CHAPTER II

EMERGENCE OF THE YOGACARA BUDDHISM
Buddhism is not merely one system but a matrix of systems. After the passing away of the Buddha, Buddhism was divided into many schools and sub-schools, sects and sub-sects. Realism, empiricism, pragmatism, subjective idealism and absolutism are all found in Buddhism. Buddhist historians like Buston and Taranath speak of three distinct phases in the history of Buddhist Philosophy. These are:

1. The earlier realistic and pluralistic phase which comprises of the Hinayana schools i.e. Theravada and Vaibhasika (Sarvastivada). This is called the Abhidharmika system. Sautrantika is another branch of Sarvastivada.

2. The middle critical phase of the Madhyamika system advocating Sunyata.

3. The last idealistic phase, the Yogacara system of Asanga and Vasubandhu and the later Vijnanavada of Dignaga and Dharmakirti. While Yogacara stands for the practical side of philosophy, Vijnanavada stands for its speculative features.
Establishment of the major schools of Indian Buddhist Philosophy was completed by the fifth century A.D. The Philosophical tradition of Hinayana had continued and it was perfectly systematized by Sarvastivada. This school was further developed by the representation theory of the Sautrantika, without which, there would have been no Mahayana Philosophy. Mahayana Buddhism emerged approximately between first century B.C. and first century A.D. Later on, it was divided into two main branches – Madhyamika or Sunyavada and Yogacara or Vijnanavada. The Madhyamika was founded by Nagarjuna. It continued to flourish till the fifth century. The Yogacara School came in final form in the fifth century. The origins of this are shrouded in mystery though recent research suggests that it had indefinite links with the Sautrantika School.

The early phase of Buddhism is purely realistic because it is concerned only with the empirical world and it analyses the world through experience. The earliest teaching of the Buddha is found in the Pali literature of Theravada School. The term ‘Theravada’ is derived from the Pali words ‘thera’ which means elder and ‘vada’ which means order of doctrine. So, Theravada literally means the doctrine of the elders or the Buddhist monks. This school was probably one of the oldest, and probably the most prevalent one till the time of Ashoka. Thereafter it started to decline in India, but, it continued to spread to other places and flourished there. It is a philosophy of analysis (vibhajyavada). It conceives that all phenomenal things are made up of *nama* (mind) and *rupa* (matter), and classifiable in many ways. They are – *anitya* or impermanent and transient, *dukha* or full of suffering and *anatma*. It does not believe in self (soul)
though it believes the process of birth, death and rebirth. The process ends by the achievement of *nirvana*, the supreme happiness, by undergoing spiritual training – moral, mental and gnostic (*siksa*, *citta* and *Prajna*). The philosophy of Theravada is surprisingly akin to that of Sarvastivada (Vaibhasikas), so that from this point of view, even Theravada does not present any system. Vaibhasikas are Sarvastivadins.

Sarvastivada comes closest to the Theravada school. The basic similarity between Theravada and Sarvastivada is that in both schools of thought, Reality is analyzed into a plurality of ultimate constituents called *dharma* which are defined as impersonal entities giving each its separate characteristics\(^2\). The word Sarvastivada is derived from the Sanskrit terms ‘*sarvam*’ which means ‘all, things’ and ‘*asti*’ meaning ‘exist’. So, the word Sarvastivada in Sanskrit denotes the belief that all things exist. This school was most influential in India from about 386 B.C. when Mahayana was established. This doctrine is widely studied in China and Japan.

Vaibhasika School is so called because it gives more importance to the commentaries called *Mahavibhasa* and *Vibhasa* (commentary) on *Abhidharma* treatise known as *Abhidharmajnana-prasthana*. They are also called Sarvastivadin, because they believe in the existence of all things, physical as well as mental. According to this school, everything is momentary and nothing is permanent. Human life is full of misery and liberation is the extinction of all desires, passions and misery. For the Vaibhasikas, external objects are directly
known in perception. They believe in *Bahyapratyaskavada* (i.e. theory of direct perception). This philosophy believes in direct realism and may be called presentationists.

Sarvastivadins believe in the reality of mind and the external world. External objects, for them, are physical objects composed of the atoms of earth, water, light and air. The mind is nothing but the mental state. The Sarvastivada school of thought accepted as many as seventy-five *dharmas*. These *dharmas* are treated as objectively real. Sarvastivada upholds the concept of existence of all *dharmas* in the past, present and future. Thus, *Abhidharmakosa* describes – “The Sarvastivadins as those who maintain the universal existence of everything past, present and future”\(^3\). Sarvastivada recognizes seventy-five kinds of elements which are divided into five groups enlisted below:

(i) Material entities (*rupa*)
(ii) Thought (*citta*)
(iii) Thought functions (mentals, *caitanika*)
(iv) Dissociated from thought (*citta viprayutitus*), and
(v) Unconditioned things (*asamskriti*)

The various treatises of this school were not sure whether the number of ultimately existing elements is seventy-five or not. But they pointed out that the material entities are of eleven types. These eleven types also include the five organs of cognition (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body organs of touch
awareness). The five objects of these organs are colour and shape, sound, odor, taste and tactile sense data respectively.

The principles of the Sarvastivada Philosophy are an analysis, as a whole, of its constituents. According to this school, an object, composed of many elements, is only an appearance and not real. It regards that the elements that compose the object to be grasped by each organ of cognition like colour, shape, tactile sense data etc., are real and not the parts as a whole e.g. wheels of a car; the arm of a chair; etc. The Sarvastivadins are of the opinion that only elemental factors are real, whereas the whole composition is not real. For example, individual trees that constitute a forest are alone real, while the forest is not so. They state that the world that is cognized by us is dissected into three factors - consciousness, cognitive faculty and object of cognition. Consciousness is pure illumination and it is like a clear crystal. It does not contain an image or representation when it cognizes an external object. The form of cognition belongs not to consciousness, but to external object. They explain this by giving an example - when we recognize a book, the book is seen as having the form of a book. Here, our visual faculty sees it and then our consciousness understands it.

After the Sarvastivada school there emerged another school of thought known as Sautrantika School, which is nothing but a further development of Vaibhasika school. The Sautrantika School is so called because unlike the Vaibhasikas, it emphasizes the Sutrantas or Sutras of the Sutrapitaka. They
uphold most of the doctrines of Vaibhasikas such as non-soul theory of momentariness and liberation as mere extinction of miseries, etc. They also assert the independent existence of the world but in a modified form. So the Sautrantika is not so much a new philosophy as the analysis of the implications of the Sarvastivada realism. Later, this school became only of historical importance because on account of its metaphysics it paved the way for the later Mahayanistic developments in the history of Buddhism. In this regard, A.K. Chatterjee states, "The Sautrantika prepared the way of Madhyamika on the one hand and the Yogacara on the other hand, and is, in a sense, the parting of ways"4. So to know the origins of the Yogacara Buddhism it is essential to discuss about Sautrantika and Madhyamika Buddhism.

The origin of the Sautrantika school can be traced to the fourth Buddhist council in the time of Emperor Kanishka in the first century A.D. The Sautrantika is derived from the original sutras of the Buddhist scriptures. So, literally Sautrantika means 'those who rely upon the sutras'. The founder of this school was Kumaralata or Kumaralabdha who was a contemporary of Nagarjuna, Asvaghosa and Aryedeva. Yasomitra and Asanga are the chief exponents of Sautrantika School.

The Sautrantika recognized the reality of the external object. However, the external objects are not directly perceived, they are only indirectly inferred. These thinkers believe like some modern critical realists in the 'copy theory of ideas' and may be known as representationalists as against presentationalists.
These philosophers believe in *Bahyanumeyavada*. The Sautrantika recognized the existence of the external object because they thought that the factors limiting cognition spatially and temporally must be outside knowledge itself. We do not know the thing in itself. We can only know ideas which are copies or mental pictures of reality and from these we infer the existence of the originals. They give an example - a jar when seen on the table at a time is not seen everywhere all the time. This is explained by the fact that cognition always occurs in a specific time and place. If cognition were to arise on its own without any restriction by external conditions, then the jar would have been seen everywhere at the same time. On the basis of this explanation, Sautrantikas inferred the existence of an external object not directly perceived.

Thus, according to Sautrantikas, we do not perceive a thing directly, but our mental images or ideas are composed on it. On the basis of representative perception of the Sautrantika Buddhism, the Yogacara emphasizes that the world does not exist independent of the mind. Our images or ideas alone construct the external world or it appears as if they were outside. Therefore, it is said that Sautrantika actually paved the way for the Yogacara School.

The Sautrantika says that the ideas of objects we get, when we perceive them, represent them. So, their doctrine of perception is called the representative theory. Like Sarvastivada, the Sautrantika also gives the example of the book in different ways. When we see a book, we are actually seeing the book as it exists in reality; and this is already represented in our
minds. Though the book external to us is never seen, it remains always as something.

The Sautrantika advocated realism based on Sakarajnanavada. The view that knowledge contains itself within the form of the object is known as Sakarajnanavada. According to Mookerjee, the theory holds that "Knowledge of external reality is made possible by virtue of the objective reality leaving an impression of its likeness on the mirror of consciousness". There is a controversy between the Sakarajnanavada and Nirakaravada. The Nirakaravada is held by the Nyaya-Vaisesika, Mimamsa and Jain. The Vaibhasika is regarded as Nirakaravadin. This theory maintains that an object is cognized by knowledge not endowed with the image of the object. But, in Sakaravada the object is cognized by the knowledge having its image. While the Sarvastivada based on the Anakarajnanavada holds that the form belongs to the external object, and that knowledge merely reflects it. The Nyaya-Vaisesika and Mimamsa also support this view.

From metaphysical point of view the Sautrantika maintains three theses:

(i) Everything is transient and perishing (anitya)
(ii) Everything is devoid of selfhood or substantiality (anatma)
(iii) Everything is discrete and unique (svalahsana)

Some Hindu writers noticed that there are some differences between the Sarvastivada (Vaibhasika) and the Sautrantikas. These are --
(1) The Sarvastivada school attaches supreme importance to the commentaries called *Mahavibhasa* and *Vibhasa* on an *Abhidharma* treatise which is called *Abhidharma-jnana prasthana*. While the Sautrantika school attaches supreme importance to the *Sutras* of *Sutrapitaka*.

(2) Like Descartes and some modern neo-realists the Sarvastivada believes in direct realism and may be called a presentationist. While Sautrantikas, like Locke and some modern critical realists, believe in the 'copy theory of ideas' and may be called a representationist. According to the Sarvarstivada, external objects are directly known in the perception. They believe in *Bahya-pratyaksa-vada*. On the other hand the Sautrantika believes in *Bahyanumeyavada*. Because, according to them external objects are not directly perceived, but only indirectly inferred. Here, we do not know the thing in itself or the *Svalaksana*. We know only ideas which are copies or mental pictures of reality and from these copies we infer the existence of the originals.

(3) The Sarvastivada accepts seventy-five *dharmas*, the ultimate momentary elements of existence. But the Sautrantika cuts their number down to forty-three and treats the result of mental construction.

It seems that the Sautrantika is more critical and like Kant emphasizes the apriori element of thought-construction (*kalpana* or *vikalpa*) in knowledge.
Kant thought that the real object, the thing-in-itself, never appears in knowledge. Knowledge is determined by certain transcendental functions, viz. the apriori categories of understanding. The known object is therefore a synthesis of the subjective categories and the thing-in-itself to which thought cannot penetrate.

The Sautrantika school had some inconsistencies. The Vaibhasika and Sautrantika deny only pudgala, existence of self, but accepted substantiality of dharmas (elements). For them, everything exists objectively and independently and rejected rest as subjective and unreal. The Mahayanist thinkers thought that if a thing were objective and real, it would be able to exist by itself; it must not be in need of being understood through something else. In order to remove these drawbacks, two other schools were established – the Madhyamika school and the Yogacara school, in the same chronological order. Even though Madhyamika comes in between Sautrantika and Yogacara, yet it is a very extreme position and actually it should have come last. Moreover Sautrantika and Yogacara are both speculative and so spiritually similar. So Madhyamika school appears to be an accidental episode between the other two. And if this is true it is not known whether Madhyamika is a necessary step in the logical development of idealism. T. R. V. Murti states, “The Madhyamika is the turning point of Buddhism”⁶. Idealism of the Yogacara school has to be understood as a significant modification of the Madhyamika.

The Madhyamika system was mainly developed and protected by the great Buddhist scholar Acharya Nagarjuna. As per biography (translated into
Chinese by Kumarajiva in about 405 A.D.), Nagarjuna was born in a Brahmin family in Andhradesa probably in Vidarbha (Berar). He flourished in the second century A.D. He studied the Vedas and other important branches of Brahmanical learning. Later, he was converted to Buddhism. There is a legend associated with his name. 'Naga' means a serpent or dragon, and 'Arjuna' is the name of a tree. It is believed that he was born under an Arjuna tree. Buddha is said to have remarked, "The serpent is a name for one who has destroyed the asavas (passion)".

There are three or four stages in the course of the Madhyamika development:

1. In the first stage, there was a systematic formulation of the Madhyamika philosophy by Nagarjuna and Aryadeva.
2. The second stage is one of division of the system into two schools – the Prasangika and the Svatantrika represented by Buddha Palita and Bhavaviveka, respectively.
3. The third stage is one of re-affirmation of the Prasangika school. Chandrakirti (early 7th century A.D.) reaffirms this school (reductio-ad-absurdism) as the norm of the Madhyamika; the rigor and vitality of the system is no small measure to him. Santideva (691-743) may also be taken as falling within this period. These two philosophers account for the high level attained by the Madhyamika system.
4. The fourth or the last stage is a syncretism of the Yogacara and the Madhyamika. The chief representatives of this stage are Santaraksita and Kamalasila. The Madhyamika remains to this day the official philosophy of the Tibetan church.

First stage – Nagarjuna (c. A.D. – 150) and Arya Deva (c. 180-200):

Prof. T. R. V. Murti remarked that Naga means that he founded a new and important phase in Buddhism. Nagarjuna propagated the new prajnaparamita teaching. Prajnaparamita is usually translated as perfection of wisdom, but actually it means transcendental wisdom. It is the highest kind of knowledge. It is an integral principle which comprehends both the aspects of cognition and emotion. So it comprises both truth and universal love. It destroys not only the craving for sense-pleasure but also power and self.

Prajnaparamita is a term which consists of six spiritual qualities, namely

(a) Dana (charity)
(b) Sila (withdrawing from all evil deeds)
(c) Ksanti (forbearance)
(d) Virya (enthusiasm and exertion)
(e) Dhyana (concentration)
(f) Prajna (transcendental insight)
The first four are moral qualities. Their development prepares one for the practice of dhyana, which orients the mind towards prajna i.e. wisdom. Prajna is super-rational and it knows reality as it is (prajna-yathabhutam artham Prajanal). Dr. K.V. Ramanam says that Mahaprajna paramita sastra uses the word prajna in two senses – (a) the eternal prajna and (b) the prajna that functions along with the five paramitas. The former is the substantial or stable prajna; while the latter is the functional prajnaparamita. The functional prajna puts an end to the darkness of ignorance and then eternal prajna comes to the fore. In the eternal prajna, one cannot even find the distinction of ignorance and knowledge. It is the "eternal light in the heart of man". The functional prajna is the act of knowledge which consists of analysis, criticism and comprehension. These are only mode of power of permanent prajna.

Prajna can be attained only when we know the truth. Prajna cannot be attained by the chattering academician 'sicklied over with the pail of thought'; nor can it be attained simply by 'putting on wishing cap'. It can be attained only by arduous self-discipline and self-culture.

According to Buston, there are six important treatise of Nagarjuna.

(i) Prajnamula (Mulamadhyamika karakas), which is the Madhyamika sastra par excellence.

(ii) Sunyata saptati (the unreality of things), which expounds the theory of the unreality of things in 66 anustab stanzas.
(iii) Yukti Sastika, which is a work of 60 stanzas in *anustup metre*. The original of this is lost; however, the Tibetan version has been preserved.

(iv) *Vigrahavyavartani*: These books are the refutation of possible objects that may be raised against the negative method of *sunyata*.

(v) *Vaidalya sutra* and *Prakarana*: The self-defense of Nagarjuna against the charge of perverting logic is to be had in Tibetan.

(vi) The sixth work is *Vyavahara Siddhi*. This book shows that from the point of view of the Absolute Truth i.e. Non-substantiality, and from the empirical standpoint i.e. worldly practice go along together.

Arya deva was the chief pupil and worthy successor of Nagarjuna. He was born in the island of Sinhala (Ceylon) and was a son of the king of the land. His biography was translated into Chinese by Kumarajiva in about 405 A.D. He defended the teachings of Nagarjuna, and criticized the philosophy of Hinayana, Samkhya and Vaisesika. His most famous work is *Catuhsataka* which consists of 400 *karikas*. He was probably the author of *Aksara-Sastakam*. He is also said to have been the author of *Hastavala-Prakarana* and *Cittavisuddhi Prakarana*. The original work is lost but the Tibetan version is available and from this a Sanskrit version has been reconstructed. The first half of this work is devoted to the Madhyamika spiritual discipline and the second to a refutation of dogmatic speculations of Buddhists and non-Buddhists e.g. Samkhya and Vaisesika. Arya deva summarizes the *Hastavala-Prakarana* in six verses. Here, he shows that just as ‘the appearance of the rope-snake’ is unreal; so also the things of the world, when it is observed, are nothing apart from their parts; and invisible
parts are also equally unreal. In the last verse of his work, Arya deva draws the
distinction between the empirical (laukika) and the Absolute truth (paramartha).

Second stage – Division into two - Prasangika and Svatantrika:

Buddha Palita and Bhavaviveka initiated a new phase in the
development of the Madhyamika system. Towards the beginning of the 5th
century A.D. the Madhyamika was divided into two schools of thought – the
Prasangika school and the Svatantrika school. The Prasangika school used the
method of 'reductio-ad absurdism'. Nagarjuna has used the technique of
Prasanga in formulating his Madhyamika Philosophy. Prasanga is the technical
word which means reductio-ad absurdism argument. Nagarjuna did not
advance any theory of his own, and therefore, he did not have any need to
advance an argument to prove his theory. He uses only pranga-vakya or
reductio-ad absurdism argument to prove that the theories advanced by his
opponents only led to absurdity on the very principles accepted by them. This
implied that reality was beyond thought-constructs.

Buddha Palita flourished in the middle of the sixth century A.D. He
thought that prasanga was the correct method of the Madhyamika Philosophy
and employed it in his writings and teachings. So, it is believed that Buddha
Palita is the founder of this school. He wrote a commentary called
Madhyamakavṛtti. Though the original copy is lost, the Tibetan version is still available.

A junior contemporary of Buddha Palita, named Bhavaviveka, propounded the Svatāntra Madhyamika school. He tried to establish the truth of the Madhyamika doctrines by advancing independent (svatantra) reasoning. Bhavaviveka has written an independent work — Madhyamakavatara — pradīpa and another Prakarana — Madhyamaka Pratitya Samutpāda.

In his Karatalaratna, Bhavaviveka attempts to establish the basic Madhyamika standpoint by syllogistic arguments. He formulates the syllogism that — "The conditioned things (Sanskrta) are unreal (Sunya) from the standpoint of ultimate truth (tattvatah), because they are produced through causes and conditions (pratyayodhavañ); like things created by magic (mayavañ). The unconditional things (asamkrta) such as space, Nirvana, etc. are non-existent from the standpoint of ultimate truth, because they are non-originating (amutpadah) like the sky-lotus (khapusvat)"\textsuperscript{15}. Bhavaviveka defends his arguments against possible formal and material objections. He points out that he does not mean to deny the empirical validity of things (samvṛtisat); but only their ultimate reality. The argument therefore is not vitiated by the evidence of sense-perception; but these acquaint us only with appearance.
Bhavaviveka stated that sunyata does not mean the assertion of the non-existence of things, but only the denial of the dogmatic assertion of existence. He points out that Sunyata does not nullify things or make them disappear, but shows that their real nature as devoid of essence (nihsvabhava)\textsuperscript{16}.

Third stage – Reaffirmation of the Prasangika School:

This stage has found two brilliant scholars of the Madhyamika system – Chandrakirti and Shantideva. The famous works of Chandrakirti are – ‘The Mulamadhyamaka karika of Nagarjuna’ and his independent work named ‘Madhyamakavatara’\textsuperscript{17}. He also wrote commentaries on Nagarjuna’s Sunyata Saptati and Yukti Sastika and on Arya deva’s Catuhsataka. Two other Prakaranas or manuals, Madhyamaka prajnavatara and Pancaskandha, were also written by him. Chandrakirti is the chief exponent of the Prasangika School. He exposes the hollowness of Bhavaviveka’s logic. He supports the commonsense view of sense-perception and criticizes the doctrine of ‘unique particular’ (svalaksana) and perception devoid of determination (kalpanapradha). He was also a refuted vijnanavada and maintains that consciousness (vijnana) without an object is unthinkable. Chandrakirti shows in his Madhyamakavatara (chapter vi) that without object, vijnana (consciousness) too is nothing. We cannot even apprehend it. In fact, he concluded that Vijnanavada is inconsistent with the truth of empirical reality. According to him, Vijnanavada is not the middle position, which is the non-acceptance of both ‘is’ and ‘is not’ (astiva and
nastiva). Vijnanavada accepts both the non-existence of the Parikalpita and the existence of the Paratantra. Chandrakirti states that Vijnanavada is not the final teaching (nitartha); but is just a step to it (neyartha)\textsuperscript{18}.

Shantideva was another great pillar of the Prasangika school. He was the author of Siksa-samuccaya and Bodhicaryavatara. He has referred to many important Mahayana works, nearly 97 in number which are now completely lost. In the Bodhicaryavatara, he has emphasized the cultivation of Bodhicitta. He was the greatest poet of the Madhyamika school.

**Fourth stage – Syncretism of the Yogacara and the Madhyamika:**

It has been observed that Santaraksita and Kamalasila are new phase in the development of Madhyamika system. They accepted the Sautrantika-Vijnanavada position with regards to the empirical, and the Madhyamika with regards to the ultimate Reality. They represent a syncretism of the Madhyamika with the Yogacara. Santaraksita flourished in the 8\textsuperscript{th} century A.D. His great work was Tattvasangraha (compendium of Reality). His celebrated pupil, Kamalasila wrote the Tattvasangraha-panjika. Santaraksita composed the Madhyamika Karika and laid the foundation of another school of the Madhyamikas. This school denies the Empirical Reality of the external world, but, on the other hand does not consider consciousness to have an ultimate Reality (which is the
difference from Yogacara-vijnanavadins). The Madhyamika continues to be the dominant philosophy till date in Tibet and Mongolia.

The central idea of the Madhyamika system is known as *Sunyavada* which asserts *Sunya* as the characterization of Reality. *Sunyata* is the pivot concept on which the entire Buddhist turned. Some scholars states that the word ‘*sunya*’ has no ontological significance – it is only a stereological suggestion. But the word ‘*sunya*’ has been used in an ontological sense with an axiological overtone and stereological background. In ontological sense *sunya* is the void which is also fullness. This is because it is nothing in particular, yet it has the possibility of everything. It has been identified with *Nirvana*, with the Absolute with *Paramarthasatya* (the Supreme Reality) with *tattva* (Reality).

Nagarjuna says that *sunya* is *aparapratyayam, santam, prapancair aprapancitam, nirvikalpam, ananartham*. Etymologically, the word ‘*Sunya*’ is derived from the root ‘svi’ which mean to ‘swell’ or ‘to expand’. Epistemologically emptiness (*sunyata*) is *prajna* i.e. unattached insight that no truth is absolute. The so-called ultimate truth and worldly truth are relative to each other.

The word ‘*sunya*’ and ‘*sunyata*’ is understood in connection with *svabhava* which means ‘own being’. In one word *svabhava* is the Absolute Reality, whereas everything else, all phenomenon are *prabhava* (relative). Nagarjuna used the word ‘*sunya*’ and ‘*sunyata*’ form two points of view –
(i) The phenomenal or empirical Reality, and

(ii) The Absolute

From the phenomenal or empirical point of view, sunya means svabhava sunya i.e. devoid of svabhava or independent substantial reality of its own. In the case of Phenomena, the word ‘sunya’ has two imports – it negatively means the rejection of the uncritical acceptance of the independent nature of world things and, positively it stands for the dependent changing nature of objects. The world is called ‘sunya’ because it is empty or devoid of any intrinsic nature of its own (nihsvabhana). But these empirical determinations are not applicable to the Absolute. From the Absolute point of view, the world is called sunya, because everything in this world is relative and mutually dependent and in this sense devoid of any self-essence.

According to Nagarjuna, no single thing in the world is unconditionally and absolutely real. Everything is related to contingent upon, and conditioned by something else. There is no real production; there is only manifestation of a thing contingent on causes and conditions and there is no real causal relation between entities. There is only mutual dependence between entities which means in other words that entities are devoid of independent self-hood (svabhava). Nagarjuna shows that all categories of thought are self-discrepant with the help of his dialectic. They are relative, essenceless or ultimately unreal. Hence, subject, object, substance, attribute, whole and part, cause and effect, time and space, relational, change, motion, rest, self, nature, other
nature, knowledge, *Nirvana*, *samsara* all are discrepant. So, they are relative and ultimately unreal.

Madhyamika accepts that the nature of the absolute is immanent and transcendent. It is transcendent as it is beyond the categories of thought, untouched by empirical predicates (*catuskoti vinirmuktam, nirvikalpa*). It is immanent as it is not another thing besides the world, but it is the world itself known truly, without the distorting medium of *buddhi*²⁴. Nagarjuna’s absolute is not void but devoid of imperfection and finitude²⁵.

Non-Buddhists have interpreted ‘*sunya*’ as only Nihilism. But it is not Nihilism because this does not deny all reality. According to Madhyamika, behind the phenomenal world there is a reality and that reality is not describable by any character mental or non-mental that we perceive. Being devoid of phenomenal characters it is called *sunya*. They also say that the world of experience is also an illusion. The universe is *sunya*. *Sunyata* or voidness is the name of indeterminable, indescribable real nature of things. Things appear to exist but when we try to understand the real nature of their existence our intellect is baffled²⁶. It cannot be called either real or unreal or both real and unreal or neither real or unreal.

The Madhyamika dialectic leading to *sunyata* is not mere nihilism. By means of his dialectic method Nagarjuna tries to prove the emptiness of the Absolute Being and the relativity of the becoming²⁷. He denies the self-
existence of a thing. All things are inter-related because, there is nothing essentially real. In his Madhyamika Karika, Nagarjuna explains that there is no existence (bhava) without self-existence (svabhava). It can be known through the theory of dependent origination that there is no self-existence or self-substantiality. Everything is sunya or empty of its own substantiality. He says, “The things have dependent origination caused by the interdependence (prabhava) of cause and effect”. He also says that there is no self-existent (karata) or producer (karma) or product and karya or producing.

The principle of the dialectic is - if two things cannot be conceived either as identical or different from each other, or if two things are not intelligible either together or separately, neither of these two is established as real. There can be no relation between identical and different things. All things are dependent on other things; so they are all empty. The Madhyamika only negates all views about Reality; it does not negate Reality itself. It cannot, therefore, be called nihilism. Prof. Murti says, “No doctrine about Reality does not mean no-Reality doctrine”. Sunyata is negative only for thought, but in itself, it is non-relational knowledge of the Absolute.

It can be said that Nagarjuna’s dialectic method simply refers to the phenomena for the best without intending to define, describe or demonstrate them because they do not exist essentially. He accepts that there are two truths – the empirical (samvrti truth) and transcendental truth (paramartha). He says that the former truth is momentary and that which is beyond it is absolute.
The emptiness or *sunyata* of perceived things are the only absolute. It can be thought by finite human being. The void is beyond our notion of real and unreal, good and bad. His absolute reality is the knowledge of this or that or both or neither. We know about the empty world or *sunya* only.

The Madhyamika view is called the middle path (*madhyama*) because it avoids the extreme views by denying. In this system middle path stands for the non-acceptance of the two views concerning existence and non-existence; eternity and non-eternity; self and non-self and so on. But the Madhyamika system states that *sunyata* is the middle path between existence and non-existence of the world. According to Nagarjuna, *sunyabada* is called the middle path because it implies the theory of dependent origination.

It seems that Madhyamika system is the re-interpretation of *Pratityasamutpada* theory\(^{31}\). In Madhyamaka Sastra, it is discussed that causality or *Pratityasamutpada* is only meant to show that not a single thing in the world exists in its own right; nothing has an independent reality of its own. So, everything is conditioned by something (*Pratityasamutpada*). The world is not Reality; it is a realm of relativity. Dr. Radhakrishnan writes, “By *sunyata* therefore, the Madhyamaka does not mean absolute non-being; but relative being"\(^{32}\). In Madhyamaka karika Nagarjuna says, “There is no real production: there is only manifestation of a thing contingent on causes and conditions. It is this conditioned co-production that we designate as *sunyata*”. Therefore, causal relation does not mean a sequence of realities but only a sequence of
appearances. Everything in this world is dependent upon the sum-total of its conditions. Things are merely appearance. Pratityasamutpada is equated with sunyata. It is simply a process, and things are simply events. Nagarjuna expresses in his Madhyamakakarika, "One who perceives truly the Pratityasamutpada realizes the four sacred truths – pain, cause, cessation and the path." So, sunya means conditional character of things and their consequent constant changeability and indescribability.

It may be mentioned that Sankara seems to have been influenced by the idealistic thought of Buddhism. Among the various schools of Buddhist Philosophy, Sankara is very close to the Madhyamika Philosophy of Nagarjuna.

Etymologically, the term ‘sunya’ is derived from the root ‘svi’ which means ‘to swell’ or ‘to expand’. Curiously the word ‘brahman’ is derived from the root ‘brh’ or ‘brmh’ which also means ‘to swell’ or ‘to expand’. It has already been mentioned that the central idea of Madhyamika System is known as Sunyavada. Sunya neither means a mere negation nor does it mean nihilism. It is used in a double sense. So we may say that sunya means maya as well as Brahman. From the empirical standpoint sunya means all dharmas or world experiences which are similar to avidya in Advaita Vedanta. The Svabhavasunya of Buddhism is devoid of ultimate reality. They are merely relative. Ultimately they have no reality. They are indescribable or maya. But the mere fact is that svabhava sunya are appearances imply that there must be a reality of which they are mere appearances. This Reality or tattvas is
prapancasunya or beyond all plurality. It is like Brahman. It is in nature pure consciousness. It is indescribable because all categories of the intellect fail to describe it fully.

Both Nagarjuna and Sankara regarded the world as subject to change and therefore unreal\(^\text{37}\). Sankara explains the world with his concept of \textit{maya}, whereas Nagarjuna takes the help of the concept of \textit{sunyata}.

Sankara's view of \textit{Maya} and the world comes closer to Nagarjuna. He holds \textit{maya} to be beyond the reach of empirical determination which functions through the categories like 'is' (\textit{bhava}) or 'is not' (\textit{abhava}), etc. We cannot categorize \textit{maya} as either real or unreal or real-unreal, even if it is neither real nor unreal. The indeterminable nature is also attributed to the empirical nature of the world which according to Sankara is a product or indeterminable \textit{maya}. Sankara says that the world enjoys a relative status: it is neither real nor unreal. It is not unreal (\textit{asat}) because it is a fact of experience, it is not like hare's horn. It cannot be called real (\textit{sat}) like Brahman, because it is not like \textit{trikala-abadhita} which is devoid of contradictions in three forms of time (past, present and future). Thus, the world is not denied by Sankara as an unmitigated negation; rather he admits its relativity reality. By using the word '\textit{sunya}', Nagarjuna too points to the relative reality of the world.
It has been mentioned that the differences between the Madhyamika sunyata and Brahman are rather superficial and even verbal, and the two systems of philosophy are almost identical.

The Madhyamika and the Advaita Vedanta belongs to two different traditions – the atman tradition of the Upanishads and the anatman tradition of the Buddhists. The Advaita accepts the reality of Brahman or Atman in conformity with the Upanishadic tradition whereas the Buddhist denies the reality of the Atman. For Nagarjuna the world is like a mirage or a dream which has no reality whatsoever. But for Sankara even false creation must have some reality. Both differ in their method and approach. Sankara’s approach is positive while that of Nagarjuna is negative. The former is spiritual while the latter is logical, dialectical. Nirvana of Nagarjuna is purely negative, but for Sankara, moksa is a positive, blissful state characterized by permanence or immorality (amrtatva).

The Madhyamika absolutism is an Advayavada and Vedanta is an Advaitavada. Advaya is knowledge free from the duality of the extremes of ‘is’ and ‘is not’, being, becoming and their derivatives. Advaita is knowledge of differenceless entity – Brahman (pure Being). Advaya is purely on epistemological approach, but the Advaita is ontological approach. The aim of both the philosophy is the attainment of one Ultimate Reality, but with a difference. Advaita is a philosophy of Being; it is sustained investigation having Brahman (God) as the subject of its enquiry. Philosophy is therefore Brahma-
**jjnasa or Brahma-vidya.** Advayavada is the consciousness of its own activity or function. It is a thorough going negative dialectic.

For the Vedanta, *vedadrsti* (differentiation) is *avidya*. But for the Madhyamika, all viewing *drsti* as such is *avidya*, *drsti* is *kalpana*, *kalpana* is the ascription of features which are not existent in reality. The Madhyamika says that *avidya* is itself unreal and it is *maya* only. If it is real, its products are also real; therefore there could be no question of negating or even changing the world process.

Both the Madhyamika and the Vedanta hold that unreal can be efficient and causation is not a criterion of the real but of the unreal. The Madhyamika and the Vedanta notion of *avidya* is a beginningless positive entity that is totally destroyed by knowledge.

The difference between Vedanta and Sunyavada is the difference of emphasis only. This difference is of a double nature. First, while the Sunyavada is keener to emphasize the ultimate reality of all phenomena, Sankara is keener to emphasize the empirical reality of all phenomena. Second, while the Sunyavadin is less keen to develop the conception of ultimate Reality, Sankara is keener to develop this conception almost to perfection.

In the evolution of the Buddhist thought, after Nagarjuna of the 2nd century A.D., momentum was given by Asanga and Vasubandhu of the 4th
century and this made some distinction. Like Nagarjuna, they uphold that Reality is non-dual. But they started thinking in a more positive way calling Absolute Reality as pure consciousness. They have established Vijnanavada or Yogacara school. They accepted the theory of Sunya of Nagarjuna and interpreted it in an idealistic manner. It is Sunya in the sense that it is indescribable in terms of human language. It is pure consciousness – free from subject object duality and non-dual. They accept ideal Reality i.e. pure consciousness.

We have already seen that, for Nagarjuna, Reality is sunya (indescribable); beyond the subject object duality, indeterminate, negative and cannot even be called pure consciousness. The Yogacara is not satisfied with such a type of negative attitude of Nagarjuna. They identified the absolute with pure consciousness which is also free from subject object duality, indescribable, beyond determination of thought, categories and non-dual. They do not accept the claim of Nagarjuna that the phenomenal world is conceptual and lacks any basis. Their aim was to reach the ground of phenomena, apparent world. This school used to denote Buddhist idealism, or the Vijnanavada, the two terms being used synonymously. But Indian Buddhist scholars like A.K. Chatterjee use the two terms distinctly. The school of pure idealism of Maitreya, Asanga and Vasubandhu is called the Yogacara. (The term Yogacara does not have any sectarian significance and at the same time it has nothing to do with the orthodox Yoga school of thought. This name has been given to this school largely because the term Yogacara occurs in the title of Asanga's chief work
‘The Yogacara-bhumi-sastra’). The school of Dignaga and Dharmakirti is termed as Vijnanavada. They essentially accept the doctrine of Vijnaptimatrata and the unreality of object. But the entire system is called the Yogacara-vijnanavada. The Yogacara steers a course midway between the extremes reached by the Madhyamika, which says that ‘all is sunya’, and the Abhidharmika which endows the object with a reality of its own. This was a return to speculation and constructive metaphysics spiritually akin to the Sarvastivada and the Sautrantika.

It is believed that the founder of the Yogacara school was Asanga or Aryasanga. But, some scholars have pointed out that Maitreyanath, the teacher of Asanga is the real founder of this school. However, even Maitreyanath cannot be taken as the real founder because the source of this doctrine may be traced in the Lankavatara-sutra or Mahayana text included in the list of Mahayana Vaipulya-Sutras or Nava Dharmas alongside of the Astasahasrika-Sutra. It cannot be definitely ascertained as the text in the present form consists of portion which belonged to various periods. Therefore, Maitreyanath may be recognized as the first to systemize the Yogacara School. According to Buston, there are five works of Maitreya. And these works “Five Treatises of Maitreya” are regarded to be the most important text to the Yogacara tradition. They are as follows –

(i) Ornament for clear Realization – Abhisamaya-alankara
(ii) Ornament for the Mahayana sutras – Mahayana-sutra-alanikara
Asanga was one of the most famous of the Buddhist Philosophers. He lived in the fourth century A.D. He was born in Purusapura in the Gandhara country. It was a Brahmin family of Kausika gotra and well versed in Brahmanical learning. He was educated in Kashmir where he studied the Vibhasa-sutra. Asanga was perhaps originally attached to the Sarvastivada school which flourished in Kashmir and Gandhara in those days. But later he got converted to Mahayana Buddhism. Now, Asanga has been regarded as the most prominent teacher of the Yogacara or Vijnanavada school. He was a pupil of Matreyanath, but he became more famous than that of his teacher. The most important works of Asanga are – the Yogacara-bhumi-sastra, the Mahayana Sutralankara, the Mahayana-Samparigraha and the Prakarana-aryavaca. The first two are more important from the ethical and doctrinal points of view. The Yogacara-bhumi-sastra was discovered by Rahul Sankrityayan in its original Sanskrit form. It is divided into seventeen bhumis and describes in detail the path of discipline as per the Yogacara School. The Mahayana Sutralankara is the joint work of Asanga and his teacher Matreyanath. The karakas were written by Matreyanath and their commentary by Asanga.
Winternitz mentions such works of Asanga which have come down only in Chinese translation\textsuperscript{41}. They are – Mahayanasamparigraha, translated by Paramarth (563 A.D.); Prakarana-Aryavaca, Mahayana-bhidharmasamgiti-sastra, translated by Hsuan-Tsang (625 A.D.); and a commentary on the vajracchedika, translated by Dharmagupta (590-516 A.D.).

Another central figure in the Yogacara system is Vasubandhu. He was one of the most prominent figures in the entire history of Buddhism. He was the younger brother of Asanga, and lived in the 4\textsuperscript{th} century A.D.\textsuperscript{42} Vasubandhu was born in a Hindu family at Purusapura (today called Peshawar) in the state of Gandhara in North-Western India. At Vasubandhu’s time the dominant Buddhist school in Gandhara was Vaibhasika (also called Sarvastivada). So, he studied in this school and then travelled to the head quarters of the orthodox branch in Kashmir. After returning home, he would lecture on Vaibhasika doctrine. His greatest work, the ‘Abhidharma-kosa’ is an encyclopedia of Buddhist philosophy which was originally written from the point of view of the Vaibhasika branch of the Sarvastivada school. This grand book is written in 600 karikas. The kosa categorizes and analyses the basic factors of experience and reality, called dharmas. It proved invaluable for the propagation of Buddhism in Asia. This useful work elicited praise not only from the Buddhists but also from others. The popularity of this kosa can be imagined from the fact that in the 7\textsuperscript{th} century, Bama, while describing the hermitage of the Buddhist monk, Divakaramitra, in his Harsacarita, says that even the parrots there explained the kosa to one
another. The vast commentarial literature written on the Abhidharma-kosa points to the great influence the work has exercised on men's mind.

Vasubandhu's version of the Vaibhasika system had seventy-five dharmas; which is divided into five major categories –

1. Eleven types of material form: The five sense organs and their corresponding objects, something called *avijnapti* which was considered to be a material counterpart to any intension that didn't disclose itself through verbal or bodily gestures.

2. Mind (*citta*)

3. Forty-six mental associates: Attitudes, forms of attention, emotional states, etc. which accompany moments of cognition.

4. Fourteen conditions disassociated from the mid

5. Three unconditional *dharmas* – (i) spatiality (*akasa*); (ii) disjunction from impure *dharmas* by deliberate awareness; (iii) non-arising of impure *dharmas* due to the absence of their productive conditions

It is said that Vasubandhu was later on converted to Vijnanavada by his elder brother Asanga. He wrote his revolutionary treatise called 'Vijnaptimatratasiddhi', which comprises Vimsatika and Trimsika. This is the complete and definite text on the Yogacara idealism. The author wrote commentary on Vimsatika and Sthiramata wrote commentary on Trimsika. In the former part Vasubandhu criticizes the atomic view of the world as
propounded by Sarvastivadins and Vaisesikas and in the latter, he exhibits his positive philosophy. Vasubandhu wrote a special work – The Paramartha saptati; in order to refute the *samkhya* philosophy. He also wrote two treatises on logic – namely the Tarka-sastra and Vada-Vidhi. As a Mahayanist teacher, Vasubandhu wrote commentaries on the *Saddharma-pundarika-sutra*, the *Mahaparinirvana-sutra* and the *Vajracchedika-prajna-paramita*. The other six works mentioned by Buston are – the *Pancaskandha-prakarana*; *Vyakhyayukti*; the *Karmasiddhi-prakarana* and the three commentaries on the *Mahayanasutralanikara*; the *Pratityasamutpadasutra* and the *Madhyantavibhanga*.

For Vasubandhu, Pure consciousness is the ultimate reality. *Alaya-vijnana* is the reality from *vyavaharika* standpoint, *Klista Manavijnana* is the individual being and the world occupies the status of *Visayavijnapti*.

The most important names in this new school are those of Dignaga and Dharmakirti. In the history of Buddhist logic, the name of Dignaga occupies a predominant place. He is the founder of Buddhist logic and has been called the Father of Medieval *Nyaya* as a whole. He lived in the beginning of the 5th century A.D. According to the Tibetan sources, he was born in a Brahmin family in the South. He was first a Hinayanist of the Vatiputriya sect and later devoted himself to the teachings of Mahayanism. Tibetan tradition mentions that he was a pupil of Vasubandhu. Dignaga went to the Nalanda Mahavira where he defeated a Brahmin logician named Sudurjaya in a religious discussion. He also
toured the provinces of Odivisa (Orissa) and Maharattha (Maharashtra). Dignaga is credited with the authorship of about a hundred treatises on logic. Most of these are still preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translation. Among the works of Dignaga, the most important is the *Pramanianasamuccaya*, which primarily deals with Buddhist logic. His other important works are – the *Trikala Pariksa*; the *Hetucakranimaya*; the *Nyayamukha*; the *Nyayapravesa*; the *Alambana Pariksa* and several others; all written in a terse and difficult style. It is considered that Dignaga is, thus, an important link between the Buddhist and the orthodox *Nyaya* system of India.

The most famous of Dignaga’s successors is Dharmakirti. He was born in the village Tirumalai in the cola country. Dharmakirti lived in the 7th century A.D. He studied logic from Isvarasena who was among Dignaga’s pupil. Later, he went to Nalanda and became a disciple of Dharmapala, who was at that time the *Sangha-Sthavira* of the Mahavira and a prominent teacher of the Vijnanavada school. His celebrated work is *Pramana-varttika*. The other important works written by Dharmakirti are – the *Pramana-viniscaya*, the *Nyaya-bindu*, the *Sambandha-pariksa*, the *Hetu-bindu*, the *Vadanyaya* and the *Samanantara-siddhi*. All these works deal generally with the Buddhist theory of knowledge. Dharmakirti’s writings mark the highest summit reached in epistemological speculation by latter Buddhism.

It may be pointed out that the whole of the Vijnanavada tradition may be divided into two categories viz. *Agamanuyayi Vijnanavadin* and the
Yuktyanuyayi Vijnanavadin. Aryasanga is said to be follower of the first tradition. According to his tradition, the basic tenet of the Vijnanavada may be divided into Alaya-vijnana and Klistamanavijnana. Vasubandhu, the author of the Vijnaptimatrata, is also the follower of this tradition. The Agamanuyayi tradition of Vijnanavada further accepts eight consciousness (vijnanas) viz. (i) alaya-vijnana, (ii) klistamanovijnana, (iii) caksuravijnana, (iv) srotravijnana, (v) ghranavijnana, (vi) jihvavijnana, (vii) kayavijnana and (viii) manovijnana.

Dignaga and Dharmakirti belong to Yuktyanuyayi vijnanavada which lays more stress on logic (yukti) rather than scripture (agama). Both of them do not the support the theory of store-consciousness (Alaya-vijnana) and klistamanovijnana, otherwise they would have explained and defined vijnana along with their examples. Of the above eight vijnanas, they have accepted only six, namely (i) caksuravijnana, (ii) srotravijnana, (iii) ghranavijnana, (iv) jihvavijnana, (v) kayavijnana and (vi) manovijnana.

From metaphysical point of view, it seems that there exists a difference between these four schools. The Vaibhasikas (Sarvastivadins) believe in the reality of mind and the external objects. According to them, external objects are physical objects composed of the atoms of earth, water, light and air. The external object is the stream of "svalaksanas" or unique particular. The svalaksanas are the ultimate basis of external reality and they are infinite in number. The external object is, therefore, a series of particulars or aggregates of them which are really devoid of all characteristics although they appear to
possess them. But, as against Vaibhasikas, the philosophers of the Sautrantika maintain that the external world does not exist. It is simply a projection of the internal world, which we wrongly think to be external.

The Vaibhasikas consider Nirvana to be a positive state of existence in which all passions have been completely extinguished, and the chances of the reappearance of miseries have been eliminated. Hence, Nirvana is not mere negation, it is Dharma in which there is absence of the samskaras; in itself it is a positive entity. While for the Sautrantikas, Nirvana is unreal. It is negative, i.e. extinction of miseries and ego and only for the individual.

In Madhyamika system, everything is relative, dependent and therefore the world is unreal. Relativity is the mark of the unreal of the subject. The entire experience is purely subjective, things have only an apparent existence (samvrti) in reality, and they are imaginary and unreal. But the Yogacara thought that phenomena, though unreal, must be rooted in some reality. For them, all existence has its centre and being in mind. They believe that reality is a mere idea and the same has its centre in consciousness or mind.

For Madhyamika, there is no difference between Nirvana and Samsara. The same reality viewed from empirical point is samsara and from transcendental point is Nirvana. This Nirvana is unreal and it is also sunya. But in Vijnanavada, though the world is not real, yet Nirvana is real. Nirvana is a
state of pure consciousness (cittam) where it is free from all the subject object duality. It means self-realization.

The Sautrantika school, which among all the schools of Hinayana, is the most critical and philosophically the most advanced school. It played an important role in the transition from Hinayana to Mahayana. It leads, on one hand, to the rise of absolutism of the Madhyamika and, on the other hand, to the idealism of the Vijnanavada and the Svatantara-Vijnanavada. The doctrine of conceptual construction (vikalpa) was developed by the Sautrantika and some very original contribution were made in the sphere of logic and epistemology which were seized later on and developed by the Svatantara-Vijnanavada. The latter formulation of Vijnanavada by Dignaga, Dharmakirti and Shantaraksita should be designated Svatantara-Vijnanavada on account of its giving up the basic Absolutism of the earlier Vijnanavada. The doctrine of conceptual construction is also called Sautrantika-Yogacara, because of its fusing the critical realism of the Sautrantika with the idealism of the Yogacara. This school is also known as the school of Buddhist logic. So, the Yogacara school is divided into ancient or early Vijnanavada and the new one or latter Vijnanavada. The followers of the early Vijnanavada were Asanga, Vasubandhu, etc.

There is no vast difference between the earlier and this new form of Vijnanavada. The earlier form of Vijnanavada established their idealistic views on an interpretation of the old Abhidharma. The Lankavatra sutra has contained the early Vijnanavada concept of reality and termed it cittamatra (mind-only).
The Lankavatra sutra repeatedly affirms that citta (cittamatra) is the only reality. The subject-object discrimination of external world is merely an appearance arising from false imagination and so for them no external object exists in reality. The sutra says, "All things are devoid of alternatives of being and non-being (sadasatpaksavigatah) and are to be known as the horns of a hare, a horse or a camel or like a hairnet (sashaya kharasuvisana – kesondukaprakhya). They are discriminated as realities by the ignorant who are addicted to assertions and refutations (samarupa vada) as their intelligence has not penetrated into the truth that there is nothing but what is seen of the mind itself"\(^{45}\).

The Lankavatrasutra again and again affirms that the world is not more than mind itself (cittamatramlekam). The sutra says that the Buddha's teachings consist of the cessation of suffering arising from the discrimination of the triple world – the cessation of the ignorance, desire, deed and casualty. When one comes to recognize that an objective world, like a vision, is the manifestation of mind itself; it teaches that – "When one abides in mind only beyond which there is no external world, dualism ceases, as there is no realm of form based on discrimination one comes to recognize that there is nothing but what is seen of mind itself"\(^{46}\).

The Lankavatrasutra has sought out the reason behind the appearance of the external world and has conceived the Alaya-vijnana and other vijnanas. The Alaya-vijnana is conceived in the Lankavatra as being absolute, which is
quite free from the fault of impermanence (antiyatadessarahita); unconcerned with the doctrine of ego-substance (atmavadavinivṛtta) and it is pure in its essential nature (alayantapraκṛtisupuddī). On the other hand Alaya-vijnana is being subject to evolution (paravṛtti) which employs Manas and six indriya vijnanas to act for imaginary sensation, perception and thinking of external world. Thus, it is bringing the idea of discrimination and duality of subject-object which are accumulated in the Alaya due to ignorance from the early time. The Alaya-vijnana when purified of all these false notions brings about the salvation through realization of cīttamatra.

The concept of cīttamatra as absolute reality of the Lankavatrasūtra was developed by Vasubandhu and he termed it as Vijnaptimatrata. The tathāta doctrine was developed by Asvaghosa, the author of the Mahayana Sraddhotpada sutra. The Alayavijnana, in its basic nature, is described as identical to cīttamatra and Tathagatagarbha in the Lankavatrasūtra. Vasubandhu considered it as one of the manifestations of pure consciousness. He states that reality in Vijnaptimatrata or pure consciousness is the permanent seat of changing states of empirical existence.

The concept of Alaya-vijnana and Vijnaptimatrata are completely ignored by the svatantra-vijnanavada. According to this school, consciousness is momentary and things of the world are modifications of our sensations or mental states. They criticize the notion of permanent and considered changing psycho-physical conglomeration as the so-called self. In observation of any
permanent principle like pure consciousness, they try to explain the fact of identity by resemblance (sadrṣya). Vasubandhu denied not only the substantial reality of matter but also the efficacy and even the possibility of mere sense experience. But Dignaga only denied the substantial reality of sense-experience. C. D. Sharma describes the objective of this school as—“It wants to combine the metaphysical idealism of Vijnanavada with the logical and epistemological critical realism of Vijnanavada of the Sautrantika school. So, this school may be called as the logical school of Buddhism”.47

Dharmakirti says that everything is momentary. Whatever is produced must be destroyed. That which comes into existence and afterwards ceases to exist is called momentary. Reality is annihilation. Change exists by itself and always. Thus, reality is such that it is momentary. For him, when we say that a thing is destroyed, it actually means that the thing is momentary. Dignaga also accepts reality as pure consciousness; but consciousness is momentary—not permanent.

The only fundamental and most vital difference between Svatantra Vijnanavada and early Vijnanavada is that the former school degrades the permanent consciousness of Vijnanavada to momentary vijnanas. It is the unique momentary point instead of consciousness. They criticized the notion of permanent consciousness which is accepted by the early Vijnanavada.
The Yogacara tries to show that the object is the creation or projection of consciousness. For them, the world is a manifestation of consciousness. They deny the independent existence of the world apart from consciousness. The self-evolving thought or cosmic mind transforms itself, on one hand, into different subjects, and on the other hand, into different objects. Our knowledge of the external world is the self-consistence of consciousness. This will be discussed in details in later chapter.

From the above discussion, it seems that the Yogacara School has been influenced by the Sautrantika and the Madhyamika. It has developed its idealism by the criticism of the Sautrantika while its absolutism has come from the Madhyamika. Yogacara emerges as a natural sequence of the attempt to remove the incompleteness of Sautrantika logic.
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