

Buddhist Mind Models and Meanings of Mind-words

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This paper will discuss the meanings of three words referring to mind in Buddhist Abhidharma texts: *citta*, *manas* (*mano*), and *viññāna* (*viññāṇa*). Before we turn to these words, I want to briefly mention Charles Fillmore's Frame Semantics (Fillmore 1982) theory in the field of Cognitive Linguistics, which will provide a framework for our discussion of word meanings in Buddhist texts. Fillmore proposes that word meaning must occur relative to a "frame," and he defines "frame" as follows (1982: 111):

By the term 'frame' I have in mind any system of concepts related in such a way that to understand any one of them you have to understand the whole structure in which it fits; when one of the things in such a structure is introduced into a text, or into a conversation, all of the others are automatically made available.¹

In other words, we cannot understand the meaning of a word without knowing the whole frame within which the word fits, as well as its structure and all other concepts in the frame. Taking the verb "sell" for an example, we cannot understand this word without knowing the cognitive "scene" of the "commercial event" (Fillmore 1982: 116-7), which consists of inter-related concepts like seller, buyer, goods, money, spend, cost, charge, and so on.

Fillmore's notion of "frame" corresponds to a similar idea in cognitive science, namely, a "mental model". A mental model is a *structured representation* of reality. Some philosophers and cognitive psychologists propose that the establishment or acquisition of mental models is a fundamental feature of our intellectual process of understanding and explanation.²

Therefore, I will discuss *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* with regard to three Buddhist models of mind, namely, the mind models of the Sarvāstivāda, the Pāli Theravāda, and the Yogācāra Schools. I will focus on passages from three representative Abhidharma texts: the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (MVŚ) of the Sarvāstivāda school, which is considered the most authoritative work of the Kāśmīra orthodox Sarvāstivādins; the *Atthasālinī* (=Dhs-a) by Buddhaghosa, which is the commentary to the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (Dhs), the first book in the Theravāda Abhidhamma; and the *Yogācārabhūmi* (YBh), the most authoritative work of the Yogācāra school, and by its contents and style no doubt an Abhidharma text.

Before we turn to these three texts, it should be noted that, as all Buddhists claim to be following the teachings of the Buddha, the teachings presented in the sūtras as preserved within

¹ He notes further that "frame" is a cover term for similar notions like 'schema', 'script', 'scenario', 'ideational scaffolding', 'cognitive model', or 'folk theory'. Fillmore's "frame" is equivalent to George Lakoff's (1987) "idealized cognitive model."

² Kenneth Craik (1943) first proposed that understanding and explanation involve mental models. Philip Johnson-Laird's works on mental models (e.g. 1983; 2004) are very influential.

the Nikāyas and the Āgamas are assumed to be the foundation for further doctrinal developments. Hence, we should look at the three mind-words in the sūtras first. Time and space do not allow me to examine the sūtras in detail, but, fortunately, the works of Rune Johansson (1965) and Sue Hamilton (1996) provide a good starting point. According to their studies, we should note first that *citta*, *manas* (*mano*), and *vijñāna* (*viññāṇa*) are often listed together as synonyms.³ In these cases, they all refer in a general sense to the subjective aspect of a sentient being. However, in other contexts these three words may have their own different shades of meanings. *Citta* is more an individual's trait-bearer, like a piece of cloth that can be dyed and tainted.⁴ As a result, it should be tamed, controlled, restrained,⁵ and ultimately it should be purified and liberated.⁶ *Manas*, as a member of the six bases (*āyatana*), 12 faculties (*indriya*), and 18 elements (*dhātu*), is the faculty that has the potential to give rise to mental experience. It also can experience all other five senses' object fields aside from its own object field. And more importantly, it is the agent or instrument of actions. *Vijñāna* is more related to perceptual experience. As a member in the five *skandhas* (*khandha*) and the 12-linked dependent origination, its definition as given in the sūtras is always in the context of the list of the six types of consciousness. As Hamilton (1996: 88, 95) points out, *viññāṇa* is “conscious of,” the fundamental consciousness or awareness that underlies all cognitive functions of mind. In summary, these three terms in the sūtras can be understood as referring to the same phenomenon but reflect its different perspectival aspects and functions.

We will see in the following discussion that all these senses of these mind-words are in some way maintained in Abhidharma texts. However, it should also be noted that, although there is a lot of discussion about the qualities of mind and how it should be trained in the sūtras, little attention is given to how mind is structured, and exactly how it functions. In other words, the sūtra texts do not propose any mind model explicitly. But the situation changed in the Abhidharma period. To develop their all-inclusive and exhaustive philosophical systems, Abhidharma scholastics had to deal with the issue directly and explicitly. In the following, I will discuss three mind models of the Sarvāstivāda, the Theravāda, and the Yogācāra schools, with passages clarifying the mind-words *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna* from their representative texts.

The Sarvāstivāda and the Theravāda propose two similar mind models that agree in two principal points: (1) In one moment only one instance of consciousness occurs; and (2) within each such instance, there is one consciousness (*citta* and *vijñāna* can be used interchangeably to refer to such a moment of consciousness), and a number of mental factors (*caitta/cetasika*) associated (*samprayukta/sampayutta*) with it. I call such a model of mind the “linear” model, because it proposes a mental stream consists of a series of single moments of consciousness. However, although the two schools share a common framework for their mind models, they have significant differences in the technical details of their mind models. Let us start with a passage

³ S II 94: *yañca kho etaṃ, bhikkhave, vuccati cittaṃ itipi, mano itipi, viññāṇaṃ itipi, tatrāssutavā puthujjano nālaṃ nibbindituṃ nālaṃ virajjituṃ nālaṃ vimuccituṃ*. Same with the Chinese 心意識 in Taishō No. 99 雜阿含經 T02, 50b24, 81c08, 91c09, 237c06; No. 26 中阿含經 T01, 440c01-2.

⁴ M I 36.

⁵ A I 5.

⁶ D III 223, A I 255.

from the *Mahāvibhāṣā* and see how the Sarvāstivādins understand the terms *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* with regard to their mind model.⁷

Q: In the sūtras *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* are mentioned. What are the differences among these three terms?

A: Some say that [they] have no difference. *Citta* is *manas*, and *manas* is *viññāna*. These three [terms] differ by their sounds (*śabda* 聲), but have no difference in meaning (*artha* 義)...

Some others say, *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* also have differences: their names are different, namely, they are different by their names as *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna*.

Furthermore, they also differ by time: the past [one] is called *manas*, the future [one] is called *citta*, and the present [one] is called *viññāna*.

Furthermore, they are also different by designation (*prajñapti* 施設): in the elements (*dhātu* 界) *citta* is designated, in the bases (*āyatana* 處) *manas* is designated, and in the aggregates (*skandha* 蘊) *viññāna* is designated.

Furthermore, their meanings (*artha* 義) are also different: *citta* has the meaning “clan” (*gotra* 種族), *manas* has the meaning “gate of arising” (**āya-dvāra* 生門), *viññāna* has the meaning of “heap” (*rāsi* 積聚).

Furthermore, they have differences in their functions (**karman* or **kriyā* 業). Far-going (*dūragama* 遠行) is the function of *citta*. As it is said in this verse:

“Those who will tame this mind (*citta*), which can go far and alone, incorporeal, lying in the cave, will be freed from the great fear.”⁸

Fore-running (*pūrvāṅgama*) is the function of *manas*, as it is said in this verse:

“All dharmas are preceded by mind (*manas*), have mind as their leader, and led by mind. Speak and act with mind defiled or pure, suffering and happiness will follow like shadows.”⁹

⁷ Taishō No. 1545 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (卷 71) T27, p371a19-b29: 問諸契經中說心意識。如是三種差別云何。或有說者。無有差別。心即是意意即是識。此三聲別義無異故。... 復有說者。心意識三亦有差別。謂名即差別。名心名意名識異故。復次世亦差別。謂過去名意。未來名心。現在名識故。復次施設亦有差別。謂界中施設心。處中施設意。蘊中施設識故。復次義亦有差別。謂心是種族義。意是生門義。識是積聚義。復次業亦有差別。謂遠行是心業。如有頌曰:

能遠行獨行 無身寐於窟
調伏此心者 解脫大怖畏

前行是意業。如有頌曰:

諸法意前行 意尊意所引
意染淨言作 苦樂如影隨

續生是識業。如契經說。入母胎時識若無者。羯刺藍等不得成就。故知續生是識業用。復次彩畫是心業。如契經說。苾芻當知。諸傍生趣由心彩畫。有種種色。歸趣是意業。如契經說。苾芻當知。如是五根各別所行各別境界。意根總領受彼所行境界。意歸趣彼作諸事業。了別是識業。如契經說。苾芻當知。識能了別種種境事。復次滋長是心業。思量是意業。分別是識業。脇尊者言。滋長分割是心業。思量思惟是意業。分別解了是識業。應知此中滋長者是有漏心。分割者是無漏心。思量者是有漏意。思惟者是無漏意。分別者是有漏識。解了者是無漏識。心意識三是謂差別。English translation has partly consulted Dhammajoti 2007: 274-5.

⁸ Dhp verse 37: *dūraṅgamaṃ ekacaramaṃ asarīraṃ guhāsayaṃ ye cittaṃ saññamessanti mokkhanti Mārabandhanā*. English translation mainly follows K. R. Norman (1997: 6), but adjusted according to the Chinese text.

⁹ Roughly corresponds to Dhp verse 2: *manopubbāṅgamaṃ dhammā manoseṭṭhā manomayā, manasā ce pasannena bhāsati vā karoti vā tato naṃ sukham anveti chāyā va anapāyini*.

Birth-relinking (**saṃdhāna/pratisaṃdhi* 續生) is the function of *viññāna*. As it is said in the sūtra, “When [one] descends into the mother’s womb, if there is no consciousness (*viññāna*), *kalala* etc. cannot take form.” Therefore [we] know that birth-relinking is the function of *viññāna*.

Furthermore, variegated (*citra* 彩畫) is the function of *citta*. As it is said in the sūtra, “Bhikṣus, [you] should know, animals (**tiraścīna-gati* 傍生趣) have variegated forms because [their] minds are variegated.”

Resort (**pratisaraṇa*, P. *paṭisaraṇa* 歸趣) is the function of *manas*. As it is said in the sūtra, “The five [physical] senses each wanders in its own object-field (*gocara*), but the faculty of mind (*manas*) can experience all the object-fields, and *manas* is the resort of all the actions of them.”

To cognize (了別) is the function of *viññāna*. As it is said in the sūtra, “Consciousness (*viññāna*) can distinguish all kinds of objects.”

Furthermore, to increase (滋長) is the function of *citta*, to think and measure (思量) is the function of *manas*, and to discriminate (分別) is the function of *viññāna*.

According to Venerable Parśva, to increase and to sever (分割) are the functions of *citta*; to think and to contemplate (思惟) are the functions of *manas*; to discriminate and to understand (解了) are the functions of *viññāna*. It should be known that what increases is *citta* with taint, what severs is *citta* without taint; what thinks is *manas* with taint, what contemplates is *manas* without taint; what discriminates is *viññāna* with taint, what understands is *viññāna* without taint.

This passage has very rich contents and can be clarified through a table:

1	Differ by name 名 <i>nāma</i>	<i>citta</i> 心	<i>manas</i> 意	<i>viññāna</i> 識	
2	Differ by time 世 <i>adhvan</i>	future 未來	past 過去	present 現在	
3	Differ by designation 施設 <i>prajñapti</i>	界 <i>dhātu</i>	處 <i>āyatana</i>	蘊 <i>skandha</i>	
4	Differ by meaning 義 <i>artha</i>	種族 <i>gotra</i>	生門 <i>āya-dvara</i>	積聚 <i>rāsi</i>	
5	Differ by function 業 <i>*karman/kriyā</i>	far-going 遠行 <i>dūragama</i>	fore-running 前行 <i>pūrvāṅgama</i>	birth-relinking 續生 <i>*saṃdhāna/pratisaṃdhi</i>	
		painting/variegated 彩畫 <i>citra</i>	resort 歸趣 <i>pratisaraṇa</i>	cognition 了別 <i>*vi-√jñā</i>	
		increasing 滋長	thinking 思量	distinguishing 分別	
	With taint 有漏 <i>sāsrava</i>	accumulating 滋長 <i>*√ci</i>	thinking 思量 <i>*√man</i>	distinguishing 分別 <i>*vi-√jñā</i>	According to Parśva

	Taintless 無漏 <i>anāsrava</i>	severing 分割 <i>*vi-√ci</i>	contemplating 思惟 <i>*manasi-√kṛ</i>	comprehending 解了 <i>*pra-√jñā</i>	
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All these interpretations can be classified as of three types: interpretations based on (1) quotations from sūtras or (2) etymological analyses, and interpretations with regard to (3) special Abhidharma doctrines. Let us look at the interpretations in more detail.

Row 2 shows an interpretation of these terms unique to the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma. It assigns the three terms to three times: *manas* to the past, *citta* to the future, and *vijñāna* to the present. This clearly shows the Sarvāstivāda linear model of mind: at any moment in the stream of mind, the present moment is called *vijñāna*, the moment that precedes it is *manas*, and the moment after it is *citta*. I will discuss this interpretation further and compare it to the Theravāda and Yogācāra interpretations at a later point.

Row 3 of the table shows the designations of the three mind-words. The fact that *manas* designates an *āyatana*, and *vijñāna*, a *skandha*, is common in the sūtras. However, I have not found *citta* to designate a *dhātu* in any sūtra. It is possible that, because the *skandha*, *āyatana*, and *dhātu* became the most important categories for classifying all possible phenomena in the Abhidharma analysis, Abhidharma teachers felt that they had to find a place for *citta* among them. Also, since *citta* functions to identify an individual and differentiates one person from others, perhaps it was assumed that *citta* should be assigned to the *dhātu* classification, even though *citta* is not a member of the 18 *dhātus*.¹⁰

In row 4, *gotra*, *āya-dvāra*, and *rāśi* are Sarvāstivāda interpretations of the meanings of terms *dhātu*, *āyatana*, and *skandha*, respectively.¹¹

Among the functions (**karman/kriyā*) listed in row 5, *citta* as “far-going” (*dūraṅgama*) is based on Dhammapada verse 37; *manas* as “fore-running” is based on Dhammapada verse 2. To interpret *vijñāna* as *pratisaṃdhi* depends upon the function of *vijñāna* as a link in the dependent origination (*pratītyasamudpāda*).¹²

The two interpretations, *citta* as painting/variegated (*citra*)¹³ and *manas* as the resort (歸趣,

¹⁰ I have not found in the Abhidharma texts any explicit explanation why *citta* is assigned to *dhātu* and *gotra*.

¹¹ AKB 1.20ab: *rāśy-āyadvāra-gotrārthāḥ skandhāyatanaadhātavaḥ*. MVŚ Taishō No. 1545 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (卷 71) T27, p367c25-8: 種族義是界義者。如一山中有多种族。謂金銀銅鐵白鐵鉛錫丹青等石。白墻土等異類種族。如是於一相續身中。有十八界異類種族。(卷 73) T27, p379a14-17: 生門義是處義者。如城邑中出生諸物。由此長養諸有情身。如是所依及所緣內出生種種心心所法。由此長養染淨相續。(卷 74) T27, p383c18-20: 聚義是蘊義者。謂諸所有色。若過去若未來若現在。廣說乃至若遠若近。如是一切總為一聚立為色蘊。乃至識蘊聚義亦爾。

¹² See also in the section of dependent origination in the MVŚ: No. 1545 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (卷 23) T27, p119a: 云何識。謂續生心及彼助伴。I don't find an exact match of the unnamed sūtra quoted here. It is likely the MĀ No. 201, Taishō No. 26 中阿含經 (卷 54) T01, p769b23-5, which corresponds to Pāli M No. 38, *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta*. Though there are mentionings of the conception process in these two sūtras, the wordings are not exactly the same as those quoted in the MVŚ.

¹³ Taishō No. 99 雜阿含經 (卷 10) T02, p69c19-25: 佛告比丘。如嗟蘭那鳥種種雜色。我說彼心種種雜亦復如是。所以者何。彼嗟蘭那鳥心種種故其色種種。是故。當善觀察思惟於心長夜種種。貪欲。瞋恚。愚癡種種。心惱故眾生惱。心淨故眾生淨。譬如畫師。畫師弟子。善治素地。具眾彩色。隨意圖畫種種像類。See also the corresponding Pāli sūta in S III 152; Bodhi 2000: 958-9; 1088-9, n207, n208. This is based on the pun of *citta* and *citra*, which only makes sense in a Prakrit language and not in Sanskrit.

**pratisaraṇa*, P. *paṭisaraṇa*) of the five physical senses,¹⁴ are also directly from the sūtras.

Other interpretations are mostly based on etymological or pseudo-etymological analyses of the terms. *Citta* is understood as “increasing” because there are two roots in Sanskrit, both having the form \sqrt{ci} : one means “to perceive,” which is related to the root \sqrt{cit} , from which the word *citta* is derived; the other means “to accumulate,”¹⁵ and adding the prefix *vi-* makes it “to sever.” *Manas* is from the root \sqrt{man} , which means “to think.”¹⁶ *Vijñāna* is from the root $\sqrt{jñā}$ “to know,” and adding the prefix *vi-* makes the meaning “to distinguish.”¹⁷ In his interpretation, Parśva chooses terms derived from the same roots but with different connotations, all emphasizing the difference between a mind with taint (*sāsrava*) and one that is taintless (*anāsrava*).

In the Pāli commentary Dhs-a, we also find similar interpretations of the three terms denoting mind. The following is a passage from the *Atthasālinī* (=Dhs-a):¹⁸

By ‘consciousness’ (*citta*) is meant that which *thinks* of its object, is aware variously. Or, inasmuch as this word ‘consciousness’ is common to all states or classes of consciousness, that which is known as worldly, moral, immoral, or the great inoperative, is termed ‘consciousness,’ because it arranges itself in a series by way of apperception in a process of thought. And the resultant is also termed ‘consciousness’ because it is accumulated (*cito*) by kamma and the corruptions.

Moreover, all (four classes) are termed ‘consciousness’ because they are variegated (*citra*) according to circumstance. The meaning of consciousness may also be understood from its capacity of producing a variety or diversity of effects.

We can see the similarities between this passage and the passage cited previously from the *Mahāvibhāṣā*. The word *citta* is analyzed according to its etymology. It is based on the root \sqrt{cint} “to think;” hence it is called *citta* because it thinks of its object (*ārammaṇa*). It is also associated with the root \sqrt{ci} “to accumulate;” because it has accumulated (*cita*) karma and defilements, it is called *citta*. But the Pāli commentary also understands the meaning of *citta* based on the Theravāda theory of mind-process (*citta-vīthi*) and states that it is called *citta* because it gathers or arranges (*cinoti*) itself into a series (*santāna*). In contrast, the Sarvāstivādins say only that it accumulates karma.¹⁹ And, similar to the Sarvāstivādins, the Pāli commentators also play with

¹⁴ M I 295: *pañcannaṃ indriyānaṃ nānāvisayānaṃ nānāgocarānaṃ, na aññamaññassa gocaravisayaṃ paccanubhontānaṃ, mano paṭisaraṇaṃ, mano ca nesaṃ gocaravisayaṃ paccanubhoti*. Taishō No. 26 中阿含經 (卷 58) sūtra No. 211, 大拘絺羅經. T01, p791b15-17: 五根異行異境界。各各自受境界。眼根耳鼻舌身根。此五根異行異境界。各各受自境界。意為彼盡受境界。意為彼依。

¹⁵ AKB 61: *cinoṭṭi cittaṃ*. AK-Vy 141: *cinoṭṭi cittaṃ iti. kuśalam akuśalam vā cinoṭṭy arthaḥ. nairuktena vidhinaivaṃ siddhaṃ*.

¹⁶ AKB 61: *manuta iti manaḥ*. AK-Vy 141: *manuta iti manaḥ. mana jñāna ity asya auṇādikapratyayāt tasyaitad rūpaṃ mana iti*.

¹⁷ AKB 61: *vijānāṭṭi vijñānaṃ*. AK-Vy 141: *vijānāṭṭy ālambanam iti vijñānaṃ kartari lyuṭ*.

¹⁸ Dhs-a 63: *cittanti ārammaṇaṃ cintetīti cittaṃ; vijānāṭṭi attho. Yasmā vā ‘citta’nti sabbacittasādhāraṇo esa saddo, tasmā yadetha lokiyakusalākusalakiriyacittaṃ, taṃ javanavīthivasena attano santānaṃ cinoṭṭi cittaṃ. vipākaṃ kammakilesehi citanti cittaṃ. apica sabbampi yathānūrūpato cittatāya cittaṃ. cittakaraṇatāya cittanti evampettha attho vedītabbo*. English translation Tin 1920: 84-5.

¹⁹ AK-Vy 141: *kuśalam akuśalam vā cinoṭṭy arthaḥ*.

the pun of *citta* and *citra*.

Further, according to the Pāli commentarial tradition, a concept is defined in terms of four aspects: its characteristic (*lakkhāṇa*), function (*rasa*), manifestation (*paccupaṭṭhāna*), and proximate cause (*padaṭṭhāna*).²⁰ Thus, Pāli commentators also define *citta* as having cognizing (*viñānana*) an object as its characteristic, fore-running (*pubbaṅgama*) as its function, connecting (*sandahana*) as its manifestation, and *nāma-rūpa* as its proximate cause.²¹ It should be noted that here the Pāli commentary does not distinguish *citta*, *mano*, and *viññāṇa*, and would appear to treat these three as exact synonyms. First, *citta* is glossed by *vi-√jñā*, which is also the etymology of *viññāṇa*. And further, as we have seen earlier, in the sūtra (Dhammapada verses 1-2), when describing mind as fore-running (*pubbaṅgama*), the term *manas* is used. Nevertheless, here the Dhs-a applies this function to the term *citta*. And on another occasion, the commentary even explicitly states that *mano* and *citta* are synonyms (*vevacana*).²²

Mano in the Pāli commentary is defined by its verbal root *√man* “to think,” and is also glossed with the verb *vi-√jñā*.²³ This shows again that *mano* and *viññāṇa* are synonyms. Some other Pāli commentators (*aṭṭhakathācariyā*) also relate *mano* with another root *√mi* “to measure.”²⁴

The term *viññāṇa* is defined etymologically as “cognizing” (*vi-√jñā*).²⁵ But no further explanation of this term is given in the *Atthasālinī*. Perhaps the commentators think that since all these three terms are synonyms, and *citta* and *mano*, especially *citta*, has already been treated properly, there is no need to comment further on the last term *viññāṇa*.

To sum up, both the Sarvāstivādins and the Theravādins quote sūtras and engage in etymological analyses of the terms. *Citta* is from the root *√cit* or *√cint* “to think,” and both traditions also relate *citta* with the root *√ci* “to accumulate.” Furthermore, they both play with the pun *citta/citra*, which has its source in the sūtra. Similarly, *manas/mano* is explained by its root *√man*, and *viññāna/viññāṇa* is analyzed by its formation *vi-√jñā*. And they all mention that these three terms are taken as synonyms when referring to “mind” in general.

However, as we have seen earlier, in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, there is the particular interpretation of the three terms with regard to their temporal positions, namely *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* are assigned to future, past, and present times, respectively. This appears to be a particular Sarvāstivāda doctrine and is not shared with the Pāli Abhidhamma. This interpretation of *manas* is further clarified in Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* in the discussion of the term *mano-dhātu*:

Of the six [types of consciousness], the consciousness (*viññāna*) that has just past is *manas*. The consciousness that has just ceased (*niruddha*) is called *mano-dhātu*. Just

²⁰ The definition of these four aspects are given in Dhs-a 63.

²¹ Dhs-a 112: *lakkhaṇādīto pana viñānanalakkhaṇaṃ cittaṃ, pubbaṅgamarasaṃ, sandahanapaccupaṭṭhānaṃ, nāmarūpapadaṭṭhānaṃ*. English translation Tin 1920: 148-9.

²² Dhs-a 123: *heṭṭhā vuttacittassevetaṃ vevacanaṃ*.

²³ Dhs-a 123: *manatīti mano. viñānātīti attho*.

²⁴ Dhs-a 123: *aṭṭhakathācariyā panāhu--nāḷiyā minamāno viya, mahātulāya dhārayamāno viya ca, ārammaṇaṃ minati pajānātīti manoti*. This might also find confirmation in Xuanzang’s Chinese translation 思量 “to think and measure.”

²⁵ Dhs-a 141: *viñānātīti viññāṇaṃ*.

like a son becomes another's father, also like a fruit has the name of another [plant]'s seed, in the same way [the past consciousness] attained the name *mano-dhātu*.²⁶

In contrast, the Theravāda Abhidhamma interprets *mano-dhātu* in quite a different way. The *Atthasālinī* defines it as follows:²⁷

It has the characteristic of knowing the visible or other objects immediately after visual or other cognition respectively, the function of receiving (*sampaṭicchana*) visible and other objects, the manifestation of the state of such reception, the proximate cause of the absence of visual and other cognition.

This passage only makes sense with regard to the mind-process (*citta-vīthi*) theory in the Theravāda Abhidhamma and commentaries.²⁸ In this theory, the cognitive process consists of a number of moments (*khaṇa*) of consciousness in accordance with the type and strength of the object. The longest process possible is that directed toward a strong object of the five physical senses (*pañca-dvāra*, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body), which can have 17 moments: (1) past *bhavaṅga*, (2) *bhavaṅga* vibration (*calana*), (3) *bhavaṅga* interrupted (*bhavaṅgupaccheda*), (4) the mind adverting to the sense-door (*dvārāvajjana*), (5) physical sense consciousness (*pañca-viññāṇa*), (6) the receiving (*sampaṭicchana*) consciousness, (7) the investigating (*santīraṇa*) consciousness, (8) the determining (*voṭṭhapana*) consciousness, (9)-(15) seven moments of impulsion (*javana*) consciousness, and (16)-(17) two moments of retention (*tad-āramaṇa*) consciousness. The *Atthasālinī* passage points out that only the sixth moment in this process, namely the receiving (*sampaṭicchana*) consciousness right after a physical sense consciousness (*pañca-viññāṇa*), can be referred to as *mano-dhātu*.²⁹

In summary, the Sarvāstivādins and the Theravādins share many common interpretations of the terms *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna*, especially when these interpretations are based on scriptural passages or etymological analyses. But they are significantly different in their interpretation of the term *manas/mano* in its specific technical meaning. The Sarvāstivādins propose that it is the past moment of consciousness that gives rise to the new moment of consciousness, while the Theravādins propose that only one or two specific moments in the mind-process can be called

²⁶ AKB i.17ab (p.11): *ṣaṇṇāmanantarāṭṭam vijñānaṃ yaddhi tanmanaḥ. yadyatsamanantaraniruddhaṃ vijñānaṃ tanmanodhāturityucyeta /tadyathā sa eva putro' anyasya pitā bhavati, tad eva phalam anyasya bijākhyāṃ, tathēhāpi sa eva manodhātvākhyāṃ labhate*. This statement has its predecessor in the *Abhidharma-hṛdaya*: Taishō No. 1551 阿毘曇心論經 (卷 1) T28, p835b1-4: 除六識界更無意界。是故十七即六識身。展轉相續名為意界。如父子名子展轉相續次第名父。如是除意界外無別六識界。 This sentence is absent in the other Chinese translation Taishō No. 1550.

²⁷ Dhs-a 263: *manodhātu: sā cakkhuvīññāṇādīnaṃ anantaram rūpādivijānanalakkaṇā, rūpādīnaṃ sampaṭicchanasā, tathābhāvapaccupaṭṭhānā, cakkhuvīññāṇādiapagamapadaṭṭhānā*. English translation Tin 1920: 350.

²⁸ See details of this theory in Dhs-a 266-87, 400-1. A number of modern authors have discussed the mind-process theory. See Gethin 1994: 17-8n22 for a list of modern studies.

²⁹ According to the *Vibhaṅga*, not only the receiving (*sampaṭicchana*) consciousness, but the five-sense-door-adverting (*pañcadvārāvajjana*) consciousness, is also *mano-dhātu*. See Vibh 89, and Vibh-a 81. This is a complicated issue and I will discuss it in more details in a separate study.

mano-dhātu.

However, all these interpretations in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, Theravāda Abhidhamma, as well as the usages of the mind-words in the early sūtras, share an important common feature, which is that the terms *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* all refer to the same phenomenon, namely the mind, and their differences are only concerning different perspectival aspects or functions of mind. In the sūtras, when they teach that one should restrain and purify his mind, usually *citta* is used; when the mind is mentioned as an agent that performs an action, *manas* is used; and *viññāna* is most often used in describing the process of perception. These all represent mind from different perspectives and describe its function from that perspective. There is no indication that they refer to different things. Similarly, in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, as we have seen in the *Mahāvibhāṣā* passage, most of the differences among these terms concern their functions (**karman/kriyā*). This is also true regarding the particular Sarvāstivāda doctrine that *manas* is the past, *citta* is the future, and *viññāna* is the present moment of consciousness. As is pointed out in the AKB passage, just as the same person can be called both a father and a son in different circumstances, the same instance of consciousness can be called *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* regarding its relationships with other moments of consciousness. Moreover, in the Theravāda Abhidhamma, *citta*, *mano*, and *viññāna* are explicitly explained as synonyms. Finally, as in the Sarvāstivāda mind model, according to the Theravāda mind-process theory, *mano-dhātu* is the mind (*citta/mano/viññāna*) that functions in a specific moment in the cognitive process, and it is not something different by its nature from other moments of mind. In this respect, the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda interpretations of the mind-words are closer to the sūtras. Next let us turn to the Yogācāra School, and we will see that the Yogācāra interpretation of these terms is drastically different in this regard.

The Yogācāra School is famous for its theory of eight types of consciousness: the traditional six types of consciousness from the sūtras, added to the “defiled mind” (*kliṣṭa manas*) as the seventh consciousness, and the fundamental *ālayaviññāna* as the eighth. It also proposes a hierarchical, multiple consciousness model of mind, in which more than one instance of different types of consciousness can occur simultaneously. For example, for an ordinary being, the two types of consciousness *ālaya* and *manas* are constantly present, and they may also be accompanied by the *manoviññāna*, as well as one or more instances of the five types of physical sense consciousness. The following is a passage that defines *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* in the *Manobhūmi* of the *Yogācārabhūmi* in its Basic Section.³⁰

What is the self-nature of *manas*? It is *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna*.

³⁰ YBh (Bhattacharya 1957) p.11:1-8: *mano-bhūmiḥ katamā | ... svabhāvaḥ katamaḥ | yac cittam mano viññānam || cittam katamat | yat sarvabijopagatam āśrayabhāvopagatam āśrayabhāvaniṣṭham upādātī vipākasaṃgṛhītam ālayaviññānam || manaḥ katamat | yat saṅgām apiviññānakāyānām anantarāniruddham kliṣṭam ca mano yannityam avidyātmadrṣṭy-asmimāna- tīṣṇā-lakṣaṇaiś caturbhiḥ kleśaiḥ samprayuktaḥ || viññānam katamat | yadālabana-vijñaptau pratyupasthitam*. Chinese translation Taishō No. 1579 瑜伽師地論 (卷 1) T30, p280: 云何意自性。謂心意識。心謂一切種子所隨依止性。依附依止性。體能執受。異熟所攝阿賴耶識。意謂恒行意及六識身無間滅意。識謂現前了別所緣境界。English translation partly consulted Lambert Schmithausen (2007: 118) and Dan Lusthaus (2013: 585-6).

What is *citta*? It is the *ālayavijñāna*, that is the resort of all seeds (*sarvabījopagata*); the resort has the nature as the basis (*āśrayabhāvopagata*), grounded on the nature as the basis (*āśrayabhāvaniṣṭha*),³¹ the appropriator (*upadātr*), and classified as a resultant [phenomenon] (*vipākasamgrhīta*).

What is *manas*? It is that among the six types of consciousness which has just ceased. (*saññāmapi vijñānakāyānām anantaraniruddham*), and the *manas* that is constant and associated with the four defilements (*kleśa*) having the characteristics of ignorance (*avidyā*), the wrong view of self (*ātmadrṣṭi*), the conceit of “I am” (*asmimāna*), and craving (*trṣṇā*).

What is *vijñāna*? It is the presence of the manifestation (*vijñapti*) of the objective-support (*ālambana*).

This is a difficult and troublesome passage. Schmithausen suggests that this passage is likely a later addition and represents an expansion of an old exposition of the traditional sixth type of consciousness from the sūtras, namely the *manovijñāna*.³² If this is the case, then this passage will serve our purpose of examining the particular meanings of the terms *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna* within the Yogācāra School, because it provides an opportunity to observe differences between the Yogācāra interpretation and the earlier traditions.

The first thing to notice in the passage is that it puts all the three terms under the rubric *manas*, that is, the *Manobhūmi* that follows the *Pañcavijñānakāyasamprayuktābhūmi*, which discusses the five types of sense consciousness. In this way, the treatise maintains an apparent continuity with the exposition of *manas* in earlier, traditional discourses. Also, the interpretation of *vijñāna* as cognizing (*vi-√jñā*) an object, is the same as in earlier traditions. However, the Yogācārins understand *citta* as specifically *ālayavijñāna*, a new type of consciousness introduced by them, which has no predecessor in either the early sūtras or Abhidharma texts. And concerning *manas*, the passage proposes two types of *manas*: the first is “that among the six types of consciousness which has just ceased,” which is exactly the *manas* defined in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, namely, as the previous moment of consciousness. However, the second type of *manas*, namely the *kliṣṭa manas*, is again a new type of consciousness introduced in the Yogācāra tradition.

In another passage in the *Sacittakabhūmi* of the *Viniścayasamgrahaṇī* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the three terms are also analyzed in terms of their etymology:³³

... All these types of consciousness are all called *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna*. But by [their] most prominent [characteristics], *ālayavijñāna* is called *citta*. Why?

³¹ Schmithausen (2007: 117, 422n805) proposes that the word should be *āśrayabhāvasanniviṣṭa* based on the comparison with another manuscript and the Chinese and Tibetan translations. I think his emendation is reasonable.

³² Schmithausen 2007: 124-7.

³³ No. 1579 瑜伽師地論 (卷 63) T30, p651b: (攝決擇分中有心地) 復次此中諸識皆名心意識。若就最勝。阿賴耶識名心。何以故。由此識能集聚一切法種子故。於一切時緣執受境。緣不可知一類器境。末那名意。於一切時執我我所及我慢等。思量為性。餘識名識。謂於境界了別為相。 See also Schmithausen 2007: 123, 426n824. This part of the YBh has no Sanskrit version extant.

Because this consciousness can accumulate the seeds of all dharmas. ... *mano* is *manas*; [it] constantly grasps “I,” “mine,” and the conceit of self, etc. [It] has thinking and measuring as its nature. All the other types of consciousness are called *vijñāna*; [they] have the cognition of objects as [their] characteristic.

In this passage, *citta* is understood by the root \sqrt{ci} “to accumulate,” but the more “correct” roots \sqrt{cit} “to know” and \sqrt{cint} “to think” are, perhaps purposely, ignored (because “to think” has been assigned to *mano*, and “to know” has been assigned to *vijñāna*). *Manas* is explained by the root \sqrt{man} “to think,” and *vijñāna* by $vi-\sqrt{jñā}$ “to cognize.” We can see that the etymological analyses here are shared with both the Sarvāstivāda and the Theravāda texts. From this we can see the syncretic character of the Yogācāra tradition; its system was developed based on earlier traditions, hence preserves materials from earlier traditions and texts, but subsumes them under its own theoretical framework, namely, the theory of eight types of consciousness instead of the six types in the sūtras and earlier Abhidharma texts. According to the Yogācāra interpretation, *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna* no longer refer to the same phenomenon in its different aspects or functions but rather refer to three different components within their mind model. This is clearly shown in the following passage:³⁴

Sometimes the *ālayavijñāna* occurs together with only one manifesting consciousness (*pravṛtti-vijñāna* 轉識): namely, *manas* (末那, i.e. *kliṣṭa manas*)... Sometimes it occurs together with two [*pravṛtti-vijñānas*]: *manas* and *manovijñāna*. Sometimes it occurs together with three [*pravṛtti-vijñānas*]: namely when one of the five types of sense consciousness [occurs]. Sometimes it occurs together with four [*pravṛtti-vijñānas*]: namely, when two of the five types of sense consciousness [occur]. Sometimes it occurs together with up to seven [*pravṛtti-vijñānas*]: namely, when all the five types of sense consciousness occur together at once.

This passage illustrates the three-level hierarchical mind model of the Yogācāra school: at the fundamental level is the *ālaya* which is present all the time; in the middle is the *manas*, which constantly grasps the *ālaya* as its object hence always accompanies the *ālaya*; at the top level are the traditional six types of consciousness which occur occasionally one alone or several together. In such a model, it is impossible to say that the *ālaya* (i.e. the *citta*), the *manas*, and the traditional six *vijñānas* are different aspects or functions of the same thing. They are different components in the hierarchical structure and can occur all together at the same time.

Having seen in the passages from the Sarvāstivāda, Theravāda, and Yogācāra texts the technical details regarding the meanings of *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna*, in conclusion, let us look at these terms again from the perspective of the mind models as proposed by these Buddhist

³⁴ Taishō No. 1579 瑜伽師地論 (卷 51) T30, p580b-c: 云何建立阿賴耶識與轉識等俱轉轉相。謂阿賴耶識。或於一時唯與一種轉識俱轉。所謂末那。... 或於一時與二俱轉。謂末那及意識。或於一時與三俱轉。謂五識身隨一轉時。或於一時與四俱轉。謂五識身隨二轉時。或時乃至與七俱轉。謂五識身和合轉時。

traditions. As mentioned earlier, no mind model is explicitly proposed in the sūtras, and the terms *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* refer to the same phenomenon, namely, the subjective aspect of a sentient being, but each reflects its different perspectival aspects or functions. The Sarvāstivāda and the Theravāda are similar in proposing linear models of mind, and, within these similar mind models, the meanings of the three mind-words are close to those in the sūtras. But these two traditions differ significantly in their understanding of the term *manas* in its technical meaning: the Sarvāstivādins propose that *manas* is the past moment of consciousness, while the Theravāda Abhidhamma texts interpret the term in the context of their mind-process (*citta-vīthi*) theory and propose that only the instances of consciousness in specific moments of the mind-process are *mano-dhātu*. The Yogācārins have a hierarchical mind model, which is drastically different from both the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda linear models. In the Yogācāra model, *viññāna* by and large maintains its meaning in the earlier traditions. *Manas* retains the “past consciousness” meaning from the Sarvāstivāda model but is given a new meaning, that is, the newly introduced “defiled mind” (*kliṣṭa manas*). And *citta* acquires a completely new meaning as referring to the *ālayaviññāna*, the type of consciousness that is not present in earlier Buddhist mind models. And compared to earlier traditions in which the mind-words *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāna* refer either to different aspects or different functions of mind, in the Yogācāra model they refer to different types of consciousness. In other words, in earlier traditions the meanings are more or less epistemic, but in the Yogācāra model of mind, meanings of these mind-words undergo an “ontological shift;” that is to say, they no longer refer to the same thing but to different entities in a hierarchically structured mind.

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