CHAPTER-V

EXTERNAL WORLD IN VIJNANAVADA
"All dharmas, except consciousness are unreal. Consciousness only is the established truth preached by the Buddha. All the three worlds (nama, rupa and arupa, i.e., of mater, form and no form) are the result of discrimination (vikalpa) or thought relations. No external object exists in reality. All that is, is consciousness"

Lankavatara Sutra, pp-186-158
Vijnanavada belongs to Mahayana Buddhism and is an idealistic school. From the very outset Buddhism had been subjectivistic and critical. "A content is said to be subjective when it is merely in thought and has no grounding in external reality." This system is called Yogacara, because its followers emphasise the important of yoga for the realization of pure knowledge (Bodhi). They are also known as Vijnanavadins, because they admit only the reality of Vijnana or consciousness. Yoga is the way of attainment to the absolute truth and Vijnana is the reality of this world. "In the first instance, it is called Vijnanavada, because it advocates the practice of yoga as the way of attainment to the absolute Truth, and in the second instance because it teaches the doctrine of ideation only." It seems that Yogacara brings out the practical side of the philosophy, while Vijnanavada brings out its speculative features or metaphysics.

It is generally believed that Asanga or Aryasanga was the founder of this school. But, it is accepted that Maitreyanatha was the real founder of this school. According to Buston, the works of Maitreya are five, viz. (1) Mahaynanautra-lankara (2) Madhyantavibhanga (3) Dharmadharmata-vighanga, (4) Uttaratantra and (5) Abhisamayalankara. "Asvaghosa, the author of Buddhacarita, was one of the principal actors who practically initiated the great spiritual and intellectual movement of Mahayana in India." This work is one of the foundations of the Mahayana Buddhism. It anticipates both the Madhyamika and the Yogacara system.
Lankavatara Sutra is the main text of Yogacara Idealism. This text contains mature idealistic teaching. It teaches the sole reality of consciousness and denies the reality of the external world. "Nothing definite can be said about the date of the Lankavatara Sutra. It was first translated into Chinese about A.D. 430, and again in A.D. 443, but it was then already a composite work and it may have existed much earlier in a simpler form." The main portion of Chapter-II and VII is entirely philosophical in context and treats the whole systems of the Buddhist doctrine, mainly from the standpoint of the Vijnanavada.

In the history of Buddhism, the Yogacara school is divided into the ancient one, or the followers of Aryasanga and the new one, or the followers of Dignaga. The first establishes the idealistic view on new interpretation of the old Abhidharma. Aryasanga himself composed a Mahayanistic Abhidharma and he increased the number of elements from 75 to 100. The Alayavijnana is here a new element. In the system of Dignaga the old Abhidharma is forsaken replaced by logic and epistemology. Dignaga reforms the Brahmanical logic (Nyaya) and adapts it to the Buddhist ideas. The most important work of Asanga is the 'Yogacara- bhumisastra.' But Winternitz thinks that it is the work of Maitreyanatha and not of Asanga. Besides this work, Buston mentions some important works of Asanga viz. – (1) the Abhidharmasamuccaya and (2) Mahayana Samgraha. Asanga was the first thinker who introduced Tantrism in Buddhism. Taranatha says that Tantrism was handed down by secret means from the time of Asanga until the time of Dharmakirti. G Tucci is of the opinion that the Tantras go back to the times of Asanga (4th Century A.D.).
Vasubandhu is the central figure in Yogacara system and one of the most prominent figures in the entire history of Buddhism. In later part of his life, he was converted to Mahayana and wrote a large number of commentaries on Mahayanasutras, on the Saddharmapundarika, the Mahaparinirvanasutra and the Vajracchedika Prajnaparamita. Buston mentions eight treatises by Vasubandhu on idealism. The first and the most important of these are the two classical treatises, the Vimsatika and Trinsika, comprising together the great Vijnaptimatratasiddhi. This is the complete and definite text on the Yogacara idealism. Sthiramati Dignaga who lived in 5th century A.D., was the great commentator of Yogacara Idealism. He wrote the most famous commentary on Yogacara Idealism viz. Trimsikavijnaptibhasya (commentaries on Vasubandhu's eight treatises on Idealism) Kasyapaparivarta or Ratnakuta. After Dignaga, the creative idealistic phase of the Yogacara system comes virtually close. Thinkers are not any more interested in idealistic metaphysics. Therefore, their interest shifts from metaphysics to logic and epistemology. "Idealism was maintained from the standpoint of ultimate reality but, in order to supply a stable basis for the logic of empirical reality the Sautrantika conception of a thing in itself was revived." On the one side, they maintain the earlier Yogacara concept of Idealism and on the other side they accept the Sautrantika concept of things in themselves for the purpose of logical elaboration of the external world. This formation of Sautrantika Yogacara results in a new hybrid school, which is called Vijnanavada. "The Vijnanavada school has developed its Idealism by the
criticism of the Sautrantika while its absolutism has come from the Madhyamika.\textsuperscript{6}

Dignaga and Dharmakirti are great Indian logicians and eminent philosophers of Vijnanavada school. According to them, the ultimate reality of this world is consciousness alone, but for the purpose of logical elaboration they accept the existence of the external world. The first phase of pure idealism, represented by Maitreya, Asanga, Vasubandhu and Sthiramati can be called the Yogacara school and the second phase of idealism cum critical realism, represented by Dignaga and Dharmakirti, can be called the Vijnanavada school. The whole development of this school is known as 'the Yogacara Vijnanavada'.

Vaibhasika and Sautrantika are natural dualists, because they maintain the independent existence of matter and mind. In their view matter and mind both are real because of their elements or dharmas. But in epistemology, Sautrantikas admit that in the process of knowledge we perceive directly only the cognition and external things are inferred through the cognitions of these corresponding things. Through this concept of Sautrantika, Yogacara establishes its idealism. “The Yogacara takes his cue from the Sautrantika, which thus plays a pivotal transitional role.”\textsuperscript{7} Secondly, Vaibhasika and Sautrantika admit the idea of pure consciousness which arises in support of the subjective and objective dharma. This pure consciousness is the inner theme of Yogacara idealism and they call it Alayayavijnana. In modern times this philosophy is defined as vast
philosophy which is self-consistent and cannot be defined by language. “Yogacara is not only merely idealism but also absolutism.”

According to Yogacara, the world is the manifestation of our consciousness. Therefore, they deny the independent existence of the world apart from the consciousness. All things are the construction of our mind. Vaibhasika and Sautrantika analyse the world through the co-operation of 75 kinds of mental and material elements. Yogacara also admits 100 such kinds of elements. But according to Yogacara all elements are mental. “There is no other dharma apart from the Mana dharma or mental dharma. Vaibhasika and Sautrantika argue mental and material dharma, but Yogacara reduces all dharma into the Minds.”

The external objects are our thought construction. Therefore, there is no independent existence of external objects apart from its cognition. “All dharma, subjective and objective are fruitions (vipaka) of the seeds or dispositions (vasana) conserved in the Alayavijnana. One pure consciousness is the ground of the all conserving mind.” Consciousness is the sole reality and external world is the manifestation of consciousness. No object can ever be experienced apart from consciousness. Therefore, consciousness and its objects are one and identical. The empirical world reduces itself to ideas and it is the vibration of consciousness. “The self evolving thought, or cosmic mind transforms itself, on the one hand, into different subjects and into different objects on the other.”

Our knowledge of external world is the self-consistence of consciousness. The object of knowledge is not external object, it is only cognition and it is the manifestation of our consciousness. “The thinking being becomes conscious of
its existence and identity of the subject only by knowing objects. The whole systems of facts are placed within the individual consciousness. The Alaya, with its internal duality of subject and object, becomes itself a little world. 

Realists hold that external objects produce sensation, sense organs receive this sensation according to their own forms and consciousness is aware of that particular object. Sense data are not our mental creations. They are objective and basic instructions of our knowledge. Consciousness never manifests round or blue object, unless we perceive the blue and round objects. Therefore, the objective reality of sense data proves the independent existence of external objects. Yogacara denies realist view about the external world. For them, what we call sense data round or blue are our mental creations and modifications of consciousness. Blue or round is not inherent in external objects. On the objective side, blue or round is meaningless. Objects are neither blue nor round, cognition manifest itself as a blue or round object. "Consciousness is creative and its creativity is governed by the illusory idea of the object. Reality is to be viewed as a will or an idea. This creativity is manifested at different levels of consciousness." Therefore, sense data are mental creations and purely subjective. "Cognition cannot create an object. Nor can object be produced by the cognition, which immediately precedes it. Cognition apprehends itself. It cannot apprehend anything other than itself. Therefore, the cognition of blue also must be of nature of self-awareness (atmasamvedena). The existence of external object is a needless assumption." Neither the mind nor the sense organs perceive the external objects. They are nothing but cognition. The Buddha has
said that there must be non-difference between the blue and its cognition, because they are always found together. External objects are the self-creation of thought and thought is the activity of our consciousness. According to Vasubandhu, consciousness is the only reality and external objects are the creation of consciousness. Citta, manas, vijnana are nothing; but the synonyms of consciousness. The external world is only a continuation of consciousness with the added idea of externality. The difference between internality and externality is only verbal, and not real.

According to realists, knowledge is based on real relation between the cognition and its objects. In the process of knowledge there must be an agent, an object, an instrument and a process. This certain relation of knowledge proves the independent existence of the external world. Yogacara denies such distinction of subject and object, apprehender and apprehension in knowledge. The same cognition manifests as the subject and object in the process of knowledge. Therefore, the distinction between agent, object, instrument and result is unreal. It is mere convention. “The apprehending cognition (grahaka) and the apprehended object (grahya), subject and object are the forms of cognition which is one and self identical.” Therefore, there is no blue object apart from the consciousness of blue. The distinction between subject and object, apprehender and apprehension is only a mode of consciousness. “There is no distinction between subject and object in consciousness, it appears to be differentiated into subject and object owing to illusion. The duality of subject
and object is as illusory as the appearance of the double moon.\textsuperscript{16} The object of cognitions is self-consistence.

According to Dharmakirti, we never perceive or infer the external objects. What we perceive is only the sense data. Our mind receives sense data and analyses these data accordingly to their own forms. Neither the mind nor the sense organs perceive the external material objects. On the other hand, mind and sense organs are nothing but cognition. External objects appear and disappear into nothingness. We find only the cognition behind the external object. "The Yogacara holds that cognition is self-luminous, it manifests itself and it is self-aware. There is no real distinction of subject and object within it; it is not related to itself as subject and object. It is one and undivided. It is free from the distinction of subject and object."\textsuperscript{17} Feelings of pleasure and pain are the creations of our mind and all these are the modes of our consciousness. "The entire universe comprehending the threefold phenomena of the subjective, objective and the imaginary (fictitious) is mere ideation, the mere idea which appears as various in each individual according to the different chains of causation."\textsuperscript{18} Consciousness is formless, but it assumes the form of subject and objects. Therefore, the inner cognition of object and external objects are the forms of cognition. "The subject and the object are the two pillars upon which the phenomenal world depends. But actually these two pillars are the production of the mind. The mind exhibits itself in the form of store house of consciousness."\textsuperscript{19} Yogacara philosophers are clear in this position that the distinction between subject and object is illusory. Therefore, the external world
is not real. The appearance of the world is the self-consistence of cognition and all activities of our cognition is the modification of consciousness.

Yogacara asserts that the knowledge of the world which arises through perception or the five sense organs is not true knowledge of things. Therefore, the appearance of the world or the phenomena is not real. Our experience never produces the real nature of things. Therefore, the empirical world is not a real world. But in reality the world is manifestation of our consciousness. Thus, consciousness alone is real. For Vijnanavada the appearance of the world is the result of transcendental illusion. “The independence of the external object confronting consciousness is only apparent. The distinction naively made between the percept and its content is illusory.”

According to Vijnanavada, consciousness does not directly reveal the appearance of the external world but that it can perceive only its ideas. According to this hypothesis, consciousness is mediated by its own representations in its perception of objects. Here, there is not merely conscious on the one hand and the object on the other but in between these two we have a tertium quid, the image or ideas. “Objects are not immediately presented to consciousness but are represented indirectly through ‘ideas’ which are signs of their presence and character.” According to Vijnanavada, consciousness is the source as well as the result of itself. Dignaga says that we do not assume that the result of cognition differs from the act, because the supposed result is nothing, it is the image of the cognized object which is separated into an act and a content
For Buddhist idealist the cognition and the content of cognition are one and the same. Thus, the world is not real; its appearance is the manifestation of consciousness. It is found in Vijñānavāda that from the epistemological point of view the world is the manifestation of consciousness and from the transcendental point of view the world is illusory. "The phenomena that seem to originate, stay and be destroyed are construction of tamed imagination and the tathāta, or thatness is nothing but the turning away of this constructive activity or nature of the imagination (Vikalpa) tainted with the associations of beginningless root desires (Vasana)."\(^{22}\)

But the question is, if cognition is the source as well as the result of itself, is it not a contradiction to assume that one and the same undivided reality regarded as its cause as well as its effect? The same man cannot be his father as well as his son.

Buddhist idealist points out that the act and content of cognition are not really two different things. We impose two different aspects in one and the same reality. If a thing is looked at from two different standpoints, there occurs the difference. The same woman is mother, wife and daughter. But she is numerically one and the same person. The same applies to the process of cognition. But in reality act, content and instrument of cognition are not different from one another. According to Dignaga, the resulting content of our cognition is self-feeling. Dharmakīrti also says that there is no difference between the act and the content of knowledge. The same cognition becomes the content when it
co-ordinates with the mental image. Therefore, the world is known only through the cognition when our cognition co-ordinates with the mental image not with the external things. Yogacaras give the following reasons about the non-existence of the external world

External objects are changing constantly at every moment. Therefore, things are not permanent. If external objects apprehended by us are raised from the existence of external object then our cognition cognizes nothing. But, there is no certain object as a pen or blue outside the cognition. “The cognition “this is blue” is a pure error whereas the awareness “I am blue ‘is veridical. The difference between consciousness and its content is perceived due to the illusory cognition as in a unique and absolute moon.”23 There is no identity between cognition and external object, because cognition is the transformation of cosmic mind. According to Yogacara, the apprehended object does not arise from the existence, because the object, which is generated, has no permanence. The person ‘Ram’ changes constantly at every moment from childhood to youth and to old age. But we call him by the same name ‘Ram’ and it is due to our cognition. Cognition manifests in itself everything as ‘it is’ or ‘that is’.

Secondly, is the external object simple atom or a complex body? It cannot be whole because the aggregation of atoms and their relation between part and whole is unintelligible. Again the external object is not an aggregation of atoms, because atom is supersensible. But question is if composition of atoms
and part of atom is unintelligible, then how can we know the position or status of external objects? According to Yogacara, the way of knowing of the objects is an idea and ultimate source of idea is consciousness. "An atom cannot combine with other atoms either partially or entirely. It cannot combine partially because it is partless. It cannot combine entirely because total interpenetrating of atoms cannot produce grossness in the aggregate of atoms. Therefore, external object does not exist." Yogacara neither accepts the existence of four kinds of atoms as to the ultimate reality of the external objects nor directly denies the unreality of atoms. Their position is that the aggregation of atoms and relation between parts and whole is unintelligible and concludes that the elements are not external and material. All elements are mental. Therefore, external objects have the existence only in our mind. According to Yogacara, we are conscious of things and ideas together. Therefore, ideas and things are not different. All the properties we know i.e length, size, taste etc, are subjective.

Santaraksita and Kamalasila give the following reasons for the non-existence of external objects — (1) the essential characteristic of cognition is that the cognition is self-awareness. It is the nature of consciousness, which is self-luminous. Consciousness is self-awareness (svasamvedana). Cognition reveals itself without existence of external objects. Cognition is the self-revealing of consciousness. According to Vasubandhu, consciousness is the only reality and external objects are the self-creation of consciousness. Therefore, cognition does not apprehend the external objects. "There is neither a permanent
self nor an external object. There is only a series of self-aware cognition (Vijnana).”

Cognition is mental and conscious but objects are material and unconscious. Whenever cognition is produced it manifests itself. It is non-material and self-manifest. Therefore, it can never apprehend an external object. There is no identity between consciousness and objects. It cannot generate an object. Nor objects can generate cognition. Hence cognition can never apprehend an external object of actually there is an ‘external’ object.

Cognition is formless. Formless cognitions cannot be external object. Therefore, cognition cannot come into the connection with the external objects. “The cognition is devoid of the form of the object.”

According to Realists, ideas are the real copies of the external objects. Cognition or idea arises from the object. But according to Yogacara philosophers, so-called external object is the creation of our consciousness. Santaraksita says that the cognition of blue is non-distinct from the cognition of the cognition of blue.

All the arguments of the Yogacara Buddhist show that they are subjective idealists. External objects are self-subsistent cognition. Kumarila calls it niralambanavada because it recognizes the reality of self-subsistent cognitions without any basis in external object. According to Dharmakirti, one who does not perceive cognitions cannot perceive their objects. In subjective point of view
consciousness is the cosmic mind, but in objective point of view consciousness or cosmic mind takes the forms of object, which is self-consistence. "All dharma or subjective and objective phenomena exists in a potential state in the Alayavijnana, it exists in them as their cause. It is the cause of the world. Alayavijnana and the world are intimately related to each other as cause and effect. Sthiramati says that it is called Alaya because it contains the seeds or potentialities of all dharma which produces defilement's, or because all dharma of the world are the effects of the seed potentialities preserved in it, or because it exists in all dharma in the form of a cause. "All dharmas (qualities and substance) are but imaginary construction of ignorant minds. There is no movement in the so-called external world as we suppose, for it does not exist. We construct it ourselves and then are ourselves deluded that it exits by itself." External objects are the transformation of consciousness. If there is no consciousness, there is no external world. There is a real transformation of the self-evolving thought into the individual subjects on the one hand and the objective world of perceived objects on the other. "The self becomes known through consciousness. And so there is no difference between the knowable self and its consciousness." All the subjective and objective dharma is conserved in Alayavijnana. Pure consciousness is the ground of the all-conserving mind. The sense data like form, color, length are the transformation of our cosmic mind. Yogacara believes in the transformations of consciousness into mental and physical world. "Alaya receives impressions and develops the germs deposited in it by karma or experience and is continually active."
Asanga distinguishes in the three grades of reality viz, (1) Parikalpitasatta or imaginary reality, (2) Paratantrasatta, relative contingent or dependent reality and (3) Absolute reality. ‘What we perceive’ is an illusion, which consists in false ascription of an idea of imagination to an object produced by its cause and condition. Empirical knowledge is the knowledge of objects produced by their causes and conditions. Empirical knowledge is relative. It is ordinary and pragmatic knowledge. Dependent reality has three characteristics based on the law of relativity. The cognized objects are of three kinds — (1) An apparent world, (2) An apparent object and (3) An apparent body. Empirical knowledge is relative conventional practical intellectual and discriminative. In empirical knowledge there is no distinction of subject and object. Empirical knowledge apprehends phenomena produced by other phenomena. There is distinction of cognizer and cognized in paratantra knowledge, though the distinction is unreal and imaginary.

Absolute reality is beyond both empirical existence, and non-existence. It is free from empirical categories. “It is neither existence nor non-existence, neither such nor non-such, neither generated nor destroyed, neither liable to increase nor liable to decrease, neither purified nor defiled; it is absolute reality.” Absolute knowledge is the knowledge of one, non-dual, ontological reality. It is grasped by non-discriminative knowledge. When the rope is known in its ultimate nature as suchness its knowledge is absolute. According to Vasubondhu, the absolute reality is pure consciousness, which is eternal. “It is unchangeable, immutable and eternal. It is supreme reality, the essence of all
beings. It is uncaused, unconditional, necessary and absolute. It is the essence of the whole universe.\textsuperscript{32} Absolute knowledge is supra-intellectual intuition. It is non-discriminative. The Alaya is not static: it is compared to a mighty stream. According to Asanga citta is the ultimate source of all things. It has two aspects, phenomenal and noumenal. The former is changeable whereas the latter is unchangeable. “The alaya is the repository the carrier of all vasanas, the potential state of things. The other Vijnanas are connected with it as its consequence. The other two strata not only drew upon the Alaya, but also replenish it.”\textsuperscript{33} Alaya is the ground, and essence of all things. It is the noumenon; it is inseparable from the empirical world of phenomena which are its manifestations. Phenomena cannot exist apart from their noumenon or suchness. Alaya has the independent existence in our mind. It alone exists. It is the foundation and background of all feelings, ideas and common to all minds. All things in the universe are in it, particular phenomena are manifestations of the Alaya according to the number and nature of the conditions. Dharmapala says that “Suchness is a provisional name, that it is said to have a positive nature (Bhava) because it may be mistaken for nothingness, and said that it may be called Sunyata or emptiness. But it is called reality, since it is neither illusory nor subjective.”\textsuperscript{34} According to Vasubandhu, all appearances subjective and objective are transformation of the eternal principle of pure consciousness. It is the foundation of cosmic consciousness and individual consciousness. Yogacara concept of self-identical, eternal, pure consciousness is very similar to the Vedantic conception of Brahman. “There is a real transformation of the self-
evolving thought into the individual subjects on the one hand, and the objective world of perceived objects on the other. The individual subject seems to perceive an objective world external to him though there is no distinctions between the subjective and the objective, both being equally self-evolutions of thought."\(^{35}\)

Vasubandhu regards subjects and objects as real transformation of the self-evolving thought. But Asvaghosa regards them as illusory transformations of consciousness through ignorance. There is no external object, but there is only the transformation of consciousness in the form of knowable objects. The nature of the pure transcendent consciousness is indeterminable and unthinkable. "The Alayavijnana is only a hypothetical state which may be regarded as much an imposition on the pure consciousness and as false as are the ordinary experiences."\(^{36}\)

Realists assert that the appearance of the external world is real because there is identity of objects with the image of consciousness. This theory of realists is known as the theory of co-ordination.

Yogacara philosophers deny the realists co-ordination theory and they establish their biotic theory. For them, the reality of the external world is nothing but a construction of mind. If there is no object at all there is nothing to compare with. Hence the co-ordination theory is not possible. Therefore, the world is not real, but our internal biotic force produces ideas of the external world. For idealist philosophers the biotic force is the principle of the evolution of our life. Through this force the phenomenal world of our experience evolves
out of the transcendental reality. "The innumerable phenomena are lying
dormant in the store house consciousness in the form of ideas. When
circumstances become favourable, when the 'biotic force is ripe, the phenomenal
world appears with all its varieties and vividness."\textsuperscript{37} But \textit{when man wakes up from his perpetual slumber of ignorance, when he realises the four noble truths, when he gets the enlightenment, when he come to know that there is no soul, there are no objects, then for him there is no external world.}

Vijinanavadins analyse the world through the concept of vasana.
"The term vasana is derived from the root 'vas' which means 'to live' and also
from the root 'vas' which means to perfume."\textsuperscript{38} The Buddhist idealists take it in the first sense. In Abhidharmakosa, it is often identified with the word 'bhavana' which propels the evolution of our life. Buddhist concept of vasana can be compared with the principle of 'élan-vital' of Bergson, which is developed in the creative evolution as a principle to explain the origin and development of the phenomenal world.

There are two kinds of vasana viz, (1) Anubhava-vasana and (2) Avidya vasana or Anadi-vasana. The term Anubhava vasana implies the reality of the external world. In this sense Sautrantikas accepts the existence of the external world as real. "The reality is particular unique, extreme point instant and beyond all our conceptions."\textsuperscript{39} For them, we know the existence of the external world only through our internal images which correspond to the external objects.
But in Anadivasana, when we ponder over the reality of this world where we live and walk worship and fight, it seems to be vanishing. "The more we ponder the more it withers away." According to Vijnanavadians, we cannot know anything beyond ideas and how these ideas are related to the external world cannot be explained. The world beyond our ideas is meaningless. We know the world only through ideas. Therefore, the appearance of the world is only our ideal formation and idea alone is real.

Thus, it can be said that there is an internal force which creates the illusion of the external world. This force may be called the force of transcendental illusion. This force can be compared with the Maya Sakti of Brahman of Vedanta. The difference between them is that in force, there is no substratum like Brahman of Vedanta. "According to Asanga, no activity has ever resulted from co-ordination between images and the extreme particulars. All activity is due to transcendental illusion." According to Vijnanavada, the differences of subject and object, apprehender and apprehended, cognition and being cognized are made from empirical point of view. But from the transcendental point of view there is no such difference in cognition or consciousness. For example, when a man is suffering from jaundice he sees the white conch shell as yellow. In the same way we are suffering from transcendental illusion. Therefore, we see the absolute reality as the external world.
According to Vijnanavada, the entire world is an illusion. It is a reflex or a thought image "Santaraksita maintains that illusions are sense born. They appear only when the sense organ is there and cease when the sense organ is hurt or annihilated." Therefore, nothing is real except consciousness. Just as a man with defective sense organs sees the vision of double moon, in the same way the ignorant man who has not attained to the absolute wisdom sees the vision of diverse colours and forms and acts on the presumption that they are real. But all these various objects are illusory. All these are the projections of the mind and appear as something external. They are mere ideas. The diversity of things and the plurality of persons, in short the universe and its inhabitants are the creation of the mind. Thus, the whole phenomenal world is illusory and it has no independent existence. The projections of the mind are themselves apprehended as real.

According to Vijnanavada, there are two kinds of illusions, viz. 1) Empirical illusion and 2) Transcendental illusion. From the empirical point of view the 'moving' tree is an illusion. The vision of mirage, the vision of double moon etc are nothing but illusions. In the same way, the objects of dream which satisfy our desires and give us pleasure are also illusions.

But from transcendental point of view the visions of 'standing' tree, vision of real water, vision of rope or the single moon all are also illusions. "Just as the objects of dream satisfy our desires of food and drink, so long as we are not awakened, in the same way the objects of the visible world also satisfy
our desires and are real so long as we are not awakened, in the same way the
objects of dream satisfy our desires and are real as long as we are sleeping under
the veil of ignorance."\textsuperscript{42} We cannot apprehend reality in its true nature.
Therefore, our knowledge is empirically true but transcendentally false. From
the metaphysical point of view, the empirical world is unreal, but the world is
transcendentally real. "The entire world, all the subject object relations the
feeling of doer and of doing of apprehender and of being apprehended are
nothing beyond non-dual consciousness. The internal consciousness itself
appears as if it is something external."\textsuperscript{43}

According to Vijnanavadin\textn, every object is produced by an
aggregate of four causes – (1) so-operating causes (2) dominant cause (3)
Immediate cause and (4) external cause. "The object which is produced by an
aggregate of four causes is real and that which is not produced by any or all of
them is unreal. The object of illusion has none of these causes. Hence it is
unreal."\textsuperscript{44} The Yogacaras hold that illusory cognition is produced by vasana
which arises in the beginningless series of transcendental illusion. This
beginningless series of impressions is purely subjective. Therefore, illusion is
not produced by an external object in contact with sense organs. It is a subjective
notion which is a projection of our mind. Thus, our consciousness appears in the
dual form of subject and object due to transcendental illusion.

Now, a question arises if external world is not real then what is the
meaning of perception? "Dignaga defines perception as that which being free
from conception is unconnected with name, genus etc. It is the cognition of the form of things which through the imposed identify of the qualifying and denotative adjuncts appears as non determinate in connection with each of the sense organs."\textsuperscript{45} For the Buddhist idealist, the categories of universals, action, quality and substance do not exist. They are thought constructions and do not posses objective reality. The feeling of pleasure and pain joy and sorrow is a consciousness of consciousness, a self-consciousness. Dignaga analyses it into the three moment’s viz. sensation, mental sensation and self-cognition. In the first moments of our perceptual process there is a simple reflex, which is in response to a particular and indefinite object. In the next moment a mental feeling arises which is invoked by the simple reflex to the effect that there is something in our field of perception. When these two moments of pure sensation and mental sensation cease to function we feel in the third moment a desire to achieve or avoid the object. This feeling of desire or aversion for the object is called self-cognition that the feeling of desire or aversion does not depend upon the external object. So, it cannot be described in terms of subject object relations. According to Vijnanavadins, self-cognition can be realized only through the yogic perception.

Vijnanavadins admit that reality is transcendental. "It is existence as such. It is the basis of all our knowledge. It is crystal clear and pure like gold. It is self-luminous and falls short of all descriptions. It is beyond the triad of knower known and knowledge."\textsuperscript{46} It is the substance of all things and devoid of all attributes. The yogins realize this high knowledge through the practice of
meditation. In the high knowledge of reality there is no existence of external world apart from the consciousness.

Now, a question arises if the world is not real, what is the object of our perception? According to Dignaga, the object of perception is an extreme particular. It is beyond our speculative thought. The categories of understanding that is name, universal, action etc do not characterize it. They are applicable only to the generalized images of inferential knowledge. "It is beyond space and time. It represents a single moment. It is similar to nothing. It is unique; it is the reality which can be apprehended only through the senses. It is the ultimate reality and is the cause of our imagination. It is the basis of all our empirical knowledge."47 Dharmakirti says that in a perceptual process the cogniser apprehends the vision of reality. It is essence in itself and has no things of imagination or description. "Particular is the object of cognition which produces a vivid flash of consciousness when it is near and a dim one when it is at a distance."48 This particular is not in need of a universal to denote its substance.

It is found that Vijnanavada directly denies the existence of the external world. What we perceive, is not external object, it is the extreme particulars the essence of thing. This essence is not presented to the senses. It is directly intuited by consciousness. The world appears as real due to the transcendental illusion. Therefore, the world is the creation of our consciousness. All things are the results of cosmic evolutions of the consciousness. In Vijnanavada, it is known as biotic force. "To say that everything mental or non-
mental is unreal is suicidal. The reality of the mind should at least be admitted in order to make correct thinking possible." According to Vijnanavadians, only that particular is the object of perception which is capable of producing an effect. Therefore, only that thing is real if it is capable to produce an effect. The particular, alone is efficient to produce the desired effect. Therefore, particular alone is existence and it is real. Vijnanavadians hold that the ideas of space, time and causality are the constructions of mind, but unique particulars being and their substratum are real.

Thus, for Vijnanavadians only efficient cause is the cause of our sensation. Buddhist Idealists call it image. Judgments refer to this image. Therefore, judgment does not refer to any objective reality of things. "All objects of judgment are ideally real and empirically unreal. They are technically called paratantra or phenomenal and differ from fictitious objects and absolutely real objects." The object of judgment is a logical and psychological result of sensation. Asanga and Vasubandhu use the term Vijnana for both the sense of sensation and conception.

Vijnanavadians hold that external things have no identity; there is only a continuity of unbreakable consciousness. Objects are not identical with their names, because names are not contained in the object. "They are neither appended to them nor inherent in them, nor produced by them." Therefore, names are not reality. They are logical constructions and belong to the faculty of
conception. Thus, reality is essence in-itself. It is extreme particular. It is momentary and beyond the human language.

The Vijnanavadians also point out that categories are nothing but mere names. They do not designate any object which really exists. Therefore, the world is the construction of our mind. So, categories have no reality. According to Dignaga, categories are mere thought construction. He denies the category of universal, because it is the imagination of our intellect. Universal is not capable of producing any effect. Therefore, it is not real. Since it is not real, it can not produce any sensation. Therefore, universals are mental construction. They do not represent any external reality. They owe their origin to the cognitive capacity of our reason. Dharmakirti also says that universals are construction of our imagination. Their reality is the result of illusion like universals, identity negation, relations etc all mental categories are our thought construction. Therefore, they do not denote any objective reality of things.

Dignaga says, “All relations are of the form of substantivite and the attributive and are apriori. They are rules or principles of understanding which are constructed by our imagination for the sake of explaining the connection between two empirical phenomena.” Therefore, all relations are contingent and have no self existence. Dharmakirti also says that relation means ‘dependence’ interpenetration, relativity and causality. Relation and its relata subsist only in the mind. Therefore, in the sense of ultimate reality relations do not really exist. Thus, all relations are ideal. The ultimate reality (extreme particular) cannot be
related. All relations are creation of our imagination. Thus, from the ultimate point of view there can be no relation between things which are identical by nature.

Thus, it is found in Vijnanavada that all our mental categories are our thought construction. Therefore, they have no separate reality. Thus, the entire world is the creation of our own mind. On the other hand, nothing exists outside the mind or consciousness. What is visible is nothing but mind or consciousness. So, external objects are nothing but appearances. They are like the floating hair in the atmosphere or like the vision of the double moon. Our ideas are themselves taken to be external reality owing to transcendental illusion. We take our own ideas as really existing in the form of external objects. "The ideas regarding the reality of the objects are accumulated from the beginningless part in mind in the form of impressions and we take these impressions as having objective reality owing to our ignorance." Our attachment to these so-called external objects is the root cause of all our sorrows and sufferings. Thus, external world is the creation of our mind only the mind is absolutely real.

Yogacara believes the grade of consciousness. They assert this gradation only to account for the empirical distinctions. "The Alaya is the Ocean; Pravrtti- Vijnanas are the waves just as the waves stirred by the wind dance on the Ocean similarly, the manifold individual Vijnanas stirred by the wind of objects which are the creation of Ignorance, dance on the Alaya." The waves are neither identical with nor different from the Ocean. Similarly, the Pravrtti- Vijnanas are neither identical nor different from the absolute citta or the
Alaya. They accept the three kinds of Vijnanas viz, (1) Alayavijnana (2) Monovijnana and (3) Pravrtti Vijnana. The evolutes of Vijnana are infinite and these are the three stages of its evolution. "Vijnana diversifies itself and gives rise to the whole phenomena of empirical existence, and these three Vijnana represent different stages of this diversifying process." The difference between them is only that of the degree of self determination. Again none of these three evolutes has an absolute existence of its own. So, none of these three is ultimate. The evolution itself is not ultimate though it is a real process. It is caused by an illusory idea. The essence of Vijnana is creativity. Therefore, these three Vijnanas are creative. "Individual Pravrttivijnanas are manifestation of the Alaya. They are neither identical with nor different form the Alaya, just as a lump of earth is neither identical with nor different from the atoms of earth or a gold ornament from gold. If they were identical with the Alaya then their cessation would also mean the cessation of the Alaya; and if they were different from the Alaya then they would not arise out of it."

The first and most fundamental of these three is the Alaya Vijnana. "It is called Alaya, (visual sachness) because it is the place or the receptor of the seeds or impressions (vasana) of any karma. All dharma ensue from it as its effects or evolutes." Therefore, it is called 'Sarvabijaka (being the cause of every thing empirical). It is also called vipaka, because any kinds of karma done by the individual in any sphere of existence leave its trace in the Alaya. All mental phenomena like individual intellectual are the production and phase of Alaya. Alaya is the root cause of the false belief in the existence of the world.
All things in the universe are in it. The Alaya with its internal duality of subject and object becomes itself a little world. “The plurality of the waves the manifestation of the Ocean; the manifold Vijnanas are the manifestation of the Alaya. Ultimately there is not the slightest difference between the individual Vijnanas and Alaya. It is only by the discoursive intellect that the Alaya is compared to the ocean and the Vijnanas to the waves. Ultimately the Alaya is indescribable and transcends all categories of the intellect.”

According to Vijnanavada the Alaya serves two functions in the cosmic process. First, it recaptures the impressions of past Vijnanas. Secondly, it gives rise to further Vijnanas by maturing those impressions. The whole order is cyclic therefore the cosmic evolution has two aspects; first, the replenishment of vasanas in the Alaya, and secondly, the fructification of these into further Vijnanas, which again lay their own seeds in the Alaya and so on.

The accumulation of seeds of Vijnana in Alaya is called the hetuparinama and their actualization is called phala-parinama. Both are parinama because Alaya incessantly undergoes change. Therefore, the Alaya is momentary. Since the Alaya is momentary, the world manifestation of Alaya is also momentary. “Hetuparinama is the development and maturity is the vasana’s in the Alaya and phala-parinama is the emerging into existence of their respective effects.”

Vasana means the motive force and this force governs the evolutionary process of the world. This philosophical position of Vijnanavada
can be compared with the Brahman parinamavada of Vedanta and the motive force of Vijnanavada can be compared with the Maya Sakti of Brahman. But, unlike Brahman, the unchangeable reality of Vedanta the Alaya of Vijnanavada is not permanent. Since the Alaya is momentary, the world manifestation of Alaya is also momentary. Secondly, the evolution of the world of the Vijnanavada is cosmic but in Vedanta the evolution of the world is transcendental. Both have the same view that the world is the transformation (parinama) of reality but there is vast difference between them about the process of evolution and concept of reality. The root cause of difference between them is that one is the philosophy of dynamic reality and another is the philosophy of static reality.

Now, from the discussion of Yogacara school it can be concluded that the world is the result of evolution of the consciousness. The force of evolution is called biotic force by Vijnanavadians and it is the principle of cosmic evolution. Therefore, the world is not real. We perceive the world as real existence due to the transcendental illusion. We are suffering from the transcendental illusion and we perceive it as real. All our categories of understanding are thought constructions. Therefore, they do not denote any objective reality of things. All these categories are the projection of our mind. The object of perception is not external object, it is the extreme particular. It is the essence of things. It cannot be characterized by any category. It is nondual, one, undivided and purely mental. Thus, the world is the manifestation of Alaya and the Alaya is Absolute.
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