Vāsanā in Trimsākāvijñānapitibhāṣya

KANABISHI Akihiro

Last year, I contributed to this journal dealing with vāsanā (latent impression) in Yogābhaṣya (YBh: ca. 4–5c). Comparing the concepts of samskāra and vāsanā in the YBh, I clarified the difference between them.¹)

In YBh samskāra plays an important role in terms of both soteriology, as well as its goal, namely, samādhi. The theory to terminate the samskāra is thus described systematically in detail. On the other hand, vāsanā is confined to the subordinate position. It is not explained systematically.

What is vāsanā? From such a question, I started researching from the viewpoint of the whole history of Indian philosophy and literature how people other than Yoga school understand and use that concept. For this occasion I took the text of Yogācāra school, because it is likely that this school has a strong influence on Yoga school. Especially I chose Trimsākāvijñānapitibhāṣya²) (TrBh: ca. 6c), Sthiramati’s commentary on Vasubandhu’s Trimsākārikā (Tr: ca. 5–6c) because it should have been written not so far from YBh with reference to the time. The aim of this paper is to analyze how Sthiramati uses the concept of vāsanā and to classify it.³)

1. karma-vāsanā, grāhadvaya-vāsanā

Through the whole part of Tr, vāsanā is referred only twice in one sūtra, in Tr 19, which says “In cooperation with grāhadvaya-vāsanā, karma-vāsanās generate it which is another maturation, when the previous maturation is worn away.”⁴) These karma-vāsanā and grāhadvaya-vāsanā are commented by Sthiramati as follows:

Karma-vāsanā: Karma-vāsanā is the ability placed on ālaya-vijñāna to make existence of Self (ātma-bhāva) come into being in the future... Existence of Self will come into different states by the difference of destiny (gati) influenced by karma-vāsanā.”⁵)

Grāhadvaya-vāsanā: Grāhadvaya means the <attachment to what is seized> (grāhya-grāha) and
<that to what seize> (grāhaka-grāha). Among the two, the former is the apprehension that what is seized is settled in the succession of itself independently from consciousness (vijñāna); the latter is the apprehension that [what is seized] is received, recognized, and grasped by the consciousness. Grāhadvaya-vāsanā is the seed for the same kind of the <attachment to what is seized and to what seize> to come out in the future drawn by the <attachment to what is seized and to what seize> previously generated.6)

As Sthiramati notes in another place, “Accompanied by grāhadvaya-vāsanā, karma-vāsanās generate ‘it’, namely, ālaya-vijñāna which is the maturation different from already consumed one.”7)

Vāsanās referred in these passages can be classified into two types in terms of character. Type (1): Karma-vāsanā is the latent impression generated from good and evil deeds, and will regenerate different existences of Self by the difference of destiny (gati), and also make ālaya-vijñāna supported by grāhadvaya-vāsanā. This vāsanā can be characterised as the latent remains which have substantive aspect. Type (2): Grāhadvaya-vāsanā is generated from the attachment to the misconceptions about what is seized and what seizes. This is the latent impression which has cognitive aspect.

It is explained that these two types of vāsanā do not work independently, but produce ālaya-vijñāna in cooperation with each other.

2. vipāka-vāsanā, niṣyanda-vāsanā

In Tr 19, it is stated that “<the alteration [of consciousness]> (vijñāna-parināma) comes in three kinds,8)

Besides, <the alteration of consciousness> (vijñāna-parināma) on which the figurative expression about Self and the like (ātma-ādy-upacāra) and that of objects (dharma-upacāra) are based is divided in terms of cause and result. Among these two: <the alteration of cause> (hetu-parināma) is that <the vāsanā of maturation> (vipāka-vāsanā) and <[that of] flowing> (niṣyanda-vāsanā) are nourished in ālaya-vijñāna; <the alteration of result> (phala-parināma) is that because vipāka-vāsanā gets at operation (vipāka-vāsanā-vṛtti-lābhāt), ālaya-vijñāna appears among various classes of similar beings (nikāya-sabhāga-antaresu) when the drawing of previous karman is completed, [<The alteration of result>] is also that <consciousness in action> (pravṛtti-vijñāna) and <the afflicted mind> (*kliṣṭa-manas) come out from ālaya-vijñāna because niṣyanda-vāsanā gets at operation (niṣyanda-vāsanā-vṛtti-lābhāt). Among these two, pravṛtti-vijñāna [which is of two types], good and evil ones, puts both vipāka-vāsanā and niṣyanda-vāsanā in the ālaya-vijñāna, but kliṣṭa-manas which is neutral (avyākṛta) puts only niṣyanda-vāsanā in the ālaya-vijñāna.9)

In this part, <the alteration of consciousness> (vijñāna-parināma) is divided into <the
alteration of cause> (hetu-parināma) and <the alteration of result> (phala-parināma).

Judging from the Sthiramati’s note to Tr 2ab, ālaya-vijñāna, kliṣṭa-manas, and pravṛtti-vijñāna correspond to ‘alteration’ (vipāka), ‘thinking’ (manana), ‘representation of objects’ (viṣaya-vijñāpti) respectively. As these three are the components of vijñāna-parināma, the two vāsanās referred here are related to the entirety of vijñāna-parināma. They are functioning as the materials for ālaya-vijñāna, kliṣṭa-manas, and pravṛtti-vijñāna which are the basis for everything, namely, every cognition from the viewpoint of vijñaptimātratā.

What I want to point out here is that vipāka-vāsanā has no more function than to generate ālaya-vijñāna. The vijñāna-parināma further will be made by the virtue of niṣyanda-vāsanā alone; kliṣṭa-manas and pravṛtti-vijñāna, too, are born from this vāsanā.

**3. vāsanā as upādi**

In Tr 3ab, Vasubandhu says that “The [ālayavijñāna] has unrecognizable <reception> (upādi) and <representation of place> sthāna-vijñapti.” Sthiramati gives the explanation to the word ‘upādi’ that “[Upādi] is the vāsanā of the attachment to imagined nature (parikalpita-svabhāva), and is form (rūpa) as sense organ and also name (nāma), which both have a firm basis.” Further Sthiramati says as follows:

This [upādi] is the vāsanā of the imagination of Self (ātman) and the like, and also the vāsanā of the imagination of objects (dharma) like form (rūpa) and so on. Because of the [upādi], the imagination of Self etc, and that of form etc, are received (upātta) by ālaya-vijñāna as a result, so the upādi is said to be the vāsanā of the imagination of Self etc, and of form etc.

In these passages the upādi is equated to the vāsanā of ‘the attachment to imagined nature,’ ‘the imagination of Self,’ and ‘the imagination of things.’ Compared with the vipāka-vāsanā and niṣyanda-vāsanā, which generate the ālaya-vijñāna, kliṣṭa-manas, and pravṛtti-vijñāna, this upādi is related to the fundamental cognition that takes place in ālaya-vijñāna.

**4. Conclusion**

According to the analysis so far, the vāsanās referred in TrBh can be classified into two types.
Type 1: Vāsanās of this type generate ālaya-vijñāna, kliśta-manas, and pravṛtti-vijñāna, which are the basis for <figurative expression> (upacāra), cognition and so on.

Type 2: Vāsanās of this type cause misconception about Self (ātman) or objects (dharma) and so on, and take place from the attachment to such a misconception.

In TrBh 19, although karma-vāsanā has a function to generate ālaya-vijñāna, it cannot produce its effect by itself but only with the cooperation of grāhadvaya-vāsanā.

In TrBh 1, vipāka-vāsanā is explained as generating ālaya-vijñāna, and it is same with karma-vāsanā. Nisyanda-vāsanā also has the substantial aspect that it serves as the material for kliśta-manas and pravṛtti-vijñāna. This nisyanda-vāsanā, however, can be said to have a function similar to grāhadvaya-vāsanā, in that it helps the evolution of vijñāna-parināma, namely, the generation of ālayavijñāna further on. For, it is only nisyanda-vāsanā that can generate both kliśta-manas and pravṛtti-vijñāna, which are the origin of those two vāsanās. On the other hand, vipāka-vāsanā cannot do so.

The vāsanā as upādi referred in TrBh 3ab is described as having only the cognitive aspect.

Thus it appears to me that Sthiramati presents the concept of vāsanā in the way that it has two major aspects, which are somehow mutually related.


2) The text that I used is: Hartmut Buescher [2007]: Sthiramati’s Trimśikāvijñānapīṭhaśāya, Critical Editions of the Sanskrit Text and its Tibetan Translation, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien.

3) We only have few previous studies about vāsanā of Tr or TrBh. Ujike’s research is one of them. Ujike, Akio (氏家 昭夫) [1967]: “Yuishikisetsu niokeru Jikke to Tenpen nitsuite” (唯識説における習気vāsanāと転変parināmaについて), Indgaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū (印度學佛教學研究) 16-1, pp. 169-171.

4) karmaṇo vāsanā grāhadvayavāsan-ayā saha/ kṣine pūrvavipāke ‘nyam vipākaṅ janayanti tat/ (Tr 19, p. 112, ll. 9-10).

5) TrBh ad. Tr 19, p. 112, ll. 11-12, 17-18.

6) TrBh ad. Tr 19, p. 112, ll. 13-17.

7) TrBh ad. Tr 19, p. 114, ll. 8-10.

8) parināmaḥ sa ca tridhāḥ/ (Tr 19 d).

9) TrBh ad. Tr 1d, p. 48, ll. 15-21.

10) TrBh ad. Tr 2ab, p. 50, ll. 4-8.

11) vipāko mahanākhyas ca vijñāpīr viṣayasya ca/ (Tr 2ab, p. 50, l. 3).

12) asamviditakopādīsthānavijñānaptikān ca tat/ (Tr 3ab, p. 52, l. 6).

13) TrBh ad. Tr 3ab, p. 52, ll. 4-5.

14) TrBh ad. Tr 3ab, p. 52, ll. 9-13.

15) Upādi or upadāna is a problematic concept not only in Yogācāra school, but also in Sarvāstivāda. There are many previous studies about this concept. For example: Hita,
Michio (Takasaki, Jikido) [1991]: "upādāna no Mondai" (upādāna の 問題), Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū (印度學佛教學研究) 39-2, pp. (191)-(193) Takasaki, Jikido (高崎 直道) [1985]: "Ārayashiki to Engi: Shūju tono Kanren" (アーラヤ識と縁起—執受 upādāna との関連—), Hirakawa Akira Hakase Koki Kinen Ronshū Bukkyō Shisō no Sho-mondai (平川彰博士古稀記念論集仏教思想の諸問題), Tokyo: Shunjū-sha, pp. 33–53. Takeuchi, Shoko (武内 紹晃) [1985]: "Yuishikigaku Ronsho niokeru Shūju no Hutatsu no Yōrei" (唯識学論書における執受の二つの用例), Kumoi Shōzen Hakase Koki Kinen Bukkyō to I-shūkyō (雲井昭善博士古稀記念仏教と異宗教), Kyoto: Heirakuji-shoten, pp. 267–278. Especially the latter two contain the translation of the part of TrBh concerning this paper, and also a detailed analysis of it.

〈Key words〉 vāsanā, Sthiramati, Trīśikāvijñaptibhāṣya
(Graduate student, Kyoto University)