for which Vasubandhu is renowned in the Buddhist world. European scholars will witness their great Indian predecessor at the same work of elucidating the difficult points of doctrine which they also have devoted many efforts to. They will see him making just the same references to passages in Buddha's sermons which they invoked in support of their solutions. They will see that there is no «glaring contradiction» between the scientific doctrine of Soullessness and what in the popular style of the Sermons appears as a transmigration of Souls. They will give credit to the universal conviction of learned Buddhists that Buddha in his sermons very often had recourse to figurative speech in order to approach the simple souls of uneducated people. They will, as I hope, find in the *abhidharma* what they were in vain looking for in the diffuse style of popular *sūtras* — «la forte structure d'une théorie autonome, sortant toute armée d'une speculation maîtresse d'elle même»¹.

The translation is made from the Tibetan text of the *Bstan-hgyur*,

¹ E. Senart in *Mélanges Harlez*, p. 281.

vol. 63, f. 93—109. The figures in margin refer to the Peking edition of our Asiatic Museum, the figures in brackets to the Japanese edition of Hiuen-Tsang's translation. Some indispensable explanations and additions have been borrowed from Yaçomitra's commentary, a literal version is sometimes added in the notes. Our translation has been carefully compared with the Chinese translations of Paramārtha and Hiuen-Tsang by the much regretted late prof. O. O. Rosenberg whose premature demise just at the beging of a scientific career full of the greatest promise is a heavy blow upon our so much tried country. In translating the technical terms we have mainly followed the conclusions of his first and alas! last work: Проблемы буддйской философии, Петроградъ 1917.

We subjoin a table of the Elements of existence and their different classifications. This table must always be present to the mind when dealing with Buddhist conceptions.

I classification into 5 groups (Skandha) of elements, the substrates of a personal life: 1. physical elements 2. feelings 3. ideas, 4. volitions 5. general consciousness.

II classification into 12 bases of cognition (āyatana), i. e. all things cognizable:

6 perceptive faculties.	Their 6 objects.
1. sense of vision	7. colour and shape
2. auditory sense	8. sounds
3. olefactory sense	9. odours
4. sense of taste	10. tastes
5. sense of touch	11. tactile objects
6. intellect	12. the remaining 64 elements (dharmāḥ).

The elements of matter are included in № 11. № 12 includes 1) 3 eternal elements: space and two kinds of non-existence, 2) mental faculties: volitions, feelings, ideas, passions, virtues etc. 46 in number, 3) general energies or processes: birth, decay etc. 14 in number, 4) a special physical element, termed non-intimation. №№ 1—5 and 7—11 of this classification correspond to № 1 of the former, № 6 to № 5, № 2—4 of the former are included in № 12 of the bases.

III classification in 18 component parts of existence (dhātu) is the same as the foregoing one with the addition of 6 kinds of consciousness, viz. 13 visual—, 14 auditory—, 15 olefactory—, 16 consciousness of taste,

17 tactile — and 18 intellectual i. e. non sensuous or abstract consciousness.

Other current classifications are: 1) mind and body (nāmarūpa), 2) energies and substances (saṃskāra dravya), 3) matter, mind and energies (rūpa jñāna cittaviprayuktasaṃskāra).

This makes together 75 elements: 3 eternal ones, 1 consciousness, 46 mental faculties, 14 general forces, and 11 physical elements.

Other shools give different numbers the Yogācāras — 100 etc.

Individuality examined.

Appendix to the VIIIth chapter of Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa.

[§ 1. Introductory].

99. b. 4.

Our Teacher is no more,
Of Universe the Eyes are closed,
Those who have witnessed Him are gone,
And troubled by false reasoning is our Religion!
For the Supreme Lord has entered Final Rescue,
Followed by those who faithfully
This Holy Doctrine have maintained.
The World is left without a Guide.
Unchecked Corruption nowadays
Is freely spreading and defeating Virtue.
The times are come
When flooded by the rising tide of Ignorance
Buddha's Religion seems to breathe its last!
Therefore, if for Salvation you do care,
Do not be heedless!¹

[§ 2. Question stated.]

99. b. 7.

Is there, indeed, no other Salvation than (within the pale of Buddhism)?
No, there is none! — Why? — Because (all other doctrines) hold to the erroneous view of the real existence of a Soul. The term «Soul» is not regarded by them as a conventional term applied to what is only a flux of elements². They maintain instead that the Soul is a Reality quite independent from (the elements). This idea of a Self is at the root of every evil passion (and through its action Salvation becomes impossible).³

But how can it be proved that the (various) terms which are used to designate a Soul refer to a flux of elements only and that there is no other (reality) denoted by them? 94. a. 1
(8. b. —10).

This is deduced from the fact that there neither is a direct perception nor an inference (in favour of the existence of the Soul). Elements really existing, when present, are subject to direct perception, as f. i. the six kinds of objects: (colours, sounds, smells etc.) and intellect (itself, in the preceding moment)⁴. Otherwise their existence may be inferred as f. i. the five sense- (sight etc.). The (existence) of the latter is inferred as follows:

General proposition. (Experience) shows, that although the (general) causes be present, the effect is not produced in absence of its special cause, but it is produced, when the latter is (also) present.

Example. As f. i. a plant (is produced from its special cause—the seed).

Application. Experience shows that although the object be present and attention aroused, (it nevertheless sometimes happens) that perception is not produced, while (in other cases) it is produced.

Example. With the blind, the deaf etc. (it is not —) and with those not blind, not deaf etc. (it is produced).

Conclusion. Therefore it is established beyond any doubt that here also a special cause is either absent or present. This special cause is the sense-faculty (of sight etc.)⁵. This is (a valid) inference. But with regard to the Soul no such (inference is possible). Consequently there is no Soul.

But then the «Individual»⁶ the existence of which is admitted by the school of the Vatsīputrīyas⁷ what does it represent?

First of all we must examine the question, whether they admit (the existence of the Individual) as a reality or as an existence merely nominal?

Vatsīputrīya. What is an actual, and what a nominal existence?

Vasubandhu. If something exists by itself (as a separate element), it has an actual existence, as f. i. colour and other (ultimate elements of matter and mind)⁸. But if something represents a combination (of such elements) it is a nominal existence, as f. i. milk.

Vatsīputrīya. (So far I do not object). But what do you follow from this?

Vasubandhu. It follows first of all, that if Soul is an actual existence, it must have an essence of its own and must be something different from the elements of a personal life, (just as these elements differ from one another). Secondly you must indicate its cause, for otherwise it would be an existence uncaused, (an eternal being), and you would thus become guilty of professing

an heretical view, (which is contrary to your own system). Moreover (such an eternal, uncaused and unchanging being) would be without any practical efficiency,⁹ (as if unexisting). But if on the contrary you admit it to be a nominal existence, (as a current designation for the elements of a personal life), I too will admit it, and say «so it is!»

Vatsīputrīya. We do not maintain that it is an absolute reality, but we neither accept it to be a nominal one.

Vasubandhu. What is it then?

94. b. 1. *Vatsīputrīya*. We give the name of an Individual to something conditioned by the elements (as far as they are organized) at a given moment in a personal life¹⁰.

Vasubandhu. These words are so to say blind! As long as their meaning is not disclosed, I do not understand them! What does it mean to be «conditioned»? (Does it mean conditioned by perception or conditioned by existence?) In the first case the meaning would be: having perceived some elements (I call them an Individual). Then an Individual would be only another name for the elements. Just as when I perceive a liquid of a definite colour (smell, taste etc.), I call it milk, though it is nothing else than these elements only. But if conditioned means that (the use of the term Individual) is founded on (the existence) of elements, then these elements would represent the cause for our using this term. The difficulty remains the same.

[§ 3. The relation of the Individual to its elements,
exemplified by the relation of fire to fuel].

94. b. 4 *Vatsīputrīya*. We do not use the term («conditioned») in that sense.

(9b—9) *Vasubandhu*. In what sense then?

Vatsīputrīya. (We use it) just as we use the word «fire», (in applying it to something) conditioned by the presence of burning fuel.

Vasubandhu. And what does it mean that the use of the word fire is conditioned by burning fuel?

Vatsīputrīya. If there is no fuel, neither (is there anything) we can apply the name of fire to. Nevertheless we neither can maintain that fire is something different from burning fuel, nor can we assert that it is the same. Were it altogether different, fuel could not contain any caloric element,

(which we know it always does contain)¹¹. But if there were no difference at all, then the substance that burns and the something that sings would be (one and the same substance). This illustrates (the relation between the Individual ^{94.b.5 (10a-2)} and its elements). If the elements of a personal life are absent, we do not use the term Individual. Nevertheless we neither can maintain that the Individual is something different from its component elements, nor can we assert that they are identical. (In the first case) the consequence would be an eternal (Soul), (in the second) its total absence.

Vasubandhu. Indeed! Then please explain what in your opinion is fuel ^{94.b.7 (10a-7)} and what is fire? Thereupon I should like you to explain, what it does mean that the name fire is applied to something «conditioned» by the presence of burning fuel?

Vatsīputrīya. This requires no explanation! Fuel is the matter that burns and fire is that which sings. That is all!

Vasubandhu. This is just the thing I should like you to explain: what is the matter that is consumed by fire, and what is it that consumes it?

Vatsīputrīya. Now, as used in common life (these terms have the meaning of wood and flames). When wood or any other fuel is bursting into flames, people say: «this it fuel», «it is burning». With regard to the flames they say: «this is fire», «it sings». Flames and intense heat are the agency which burns i. e. destroys fuel in that sense that the continuity of its existence undergoes a change, (it is turned into ashes). But (from the scientific point of view, both fuel and fire) are composed of (exactly the same set) of eight primary constituents (the sole difference consisting in the circumstance that in fire the caloric element is more prominent than in fuel)¹¹. If the production of fire is conditioned by the presence of fuel, it is just as the production of curds which is conditioned (by the previous existence) of milk, or the milk's sour taste which is conditioned by its previous sweet taste.

Vasubandhu. But then, if the expression «conditioned by the existence of fuel» has this meaning, fuel and fire are altogether different things, because they are produced at different moments. If you mean that the production of an Individual is conditioned by its component elements in the same way, then it must be something different from them and at the same time something non-permanent, (since it has a cause). But if you understand the caloric element in the burning fuel to represent alone the fire, and the other three constituents of matter — which are inseparable from this element — to represent the fuel, then indeed it is established that they must be different, since they differ in

substance¹¹. But then how can the name of such a fire be applied to something «conditioned» by the presence of such fuel! Once more you are bound to explain the meaning you attach to the term «conditioned»? This (fuel) is not the cause producing fire, neither is it the cause of using the name «fire». For fire itself is here the cause for applying to it this name.

95. a. 5. *Vatsīputrīya*. The term «conditioned» may here be accepted in the sense of a support, or necessarily coexisting element?

Vasubandhu. But if you suppose the elements of a personal life to «support» the Individual, or to be coexisting with him in the same sense (in which the primary constituents of matter are coexisting or supporting one another), you evidently are admitting a difference between them. (Then indeed it would follow that) no Individual can exist in the absence of its component elements, just as well as no fire can exist in the absence of fuel.

95. a. 6. *Vatsīputrīya*. To this we have already answered, that if fire be altogether different from fuel, the latter could not contain any element of heat, (which it always does contain).

Vasubandhu. (Yes, you did say so), but what do you understand by heat? If it is the caloric element fuel, never will be the same as heat, since it is (in this case) represented by the other constituents of matter. (They will be as different as one constituent differs from the others).

Vatsīputrīya. But then the other coexisting elements may be possessed of heat. In this case it will be established, that they are different from fire, as far as the latter is represented by the caloric element, but they nevertheless will represent heat also, in as much as they will be pregnant with heat. Hence there is no fault in them being different substances, (since they are thus united).

Vasubandhu. You suppose burning wood etc. to represent at the same time the fuel as well as the fire! Again you are obliged to explain what in this case will be the meaning attached to the term «conditioned»? And besides, since there is nothing but the elements to represent the Individual you cannot possibly escape the conclusion that the latter is nothing different (from the elements). Therefore you have not proved that the name Individual is applied to something conditioned by the presence of its elements in the same sense in which the name fire is applied to something conditioned by the presence of fuel.

[§ 4. The Individual not included in the table of the Elements].

Vasubandhu. Further, if the Individual is included as a separate element among the elements of a personal life, then we must admit the existence of a new category of cognizable elements, a fifth category. For the cognizable elements are either impermanent — past, present and future —, or permanent. (That makes four categories). Now if your Individual is an existence neither constantly changing, nor eternal, it will constitute a fifth, intermediate category — an existence neither momentary, nor eternal.¹² 95. b. 2.

Vatsīputrīya. This cannot be maintained.

Vasubandhu. What is it then?

Vatsīputrīya. It is undefinable: it neither does nor does not constitute any fifth category.

Vasubandhu. When we are applying to an idea the name «an Individual», what is the corresponding object? Is it the elements of a personal life, or is it a (real) Individual? In the first case we are applying the name to the elements only, since there is no (real) object so called. In the second, why should this name be conditioned by the elements, since it is conditioned by the real Individual itself? 95. b. 4.

Vatsīputrīya. We maintain that in the presence of all the elements of a personal life we perceive the object called Individual. Therefore we use this name as conditioned by the elements.

Vasubandhu. But colour too is perceived under the condition that the sense of vision, aroused attention and light be present. Hence you must maintain that it is «conditioned» by them and therefore nominal. (There will be no unconditioned existence altogether).

[§ 5. How is the Individual's existence cognized].

Vasubandhu. Now I should like you to answer the following question. There are six kinds of cognition, (five sense-perceptions, according to the number of senses, and one purely mental). By which of them is the Individual cognized? 95. b. 7.

Vatsīputrīya. We answer: by all the six!

Vasubandhu. How is that to be understood?

Vatsīputrīya. If we have a visual perception of some coloured shape¹³, and if we thereby indirectly cognize the presence of a human Individual, we may maintain that he is cognized by sight. But we neither can admit 95. b. 8.

that he himself is this colour and this shape, nor can we deny it. The same applies (to all the other material elements, voice etc.) and also to the mental phenomena¹⁴. If we have a perception of some mental phenomena through the intellect, and if thereby the idea of an intelligent being presents itself to our mind, we may maintain that this Individual is cognized by a perception purely mental; but we neither can admit that he himself represents those mental phenomena, nor can we (absolutely) deny it.

96. a. 2
(12a-1)

Vasubandhu. But if that be true, the same argument may be applied to the cognition of milk and other (composite substances. They include elements of colour, of smell, taste and touch). If we have a direct visual perception of a definite colour (and flat surface), and through it the idea of milk or of water presents itself to our mind, we may maintain that this milk and this water is cognized by sight. But we neither can admit that they themselves are this colour and shape, nor can we absolutely deny it. The same might be said about their elements cognized by smell, taste and touch. We may have a direct perception of these substances through the sense of touch, but we neither can admit that they are themselves this touch nor can we absolutely deny it. Because (if these colour, smell, taste and touch were each of them milk itself or water itself), we should have four different kinds of milk or water. We arrive at the following conclusion: just as milk and water are conventional names (for a set of independent elements), for some colour, (smell, taste and touch) taken together, so is the designation «Individual» but a common name for the different elements, which it is composed of.

96. a. 6

But (let us consider the argument more closely). You have said: «if we have a visual perception of some colour and shape, and if we thereby indirectly cognize the presence of a human Individual» etc. Now, what is the meaning of these words? Does it mean that the cognition of the Individual is caused by its visible element, or does it mean that both are cognized simultaneously?

(*Vatsīputrīya*. What is the difference between these two possibilities?)

Vasubandhu. If the visible element is the cause producing the cognition of the Individual, and at the same time we are told, that the latter does not differ from the former, (this must be true of all the other causes too), and since they are not different from the Individual, there neither can be any difference between themselves. Hence we arrive at the absurd conclusion, that the visible element in its turn does not differ from sight, light and attention, since these all are the causes of a visual perception. Now, (take the other possibility): the cognition of the Individual appears at the same time with

the cognition of the visible element. The question arises: do we perceive the Individual by that very perception, by which we perceive the visible form, or by another one? In the first case the Individual would be essentially the same as the visible form, in other words, it would be the name for some visible element only. But then how could we make a distinction between them? How could we tell: «this is the bodily frame» and «this is the Individual itself». Or how indeed could we surmise that the Individual is something as really existing, as the visible element is, if there altogether be no distinction between them? We can assume etc. existence only on the basis of some cognition. What is here said about the visible element, might be extended to all the other elements, mental phenomena included. But supposing the Individual to be cognized by a separate act of perceptive knowledge, then it should be something quite different from the visible element, as both are cognized at different moments, just as blue differs from yellow, or just as two moments (in the existence of the same object) differ from one another. This might also be extended to all other elements, mental phenomena included. 96. b. 3.

Vatsīputrīya. But (there is still another possibility): just as we maintain that the Individual and the visible element are neither different, nor are they identical, we shall extend (the same principle) to their cognitions; they are neither different, nor are they identical!

Vasubandhu. Well (if you go on this way with the relation of neither different nor identical), you neither will be capable even to maintain that (this cognition of an Individual) is a passing phenomenon and this will mean giving up your own tenet, (namely that cognitions are always phenomenal).

Further (if you are in the right and this Individual) really exists, but is neither identical nor different from the visible element, why then has the Lord (expressly denied it), declaring that «neither the visible element is the Self nor any other element, consciousness included»? And if the Individual is perceived through sight, what is the objective cause producing such perception? Is it the visible frame, or is it the Individual, or both together? If it is the visible element it cannot possibly be a perception of the Individual, no more than it can be a perception of his voice or the like. Because the objective cause of every perception belongs necessarily to its own special field, (a visual perception can be of colour or form only). And if (you suppose it to be the Individual itself or the Individual and the body together, you will be contradicted¹⁵ by Scripture, because Scripture lays a stress upon the point that there are only two causes produ-

97. a. 1. cive of perception. Thus it is declared: «O, Brother! when a visual perception is produced, the first cause of it is the faculty of sight, the second a visible object. Why is that? Because the production of all visual perceptions, whatever they may be, is conditioned by the existence of the faculty of sight and of a visible object.» In that case it would likewise follow, that the Individual, (did it exist), would be something changing in every moment, for Scripture declares, that «whatever be the active cause or the object of a visual perception, is eo ipso a momentary existence». Now if your Individual is not a visible object, it never will be cognized by sight. As to your theory that the Individual may be cognized by all the six kinds of perception, (we must observe, that) if it can be cognized by audition, it must be something quite different from the visible element, as different as sound is from colour. On the other hand if it is cognized by sight it must be something quite different from the voice, as different as colour is from sound. The same argument may be extended to the other sources of cognition. Moreover your theory is in contradiction with the following Scriptural passage: «O, Brahmīn! each of these five sense faculties has its own separate field of action and its own objects because each one experiences its own objects in its own special field¹⁶. One faculty cannot act in the domain of another, or experience objects belonging to it. Thus we have the faculties of sight, of audition, of smell, of taste, of touch and of the intellect. The first five have their proper domain and their own objects each, the faculty of the intellect being the common resort for all». The consequence of this would be that there is altogether no such object as an Individual, and if it does not constitute an object of cognition, it will follow that it cannot be cognized at all.

97. b. 1. *Vatsīputrīya*. If this would be the case, then the Individual could not be cognized even by the intellect. (But in its turn this is contradicted by Scripture). It is declared in the Parable of the Six Animals: «the six faculties have each of them a separate field of action, each has a natural propensity towards a special domain of its own and its own special objects.» (This propensity belongs to intellect alone, hence we understand this passage to indicate that the faculty of the intellect may cognize every objects).

Vasubandhu. This passage does not mention the cognitive faculties in the current sense of the six cognitive faculties, (because it mentions their propensity i. e. a conscious choice). Now the five senses and the (indefinite) consciousness produced by them cannot have any propensity towards visual or other perception. But by their influence mind is attracted and they are followed by definite mental cognitions which are referred to in the above passage

under the name of cognitive faculties. As to cognitions (purely) mental which are consequent on the action of the intellect alone, (independently of any influence by the senses, they have their own special objects and) cannot have any inclination towards a domain which is essentially different from their own. (There can be no common object for all cognitive faculties; the Individual being no special object of any separate faculty cannot be cognized altogether). Therefore your objection is not valid, (your reference to the meaning of the passage in question does not improve your position). And besides Buddha (has given the full list of all existing elements without mentioning any Individual). «O Brethren! has he declared, I will expose to you the list of all elements which must be well known, thoroughly known. Well known, thoroughly known must be the faculty of vision, its object, its apprehension, its sensation and the feeling whether pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent caused by the sensation of a visual contact» and so on, (he goes on enumerating the elements and) concludes with «the feeling arising from a purely mental sensation. This is the list of all the elements of existence that must be well known, that must be thoroughly known».

(*Vatsīputrīya*. Buddha speaks in this passage about thorough knowledge. But to apprehend the mere existence of something is not the same as to know thoroughly.)

Vasubandhu. It is clearly stated in the above passage that the elements to be well known, and thoroughly known are so many and no more. There is no Individual among them. Therefore neither its mere existence can be apprehended, since the indefinite apprehension of an object's mere existence and its subsequent definite cognition always refer to just the same object. This idea of yours that there is an existing Self who through the opening of his eyes contemplates other Selves — this idea it is which is called Wrong Personalism.¹⁹

[§ 6. Scriptural passages discussed].

Vasubandhu. In his sermons Buddha lays a stress upon the point, that what is called an Individual is nothing else than the component elements (of a personal life). So it is declared in the Ajita-Sermon: «a visual consciousness depends upon the organ of sight and a visible object. When these three: (object, sense organ and consciousness) combine, a sensation is produced. It is accompanied by a feeling, a representation and a volition. Thus we have four elements that are mentale (sensation i. e. indefinite consciousness, feeling, representation and volition), and one, the organ of sight, that is physical. Only

so much is meant, when we are speaking of a human being. To these (five sets of elements) different names are being given, such as a sentient being, a man, Manu's progeny, a son of Manu, a child, an Individual, a life, a Soul. If with respect to them the expression is used «he sees this object with his own eyes», it is false imputation, (there being in reality nobody possessing eyes of his own). In common life with respect to them such expressions are current as: «that is the name of this venerable man, he belongs to such a caste and such a family, he eats such food, this pleases him, he has reached such an age, he has lived so many years, he has died at such an age». These O Brethren! accordingly are mere words, mere conventional designations.

«Expressions are they, (but not truth)!
 Real elements have no duration,
 Vitality makes them combine,
 In mutually dependent apparitions».

Moreover Buddha has declared that one must hold to the definite (direct, technical) meaning of his words. Therefore their meaning must be examined over and over. Thus, when it is said: «O Brahmins! every thing exists», (one must bear in mind) that it likewise has been said, «this refers only to (the elements of existence classified as) the twelve «bases of cognition». Now if this Individual is not to be found among the bases of cognition, it is (eo ipso) proved that it does not exist altogether. If, on the contrary, it is included in them, then it is not admissible to maintain that the Individual is something indefinite, (neither identical nor different from the elements, since the elements and bases are something definite). Again in one sermon according to the (Vatsiputrīyas) themselves, there is a passage running thus: «all the organs of sight that may exist and all the visible objects, that may exist etc. etc.» — follows the enumeration of all the twelve bases of cognition — «the Buddha has declared that here (in the twelve bases) they are contained, all without exception; and he declares that these are the only elements really existing». Among them there is no Individual. Therefore how can the Vatsiputrīyas maintain that the Individual is something real? (They contradict their own Scriptures!) Again in the Bimbisāra-Sermon it is declared: «O Brethren! (the notion) of «myself» and of «mine» is a childish notion of simple uneducated people, who are misled by current expressions¹⁷. There is no Self, nothing mine, nothing except the separate elements of the trouble of life in their vanishing apparitions¹⁸. And the holy nun Ćilā¹⁹ — Māra having started the discussion²⁰ — gives the following answer:

«A sentient being does exist, you think, o Māra?
 You are misled by false conception.
 This bundle of elements is void of Self,
 In it there is no sentient being,
 Just as a set of wooden parts
 Receives the name of carriage,
 So do we give to elements
 The name of fancied being»²¹.

Further, we find in the «Scriptural Chips»²² Buddha addressing the 98. b. 5. Brahmin Bādarayaṇa in the following terms: «Listen thou, o Bādarayaṇa! I shall explain to you all bonds of life which are the vanishing elements. On consciousness (they do depend, with it) are they defiled, with it they become purified²³. But a Self in the sense of the real Self does not exist. By false (imputation the element of consciousness) is fancied (to represent a Self). There is here neither a Self nor a sentient Being. There are elements which depend (upon other elements acting as) causes. Life revolves in twelve successive stages, (but it contains nothing else except the elements, differently classified as) the five aggregates (the substrates of an individual life), or the twelve bases of cognition, or the eighteen component parts of existence. If we carefully examine them, we do not find among all of them any Individual. Behold the elements of inward life! they are void (of a Self) Behold those lying to the outward! they also are void²⁴. And even he who is plunged in deep meditation about this (twofold) voidness, whosoever he may be, he is not found (among the elements of real existence)!» And it is likewise declared (in the same collection): 98. b. 8. «There are five draw-backs²⁵ in this idea of a Soul: 1) a false dogma of a Soul, of an intelligent being, or a living creature²⁶, 2) a coincidence with heretics, 3) a wrong path to Salvation, 4) a disinclination towards the idea of (Self-) voidness, a disbelief, a want of steadiness, want of devotion to it²⁷, 5) the elements of saintliness do not appear in their (genuine) purity».

Vatsīputrīya. For the (Vatsīputrīyas) these texts are of no authority!
Vasubandhu. Why?

Vatsīputrīya. Because they maintain that in their Collection of Sermons they are not to be found.

Vasubandhu. But are their Collections the only authority (they bow to), or is the word of Buddha their authority? If their Collections are the only authority, then Buddha is not their Teacher and they are not the sons of the

Çākya-Heremit. But if the word of Buddha is their authority, why then should these texts not be authoritative?

£9. a. 4
(16a—7).

Vatsiputrīya. They are not the (true) Words of Buddha.

Vasubandhu. And why?

Vatsiputrīya. Because the (vatsiputriya) are known to maintain that they are not to be found in their Collections ²⁸.

Vasubandhu. This is inadmissible!

Vatsiputrīya. What is inadmissible?

Vasubandhu. To declare a text spurious because it is omitted in their collection, a text which is found in all other collections, a text which neither disagrees with Scripture nor with the theory of Elements ²⁹, this is a quite arbitrary proceeding and nothing more! And then, the (well known) passage «the elements contain no Self», is it likewise omitted (in their own Collections)?

Vatsiputrīya. But in our opinion it means that the Individual is neither one of the elements nor is it something outside the elements, (as stated above).

Vasubandhu. In this case (if nothing corresponds to it) the Individual would never have existed (even) as a mental idea ³⁰, (since every idea must have something for its objective source). It is expressly stated in Scripture, that there are always two causes for every cognition (a receptive faculty and an apprehended object).

(*Vatsiputrīya.* And how do you explain the fact that in the absence of a Self there nevertheless arises an idea of a Self?)

Vasubandhu. It is stated (in other texts) that «the Self corresponds to a non-Self, (to something existing, but not to a real Self). It is a wrong idea, a wrong apprehension and a wrong doctrine.

Vatsiputrīya. How indeed did you come to know that the false idea of a Self corresponds not to a Self, but to a non-Self?

Vasubandhu. And what (in your opinion) does the expression «non-Self» mean (in Scripture)?

Vatsiputrīya. (It is meant to designate all the elements of phenomenal existence, classified as they are in) five aggregates (the substrates of a personal life), or in twelve bases of cognition, or in eighteen component parts of existence.

Vasubandhu. Well, (f. i. the bodily frame being an element must be designated as a non-Self, and it follows that you are contradicting your own statement made above), the statement namely that the Individual is neither identical with the bodily frame, nor is it something different ³¹. (If the bodily element does not differ from the Self, it cannot represent the non-Self).

In another Sermon it is declared: «O Brethren! some Buddhists as 99. b. 1. well as some Brahmins entertain the idea of a Self. But you must know that all such ideas refer exclusively to the five mundane groups (of elements, the substrates of a person's phenomenal life: its bodily frame, its feelings, its notions, its will, and its general consciousness)». Therefore all such cognitions of a Self invariably refer to the non-Self.

[§ 7. Is the Buddha a real personality].

Vasubandhu. Accordingly Scripture declares: «(there are saints, who 99. b. 2. can) remember their various previous existences, but in doing so, all that they did remember, all they are remembering or will remember about in future refers simply to these five groups of mundane elements.

Vatsiputriya. If such be the import of this text, why then does Buddha declare (in his Sermons): «in a former existence I have had such a bodily frame». (Using the term «I» implies the existence of a Self).

Vasubandhu. He alludes in these words to the fact which has been expressed in the (just cited) passage «there are saints who can remember their various previous existences etc.» (The saints who remember their previous births remember them in this form, namely in the form: «I» have had such a bodily frame)». If the import of these words had been (as you conceive it) that there is a (real) Individual, which (in former births) possessed an(other) body, it would follow, that you are professing the heresy of Wrong Personalism, and then the only possible escape (for you not to be accused of this heresy) would be to declare spurious (all the Sermons where Buddha speaks of his previous births)³². Therefore it is clear that in those Sermons Buddha speaks about his person in the common, conventional sense, just as we use the expression «a collection» (meaning its separate parts), or «a continuity» (meaning its separate moments. In one moment we have a collection Yaçom. of the elements of a personality existing simultaneously, in the continuity of life through many births a collection of such successive moments).

Vatsiputrīya. In this case it would follow that Buddha is not omni- 99 b. 5. scient. Since consciousness as well as the mental states are but separate moments, there is not the slightest possibility (for one of such moments) to know every thing (i. e. the arising and disappearing of all elements in every moment). But for a real personality such (universal) knowledge becomes possible.

Vasubandhu. But then you admit the existence of a Self which does not vanish at the moment when consciousness vanishes, therefore you must admit the existence of an eternal Soul, (an unchanging Self along with a

changing consciousness, and that would be a contradiction to your own doctrine). As to us we by no means maintain that the Buddha has an immediate direct knowledge of all (moments) and that this is the reason of his being called «the Omniscient».

Vatsīputrīya. How is it then?

Vasubandhu. He is possessed of the gift of omniscience in the sense that the continuity of life which is called «the Buddha» has the force of producing the right knowledge of any object he may like to know by simply directing his attention towards it. It has been said:

«Not in the sense of «all at once»
Admit we omniscience,
But gradually it operates
Like fire every thing consuming!»

Vatsīputrīya. How can it be proved (that the Buddha is no permanent personality, but a stream of changing elements)?

Vasubandhu. It follows from the fact that there are past, future and present Buddhas, as stated in Scripture.

(*Vatsīputrīya.* Where has it been declared?)

Vasubandhu. There is (a verse in Scripture) running thus:

«Be it the Buddhas of the past
Be it the Buddhas of the future
Be it the Buddhas of the present
They all remove the suffering
Of many sentient beings».

Since you yourself are likewise maintaining that what appears in the three times are elements only and no permanent personality, (therefore it is clear that there is no Ego outside the elements, nor is there any Omniscient Ego, because this would be irreconcilable with the temporary character of these elements).

[§ 8. Examination of the parable of the burden and the carrier].

100. a. 3
(1a — 5). *Vatsīputrīya.* If the Individual is nothing else but the elements (it is composed of), what for then has it been declared by Buddha: «O, Brethren! I shall explain unto you the burden (of life) and moreover I will explain the taking up of the burden, the laying aside of it and who the carrier is!» («Listen

well, listen attentively and inculcate it in your minds! I am going to explain! Yaçom. What is the burden? All the five aggregates of elements the substrates of personal life. What is meant by the taking up of the burden? The Force of Craving for a continuous life, accompanied by passionate desires, the rejoicing at many an object. What is the laying aside of the burden? It is the wholesale rejection of this Craving for a continuation of life, accompanied as it is by passionate desires and rejoicings at many an object, the getting rid of it in every circumstance, its extinction, its end, its suppression, an aversion towards it, its restraint, its disappearance. Who is the carrier? We must answer: it is the Individual i. e. «this venerable man, having this name, of such a caste, of such family, eating such food, finding pleasure or displeasure at such things, of such an age, the man who after a life of such length, will pass away having reached such an age». (What for did Buddha declare this?)

Vasubandhu. Why should he not?

Vatsiputrīya. (The burden is explained to represent all the elements of life and the carrier i. e. the Individual, if not different from them, must be included in the same). Now the burden and the carrier of the burden cannot possibly be the same thing²⁸.

Vasubandhu. Why?

Vatsiputrīya. Because (experience teaches) that this never happens.

Vasubandhu. But to say (as you do) that an Individual is something undefinable, (neither identical nor different from the elements it is composed of) is likewise inadmissible! And why? (For the same reason!) Because such a thing has never been witnessed! Moreover (if the carrier of the burden be taken to represent something different from the elements), the consequence would be that neither «the taking up of the burden» (i. e. the Force of assuming new elements by birth) could be included among these elements (which we know it is, under the name of the Force of Craving for Life)²⁹. The carrier of the burden has been pointed to by Buddha with the express purpose to show that only so much can be known of him: «he is a venerable man, named so and so» and other (common life) particulars ending with «after so long a life he will die at such an age», but he must not be misunderstood to represent some eternal (Soul) or some (real) Individual. (In reality nothing exists but momentary sets of elements), the elements of the former moment exercising (as it were) a pressure upon the elements of the following one. Hence the preceding moment has been conventionally called the burden and the following one — the carrier of the burden³⁴.

[§ 9. Further arguments of the Vatsīputrīyas in favour of the existence of some kind of Individual, stated and answered].

100. a. 7. *Vatsīputrīya*. Some Individual necessarily must exist, (because there are apparitional spontaneous self-births³⁵. The denial of spontaneous births has been (condemned in Scripture, as one of) the wrong views.

Vasubandhu. Who has ever denied spontaneous births! In conformity with the explanation given by Buddha, we maintain that they do exist. (Buddha has said namely that if the elements develop into a new life spontaneously, the result is a self born apparition). Hence what has been condemned as a wrong view is (the denial of this explanation,) the denial of the fact that such an apparition in a new existence is a (mere) transformation in an unbroken chain of appearing elements, because an apparition consists out of elements³⁶. But supposing you were in the right, and I am really guilty of the fault you are imputing to me, namely the heresy of denying the existence of an Individual³⁷, what would happen? I never could get rid of it! For only two ways are taught towards perfection: insight into the four Truths of Perfection and Ecstasy or the practice of the Holy Path. Neither will be applicable in my case. Insight into the Truths will not do, because such an heresy is not mentioned in them, on the contrary we find the opposite view — the heresy of Wrong Personalism — mentioned. And as to the way of practice it is not capable of clearing up wrong views altogether³⁸.

100. b. 2. *Vatsīputrīya*. But the Individual cannot be identical with the elements of a personal life, because (Scripture mentions the Individual as a unit). There is a passage: «when one whole individual appears in the world, it is born»³⁹.

Vasubandhu. This is wrong! A unit may also be used as a conventional substitute for a multitude, as f. i. «one» corn of sesam, «one» corn of rice (for a multitude of atoms), or «one» heap of corn (for a multitude of grains) and «one» word (for a combination of sounds).

And again, since you admit that the Self is something that is being born (into phenomenal existence) you must admit that it cannot be something permanent. (Elements that are subject to birth never are permanent)⁴⁰.

Vatsīputrīya. (It is permanent in a way, for «being born» is here used in another sense). The elements are (momentary) apparitions which did not exist in the former moment, but the Self is not born in this way.

Vasubandhu. How then?

Vatṣputrīya. It is born in the sense, that it acquires new elements, casting away the previous ones), just as by the acquirement of knowledge one becomes a priest or a grammarian, by (appropriate) distinctions⁴¹ one becomes a buddhist monk or a brahminical wandering ascetic, and by a change in the physical condition one becomes old or falls ill. (In all these cases new elements are produced in something already existing).

Vasubandhu. This argument is wrong! It is condemned in Scripture. In his Sermon about the «Real Void»⁴² Buddha has spoken thus: «O, Brethren! actions do exist and also their consequences (merit and demerit), but the person that acts does not. There is no one to cast away this set of elements and no one to assume a new set of them⁴³. (There exists no Individual), it is only a conventional name given to (a set) of elements»⁴⁴. In the «Discourse with Phālguna»⁴⁵ it is likewise declared: 100. b. 7. «I do not say, o Phalguna! that the same body assumes a (new set of elements)». Therefore there is no one whatsoever who assumes elements or throws them off.

But first of all I should like to know: what are you alluding to, when you refer to the (assuming of new elements by) the priest, (the grammarian) etc.? Is it their personality? No, because its existence is not proved. Is it their mind and mental phenomena? (No, because there is nothing permanent in them), they appear anew at every moment. Is it their body? (No, because the same must be said about the body. 100. b. 8.

Further, (your examples prove the opposite of what they are ment to prove. You maintain namely that the Self and the elements are neither different, nor identical, but) just as knowledge and other marks (are different from the body), in like manner the elements must be different from a Self. (If you admit that the bodies of the old and the sick (are different states), of the same body, we answer that the old and the sick body are altogether new bodies (different from the previous ones. To deny it would mean to accept) the transformation doctrine of the Sāṃkhya which has already been dispensed with. Therefore your examples are not fit (to prove your tenet that the Self and the elements are neither different nor identical). Again if you admit the elements, but not the Self, to be produced anew (in every moment), then you clearly show that both are different and that the Self is permanent. And when you point to the fact that there are five sets of elements in and personal life and only one Self, do you not maintain that the Self is different from the elements?!⁴⁶ (How can you at the same time maintain that it is not different and not permanent)?

101. a. 4. *Vatsīputrīya*. There I will ask you in my turn. There are four primal constituents of matter, but matter itself is regarded as something simple. Nevertheless is it not taught that matter is not different from its constituents?

Vasubandhu. This is a mistaken view held by some persons.

Vatsīputrīya. By whom?

Vasubandhu. By those who (like Buddhadeva) admit the existence of the primary constituents alone⁴⁷.

[§ 10. Questions supposed to have been left unsettled].

101. a. 6
(2b—10). *Vatsīputrīya*. If this be true, if an individual represents exactly the elements it is composed of and nothing else, why then did the Lord decline to decide the question, whether the «living being» is identical with the body, or not?

Vasubandhu. Because he took into consideration the intention of the questioner. The latter asked about the existence of the Soul as a real living unit, controlling our actions from within. But as such a Soul is absolutely non existing, how could Buddha have decided, whether it did or did not differ from the body. Fancy someone asking: are the hair of the tortoise hard, or smooth?! This question has already been analysed by quite ancient teachers. (There lived once an Elder of great learning named Nāgasena and a powerful King, Milinda by name). This King Milinda came to the Elder Nāgasena and said: «O Venerable One! Very loquacious are monks! If you would answer exactly to my question, I have a mind to ask you something». «Please, do ask!» said the Elder. The King asked: «This living being what is it? Is it the same as the body, or is the living being one thing and the body another?» The Elder said: «This question has not been answered!» The other riposted: «O most venerable One! did you not condescend to promise at the outset not to give any evasive explanation? Why then are you telling me that this question has not been answered (by Buddha). These words are by no means (an answer to my question)». The Elder spoke: «O great King! Very loquacious are Kings! If you would answer exactly to my question, I also have a mind to ask you something». «Please, ask!» said the King. The Elder asked: «are the fruit of the mango tree in your palace sour or are they sweet?» «There is absolutely no mango tree in my palace!» was the answer. The Elder riposted: «O great King! did you not condescend to promise at the outset, not to give any evasive explanation? Whatfore then are you telling me that there is no mango tree in your palace?

This is by no means (an answer to my question)!» The King replied: «But how can I tell you something about the taste, sour or sweet, of the fruit of an unexisting mango tree?» «O great King! said the Elder, it is just the same with this living being! If it does not exist, whatfore shall I explain whether it does or does not differ from the body?»

Vatsiputrīya. And why did not the Lord declare that it does not exist 101. b. 7. at all?

Vasubandhu. Because he took into consideration the questioner's state of mind. The latter could have understood that the «diving being» is the same as the continuity of the elements of a life (and that this continuity) is also denied. He thus would have fallen into a wrong doctrine, (the doctrine of Nihilism).

(*Vatsiputrīya.* Why then did not Buddha declare, that the «diving being» is a conventional name for a set of constantly changing elements?)

Vasubandhu. Because his interlocutor was not capable of grasping the theory (of elements), since he had no knowledge (of the manner, in which these elements) appear in combinations, being mutually interdependent. This (method of teaching in conformity with the mental capacity of the auditory) can be clearly seen in the following express words of Buddha. (After having refused an answer to the questions of the wandering ascetic Vatsagotra about the existence of the soul, he thus adressed Ananda): «Would it not have been improper, O Ananda, to tell that there is a Soul, since among all elements of existence there is none. And if I did tell him that it does not exist, Vatsagotra might have fallen out of one perplexity into a still greater one. He might have thought: «I had a Soul precedently, now I have lost it!» If I tell that the Soul exists, O Ananda, there is the danger of falling into one extremity in surmising its Eternity. If I tell that it does not exist, there is the opposite danger of falling into Nihilism!» This point has been explained (by Kumāralābha) thus: «The Buddha was pleased 102. a. 4 (4n - 3). to construct his doctrine concerning the elements of existence (with the greatest caution), like a tigress who holds her young by her teeth, (her grasp is not too tight in order not to hurt him, nor is it too loose in order not to let him fall). Buddha saw the wounds produced by the sharp teeth of the dogmatic (belief in Eternity) on the one hand, and by the downfall of (every responsibility for one's) actions on the other. If (humanity) accepted the idea of an existing Soul it lay down wounded by the sharp weapon of dogmatism. But if it did cease to believe in the existence of a conditioned Self, then the tender child of its moral merit would perish». The same author goes on

and says: «Since the «living being» does not exist, the Lord did not declare that it is different from the body. But he neither has declared that it does not exist, fearing that this could be understood as a denial of the empirical Self. There is namely in the stream of elements a certain «living» in the sense (of actions producing) good or bad results, and if Buddha had said that there is altogether no living being, (Vatsa) might have supposed that such a «living» too does not exist. Nor did he declare that a «living being» is merely a conventional name given to a set of elements, for in that case he had to deal with a man incapable of realising the idea of Voidness (i. e. the absence of a real personality in the stream of elements appearing in mutual interdependence). Thus it is that being questioned by Vatsa whether the Soul did or did not exist, Buddha took into consideration the intellectual level of his interlocutor and did give no answer. But if a Soul did exist, nothing could have prevented him to declare that it did!»

Vatsiputrīya. And why did Buddha not settle the questions about the Eternity of the World etc.?

Vasubandhu. For the same reason! He took into consideration the intention of the questioner. First of all the latter would have meant the (Universal) Soul to be the World. But then as for Buddha no (such) Soul did altogether exist, (every answer such as: it is eternal, it is not eternal, it is partly eternal and partly non eternal, it is neither eternal nor non-eternal) would have been out of place. If again the questioner would have meant under Universe the appearing and disappearing of all (its elements), again every answer would have been out of place. For if this (process of life) is eternal, there is no (hope of putting an end to it in) Final Rescue. If it is non eternal, then it will break up altogether (by itself). Supposing it to be both: (partly non eternal and partly eternal), then some living beings will naturally attain Final Rescue (without any effort), and other ones will never attain it. And lastly, supposing it to be neither eternal nor non-eternal (we get a contradiction, namely that) at the same time there neither will be any Salvation nor any absence of Salvation! As a matter of fact Salvation can be attained by the practice of the Holy Path only, therefore every (direct) unqualified answer would have been incomplete. Similarly (Buddha declined to answer the question of a) learned Gymnosophist who taking a fledgling in his hand (asked, whether it was living or not. If he had answered «it is living» the gymnosophist would have squeezed the bird in his hand and shown it dead. If he had answered «it is dead» the Gymnosophist would have shown a living fledgling and thus proved to the audience that

Buddha was not omniscient. But the Lord guessed the hidden aim and gave no direct answer. He only said: «as a matter of fact it can be living or dead, since this depends upon your will»).

For the same reason Buddha did not solve the four questions regarding the end of the Universe. These questions have the same import as the preceding four questions.

(*Vatsīputrīya*. How do you know that these four questions about the end of the world have the same meaning as the questions about its eternity etc.)?

Vasubandhu. (I know it) because the wandering ascetic Vatsa⁴⁸ after having proposed (the first set of four questions) proceeded again to ask: «are you maintaining that all «worlds» (i. e. all sentient beings) are able to find escape or only a part of them (i. e. are there «worlds» eternal and non-eternal)? Ananda the Elder (who was present) made the remark: «Vatsa! you have already asked the Lord about these questions. Why are you now repeating them, changing only the words?» (We know therefore that the second set of four questions have the same meaning as the first).

(*Vatsīputrīya*. And why was the question about the existence of a Buddha after death refused an answer)?

Vasubandhu. For the same reason! Because taking into consideration the intention of the questioner a (simple) answer was not possible. The latter namely in asking his question, was surmising that the term «Buddha» denoted the (absolute) Soul liberated (from all bonds of transient existence. Since the existence of such a Soul was not admitted, it was impossible to answer whether it did or did not exist after the death of the body).

Now we must (in our turn) ask those who are admitting the existence (of a Soul in the shape of) an Individual: why did Buddha speaking about the living Individual declare that it did exist (meaning all its elements existing at a certain moment)? Why did he refuse to answer the question about its existence after death?

Vatsīputrīya. Because he feared to be misunderstood as admitting the existence of eternal (elements). 102. b. 7
(5a—9).

Vasubandhu. How is that? (Buddha has made declarations regarding future and former existences without fearing to be accused of admitting eternal life). «The time will come, O Maitreya, said he, when you will become the absolute Saint, the perfectly accomplished Buddha!» And upon an other occasion, when one of his followers passed away, he made a declaration about his former existence, saying: «he was born formerly as such and such

a one». How is that? Did he in these cases admit an eternal continuation of life? If it be supposed that Buddha perceived a man's (destiny) previously to his entering the absolute state and ceased to perceive it after that, then it would follow that he did not answer (the question about the existence of a Buddha after death), because he did not know of it. But this is a denial of our Great Master's omniscience. Otherwise (there is only one explanation possible, namely that he did not answer the question about the existence of a Buddha i. e. an absolute Soul after the death of the body because) there is altogether no Soul. You are driven to accept (our, the Sarvāstivādin's view). If on the contrary you admit that he perceived the existence of a Soul in this case, but was silent about it, then it will be proved that a Soul is existing and is eternal. Or (perhaps you will have recourse to your favourite method and declare that) this also is something undefinable, that Buddha does and does not perceive it at the same time! But hush! hush! do not give voice to such (blasphemy)!

[§ 11. A further argument in favour of a Soul stated and answered].

103. a. 4. *Vatsīputrīya*. (Some kind of) Individual must exist, since Scripture declares: «to maintain dogmatically «I have no Soul» is a wrong dogma».

Vasubandhu. But it likewise declares: «to maintain that there is a Soul is wrong dogmatism». Therefore this is absolutely inadmissible. The Abhidharmists declare both these views to be inadmissible extremes. They are included by them among the heresies as the belief in Eternity and Nihilism. Their view is profoundly logical, since it is just the same view that has been proffered in the Discourse with Vatsa: «O Ananda! if we declare that there is a (real) Soul, we shall fall into (the extreme of) Eternity; and if we declare that there is no (empirical) Self, we shall fall into (the extreme of) Nihilism».

[§ 12. Is there any transmigration of Souls].

103. a. 7. *Vatsīputrīya*. If there were no Individual existing, who is it that does migrate, (appearing and disappearing in different existences), since it is impossible to suppose that the process of life is itself appearing and disappearing? Besides the Lord has declared in Scripture: «The living beings are migra-

ting. Obscured by Ignorance (and bound by a Craving for life) they are wandering about (through birth and death)».

Vasubandhu. But how do they migrate?

Vatsīputrīya. By abandoning one set of elements and taking up a new one.

Vasubandhu. This theory has already been dispensed with. (We have proved that life is going on like a moving fire which is consuming a prairie). Although it is disappearing at every moment it nevertheless is called a wandering fire on account of its continuity. Just so does a multitude of sets of elements conventionally called «diving beings» wander (to future birth and death) on account of (the element of) Craving for life.

Vatsīputrīya. If this (so called living being is a mere) combination of ^{103 b. 1} elements (without any real Ego), how could the Lord have declared: «at ^(6a-7) that time I have been living as Sunetra the (venerable) teacher?»

Vasubandhu. Why should he not?

Vatsīputrīya. Because the elements (of a former existence) are not the same (as the present ones).

Vasubandhu. What is it then (that is now Buddha and was formerly Sunetra)?

Vatsīputrīya. The Individual.

Vasubandhu. (Impossible because it) would be eternal! Therefore when Buddha says «I myself was this (teacher Sunetra)», he means that (his past and his present) belong to one and the same lineage (of momentary existences, he does not mean that the former elements did not disappear). Just as when we say «this same fire which has been seen consuming (that thing) has reached (this object)», (the fire is not the same, but overlooking this difference we indirectly call fire the continuity of its moments i. e. rebirths). Again supposing that a (real) Self is existing, (this Self being very subtle) ^{103. b. 3.} only Buddhas will perceive it quite clearly. Having thus perceived it they will be imbued with a very strong belief in it, and since according to Scripture «the idea of a Self is followed by the idea of «mine»», they — the Buddhas — will preeminently believe that the elements of their lives belong to them, and this will constitute their heresy of Wrong Personalism. Further, where the wrong idea of «mine» has found its place, there arises a craving for all that is supposed to be «mine». Thus it will happen that (these would be Buddhas) corrupted by the strongest bonds of a passionate love for their own persons and belongings will postpone their Salvation into remote future! (i. e. will never become Buddhas!)

103. b. 5
(6b-5). *Vatsīputrīya*. On the contrary! passionate love towards the (real) Self is never experienced.

Vasubandhu. According to this opinion there can be no love for the (pure) Self, this love appears only when something which is not at all the real Self, is mistaken for the Self. This you suppose to be logical! (But it is impossible logically to prove such tenets. Therefore you are grossly mistaken, when you suppose that the disease of such wrong views reducing Salvation to nought might appear in a natural way within the pale of the Holy Doctrine of Buddha). To summarise: One category (of thinkers, as f. i. the *Vatsīputrīyas*) admit the existence of an (undefinable) Individuality (along with the elements). An other category (as f. i. the *Mādhyamikas*) declare that there is altogether nothing real, (i. e. the elements themselves have no real existence). These two wrong doctrines have appeared within the pale of Buddhism. There are besides the heterodox teachers, who maintain that the Soul is a quite independent substance. All these wrong doctrines make Salvation impossible and this is their irremissible fault!

[§ 13. Memory explained].

103 b. 7. *Vatsīputrīya*. Now, if there absolutely is no Soul, how is it then, that the detached moments of consciousness can remember or recognise things which have been experienced a long time ago?

Vasubandhu. Consciousness, being in a special condition and connected with a (previous) knowledge of the remembered object, produces its recollection.

Vatsīputrīya. What is this special condition of consciousness which is immediately followed by remembrance?

Vasubandhu. It is a condition which includes 1) attention directed towards this object, 2) an idea etc. similar or otherwise connected with it and 3) absence of bodily pain, grief or distraction etc., impairing its capacity. But supposing all these conditions are realised, consciousness nevertheless is not able to produce remembrance, if it is not connected with a previous experience of the remembered object. If on the other hand it is so connected, but the above conditions are absent, it likewise is not able to produce it. Both factors are necessary — (a previous cognition and a suitable state of mind). Then only memory appears. Experience shows that no other forces are capable (of evoking it).

Vatsīputrīya. But (if there were absolutely nothing permanent, it would mean that) one consciousness has perceived the object and an other one

remembers it. How is this possible? In this case things experienced by Devadatta's consciousness would be remembered by the consciousness of Yajñadatta.

Vasubandhu. No! because there is no connection between them. They are not mutually related as cause and effect, as is the case between moments belonging to the same stream of thought. Indeed we do not at all maintain that one consciousness perceives and another one remembers. (The stream of thought is the same). On a previous occasion we have explained the manner in which a complete change is gradually taking place in a chain of consecutive moments. Thus it is that a consciousness which did perceive an object formerly, is (gradually) producing a consciousness which remembers it now. What fault can you find with this argument?

As to recognition it is simply the consequence of a recollection, (and requires no further explanation).

Vatsīputrīya. If there is no Soul, who is it that remembers?

Vasubandhu. What is the meaning of the word «to remember»?

Vatsīputrīya. It means to grasp an object by memory.

Vasubandhu. Is this «grasping by memory» something different from memory?

Vatsīputrīya. It is an agent who acts through memory.

Vasubandhu. The agency by which memory is produced we have just explained. The cause productive of a recollection is a suitable state of mind (and nothing else)!

Vatsīputrīya. But when (in common life) we are using the expression «Caitra remembers» what does it mean?

Vasubandhu. In the current (of phenomena), which is designated by the name Caitra a recollection appears. We notice the fact and express it. It is no more!

Vatsīputrīya. But if there is no Soul, whose is the recollection, (whom does it belong to)?

Vasubandhu. What is here the meaning of the Genitive «whose»?

Vatsīputrīya. It denotes proprietorship.

Vasubandhu. Is it the same as when somebody enquires, of what objects who is the proprietor?

Vatsīputrīya. It is just as when we say «Caitra is the owner of a cow».

Vasubandhu. What does it mean to be the owner of a cow?

Vatsīputrīya. It means that it depends on him to employ her for milking or driving purposes etc.

Vasubandhu. Now I should like to know to what place must I dispatch my memory, since it is supposed that I am the master of it.

Vatsiputrīya. You must direct it towards the remembered object.

Vasubandhu. What for shall I direct my memory?

Vatsiputrīya. In order to remember.

104. b. 1
(8a—2).

Vasubandhu. Hallo! I must employ the very thing I already possess in order to get it! Indeed that is well spoken! Great is the merit (of such discoveries)! And then I should like to know, in what sense memory is to be influenced: in the sense of its being produced, or in the sense of its being dispatched, (like a servant)?

Vatsiputrīya. In the sense of production, since memory cannot move (like a servant).

Vasubandhu. In that case the proprietor is simply the cause and the property will simply be its effect. The cause has a rule over the effect, and this rule belongs to the cause (only in the sense of its producing) a result. Memory is the property of something which is its own cause. As to the name of an owner given to the united elements of Caitra with respect to those of the cow, this name has been given only because it has been observed that there exists a relation of cause to effect between him and the movements and other changes in the cow, but there is no real unity whatsoever neither in Caitra nor in the cow. Consequently there is in this case no other proprietorship than a relation of cause to effect. The same argument may be applied to the questions «who is it that perceives?», «whom does perception belong to?» and other similar questions: (who feels, who has notions, who acts etc.?) The difference consists in the fact that (instead of the described state of mind producing memory), the corresponding conditions for a perception are: activity of the senses, presence of the object and aroused attention.
