SUNYATA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN BUDDHISM

By—N.A. S.1517.

The concept of Sunyata is one of the main topics in Buddhism. Its early reference has been found in the Majjhima Nikaya, III, p. 164, in connection with the elucidation of Sunyata-viharana (सून्यता-विहरन). It is stated there that the monastery is Sunya, devoid of inhabitants, cows and hens, etc., but not devoid of rain, sun, or wind, and this is common to all.

One dwelling in the forest may be devoid of the village and its men, but not devoid of the forest existence. In the same way when a meditator meditates on the earth as one object without its rivers and mountains, etc. he remains devoid of men, forest or hills, etc. but not devoid of the earth-consciousness. When the meditator rises up to the fifth meditative concentration concentrating his mind on infinite space, this much remains in his mind as a real object, ātman. Similarly in his subsequent higher meditations on infinite sameness, on the state of nothingness, akāmacitta, and on the state of rapture, consciousness becomes devoid of every other object but not devoid of the meditated objects. In his last concentration on the absence of any object animistratya-citta, he finds that even this concept is not everlasting and permanent and thus he got rid of his three avasāya of things: rebirth and ignorance. Even though the meditator in this last concentration is freed from these impurities, āsrama, he, however, retains the state of his body as constituted of the six organs up to the end of his life. Thus we find explained in this Discourse the internal voidness Sunyata and the external voidness Sunyata, viz. the former is the deliverance of one's mind from the said impurities, whereas the latter is the absence of something else in a particular place or object, e.g. monastery, etc. It is not most likely that this internal Sunyata is conveyed in such phrasing alike: Sunyata gatavā hetu Sunyata-patimokkha, "Deceital sense is very deep... and so named with Sunyata, internal purification" "Sūnya" IV, p. 267.

A new interpretation of the term may be traced in Sūn. IV p. 154. Ananda makes a query to Buddha on the meaning of the word emptiness, and Buddha's answer is that it is empty because of the absence in it of the self and of anything of the self. This new interpretation is to be up throughout the later Pali texts like the Sūtra Jātaka and other Sūtras. It is thus as well.

A new expression has been formed in Sūn. I, p. 133 to convey the absence of soul in man in a stanza attributed to Arya Bhikṣu. It
reads: "To conceive a permanent living being in this body is a wrong view coming from the god of death, Mara. For, this body is pure collocalation of the manifest elements, and there is not found a permanent living being. Sutta of Sāṅghabhadra: From no store Saṅsaṅga occurs. The same expression in the Theragātha, 229; Sutta of Sāṅghabhāsī: Amatāvatā. The idea that Sutta stands in lieu of Sūtra has been suggested from the Sanskrit counterpart of the cited Pali stanza found in the Ashvaghosha-bhūsa of Vasubandhu, p. 466:

Thus the term, Sunya assumed a new definiteness: significance which fact will be more and more confirmed in the subsequent citations.

Sūtra-Samadhī is mentioned along with animitta and apariccheda in Vinaya IV.53, Digh. III. 219, Sam. IV. 360, Ang. I. 299 (Lamotte, Histoire, p. 47).

The above three Samadhis occur sometimes under three Vīmokkas (emancipation) and sometimes under Vīmokka-mukha (channel of emancipation). Sūtra-vīmokka (सूत्रावैभविन्य) is when one's mind is completely from the three impurities (Dhammapada, Sect 7, ver. 4). Dhammapada has only two vīmokkas, viz., Sunya and animitta as in the Cula-Sūtra-sutta of Majjhikha-nikāya.

S. vīmokka-mukha results from the contemplation on the non-soul-conception (Compendium, p. 216, Abh. Sin. I. 39). The Vmūlmaññā of Upatissa, (p. 313) also makes clear how the void-emancipation is fulfilled through penetration into no-soul-thought. One dwelling on the no-soul-thought obtains Sunyata-vīmokka-mukha, says the Pāli-samādhi (cited in Abh. Dipa, p. 474, n. 3). This specified import of Sūnyota has been much amplified by other Pāli authors like Nīgasena and Buddhaghosa. The former comments: "The self-character of all the manifest elements, the supreme voidness, i.e. absence of any living-being and intention the extreme voidness should be made bright" Samādhisamāna Sabhavana-parama-Sunnata-nirukā-niratthiyata-sam sampling 2. (Mittaka, Bombay Univ. Series, p. 456) while the latter remark: "As a wood-carver mill is void, i.e. free of any living-being and intention (nirukā-niratthiyata) and yet it acts as if it walks and

1. Note it is sunya (सूत्र) because there is no Saṅsaṅga, a sentient being in it.

2. जीवाचने संबंधं परस्परं विनिरहितं विनिपक्तं।

6
stand, just as is Nāma-rupa, man, he is void, i.e. free from any living being and intention (ajjīvam, akṣaram), yet he looks as if he has a self and intention and discharges duties, etc. (Viss. magga, ch. 16).

Even cet. in Mahāy. na Sutras he favored the idea that Sunyata concept countersākṣare-dhatu, belief, in soul (Lamotte, Vimal. kīrt., p. 141, n. 16, nel. saṃgamasamādhā, p. 17) as against the Sāndhīk.ā-sūtra’s saying:

"Voidness does neither arise nor die as all these things are devoid of their self-characteristics.

न भूतत्वं बन्धनं नो व स्वरूपेः

अत्यात्मस्य यथा समस्वरूपः

(ch. 7, Ver. 18 cited in B.udd. k. an. Sā. saṇ. a ha, p. 129).

Let us see now what N. j. jain, the great champion of the Sunyata school says. He makes Sākṣare-dhamma, as an empty husk around the seedling, the Po. He is rather my 166 dham niyama classified. However, it should be noted that he is a Patāilik, that is a Patālik-trinity, viz. he would combat strongly and radically every proposition relating to any notion in the topic of mind, put forward by his opponent. Who, e.g. the proposition is put forward, viz. cet., in case produces certain result, he finds itself with every one of the proposition asking whether the case, and the result is consistent or inconsistent and concludes ultimately that both the case and the result are Sunyata, void. This conclusion he makes solely in this text:—

"This world is . . . more continuity of cause and effect; there is no S. t., . . . as such in the empirical t. . . . for a. void thing come out of void thing".


The idea implied here that the process of cause and result continues for ever, without the end of any consciousness, gain is the fundamental topic of the Sā. sarv. Sūtra. Note the causation formula stated in the Sūtra:

"The seed which producing the fruit does not think, I am producing it; he produces it, while being produced does not think I am produced by the seed, etc." (p. 14). Thus the entire process of causation is free from any consciousness, gain, giving nirvāṇam (p. 15). Compare the Thagāthi: Saddhām bhāvanāy upeyām Saddhām upeyām...
"Pure is production of things and pure is the continuity of the manifest elements" substituting an old terminology Suddha, pure for Sunya, void, (Adhivittva-bhava ver. 13) and note his another saying: Suddham esaiva svarupa, "This is all pure and without an embryo" (Ibid. 9).

We can now see that the comments on Sunyata (सून्यता) made by Nagarjuna and Buddha-gaya as noted above (p. 18) are quite in keeping with the traditional thinking of the early Buddhists. Thus the cause, effect and the act of production being void, Nagarjuna declares:

"What is the dependent origination,
We call it voidness?" (Madhi. Sastra, ch. 1, Ver. 18).

The same idea he spells out in another context:

"Dependent origination is nothing but voidness, and (10) accepted by you."

क: महोकितकरुपावः सून्यता चव ते मना

Cited in Bodh-Panjika, p. 414 from his Lokaksa-stava 30).

In all these passages the original idea of Sunyata, self-lessness intended in the term must not be overlooked by us. So the premises made by the Madhyamika authors as dharmas are Sunya, void and maha-bhava, non-substantial are quite sensible and suggestive. Although one may plead with Bhumidatta (Kantaka. p. 36) that these two terms are synonymous, they have their own primary ideas and significances.

Some early Buddhists raise objection to such a wide application of Sunyata on the plea that Buddha preached it as a means to gain insight into an-soul-idea, (कल्पना). Nagarjuna replies in this celebrated stanza:

"Sunyata has been preached by Buddha with a view to removing all wrong speculations. But those who resort to it as an ultimate end are to be declared as incorrigible fellows".

(Madh-Sastra, XIII, 8).

The above introductory statement by Candrakirti in his Prasannapada makes clear that it was Nagarjuna who widened the application of Sunyata to the entire field of philosophical speculation. However, the

1. सून्याधिकारणां सून्य विषयवसन्तिः
fact that the Surya-doctrine must be viewed as a suitable weapon to check all the wrong views and opinions has also been well stressed by Nagaena, a predecessor of Nagarjuna (See Milinda, p. 464).

Doctrine of Surya (सूर्य) is a fundamental topic of the Sutrasiddhā which adopted it as an antidote against the reality-notions of separate elements including the concepts of Umacgī, etc. Surya is not applied to priestly dharmas, empirical things like chariot, house, etc., reality of which is negated by means of studies of the scripture. Surya-concept is not an end by itself, it is also put a stop to at the Nirvanic state (Ch. 141).

The S. Siddhi employs the term Sunya along with other three terms with reference to the elements in this order: anitya, dāhika, Sunya and anatman. Sunya has been made into 'selfless' in keeping with its early usage. Now the idea of anatman, 'selfless' becomes redundant; hence the term is treated as conveying the idea of non-substantial (chs. 189, 190, 191). The Siddhi presumably implies thereby the theory of two-fold soullessness, vacayoga of the Maha-Yācis.

We may now try to find out whether we have any early authority employing all the four terms in parallel as in the S. Siddhi. The Theragātha (Talapata's ver. 227) refers to them thus:

अभिलो नुस्धीरिणि विरधिनि
नुस्धिः अभिलो विरधिनि नुस्धिः

We have here two more characteristics, agaham, sinful and savaham, destructive. The Theravada addresses his mind to be watchful of things in their true characteristics in order that it may remain aloof from them.

The mind's watchfulness over the separate personality elements is one of the four ways of mindfulness, Satipatthana. It is explained in the Nikayas as to keep watch on the fact that dharmas like the removal of the hindrances, nirvana, seven factors of Bodhi and four noble truths, etc. are real and so on. But Vasubandhu gives a different meaning of Dharmamārtti. "The person engaged in it penetrates into the elements under four aspects: anitya, impermanent, dāhika, sorrowful, Sunya, void and anatman, selfless" (Abb. Vana, VI. 19). This interpretation should not be viewed as Vasubandhu's own, but it is, in fact, based on that of the early Sūtravādin authors as many other topics of the Kosas are. Cfr. the same interpretation in the Abb. dipa with Vitti, p. 516-17. We have the same four aspects stated in another context. The Sarvastivādin's Abhidharma, e.g. Parac-vātikā, p. 18, insists that the comprehension of the four Arya truths must be effected
under four aspects each. The first truth, dharma: amagga, dhammad, amana and anatman. Second, Dhamma-agga consists of the entire Universe (S. Siddhi, ch. 17) and its nature, which is explained under the four aspects of dharmas. Anagga, dhamma, amana and anatman. Though these four are not spoken of here under dhamma-agga, the context implies that they are described characteristics of things under that truth (p. 151). Four perfections (therm) are mentioned as related to the four aspects: (1) towards impermanent things, khyetanasam; (2) towards unskillful things, sattanaparip; (3) towards selfless things, sattanaparip; (4) towards ugly things. Since the moral body of the path is found under the four perfections, converse of them are attributed to the moral body, viz. nipa-pariparip, permanent-climax, unskillful-climax, and unskillful-climax and subskillful-climax.

According to the Buddhist there are four perfections to be checked by their four weaknesses (preyakata), viz., four ways of insecurity than: The mindfulness of the body checks the pre-weakness, sati; pre-weakness, on the feeling, khyetanasam; of the moral body, sattanaparip; in the mind, permanent perfections, nipa-parip. Of the pre-weakness, nipa-parip, attributes the soul-perfection, amagga (Kass. VI, 15 with wish and Abh. Dippa, p. 316). By exercising the four perfections the said four aspects are to be observed in order to check the mind, a perfection. The poet Asvaghosa who preceded the S. Siddhi employs the terms in parallel and explains the: The elements are amagga, void because there is neither producer nor object in them; they are amana, as that is without an object (Surdive, XVII, 10-21). It becomes now evident that the S. Siddhi and Asvaghosa have faithfully kept the earlier dictum in interpreting amagga into smallness or selflessness in respect of anatman, the S. Siddhi made it into anatman, nonexistent, pre-weakness, pre-weakness, following Njogirana and his school whereas Asvaghosa put it into desireless. The three-four characteristics of amagga, amana are described by Njogirana in his 5th ed. without explanation (p. 10).
A CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE YOGACARA AND THE MADHYAMAKA

The Yogacara idealists maintain that the objective world that we experience is a false reflection of our mind. It is unreal because it does not stand our critical and logical test as Dignaga has proved (Dhamapa-pariksha). Its one phase of the store-consciousness which is an accumulation of bestic forces from immemorial time (सत्तिकध महक). The store-consciousness must be checked and substantiated by a pure ultra-mundane knowledge. To do away with it is to acquire नन्दितत्व (v. नक्षत्र-परिवर्त्तनम्, M. Vilasaga, 1, 5, नन्दितत्वम् Trimsika, 3).

Maitreyanatha calls it Sunyata, voidness on the ground that it is cleared of all deluding forces which generate illusory appearance of the external things as well as attachment to them. Voidness is not an absolute non-entity but something more. His plea is that the liberation is secured as a result of clearing one’s own mind of its misconceptions and perversions. Because our consciousness presents an illusory show before us, we cannot deny its existence altogether. We deny its illusive characters; its self-substance remains there. The illusive characters are purely mind-gruping effects. (सत्तिकध महक). Its self-substance is beyond the reach of the ordinary mind, hence it cannot be denied (v. e., Vilh. Tika, p. 16, 10-11).

This conception of Sunyata differentiates it from the Madhyamikas. For Nagarjuna propounds the Madhyamika School, Sunyata, voidness conveys the idea of non-substantiety (नै सत्तन्त्र) and serves as an antidote against illusory perception and false notions. It has also been equated with the idea of relativity, i.e., some contingent existence of things. Nagarjuna says: whichever is brought about by causal relations is not really produced, and hence non-existent. He sometime raises

1. Cfr., Mujh. III, pp. 104ff.; Culaamantaka-Sutta. The purport of this Sutta is summed up thus: “The true solitude is not to be found in forest-dwelling nor in the concentration of heart from all ideas, but from in attaining to the deliverance from asavas.”

Mahala Skhara, Pali Proper Names, p. 904-5.
the concept of Sunyata to the status of the Absolute Truth, which he
defines as free of four essential attributes, etc. etc. (v. M. Vetti,
pp. 176, 491 & 372); but he never says that Sunyata by itself is
the Truth.

The Idealists do not agree with N. Gorjuna's line of thinking.
Maitreyya, founder of the school has presented convincingly his case and
shown how the concept of Sunyata should be viewed in order to
accomplish the cherished purpose. He asks: How is voidness to be viewed?
His reply is:

When something is absent in a place, that place is devoid
(अभाव) of that something; what is left out there over and above
that something, exists forever. Perceiving it in this manner
one is said to have grasped voidness in a true perspective. Going
this one is said to have penetrated deep into voidness. This point
is further illustrated as follows:

Suppose, we have here some object (name) specified as Rupa,
etc. When its aspect coming under category of designation does not
at all exist as it is imposed thereon, that object is devoid of the aspect
that is designated as Rupa, etc. What is seen there is the object designa-
ted as Rupa, etc., and what serves as the basis of the designation; this
अपदि (नासुक) (serving simply as accessory to such designation)
is something real. When one understands truly well these two: the
basic object and the designation, he does not impose anything that is
not there, does not negate the basic truth (प्रसंस्करण), neither exaggerates
nor belittles, neither removes nor imposes, but understands the truth
well; that is the Tathata (सत्यता) which is indiscernible in its nature:
This is known as well grasped voidness.

The fact that every element is indiscernible in its nature is
to be ascertained from the scripture also. (Buddha says in the Bhav.
Sankhyantra)

Whichever thing is designated with which we designation
(नासुक) (designated) thing does not at all exist in
itself: this is true law of elements (स्वतंत्रता). (v. 75, 76, 7)

1. The same idea is expressed in M. j., III, p. 106:

मं त्रिपृष्ठाः स्वप्नम् स्वप्नं प्रसंस्करणस्वप्नं
मं त्रिपृष्ठाः स्वप्नम् स्वप्नं प्रसंस्करणस्वप्नं

12
Dharmata according to Kumātika is prakṛti, true characteristic of all elements that remains outside of all discursive talk:

वर्षणं अवशेषीनुभ नदनं समानं ।

Prajña.

How one is said to have ill-grasped voidness is also elucidated by Mātrayaśa thus: If any ascetic or Brahman does not wish to concede that what is devoid of something that something is non-existent and what is left out there is existent, then voidness becomes ill-understood. Why so? Because it is proper to say that when there is something absent, that something is non-existent; whereas it is obvious, that basic element is existent. If every thing (i.e. both) is non-existent, how will it be? What is it that is devoid? Of what it is devoid? Nor is it proper to say that it is devoid of itself. Therefore the concept of voidness in this manner becomes ill-grasped (I-f G. IV, etc., E. L.V.
Poutré: Note on Sunya; with an extract from Bodhichittta-bhāṣya.)

Speaking earlier of the Nihātrīts (Vin. nīlaka) who denies absolutely any fundamental basic principle underlying our talks and designations Maitreya observes: We shall disclose how a Nihātrī who challenges the very basic principle inherent in the surface of things like rupa, etc. (matters) shall be fallen from this spiritual discipline (dharma-rūpya). To the person who denies even the basic principle (vāsanātra), in such things it is impossible to speak of the basic truth and the designations. For example, the talk of the soul (pudgala) is possible only in the presence of five aggregates of elements, matter etc. but not in their absence. Likewise in the presence of the basic truth underlying the matter, etc. the designations of such things are possible but not otherwise. In its absence one must be a useless talk. When there is no basic principle, the baseless talk also will not be there. Thus there are certain people who on account of their ill-understanding, having heard the discourses that are inclined to Nihātric ideas and attached to the elucidation of voidness and logical meanings, do not grasp the true meaning of what is preached there, speculate wrongly, and with the help of improper and ill formulated logic conceive wrong ideas thus: Designation is only one principal truth; one who conceives in this manner conceives not well. For them the basic principle that serves as substratum of designation is absent and the designation also by no means is possible. How can there be the designation itself as the basic principle? In this manner they destroy both the principle as well as designation. The basic principle being denied, he is to be declared as a principal Nihātrī (Pradhanamāntika).

As such he deserves neither conversation nor co-existence with the wise men. He not only dopes himself but dopes others too. Buddha with
this idea in view says: Every thing is possible for certain person of the soul-view, but nothing is possible for him who mis-conceives the voidness. Why so? A man of soul-view may be deluded in respect of one knowable reality (pure): but he does not dispute every knowable reality. Nor will be, due to that view, fall into unhappy state of life. He will neither dispute with any seeker of truth, nor will be duped him. He may on the other hand, make the person secure a true dharma. But a man of misconceived voidness will be deluded in respect of knowable reality and neglect it. Due to that he will fall into unhappy state of life and destroy the seeker of truth and the end of misery. He will become finally negligent in his religious duties (itihastot). This person negating the truth (knowable reality) will fall from the spiritual discipline (dharmainga) (I bid.)

Prof. Louis de Vallee Poussin thinks that the absolute Niblist (Vinanyaka) referred to in the passage cited above is perhaps Bhavaviveka of the Madhyamika school or the Madhyamika system itself which maintains the views similar to those expressed in the passage. It is most likely that the passage critiques Nagarjuna's school which holds the view that everything including Nirvana is absolutely void. Nagarjuna, too warns that voidness being ill grasped will destroy the seeker of the truth; e.g. the serpent when one catches it improperly destroys the person (M. Sutra, XXIV, II).

It is interesting to note that the above passage throws among other things a new light on the origin of the Idealistic thought in Buddhism. Maitreya makes absolutely clear that his school was started with a view to reinterpret the concept of Sunyata (सून्यता) which was elaborated in the Pratityasamutpada Sutras and which was made again the subject matter of the Madhyamika Sutras. It was the Madhyamika who upheld the view that Sunyata stands for an absolute negation of any conceivable thought about the ultimate truth. He never speaks of any fundamental principle (अभिव्यक्ति) underlying our daily experiences. The Idealistic characterizes it as not, existent whereas the Madhyamika keeps it clear from such characterization. For him the absolute in free of any attribute, existence or non-existence.

It is quite logical to plead with the Idealists that there ought to be some basic principle on which our illusive talk is founded. This point is well elucidated by Candrakirti in course of presenting the Idealistic position in his Madh. Avatara as follows:

"The relative existence (parastana) ought to be upheld since it is considered to be the basis of entire chain of imaginations. The illusion of snake arises on the support of a rope. No such illusion would arise in the absence of rope. Likewise the idea of blue, etc.
arises on the support of some basic mind. If this basic fact is absent, what would be the basis of the idea of blue, etc.? Therefore we ought to uphold paratana, the basic mind, the basic cause of the blue idea, etc. It is also a causative gift of deluding karmas as well as purifying ones. In this manner one realizes that what is absent in a place is co-existing truly. This (realization) is what is called truly entering into voidness. By realizing this wise voidness becomes well concluded” (v. my Sinhalese text, p. 47, f. pub. in JOR, M. Supplement, 1930).

C.o.t. Kitte earlier remarks that the advocate of God holds that He is creator of the universe; likewise the advocate of the store-consciousness holds that the creator of the universe is the store-consciousness. The universe for the Vedantin is in illusion and impressed on the impersonal Brahman which is eternal and subsists above all illusory things. The Buddhist Idealists agree with the Advaita Vedantins in so far as one basic reality (केशवत) is constituted, but differ from the latter in viewing it as momentary. Since the basic store-consciousness is momentary and saturated with self-created qualities, it is gradually to be elucidated and subsumed fully or converted into a permanent ultimate knowledge.

Vasubandhu’s definition of the perfect knowledge is that when the basic consciousness, paratana is devoid of all imposed ideas (parikalpa), it becomes perfect knowledge (parinirmana). Since the latter is evolved from the former, the former is considered as a real entity. In Maitreya’s terminology samala ‘Ataka (समलक्ष निदर्पण) is paratana and Vinala ‘Ataka (विनालक्ष निदर्पण) is parinirmana or equivalent to Tathagatagarbha in paratana and Dharmakaya is parinirmana, or according to Madhyantavibhanga Abhapanaskhipa (मद्यांतविभंग काढिपाथिक) is paratana and Tatra Sampuru (तत्त्व सूपुरुष) is parinirman.

Maitreya remarks that the Absolute is sometimes contaminated with impurities, and sometimes freed from them. Owing to contamination man strongly adheres to the idea of subject-object relations in his mind and entertain a misgiving about the concept of Simarta, i.e., ideation-ledge, entanglement. When he gives up that idea and acquires the true knowledge, then the true concept of voidness dawns in his mind and he is said to be freed from impurities. Thus the pure or.
impure state of mind is contingent (तत्त्वज्ञान) or conditioned and does not affect its own nature; for it is forever shining in its nature (प्रकृतिस्वतेः). The water or gold, e.g., is pure in its nature but becomes impure on account of its contamination with impure elements. Likewise is the mind. But the contaminated state is something actual and not our guess. Otherwise all people would become at once wise and noble (M. Vibh. Tīkā, p. 427-3). Its original purity also cannot be questioned; otherwise all our efforts for our spiritual betterment would be in vain and produce little effect. A Bodhisattva takes to the spiritual path in order that he would serve people and fulfill their desires. That is the primary purpose in his life.

Now let us note the Ratnagotra’s comment on Sunyata. Tathagata-dharm is void of the accidental impurities which are of separable character, and non-void of the highest virtues of inseparable character (l. 153). There is nothing to be removed, nor is there anything to be imposed upon it (absolute). The absolute (चिन्त) should be viewed as such, one who views it in its true perspective gets released. In these statements the characteristic of Sunyata is elucidated as a middle path (अपेक्षयं) since it has been denied of either impurity or imputation. The author further denounces the Madhyamikas and their mode of thinking; these whose thought is distracted from the enunciated import of Sunyata or not composed or concentrated upon it are declared to be drifted from the Sunyata. In the absence of true comprehension of Sunyata of the highest import (paramatmya) the indiscriminated absolute element (अत्तर्त) cannot be comprehended or cognized introspectively. With this intention it is stated (by Buddha): Tathagata’s comprehension of Sunyata is no other than that of Tathagata-ibha which is unknown or unrealized by the Svaekas and Pratyekbudhis, etc. (P. 76). The same treatise decides those who profess and adhere to the Sunyata-concepts itself are maddened in the doctrine. Buddha declares towards such persons: Far better is the belief in soul (ात्मानं) of Sumera mountain dimension than an abseased sunyata-concept (p.18, l. 11). Negapriya too is not less emphatic in denouncing such obsession: Those who adhere to the Sunyata-concept by itself, we call them incorrigible (M. Sutra, XIII, 8). These two statements make it plain that each school holds its own interpretation prima facie correct and condemns other’s one a fallacious. An interesting parallel to this idea of Sunyata, not ideal by itself can be traced in the hotoniad, mantra.

Bone of contention between the Yogacara and the Madhyamika schools is the question of Parama. The Yogacara (Vijñaptimaṇḍala) holds it as real and existing, because it serves as a basis of our designations and imputations. However Bhaviveka, a champion of Sanātan- trika Madhyamika school refuses to accept its reality. He has also
criticized the interpretation of Sunyata as has been shown in the above cited passage (of the Yogacarabhumi: वें गुप्तागुप त्वस्य अति), Read his Karatalakata (Vissudhimagga pub 1949, pp 1516 37-59). He has been accused by Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsuan Tsang and others that he has made Mahayana lacking in lankas, paramatra, etc. (K. My Introp. XII-III, Karata).

For the Vijayavada, paramatra, relative entity may be unreal only in so far as its imposed aspect is concerned विजयवत्वमें अति but not absolutely unreal. It is an entity which consists of eight consciousness elements (काल्याणां च स्मुद्रम प्रति) M. Vibb. Tika I, p. 15).

This point has been emphasized in the first stanza of his treatise by Maitreyas:

There is a (foundation of ) unreal imputations, but in it duality (of the subject-and-object-aspects) is not there. There is, however, Sunyata, voidness; in that voidness even there is imputation. (Madhyanta, I, 2).

Here the foundation of imputation is the mind and mental states (verse 9); they continue by way of causes and conditions up to the time of Nirvana and cover the three spheres of existence (Madhy. Tika, p. 12. L:10-11; also Trimsika, p. 41).

The later schools of Buddhism in Tibet and Mongolia which sprang from the Yogacara school have admitted the mind as the ultimate principle and viewed it as anitya with the implication of advaya, non-dual. Note, for example, Tibet’s great Yogin Milarepa’s statement (Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup’s translation)"I understood the Samvara and Nirvana to be dependent and relative states and that the Universal cause is mind which is distinct from ideas of interestlessness or partiality. This universal cause, when directed along the path of Disbelief (or selfishness) resulted in the Samvara; while, if it be directed along the path of Ahimsa, it resulted in Nirvana. I was perfectly convinced that the real source of both Samvara and Nirvana lay in the voidness (of the Supreme Mind) "—p. 209. Previously Milarepa is said to be well versed in the exposition of the science of the clear void of mind, wherein all forms and substances have their cause and origin. Here the mind is viewed as the void which however is not the void of nothingness, but the primordial uncreated, unformed, incapable of being described in terms of phenomenal experience (pp. 30-7). The primordial cause is pri.
meridional Mind, the one unity. All pairs of opposites being but concepts of mundane mind — when viewed by the supra-mundane sense of enlightenment merge in at-one-ment, and Duality is realized to be illusion (p.15. n. 1, Evans Wentz, Milarepa, Oxford, 1958).

**Note**

The term, Sunya in the following instances indicate the absence of people or some person:—

- Sunyata Dhp. XXV. 14, Milindap. Bombay edn. p. 360
- Sunyata, Sam-Nikaya, IV, 192ff.
- Sunyatana (="Ruh") Jataka, Vol. III, No. 305.
- Shunya, Kanyakuru. Amarasataka, Ver. 82.

Again let us note Vasubandhu’s comments on these two terms, Sunya and Anatman:—

- भावोऽभोज्यस्वप्न शुनयुः।
- अत्राःशुनयकालस्य अनातमः।

- मयाभिस्वप्नापि शुनयुः।
- मयाप्रतिविमाश्च अनातमः।

- भावोऽभोज्यस्वप्न शुनयुः।
- अत्राःशुनयकालस्य अनातमः।
Kosabhasya, p 400.

N. A. Sastri,
Sastiniketen.