On Three-Treatise Master Jízàng's Refutation of the Ābhidharmikas and the East Asian Mādhyamika Analysis of Time

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Introduction –The Past and Present of East Asian Mādhyamika Thought

The Mādhyamaka teaching of emptiness – of *śūnyatā* – stands out as one of the doctrinal cornerstones of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Nāgārjuna's insight into the emptiness of conditioned arising「緣起性空」serves as one of the basic catechisms of the Mahāyāna Buddhist traditions.

But what does the teaching of *śūnyatā* offer for our understanding of the issues of temporality and transformation? Is ceaseless change an inescapable "fact", or is there an immutable, "permanent" reality beyond impermanence? Are the fluctuations of time and the transformation of entities that this engenders, merely illusions which veil a broader, immutable Reality? Is time purely of illusive, delusory character, or does time also serve a positive role in Nāgārjuna's thought? Furthermore, what might this constructive function of time be in the context of Buddhist praxis?

These basic questions concerning the philosophical import of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikās* 《中論》 have continuously generated contenting readings of this seminal treatise, and have contributed to a well as a growing body of commentarial literature. In recent years scholars such as Jay Garfield and Jan Westerhoff have fruitfully probed the commentarial tradition associated with Nāgārjuna in the Indo-Tibetan canons/tradition. And yet, what contributions or useful points of reference might the East Asian tradition of Mādhyamaka thought offer for this broader discourse?

The issues of time and transformation unfold in the Mahāyana scriptures in the Chinese canon, whose verses often eulogize the Buddhas of the three times 三世諸佛. In embracing a cosmological worldview encompassing a multitude of Buddha-s and Bodhisattvas, the root texts of the East Asian canon, such as the *Lotus Sūtra,* develop an inter-referential approach to the Buddha's many avatars and manifestations throughout the past, present, and future. As taught by the *Lotus,* the critical reflection into the nature of the Buddha's past manifestations reveal them to be mere apparitions, specters of the Buddha's previous actions and past lives, and yet all pointing towards the eventual prospect of the Buddha's final and perfect awakening. Likewise, the final enlightenment of the Buddha harkens back to his past actions and identities. Each of the scenarios and parables of the *Lotus* is interwoven into the larger narrative of transformation. The reflective awareness into the broader dynamic of the Buddha's transformation, implicates all sentient beings, whom, as the *Lotus* proclaims, in turn receive the assurance (*vyākaraṇa* 授記) of their eventual becoming a Buddha. Such vatic announcements are part and parcel of the "prophetic" genre of the later chapters of the *Lotus Sūtra* such as the "Chapter on Peaceful Practices"〈安樂行品〉. In accordance with the *Sūtra*'s teaching, the "Dharma-body" (*dharmakāya* 法身) of the Buddha, universally pervades the three times 三世.

It is the potentiality for critical reflection into the issue of temporality -- inherent within the *Lotus* and the Mahāyāna sūtra-s -- that informs the Chinese Buddhists' critical appropriation and interpretation of the

śāstra tradition. Indeed, the Sūtra texts – such as Kumārājīva's translation of the *Lotus* – afforded Master Jízàng 嘉祥吉藏大師 (549-623 C.E.) and other renowned Buddhist scholiasts with a framework for critical reflection into the overwhelming, and seemingly contradictory teachings of the *śāstra* literature. On the other hand, it the very ambiguity of the *Lotus* and other *sūtras*, that offered a fertile ground for fruitful probing into the often terse and opaque passages of the *śāstra*-s. The examination of the contents of the *śāstra*-commentaries of the 6th and 7th centuries, thus reveals a mutual enhancement between sūtras and *śāstra*-s, each of which serves to augment the other as a source of doctrinal authority and to validate its philosophical and religious claims.

It is for good reason that the modern Mādhyamika Master Yìnshùn often speaks of the *Zhōnglùn* as the "root text"「根本中論」.[1] It would be difficult to overstate the importance this treatise across the variegated traditions of East Asian Buddhism, given its status as the "root text", *par excellence*, of the Mādhyamaka teaching.

And yet, this pervasive context of inter-referentiality that underlies the act/production of exegesis by the Chinese Masters on the *śāstra* literature, such as MMK, is too often overlooked. Indeed, the consideration of the Chinese commentarial tradition in its history sheds light upon a multi-faceted hermeneutical model, informed by both intra-textual and inter-textual dynamics.[2] Amidst the many received layers of *śāstra* interpretation, which elements are appropriated from the *sūtra* literature, which rejected, as well the understanding of any specific element of the text, are all informed by overlapping synchronic contexts. Likewise, the examination of the *Zhōnglùn* and its interpretation in history, likewise, implicates a diachronic context of gradual transmission and shifting intellectual trends vis-à-vis the emergence of new texts through time. Such as the relationship between successive Chinese translations of the the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, for instance, on the question of whether or not the *icchantika* 一闡提 possess the inherent seed of Enlightenment.

Rather than an appeal to any particular *sūtra* text as an inviolable source of doctrinal authority, in matters of interpretation, the Chinese Buddhist masters of the 6th and 7th centuries instead engaged in fruitful "hermeneutic circle" between the *śāstra*-s and the received *sūtra* literature:[3]Fascicle 5 of the *Treatise on the Profundities of the Mahāyāna*《大乘玄論・卷五》reads:

> The Sutra Master [Nāgārjuna] employs the Two Truths as a corrective, and the two cognitions [of *upāya* 權 and *prājña* 實] as ancillary [to the Two Truths]. Thus, the Sūtras take cognition as their capability, and the Two Truths as their object. The *śāstra*-s take the truth as their capability, and wisdom as their object. Thus, the capability of the *sūtra*-s serves as the object of the *śāstra*-s and the capability of the *śāstra*-s serves as the object of the *sūtra*-s; the object of the *sūtra*-s serves as the capability of the *śāstra*-s and the object of the *śāstra*-s serves as the capability of the *sūtra*-s. It is moreover so that the ancillary features of the *sūtra*-s provide the corrective for the *śāstras* and that the corrective for the *sūtra*-s furnishes the ancillary elements of the *śāstra*-s." 『論主以二諦為正，

[1] Master Yìnshùn 印順法師, *Zhōngguān jīnlùn*《中觀今論》(Taipei: Zhèngwén chūbǎnshè, 1992), p. 83.

[2] Robert M. Gimello, "Chih-yen 智儼 (602-668) and the Foundations of Huayan Buddhism," (Columbia University Dissertation, 1997), pp. 161-2.

[3] T45, no. 1853, p. 73, c04-7.

二智為傍。故經以智為能，以諦為所。故論以諦為能，以智為所。是則經能為論所，論能為經所。經所為論能，論所為經能；亦是經傍為論正，論傍為經正，經正為論傍。』

The edifice of Jizang's analysis of the Buddhist teachings is his notion of the "two wisdoms" 二慧 or "two cognitions"二智 of *upāya* 權 and *prājña* 實. The dynamic between these two key concepts serves to link and to reconcile the varied and often multivalent teachings of the *sūtras* and *śāstra*. In accordance with this hermeneutical framework, the sūtras take the Buddha's enlightened cognition or *prājña* as their point of departure, which in turn may be used to explicate the "truth" (*satya* 諦) of the *śāstra*-s as its object. Likewise, the *upāya* 權 or skillful means provide the point of departure for the *śāstra*-s, which serves to reveal the insights of the Mahāyāna *sūtras*. This notion of skillful means as inherent in the *śāstra* text is critical to Jízàng's reinvisioning of the Mahāyāna Two Truths as expedient "verbal teachings"教諦. Given this inherent capability of the *śāstra* text as a "corrective" 正 to the sometimes inconsistent teachings of the various *sūtras*, it is for good reason that Jízàng selects Nāgārjuna's *Zhōnglùn* as the doctrinal cornerstone of his exegetical system.

Thus, to the Chinese scholiasts such as Jízàng, the *Zhōnglùn* furnished a platform for religious engagement into the diversity of the Buddhist teachings. Furthermore, given its status as a text steeped in the Indian tradition of argumentation and debate, the *Zhōnglùn* further helped to formulate Chinese thinkers' critiques of rival textual traditions, and with reference to this root text, bolstered the rhetorical effectiveness of their polemics by appealing to authority of the Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna.

There is the sense in Jízàng's work that the *Zhōnglùn* text itself serves as the "comprehensive discourse" 通論[4] that subsumes the other two Mādhyamaka treatises in Chinese translation, the *Śata-śāstra* 《百論》and the *Twelve Gates Treatise*《十二門論》. Naturally, these two *śāstra*-s may perhaps be best viewed as in themselves "commentaries," or as broader explanations of the *Zhōnglùn* and its philosophical ramifications by Nāgārjuna and his Mādhyamika successor, the Bodhisattva Āryadeva 提婆菩薩.

As Jízàng points out, the Nāgārjuna's Two Truths are at best expedient teachings, operating at the level of provisionality and meant to refer back to the ineffable Middle Way. At the point when the Ultimate Truth is granted determinate as a "principle" it becomes the subtle object of attachment. It is due to this constant danger of reifying the Two Truths, that Jízàng articulates the Two Truths as a verbal teaching 約教, rather than as a determinate "principle"約理.[5]

This tension between contending models of the Two Truths reveals certain underlying hermeneutical concerns. The consideration of Chinese Mādhyamika studies in history reveals a "temporality" which unfolds through the evolution of understanding, thereby opening a window from which to observe the development of the exegetical endeavor. Critical to Jízàng's hermeneutical stance is his conception of the Two Truths as verbal

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[4] Fascicle 5 of the *Discourse on the Profundities of the Māhāyana* reads《大乘玄論·卷五》: "The *Zhōnglùn* gains its name from the teaching of the principle, in comprehensively discoursing on the Three Treatises."『《中論》從「教理」為稱，通論三論。』(T45, no. 1853, p. 71, a17)

[5] Whalen Lai has drawn our attention to this important distinction between Jízàng's interpretation of the Two Truths and that of the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* 成實師 Masters at the powerful Kāishàn monastery 開善寺 – see Prof. Lai's article, "Once More on the Two Truths: What Does Chi-tsang Mean by the Two Truths as 'Yüeh-chiao 約教'?" *Religious Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (Dec. 1983), pp. 505-521.

teachings which, according to the Chinese Mahāyāna teaching of skillful means, serve as didactic tools guiding all sentient beings to eventual emancipation. This notion is inherent in Nagārjuna's verses which state that "The various Buddhas speak the dharma on behalf of sentient beings in accordance with the Two Truths"「諸佛依二諦，為眾生說法」.[6]

The period of the Southern-Dynasties through the Suí and early-Táng witnessed an efflorescence of Mādhyamika studies. The large body of commentarial literature that emerged from the contentious intellectual terrain of this period, centered around the interpretation of Nāgārjuna's *Zhōnglùn* and its ramifications to such core doctrines as the Two Truths and the Buddha-nature.

In this paper I focus on Master Jízàng's嘉祥吉藏大師 (549-623 C.E.) monumental contribution to *Mādhyamika* studies, the *Commentary on the Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* (*Zhōngguānlùn shū*)《中觀論疏》, completed in 608 C.E. (hereafter, ZGLS). This understudied commentary provides a point of reference from which to investigate the intellectual underpinnings of the Three Treatise (*Sānlùn*) tradition of Chinese Buddhist exegesis. Through study of the *Zhōngguānlùn shū*, I seek to address certain theoretical implications of Jízàng's interpretation of Kumārajīva's鳩摩羅什 (343-413 C.E.) Chinese translation of the Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna's龍樹菩薩famous *śastra*.

Although recognized as the founder of a East Asian Buddhist lineage purportedly based upon an Indian predecessor, Jízàng diverged from his Indian contemporaries Candrakīrti月稱 (ca. 600-650 C.E.) and Bhavaviveka清辯 (ca. 500-578 C.E.) in his interpretation of the *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikās* (MMK). Given the authoritative status of the MMK as the catechism of the Mādhyamika doctrine, a closer look at Jízàng's commentary works promises to shed light upon the cross-cultural currents of intellectual and religious exchange that coalesce in the great scholastic traditions of medieval China.

Jízàng's commentary offers a vantage point from which to explore the diverse and variegated intellectual interactions between Indian and Chinese Buddhists in the early 7th century. The contents of Jízàng's considerable corpus pose important questions for the study of Buddhist doctrinal history. What conclusions can we draw as to Jízàng's understanding of Abhidharma thought, based upon his selection and usage of the literature available in Chinese translation at the time? How did Jízàng's reading of the Sarvāstivada tradition both reflect upon and inform his exegesis on the MMK? Although Jízàng was cognizant of Nāgārjuna's implicit criticisms of the Ābhidharmika-s in the MMK, Jízàng seems to have been wholly unaware of the Northern-Wèi period Chinese translation of the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*《迴諍論》, the cornerstone of Nāgārjuna's critique of Ābhidharmika epistemology (including their theories of *pramāṇa*). And yet, Jízàng's commentary on the *Zhōnglùn* preserves a wealth of information concerning Indian philosophical debates and offers an exceedingly detailed and trenchant critique of the Sarvāstivādin theory that "real factors exist throughout the three periods of time"「三世實有」.The ardently "anti-realist" cast of Jízàng's argument would rest well with even the most doctrinaire of Indian Madhyāmika-s. Given that, following Jízàng, the complex "realist" ontology of the Sarvāstivadins was largely discredited within the "mainstream" traditions of Chinese Buddhism, the examination of Jízàng's arguments against the Sarvāstivadins goes far to reveal the some of the main historical factors underlying the emergence of the Mādhyamaka philosophy to its place of primacy within

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[6] *Dàshèng xuánlùn*《大乘玄論・卷一》: "The Two Truths are solely the gates of the verbal teaching, and do not pertain to the ontological truth."『二諦唯是教門，不關境理。』T45, no. 1853, p. 15, a17.

the early Sinitic Buddhist systems. Jízàng's oeuvre is thus of indisputable historical importance in its potential to shed light upon the contours of this development. The broad currency of Jízàng's Mādhyamika interpretations in later Buddhist circles is attested to by the 8th-century sub-commentary by the early Heian-period scholiast Anchō安澄 (763-814), the *Chūron-soki*《中論疏記》.

The issues of time and transformation in Jízàng's Mādhyamaka thought implicate contending theoretical models deriving from Indian Buddhist doctrine, which are, in turn subjected to Jízàng's trenchant analysis along the lines of his reading of Nāgārjuna's and Āryadeva's philosophical works. It might be noted, as no explicit "refutation" of rival Buddhist or non-Buddhist traditions is offered in Nāgārjuna's verses themselves, the exploration of this aspect of the Chinese commentarial tradition reveals an aspect of Mādhyamika analysis that has remained opaque in a field of study dominated by the reading of the South Asian and Tibetan canons.

"Refuting False Views and Manifesting the True Teaching" 破邪顯正

In any attempt to address the intellectual development of the Chinese Mādhyamika tradition, we must eventually take into account the doctrinal and philosophical controversies that preoccupied such thinkers as Jízàng. These controversies stem from doctrinal debates between Ābhidharmika thinkers -- such as those associated with the Sautrāntika and Sarvāstivāda traditions -- concerning the analysis and taxonomy of dharma-s (*dharma-pravicaya* 擇法), and the associated theories of time and temporality. How does Jízàng envision of Nāgārjuna's *kārikas* as a vehicle for philosophical discussion and polemical engagement with rival Ābhidharmika traditions regarding the question of time (*kāla* 時)?

The so-called "Ābhidharmikas"毘曇 figure heavily in the works of the great 6th- and 7th-century Buddhist Masters, most notably the records of Tiāntái Master Zhìyǐ and Master Jìngyíng Huìyuán. Here the Pītán are represented as proponents of a deluded attachment to the Buddhist doctrine as "apprehensible"有所得, while lacking access to the complete revelation of the Mahāyāna which is unfathomable, even "inapprehensible" 無所得. But who are the so-called Pītán? Do they correspond to active textual communities at the time of Jízàng, or are they merely "straw-men", imagined opponents serving largely serving as a rhetorical foils?

The examination of Jízàng's corpus reveals that the "Pītán tradition"「毘曇宗」[7]was associated with the study of the Vaibhāṣika tradition of Sarvāstivāda thought, especially the *Āpítán pípōshālùn*《阿毘曇毘婆沙論》 (*Abhidharma-vibhāṣā-śāstra*), translated by the Indian Master Buddhavarman in the North.[8]

The consideration of the textual record from the South reveals that the study of the Abhidharma in this region similarly centered around the Sarvāstivāda tradition of exegesis, specifically the *Āpítánxīn-lùn*《阿毘曇心論》(*Abhidharmahṛdaya*), translated by Gautama Saṃghadeva 瞿曇僧伽提婆 and Lúshān Huìyuán 廬山慧遠 (334–416)[9] in 391 on Mt. Lǔ 廬山 (in modern-day Jiāngxī province),[10] and the *Záāpítánxīn-lùn*《雜阿毘

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[7] *Zhōngguānlùn-shū*, "The Contemplation of *Saṃskāra*-s"〈觀行品〉, T42, no. 1824, p. 106, c23.

[8] The *Āpítán pípōshālùn*; 60 fasc. T 1546 no. 28; by Kātyāyanīputra 迦多衍尼子；translated into Chinese in 437 by Buddhavarman of the Northern-Liáng Dynasty 北涼・天竺沙門浮陀跋摩, Daotai 道泰 et al. As Jízàng reports in his *Sānlùnxuányì*: "'*Vibhāṣā*' means 'broad explanation.' This text was translated into Chinese during the Western Liáng-period, originally comprising 100 fascicles. Later, it was incinerated by roving troops, and now only 60 fascicles remain. [This text] explains the *Jñāna-prasthāna-śāstra*『「毘婆沙」者，此云廣解。於西涼州譯出，凡有百卷。值兵火燒之，唯六十卷現在。止解三《犍度》也。』T45, no. 1852, p. 2, b29-c1.

[9] See Huìyuán's preface -- *Chūsānzàng jìjí* (T55n2145_p0072c01-29).

曇心論》(*Saṃyuktâbhidmarmahṛdaya*) translated by Saṃghavarman 僧伽跋摩 in 434.

Insofar as Modern Asian scholars speak of a Chinese Mādhyamika "school," it should be fair to speak of a Chinese Ābhidharmika "school"毗曇宗, based upon study of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma.[11]

By that same token, might we even point to a Chinese Sautrāntika "school," based upon the study of the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra*《成實論》?[12] MIZUNO Kōgen 水野宏元 identifies this text as an exposition of a Dārṣṭāntika/Sautrāntika critique of certain Sarvāstivādin doctrinal positions. [13]

Despite the ardent polemics of Jízàng, the textual record from the Southern Dynasties would tell us that the *Tattvasiddhi* was in fact regarded by many at the time as a Mahāyāna treatise.[14] For instance, the Liáng-period monk Sēngyòu's 僧祐 *Collected Notes on the Tripiṭaka*《出三藏記集》preserves the 5th-century layman Zhōuyǒng's 周顒[15] "Prefatory Notes to the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra*〈抄成實論序〉**,** which states: "The *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* is an hidden teaching which subsumes the Three Vehicles (of the *śrāvaka-*, *pratekyabuddha-*, and *Bodhisattva-yāna*.) 『《成實論》者，總三乘之祕數。』[16]

The Chapter Divisions 科判 of the *Zhōngguānlùn-shū*

Jízàng adheres to a system of threefold chapter division 三段分科 in composing his *Zhōngguānlùn-shū*:[17]

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[10] *Chūsānzàng jìjí*, T55, no. 2145, p. 10, c12; see Whalen Lai, "Tao-sheng's Theory of Sudden Enlightenment Re-examined," *Sudden and Gradual* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), pp. 174-8.

[11] ZGLS, T42, no. 1824, p. 106, c23.

[12] HIRAI Shunei 平井俊榮 (1965) cites MIYAMOTO Shōson's 宮本正尊 appraisal of the *Chéngshì-lùn*, p. 145:"Although the *Tattvasiddhi* is critical, it has come to preserve the analytical tendencies of the analysis of the characteristics of *dharma*-s and *citta*-s from the standpoint of the Ābhidharmika Masters within the system of the Dārṣṭāntikas, Sarvāstivādans, Sautrāntikas, and Vabhāṣikas" "成実は批判的であるが、譬喩者有部経部系統の阿毘達磨師、毘婆師として法相心相の分析的傾向を保存しておったこと。" Hirai Shunei, "Sanron kyōgaku seiritsu-shi no sho mondai -- Nansei Chirin Chūron-so ni tsuite"〈三論教学成立史上の諸問題 –南斉・智琳《中論疏》について 〉, *Journal of the Faculty of Buddhism of the Komazawa University* [Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyō Gakkai nenhō]《駒沢大学仏教学会年報》(23.3, 1965), pp. 143-161. The *Sānlùn xuányì* reads: "The Sautrāntika doctrines are largely the same as those of the Tattvasiddhi-*śāstra*『經部之義多同《成實》。』T45, no. 1852, p. 3, c01.

[13] Mizuno Kōgen 水野宏元. 1930. "Hiyūshi to Jōjitsu-ron"〈譬喩師と成實論〉, *Komazawa Daigaku Bukkyō Gakkai nenhō*《駒沢大学仏教学会年報》vol. 1, pp. 134-156.

[14] Tāng Yòngtōng 湯用彤 lists no less than twelve commentaries on the *Tattvasiddhi* composed during the period of the Southern Dynasties. Unfortunately, none are extant. Hàn Wèi liǎng Jìn Nánběichóo Fójiàoshǐ《漢魏兩晉南北朝佛教史》, (Taipei: Táiwān shāngwù chūbǎnshè, 1991.) pp. 728-730.

[15] Although Whalen Lai describes Zhōuyǒng as having "fired the first volley" against the Chéngshí masters along the lines of a Mādhyamika critique, it is clear from such passages that Zhōuyǒng's affiliation vis-à-vis the *Tattvasiddhi* was much more nuanced and problematic than it may seem from the outset. For the analysis of the ostensible content of Zhōuyǒng's treatise – the *Sānzōnglùn*《三宗論》-- on the basis of its fragmentary citations in various Buddhist and secular sources from the Southern Dynasties period, see Whalen W. Lai, "Further Developments of the Two Truths Theory in China: The "Ch'eng-shih-lun" Tradition   and Chou Yung's 'San-tsung-lun,'" *Philosophy East and West*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Apr., 1980), pp. 139-161

[16] *Collected Notes on the Tripiṭaka* (*Chūsānzàng jìjí*)*,* T55, no. 2145, p. 78, b03.

[17]Zhōngguānlùn-shū: "Since the time of the masters at Mt. Shèlǐng there has been the received method of dividing the 27 chapters of the *Zhōnglùn* into three sections: the first 25 chapters refute the delusions of the Māhāyana and further clarify the Māhāyana contemplations. The second section contains two chapters ("The Contemplation of Twelvefold Conditioned Arising"〈觀十二因緣品〉

1. "Explication of Terminology"釋名: Chapters 1 through 25

2.   "Unfolding of the Teaching"開會, corresponding to chapters 26 and 27 (excluding the final verses of the chapter)

3. Penultimate and final verses of Nāgārjuna's "Contemplation of Mistaken Views"〈觀邪見品〉

This specific method of threefold chapter division 分科 derives from the Mt. Shè Master Sēngláng 僧朗. However, Jízàng attributes a similar tripartite division to the 5th- and 6th-century Three Treatise masters in the North, who developed this method of meticulous chapter division 科章 in contrast to the early commentator Tányǐng, whom Jízàng describes as having rather been engaged in "direct commentary" 直解釋 on the text.[18]

In the following section, we shall first turn to chapter 7 on the "Contemplation of the Three Marks"〈觀三相品〉. This chapter falls squarely into the division concerning the "Explication of Terminology." Here I address Jízàng's exegesis on this chapter, which further elucidates his analysis of the question of the time in the MMK.

"Analysis of the Three Characteristics"〈觀三相品〉

It is worth noting that here that Kumārajīva's translation of the chapter title differs from that of the classical Sanskrit, which describes the "Examination of Formations." (*saṃskṛta parīkṣā*). Kumārajīva frequently uses the graph xiàng 相 to render the Sanskrit terminology, "*lakṣaṇa*"

In any case, Jízàng's analysis of "Contemplation of the Three Marks"〈觀三相品〉entails a detailed refutation of the Ābhidharmika conception of the three characteristics of "generation"生, "abiding"住, and "senescence"滅.

In the Ābhidharmika taxonomical context, "time" is envisioned as an outgrowth of the "*dharma*-s disjoined from mental [and material] factors" (*citta-viprayukta-saṃskara-dharmas-s* 心不相應行法). This oft-disputed category of dharma-s includes the so-called "conditioned characteristics" (*saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa*) such as "the characteristic of generation"生相, that of "abidance"住相, and "senescence"滅相.

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and the "Contemplation of False Views"〈觀邪見品〉), which refute the Hināyāna delusions and distinguish between the Hināyāna contemplations. The third section (including the penultimate and final verses) further clarifies the Mahāyāna contemplation and eulogizes the refuge in the Buddha. 『自攝嶺相承分二十七品以為三段：初二十五品破大乘迷失，明大乘觀行；次有兩品，破小乘迷執，辨小乘觀行。第三重明大乘觀行，推功歸佛。』ZGLS, T42, no. 1824, p. 7, c24-28.

[18] The *Commentary on the Zhōnglùn*, "Contemplation of Causality"《中觀論疏・觀因緣品》reads: "There are in total two types of exponents of this *śāstra*: firstly, those who engage in the direct exegesis on the text; secondly, those who engage in the teaching gate involving the division of chapters. Just as Tányǐng's commentary clarifies: **This *śāstra* is comprised of four fascicles and 27 chapters. In apprehending its great source teaching of refuting the sickness of the views of nihilism and eternalism, [we recognize] the *śāstra* as expounding the Two Truths and the Middle Path. Thus, in accordance with this Middle Path we give rise to the True Contemplation.**" Secondly, the Northern Three Treatise Masters clarify: "this *śāstra* is comprised of four fascicles which may broadly be clarified as three sections: the first comprises the first four verses (*gātha*-s), which propound and discuss the great source teaching. The second section starts from the refutation of the four *pratyaya*-s and continues until the "Examination of Views", refuting delusions while manifesting the Source Teaching. The third section, comprising the last verse eulogizes taking refuge in the Buddha." 『講論者凡有二種：一者、直解釋；二者、科章門。如曇影制疏明：『此論文有四卷；品二十七。領其大宗為破眾生斷・常之病，申二諦・中道。今因此中道發生正觀也。』二者、北立三論師明：此論文有四卷。大明三章：初有四偈，標論大宗。第二、從破「四緣」，以下竟〈邪見品〉，破執顯宗。第三、最後一偈推功歸佛。』T42, no. 1824, p. 7, c2-7.

Debates between Sautrāntika and Sarvāstivādin thinkers, such as those unfolding between such luminaries as Vasubandhu 世親 and Saṁghabhadra 眾賢, centered around the issue of the *saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s* 有為相 and their respective inclusion/exclusion from the category of the *citta-viprayukta-saṃskaṛa-dharma-s*. Suffice it to say that Sarvāstivādin theorists regarded the *saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s* as "Real Factors"實法.[19] According to the Sarvāstivādin definition, these factors pertain to a *svabhāva* 自性 or "self-nature." Given their hypostatization into factors in Sarvāstivādin system, such "real factors" persist throughout the three periods of time.

The ontological status of the "*dharma*-s disjoined from mental [and material] factors" (*citta-viprayukta-saṃskaṛa-dharmas-s* 心不相應行法) is a perennial question for the Sarvāstivādin thinkers, and continuously generated debate between various textual factions. Furthermore, the question of these factors exact number and their existence/non-existence throughout the three times engendered heated debates between the proponents of the Sautrāntika and Sārvāstivāda theories of Abhidharma taxonomy under the rubric of "the analysis of dharmas" (*dharma-pravicaya* 擇法).[20]

Jízàng recognizes the multivalency of the Mahāyāna scriptures concerning the question of the four *saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s* -- or only three, as discussed in Nāgārjuna's MMK and the *Twelve Gates Treatise*.[21] Indeed, the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa sūtra* speaks of the four marks 四相 of birth, old age, sickness, and death.

Regarding the Sarvāstivādin teaching, Jízàng interprets the Sarvāstivādins as advocating three conditioned characteristics, which correspond to the "factors that are neither mind nor matter" 非色非心法.[22] Of course, Jízàng's reading here glosses over a certain disconsonance in the Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma surrounding the status of the "Mark of Transformation"異相 (*bhinna-lakṣaṇa*).[23]

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[19] Collett Cox, *Disputed Dharmas*, "The Four Characteristics," *: Early Buddhist Theories on Existence*, (Tōkyō: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1995), pp. 148-150.

[20] Collett Cox (1995) writes: "Though early Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma lists of dissociated factors include the category of conditioned characteristics of conditioned factors, there is some variation in their number. For example, the majority of early and later Sārvāstivadin Abhidharma texts acknowledge four such conditioned characteristics: birth (*jāti* 生相), continuance (*stithi* 住相), senescence (*jarā* 滅相) and desinence (*aniyatā* 無常相). However, other Abhidharma texts, including certain Sārvāstivadin Abhidharma texts, acknowledge only three, for example, the *Āryavasumitrabodhisattvasaṇgītaśāstra*, the earlier translation or recension of the *Jñānaprasthāna* – the *Abhidharmāṣṭaskandhaśāstra* -- and the *Vibhāṣaśāstra* all omit continuance. Indeed, the question of the number of characteristics as three or four remains a live issue for later Abhidharma interpreters, particularly in view of the fact that the sūtra passage cited as scriptural authority in support of the existence of the conditioned characteristics also mentions only three characteristics. In these later interpretations also, the primary problem is presented by the characteristic of continuance, which would appear to contradict the restricted definition of a moment and thereby, the Buddhist principle of impermanence." *Disputed Dharmas*, p. 147.

[21] *Shíèrmén-lùn*, T30, no. 1568, p. 162, c15.

[22] Jízàng commentates: 'apart from the substance of dharma-s there are three marks, thus the substance of dharma-s coheres in the threefold conglomeration; the three marks are merely among the 'factors that are neither mind nor matter," and pertain to the *saṃskāra-skandha*." 『薩婆多云：離法體外別有三相，故法體通於三聚，而三相但是非色非心，屬行陰攝。』T42, no. 1824, p. 77, a28-29.

[23] *Āpítánlùn*: "Each conditioned factor universally possesses the four marks of birth, abiding, transformation, and senescence. The change of state (*avasthā*?) within the mundane realm thus leads to generation. The change in transformation (*bhāva*) having been completed, there is abidance. The causal efficacy [related to the factor of abidance having declined, there is transformation; with the ceasing of the transformation there is senescence. These three marks are called the "factors disjoined from mind and matter" 『一切有為法各・各有四相，生・住・異・壞。世中起，故生；已起自事立，故住；已住勢衰，故異；已異滅，故壞。此相說「心不相應行」。』T28, no. 1550, p. 811, b18-20.
※Verse 4 of the "Analysis of Combination"〈成壞品〉from the *Zhōnglùn* reads: "Not only can no difference be found in the dharma-s

Nāgārjuna's verses speak of the "three characteristics"三相, while Ābhidharmika traditions such as the Sārvāstivadins often propound a taxonomy including four *saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s*. The *Śata-śāstra* illuminates upon the Three Characteristics of generation (*jāti* 生相), abiding (*stithi* 住相) and the mark of senescence/destruction 壞相 (*vyāya-lakṣaṇa*).

The *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* are critical to the Sarvāstivādin doctrine of the synchronous causation. This theory describes the simultaneous arising of "9 factors"「九法」comprising the dharma itself 本法, along with the "four fundamental aspects"四本相[24] of generation 生, abidance 住, change 異, and senescence 滅, as well as the four derivative aspects 四隨相 of the arising of generation生生, abiding of abiding 住住, the changing of change 異異, and the extinction of senescence 滅滅. These form the so-called "nine factors" 九法, which arise synchronously within a single *kṣaṇa*, and thus serve to lead the fundamental factor to the manifestation of its causal efficacy. Once its specific causal efficacy or *kāritra* 用 is expended, the function of change assumes priority, the of the characteristic of adbiding desists due to the characteristic of change, which is in turn followed by the characteristic of senescence thus causing the factor to fade into the past.

Of course, in accordance with the classical Sarvāstivādin doctrine, this is a synchronous process. And yet, as Jízàng notes, how might the characteristic of senescence be said to follow or tail those of the other four characteristics, if this entire process unfolds within a single period of time 四相一時?[25]Given that all real

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that are seen and the rest can no difference in characteristics be found; but all existent dharma-s are without different characteristics."
非但見等法　　　異相不可得
所有一切法　　　皆亦無異相

[24] Jízàng refers to this aspect as the "greater characteristics"大相 and the four derivative aspects of birth and rebirth ("abidance of abiding," etc.), as the "lesser characteristics"小相: "This greater characteristic of generation is itself generated by the derivative characteristics, thus assuming the name of the "[greater] characteristic of generation" 為小生生之，故是生相 (T42, no. 1824, p. 80, b01). In his exegesis, Jizang alternates between two models of causation – that including 6 saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s, and that including only 8 saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s. Here Jizang defines the "lesser" and "greater characteristics" with relation to the limited model of only 6 saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s: "The lesser aspect of generation 小生 is solely capable of generating the greater aspect, thus is goes by the name of "the arising of generation. The greater aspect of generation does not only generate the lesser aspect, but also may give rise to the six factors (i.e. generation, the arising of generation, abidance, the abiding of abidance, senescence, and the extinction of senescence) 『生但能生大生故名生生，大生非止生小生，能生六法。』ZGLS, T42, no. 1824, p. 80, b22.

[25]HIRAKAWA Akira 平川彰 explains: "Moreover, it is such that when the single dharma is generated, the four characteristics of generation, abidance, change, and senescence are simultaneously generated. That is, in accordance with the characteristic of generation, the fundamental dharma along with the characteristics of abidance, change, and senescence are so generated. However, given that , as such, it is the case that there is nothing specifically that gives rise to the characteristic of generation, the Sarvāstivādins further posit the four derivative characteristics 四随相. Namely, there are the four derivative characteristics of the 'arising of generation,' 'the abidance of abiding,' the "changing of change," and the "extinction of senescence," which are such that they arise synchronously with the original dharma. Thus, the characteristic of generation yields the other eight factors 八法, and in accordance with the 'arising of generation' is itself generated. Following this, the characteristic of abidance causes the other eight factors to abide, and the characteristic of abidance itself is caused to abide by the 'abiding of abidance.' In this manner the nine factors are said to arise simultaneously. However, as the of the factors comprising our material body and mind are numerous, given that each factor is said to be conjoined with the four fundamental characteristics and the four derivative characteristics, the numerical quantity of those factors must be vast." 『従って、一法が生きずるとき、生、住、異、滅の四相も同時に生ずるわけである。即ち本法と住、異、滅の三相とは生相によって生ぜしめられるわけである。しかしそれでは生相を生ぜしめるものがないことになるので、有部は別に四随相を立てる。即ち生生、住住、異異、滅滅の四随相があり、本法と同時生ずることになる。そして生相は他の八法を生じ、自らは生生によって生ぜしめられるという。つぎに住相は他の八法を住せしめ、自らは住住によって住せしめられるという。このようにして九法が同時に倶起するという。しかし一刹那のわれわれの肉体や心を形成する法は多数であるから、その一一の法に四相、四随相が付随しているとしたら、その数は莫大になるわけである。』Hirakawa Akira 平川彰, Bukkyō Abidaruma ni okeru jikanron"〈原始仏教・アビダルムにおける時間論〉, *Kōza Bukkyō shisō – Sonzairon・Jikanron*《講座仏教思想・「存在論・時間論」》, Vol. 1, （Tōkyō 東京：Risō-sha 理想社, 1974）, p 202.

factors are said to exist throughout the three periods of time, how do the eight *saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s* emerge as conascent with that of the individual factor they adhere to?

From this Mādhyamaka line of analysis, the negation of the three *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* as "real factors disjoined from mind and matter" is a line of critique elaborated in Nāgārjuna's *Twelve Gate Treatise*《十二門論》 in the eleventh chapter on the 'Contemplation of the Three Times' 〈觀三時門〉and the Fourth Chapter on the "Contemplation of the Conditioned Factors" 〈觀相門第四〉, which further elucidates Nāgārjuna's position regarding the *citta-viprayukta-saṃskara-dharmas-s*. Although this problem of the *saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa-s* clusters together a series of doctrinal controversies and inherited debates, Jízàng uses this specific issue of the as a platform from which critically assess the various stances of the received *śāstra-s*.

In his analysis of the *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s*, Jízàng alternates freely between the "threefold" 三相 and "fourfold"四相 sequence of *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s*. Jízàng seeks to reveal the intractable issues inherent with either notion. As he describes the Sarvāstivādin model of three *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* as synchronously arising:

> The greater aspect of generation (i.e. the conditioned factor of generation 生相) gives rise to the substance of the factor; the nature of abiding, change, and senescence exist as inherent within the substance of the factor. The substance of the factor having arisen in turn gives rise to the three greater characteristics (i.e. generation, abiding, and senescence). The three greater characteristics further possess the nature of abiding, change, and senescence, which much be matched 相 to the three [lesser] characteristics (i.e. generation of generation, abidance of abiding, and extinction of senescence). These three lesser characteristics must further match up with the three greater characteristics. The three greater characteristics having arisen, the lesser characteristics emerge – thus, the nine factors arise conascently in one period of time.『大生生法體，而法體中有住・異・滅性。法體既起，「三大相」即起。三大相復有住・異・滅性，須「三相」相之；三小復須三大相相之。大相既起小復起，故一時「九法」共起。』

In terms of the threefold model, each conditioned characteristic contains the inherent nature of the three other characteristics. For instance, the nature of "abiding, "change," and "senescence" is inherent within the characteristic of "generation." Each factor is described in its likeness to the three other factors (whose nature is inherent within it). And yet, each factor's specific function within the synchronous process is distinct from that of the others. That is, the function of each factor is manifested sequentially with relation to the other 7 factors, and yet, for the Sarvāstivādins, the entire sequence unfolds within a single period of time 一時. But, it we admit such a sequence, are we not also admitting the distinctions of "prior and subsequent" within a single moment? Speaking of the classical model of nine factors 九法, Jízàng writes:

> Time is posited in accordance with the dharma-s. If the nine factors mutually arise, then they should accord to nine separate periods of time. If you say that [the 9 factors] "mutually arise within one period of time," then by that token they **"mutually pertain to a single dharma."**
> 『因法假名時。若九法共起，則有九時。若言『共一時』，亦應『共一法』。』[26]

If you speak of "momentary" 剎那滅 dharma-s, then by definition they abide for exactly one moment. The operation of nine individual factors would require nine moments to reach its completion.[27]

In short, regardless of their inclusion of seven or nine factors, three or four conditioned characteristics,

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[26] *Zhōngguānlùnshū*, "Contemplation of Causes and Fruits"《中觀論疏・觀因果品》, T42, no. 1824, p. 133, c02-3.

[27] See Piṅgala's 青目 commentary on the *Zhōnglùn*: T30, no. 1564, p. 29, b13

Jízàng argues that the Sarvāstivādin models of causation is unable to be accounted for coherently. Indeed, the notion of synchronous causation within "one moment" has continuously puzzled commentators. How do you account for the apparent sequence in the operation of the conditioned characteristics?[28] For Jízàng, the incongruous inclusion of synchronic and diachronic features reveals certain intractable issues with the Sarvāstivādin theory of synchronous causation.

On Three-Treatise Master Jízàng's Refutation of *Sarvāstiva*

The refutation of the Sarvāstivāda theory of the "real existence of past, present, and future factors" is critical to Jizang's analysis of the *Zhōnglùn*. Although there is no explicit reference to this doctrine, or to the Sarvāstivādins specifically, in Nāgārjuna verses, this is a line of critique that is drawn into an explicit position in the Chinese commentarial tradition on the *Zhōnglùn*.

In clarifying the touchstone doctrine of the Sarvāstivādins – the theory of *Sarvāstiva*[29]-- Jízàng draws upon Buddhavarman's 浮陀跋摩 translation of the *Vibhāṣa Śāstra*《阿毘曇毘婆沙論》(hereafter VS)[30]:

> The *Vibhāṣa Śāstra* reads: **In order to refute the other theories we thus clarify: dharma-s are temporal dharma-s, dharma-s are dharma-s in time, during the period of impermanence they are impermanent.'**[31]This is to determine that time (*kāla*) is posited as a provisional existent (*prajñapti*) in accordance with the dharma-s; without dharma-s there is no distinct time. Although there is no distinct essence pertaining to the three periods of time, the dharma-s existing within time are certainly not inexistent."『《婆沙》云：「為止此說,明：「法」即是「時法」，無常時即無常。」辨：因「法」假名「時」；離「法」無別「時」。「三世」之時，雖無「別體」，而時中之法，則決定不無。」』[32]

Jízàng's summary of the *Sarvāstiva* doctrine harkens back to the basic distinction between provisional factors and real existents. For classical Sarvāstivādin theorists, the provisional factors are contingent upon the real existents「假必依實」. Provisional factors, by definition, are established from the standpoint of the conventional truth 世俗諦, and may not be described as "real existents"實法 from the Ultimate standpoint. However, there a basic dependence between provisional factors and real existents, which is parallel to the relationship between conditioned and unconditioned factors, and, by extension, between the Conventional and Ultimate Truth. Time (*kāla*) is inextricable from its components – the various dharma-s – which are ultimately

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[28]   Professor Alexander von Rospatt writes: The Sarvāstivādins did not give up their doctrine of the *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* when they came to view all conditioned entities as momentary. This was impossible because the four *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* had become the indispensable corollary of each conditioned entity, once they had been hypostatized to causally efficient factors which account for the origination, duration, decay and annihilation of these entities. Thus the e Sarvāstivādins had to carry on attributing the *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* to discrete conditioned entities even after the duration of these entities had been reduced to a bare moment. This meant that the operation of the four *saṃskṛta lakṣaṇa-s* which really requires a certain stretch of time had to be squeezed into a moment once the momentariness of all conditioned entities was espoused." *The Buddhist Doctrine of Momentariness*, (Hamburg: Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 1995), p. 48

[29] Literally: "All (Skt.: sarva) [dharmas] exist (Skt. asti) in three times: past, present, and future."

[30] This was originally a 100-fascicle translation, although only 60 fascicles of the translation survive – see *Gāosēngzhuàn*, T50, no. 2059, p. 339, a24-28.

[31] This phrase as cited does not appear in the Northern-Liáng 北涼 translation of the *Vibhāṣa Śāstra*《阿毘曇毘婆沙論》, although it perhaps pertains to the content of the later folios which were lost?

[32] ZGLS, T42, no. 1824, p. 130, c09-12.

real 勝義有 (*paramārtha-sat*), although as a secondary structure rooted in these real factors, time might only be described as a provisional existent 假名有. This provisional existence stands in contrast to "space" (*akāsā*), which, by definition as a "real factor" – represents a sort of irreducible component of reality.

The refutation of the classical Sarvāstivādin theory of the existence of factors throughout the three periods of time, is part and parcel of the critical ethos of the Chinese Mādhyāmika-s. It should be noted, however, that such polemics remain implicit in Nāgārjuna's *kārikas* as veiled critiques of various doctrinal points associated with the Sarvāstivādins.

For Jízàng, the Sarvāstivādin theory of time is synonymous with their ontology based on "substances" (*dravya-s* 實體) . The substance of these real entities is rooted in their real existence from the Ultimate standpoint (*paramārtha-sat*), and accordingly subsists throughout the three periods of time.[33]

As a source for his critique of the Sarvāstivādins, Jizang continuously cites Saṅghadeva's 僧伽跋摩 translation of the *Abhidhama-hṛdaya-śāstra*《雜阿毘曇心論》. This particular text proposes arguments for the real existence of dharma-s in the three periods of time 三世實有. As Saṅghadeva's translation reads:

> The theory of the real existence of factors throughout the three times (*sarvāstitva*) was established the Sarvāstivādins. Why? Answer: while perceiving the past and future from the standpoint of the present there is thus a positing 施設 [of existent factors in the past and future]. If there were no existent factors in the past or the future, then there would be no manifestation [of those factors] in the present moment. If there were no existent factors in the present, then there would be no conditioned factors [in the past and future]. By this token, factors exist throughout the three periods of time -- you may not say that this is false!『有三世薩婆多。此薩婆多所立。問：何故？答：現在世者，觀過去・未來故施設；若無過去・未來者，則無現在世。現在世無者，亦無「有為法」；是故有三世，莫言有咎。』[34]

At the heart of Jízàng's analysis of Nāgārjuna's verses, and his polemical stance vis-à-vis the Sarvāstivādins, is his aversion to describing "time" (*kāla*) as composed of real factors pertaining to the past, present, and future periods.

For Nāgārjuna, to posit discrete factors that serve the function of leading factors from states of non-being into being, leads to a conception of time as composed of infinite hierarchy of entities, all corresponding to "past," "present," and "future" moments. The factors generating the "presently existent" factor must have existed in the previous moment, thus there must have been existent factors in the moment before that in order to in give rise to the factors in the previous moment, *mutatis mutandis*.

Jízàng is cognizant of the difficulties that the Sarvāstivādins face in resolving this problem of infinite regress in accounting for their theory of the real existence of factors throughout the three periods of time. Jízàng thus describes time as devoid of substances, although he states, paradoxically, that without substance, the nature of time is inapprehensible 時相不可得: "in the absence of substance there is no time [to be spoken of]."『無體則無時』[35]

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[33] The third chapter of this thesis shall explore in greater depth the arguments for this theory presented in the Sarvāstivādin works translated into Chinese from the 5th-7th centuries.

[34] T28, no. 1552, p. 963, b4-7.

[35] ZGLS, T42, no. 1824, p. 132, a03.

Jízàng's analysis of time revolves around the ontological status of "substance" 體.[36] Jízàng's invocation of tǐ here is ambiguous, insofar as in the lexical context of his usage it draws from the sense of both "essence" and "substance." The fecundity of the term tǐ draws from this broad semantic field, although in this case it applies directly to Jízàng's critique of the substantialist ontology of the Ābidharmikas. Jízàng further applies this polemical anti-substantialist stance to the proponents of the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* 成實師, whom Jízàng vehemently denounces as "Hināyānists."

The *locus classicus* for the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra*'s《成實論》analysis of time is the "Chapter 22 on the Non-existence of Past and Future Factors"〈二世無品・第二十二〉. Here Harivarman reveals a close allegiance with the Sautrāntika view that factors in the past and future may not be described as existing in any substantive way 實有. Even as for present factors, we may only speak of a sort of provisional existence 假名有 – a move that avoids the Sarvāstitvādin view which relies upon a conception of the continuously abiding self-nature of factors throughout the three periods of time 法體恆有.

Paramārtha's 真諦 translation of the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya*《阿毘達磨俱舍釋論》, outlays Vasubhandu's critique of the existence of real things 實物 in the past and future periods of time. As to the claim that factors pertain to "substances" 實體 which exist from the Ultimate standpoint (*paramārtha-sat*) from time immemorial, Vasubandhu opines in that *dravya*-s in the past and future are non-existent. The casual efficacy (*kāritra* 力) of factors only exists in the present moment. Their causal efficacy spent, such factors fade into non-existence.

At this juncture, I believe that it may be useful to draw upon Jízàng's commentary on the 1st verse of the "Contemplation of the Three Marks"〈觀三相品〉, which reveals a nuanced interpretation and refutation of the various theories of time expounded by Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions, each extensively documented in the ZGLS.

> The refutations of the Śāstra-Master Nāgārjuna are meant to expound the verbal doctrine of "non-abiding thoughts" in order to induce understanding of the Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures amongst the various Ābhidharmika sects 諸部. The refutation of "coalescence of factors" is precisely the refutation of the Sarvāstivāda theory, which requires the mutual support of the three characteristics (*saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa*) for the generation of conditioned factors. The refutation of "dispersion" is the refutation of the Dārṣṭāntika theory of "the establishment of the three characteristics (*saṃskṛta-lakṣaṇa*) within three moments (*kṣaṇa*-s)." This verse further refutes the Ābhidharmika stance. The Ābhidharmikas have two theories: the first regards the substance as remaining the same throughout time, while the functional activity (*kāritra*) differs between previous and subsequent moments. The theory of difference in functional activity (*kāritra*) between previous and subsequent moments is "dispersion"; the substance remaining the same through time is "coalescence."
> The second theory [pertaining to the Ābhidharmikas] is that of the essence and functional activity remaining the same throughout time, but it is merely that at the time of the generation of functional activity, the functional activity of the factor of generation (*jāti* 生相) is strong, and the functional activity of the other conditioned factors is weak.
> Thus the verse also refutes this theory. The Saṃkhyans have that "future self-natures are existent, that they existent in their current mode of being, although their existence from the past remains opaquely latent."The *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* reads: **"although the substances of the periods of time coming and going (i.e. past and future) are non-existent (*abhāva*), they pertain to the meaning of "then [currently] existing factors." Present [factors] are only existing in the present and pertain to the meaning of "future non-existent factors"**

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[36] For an examination of the Abhidharmic concept of *dravya*, and its interpolation by Chinese translators in terms of the Sinitic concept of tǐ 體, see KOGA Hidekiko 古賀英彦, "Ūbu no taiyō-ron to samusukāra no gainen"〈有部の体用論と行の概念〉, *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū*《印度学仏教学研究》, 33 (17-1, 1968), pp. 130-131.

當無義.[37]

『又論主破，即是申「一念不住」之言，令諸部解佛經意也。破「聚」，正破<u>薩婆多義</u>，以「有為」
必「三相」扶共起故也。破散、破<u>譬喻部</u>「三刹那立三相義」也。又此一偈並破<u>毘曇</u>。<u>毘曇</u>師二說：一、
云：「體」同時，「用」前後，「用」前後是「散」。「體」同時是「聚」：二、云：「體用同時」。但當「生
用」時，「生用」即強，餘相用弱耳。故此偈具破之也。<u>數人</u>「未來性有；現在事有；過去冥伏有。《成
論》云：『去來體是無而有曾當義；現在是現有，[38]而有當無義也。[39]』』[40]

In the above passage, Jízāng forefronts Sarvāstivāda/Sautrāntika debates on the nature of "causal efficacy" (*kāritra*) and its duration in time. This approach is invoked in the critique of the Ābhidharmic traditions of the Sautrāntikas and Sarvāstivādans, which rely upon the notion of *kārita* or causal efficacy 作用[41] to distinguish the presently active dharma from the innumerable dharma-s of the past and future, which exist throughout the three periods of time.[42] The Mādhyamika Jízàng goes so far to state that there are no real or latently existent factors in any of the three periods of time. Even to posit an evanescent entity pertaining to momentary causal efficacy would contravene the emptiness of conventional phenomena and of all temporal entities.

Conclusions

In the *Lotus*, the many Buddhas and Bodhisattva's avail themselves of every possible expedient device to lead each sentient being away from delusion and towards enlightenment. Jízàng's analysis of the Mādhyamika teaching on time and transformation unfolds from this hermeneutical context of *upāya*. Sentient beings strive to escape from delusory names and forms, although it is only by means of skillful teachings that the Buddha's may manifest the "Ultimate Truth." Given that this "Ultimate Truth" is expressible only through expedient devices, its explicability may only be only realized by clearing away unskillful and false teachings. For Jízàng,

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[37] This statement seems to be pointing towards the Sautrāntika position that only present factors actually exist. Present factors may only be described as existing within the present "moment" (*kṣaṇa*).

[38] ZGLS: "The text of the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* states: the three conditioned factors all existent in thepresent. If the factor should pass away, then the two conditioned factors (of generation and abidance) reside in the present, and the conditioned characteristic of senescence resides in the future 『《成論文》云：三有為法悉在現在。若應滅者，即二相在現，而滅在未來。』T42, no. 1824, p. 86, c16-17.

[39] Here Jízàng aticulates a critique on the Sautrāntika doctrine of factors as only existing in the present moment: **"Karma pertaining to current factors fades into the past, although without developing the [future karmic] result (*phala*) , [these factors] abide eternally in the present."** This is in fact the same as the Sarvāstivādin doctrine of "eternal abiding" (*nitya*). The subsequent fruit give rise to the karmic result, then [the fruit] again fades into the past – this is the same as the Mahāsāṃghika nihilistic doctrine. Moreover, the *Tattvasiddhi*-masters and the Masters of the Zhuāngyán Temple state that "**karmic factors fade into the past as their substance (*dravya*?) is non-existent, and thus due to the meaning of then currently existing factors having then attained fruition."** 「現在業」謝「過去」；未得果時，常在。此同<u>薩婆多</u>「常義」，後果起此業，復謝滅無：同<u>僧祇斷義</u>。次《成實》師、<u>莊嚴</u>云：『業謝過去體是無，而有曾有義故得果。』T42, no. 1824, p. 118a24-25.

[40] T42, no. 1824, p.79, a13(10)－b26.

[41] Paramārtha renders *kāritra* through the character lì 力, while Xuánzàng often translates the term with the compound zuòyòng 作用.

[42] For Vasubhandu's criticisms of the *Sarvstitvā* 一切有 theory, see Collete Cox, *Disputed Dharmas*: *Early Buddhist Theories on Existence*, (Tōkyō: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 1995), pp. 148-150.

this entails the confrontation and eventual refutation of each of the false views and mistaken teachings. Jízàng thus might be seen as expanding upon Nāgārjuna's apophatic pronouncements in such chapters as "Contemplation of Time" (〈觀時品〉, "kalāparīkṣā"），while enacting a systematic refutation of such rival traditions as the Sarvāstivādins and the *Tattvasiddhi*-masters.

In contrast to the Ābhidharmikas, who construct theories of "time" with reference to their complex ontological systems, Jízàng draws upon the *Zhōnglùn* to reveal the illusory nature of time, albeit as a useful fiction which serves an instrumental role within Buddhist praxis. Jízàng thus attempts to move beyond a model of time rooted in "substances," towards what he envisions as the "inapprehensible emptiness"無所得空 of the Mahāyāna teaching.

From the perspective of the history of Buddhist doctrine, Jízàng's Sānlùn commentaries provide a valuable point of reference for exploring the early appropriation of *Vaibhāṣika* thought within China during the 7th century. My aims in this chapter have been place Jízàng's refutation of *sarvāstitva* in its proper historical perspective. This entails counterbalancing Jízàng's critiques with the source material that he drew upon and appropriated in composing his commentary on the *Zhōnglùn*.

The Mādhyamika analysis of time, as reinvisioned by Jízàng through the lense of the *Zhōnglùn*, entails the thorough "emptying" of the *svābhava*-s, a move that for Jízàng is imbued with profound soteriological significance. Jízàng employs the notion of the Two Truths as skillful means to refute the "ontological" interpretation of the Two Truths as indicating graduated states of being, as in the Sarvāstivādin notion of "conventional existents" (*saṁvṛti-sat* 世俗有) and "real existents" (*paramārtha-sat* 勝義有). Jízàng perceives this misreading of the Two Truths in the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra*'s analytical conception of emptiness, in which each "real factor" 實法 composing conventional existence is gradually revealed to be a provisional entity 假名有, an illusion obstructing the adept's view of the universal void or *śūnyatā*.[43]

Jízàng's reinvisioning of the Two Truths poses broad questions for the East Asian Buddhist analysis of time. Jízàng's conception of "time" as a purely conventional construct does not render it as a sterile non-substantiality, but yet serves a constructive soteriological role as the foundation for the verbal teaching of expedient means. As viewed as the ground on which the Conventional is deconstructed and the Ultimate is thus revealed, Jízàng's Mādhyamika tradition also includes this positive account of time. Within the framework of the *śūnyavāda* teaching, the continuum of causes and conditions 相續 comprising time serves an instrumental role for religious development and in the realization of progressive insights. Conventional "time" in this sense fulfills its role as a useful "fiction," yet indispensible to the cultivation of the Buddhist Path.

Abbreviations

T   *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*《大正新修大藏經》. Edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭, et al. 100 vols. Tōkyō: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai 大正一切經刊刻會, 1924-1932. (CBETA version). Citations are indicated by the text number, followed by the volume, page, register (a, b, or c), and line number(s).

X   *Shinsan Dainihon zokuzōkyō*《卍新纂大日本續藏經》. Edited by Kawamura Kōshō 河村考照 between 1975 and 1989, printed by Kokusho kangyōkai 國書刊行會. Originally compiled by Nakano Tatsue中野達慧. Kyōtō: Zōkyō shoin 藏經書院, 1905-1912. (CBETA version).

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[43] Jízàng describes this "mereological" approach attempted by Harivarman as "cutting off dharma-s to reveal emptiness" 折法明空.