

**Ālaya-vijñāna in the Yogācāra School &
Bhavaṅga - citta in Theravāda Abhidhamma in Relation
to the Process of Rebirth**

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Abstract

This article examines and compares the concepts of Ālaya-vijñāna and Bhavaṅga-citta in the Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhist traditions. Vijñāna (consciousness) refers to the awareness that animates the physical body through each birth and death cycle. According to the Theravāda Abhidhamma, Bhavaṅga is the most fundamental aspect of the mind, which presents an aspect of consciousness (bhavaṅga-citta), as the basis of all mental processes in the Samsaric continuum. The process of sense perception begins with bhavaṅga and it continues throughout life like a river current until it is annihilated with the attainment of Nibbāna. Both Ālaya-vijñāna and Bhavaṅga-citta play important roles in psychological and physical processes. They serve as continuing mechanisms attaining wisdom in order to penetrate consciousness itself. They are crucial to mental and physical actions and play an extremely important role in the life continuum, and Nibbāna.

Keywords: *Vijñāna (consciousness), Ālaya-vijñāna (store consciousness), Bhavaṅga-citta (factor of existence), Process of Rebirth*

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