

**ISSUES IN ŚAMATHA AND VIPAŚYANĀ:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION**

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BY
YA-CHUN HUNG
(BHIKKHUNĪ SYINCHEN)

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Ya-Chun Hung
(Bhikkhunī Syinchen)

Candidate

Fall 2010

Date

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APPROVED BY:

(William Chu, Supervisor)

Date

(Bruce Long, Member)

Date

(Bhikkhu Anālayo, Member)

Date

**I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted
as an exercise for a degree at any other University,
and that it is entirely my own work.**

Signed _____

Abstract

The union of *śamatha* (tranquility meditation) and *vipaśyanā* (insight meditation) is the unique Buddhist path to deliverance. This dissertation explores various schemes of *śamatha* developed in distinct meditation systems, so as to analyze the different degrees of samādhi which affect the power of insight in eradication of defilements. The nature of *dhyāna/jhāna* is explained quite different in the canonical and commentarial materials of Buddhist schools. How a meditator practices mindfulness of breathing is based on how a meditator interprets what the *dhyāna/jhāna* is. This dissertation provides various possible explanations for the diverse dispositions of meditators in meditation practice. In insight meditation, when consciousness acts with skillful mental qualities, one is able to penetrate the true nature of all physical and mental phenomena; in the cycle of rebirth, consciousness links the present existence and the next. The different roles of consciousness in rebirth, and deliverance are investigated. This dissertation is mainly based on the Chinese Canon to examine key issues in meditation practice, revolving around the significance of tranquility meditation and insight meditation.

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Abbreviations

AH	<i>*Abhidharmahṛdayasāstra</i>
AAS	<i>Abhidharmāmṛtasāstra</i>
ANS	<i>*Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra</i>
AK	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i>
AN	<i>Aṅguttara Nikāya</i>
AS	<i>Abhidharmasamuccaya</i>
ASV	<i>Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā</i>
Avb	<i>*Abhidharmavibhāṣāsāstra</i>
App	<i>Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra</i>
BSĀ	<i>Samyukta Āgama (2nd partial)</i>
Chl	<i>Chengweishih lun</i>
DK	<i>Dhātukāya</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha Nikāya</i>
Dsk	<i>Dharmaskandha</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottara Āgama</i>
JP	<i>Jñānaprasthāna</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama Āgama</i>
Mhr	<i>Mahāratnakūṭasūtra</i>
Mhs	<i>*Mahāyānasamgraha</i>
MhsA	<i>*Mahāyānasamgrāha-bhāṣya</i> by Asvabhāva
MhsV	<i>*Mahāyānasamgrāha-bhāṣya</i> by Vasubandhu
Msl	<i>Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra</i>

Mhv	<i>*Mahāvibhāṣā</i>
MN	<i>Majjhima Nikāya</i>
MP	<i>*Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa</i>
MV	<i>Madhyāntavibhāga</i>
PP	<i>Prakaraṇapāda</i>
PS	<i>*Prakaraṇāryavākāśāstra</i>
Psk	<i>Pañcaskandhakaparakaraṇa</i>
Pss	<i>*Pañcaskandhaparakaraṇavāibhāṣya</i>
Pps	<i>Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitāsūtra</i>
SĀ	<i>Samyukta Āgama</i>
SH	<i>*Samyuktābhīdharmahṛdayaśāstra</i>
SN	<i>Samyutta Nikāya</i>
SP	<i>Samgītiparyāya</i>
SS	<i>Samdhinirmocanasūtra</i>
Sps	<i>Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra</i>
T	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 大正新修大藏經
TS	<i>*Tattvasiddhiśāstra</i>
Vim	<i>Vimuttimagga</i>
YB	<i>Yogācārabhūmi</i>

Chapter I

Introduction

An examination of the development of *samatha* (tranquility) and *vipāśyanā* (insight) in Buddhist schools demonstrates that the Buddha's teachings are of one-taste in the path of deliverance, leading one to see things as they really are. All Buddhist traditions are of one-taste in the ocean of Dharma. As the *Pahārāda Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* states, "Just as the great ocean has but one taste, the taste of salt; even so this Dhamma and Discipline has but one taste, the taste of liberation."¹ Yet, the one-taste of Dharma was inevitably developed into different systems by disciples in their quest for truth and the purification of themselves and this world. In order to analyze the consistent and dynamic nature of Buddhist meditation within the one-taste of Dharma, it is crucial to trace and investigate the fundamental characteristics of *samatha* and *vipāśyanā* in the *Āgamas*, the *Nikāyas*, the Abhidharma and commentarial literature, and the Mahāyāna texts. By using textual analysis, the study is mainly based on the Chinese Canon to examine the essence of Buddhist meditation and its development in Buddhist schools.

The development of *samatha* and *vipāśyanā* is related to three questions: 1) What kinds of *samatha* does a meditator need as the basis for the development of insight? 2) Could the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, serve as an adequate basis for a meditator to eradicate all taints? 3) What samādhis can serve as the adequate basis for the initial stage of enlightenment? These three questions are dealt

¹ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 204.

with in the second chapter. In order to solve these questions, I will clarify the different schemes of *śamatha* which are suggested in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, and then examine variant schemes developed in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature, and the Mahāyāna texts.

First, the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha* in the *Qiyi jing* 七依經 shows that the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments are the supporting condition for the development of insight.² This sūtra is cited by the Yogācārins and the Abhidharma masters of different schools to prove that the *śamatha* needed by a meditator to develop insight is the first seven attainments with perception. However, in the *Āgamas*, the 745th sūtra and the 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* (*Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經), the *Bacheng jing* 八城經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* (*Zhong ahan jing* 中阿含經), and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* 佛說十支居士八城人經 suggest that the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception can also be the adequate basis for the development of insight, forming the eightfold scheme of *śamatha*.³ Clarifying the discrepancy in the *Āgamas* is essential for the determination of which scheme is authentic in the sūtras for one to practice insight.

Second, the ninefold scheme is based on the sevenfold scheme in the sūtras to include the *anāgāmya-samādhi*, and the *dhyānāntara*. The *anāgāmya-samādhi* and the *dhyānāntara* were indicated by the Abhidharma masters to interpret the Buddha's implicit suggestions in the sūtras; both were developed in the Abhidharma systems becoming the

² This discourse is not present in the *Āgamas*, but is preserved in its entirety in the *Dharmaskandh* at T1537, 493c28.

³ SĀ 745 at T99, 198a02; SĀ 870 at T99, 220b7; MĀ 217 at T26, 802b26; *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* 佛說十支居士八城人經 at T92, 916c28.

adequate basis for insight⁴ The ninefold scheme of *śamatha* had been completely developed in the Sarvāstivāda school, and assimilated by the Yogācārinś The investigation of the Buddha's implicit meanings in the sūtras and the definite interpretations in the Abhidharma systems is conducive to analyzing how the complete *śamatha* system is developed in Buddhist schools, and responds to the second question could the *anāgāmya*-samādhi serve as the basis for one to eradicate all taints? This question involves whether the *dhyāna* is necessary for one to attain enlightenment

Third, the sixfold scheme of *śamatha* set by **Mahāvibhāṣā* (*Apīdamo dāpīposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論), consisting of the four *dhyānas*, the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, and the *dhyānāntara*, serves as the basis for one to reach the initial stage of enlightenment⁵ In contrast, the fivefold scheme of *śamatha* set by the *Yogācārabhūmi* (*Yuqie shidi lun* 瑜伽師地論) is composed of the four *dhyānas* and the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, imperative to the initial breakthrough to the noble truths (*satya-abhisamaya*)⁶ The sixfold scheme and the fivefold scheme are consistent to indicate it is not the formless attainments (*ārūpya-samāpatti*), but the *dhyānas* that could serve as the basis for one to eradicate the three coarsest fetters (*trīṇi saṃyojanāni*)—identity view (that is, view of self), attachment to rules and observances, and doubt This shows that the *dhyānas* and the formless attainments have different functions in the extirpation of defilements The controversial

⁴ Mhv at T1545, 218a28 無漏者在九地 謂四靜慮、未至、中間、下三無色 AK at T1558, 32a1 若無漏道展轉相望，一一皆與九地為因，謂未至定、靜慮中間、四本靜慮、三本無色，九地道諦皆互為因 YB at T1579, 881a8 一切異生復有九依能盡諸漏。何等為九？謂未至定、若初靜慮、靜慮中間、餘三靜慮、及三無色，除第一有 MP at T1509, 187c9 九地無漏定：四禪、三無色定、未到地、禪中間，能斷結使

⁵ Mhv at T1545, 311a16 三結或依四或依未至滅者：四謂四靜慮地，未至謂未至地及靜慮中間，此二俱名未至地故。問此地何故名未至耶？答未入根本能現在前斷諸煩惱故名未至

⁶ YB at T1579, 682b27 復次，唯依諸靜慮及初靜慮近分未至定能入聖諦現觀，非無色定。所以者何？無色定中奢摩他道勝，毘鉢舍那道劣，非毘鉢舍那劣道能入聖諦現觀

point between these two schemes is: Could the *dhyānāntara* serve as the efficient basis for one to eliminate the three coarsest fetters? In other words, does the *dhyānāntara* function as the basis for the initial stage of enlightenment? The different functions of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the *dhyānāntara*, the four *dhyānas*, and the three formless attainments in the elimination of defilements will be discussed, so as to respond the third question: what samādhis can serve as the adequate basis for the initial stage of enlightenment?

The third chapter is an investigation into the nature of *dhyāna/jhāna*. The four *dhyānas* are called “*rūpa*” (form) *dhyānas*. What does *rūpa* signify? If one intends to penetrate the selfless nature of the form aggregate (*rūpa-skandha*), it is not the formless attainments (*ārūpya-samāpatti*), but the “*rūpa-dhyānas*” can serve as a basis for one to see the true nature of physical phenomena. This is clearly shown in the *Mahāmālunkya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Jhāna Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*.⁷ These discourses illustrate that the unique characteristic of the *rūpa-dhyāna* is for a meditator to see the physical phenomena as they really are. The term “*rūpa*” stands in contrast to *kāma* and *arūpa*, the three types of realms, namely “fine-material.” In the fine-material realm (*rūpadhātu*), the physical body must be present. In the *rūpa-dhyāna*, a feeling of the body is still there. Then, does sensory awareness occur while one is in *dhyāna*? By focusing on the controversy of Maudgalyāyana/Moggallāna hearing sounds in meditation, I will explore whether or not sensory awareness can take place while one is in *dhyāna*.

According to the Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds while in a meditative attainment, and this attainment was

⁷ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 539-41. Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 235.

not purified⁸ This suggests that sensory awareness can be present while one is in *dhyāna* According to the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Anguttara Nikāya*, sounds are a thorn to one who attains the first *dhyāna*⁹ This means that sounds are an obstruction for one to stay in a meditative attainment, that is, if one pays attention to the disturbance of sounds from outside, one loses the meditative attainment

The *Mahāsāmgghika Vinaya*, the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, and the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* describe that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds after emerging from a formless attainment¹⁰ This case illustrates that sensory awareness cannot occur while one is in the formless attainment All these *Vinayas* record the same event of Venerable Maudgalyāyana hearing sounds, but hearing sounds within a meditative attainment or after emerging from the attainment is recorded differently

The *Kathāvatthu* disputes the possibility of hearing sounds while one is in *dhyāna*¹¹ The *Visuddhimagga* also states that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*, because “consciousness at that time does not occur by way of the five doors”¹² In contrast, the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra* (*Xianyang shengjiao lun* 顯揚聖教論) maintain that a meditator hears sounds through

⁸ Horner, trans., *Vinaya-pitaka*, 1 189-90 The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* at T1428, 984c26 時目連告諸比丘言：我入空慧定，聞八萬四千象入曼陀延池水聲 佛言：有如是定但不清淨

⁹ MĀ 84, AN 10 72

¹⁰ The *Mahāsāmgghika Vinaya* at T1425, 466a5 佛告諸比丘：目連實得無色定，不善知出入相，出定聞，非入定聞 The *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya* at T1435, 441a1 佛語諸比丘：汝等莫說目連是事過罪。何以故？目連見先事不見後事，如來亦見先亦見後。目連在耆闍崛山中，入虛空無色定，善取入定相，不善取出定相。是人從三昧起，聞薩卑尼池岸上象聲已，還疾入虛空無色定，便謂我入定聞聲 The *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* at T1442, 680b6 世尊告曰：汝諸苾芻如大目連所言無妄，雖復現入無所有處定，諸色聲想悉皆遠離。然大目連獲得靜慮解脫勝妙等持，速出速入，雖是出定調在定中，便以其事告諸苾芻，我在定中聞象吼叫

¹¹ Upagupta, *Kathāvatthu*, trans Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs Rhys Davids, 331

¹² Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 323

ear-consciousness while in a meditative attainment.¹³ Whether or not a meditator is able to hear sounds within a deep absorption is not only controversial in the Buddhist *Vinayas*, but also debatable in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature, and the Mahāyāna texts.

In Buddhist *dhyāna*, there are five *dhyāna* factors—applied thought (*vitarka/vitakka*), sustained thought (*vicāra*), rapture (*prīti/pīti*), pleasure (*sukha*), and unification of mind (*ekāgratā/ekaggatā*)—present in the first *dhyāna*.¹⁴ *Vitarka* and *vicāra* are two unique mental qualities of a meditator while in the first *dhyāna*. *Prīti* is present feeling which is experienced while one is in the two lower *dhyānas*. *Sukha* is also present feeling which is experienced while one is in the three lower *dhyānas*. Unification of mind is the *dhyāna* factor common to the four *rūpa-dhyānas* and the four formless attainments. In the five *dhyāna* factors, *vitarka*, *vicāra*, *prīti*, and *sukha* are peculiar to the *rūpa-dhyānas*; that is, these four *dhyāna* factors are the distinctive characteristics of the *rūpa-dhyānas*. Based on what the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* say, the Buddhist schools developed quite different interpretations on *vitarka* and *vicāra*, which reflect their respective understandings and experiences on what *dhyāna* is. In this chapter, I will explore the origin of *vitarka* and *vicāra* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, and then examine how the Abhidharma and commentarial literature and the Mahāyāna texts explain these two *dhyāna* factors in meditation practice.

According to the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and the 810th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*,

¹³ YB at T1579, 650c20. 若遇聲緣從定而起，與定相應意識俱轉餘耳識生，非即彼定相應意識能取此聲。若不爾者，於此音聲不領受故，不應出定。非取聲時即便出定，領受聲已，若有稀望，後時方出。PS at T1602, 576b24. 又處定中取外聲時，當知由二種取：一由了別定所緣境及種種所緣境意識故，二由此俱生耳識故。

¹³ YB at T1579, 650c20.

¹⁴ MN 43, MĀ 210

prīti and *sukha* are pleasant feelings classified under the aggregate of feeling (*vedanāskandha*). Yet, the definition of *prīti* and *sukha* are quite controversial in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature. In Theravāda, the *Visuddhimagga* does not regard *prīti* as a pleasant feeling, but a mental concomitant (*caittasika/cetasika*) belonging to the aggregate of mental formations (*saṃskāraskandha*).¹⁵

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the **Mahāvībhāṣā* and the *Dharmaskandha* (*Abhidharma fayun zu lun* 阿毘達磨法蘊足論) treat *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* as pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) included in the aggregate of mental formations, and *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* to be a mental pleasure belonging to the aggregate of feeling.¹⁶

In Yogācāra, the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra* suggest that *prīti* and *sukha* involve both mental pleasure and bodily pleasure belonging to the aggregate of feeling.¹⁷ Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhiśāstra* (*Chengshih lun* 成實論), also says that both *prīti* and *sukha* are pleasant feeling.¹⁸ In the third chapter, I will clarify the nature of *prīti* and *sukha*, and analyze their functions in meditation practice, so as to expound the typical characteristics of *dhyāna*.

Mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasmṛti/ānāpānasati*) will be discussed in the fourth chapter. In the Chinese *Āgamas* and the Pāli *Nikāyas*, mindfulness of breathing is

¹⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 142.

¹⁶ Mhv at T1545, 412b5: 初二靜慮是輕安樂，第三靜慮別是受樂；初二靜慮樂行蘊攝，第三靜慮樂受蘊攝。Dsk at 1537, 484b25: 身受樂者：身調意身，由意身中有受樂故，四大種身亦得安適，由此因緣名身受樂。此中樂者：調離喜時已斷身重性心重性，乃至身調柔性心調柔性，總名為樂。此是受樂，非輕安樂。

¹⁷ YB at T1579, 467c2: 言喜樂者：謂已獲得所希求義，及於喜中未見過失，一切羶重已除遣故，及已獲得廣大輕安，身心調暢有堪能故，說名喜樂。YB at T1579, 468a17: 彼於爾時色身意身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂。第三靜慮已下諸地，無如是樂及無間捨。PS at T1602, 487a3: 喜者：謂已轉依者依於轉識，心悅心勇心適心調安適受受所攝。樂者：謂已轉依者依阿賴耶識能攝所依，令身怡悅安適受受所攝。

¹⁸ TS at T1646, 341a3: 又樂受即是喜，但差別說，亦從猗別說為樂，如經中說得身猗則受樂。

said to fulfill the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*)¹⁹ and the seven enlightenment factors (*sattabojjhangā*),²⁰ culminating in knowledge and deliverance.²¹ This meditation practice was used by the Buddha on the night of his enlightenment, consisting of the development of both tranquility meditation (*śamatha*) and insight meditation (*vipāśyanā*). But, the practice of mindfulness of breathing is explained quite differently in the *Visuddhimagga*,²² the *Vimuttimagga*,²³ the **Mahāvibhāṣā*,²⁴ the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*,²⁵ and the *Yogācārabhūmi*.²⁶ The major differences between these treatises include the kind of meditation object employed and the way insight is developed. These differences could be summarized as involving two controversial issues: First, do bodily sensations occur while one is in *dhyāna*? Whether or not bodily sensations are present while one is in *dhyāna* has implications on what the meditation object should be for the practice of mindfulness of breathing. Second, is insight developed while one is in *dhyāna* or after one emerges from *dhyāna*?

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, there is no experience of bodily sensations in *dhyāna*, and hence the meditation object “the breath” needs to be replaced by a mental counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga nimitta*), before one can enter the state of *dhyāna*.²⁷ The Chinese *Vimuttimagga* does not state whether or not bodily sensations are present while one is in *dhyāna*. This work simply suggests that one uses tactile signs or breath

¹⁹ They are mindfulness of body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), mind (*citta*) and mental objects (*dhamma*).

²⁰ The seven enlightenment factors (*satta bojjhangā*) are: mindfulness (*sati*), investigation of the law (*dhamma-vicaya*), energy (*virīya*), rapture (*pīti*), serenity (*passaddhi*), concentration (*Samādhi*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

²¹ SĀ 810, MN 118

²² It is an influential work in Theravāda.

²³ It has a close affinity with the *Visuddhimagga*.

²⁴ It is an important Abhidharma text of Sarvāstivāda.

²⁵ It is an outstanding Abhidharma text.

²⁶ It is an encyclopedic text of Yogācāra.

²⁷ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 279, 323.

sensations as the meditative object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing ²⁸

The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the **Abhidharmanyāyāmusārasāstra* indicate that the orthodoxy of the Sarvāstivāda is that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna* ²⁹ On this basis of this position, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* maintains that after attaining *dhyāna*, one uses perception of the breath for the practice of mindfulness of breathing, that is, a meditator concentrates on perception of the breath to discern in-and-out breath throughout the entire body as a thread through a pearl ³⁰

Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, also says that the breath flows throughout the whole body like a thread through a pearl, but points out that a meditator is aware of the breath cool or warm, having a benign or malign influence to the body ³¹ He adopts the position of the Sautrāntika that body-consciousness can occur while one is in *dhyāna*, hence, breath sensations are suggested as the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing while one is in *dhyāna* ³²

The *Yogācārabhūmi* states that a meditator is able to experience bodily pleasant feeling while in *dhyāna* ³³ Sthiramati, in his **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* (*Dasheng apidamo zajitun* 大乘阿毘達磨雜集論), says that the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while one is in *dhyāna*, but that *ālaya*-consciousness sustains the body to experience bodily pleasure ³⁴ Vasubandhu and Asvabhāva, in their respective commentaries on the **Mahāyānasamgraha*, state that there is no arising of the five

²⁸ Vim at T1648, 412a8 又一行處，以觸應取相，謂念數息

²⁹ AK at T1558, 147a2 正在定中無五識故 ANS at T1562, 760a27 正在定中無五識故

³⁰ Mhv at T1545, 135a17 住心觀息遍住身中如珠中纒

³¹ AK at T1558, 118b10 觀息住身如珠中纒，為冷為煖，為損為益

³² AK at T1558, 147a21 若言定中享有身識，有亦無失

³³ YB at T1579, 468a17 彼於爾時色身身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂。第三靜慮已下諸地，無如是樂及無間捨

³⁴ ASV at T1606, 726a27 三摩呬多位餘識無故。云何為樂？謂已轉依者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依。所依怡悅安適受者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依，所依怡悅安適受 受所攝，此經意說

sensory consciousnesses while one is in *dhyāna*, but that mind-consciousness depends on the body to experience bodily pleasure through similar body-contact³⁵ Their interpretation is based on the position of six consciousnesses,³⁶ not eight consciousnesses,³⁷ to discuss bodily feeling. The *Yogācārabhūmi* does not state whether or not body-consciousness feels pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*. This treatise simply suggests that breath sensations or tactile sensations are reminiscent of those created by the rubbing of cotton or fluff against one's skin to be the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing³⁸.

With regard to insight meditation, the Pāli *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and its counterpart discourses in Chinese, SĀ 803 and SĀ 810, say nothing about emerging from a *dhyāna* for the development of insight, but the Pāli *Visuddhimagga* and the Chinese *Vimuttimaggā* do suggest that one develops insight after *dhyāna*³⁹. The *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā* describe the development of insight while in *dhyāna*⁴⁰. In order to

³⁵ MhsV, trans Paramārtha, at T1595, 185a25 若在有色界，意識依身故生。釋曰：何故有身處必似觸，以意識必依身生故，似觸顯現。由此意識依身似觸生故，觀行人正入觀時，五識雖復不起，中間於色身有喜樂受生。MhsV, trans Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14 又一切處亦似所觸影像而生：謂有色處於定位中無五識時，在色身中內領受起。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止於身，由此諸根依止身故，於自所依能起損益；意識亦爾，依止身故，應知於身能作變異。MhsA at T1598, 402a17 又一切處亦似所觸影像而轉者：謂於定中領納分別輕重等觸，而非散亂隨順彼故。有色界中者：非於無色界，何以故？即此意識依止身故。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益。

³⁶ They are eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness.

³⁷ They are based on the six consciousnesses plus *manas* and *ālaya*-consciousness.

³⁸ YB at T1579, 464b20 如妒羅綿或疊絮等諸輕飄物，於是諸相而起勝解。彼若於內入息出息流轉不絕作意思惟，爾時名為於其內身住循身觀。

³⁹ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 279-80, Vim at T1648, 461b24 云何令起者？彼坐禪人入寂寂住，或坐或臥，樂滅意樂滅入初禪。入已安詳出，無間見彼禪無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。如第二禪第三禪第四禪，虛空處識處無所有處，入已安詳出，無間見正定無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。爾時無間入非非想處，從彼或二或三，令起非非想心，起已令心滅。心滅已不生不現入，此謂入滅想定。

⁴⁰ YB at T1579, 433b8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。今依無常隨觀，復於毘鉢舍那修瑜伽行，如是以奢摩他毘鉢舍那重修心已，於諸界中從彼隨眠而求解脫。Mhv at T1545, 136b4 尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、

clarify these two controversial issues, I will explore how the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* state, and then investigate, how the Abhidharma and commentarial literature and the Mahāyāna texts interpret the meditation object and the development of insight. In the practice of mindfulness of breathing, the contemplation of the body in the initial four steps will also be discussed in the fourth chapter.

The fifth chapter will focus on consciousness and meditation. Insight meditation involves a subtle interplay between meditative consciousness and its mental factors (*caittas*), giving rise to insight-wisdom. Wisdom and consciousness are conjoined phenomena, as the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* states, “[T]hese states are conjoined, not disjoined, and it is impossible to separate each of these states from the other in order to describe the difference between them. For what one wisely understands, that one cognizes, and what one cognizes, that one wisely understands.”⁴¹ Whether or not there is the arising of insight-wisdom depends on how meditative consciousness cognizes its objects. This specifically involves the function of *nāma* (name or mentality) in meditation practice. The investigation into the definition of *nāma* and its function in meditation practice will explain how the meditative consciousness and its mental factors (*caittas*) act in insight meditation.

When unwise meditators attain the *dhyānas*, the *dhyānas* are said to be inevitably tinged with craving (*trṣṇā*), conceit (*māna*), views (*dṛṣṭi*), and ignorance (*avidyā*), called “*dhyāna* dominated by craving,” “*dhyāna* dominated by views,” “*dhyāna* dominated by

如癩、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾。Avb at T1546, 106c16。問曰：繫念在鼻端，云何復知入出息遍身耶？答曰：尊者須蜜作如是說：遍知此身是無常法，而不失念。問曰：若然者，不名起定耶？答曰：不名起，以不捨其方便故。如是展轉觀此身，是苦、空、無我、穢污不淨性。

⁴¹ Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 388

conceit,” and “*dhyāna* dominated by doubt ”⁴² Here doubt arises due to ignorance ⁴³ Craving, conceit, views, and ignorance are the four defilements specifically associated with *manas*, or the seventh consciousness, in Yogācāra ⁴⁴ Ven Ñānanda indicates, “Craving, Conceit, and Views (*taṇhā, māna, diṭṭhi*) are but three aspects of the self-same ego-consciousness ”⁴⁵ When a meditator reaches the *dhyāna*, consciousness is still associated with craving, conceit, views, and ignorance which hinder the meditator from the development of insight-wisdom The activities of *manas* and ego-consciousness on samādhi will be analyzed in this chapter

In Yogācāra meditation, the four stages of insight are the existence of consciousness, the nonexistence of objects, the nonexistence of consciousness, and the realization of non-duality as shown in the verses of the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (*Bian zhongbie lun* 辯中邊論) and the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*Dasheng apidamo ji lun* 大乘阿毘達磨集論) ⁴⁶ These verses show that the development of insight begins with the existence of consciousness, as the Buddha, on the eve of his enlightenment, searched for the conditions for suffering, traced them back to consciousness, and discovered, “This consciousness turns back ”⁴⁷ This discovery illustrates that the whole mass of suffering comes to be when there is the mutual dependency of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* ⁴⁸

⁴² Asanga, *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, trans Walpola Rāhula and Sara Boin-Webb, 149-150 AS at T1605, 683b6 由有愛故味上靜慮雜染所染，由有見故見上靜慮雜染所染，由有慢故慢上靜慮雜染所染，由無明故疑上靜慮雜染所染 YB at T1579, 335b8 復次有四得靜慮者：一愛上靜慮者，二見上靜慮者，三慢上靜慮者，四疑上靜慮者

⁴³ AS at T1605, 683b8 由無明故疑上靜慮雜染所染

⁴⁴ Mhs at T1594, 133c 7 第二染污意與四煩惱恒共相應，一者薩迦耶見，二者我慢，三者我愛，四者無明

⁴⁵ Ñānanda, *Concept and Reality*, 12

⁴⁶ MV at T1600, 465a5 AS at T1605, 687b18

⁴⁷ Bodhi, trans , *Samyutta Nikāya*, 602

⁴⁸ Ibid

Here the consciousness is said to be *ālaya*-consciousness linking death and rebirth⁴⁹ In the cycle of rebirth, there is no substantial self, but *ālaya*-consciousness runs from life to life To bring an end to rebirth and suffering is the task of mind-consciousness acting in insight meditation By focusing on *ālaya*-consciousness and mind-consciousness, I will discuss the four stages of Yogācāra meditation in the fifth chapter

Buddhist meditation is the union of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, to be a crucial practice for directly knowing and seeing the truth of everything This study is an initial exploration of the one-taste of deliverance in the ocean of Dharma, and it is hoped that through the process of examination the results will be useful to meditators and scholars, and can be used as an aid in meditation practice

⁴⁹ Mhs at T1594, 136a16 若離異孰識，識與名色更互相依，譬如蘆束相依而轉，此亦不成

Chapter II

Meditation and Enlightenment

1. Is Enlightenment Possible in Any and All Meditative States?

—The Sevenfold Scheme of *Śamatha* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*

The well-known and significant *Qiyi jing* 七依經 was cited by the Yogācārinś to explain that the eradication of defilements depends on the seven meditative attainments: the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments.⁵⁰ In the Chinese Canon, the Abhidharma masters of different schools also quoted the *Qiyi jing* to uphold the first seven attainments with perception functioning as the efficient basis for the development of insight. The eighth attainment, the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, is not included in insight development. The reason why the fourth formless attainment cannot be considered as the basis for insight is clearly explained in the Abhidharma texts. The *Qiyi jing* is not present in the four *Āgamas*. Fortunately, its complete text is preserved in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, and its counterpart is found in the Pāli *Nikāyas* of the Theravāda called *Jhāna Sutta*, which shows the same sevenfold system of *śamatha*.⁵¹

The Chinese *Āgamas* are the recensions that include the *Āgamas* of different schools, in which there are two systems of *śamatha*: the sevenfold scheme and the

⁵⁰ Asaṅga cited it in the **Prakaraṇāryavākāśāstra* (*Xianyang shengjiao lun* 顯揚聖教論) at T1602, 574c22; Sthiramati in the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* (*Dasheng apidamo zajulun* 大乘阿毘達摩雜集論) at T1606, 770a23.

⁵¹ This sūtra is preserved in its entirety in the *Dharmaskandha* (*Abhidharma Fayun zu lun* 阿毘達摩法蘊足論) at T1537, 493c28. Bodhi and Nyanaponika, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 234-35.

eightfold scheme for insight. The core problem between the two systems of *śamatha* is whether the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception can be the supporting condition for insight. Can the sevenfold scheme and the eightfold scheme represent the distinct systems of meditation in the Buddhist schools? The Abhidharma texts of early schools and the Mahāyāna texts are consistent in the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha* in the Chinese Canon. The Pāli *Nikāyas* also upholds the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha*, not the eightfold scheme.

The Pāli *Nikāyas*, the Chinese Abhidharma texts, and the Mahāyāna texts are in agreement on the sevenfold system of *śamatha*. Then, why is there an eightfold scheme of *śamatha* in the Chinese *Āgamas*? What is the role of the base of neither-perception-nor non-perception in the development of insight? In order to clarify the scheme of *śamatha* for insight in the sūtra system, it is essential to determine which schools the four *Āgamas* belong to and then verify their corresponding Abhidharma texts. The investigation of the Pāli parallels also provides a clue to clarification. This will demonstrate the common system of *śamatha* for insight in Buddhist meditation, as the Buddha taught in the sūtras followed by the Buddhist schools.

The Eightfold Scheme of *Śamatha* and its Copyist's Error

The eightfold scheme of *śamatha* is presented in the 745th sūtra and the 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* (*Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經), the *Bacheng jing* 八城經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* (*Zhong ahan jing* 中阿含經), and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren*

jing 佛說十支居士八城人經 that is an individual sūtra from the *Āgamas*.⁵² These sūtras say that the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception can serve as the basis for the development of insight. Regarding the sectarian identity of the *Samyukta Āgama*, Ven. Yinshun⁵³ 印順 (1906-2005), in his *Yuanshi fojiao shengdian zhi jicheng* 原始佛教聖典之集成, cited the statement of Saṃghabhadra⁵⁴ in the **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra* (*Apidamo shunzhengli lun* 阿毘達磨順正理論) to point out that the *Fuzhang yu jing* 撫掌喻經 and the *Shunbiechu jing* 順別處經 in the *Samyukta Āgama* are unique to the Sarvāstivāda school.⁵⁵ This proves that the *Samyukta Āgama* is a Sarvāstivāda compilation.⁵⁶ Guṇabhadra,⁵⁷ the translator of the *Samyukta Āgama*, also translated the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma: *Zhong shifen apitan lun* 衆事分阿毘曇論 that is the other translation of the *Prakaraṇapāda*⁵⁸ (*Apidamo pinlei zu lun* 阿毘達磨品類足論). According to the *Four Gāndhārī Samyuktāgama Sutras: Senior Kharoṣṭhi Fragment 5*, “Most scholars connect this version with the Sarvāstivādin”; the *Samyukta Āgama* is generally regarded as belonging to Sarvāstivāda.⁵⁹

Moreover, the *Bacheng jing* of the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* are also different translations of the same Sarvāstivāda version of the

⁵² SĀ 745 at T99, 198a02; SĀ 870 at T99, 220b7; MĀ 217 at T26, 802b26; *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* 佛說十支居士八城人經 at T92, 916c28.

⁵³ An influential Chinese scholar-monk who promulgated the ideal of “Buddhism for the Human Realm” (*renjian fojiao* 人間佛教).

⁵⁴ A prominent Sarvāstivādin who composed the *Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra* (*Apidamo shunzhengli lun* 阿毘達磨順正理論) in order to dispute Vasubandhu’s *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* (*Apidamo jushe lun* 阿毘達磨俱舍論) and uphold the Sarvāstivāda doctrines.

⁵⁵ ANS at T1562, 330b1, 332a27; Yinshun 印順, *Yuanshi Fojiao*, 97-98.

⁵⁶ The expression “Sarvāstivāda” as an umbrella term covers the so-called Mūlasarvāstivāda.

⁵⁷ An Indian monk who traveled to China in 435 CE and translated the *Samyukta Āgama* and the Mahāyāna texts concerning *tathāgatagarbha*.

⁵⁸ In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma piṭaka, there are seven Abhidharma texts called “the body and the six feet.” The *Prakaraṇapāda* is one of the six pāda works, translated by Xuanzang in the seventh century CE.

⁵⁹ Glass, *Four Gāndhārī Samyuktāgama Sutras*, 28.

sūtra. The former was translated by the Kashmiri monk Saṃghadeva,⁶⁰ and the latter was translated by the Parthian monk An Shigao.⁶¹ Both translators were from the areas where Sarvāstivāda flourished. An Shigao's translations of meditation sūtra, such as the *Yogācārabhūmisūtra*⁶² (*Daodi jing* 道地經) and the *Apitan wufaxing jing*⁶³ 阿毘曇五法行經, belong to the Sarvāstivāda school. Saṃghadeva, an Abhidharma master, translated and disseminated the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma. The translations of Saṃghadeva and An Shigao belong to the Sarvāstivāda system. This comes to a conclusion that the 745th sūtra and the 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the *Bacheng jing* of the *Madhyama Āgama*, and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* came from the Sarvāstivāda school.

However, these four sūtras show that the eightfold scheme of *śamatha* is different from the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma that upholds the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha*. In other words, the presentation of the sevenfold scheme and the eightfold scheme in the *Āgamas* does not connote that there are two distinct systems of meditation in early schools.

The sevenfold system of *śamatha* is explicitly shown in the *Qiyi jing*, which is found only in the Abhidharma texts, but not in the *Āgamas*. The *Dharmaskandha*⁶⁴ (*Abhidharma fayun zu lun* 阿毘達磨法蘊足論), cited this sūtra in its entirety, illustrates that the destruction of the defilements depends on the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments, within which a meditator contemplates the five aggregates of form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness as impermanent, suffering, empty, and

⁶⁰ An eminent Abhidharma master who arrived in China in 383 CE and translated many Sarvāstivāda treatises.

⁶¹ A prince of Parthia who made the earliest translations of the non-Mahāyāna texts into Chinese.

⁶² It is the work of the Saṃgharakṣa, a Sarvāstivādin.

⁶³ This work is the partial translation of the *Prakaraṇapāda*.

⁶⁴ It is one of the six pāda works in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma.

not-self, leading to deliverance and nirvāṇa.⁶⁵ At the end of this sūtra, the Buddha clearly indicates: 1) only meditative attainments accompanied by perception are qualified for joining insight in pairs, namely the first seven attainments; 2) a monk develops the taintless contemplation within the first seven attainments and then enters the fourth formless attainment or the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) with the developed taintless contemplation. This means that the fourth formless attainment as ‘neither-perception-nor-non-perception’ differs from the first seven attainments with ‘clear perception’ and therefore it cannot be the foundation for a meditator to develop the taintless contemplation. The *Qiyi jing* explicitly defines the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha* for the development of insight and explains why the fourth formless attainment is incapable thus:

Bhikṣus, know that the meditative attainments with perception are capable of assisting in what should be completed like this. There are also the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and the attainment of cessation. I say, “those bhikṣus who practice these attainments should frequently enter in and emerge from the taintless contemplation that is associated with and developed within the seven supporting attainments.”

苾芻，當知乃至想定能辦如是所應作事。復有非想非非想處及滅盡定，我說於彼脩定苾芻，應數入出彼脩如是七依定時所有無漏作意相應。⁶⁶

The corresponding text of the *Qiyi jing* in the Pāli Canon is the *Jhāna Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*.⁶⁷ In the beginning, the *Jhāna Sutta* shows that the destruction of the taints depends on the nine attainments: the four *dhyānas*, the four formless attainments, and the cessation of perception and feeling. This discourse elaborates that the first seven attainments provide the stable foundation for the development of insight, within which a meditator is able to directly see the true nature of existence as impermanent, suffering,

⁶⁵ Dsk at T1537, p.493c28.

⁶⁶ Dsk at T1537, p.494b3.

⁶⁷ Bodhi and Nyanaponika, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 234-5.

and not-self, reaching ultimate deliverance. In the end, this sūtra indicates that a meditator destroys the taints in dependence on the attainments with perception, namely the first seven attainments. In the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, the concentration therein is overpowering and the perception is too subtle as its name implies; therefore, a meditator is unable to develop insight while abiding within it. In addition, perception and feeling completely cease in the attainment of cessation, within which there can be no development of insight. In other words, ‘perception’ is the key to the practice of insight. With regard to the first seven attainments with perception, the *Jhāna Sutta* states:

O monks, that the destruction of the taints occurs in dependence on the first jhāna, the second jhāna, the third jhāna, the fourth jhāna; in dependence on the base of the infinity of space, the base of infinity of consciousness, the base of nothingness, the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; in dependence on the cessation of perception and feelings ... Thus, monks, the penetration to final knowledge takes place to the extent that there are attainments with perception. But as to these two bases—the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and the cessation of perception and feeling—I say that these are to be extolled by those monks who are meditators, skilled in their attainment and in emerging from the attainment, after they have attained them and emerged from them.⁶⁸

Both the Chinese *Qiyi jing* and the Pāli *Jhāna Sutta* indicate that the liberating insight is developed within the meditative attainments with ‘perception.’ Due to the limitation of perception in the fourth formless attainment and the absence of perception in the attainment of cessation, these two attainments cannot serve as the efficient foundation for a meditator to develop liberating insight. However, they are indirectly conducive to deliverance of mind.

In contradiction with the Chinese *Qiyi jing* and the Pāli *Jhāna Sutta*, the 745th

⁶⁸ Ibid., 234-5.

sūtra and the 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the *Bacheng jing* of the *Madhyama Āgama*, and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* say that the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is also available for the development of insight. After an examination of these four texts in comparison with their parallels in the Pāli *Nikāyas*, a clue emerges to explain why there is an eightfold scheme of *samatha* in the Chinese *Āgamas*.

The 745th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* is a short sūtra. Its complete original text and English translation are

Thus I have heard, once the Buddha dwelt at Śrāvastī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapindada's Park. At that time, the World-honored One told the bhiksus: "If a bhikṣu develops and cultivates the base of space, this leads to great fruit and great benefit. How does a bhikṣu develop and cultivate the base of space leading to great fruit and great benefit? The mind of this bhikṣu, accompanied by the base of space, develops the mindfulness-enlightenment factor, which depends on seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, resulting in relinquishment. He develops the factors up to the equanimity-enlightenment factor, which depends on seclusion, dispassion, and cessation, resulting in relinquishment." This was the sermon given by the Buddha. After hearing the Buddha's words, all bhiksus were delighted and put the teachings into practice. *As for the three sūtras that pertain to the base of consciousness, the base of nothingness, and the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, they are formulated in the same way as that on the development of the base of space.*⁶⁹

如是我聞，一時佛住舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園。爾時世尊告諸比丘：「若比丘修空入處，多修習已，得大果大福利。云何比丘修空入處，多修習已，得大果大福利？是比丘心與空入處俱，修念覺分，依遠離、依無欲、依滅，向於捨；乃至修捨覺分，依遠離、依無欲、依滅，向於捨。」佛說此經已，諸比丘聞佛所說，歡喜奉行。如修空入處，如是識入處、無所有入處、非想非非想入處三經，亦如上說。⁷⁰

This sūtra elucidates that the development of the seven enlightenment factors⁷¹ can occur in dependence on the base of the infinity of space. Then, the other three sūtras are

⁶⁹ Italics added

⁷⁰ SĀ 745 at T99, 197c23 (my italics)

⁷¹ The seven enlightenment factors are mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, energy, rapture, tranquility, concentration, and equanimity.

attached in a way of formulaic declaration, so as to explain that the base of infinity of consciousness, the base of nothingness, and the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception are also efficient bases for the development of the seven enlightenment factors, as the italicized section shows. Here the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception also enables a meditator to develop and cultivate the seven enlightenment factors for the fulfillment of true knowledge and deliverance. Yet, the informal attachment is unreliable and doubtful.

The 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* treats the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception in the same way.

Thus I have heard, once the Buddha dwelt at Śrāvastī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapindada's Park. At that time, the World-honored One told the bhiksus: "If a bhikṣu is of such practice, such manifestation, and such characteristics, with the abandoning of pain and pleasure, with the previous ceasing of grief and joy, he enters and dwells in the fourth *dhyāna*, a state of neither pain nor pleasure, equanimity, the purification of mindfulness, and one-pointedness of mind. If he does not attend in such a way, he contemplates form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness as a disease, as a carbuncle, as a dart, as a murderer, until he enters upon nirvāṇa. If he does not achieve this, then he is reborn in the heaven of extensive fruition, if he does not achieve this, he is reborn in the heaven of blessed birth, if he does not achieve this, he is reborn in the heaven of limited blessed birth." This was the sermon given by the Buddha. After hearing the Buddha's words, all the bhiksus were delighted and put the teachings into practice. *As the four dhyānas are formulated, [the Buddha] said the same regarding the four formless attainments.*⁷²

如是我聞，一時佛住舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園。爾時世尊告諸比丘：「若比丘如是行，如是形，如是相，離苦息樂，前憂喜已滅，不苦不樂、捨、淨念、一心，第四禪具足住。若不如是憶念，而於色、受、想、行、識思惟如病、如癰、如刺、如殺，乃至上流般涅槃。若不爾者，或生因性果實天；若不爾者，生福生天；若不爾者，生少福天。」佛說此經已，諸比丘聞佛所說，歡喜奉行。如四禪，如是四無色定亦如是說。⁷³

The 870th sūtra explains that in the state of the fourth *dhyāna*, a meditator does not focus

⁷² Italics added

⁷³ SĀ 870 at T99, 220a27 (my italics)

on the components of this *dhyāna* in order to avoid attachment to this *dhyāna*. He/she contemplates the physical and mental phenomena, and thus culminates in the realization of nirvāṇa or in rebirth in a celestial realm. The 870th sūtra is the final one of a series of sūtras from the 864th to the 870th in the *Samyukta Āgama*, which introduces how a meditator, within the state of the four *dhyānas*, develops the liberating insight into impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and not-self. At the end of this sūtra, the four formless attainments are also attached in the same informal way as the 745th sūtra, so as to explain the four formless attainments joining insight in pairs as the four *dhyānas* do. In this kind of informal attachment, the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception was quite possibly added in error.

In the *Bacheng jing* of the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing*, there are twelve doors to the Deathless: the four *dhyānas*, the four divine abodes, and the four formless attainments, in which the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is included.⁷⁴ This differs from their parallels in the Pāli *Nikāyas*, which have eleven doors to the Deathless, without the fourth formless attainment. These doors illustrate *samatha* as the indispensable basis for the development of insight leading to the Deathless, Nirvāṇa. The four divine abodes are a set of doors to the Deathless, and they can be correlated with meditations within the sevenfold system of *samatha*, as shown by the 743rd sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*.

According to the 743rd sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the Buddha says:

A mind with lovingkindness is developed, which culminates in purification. A mind with compassion is developed, which culminates in the base of space. A mind with joy is developed, which culminates in the base of consciousness. A mind with equanimity is developed, which culminates in the base of nothingness.

⁷⁴ MĀ 217 at T26, 802b26; *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* 佛說十支居士八城人經 at T92, 916c28.

心與慈俱多修習，於淨最勝；悲心修習多修習，空入處最勝；喜心修習多修習，識入處最勝；捨心修習多修習，無所有入處最勝。⁷⁵

Its Pāli counterpart, the *Metta Sutta*, shows the same sevenfold scheme:

[T]he liberation of mind by lovingkindness has the beautiful as its culmination ... the liberation of mind by compassion has the base of the infinity of space as its culmination ... the liberation of mind by altruistic joy has the base of the infinity of consciousness as its culmination ... the liberation of mind by equanimity has the base of nothingness as its culmination.⁷⁶

The base of nothingness is the peak of the four divine abodes, rather than the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, serving as an effective foundation for the development of insight. This discourse illustrates that the four divine abodes are the meditations within the sevenfold system of *samatha*.

The twelve doors to the Deathless in the Chinese *Bacheng jing* of the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* are presented in a simpler and more formulaic way than their Pāli parallels. The Pāli texts treat each door in detail; therefore, there is no room for the mistaken addition. The set of the formless attainments in the *Bacheng jing* 八城經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* is treated in a condensed way:

Transcending all perceptions of forms, up to the completion of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he contemplates dharmas within these bases as they really are. One who dwells in these bases to attain the destruction of all taints perhaps has a proper basis.

度一切色想，乃至非有想非無想處成就遊，彼於此處觀法如法，彼於此處觀法如法，住彼得漏盡者或有是處。⁷⁷

The list of the formless attainments is also abridged in the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing*: transcending all perceptions of forms, up to attaining and dwelling in the base of

⁷⁵ SĀ 743 at T99, 197c11.

⁷⁶ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1609-1611.

⁷⁷ MĀ 217 at T26, 802b26.

neither-perception-nor-non-perception.⁷⁸ Here, the inclusion of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is questionable.

The 745th sūtra and the 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the *Bacheng jing* of the *Madhyama Āgama*, and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* sustain the eightfold scheme of *śamatha* translated by Guṇabhadra, Saṃghadeva, and An Shigao. These three translators were experts in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma and also translated its Abhidharma texts, such as the *Zhong shifen apitan lun* 衆事分阿毘曇論 by Guṇabhadra, the **Abhidharmahṛdayasāstra* (*Apitan xin lun* 阿毘曇心論) by Saṃghadeva, and the *Apitan wufaxing jing* 阿毘曇五法行經 by An Shigao. The *Zhong shifen apitan lun* and the *Apitan wufaxing jing* are the different translations of the *Prakaraṇapāda* (*Apidamo pinlei zu lun* 阿毘達磨品類足論). According to the *Prakaraṇapāda*,

What is the taintless? The taintless four aggregates are developed in conjunction with the base of infinity of space. In the same way, [the taintless four aggregates are developed in conjunction with] the base of infinity of consciousness and the base of nothingness.

云何無漏？謂空無邊處所攝無漏四蘊。識無邊處無所有處亦爾。⁷⁹

According to the **Abhidharmahṛdayasāstra* (*Apitan xin lun* 阿毘曇心論),

There is no taintless in the highest base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

最上非想非非想處彼中無無漏。⁸⁰

Both the *Prakaraṇapāda* and the **Abhidharmahṛdayasāstra* state that the taintless path depends on the three lower formless attainments, upholding the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha*. This sevenfold system is the common conclusion in the *śamatha* system of the

⁷⁸ *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* at T92, 916c: “度一切色想, 至有想無想處正受住.” The Taisho edition is 相, while the other three editions of the Sung, the Yuan and the Ming dynasties are 想. According to its context, the correct word is 想. Here 相 is replaced by 想.

⁷⁹ PP at T1542, 748c17.

⁸⁰ AH at T1550, 823b17.

Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma. In other words, Guṇabhadra, Saṃghadeva, and An Shigao are clear that there is no destruction of the defilements in dependence on the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, which demonstrates that the presentation of the eightfold scheme of *śamatha* in their translations of the *Āgamas* stems from the later, incorrect addition of the fourth formless attainment.

According to the *Aṭṭhakanāgara Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Dasama Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, Venerable Ānanda instructs the householder, Dasama, in the eleven doors to the Deathless. He details how to contemplate on how each of the meditative attainments is “conditioned and volitionally produced. But whatever is conditioned and volitionally produced is impermanent, subject to cessation.”⁸¹ Then, one sees the impermanent nature of each meditative attainment, leading to the eradication of defilements and the arising of true knowledge. Regarding the absence of the fourth formless attainment, Ven. Bodhi paraphrases the explanation from the commentaries, “The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is not mentioned because it is too subtle a state for its constituent factors to be used as objects of insight contemplation.”⁸²

The sevenfold scheme of *śamatha* is also presented in the Chinese *Āgamas*. According to the *Wuxiafenjie jing* 五下分結經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*, the development of insight is based on the first seven attainments in order for a meditator to know and see the arising and the passing away of phenomena, which leads to the removal of fetters. Each of the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments is described in detail.⁸³ The Pāli counterpart is the *Mahāmālunkya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, which shows the same sevenfold scheme of *śamatha* for insight to abandon the five lower

⁸¹ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 454-5.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 1254.

⁸³ MĀ 205 at T26, 779c18.

fetters.⁸⁴ In the *Anupada Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, Sāriputta develops insight by discerning the impermanence of *dhyāna* factors within the meditative attainment itself, a contemplation that is dependent upon the first seven attainments with perception; then, as for the fourth formless attainment, he has to first emerge from it before he could undertake insight practice, because the subtle perception of this attainment is unable to discern anything within this attainment itself.⁸⁵

Clearly, the eightfold scheme of *śamatha* of the SĀ sūtras must be a “copyist’s error.”⁸⁶ The four formless attainments are a set and appear together in many sūtras. If copyists of the Chinese *Āgamas* were not familiar with the Abhidharma system, they could have assumed that all four formless attainments served as an integral set of *śamatha* for insight, and then they could have formulated the addition in accordance with their assumption. The eightfold scheme of *śamatha* in the four sūtras is presented in an informal attachment or a formulaic mode, which quite differs from the sevenfold scheme with detailed contemplation in both the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*. The *Samyukta Āgama*, the *Madhyama Āgama*, and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* are the translations of the Sarvāstivāda version, and the Abhidharma system of the Sarvāstivāda is consistent with the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha*. The translators—Guṇabhadra, Saṃghadeva, and An Shigao—mastered the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, and their translations of the Abhidharma texts also expressed the sevenfold system. From this we can infer that the fourth formless attainment may have been attached, by copyist’s error, to the set of formless attainments usable as a basis for the development of insight.

⁸⁴ Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 537-41.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 899-902.

⁸⁶ This conclusion comes from a discussion with Ven. Bodhi. I am grateful for his instructions.

The Sevenfold System of *Śamatha* in the Buddhist Schools

The *Qiyi jing* is the crucial text for both the early schools and Mahāyāna in establishing the sevenfold system of *śamatha* which serves as an adequate basis for insight. The base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is inadequate for the development of insight. Here arises another problem: if a meditator is reborn in the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, then, how does he/she reach the ultimate deliverance? On the basis of the sevenfold scheme of *śamatha*, the Sarvāstivādins explained that a meditator who is reborn in the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception has to attain Arhatship in dependence on the base of nothingness. For instance, in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*⁸⁷ (*Apidamo dapiposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論), the *Qiyi jing* is cited and connected with this problem:

As [the Buddha] states, “Bhikṣus, the noble goal is reached through the meditative attainments with perception.” When the disciples of the World-honored One are reborn in the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, what samādhi do they depend on to attain Arhatship? The answer is: the base of nothingness.

如說苾芻乃至想定能達聖旨。世尊弟子生非想非非想處，彼依何定得阿羅漢果？答無所有處。⁸⁸

Vasubandhu⁸⁹ upholds the same point in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (*Apidamo jushe lun* 阿毘達磨俱舍論). He gives the reason thus:

The noble one who is reborn in the peak of existence has to attain the taintless in dependence on the base of nothingness, so as to eradicate the

⁸⁷ It is a detailed commentary on the *Jñānaprasthāna* (*Apidamo fazhi lun* 阿毘達磨發智論).

⁸⁸ Mhv at T1545, 929b3.

⁸⁹ The key treatises of Vasubandhu includes the *Triṃśikā* (*Weishih sanshuh lun* 唯識三十論), *Vṃśatikā* (*Weishih erhshih lun* 唯識二十論), *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* (*Dasheng chengye lun* 大乘成業論), *Mahāyānaśatadharmāprakāśamukhaśāstra* (*Dasheng baifa mungmen lun* 大乘百法明門論), writing commentaries on Maitreya’s *Madhyāntavibhāgākārikā* (*Bian zhongbian lun song* 辯中邊論頌) and Asaṅga’s *Mahāyānasamgraha* (*She dacheng lun* 攝大乘論). His influential commentaries on sūtras are the *Daśabhūmikabhāṣya* (*Shidijing lun* 十地經論) and *Amitāyus sutropadeśa* (*Wuliangshoujing youbotishe* 無量壽經優波提舍).

defilements that remain in the peak of existence itself, because there is no arising of delight in the noble path. Only the base of nothingness, which is nearest, is to be aroused for the destruction of the remaining defilements. 聖生有頂必起無漏無所有處，為盡自地所餘煩惱，自無聖道欣樂起故。唯無所有最鄰近故，起彼現前盡餘煩惱。⁹⁰

Vasubandhu, the younger brother of Asaṅga, learned the *Vibhāṣā* of the Sarvāstivāda school from Kashmir and allegedly mastered the doctrines of the eighteen schools. In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, he supported and criticized both the Sarvāstivāda and the Sautrāntika doctrines, without attachment to sectarian views, but directly returned to the Buddha's teachings. The Chinese Jushe school 俱舍宗 was established based on his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. According to the *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記, initially Vasubandhu did not believe in Mahāyāna, but later he was converted to Mahāyāna by his half-brother Asaṅga.⁹¹ He composed more than a hundred treatises on the Mahayana teachings, mostly on Yogācāra.⁹²

Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhīśāstra* (*Chengshih lun* 成實論), also mentions that the Buddha states that the seven attainments with perception could serve as the basis for insight. Explaining why the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception cannot function as an attainment with perception, he says:

Question: For what reason is the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception not considered the foundation?

Answer: In this state, there is no clear [perception], with its samādhi dominant, and wisdom insufficient; therefore, it is not considered the foundation. The seven attainments with perception are equivalent to the seven bases.

Question: Why did the Buddha state the seven bases to be the seven attainments with perception?

Answer: The non-Buddhists do not have true wisdom but merely depend on perception. Then, all the bases are tainted by perception, which are not

⁹⁰ AK at T1558, 149a21.

⁹¹ *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 at T2087, 896c21.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 897a6.

used for deliverance Therefore, they are called the samādhis with perception The noble ones are able to destroy perception and directly reach the extinction of the taints in dependence on the samādhis Hence, the samādhis are named the foundation As the Buddha says, a yogin contemplates the dharmas as a disease, as a carbuncle, and so on Due to its unclear perception, the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is not regarded as an attainment with perception

問曰：非想非非想處何故不說依耶？答曰：彼中不了、定多、慧少，故不說有依。七想定即七依也。問曰：佛何故說七依名七想定？答曰：外道無真智故，但依止想，一切依止皆為想所污，不為解脫，故名想定。聖人能破壞想，但依此定直取漏盡，故名為依。如說行者觀此諸法如病如癰等。非想非非想處亦以想不了故，不說想定。⁹³

Harivarman points out, in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, perception is too subtle, samādhi is too strong, and wisdom is too weak, therefore, it cannot serve as a foundation for insight Here the Chinese characters “不了” in the Abhidharma texts are always used for the description of perception in the fourth formless attainment⁹⁴

According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, in the state of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, “neither-perception” signifies that there is no clear perception as there is in the first seven attainments with perception, “nor-non-perception” means that the perception is not absent as in the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*) or the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*)⁹⁵

According to the Indian missionary Paramārtha,⁹⁶ the doctrines of the **Tattvasiddhīśāstra* are derived from the Sautrāntika,⁹⁷ while according to the Chinese scholar-monk Yinshun 印順, the doctrines are of a unique style, a hybrid of Hīnayāna and

⁹³ TS at T1646, 339a7

⁹⁴ Mhv at T1545, 433c7 由此地想闇鈍羸劣，不明了不決定，故名非想非非想處 AS at T1605, 683c16 非想非非想處唯是世間不明了想恒現行故

⁹⁵ Mhv at T1545, 433c3 問此何故名非想非非想處？答此地中無明了想相，亦無無想相，故名非想非非想處。無明了想相者，非如七地有想定故；亦無無想相者，非如無想及滅定故。由此地想闇鈍羸劣，不明了不決定，故名非想非非想處

⁹⁶ Paramārtha traveled to China in the 6th-century and translated more than a hundred volumes of Sanskrit Buddhist scriptures, including the works of Asanga, Vasubandhu and Aśvaghoṣa

⁹⁷ *Sanlun xuanyi* 三論玄義 at T1852, 3b29 真諦三藏云 用經部義也

Mahāyāna.⁹⁸ Harivarman was the disciple of Kumāralāta, a Sarvāstivādin, who later became the founder of the Sautrāntika.⁹⁹ According to the *Biography of Harivarman*, he also lived with a Mahāsāṃghika monk studying the Mahāyāna teachings.¹⁰⁰

Harivarman's **Tattvasiddhiśāstra* does not adopt a sectarian position, but merely explores the true meanings of the Dharma. The Chinese Chengshi school 成實宗 was founded based on the **Tattvasiddhiśāstra*.

In Mahāyāna, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*¹⁰¹ (*Dazhi du lun* 大智度論), a text of the Mādhyamika school ascribed to Nāgārjuna,¹⁰² describes how a meditator contemplates the feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness in the three lower formless attainments as a disease, a carbuncle, a boil, and a dart, leading to the insight into impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and not-self of existence, as the Buddha instructs in the *Qiyi jing*.¹⁰³ This treatise maintains that the taintless meditative attainments that a meditator can use to abandon the fetters are: the first seven attainments, the *anāgāmya-samādhi*,¹⁰⁴ and the *dhyānāntara*.¹⁰⁵ Here, the fourth formless attainment is not included. According to the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*,

The taintless meditative attainments of the nine spheres—the four *dhyānas*, the three [lower] formless attainments, the *anāgāmya-samādhi*, and the *dhyānāntara*—are able to eliminate the fetters.

九地無漏定：四禪、三無色定、未到地、禪中間能斷結使。¹⁰⁶

⁹⁸ Yinshun 印順, *Shuoyiqieyoubu*, 580.

⁹⁹ *Chusanjang jiyi* 出三藏記集 at T2145, 78c9: 薩婆多部達摩沙門究摩羅陀弟子. *Sanlun xuanyi* 三論玄義 at T1852, 3c12: 成實論者：佛滅度後八百九十年，罽賓小乘學者之匠鳩摩羅陀上足弟子訶梨跋摩之所造也。

¹⁰⁰ *Chusanjang jiyi* 出三藏記集 at T2145, 79a12.

¹⁰¹ This work is a commentary on the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitāsūtra* (*Mohe boruo boluomi jing* 摩訶般若波羅蜜經).

¹⁰² The establishment of the Mādhyamika school was based on Nāgārjun's works in India.

¹⁰³ MP at T1509, 186b24.

¹⁰⁴ It is access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*.

¹⁰⁵ It is the intermediate concentration between the first *dhyāna* and the second *dhyāna*.

¹⁰⁶ MP at T1509, 187c9.

Regarding the nine taintless attainments, the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments are explicitly taught by the Buddha in the sūtras; the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara*, according to the Abhidharma masters, are implicit in the sūtras. These nine taintless attainments are consistent with the sevenfold scheme of śamatha, and contrary to the eightfold scheme. On the basis of Nāgārjuna's works, the Chinese Sanlun school 三論宗 was founded.

In Yogācāra, the *Yogācārabhūmi*¹⁰⁷ (*Yuqie shidi lun* 瑜伽師地論) advocates the same nine attainments for the extinction of all defilements, and definitely rejects the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception as an effective basis for insight:

There are nine bases for all worldlings to extirpate all taints. What are these nine? They are: the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the first *dhyāna*, the *dhyānāntara*, the other three *dhyānas*, and the three formless attainments, excluding the peak of existence [*bhavāgra*].

一切異生復有九依能盡諸漏。何等為九？謂未至定，若初靜慮、靜慮中間、餘三靜慮，及三無色，除第一有。¹⁰⁸

Here “the peak of existence” is the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. The *Yogācārabhūmi* explains that the supramundane contemplation is developed by the attainments with perception, not by the base of neither-perception-nor non-perception.¹⁰⁹

The Chinese Shelun school 攝論宗 and Faxiang school 法相宗 were established on the basis of the Yogācāra teachings. Asaṅga¹¹⁰ and Sthiramati also cited the *Qiyi jing* to

¹⁰⁷ A well-known encyclopedia of Buddhist doctrines and practices, this work contains the teachings of the *śrāvaka*-vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha*-vehicle, and the bodhisattva-vehicle. It is attributed to the Bodhisattva Maitreya in the Chinese tradition, but to Asaṅga in the Tibetan tradition. In the Chinese version, there are one-hundred fascicles translated by Xuanzang.

¹⁰⁸ YB at T1579, 881a8.

¹⁰⁹ YB at T1579, 683a23: 第一有中所有諸智，皆俗智攝。

¹¹⁰ Asaṅga composed many important treatises to systematize the doctrines and practices of the Yogācāra, especially the establishment of the Mahāyāna *viññāptimātra* (consciousness-only). For instance, (1) the **Mahāyānasamgraha* (*She dasheng lun* 攝大乘論), an encyclopedic work of the Yogācāra school with details about the gradual stages of the Mahāyāna yoga practice. (2) *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*Dasheng apidamo ji lun* 大乘阿毘達磨集論), a Mahāyāna Abhidharma analyzing the dharmas of the *śrāvaka*-

explain that insight is developed in conjunction with the first seven attainments.

According to the **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra* (*Xianyang shengjiao lun* 顯揚聖教論),

Asaṅga states that “Bhagavan speaks of the seven kinds of dependence.”¹¹¹ He adds:

The destruction of the defilements depends on the seven supporting attainments, namely the first *dhyāna* up to [and including attainment, which is] the seventh base of nothingness.

調由依止七依定故斷諸煩惱，調初靜慮乃至第七無所有處。¹¹²

Sthiramati in the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*¹¹³ (*Dasheng apidamo zajilun* 大乘阿

毘達磨雜集論) explains *samāpatti* (meditative equipoise):

Samāpatti as a basis: that is, the seven supporting attainments. As the sūtra states, “I say that the destruction of the taints depends on the first *dhyāna*, and so too as far as the base of nothingness.”

三摩鉢底依者：調七依定。如經言：「我說依初靜慮能盡諸漏，乃至依無所有處亦爾。」¹¹⁴

The *Qiyi jing* indicates that the seven attainments with perception are employed in conjunction with insight for supramundane deliverance from the defilements and the cycle of rebirth, which was prevalent in and vital to Buddhist schools. The Abhidharma texts of the early schools and the Mahāyāna texts further explain why the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is incapable of joining insight in pairs, and why, when one is reborn in the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, one has to depend on the base of nothingness for the attainment of Arhatship. The sevenfold scheme of *śamatha* is common to Buddhist schools, and it demonstrates that the eightfold system of *śamatha* in the *Āgamas* results from a copyist’s error. On the basis of the sevenfold scheme of

vehicle, the *pratyekabuddha*-vehicle, and the bodhisattva-vehicle. (3) **Prakaraṇāryavākāśāstra* (*Xianyang shengjiao lun* 顯揚聖教論), a condensation and outline of the *Yogācārabhūmi*. (4) *Lumen jiaoshou xiding lun* (六門教授習定論), a clear exposition of *śamatha*.

¹¹¹ PS at T1602, 574c22: 薄伽梵說七種依止。

¹¹² PS at T1602, 496b28.

¹¹³ It is a commentary on Asaṅga’s *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*Dasheng apidamo ji lun* 大乘阿毘達磨集論).

¹¹⁴ ASV at T1606, 770a23.

samatha, the Abhidharma masters explored the implicit meanings of the Buddha's words and then, by including the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara*, developed the complete structure of *śamatha* in the form of the ninefold scheme in their Abhidharma systems

2. The Meditative States that lead to Enlightenment

—The Ninefold Scheme for the Development of Insight

The **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* unanimously advocate the ninefold scheme of *śamatha*. The ninefold scheme includes the *anāgāmya*-samādhi (the incompletely attained concentration), the *dhyānāntara* (the intermediate concentration), the four *dhyānas*, and three lower formless attainments, which function as the adequate basis for a meditator to develop insight, eliminate defilements and ignorance, and ultimately attain the taintless deliverance by wisdom.¹¹⁵ In this ninefold scheme, the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments are explicitly enumerated by the Buddha, the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara* are implicitly suggested in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*. After the indication of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara*, the ninefold scheme of *śamatha* joins insight in pairs for a meditator to attain enlightenment is definitely established.

The *anāgāmya*-samādhi relates to the Arhats who are liberated by wisdom (*prajñāvimukti*) without attaining any of the *dhyānas*, but who also destroy all taints in

¹¹⁵ Mhv at T1545, 218a28 無漏者在九地 謂四靜慮、未至、中間、下三無色 AK at T1558, 32a1 若無漏道展轉相望，一一皆與九地為因，謂未至定、靜慮中間、四本靜慮、三本無色，九地道諦皆互為因 YB at T1579, 881a8 一切異生復有九依能盡諸漏。何等為九？謂未至定、若初靜慮、靜慮中間、餘三靜慮、及三無色，除第一有 MP at T1509, 187c9 九地無漏定：四禪、三無色定、未到地、禪中間，能斷結使

dependence on the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, namely the *anāgāmya*-samādhi. However, the implication of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi serving as the foundation for the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats is inconsistent in SĀ 347 of the Sarvāstivāda version, the Mahāsāṃghika counterpart in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, and SN 12 70 of the Theravāda version.¹¹⁶ This inconsistency was noted by the Abhidharma masters and commentators of different schools, and then they responded to the distinctions of different versions in their interpretations. A contrast of BSĀ 160 and SĀ 936 of the Sarvāstivāda version, MĀ 195 of the Sarvāstivāda version, and MN 70 of the Theravāda version shows that the implicit suggestion of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi concerning the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats seems harmonious in these discourses.¹¹⁷

The indication of the *dhyānāntara* by the Abhidharma masters is for the explanation of the samādhi without applied thought (*vitarka*) but with sustained thought (*vicāra*) only. In the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, there are the three samādhis taught by the Buddha: the samādhi with applied thought and sustained thought, the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only, and the samādhi without applied thought and sustained thought. These three samādhis are prevalent in early discourses, such as in MĀ 72, MĀ 76, MN 128, DN33.¹¹⁸ In the Mahāyāna sūtras, the

Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra (*Da banruo boluomiduo jing* 大般若波羅蜜多經)

and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitāsūtra* (*Mohe boruo boluomi jing* 摩訶般

¹¹⁶ SĀ 347 at T99, 97a06. The *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* at T1425, 362c28. Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 612-8.

¹¹⁷ BSĀ 160 at T100, 434c4. 慧解脫阿羅漢不得八解脫。SĀ 936 T99, 240a16. 不得八解脫身作證具足住，然彼知見有扁斷，是名聖弟子不墮惡趣，乃至慧解脫。MĀ 195 at T26, 751b20. 云何比丘有慧解脫？若有比丘八解脫身不觸成就遊，以慧見諸扁已盡已知，如是比丘有慧解脫。Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 581.

¹¹⁸ MĀ 72 at T26, 538c3. 我當修學三定，修學有覺有觀定，修學無覺少觀定，修學無覺無觀定。MĀ 76 at T26, 543c20. 亦當修習有覺有觀定，無覺少觀定，修習無覺無觀定。Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1015. Walshe, trans., *Dīgha Nikāya*, 486.

若波羅蜜經) speak of these three samādhis¹¹⁹ In the Abhidharma systems of Buddhist schools, the samādhi without vitarka but with vicāra only has distinct designations, but all Abhidharma systems agree that it acts as an efficient basis for the extirpation of defilements By examining the development of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara*, I will elucidate how the complete *samatha* system is established as the ninefold scheme

Anāgāmya-samādhi

According to the 347th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the Arhats who were liberated by wisdom (*prajñāvimukti*) extirpated the defilements without depending on any of the four *dhyānas* or the formless attainments¹²⁰ To the Abhidharma masters, this discourse suggests that there exists a samādhi lower than the first *dhyāna* to be employed for the eradication of defilements, because *samatha* is the indispensable foundation for liberating insight in the taintless path The Chinese *Samyukta Āgama* is a Sarvāstivāda recension The **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra* and the *Yogācārabhūmi* are consistent to point out the 347th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* in holding that the Arhats liberated by wisdom (*prajñāvimukti*) depended on the *anāgāmya*-samādhi to achieve enlightenment¹²¹

The indication of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, or the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, is for the explanation of those Arhats who are liberated by wisdom

¹¹⁹ Sps at T220, 301a3 謂三三摩地，何等為三？謂有尋有伺三摩地，無尋唯伺三摩地，無尋無伺三摩地 Pps at T223, 255a12 所謂三三昧，何等三？有覺有觀三昧，無覺有觀三昧，無覺無觀三昧

¹²⁰ SĀ 347 at T99, 97a20 云何不得禪定而復記說？比丘答言：我是慧解脫也

¹²¹ Mhv at T1545, 572c24 時蘇尸摩不果先願，然彼五百塵真苾芻依未至定得漏盡已後，方能起根本等至 ANS at T1562, 765c9 又蘇使摩契經中說：有慧解脫者不得根本定，豈不依定成慧解脫，由此證知有未至定有中間定 YB at T1579, 835c20 得初靜慮近分所攝勝三摩地以為依止；增上慧學增上力故，得去住智及涅槃智

(*prajñāvimukti*) without attaining any of the *dhyānas*, but also possessing a *samādhi* for the eradication of all defilements, namely the *anāgāmya-samādhi*.¹²² This shows that *śamatha* is the essential condition for insight leading to the destruction of defilements, and it is not equivalent to the *dhyānas*. Yet, this conclusion is controversial because the different versions advocated by some schools do not agree that the *anāgāmya-samādhi* is used by the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats for attaining enlightenment. In order to clarify the development of *śamatha* in Buddhist schools, it is necessary to examine the implicit and explicit descriptions of the *anāgāmya-samādhi* in early discourses and the Abhidharma texts.

In the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, the Mahāsāṃghika parallel to the 347th sūtra of the *Saṃyukta Āgama* says that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats eradicated the defilements without supernormal powers or the formless attainments.¹²³ The Mahāsāṃghika version does *not* state that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats did not attain any of the *dhyānas*; this differs from the Sarvāstivāda version but accords with the Theravāda version, the *Susīma Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*.¹²⁴ Both the Mahāsāṃghika and the Theravāda versions do not indicate that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats used a *samādhi* lower than the first *dhyāna*, such as the *anāgāmya-samādhi*. The Pāli commentary, however, interprets their assertion that they are *prajñāvimukti/paññāvimutta* to mean: “We are without jhāna, dry-insighters, liberated simply by wisdom.”¹²⁵ This understanding closely resembles that of the Sarvāstivāda version. It seems that the Pāli commentator was aware of the distinctions in the version of the sūtra in other schools and incorporated these ideas in the commentary. In fact, the

¹²² SĀ 347 at T99, 97a20.

¹²³ The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* at T1425, 362c28.

¹²⁴ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 612-8.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 785.

anāgāmya-samādhi, or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, as the basis for the development of insight is very common in the Pāli commentarial texts, such as Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*.¹²⁶

In the Chinese Canon, the *Samyukta Āgama* has two versions: one is the Sarvāstivāda version called *Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經 and the other is *Bieyi za ahan jing* 別譯雜阿含經.¹²⁷ According to the *Samyukta Āgama* of the Sarvāstivāda version, the 936th sūtra states that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat does not directly experience any of the eight liberations.¹²⁸ Its counterpart in the other *Samyukta Āgama* is the 160th sūtra, which has a similar statement.¹²⁹ According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the eight liberations (*aṣṭāvimokṣa*) correspond to the first, second, and fourth *dhyānas*, the four formless attainments, and the attainment of the cessation.¹³⁰ In other words, both versions of the *Samyukta Āgama* suggest that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat does not have any of the *dhyānas*, but uses a samādhi lower than the first *dhyāna*, namely the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, to attain liberation.

In the *Madhyama Āgama* of the Sarvāstivāda version, the *Ashibeijing* 阿濕貝經 also states the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat as one who does not dwell having contacted the eight liberations with the body but who has destroyed all defilements by seeing with wisdom.¹³¹ The Theravāda counterpart is the *Kīṭāgiri Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*,

¹²⁶ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 86.

¹²⁷ Ven. Yinshun in the *Zaahan jing lun huibian* 雜阿含經論會編 indicated that the *Bieyi za ahan jing* 別譯雜阿含經 quite possibly belong to the Kāśyapīya version. Yinshun, ed., *Zaahan jing lun huibian*, b4.

¹²⁸ SĀ 936 at T99, 240a16: 不得八解脫身作證具足住，然彼知見有漏斷，是名聖弟子不墮惡趣，乃至慧解脫。

¹²⁹ BSĀ 160 at T100, 434c4: 慧解脫阿羅漢不得八解脫。

¹³⁰ Mhv at T1545, 434b15; AK at T1558, 151b1.

¹³¹ MĀ 195 at T26, 751b20: 云何比丘有慧解脫？若有比丘八解脫身不觸成就遊，以慧見諸漏已盡已知，如是比丘有慧解脫。

which defines the *prajñāvimukti/paññāvimutta* Arahant thus: “Here some person does not contact with the body and abide in those liberations that are peaceful and immaterial, transcending forms, but his taints are destroyed by his seeing with wisdom. This kind of person is called one liberated-by-wisdom.”¹³² This text does not explicitly mention the eight liberations but speaks instead of “those liberations that are peaceful and immaterial, transcending forms.” The Pāli commentary explains, “This includes those who attain arahantship either as dry-insight meditators (*sukkhā-vipassaka*) or after emerging from one or another of the four jhānas.”¹³³ Dry-insight meditators are the *prajñāvimukti/paññāvimutta* Arhats who do not attain any of the *dhyānas*, that is, who do not directly experience the eight liberations, as the two versions of the *Samyukta Āgama* assert. But the Pāli commentary states that the *prajñāvimukti/paññāvimutta* Arahant can attain the four *dhyānas*, though not the formless attainments. This agrees with the *Susīma Sutta* in both its own Theravāda version and the Mahāsāṃghika version, as shown above.

The Pāli *Puggalapaññatti* also defines the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat as “a person without experiencing the eight stages of emancipation but having perceived them through insight, has his sinful tendencies completely destroyed.”¹³⁴ This Abhidharma text clearly indicates that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat does not experience the eight liberations, that is, does not have any of the *dhyānas*. In other words, Theravāda accepted that the meditative basis for the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat to eradicate defilements could be the *anāgāmya-samādhi*—access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*.

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the *Samgūtiparyāya* (*Apidamo jiyimen zulun* 阿

¹³² Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 581.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 1274.

¹³⁴ Law, trans., *Puggala-Paññatti*, 22.

毘達磨集異門足論) and the **Abhidharmavibhāṣāsāstra*¹³⁵ (*Apitan piposha lun* 阿毘曇毘婆沙論) state that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat does not attain any of the eight liberations, but has destroyed all taints by seeing with wisdom¹³⁶ The **Śāriputrābhidharma-sāstra* (*Shelifu apitan lun* 舍利弗阿毘曇論) also has similar statement¹³⁷ In the Mahāyāna tradition, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* states that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat cannot enter any of the *dhyānas*, except the *anāgāmya-samādhi*¹³⁸ All of these texts show that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat does not experience any of the *dhyānas*, but depends on a *samādhi* lower than the first *dhyāna* to attain enlightenment

The Sarvāstivādins seemed aware of the distinctions of the different versions, including those of the Mahāsāṃghika and the Theravāda, and reflected on their Abhidharma texts In the Sarvāstivāda *Āgamas*, the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat definitely does not attain any of the *dhyānas* as shown in SĀ 347, SĀ 936, and MĀ 195 Yet, the Sarvāstivādins interpreted the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat as one who is merely unable to enter the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) This is shown in the *Mahāvibhāṣā*, Dharmasresthin's *Abhidharmahṛdayasāstra* (*Apitan xin lun* 阿毘曇心論), Ghosa's *Abhidharmāmṛtasāstra* (*Apitan ganluwei lun* 阿毘曇甘露味論), Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and Samghabhadra's **Abhidharmanyāyāmusārasāstra*

¹³⁵ It is another translation of the **Mahāvibhāṣā*

¹³⁶ SP at T1536, 436a2 云何慧解脫補特伽羅？答：若補特伽羅雖於八解脫身未證具足住，而已以慧永盡諸漏，是名慧解脫補特伽羅 Avb at T1546, 216c28 云何慧解脫人？若人不由身證八解脫，以慧斷餘漏，是名慧解脫人

¹³⁷ Sas at T1548, 588a24 云何慧解脫人？若人寂靜解脫過色無色，彼非身觸行見慧斷有漏，是名慧解脫人

¹³⁸ MP at T1509, 270b21 有二種三昧 一種慧解脫分，二種共解脫分。前者慧解脫分不能入禪定，但說未到地中三昧；此中說共解脫分，具有禪定解脫三昧

(*Apīdamo shunzhengli lun* 阿毘達磨順正理論)¹³⁹ The *Mahāvībhāṣā* maintains that an Arhat who does not have any of the *dhyānas* is called the full *prajñāvimukti* Arhat, and the Arhat who can enter any of the four *dhyānas* or the four formless attainments is called the partial *prajñāvimukti* Arhat¹⁴⁰ In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat has the ability to abide in any of the four *dhyānas* or the four formless attainments, that is, the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats have different degrees of *śamatha*, from the *anāgāmya-samādhi* up to the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. On the other hand, according to Theravāda, the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat is able to abide in the *anāgāmya-samādhi* or any of the four *dhyānas*, but not in the four formless attainments.

Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhśāstra* (*Chengshih lun* 成實論), maintains that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats employ, not the *anāgāmya-samādhi*, but the *kāmadhātu-samādhi* to extirpate all taints¹⁴¹ To Harivarman, if one does not depend on any of the four *dhyānas* or the three lower formless attainments to destroy all defilements, this means one cannot attain the first *dhyāna* and its access concentration. In other words, if one can attain the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, one must be able to enter the first *dhyāna*¹⁴² Therefore, according to Harivarman, it should be the *kāmadhātu-samādhi*, not the *anāgāmya-samādhi*, serving as the basis for the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats to attain

¹³⁹ Mhv at T1545, 564b13 由此少分慧解脫者，乃至能起有頂等至，但不得滅定。AH at T1550, 820a2 慧解脫當知不得滅盡定者。AAS at T1553, 973c10 云何慧解脫？不得滅盡定，是慧解脫。AK at T1558, 131c12 所餘未得滅盡定者名慧解脫。ANS at T1562, 725a23 然有已得七解脫者，未得滅定故，亦名慧解脫。

¹⁴⁰ Mhv at T1545, 564b8 答：慧解脫有二種，一是少分，二是全分。少分慧解脫於四靜慮能起一二三，全分慧解脫於四靜慮皆不能起。

¹⁴¹ TS at T1646, 339a2 問曰：欲界何故不說依耶？答曰：須尸摩經中說除七依更有得聖道處，故知欲界亦有。問曰：有人言依初禪邊未到地得阿羅漢果。是事云何？答曰：不然。若未到地有衣，是則有過。若能得未到地，何故不入初禪？

¹⁴² TS at T1646, 367c27 問曰：是人依初禪近地得阿羅漢道非欲界定？答曰：不然！言除七依則除初禪及近地已，又此中無有因緣能依近地非欲界定。若此行者能入近地，何故不能入初禪耶？是事亦無因緣。

awakening The Sarvāstivādins disagreed that the *kāmadhātu*-samādhi can serve as the basis for the destruction of defilements According to the **Abhidharmavibhāṣāsāstra*, a meditator can depend on the *kāmadhātu*-samādhi to develop insight, but not to destroy defilements, because *kāmadhātu*-samādhi is a samādhi not stable ¹⁴³ It is similar to a lamp blown by the wind in the crossroads ¹⁴⁴ Harivarman and the Sarvāstivādins had different viewpoints concerning the *anāgāmya*-samādhi or the *kāmadhātu*-samādhi to serve as the adequate basis for the *praññāvimukti* Arhats to attain enlightenment However, Harivarman agreed that the *praññāvimukti* Arhats are merely unable to enter the attainment of cessation as the Sarvāstivādins advocated ¹⁴⁵

In Yogācāra, the *Yogācārabhūmi* interprets the Āgama's description about the *praññāvimukti* Arhats by using the *anāgāmya*-samādhi to eradicate all defilements, a statement which is in accordance with the Sarvāstivāda version, the 347th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* ¹⁴⁶ Yet, this treatise also defines the *praññāvimukti* Arhat as one who destroys all defilements but is unable to attain all of the eight liberations

What does an individual liberated by wisdom mean? An individual has attained the destruction of all taints, but is unable to dwell having contacted all of the eight liberations with body This is named an individual liberated by wisdom

云何慧解脫補特伽羅？謂有補特伽羅已能證得諸漏永盡，於八解脫未能身證具足安住，是名慧解脫補特伽羅。¹⁴⁷

The interpretation of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi used by the *praññāvimukti* Arhats is for pointing out the Buddha's implicit suggestion in early discourses, the definition of the *praññāvimukti* Arhats reflects the *Yogācārabhūmi* position as in agreement with the

¹⁴³ Avb at T1546, 308b29 欲界定雖能正觀，不能斷結，故不名禪

¹⁴⁴ Avb at T1546, 308c7 欲界定為燒亂風所吹動，故不名禪

¹⁴⁵ TS at T1646, 246c12 因滅盡定故有二人，不得此定名慧解脫，得此定者名俱解脫

¹⁴⁶ YB at T1579, 835c20 得初靜慮近分所攝勝三摩地以為依止；增上慧學增上力故，得去住智及星槃智

¹⁴⁷ YB at T1579, 425b12

interpretation of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma

Asanga, in his *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (*Dasheng apidamo ji lun* 大乘阿毘達磨集論), also says

What is an individual liberated by wisdom? One has extirpated all taints but has not attained all of the eight liberations
何等慧解脫補特伽羅？謂已盡諸漏而未具證八解脫定。¹⁴⁸

Sthiramati's commentary on Asanga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya* is called

**Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* (*Dasheng apidamo zajulun* 大乘阿毘達磨雜集論), and in this work, he also explains that the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats cannot attain all of the eight liberations. In other words, the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat is one who can attain one liberation, two liberations, or seven liberations, but not all eight liberations.¹⁴⁹ The *prajñāvimukti* Arhat is merely unable to enter the attainment of cessation, this is consistent with the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma. The indication of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the interpretation of the *prajñāvimukti* Arhat in Yogācāra are completely consistent with the Sarvāstivāda viewpoints, this demonstrates that the Sarvāstivāda system of *śamatha* profoundly influenced the Yogācāra system of *śamatha*.

Dhyānāntara

In the *Āgamas*, the *Nikāyas*, and the Mahāyāna sūtras, there are the three samādhis taught by the Buddha: the samādhi with applied thought and sustained thought, the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only, and the samādhi without applied thought and sustained thought. These three samādhis are enumerated in MĀ 72, MĀ 76, MN 128, DN33, the *Śatasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*, and the

¹⁴⁸ AS at T1605, 689a18

¹⁴⁹ ASV at T1606, 754b19 慧解脫補特伽羅者，謂已盡諸漏，而未具證八解脫定

Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitāsūtra, referring to the four *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments ¹⁵⁰

In the generic scheme of the eight meditative attainments, the samādhi with applied thought and sustained thought is the first *dhyāna*. The samādhi without applied thought and sustained thought includes the three higher *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments. Then, what is the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only? There is no position for this samādhi either in the four *dhyānas* or in the four formless attainments. In the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, the Buddha did not specify which *dhyāna* this samādhi belongs to. Therefore, this samādhi had been interpreted in different ways in the different Abhidharma systems.

According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, the samādhi with applied thought and sustained thought is defined as the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the first *dhyāna*, the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only is defined as the *dhyānāntara* between the first *dhyāna* and the second *dhyāna*, and the samādhi without applied thought and sustained thought is defined as the three higher *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments ¹⁵¹. In the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, the *dhyānāntara* is never mentioned by the Buddha under this name. This *dhyānāntara* is indicated by the Abhidharma masters in order to explain the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only.

In the Theravāda Abhidhamma Piṭaka, the samādhi without applied thought but

¹⁵⁰ MĀ 72 at T26, 538c3, MĀ 76 at T26, 543c20. Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1015. Walshe, trans., *Dīgha Nikāya*, 486. Sps at T220, 301a3, Pps at T223, 255a12.

¹⁵¹ Mhv at T1545, 269c19. 云何有尋有伺？謂在欲界及初靜慮。云何無尋唯伺？謂在靜慮中間。云何無尋無伺？謂在上三靜慮及四無色。 YB at T1579, 294b26. 此中欲界及色界初靜慮，除靜慮中間若定若生，名有尋有伺地；即靜慮中間若定若生名無尋唯伺地，隨一有情由修此故得為大梵；從第二靜慮餘有色界及無色界，全名無尋無伺地。 MP at T1509, 234a20. 欲界未到地初禪與覺觀相應故，名有覺有觀；二禪中間但觀相應故，名無覺有觀；從第二禪乃至有頂地非覺觀相應故，名無覺無觀。

with sustained thought only is not designated as the *dhyānāntara* but is regarded as the second *dhyāna* in the fivefold division of the *dhyānas*. This fivefold division is peculiar to the Abhidharma system, it does not occur as such in the suttas. Thus there are two schemes of *dhyānas* in the Theravāda Abhidharma system: the fourfold and the fivefold. According to the *Vibhanga*, the fourfold scheme is the same as the *Nikāyas* state, the fivefold scheme is based on the former fourfold scheme with the addition of the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only.¹⁵² This demonstrates that the *dhyānāntara* or the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought is recognized among the different Buddhist schools.

In the Mahāyāna sūtras, the *Śatasāhasrikāpraññāpāramitāsūtra* and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-praññāpāramitāsūtra* clearly define the samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only as the *dhyānāntara* between the first *dhyāna* and the second *dhyāna*.¹⁵³ In these two sūtras, the definition of these three samādhis is similar to that of the Abhidharma systems, except that the *anāgāmya*-samādhi was excluded from the list. The presentation of the *dhyānāntara* in the Mahāyāna sūtras reflects the development of *śamatha* in Buddhist schools.

On the basis of the Buddha's words, a samādhi lower than the first *dhyāna* was pointed out and designated the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, and a samādhi without applied thought but with sustained thought only was named the *dhyānāntara* between the first *dhyāna* and the second *dhyāna*. Even though these two samādhis have their different

¹⁵² Thittila, trans., *Vibhanga*, 344-6

¹⁵³ Sps at T220, 301a7 若離欲惡不善法，有尋有伺離生喜樂，入初靜慮具足住，是為有尋有伺三摩地。世尊！云何無尋唯伺三摩地？善現！若初靜慮第二靜慮中間定，是為無尋唯伺三摩地。世尊！云何無尋無伺三摩地？善現！若第二靜慮乃至非想非非想處。是為無尋無伺三摩地。 Pps at T223, 255a14 云何名有覺有觀三昧？離諸欲離惡不善法，有覺有觀離生喜樂入初禪，是名有覺有觀三昧。云何名無覺有觀三昧？初禪二禪中間是名無覺有觀三昧。云何名無覺無觀三昧？從二禪乃至非有想非無想定，是名無覺無觀三昧。

designations in the Abhidharma systems, their functions for the development of insight and for the extirpation of defilements are acknowledged in Buddhist schools. After the indication of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara*, the ninefold scheme of *samatha* for the destruction of taints is completely established: the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the first *dhyāna*, the *dhyānāntara*, the three higher *dhyānas*, and the three lower formless attainments. This forms the common *samatha* system in Sarvāstivāda, Yogācāra, and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*.

3. What Samādhis Can Serve as the Adequate Basis for the Initial Stage of Enlightenment?

One is enlightened or unenlightened depending on whether there is the eradication of the three coarsest fetters¹⁵⁴ (*trīṇi saṃyojanāni*)—identity view (that is, view of self), attachment to rules and observances, and doubt. When a meditator initially sees the truth of the Dharma, he/she abandons these three fetters, entering the first stage of enlightenment. After entering the path of insight (*darśana-mārga*), one becomes a stream-enterer (*srota-āpanna*) according to the early schools or a Bodhisattva at the first *bhūmi* according to the Mahāyāna teaching¹⁵⁵.

In the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, the Buddha reveals that the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments are the adequate basis for the development of insight¹⁵⁶. Subsequently, the Abhidharma texts of the Buddhist schools further explain: when the *dhyānas*, the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the *dhyānāntara*, and the formless attainments are

¹⁵⁴ The three fetters are the last three of the five lower fetters—sensual lust, ill will, personality view, attachment to rules and observances, and doubt.

¹⁵⁵ MĀ 4 at T26, 424b28 謂身見、戒取、疑三結已盡，得須陀洹。SS at T676, 702b3 自內所證通達智生名為見道，由得此故名入菩薩正性離生，生如來家證得初地。

¹⁵⁶ This is shown in AN 9 36, MN 64, MN 111, MĀ 177, and MĀ 205.

conjoined with insight, due to their difference in the relative balance of samādhi and wisdom, these meditative attainments play different roles in the destruction of taints. Below I will explore what samādhis can serve as the adequate basis for the initial stage of enlightenment.

According to the *Navabhikkhu Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya* and its Chinese counterpart, the 1070th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the four *dhyānas* constitute the higher mind leading to a pleasant dwelling in this very life.¹⁵⁷ In the *Samādhībhāvanā Sutta* of the *Ānguttara Nikāya*, there are four kinds of development of concentration: 1) concentration that leads to a pleasant dwelling in this very life, 2) concentration that leads to obtaining knowledge and vision, 3) concentration that leads to mindfulness and clear comprehension, 4) concentration that leads to the destruction of taints.¹⁵⁸ In these four kinds of development of concentration, the four *dhyānas* alone lead to a pleasant dwelling in this very life. These discourses show the superiority of the four *dhyānas* to other samādhis winning the designation of “pleasant dwelling in this very life.” It is said that the four *dhyānas* are designated as “pleasant dwelling in this very life,” because when insight is developed in conjunction with tranquility, wisdom and samādhi reach balance only in the four *dhyānas*.

According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā (Apidamo dapiposha lun 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論)* of the Sarvāstivāda:

In the state of the four *dhyānas*, *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* are equal in strength, and thus they are named pleasant dwelling. In the state of access concentration [preceding the first *dhyāna*], *vipaśyanā* is superior but *śamatha* is inferior; in the state of the formless attainments, *śamatha* is superior but *vipaśyanā* is inferior; as a result, both are not the pleasant

¹⁵⁷ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 717. SĀ 1070 at T99, 278a1: 是比丘得四增心法正受現法安樂住。

¹⁵⁸ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 88.

dwelling.

四靜慮中止觀力等，故名樂住；近分定中觀強止劣，無色定中止強觀劣，俱非樂住。¹⁵⁹

This treatise explains that whether samādhis are “pleasant dwelling” is dependent on the balance of *samatha* and *vipāśyanā*, namely the balance of samādhi and wisdom. The Buddhist samādhis including the development of both *samatha* and *vipāśyanā* differs from the non-Buddhist samādhis that focus on the development of *samatha* only.

The **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (*Dazhi du lun* 大智度論), a text of the

Mādhyamika school ascribed to Nāgārjuna, holds the same position thus:

In the state of the four *dhyānas*, wisdom and samādhi are balanced as a pleasant [dwelling]. In the state of the *anāgāmya* [samādhi] sphere and the intermediate sphere [*dhyānāntara*], wisdom is superior but samādhi is inferior; in the state of the formless attainments, samādhi is superior but wisdom is inferior; therefore, these states are not pleasant [dwellings]. 四禪中智定等而樂；未到地中間地智多而定少，無色界定多而智少，是處非樂。¹⁶⁰

Here the *dhyānāntara* is further pointed out as superior in wisdom but inferior in samādhi. The first *dhyāna* and the second *dhyāna* can maintain a balance between samādhi and wisdom. Why is the *dhyānāntara* between the first and the second *dhyānas* unable to maintain this balance? This treatise does not explain the reason, but indicates the inferiority of the *dhyānāntara* in samādhi.

Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (*Apidamo jushe lun* 阿毘達磨俱舍論), interprets the four *dhyānas* as a pleasant dwelling thus:

Why are the *dhyānas* alone said to be superior? Among the kinds of concentration, only these include [*dhyāna*] factors. A balance between *samatha* and *vipāśyanā* enables one to perform the best examination and reflection. Thus they lead to a pleasant dwelling in this very life.

¹⁵⁹ Mhv at T1545, 420a14.

¹⁶⁰ MP at T1509, 185b18.

靜慮如何獨名為勝？諸等持內唯此攝支，止觀均行最能審慮，得現法樂住。¹⁶¹

In the state of the four *dhyānas*, there is a balance between *samatha* and *vipāśyanā*, which provides the best condition for a meditator's examination and reflection leading to the direct knowledge and vision of things as they really are. A meditator does not need to emerge from a meditative attainment for practicing insight. The four *dhyānas* attain the designation of "pleasant dwelling in this very life", according to Vasubandhu, this is because only when insight is developed in conjunction with the four *dhyānas*, *samādhi* and wisdom reach a balance which is the best condition for the attainment of supreme enlightenment.

Asanga, in his **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra (Xianyang shengjiao lun 顯揚聖教論)*, compares the *dhyānas* with the formless attainments thus

Only the *dhyānas* lead to a pleasant dwelling in this very life, because one can experience both physical and mental well-being while in them. The formless attainments cannot be due to the absence of physical well-being. One can depend on the *dhyānas*, but not on the formless attainments, to reach the [initial] breakthrough [*abhisamaya*], because when *vipāśyanā* is developed in conjunction with the *dhyānas*, it becomes extremely sharp. 唯諸靜慮是現法安樂住性，具有身心二種安故，非無色定無身安故。又依靜慮能入現觀，非無色定，以諸靜慮毘鉢舍那極猛利故。¹⁶²

Asanga indicates that while being in the four *dhyānas*, one experiences both physical and mental well-being as a pleasant dwelling in this very life, and *vipāśyanā* also becomes extremely sharp leading to the initial breakthrough to the Dharma. In contrast, the formless attainments cannot lead to a pleasant dwelling in this very life because one experiences only mental well-being without including physical well-being, and they cannot serve as a basis for one to attain the initial breakthrough to the Dharma because

¹⁶¹ AK at T1558, 145b16

¹⁶² PS at T1602, 576c4

when *vipāśyanā* is developed in conjunction with the formless attainments, it is not extremely sharp.

When *vipāśyanā* is developed in conjunction with the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, it is like an oil lamp in wind, with the result that this oil lamp is difficult to light clearly, because the *anāgāmya*-samādhi is not fixed enough. When *vipāśyanā* is developed in conjunction with the *dhyānas*, it is like an oil lamp in the interior of a house; therefore, the oil lamp lights brightly on the firmly fixed *dhyānas*. When *vipāśyanā* is developed in conjunction with the formless attainments, it is like a small oil lamp in an immense dark; as a result, the oil lamp lights finitely, because the deeper samādhi is, the weaker perception is. According to the 28th sūtra of the *Dīrgha Āgama* and the *Paṭṭhapāda Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, “from the arising of perception comes the arising of knowledge”; that is, perception (*saṃjñā*) arises first and then knowledge (*vidyā*) arises.¹⁶³ The superiority and inferiority of perception affect the development of insight. If there is no *vipāśyanā*, there is no breakthrough to the truth; however, the different degrees of samādhi also influence the power of *vipāśyanā*.

In Buddhist practice, the thirty-seven aids to enlightenment (*saptatrimśad-bodhipakṣikā-dharmāḥ*) are the central path to deliverance consisting of the seven groups: the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right kinds of striving, the four bases for spiritual power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven enlightenment factors, and the noble eightfold path. In these seven groups, the faculty of concentration in the five faculties,¹⁶⁴ the power of concentration in the five powers,¹⁶⁵ the concentration

¹⁶³ Walshe, trans., *Dīgha Nikāya*, 163.

¹⁶⁴ The five faculties (*pañca-īndriya*) are the spiritual faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

¹⁶⁵ The five powers (*pañca-balāni*) are the powers of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

in the seven enlightenment factors,¹⁶⁶ and the right concentration in the noble eightfold path¹⁶⁷ are all defined as the four *dhyānas* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*.¹⁶⁸ The “higher mind” of the threefold training¹⁶⁹ is also defined as the four *dhyānas* in early discourses.¹⁷⁰ All of these indicate that the four *dhyānas* are the most prominent type of *samatha* for a meditator to attain enlightenment; specifically, the *dhyānas* can serve as a basis for *vipassyanā* to bring the initial breakthrough to the Dharma, and the formless attainments are inadequate for this.

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the *Jñānaprasthāna*¹⁷¹ (*Apidamo fazhi lun* 阿毘達磨發智論) maintains that the destruction of the three fetters— identity view, attachment to rules and observances, and doubt—is dependent on the four *dhyānas* or the incompletely attained concentration as follows:

What samādhi does the eradication of the three fetters up to that of the ninety-eight underlying tendencies depend on? Answer: the eradication of the three fetters depends on the four [*dhyānas*] or the incompletely attained [concentration].

三結乃至九十八隨眠依何定滅？答三結或依四或依未至滅。¹⁷²

The **Mahāvibhāṣā*, a commentary on the *Jñānaprasthāna*, explains that “the four”

¹⁶⁶ The seven enlightenment factors (*sapta-bodhyanga*) are mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, energy, rapture, serenity, concentration and equanimity. The development of these seven enlightenment factors fulfills true knowledge and deliverance.

¹⁶⁷ The noble eightfold path (*aṣṭāṅgika-mārga*) is composed of eight factors: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Avoiding the two extremes of practice, the noble eightfold path is the middle way in Buddhist practice.

¹⁶⁸ E.g., SA 646, SN 48:8; SĀ 675, AN 5:14; SĀ 715; MA189, DN 22.

¹⁶⁹ The threefold training (*śikṣā-traya*) is the training in the higher virtue, the higher mind and the higher wisdom leading to the cessation of distraction, the concentration of the mind, and the final deliverance.

¹⁷⁰ SĀ 817, AN 3:88

¹⁷¹ In the Sarvāstivāda, there are seven Abhidharma texts called “the body and the six feet.” These seven treatises are *Dharmaskandha* (*Abhidharma fayun zulun* 阿毘達磨法蘊足論), *Samgītiparyāya* (*Apidamo jiyimen zulun* 阿毘達磨集異門足論), *Prajñaptiśāstra* (*Abhidharma shishe zulun* 阿毘達磨施設足論), *Prakaranapāda* (*Apidamo pinlei zu lun* 阿毘達磨品類足論), *Dhātukāya* (*Apidamo jeshen zulun* 阿毘達磨界身足論), *Vijñānakāya* (*Apidamo shushen zulun* 識身足論), and *Jñānaprasthāna* (*Apidamo fazhi lun* 阿毘達磨發智論). The first six treatises are as the feet of the last *Jñānaprasthāna*, and the *Jñānaprasthāna* as the body of the first six treatises.

¹⁷² JP at T1544, 939b16.

signifies the four *dhyānas*, and “the incompletely attained concentration” means the *anāgāmya*-*samādhi* and the *dhyānāntara*, because both are not fundamental types of concentration like the four *dhyānas* or the four formless attainments¹⁷³ According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, when insight is developed in conjunction with the formless attainments, it is capable of extirpating the subtle defilements which are destroyed by the path of cultivation (*bhāvanā-prahātavya*), but not the coarse defilements which are destroyed by the path of insight (*darśana-prahātavya*) In contrast, when insight is developed in conjunction with the *dhyānas*, it is capable of eliminating both the coarse defilements and the subtle defilements¹⁷⁴ Therefore, only the sixfold scheme of *samatha*—consisting of the four *dhyānas*, *anāgāmya*-*samādhi*, and *dhyānāntara*—acts as the supporting condition for the extirpation of the coarse defilements which are destroyed by the path of insight

Vasubandhu in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and Samghabhadra in the **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra* uphold this sixfold scheme as an adequate basis for a meditator to develop the four good roots (*kuśalamūla*) conducive to penetration (*nirvedha-bhāgīya*), namely heat (*uṣmagata*), summit (*mūradhan*), acquiescence (*kṣānti*), and the supreme worldly dharma (*laukikāgradharma*), leading to the initial breakthrough to the noble truths (*satya-abhisamaya*)¹⁷⁵ Consequently, the sixfold scheme of *samatha* joining *vipāśyanā* in pairs for a meditator to uproot the three coarsest fetters and enter the path of insight (*darśana-mārga*) becomes the orthodoxy in the Sarvāstivāda school In

¹⁷³ Mhv at T1545, 311a16 三結或依四或依未至滅者：四謂四靜慮地，未至謂未至地及靜慮中間，此二俱名未至地故。問此地何故名未至耶？答未入根本能現在前斷諸煩惱故名未至

¹⁷⁴ Mhv at T1545, 411c19 復次，若定能斷見修所斷二結盡者名為靜慮，諸無色定唯能斷修所斷結盡故非靜慮

¹⁷⁵ AK at T1558, 120a27 此四善根皆依六地 謂四靜慮、未至、中間。欲界中無闕等引故，餘上地亦無見道眷屬故，又無色界心不緣欲界故 ANS at T1562, 681b23

addition, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* also maintains that six meditative attainments in conjunction with insight enable a meditator to attain the initial breakthrough to the truth and to enter the path of insight ¹⁷⁶ Even though this treatise does not explicitly state what the six meditative attainments are, in contrast to its ninefold scheme of *śamatha* for insight, these six meditative attainments should be the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the *dhyānāntara*, and the four *dhyānas*, the same as in the Sarvāstivāda school ¹⁷⁷

However, the *Yogācārabhūmi* advocates that the fivefold system of *śamatha*, rather than the sixfold scheme, serves as the efficient foundation for the initial breakthrough to the noble truths According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*

Furthermore, only by depending on the *dhyānas* and access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*—the incompletely attained concentration, can one make the [initial] breakthrough to the noble truths The formless attainments are inadequate What is the reason? In the state of the formless attainments, the path of *śamatha* is superior, whereas the path of *vipāśyanā* is inferior The inferior path of *vipāśyanā* is incapable of attaining the [initial] breakthrough to the noble truths

復次，唯依諸靜慮及初靜慮近分未至定能入聖諦現觀，非無色定。所以者何？無色定中奢摩他道勝，毘鉢舍那道劣，非毘鉢舍那劣道能入聖諦現觀。¹⁷⁸

The description of the *Yogācārabhūmi* is related to the statement of the *Jñānaprasthāna*, but differs from the explanation of the **Mahāvibhāṣā* According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the incompletely attained concentration covers both the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the *dhyānāntara*, whereas, the *Yogācārabhūmi* asserts that the incompletely attained concentration only consists of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* According to Xuanzang, there are six comprehensions (*abhisamaya*) in

¹⁷⁶ MP at T1509, 195b14 六地見諦道

¹⁷⁷ MP at T1509, 187c9 九地無漏定：四禪、三無色定、未到地、禪中間，能斷結使 The ninefold scheme of *śamatha* is the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the *dhyānāntara*, the four *dhyānas*, and the three lower formless attainments

¹⁷⁸ YB at T1579, 682b27

the *Yogācārabhūmi*, in which three comprehensions depend on the five meditative attainments not the six meditative attainments, and this case illustrates that the *dhyānāntara* cannot be the supporting condition for the path of insight (*darśana-mārga*).¹⁷⁹ In other words, “the incompletely attained concentration” does not include the *dhyānāntara*. Xuanzang explains that there are many distractions in the *dhyānāntara* sphere, because the *Mahābrahman* dwells there; therefore, the *dhyānāntara* cannot serve as the foundation for the path of insight.¹⁸⁰

In the first *dhyāna* heaven of the form realm (*rūpadhātu*), there are three heavens: the lower heaven of Brahma followers (*Brahmapāriṣadya*), the middle heaven of Brahma's ministers (*Brahmapurohita*), and the highest heaven of the great Brahma heaven (*Mahābrahma*). Meditators will be reborn in these heavens according to their level of practice of the first *dhyāna* as weak, medium, or superior. According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, and the *Yogācārabhūmi*, Mahābrahman, the Brahma King, dwells in the great Brahma heaven, namely the *dhyānāntara* sphere.¹⁸¹ When one practices the first *dhyāna* reaching the superior level, one attains the *dhyānāntara* and thus is reborn in the great Brahma heaven. With regard to the *dhyānāntara*, Kuiji 窺基 (632-682), in his *Chengweishilun shuji* 成唯識論述記, adds:

¹⁷⁹ *Yuqielun ji* 瑜伽論記 at T1828, 618b26: 三藏云：見道依六地並取中間者，不然！唯六現觀三依五依生，除中間禪。 *Yuqeshidilun lu ezuan* 瑜伽師地論略纂 at T1829, 187a2: 法師云：見道依六地并取中間者，不然！准六現觀三依五依生，除中間禪。

¹⁸⁰ *Yuqielun ji* 瑜伽論記 at T1828, 618b27: 餘處文雖云有無漏，然以梵王所居多散亂故，準如有頂雖有無漏，不成斷惑。 *Yuqeshidilun lu ezuan* 瑜伽師地論略纂 at T1829, 187a4: 餘處文雖云有無漏，然以梵王所居多散亂故，豈如有頂雖云有無漏，不成斷惑。

¹⁸¹ *Mhv* at T1545, 509a23: 西方諸師作如是說：初靜慮地處別有三：一梵眾天處，二梵輔天處，三大梵天處，此處即是靜慮中間。迦濕彌羅諸論師說：初靜慮地唯有二處，即梵輔天中有高勝靜處，如近聚落有勝園林是大梵王常所居處，此處即是靜慮中間。 *MP* at T1509, 122c16: 梵世天者生處有三種：一者梵眾天，諸小梵生處；二者梵輔天，實梵生處；三者大梵天，是名中間禪生處。 *YB* at T1579, 294b28: 即靜慮中間若定若生，名無尋唯伺地，隨一有情由修此，故得為大梵。

Question: For what reason is [the initial breakthrough] not dependent on the *dhyānāntara*?

Answer: Because it cannot be a basis for [the development of] the sharp taintless, [a samādhi] that enables one to develop the sharp taintless can be the basis [for the initial breakthrough]. In addition, [the *dhyānāntara* sphere] is the place where the *Mahābrahman* dwells with many distractions; it is not the pure sphere.

問：何故不依中間入？答彼無明利無漏故，有明利無漏者能入故；又彼梵王居多散亂故，非純淨地故。¹⁸²

The *dhyānāntara* can be a basis for one to develop insight, but the power of insight is not sharp enough to bring the initial breakthrough to the Dharma, because the state of the *dhyānāntara* is not stable. Yet, in the state of the *dhyānāntara*, the power of insight is able to eliminate the subtle defilements which are destroyed by the path of cultivation.

The **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* also states that the *dhyānāntara* is inferior in samādhi.¹⁸³ The problem is: access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, or the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, is also inferior in samādhi, but it can be a basis for the development of sharp insight to bring the initial breakthrough to the Dharma. The *dhyānāntara* is a samādhi higher than access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*; then, why is the function of access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* superior to that of the *dhyānāntara*? The access concentration preceding the second *dhyāna* is also higher than the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, but this higher access concentration is said to not be a basis for insight to bring the breakthrough to the Dharma, while the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* can do so. In the system of *śamatha*, the four *dhyānas* and the formless attainments have their respective access concentration (*sāmantaka-samādhi*). According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and the *Yogācārabhūmi*, among the different grades of access concentration, only access

¹⁸² *Chengweishilun shuji* 成唯識論述記 at T1830, 568b8.

¹⁸³ MP at T1509, 185b19: 中間地智多而定少.

concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* functions as an adequate basis for the destruction of defilements¹⁸⁴ The other access concentrations cannot serve as a basis for the development of the taintless insight

Samghabhadra, in his **Abhidharmanyāyāmusārasāstra*, gives the reasons why access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* can be an adequate basis for the development of the taintless wisdom but others cannot thus

The higher seven access concentrations cannot be the basis for the development of the taintless [wisdom], because [while in each of these higher seven access concentrations], one does not oppose the dharmas of his/her sphere Only access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* can be the basis for the development of the taintless [wisdom], because [while in the access concentration], one is opposed to the dharmas of his/her sphere, and this sphere is close to the realm with many disasters
上七近分無無漏者，於自地法不厭背故；唯初近分通無漏者，於自地法能厭背故，此地極鄰近多災患界故。¹⁸⁵

Samghabhadra's reasons are ambiguous His statement is also cited in the Chinese commentaries on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, however, none of these three commentaries analyze his reasons

The *Yogācārabhūmi* also explains the reason thus

Excluding [dependent on] the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, one develops only the mundane wisdom, not the supramundane wisdom, while in the other access [concentrations] spheres Why is this so? It is because the *anāgāmya* sphere is the initial concentrated mind From the first *dhyāna* forth, all the concentrated minds have [the fundamental] samādhi first, hence, from the [first *dhyāna*] forth the noble disciples only depend on the fundamental [samādhis] to develop the supramundane wisdom, rather than the access concentrations

除未至定，所餘一切近分地中唯有俗智無出世智。何以故？由未至地是初定心，初靜慮上所有定心皆先有定，故聖弟子從此以上，但依根

¹⁸⁴ Mhv at T1545, 218a27 修所成慧有漏者在十七地 謂四靜慮、四近分、靜慮中間、四無色、四近分。無漏者在九地 謂四靜慮、未至、中間、下三無色 AK at T1558, 149b16 諸近分定亦有八種，與八根本為入門故，一切唯一捨受相應作功用轉故，未離下佈故，此八近分皆淨定攝，唯初近分亦通無漏 YB at T1579, 683a19 除未至定，所餘一切近分地中唯有俗智無出世智

¹⁸⁵ ANS at T1562, 765b16

本修出世智不依近分。¹⁸⁶

This treatise illustrates that the *anāgāmya*-samādhi is the initial concentration, and the noble disciples have no choice but to depend on the *anāgāmya*-samādhi to develop the supramundane wisdom. After the first *dhyāna*, the noble disciples merely choose the fundamental samādhis, rather than the other higher access concentrations, to be a basis for the attainment of supramundane wisdom. Both the **Abhidharmanyāyāmusārasāstra* and the *Yogācārabhūmi* do not definitely indicate what problems the seven higher access concentrations have and why they cannot be the basis for the development of the taintless wisdom. Xuanzang and Kuiji also do not clearly elucidate why the *dhyānāntara* cannot be a basis for one to make the initial breakthrough to the Dharma.

In brief, when insight is developed in conjunction with the four *dhyānas*, wisdom and samādhi are balanced leading to the eradication of the three coarsest fetters, and the attaining of the initial breakthrough into the noble truths. The four *dhyānas* can serve as an adequate basis for the development of the sharp taintless wisdom, conducive to both the extirpation of the coarse defilements which are destroyed by the path of insight (*darśana-prahātavya*), and the eradication of the subtle defilements which are destroyed by the path of cultivation (*bhāvanā-prahātavya*). When insight is developed in conjunction with access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, namely the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, wisdom is superior but samādhi is inferior; this union is also capable of eliminating the three coarsest fetters. When insight is developed in conjunction with the *dhyānāntara*, wisdom is superior but samādhi is inferior; yet, the fetter-removal power of this union is controversial.

¹⁸⁶ YB at T1579, 683a19.

The Sarvāstivādins and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* regard the *dhyānāntara* as an efficient basis for the destruction of the three coarsest fetters and the initial realization of the four noble truths, whereas the *Yogācārabhūmi* rejects this claim. When insight is developed in conjunction with the three lower formless attainments, samādhi is too strong and thus wisdom is insufficient. As a result, the formless attainments of the formless realm (*ārūpadhātu*) are not an efficient basis for the eradication of the three coarsest fetters, but these meditative attainments can be an adequate basis for eliminating the subtle defilements which are destroyed by the path of cultivation (*bhāvanā-prahātavya*).

Hence, according to the Sarvāstivādins and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, there is the sixfold scheme of *śamatha*, consisting of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the *dhyānāntara*, and the four *dhyānas*, which join with insight leading to the initial breakthrough to enlightenment. In contrast, in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, only when insight is developed in conjunction with the *anāgāmya*-samādhi and the four *dhyānas*, can one enter the first stage of the ten *bhūmis*. That is, the fivefold scheme of *śamatha*, without including the *dhyānāntara*, leads to the attaining of the initial breakthrough to enlightenment.

Chapter III

The Nature of *Dhyāna/Jhāna*

1. The Controversy of Maudgalyāyana/Moggallāna on Hearing Sounds in Meditation

The experience of Venerable Maudgalyāyana/Moggallāna, who heard sounds while in a meditative attainment or after emerging from a meditative attainment, is recorded differently in the *Vinayas* of different early Buddhist schools. According to the Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana was able to hear sounds while in a meditative attainment, and both *Vinayas* attribute this to his meditative attainment having not been fully purified¹⁸⁷. This suggests that sensory awareness can be present while one is in *dhyāna*. In contrast, according to the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana reached a formless (*arūpa*) attainment, and then after emerging from the formless attainment, he heard sounds¹⁸⁸. This illustrates that sensory awareness cannot occur while one is in the formless attainment. This distinction reflects the fact that the Buddhist schools have different interpretations of the nature of *dhyāna*. Below I will focus on this event of hearing sounds to explore whether or not sensory

¹⁸⁷ Horner, trans., *Vinaya-pitaka*, 1:189-90. The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* at T1428, 984c26. 時目連告諸比丘言：我入空慧定，聞八萬四千象入曼陀延池水聲。佛言：有如是定但不清淨。

¹⁸⁸ The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* at T1425, 466a5. 佛告諸比丘：目連實得無色定，不善知出入相，出定聞，非入定聞。The Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1435, 441a1. 佛語諸比丘：汝等莫說目連是事過罪。何以故？目連見先事不見後事，如來亦見先亦見後。目連在耆闍崛山中，入虛空無色定，善取入定相，不善取出定相。是人從三昧起，聞薩卑尼池岸上象聲已，還疾入虛空無色定，便謂我入定聞聲。The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1442, 680b6. 世尊告曰：汝諸苾芻如大目連所言無妄，雖復現入無所有處定，諸色聲想悉皆遠離。然大目連獲得靜慮解脫勝妙等持，速出速入，雖是出定調在定中，便以其事告諸苾芻，我在定中聞象吼叫。

awareness can occur while one is in *dhyāna*

According to the *Youxing jing* 遊行經 of the *Dīrgha Āgama* and the *Mahāparimbbāna Sutta* of the *Dīrgha Nikāya*, once, while the Buddha was sitting in meditation fully conscious and awake, he did not see nor hear a great storm, complete with rainfall, flooding, thunder, and lightning¹⁸⁹ It seems that the Buddha attained a formless (*arūpa*) attainment which transcended all perceptions of form (*rūpa*), such as perceptions of visible form, sound, smell, taste, and tactile objects Hence, he was not aware of the storm Contrary to the implication of this event, the Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* record that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds while in a meditative attainment

According to the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana described that upon entering the imperturbable concentration, namely the formless attainments or the formless attainments plus the fourth *dhyāna*, he heard sounds of elephants plunging into water, crossing over and trumpeting on the bank of the river Sappinikā Some monks became angry upon hearing this statement because they thought that Maudgalyāyana had made a false claim The Buddha commented that Maudgalyāyana had spoken truthfully because his meditative attainment was not wholly purified¹⁹⁰ Ven Thanissaro explains In an “impure” form of meditative attainment, one is able to hear sounds as Venerable Maudgalyāyana attains, while in a “pure” form of formless attainment, one is unable to hear sounds as per the Buddha’s own experience¹⁹¹

According to the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, Maudgalyāyana said that he heard

¹⁸⁹ DĀ 2 at T1, 19b01 其人即問：佛向在何所？為覺寐耶？答曰：在此，時不寐也。其人亦歎希聞得定如佛者也，雷電霹靂，聲聒天地，而獨寂定，覺而不聞 Walshe, trans, *Dīrgha Nikāya*, 259

¹⁹⁰ Horner, trans, *Vinaya-pitaka*, 1 189-90

¹⁹¹ Cited in Shankman, *Experience of Samādhi*, 126-27

sounds of elephants entering a pond while in the formless attainment of the base of infinite space. Some monks replied that it is impossible to hear sounds while one is in the base of infinite space, and reported this matter to the Buddha. The Buddha stated that there was no offense for Maudgalyāyana because his meditative attainment was “impure.” The Buddha also said that this principle could be applied to one who hears sounds while in the base of infinite consciousness and the base of nothingness, because these two attainments are not purified.¹⁹² The Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* indicate that sensory awareness can and does occur while one is in *dhyāna* or in any of the formless attainments, and both cite the same reason.

The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* provide a variant account of the same incident. According to them, Venerable Maudgalyāyana attained the formless attainment, and then after emerging from this attainment, he heard sounds.¹⁹³ According to the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana stated that he heard sounds of elephants trumpeting on the bank of the river while in the formless attainment. Some monks said that this is impossible, because when one enters the formless attainment one transcends all perceptions of form. How, then, does one hear sounds? The Buddha explained that Maudgalyāyana really attained the formless attainment, but he was not clear about the sign of entering this attainment and the sign of emerging from this attainment. Therefore, he heard sounds after emerging

¹⁹² The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* at T1428, 984c26 時目連告諸比丘言：我入空慧定，聞八萬四千象入曼陀延池水聲。時諸比丘語目連：大德自言入空慧定，聞彼諸象入曼陀延池水聲。大德！入空慧定而聞音聲無有是處，虛稱得上人法，波羅夷非比丘。時諸比丘往白佛，佛言：有如是定但不清淨，而目連無犯。識慧定處、無所有慧定處亦如是。

¹⁹³ The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* at T1425, 466a5, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1435, 441a1, The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1442, 680b6

from the attainment¹⁹⁴

According to the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana said that he heard sounds of elephants on the bank of the river while in the formless attainment of the base of infinite space. Some monks rejected the possibility of seeing forms and hearing sounds while in the base of infinite space, because when one enters any of the formless attainments, the perception of form and sound is suspended. The Buddha replied that when Maudgalyāyana entered the base of infinite space, he was clear about the sign of entering this attainment, but was not clear about the sign of emerging from this attainment. He emerged from the attainment temporarily and heard sounds of elephants, but he promptly re-entered this attainment again. Therefore, he thought that he could hear sounds while in the base of infinite space.¹⁹⁵ This *Vinaya* also indicates that when Venerable Maudgalyāyana said that he heard sounds of music while in the base of infinite consciousness or in the base of nothingness, he actually heard sounds after briefly emerging from the formless attainment, and then immediately re-entering this attainment.¹⁹⁶

In the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana described that he

¹⁹⁴ The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* at T1425, 465c28 爾時尊者大目連作如是言：長老！我入無色定，聞蘇河邊龍象飲已抖擻耳聲。諸比丘言：無有是處，入無色定過一切色想，云何聞聲？汝妄語不實，應作舉羯磨，即集比丘僧。佛乘神足從空中來，知而故問諸比丘，汝作何等？諸比丘以上因緣具白世尊，乃至妄語不實作舉羯磨。佛告諸比丘：目連實得無色定，不善知出入相，出定聞，非入定聞。佛語目連：汝當應善分別知

¹⁹⁵ The Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1435, 440c21 又一時目連在耆闍崛山中，入虛空無色定，善取入定相，不善取出定相。從三昧起，聞薩卑尼池岸上大象聲，聞已還疾入三昧，作是念：我入三昧中聞是象聲。從三昧起語諸比丘：我一時在耆闍崛山中，入虛空無色定，聞薩卑尼池岸上象聲。諸比丘語目連：何有此理？入虛空無色定中，若見若聞，無有是事。何以故？若人入無色定，破壞色相捨離聲相故。汝空無過人法故妄語，汝目連滅擯驅出。是事問佛，佛語諸比丘：汝等莫說目連是事過罪。何以故？目連見先事不見後事，如來亦見先亦見後。目連在耆闍崛山中，入虛空無色定，善取入定相，不善取出定相。是人從三昧起，聞薩卑尼池岸上象聲已，還疾入虛空無色定，便謂我入定聞聲。若人入無色定，若見色聞聲，無有是處。何以故？是人破壞色相捨離聲相故。若目連空無過人法故妄語者，亦無是處，目連隨心想說無罪

¹⁹⁶ The Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1435, 441a10

heard sounds of elephants trumpeting on the riverbank while in the base of nothingness. Some monks refuted his statement and cited the Buddha's words that one must abandon sensory objects, such as forms and sounds, upon entering the base of nothingness. How, then, could one hear sounds while in this meditative attainment? Śāriputra asked them to report this matter to the Buddha. The Buddha explained that Maudgalyāyana did not make a false claim, because his attainment was superior, and this enabled him to enter and emerge from it rapidly. Thus, he had already emerged from this attainment, even though he was under the impression that he was still within this attainment. That is, he heard sounds after emerging from the base of nothingness.¹⁹⁷

The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* are consistent in their claim that one abandons all perceptions of form when entering the formless attainments, and that no sensory awareness occurs in the formless attainments. Their unanimous conclusion is that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds after emerging from the formless attainment.

The Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* record that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds while in a meditative attainment, albeit an “impure” one. The Pāli commentary to the Theravāda *Vinaya* states, “he went forth, and had mastery in the eight attainments, but not having purified himself well in the obstructions to contemplation and rising up from musing and hearing the sound of the elements.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1442, 680a26 是時具壽大目連告諸苾芻曰：具壽！我入無所有定，聞曼陀羅池水之岸，有諸象王吼叫之聲。邬波難陀於眾中坐，聞此說已作如是言：上座勿虧正理，勿害法眼，我雖未證豈無聖教。如世尊說：若入無所有定者，必當遠離色聲諸境，如何入定而得聞聲？所授記者必無是處。廣說如前，六眾詰罪，鳴稚集眾，與大目連作捨置羯磨。時舍利子令往白佛，諸苾芻以此因緣具白世尊。世尊告曰：汝諸苾芻如大目連所言無妄，雖復現入無所有處定，諸色聲想悉皆遠離。然大目連獲得靜慮解脫勝妙等持，速出速入，雖是出定調在定中，便以其事告諸苾芻，我在定中聞象吼叫。汝諸苾芻，此大目連以實想說無犯

¹⁹⁸ Horner, trans., *Vinaya-pitaka*, 1:190

This commentary explains that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds between the meditative attainments. This statement reflects the descriptions of other schools' *Vinayas* on this issue.

The *Kathāvatthu*, an Abhidharma text of the Theravāda, refutes the view that one can enter *dhyāna* and still hear sounds. The commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* states that this view is held by the Pubbaseliyans, who cite the Buddha's words to prove this point.¹⁹⁹ Because the Buddha says that sounds are a thorn to one who attains the first *dhyāna*, if one cannot hear in the *dhyāna*, sounds cannot be a thorn.²⁰⁰ According to the *Kathāvatthu*, one cannot see, hear, smell, taste, and touch objects while in *dhyāna*. Thus, according to this interpretation, the sutta statement that "sounds are a thorn to the first *dhyāna*" should be understood to indicate that there can be no awareness of sound while remaining in the *dhyāna*.²⁰¹ The question of whether or not sensory awareness occurs while one is in a meditative attainment is debatable among the Buddhist schools, and is a subject open to different interpretations within Theravāda itself.

The **Mahāvibhāṣā*, an Abhidharma text of the Sarvāstivāda, also rejects the possibility of hearing sounds while in the first *dhyāna*.²⁰² This treatise states that one is unable to hear sounds while in the first *dhyāna*, and thus it is impossible that Venerable Maudgalyāyana could have heard sounds while in the base of nothingness.²⁰³ The **Mahāvibhāṣā* goes on to mention that some people maintain that *śamādhi* is as profound as the ocean, and *śrāvakas* (hearers) are unable to exhaust it, only the Buddha can, therefore, there was no offense committed by the Venerable Maudgalyāyana who said

¹⁹⁹ Upagupta, *Kathāvatthu*, trans. Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids, 331.

²⁰⁰ MĀ 84, AN 10.72.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 331.

²⁰² Mhv at T1545, 929c9. 住初靜慮者尚不聞聲，何況住無所有處定。

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

that he heard sounds while in the meditative attainment ²⁰⁴

Here a question is raised Did Venerable Maudgalyāyana not know that one is unable to hear sounds while in a meditative attainment? Why did he say it is possible? According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, it is because Venerable Maudgalyāyana was predominant in samādhi and had the ability to enter and emerge from samādhi rapidly, thus he thought that he heard sounds while in the base of nothingness However, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* continues, the fact is that he heard sounds after emerging from this attainment According to this treatise, he was only aware of the initial mind instant when he entered the samādhi, and of the final mind instant when he emerged from the samādhi, but he was unaware of his promptly entering, emerging, and re-entering the samādhi Thus, his claim did not constitute an offense against the discipline, because it was simply a matter of his not being aware of the full sequence of mental events involved in the meditative process ²⁰⁵ The **Mahāvibhāṣā* is also clear that other schools' *Vinayas* admit to Venerable Maudgalyāyana hearing sounds while in a meditative attainment, such as the Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, and arbitrarily judges their *Vinayas* as "apocryphal *Vinayas*" ²⁰⁶

Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhīśāstra*, indicates that sounds are a thorn, because

²⁰⁴ Ibid

²⁰⁵ Mhv at T1545, 929c24 答：彼尊者於定自在入出迅疾，雖起定聞，作住定想。謂彼先從欲界善心入初靜慮，從初靜慮入第二靜慮，如是乃至入無所有處；從無所有處起還入識處，如是乃至入初靜慮。從此欲界善心現前，聞龍象等聲不起分別。復還從欲界善心入初靜慮，從初靜慮入第二靜慮，如是乃至入無所有處；從無所有處起還入識處，如是乃至入初靜慮。從此欲界善心現前，不審分別便作是語：我自曾在無所有處定，聞曼陀枳尼也邊龍象等聲。彼但於二心起分別知：謂初入定心，及後出定心。於其中間諸心相續，不審分別故作是說，亦無有過

²⁰⁶ Mhv at T1545, 929c15 問：諸餘聲聞亦知在定不聞聲，故尚無此說，况大目犍連是最勝聲聞，何故乃於芘芻眾中說不應說？有說：此不必須通。所以者何？此是偽毘奈耶故，佛滅後有於素毘羅中置偽素毘羅，毘奈耶中置偽毘奈耶，阿毘達磨中置偽阿毘達磨，諸偽文句不應通釋

they are a pain for one who has attained the first *dhyāna*²⁰⁷ He explains that “contact” constitutes a thorn to one who attains the first *dhyāna*, and this ear-contact causes one to emerge from the first *dhyāna*, because sensory consciousnesses can occur in the first *dhyāna* and the five sensory consciousnesses disappear in the second *dhyāna*²⁰⁸

The *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācāśāstra* maintain that one is able to hear sounds while in a meditative attainment²⁰⁹ According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, one hears sounds through ear-consciousness while in a meditative attainment, at the same time, one’s mind-consciousness is still concentrated²¹⁰ That is, ear-consciousness perceives sounds first in a meditative attainment, and then mind-consciousness searches for sounds Because of this searching, the meditator has to emerge from the meditative attainment If there is no hearing of sounds or active searching for sounds, the meditator will not emerge from the meditative attainment Therefore, the *Yogācārabhūmi* insists that it must be the case that one can hear sounds while in a meditative attainment, and not just so when after one emerges from it Kuiji 窺基 (632-682), in his commentary on the *Yogācārabhūmi*, indicates that this statement of hearing sounds while in a meditative attainment is for refuting the Sarvāstivāda viewpoint that the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while one is in *dhyāna*²¹¹

²⁰⁷ TS at T1646, 285b19 又佛說聲等是初禪刺，覺觀是二禪刺，乃至非想非無想處有想受刺，刺名苦義，故知一切有苦

²⁰⁸ TS at T1646, 341a24 初禪何故以音聲為刺？答曰：初禪住定心弱如花上水，第二禪等住定心強如漆漆木。又觸等亦名為初禪刺，以觸能令起初禪故，二禪等不爾。所以者何？以初禪中諸識不滅故，第二禪等五識滅故

²⁰⁹ YB at T1579, 650c20 若遇聲緣從定而起，與定相應音識俱轉餘耳識生，非即彼定相應音識能取此聲。若不爾者，於此音聲不領受故，不應出定。非取聲時即便出定，領受聲已，若有希望，後時方出 PS at T1602, 576b24 又處定中取外聲時，當知由二種取：一由了別定所緣境及種種所緣境音識故，二由此俱生耳識故

²¹⁰ YB at T1579, 650c20

²¹¹ *Yuqieshidulun luezuan* 瑜伽師地論略纂 at T1829, 224a19 論云：若不爾者於此音聲不領受，故不應出定等者。謂薩婆多定中無五識，今破之云

In the Theravāda *Vinaya*, some monks accused Venerable Maudgalyāyana of unfounded claim to higher attainment.²¹² Commenting on the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Ven. Anālayo says, “The fact that this led the monks to accuse him of false claims shows that the impossibility of hearing sound during deep absorption was generally accepted among the monks.”²¹³ The other *Vinayas* also show that when one is in a deep meditative attainment, hearing sounds has been considered impossible by monks. It seems that if a meditator is clearly aware of hearing sounds, the meditator has already emerged from a meditative attainment. In other words, when Venerable Maudgalyāyana clearly heard sounds of elephants plunging into water, crossing over and trumpeting on the bank of the river, he had already lost the meditative attainment. But, if a meditator perceives sounds and lets it go, he/she does not clearly know the occurrence of hearing sounds. The meditator can still remain in a meditative attainment which is not purified. The Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* record that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds while in a meditative attainment, and this attainment was not purified. That is, Venerable Maudgalyāyana perceived sounds indistinctly when the meditative attainment was not wholly purified. Then he emerged from the meditative attainment and clearly heard sounds of elephants plunging into water.

As the Buddhist *Vinayas* give us contradictory accounts on the possibility of hearing sounds when one is in a meditative attainment, the Yogācāra texts are also inconsistent on whether or not the operation of sensory consciousness takes place in a meditative attainment. According to the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, hearing sounds in a meditative attainment suggests that there

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Anālayo, *Direct Path to Realization*, 77.

is the occurrence of sensory consciousness in a meditative attainment, while Sthiramati, in his **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, says that there is no occurrence of the five sensory consciousnesses in *samāhita* ²¹⁴

According to the *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論, the position of the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* is in terms of “majority” to state that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in a meditative attainment ²¹⁵ Kuiji explains that the “majority” signifies “most people” who maintain that the five sensory consciousnesses do not work while they are in a meditative attainment, and “most sensory consciousnesses” do not act when *śrāvakas* (hearers) and *pratyekabuddhas* (self-realizers) are in a meditative attainment ²¹⁶ According to Kuiji, when *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* attain and abide in a meditative attainment, only ear-consciousness can arise, not the other four sensory consciousnesses. In contrast, all five sensory consciousnesses can arise when Bodhisattvas are in a meditative attainment ²¹⁷ Kuiji’s explanation that *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas* are only aware of sounds while in a meditative attainment seems incorrect, but his indication that most meditators do not experience the five sensory objects when in a meditative attainment seems to reflect the mainstream opinion of early Buddhist schools on this issue

According to the *Cheng weishi lun* and Kuiji, Sthiramati’s statement that there is no occurrence of the five sensory consciousnesses while one is in a meditative attainment needs further elucidation. That is, there is still the occurrence of the five sensory consciousnesses while one is in a meditative attainment, even though most meditators

²¹⁴ ASV at T1606, 726a26 於三摩呬多位餘識無故

²¹⁵ ChI at T1585, 26c6 雜集論說等引位中五識無者，依多分說

²¹⁶ *Chengweishilun shuyi* 成唯識論述記 at T1830, 420b18 對去論中言餘無者：約多分說。多分有二義：一多識，二多人。多人、多識不起言無，謂二乘等定中，唯得起耳非餘四識，非菩薩故

²¹⁷ Ibid

report that the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while they are in a meditative attainment. Kuiji explains that sensory consciousness can occur while one is in a meditative attainment, but it arises and ceases momentarily.²¹⁸ This means that a meditator can experience sensory consciousness momentarily and let it go, he/she cannot keep being aware of sensory consciousness while in a meditative attainment.

With regard to the presence of sensory awareness, the 559th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* and its relevant discourse, the *Ānanda Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, indicate that when one is in the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments, sensory objects are present to one's awareness, but one does not experience them.²¹⁹ According to SĀ 559, a monk asked: How is it that one can be percipient of what exists, yet one does not think or know? Venerable Ānanda replied that a monk is percipient of existing dharmas, but he does not think or know while in the first *dhyāna* up to the base of nothingness.²²⁰ In the *Ānanda Sutta*, it is said that when one is in the three lower formless attainments, one is percipient, but the eye will not be sensitive to forms, the ear to sounds, the nose to smells, the tongue to tastes, and the body to tactile objects.²²¹ These two discourses reveal that in subtle states of concentration, even though a meditator is percipient and the objects of the five senses are present, this meditator will not experience them.

In the case of hearing sounds, when one is in *dhyāna*, it is possible to hear sounds, but because of hearing sounds and searching for them one actually loses one's *dhyāna*, as the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Anguttara Nikāya* describes that sounds are a thorn for one

²¹⁸ *Chengweishulun shuji* 成唯識論述記 at T1830, 470a22 二禪以上准欲界，亦有率爾五識

²¹⁹ SĀ 559, AN 9 37

²²⁰ SĀ559, T99, 146c5 何等為有想於有而不覺知？尊者阿難語迦摩比丘言：若比丘離欲惡不善法，有覺有觀，離生喜樂，初禪具足住，如有想比丘有法而不覺知。如是第二、第三、第四禪，空入處、識入處、無所有入處具足住，如有想比丘有法而不覺知

²²¹ "Ananda Sutta With Ananda" (AN 9 37), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, July 4, 2010, http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an09/an09_037_than.html

who attains the first *dhyāna*.²²² In contrast, when one hears sounds in *dhyāna* and simply lets go of that hearing, he/she could still remain in this *dhyāna*, as SĀ 559 and AN 9:37 state that sensory objects are present while one is in a meditative attainment, but one does not dwell on them.²²³ When objects of the five senses are present, one could decide to search for them and thus lose one’s meditative attainment, or let go of those and still remain in the meditative attainment.

Here are the questions: First, when a meditator breathes in and out experiencing the whole physical body, does the meditator need to emerge from *dhyāna*? Second, does a meditator have to emerge from *dhyāna* as rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*) pervade the whole physical body?—In other words, could a meditator experience bodily feeling while in *dhyāna*?

Regarding the first question, bodily sensations are crucial for the practice of mindfulness of breathing, which involve the contemplation of the body. According to the *Ānāpānasati Sutta*, the contemplation of the body (*kāya*) consists of four steps: 1) know long breath, 2) know short breath, 3) experience the whole body, and 4) calm the bodily formation.²²⁴ Commenting on the third step of experiencing the whole body, Ven.

Thanissaro expounds:

The commentaries insist that “body” here means the breath, but this is unlikely in this context, for the next step — without further explanation — refers to the breath as “bodily fabrication.” If the Buddha were using two different terms to refer to the breath in such close proximity, he would have been careful to signal that he was redefining his terms (as he does below, when explaining that the first four steps in breath meditation correspond to the practice of focusing on the body in and of itself as a frame of reference). The step of breathing in and out sensitive to the entire body relates to the many similes in the suttas depicting jhana as a state of

²²² MĀ 84, AN 10:72

²²³ SĀ559, T99, 146c5.

²²⁴ MN 118

whole-body awareness.²²⁵

He indicates that in the third step, a meditator breathes in and out experiencing the whole body, which means the physical body, not the breath-body. That is, in this step, the breath throughout the whole body means that there is a state of “whole-body awareness” while one is in *dhyāna*. This suggests that one can practice mindfulness of breathing with breath sensations as the meditation object while in *dhyāna*.

Moreover, according to the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the **Abhidharmavibhāṣāśāstra*, Vasumitra, an eminent Sarvāstivāda scholar monk, says that when one breathes in and out experiencing the whole body within *dhyāna*, even though awareness of the breath is present, one does not need to emerge from *dhyāna*.²²⁶ This is because the employment of *upāya* enables one to remain in *dhyāna*.²²⁷ Vasumitra’s statement also affirms that a meditator can stay in *dhyāna* with bodily awareness.

In MĀ 81, MĀ 98, and MN 119, the simile of the bath man, the simile of the lake, the simile of lotuses in a pond, and the simile of white cloth vividly describe the experience of all-around awareness while one is in *dhyāna*. Ven. Thanissaro explains these four similes as “all images of whole-body awareness, of a sense of rapture, pleasure, or bright awareness filling the entire body. That's what you want to work on when you get to know the breath, because the type of awareness that allows insight to

²²⁵ Ven. Thanissaro’s footnote on the Ānāpānasati Sutta. "Anapanasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing" (MN 118), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, June 14, 2010, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.118.than.html>.

²²⁶ Mhv at T1545, 136a29: 息念成已，觀身毛孔猶如藕根，息風周遍於中入出。問：若爾何故非出定耶？答：意樂加行俱未息故。如菩薩時雖作此觀而不出定，亦以意樂加行未息故，無有過。尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾。Avb at T1546, 106c21: 問曰：繫念在鼻端，云何復知入出息遍身耶？答曰：尊者和須蜜作如是說：遍知此身是無常法，而不失念。問曰：若然者，不名起定耶？答曰：不名起，以不捨其方便故。如是展轉觀此身，是苦、空、無我、穢污不淨性。

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

arise.”²²⁸

According to the *Kāyagatāsati Sutta*, the simile of the bath man depicts that rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*) suffuse the whole physical body thus:

Just as a skilled bath man or a bath man’s apprentice heaps bath powder in a metal basin, sprinkling it gradually with water, kneads it till the moisture wets his ball of bath powder, soaks it and pervades it inside and out, yet the ball itself does not ooze; so too, a bhikkhu makes the rapture and pleasure born of seclusion drench, steep, fill, and pervade this body, so that there is no part of his whole body unpervaded by the rapture and pleasure born of seclusion.²²⁹

Ven. Thanissaro and Richard Shankman use this simile to indicate that awareness of the body is still present while one is in *dhyāna*.²³⁰ Contrary to this, Ajahn Brahmavamso maintains that the five senses do not operate while one is in *dhyāna*, and that there is no experience of a physical body.²³¹ In this context, he emphasizes that there is no part of the whole body unpervaded by the rapture and pleasure born of seclusion, which means rapture and pleasure fill the *whole mental body*, not the whole physical body.²³² This viewpoint agrees with the interpretation of the Pāli Abhidharma and commentary, such as the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Visuddhimagga*.²³³ Whether or not sensory awareness can occur while one is *dhyāna* is also controversial among contemporary meditators.

The simile of white cloth describes that the entire body is filled from head to toe with a pure bright mind in the fourth *dhyāna* thus:

Just as though a man were sitting covered from head down with a white cloth, so that there would be no part of his whole body not covered by the white cloth; so too, a bhikkhu sits pervading this body with a pure bright mind, so that there is no part of his whole body unpervaded by the pure

²²⁸ Thanissaro, "The Steps of Breath Meditation."

²²⁹ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 953.

²³⁰ Thanissaro, *The Wings to Awakening*, 228; Shankman, *Experience of Samādhi*, 36.

²³¹ Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 164.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ Thittīla, trans., *Vibhaṅga*, 338; Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 159.

bright mind ²³⁴

In the fourth *dhyāna*, the bright awareness pervades the whole body, as rapture (*prīti/pīti*) pervades throughout the entire body in the first two *dhyānas*, and pleasure (*sukha*) in the first three *dhyānas*. The Buddha's similes do suggest that the body and mind interplay while one is in *dhyāna*, and *prīti/pīti* and *sukha* are experienced in both the body and mind

Regarding bodily feeling, the Yogācārinś recognize that a meditator experiences bodily pleasure while in *dhyāna*, but it is not body-consciousness that is aware of bodily pleasure. According to the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, Sthiramati says that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is *dhyāna*, but that *ālaya*-consciousness sustains the body to experience bodily pleasure ²³⁵. According to Vasubandhu and Asvabhāvas' commentaries on the **Mahāyānasamgraha*, they also state that no five sensory consciousnesses are present while one is in *dhyāna*, but that mind-consciousness depends on the body to perceive bodily pleasure through similar body-contact ²³⁶. Their commentaries stand on the position of six consciousnesses, ²³⁷ not eight consciousnesses, ²³⁸ to discuss bodily feeling. Vasubandhu and Asvabhāva explain that dependent on body, mind-consciousness perceives bodily feeling while one is in *dhyāna*,

²³⁴ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 954

²³⁵ ASV at T1606, 726a27 三摩呬多位餘識無故。云何為樂？謂已轉依者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依。所依怡悅安適受者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依，所依怡悅安適受受所攝，此經意說

²³⁶ MhsV, trans. Paramārtha, at T1595, 185a25 若在有色界，意識依身故生。釋曰：何故有身處必似觸，以意識必依身生故，似觸顯現。由此意識依身似觸生故，觀行人正入觀時，五識雖復不起，中間於色身有喜樂受生。MhsV, trans. Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14 又一切處亦似所觸影像而生：謂有色處於定位中無五識時，在色身中內領受起。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止於身，由此諸根依止身故，於自所依能起損益；意識亦爾，依止身故，應知於身能作變異。MhsA at T1598, 402a17 又一切處亦似所觸影像而轉者：謂於定中領納分別輕重等觸，而非散亂隨順彼故。有色界中者：非於無色界，何以故？即此意識依止身故。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益

²³⁷ They are eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness

²³⁸ They are based on the six consciousnesses plus *manas* and *ālaya*-consciousness

not in the formless attainments

2. *Vitarka/Vitakka* and *Vicāra*: Their Origin and Function in Meditation Practice

In Buddhist meditation, *vitarka/vitakka* (directed thought) and *vicāra* (examination) are two representative mental qualities of a meditator while in the first *dhyāna/jhāna*, called *dhyāna* factors (*anga*). The *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* do not give a clear definition of what these two *dhyāna* factors should be. Hence, based on meditators' respective understandings and experiences in *dhyāna*, there are variant accounts of these two *dhyāna* factors shown in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature. Below, I will explore the origin of *vitarka* and *vicāra* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, and then compare these accounts with their variant accounts in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature, and the Mahāyāna texts, so as to explain how *vitarka* and *vicāra* function in meditation practice.

Skillful Thoughts and Right Intentions in *Dhyāna* Practice

According to the *Nian jing* 念經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Dvedhāvitakka Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, *vitarka* (thought) could be divided into two sorts.²³⁹ The three skillful thoughts—thoughts of renunciation, thoughts of non-ill will, and thoughts of non-cruelty lead to the attainment of *dhyāna* and full awakening.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ MĀ 102 at T26, 589a13: 世尊告諸比丘：我本未覺無上正盡覺時，作如是念，我寧可別諸念作二分：欲念、恚念、害念作一分，無欲念、無恚念、無害念復作一分。Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 207.

²⁴⁰ MĀ 102 at T26, 589c6: 若比丘多念無欲念者，則捨欲念，以多念無欲念故，心便樂中。若比丘多念無恚念無害念者，則捨恚念害念，以多念無恚念無害念故，心便樂中。彼覺觀已息，內靜一心，無覺無觀，定生喜樂，得第二禪成就遊。彼離喜欲，捨無求遊，正念正智而身覺樂，謂聖所說聖所捨念樂住室，得第三禪成就遊。彼樂滅苦滅，喜憂本已滅，不苦不樂捨念清淨，得第四禪成就遊。

These three skillful thoughts are opposed to the three unskillful thoughts—thoughts of sensual desire, thoughts of ill will, and thoughts of cruelty which disturb the mind far from concentration. According to the *Samañamañḍikā Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, unwholesome intentions are the intention of sensual desire, the intention of ill will, and the intention of cruelty, which cease without remainder while one is in the first *dhyāna*. Wholesome intentions are the intention of renunciation, the intention of non-ill will, and the intention of non-cruelty, which cease without remainder while one is in the second *dhyāna*.²⁴¹

The Chinese parallel to the *Samañamañḍikā Sutta* is the *Wuzhiwuzhu jing* 五支物主經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*. According to the *Wuzhiwuzhu jing*, the unwholesome intentions cease without remainder while one is in the first *dhyāna*, but the wholesome intentions cease without remainder while one is in the fourth *dhyāna*.²⁴² However, the *Samañamañḍikā Sutta* states that the cessation of wholesome intentions occurs while one is in the second *dhyāna*, not the fourth *dhyāna*.²⁴³ This statement of the *Wuzhiwuzhu jing* seems to be incorrect, and it is quite possible a copyist's error. With regard to the cessation of wholesome intentions, I will discuss this issue below. The above-mentioned discourses illustrate that in meditation practice, one cultivates the three skillful thoughts or wholesome intentions and abandons the three unskillful thoughts or unwholesome intentions, so as to enter the first *dhyāna*. Then after stilling the three skillful thoughts or wholesome intentions, one enters the second *dhyāna*. These two sorts of *vitarka* and two

彼如是定，心清淨無穢無煩，柔軟善住得不動心，趣向漏盡通智作證。Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 209.

²⁴¹ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 651-652.

²⁴² MĀ 179 at T26, 721b15: 善念何處滅無餘？何處敗壞無餘？若多聞聖弟子樂滅苦滅，喜憂本已滅，不苦不樂捨念清淨，得第四禪成就遊，此善念滅無餘，敗壞無餘。

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 652.

kinds of intention are important sources in early discourses for the Yogācārinś to understand and define *vitarka* and *vicāra*.

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, *vitarka* and *vicāra*, the two *dhyāna* factors, are skillful thoughts or wholesome intentions which enable a meditator to abandon sensuality and the unwholesome qualities that belong to the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*).²⁴⁴ Asaṅga, in his **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, clearly points out that these two *dhyāna* factors are skillful thoughts connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty.²⁴⁵ Sthiramati, in his **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, also says that the function of these two *dhyāna* factors is for one to abandon unskillful thoughts connected with sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty, giving rise to rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*).²⁴⁶ In this context, *vitarka* and *vicāra* signify skillful thoughts connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty, which enable a meditator to withdraw from sensual pleasures and unwholesome states, so as to enter the first *dhyāna*. After one attains the first *dhyāna*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* still act as skillful thoughts which steady the mind in this *dhyāna*. Then it is said that one enters the second *dhyāna* through the stilling of *vitarka* and *vicāra*.²⁴⁷ In other words, skillful thoughts or wholesome intentions cease while one is in the second *dhyāna*, not the fourth *dhyāna*.

In the *Shengdao jing* 聖道經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* and the

²⁴⁴ YB at T1579, 467b27: 有尋有伺者：由於尋伺未見過失，自地猶有對治欲界諸善尋伺，是故說名有尋有伺。

²⁴⁵ PS at T1602, 486c29: 尋者：謂能對治二種雜染，出離尋無恚尋無害尋。伺者：謂能對治二種雜染，出離伺無恚伺無害伺。

²⁴⁶ ASV at T1606, 736b9: 初靜慮中尋伺二種是對治支，能斷欲界欲恚害等尋伺故。喜樂二種是利益支，由尋伺支治所治已得離生喜樂故。

²⁴⁷ YB at T1579, 467b6: 有尋有伺心行所緣，躁擾而轉不得寂靜，以如是等種種行相，於諸尋伺覺了羶相，又正了知第二靜慮無尋無伺，如是一切所說羶相皆無所有，是故宣說第二靜慮有其靜相。PS at T1602, 487a11: 又如經說：尋伺寂靜故，內等淨故，心定一趣故，無尋無伺三摩地生喜樂，第二靜慮具足住。尋伺寂靜者，謂或緣離初靜慮欲增上教法，或緣彼教授為境界已，初靜慮地尋伺寂靜，不復現行。

Mahācattārīsaka Sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, right intention (*samyak saṃkalpa/sammā saṅkappa*), a factor of the noble eightfold path,²⁴⁸ is also defined as the intention of renunciation, the intention of non-ill will, and the intention of non-cruelty.²⁴⁹ The *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* states: “The thinking, thought, intention, mental absorption, mental fixity, directing of mind, verbal formation in one whose mind is noble, whose mind is taintless, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path.”²⁵⁰ Ven. Bodhi remarks: “In this definition, the factor of intention (*saṅkappa*) is identified with applied thought (*vitakka*), which is further specified as the factor responsible for absorption by fixing and directing the mind upon its object.”²⁵¹ Yet, this part of the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* is not found in its Chinese parallel, the *Shengdao jing*. Right intention is identified with *vitarka/vitakka* as the Yogācārin defined *vitarka* and *vicāra* as skillful thoughts connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty, corresponding to right intentions as the intention of renunciation, the intention of non-ill will, and the intention of non-cruelty. These right intentions are opposed to wrong intentions connected with sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty.²⁵²

In the noble eightfold path, right intention acts together with right view, right effort, and right mindfulness shown in *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* and the *Shengdao jing*. These two discourses explain that right view is the forerunner which distinguishes between wrong intention and right intention. Then, one’s effort to abandon wrong intention and to enter upon right intention is right effort. One is mindful to abandon

²⁴⁸ The noble eightfold path is right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

²⁴⁹ MĀ 189 at T26, 736a1: 云何正志？無欲念、無恚念、無害念，是謂正志。Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 936.

²⁵⁰ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 936.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1328.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 935-36.

wrong intention, to enter upon right intention, and to remain in right intention, this is right mindfulness.²⁵³ As right view, right effort, and right mindfulness run and circle around right intention, the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra* maintain that *vitarka* and *vicāra* act in the company of mindfulness (*smṛti/sati*), clear comprehension (*samprajanya/sampajañña*), and equanimity (*upekṣā/upekkhā*) in the first *dhyāna*; then mindfulness, clear comprehension, and equanimity turn into inner clarity (*adhyātmasamprasāda/ajjhattamsampasādanam*) in the second *dhyāna*.²⁵⁴ *Vitarka* and *vicāra* act together with mindfulness, clear comprehension, and equanimity, which facilitate the steady of the first *dhyāna* and further lead to the attainment of the second *dhyāna*.

As right intention accompanies right mindfulness, *vitarka* and *vicāra* accompanies mindfulness (*smṛti*) acting before and while one is in the first *dhyāna*. After one enters the first *dhyāna*, mindfulness functions to keep the meditation object in mind in order to prevent the presence of unwholesome qualities.²⁵⁵ Corresponding to right view as a discernment of the two kinds of intention, clear comprehension (*samprajanya*) is aware of the movements of mind, discerning skillful mental qualities as skillful mental qualities and unskillful mental qualities as unskillful mental qualities in the first *dhyāna*. When a meditator occasionally loses his/her mindfulness in the first *dhyāna*, clear comprehension

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 936. MĀ 189 at T26, 736a2. 是為見邪志是邪志者，是謂正志；見正志是正志者，亦謂正志。彼如是知已，則便求學欲斷邪志，成就正志，是謂正方便。比丘以念斷於邪志，成就正志，是謂正念。此三支隨正志從見方便，是故正見最在前也。

²⁵⁴ YB at T1579, 649b8. 初靜慮中念正知捨，由尋伺門之所引發，是故雖有而不宣說。第二靜慮由彼自性能有作業，又由踊躍心隨煩惱之所纏縛，是故顯示內等淨名。PS at T1602, 576a1. 問：念正知捨一切處有，何故於初靜慮等不說耶？答：初靜慮中由尋伺門所引發故，雖有不說。第二靜慮中有踊躍自體之所作業，及心所有少分煩惱所纏覆故，總以內等淨名顯之。

²⁵⁵ In the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Asāṅga defines mindfulness (*smṛti*) as to keep remembering an object in mind without forgetfulness. Its function is said to prevent mental distraction. AS at T1605, 664b. 何等為念？調於串習事，令心明記不忘為體，不散亂為業。

rapidly understands the presence of unskillful mental qualities, such as perception and attention accompanied by sensuality, and further abandons the unskillful mental qualities

In the state of *dhyāna*, there is no need for one's effort to abandon unskillful thoughts and to enter upon skillful thoughts, because unskillful thoughts cease in the first *dhyāna*. Hence, right effort is replaced by equanimity (*upekṣā*). Asanga, in his *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, defines equanimity (*upekṣā*) as impartiality of mind, straightness of mind, and effortlessness of mind in dependence on right effort, non-desire, non-hate, and non-delusion, incompatible to defiled states.²⁵⁶ In this context equanimity is not a type of feeling as neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. When clear comprehension is aware of the losing of mindfulness, equanimity is sensitive to the presence of perception and attention accompanied by sensuality, and does not tolerate them. Even though mindfulness may not be rapid in arising, *vitarka* and *vicāra* accompanied with clear comprehension and equanimity quickly abandon the unwholesome qualities.

In the company of mindfulness (*smṛti*), clear comprehension (*samprajanya*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*), *vitarka* and *vicāra* focus on the meditation object and steady the mind in the first *dhyāna*. In comparison with the serenity of the second *dhyāna*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are gross *dhyāna* factors as an agitation. In order to proceed from the first *dhyāna* to the second *dhyāna*, it is said that equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension act together to still the agitation of *vitarka* and *vicāra*, and turn into inner clarity (*adhyātmāsamprasāda/ajjhattamsampasādanam*) in the second *dhyāna*.²⁵⁷

Inner clarity (*adhyātmāsamprasāda/ajjhattamsampasādanam*) appears in early discourses, but there is no explanation of this term in those discourses. According to the

²⁵⁶ AS at T1605, 664b1 何等為捨？調依止正勤，無貪無瞋無癡，與雜染住相違，心平等性，心正直性，心無功用住性為體，不容雜染所依為業

²⁵⁷ YB at T1579, 649b8, PS at T1602, 576a1

Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, “Again, with the stilling of applied and sustained thought, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which has self-confidence and singleness of mind without applied and sustained thought.”²⁵⁸ Here “self-confidence” is the translation of *ajjhattamsampasādanam* by Ven. Bodhi. This term is translated as “internal assurance” by Ven. Thanissaro.²⁵⁹ The Chinese parallel to the *Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta* is *Xiangjiyu jing* 象跡喻經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*.²⁶⁰ In this Chinese text, *adhyātmasamprasāda* is translated as *neijing* 內靖 or inner clarity.²⁶¹

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* accompanied with mindfulness, clear comprehension, and equanimity work together in the first *dhyāna*, and then mindfulness, clear comprehension, and equanimity turns into inner clarity (*adhyātmasamprasāda/ajjhattamsampasādanam*) in the second *dhyāna*. In contrast, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Visuddhimagga* define inner clarity as faith, not a *dhyāna* factor derived from equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension.²⁶² Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, points out that according to Sarvāstivāda, inner clarity is a profound faith attained through the stilling of the agitation of *vitarka* and *vicāra*, namely the faculty of faith (*śraddhendriya*).²⁶³ He also indicates that according to Sautrāntika, inner clarity is not different from *vitarka*, *vicāra*,

²⁵⁸ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 275.

²⁵⁹ MN 27: “Then, with the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters and remains in the second jhana: rapture and pleasure born of composure, one-pointedness of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation — internal assurance.” “Cula-hatthipadopama Sutta: The Shorter Elephant Footprint Simile” (MN 27), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, June 14, 2010, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.027.than.html>.

²⁶⁰ MĀ 146

²⁶¹ MĀ 146 at T26, 657c26: 彼覺觀已息，內靖一心，無覺無觀，定生喜樂，逮第二禪成就遊。

²⁶² Mhv at T1545, 413b3: 問：內等淨即是信，諸地皆有，何故唯在第二靜慮立為支耶？答：前說隨順是支義故，謂信唯順第二靜慮，是故唯此立信為支。Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 152.

²⁶³ AK at T1558, 147b22: 此即信根，謂若證得第二靜慮，則於定地亦可離中有深信生，名內等淨。信是淨相，故立淨名。離外均流，故名內等。淨而內等，故立內等淨名。

and samādhi.²⁶⁴ In other words, *vitarka*, *vicāra* and inner clarity are not separate things. However, *vitarka* and *vicāra* cease in the second *dhyāna*, and inner clarity remains in the second *dhyāna*. *Vitarka*, *vicāra*, and inner clarity should have different functions in *dhyāna* practice.

Ajaan Lee Dhammadharo, a Thai forest meditation master, suggests that “mindfulness combined with ardency turns into the concentration factor called *vitakka* or ‘directed thought,’ where you keep your thoughts consistently focused on one thing. Alertness combined with ardency turns into another concentration factor: *vicāra*, or ‘evaluation.’”²⁶⁵ Here alertness is the translation of *samprajanya/sampajañña*, namely clear comprehension. This interpretation shows that *vitarka* is the combination of mindfulness and ardency, and *vicāra* is the combination of clear comprehension and ardency in the first *dhyāna*. But here is the problem: one stills the agitation of *vitarka* and *vicāra* and then enters the second *dhyāna*; in the second *dhyāna*, mindfulness, ardency, and clear comprehension are still present. In other words, *vitarka* and *vicāra* have their functions which differ from mindfulness, ardency, and clear comprehension.

In the Yogācāra texts, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, and the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* state that the first *dhyāna* is composed of five *dhyāna* factors: *vitarka*, *vicāra*, rapture (*prīti/pīti*), pleasure (*sukha*), and one-pointedness of mind (*cittaikāgratā*). The second *dhyāna* has four factors: inner clarity (*adhyātmāsāmpasadā*), rapture, pleasure, and one-pointedness of mind. The third *dhyāna* has five factors: equanimity (*upekṣā*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), clear comprehension (*samprajanya*), pleasure, and one-pointedness of mind. The fourth

²⁶⁴ AK at T1558, 147b25: 有餘師言：此內等淨、等持、尋伺皆無別體。

²⁶⁵ Cited in Thanissaro, "Mindfulness Defined."

dhyāna has four *dhyāna* factors purity of equanimity, purity of mindfulness, neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, and one-pointedness of mind²⁶⁶ The enumeration of the *dhyāna* factors of each *dhyāna* in the Yogācāra texts is consistent with that in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, but differs from that in the *Vibhanga* and the *Visuddhimagga*²⁶⁷

The **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Yogācārabhūmi* regard purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness as two *dhyāna* factors in the fourth *dhyāna* The **Mahāvibhāṣā* explains that equanimity and mindfulness are free from the eight agitations of pain, pleasure, displeasure, rapture, in-breathing, out-breathing, *vitarka* and *vicāra* in the fourth *dhyāna*, and thus purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness occur only in the fourth *dhyāna*²⁶⁸ The *Yogācārabhūmi* explains that imperturbability in the fourth *dhyāna* gets rid of the agitations of *vitarka*, *vicāra*, rapture, pleasure, in-breathing, and out-breathing,

²⁶⁶ YB at T1579, 330c14 復次於初靜慮具足五支，一尋，二伺，三喜，四樂，五心一境性。第二靜慮有四支，一內等淨，二喜，三樂，四心一境性。第三靜慮有五支，一捨，二念，三正知，四樂，五心一境性。第四靜慮有四支，一捨清淨，二念清淨，三不苦不樂受，四心一境性 PS at T1602, 575c24 問：於諸靜慮有幾支耶？答：初有五支。何等為五？謂尋伺喜樂心一境性。第二靜慮有四支，謂內等淨喜樂心一境性。問：內等淨以何法為體。答：以念正知及捨為體。第三靜慮有五支，謂念正知捨樂心一境性。第四靜慮有四支，謂捨清淨念清淨，不苦不樂心一境性 AS at T1605, 683b15 云何支分建立？謂初靜慮有五支，何等為五？一尋，二伺，三喜，四樂，五心一境性。第二靜慮有四支，何等為四？一內等淨，二喜，三樂，四心一境性。第三靜慮有五支，何等為五？一捨，二念，三正知，四樂，五心一境性。第四靜慮有四支，何等為四？一捨清淨，二念清淨，三不苦不樂受，四心一境性 ASV at T1606, 736b1 何等為五？一尋，二伺，三喜，四樂，五心一境性。第二靜慮有四支，何等為四？一內等淨，二喜，三樂，四心一境性。第三靜慮有五支，何等為五？一捨，二念，三正智，四樂，五心一境性。第四靜慮有四支，何等為四？一捨清淨，二念清淨，三不苦不樂受，四心一境性

²⁶⁷ Mhv at T1545, 412a21 四靜慮支總有十八，謂初靜慮有五支，一尋，二伺，三喜，四樂，五心一境性。第二靜慮有四支，一內等淨，二喜，三樂，四心一境性。第三靜慮有五支，一行捨，二正念，三正慧，四受樂，五心一境性。第四靜慮有四支，一不苦不樂受，二行捨清淨，三念清淨，四心一境性 AK at T1558, 146c4 靜慮初五支 尋伺喜樂定 第二有四支 內淨喜樂定 第三具五支 捨念慧樂定 第四有四支 捨念中受定 Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Nānamoli, 139-164 Thittila, trans, *Vibhanga*, 335-40

²⁶⁸ Mhv at T1545, 412b12 何故但說第四靜慮捨念清淨？答：第四靜慮捨念俱離八擾亂事，故名清淨。苦樂憂喜入息出息尋伺，名為八擾亂事，此中皆無獨名清淨

giving rise to purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness²⁶⁹ In contrast, the *Vibhanga* and the *Visuddhimagga* do not consider purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness as two separate factors, but purity of mindfulness caused by equanimity²⁷⁰ Equanimity is said to be purified and clear in the fourth *dhyāna* because its opposing states have been overcome, which affects mindfulness to be purified and clear as well²⁷¹ The Chinese *Vimuttimaggā* agrees with the *Vibhanga* and the *Visuddhimagga*, suggesting that purity of mindfulness is due to equanimity in the fourth *dhyāna*²⁷²

The *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācāśāstra* maintain that equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension are present in all four *dhyānas*²⁷³ That is, *vitarka* and *vicāra* give rise to equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension in the first *dhyāna* Then, equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension turn into inner clarity in the second *dhyāna*, grow into *dhyāna* factors in the third *dhyāna*, and reach purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness in the fourth *dhyāna*²⁷⁴ These two treatises do not explain how clear comprehension is present in the fourth *dhyāna* Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhīsāstra*, indicates that purity of mindfulness in the fourth *dhyāna* includes

²⁶⁹ YB at T1579, 468b9 從初靜慮一切下地災患已斷，謂尋伺喜樂入息出息，由彼斷故，此中捨念清淨鮮白，由是因緣正入第四靜慮定時，心住無動，一切動亂皆悉遠離，是故說言捨念清淨

²⁷⁰ Thittila, trans, *Vibhanga*, 340 Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Nānamoli, 163

²⁷¹ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Nānamoli, 163-64

²⁷² Vim at T1648, 420b17 問：何故此念以捨分明清白？答：此捨離一切煩惱故，受相似相應故，成不動無經營，以此無經營與捨相應故，此念至無動成無經營，是故此念已捨成分明清白

²⁷³ YB at T1579, 649b8 初靜慮中念正知捨，由尋伺門之所引發，是故雖有而不宣說。第二靜慮由彼自性能有作業，又由踊躍心隨煩惱之所纏縛，是故顯示內等淨名。第三靜慮心隨煩惱已遠離故，顯彼自相，是故說彼離喜貪故。初靜慮中離欲貪故，非離喜貪。第二靜慮離尋伺貪故，非離喜貪。第四靜慮即彼顯示最極清淨，是故當知一切靜慮皆隨轉如其所應 PS at T1602, 575c29 問：念正知捨一切處有，何故於初靜慮等不說耶？答：初靜慮中由尋伺門所引發故，雖有不說。第二靜慮中有踊躍自體之所作業，及心所有少分煩惱所纏覆故，總以內等淨名顯之。第三靜慮中彼心所有少分煩惱皆遠離故，顯彼自相，故經中說遠離喜貪。初靜慮中雖離欲貪，未離喜貪。第二靜慮中雖離尋伺貪，未離喜貪。第四靜慮中即此捨念極善清淨顯了，是故於諸靜慮中如其所應彼差別應知

²⁷⁴ Ibid

clear comprehension, because mindfulness and clear comprehension are not separate²⁷⁵

The **Mahāvībhāṣā* also maintains that equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension are all present in the four *dhyānas*²⁷⁶ The *Visuddhimagga* definitely states that equanimity and mindfulness are present in the four *dhyānas*²⁷⁷ Even though the *dhyāna* factors of the fourth *dhyāna* in the **Mahāvībhāṣā* and the *Yogācārabhūmi* differ from those in the *Vibhanga* and the *Visuddhimagga*, these treatise are unanimous in pointing out that due to the stilling of agitations, purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness occur in the fourth *dhyāna*

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension are present in the lower three *dhyānas*, but their functions are not evident in the first two *dhyānas*²⁷⁸ Buddhaghosa explains that equanimity is overshadowed by *vitarka*, *vicāra*, and rapture (*prīti/pīti*) in the lower two *dhyānas*, and thus its function is not evident there²⁷⁹ With regard to mindfulness and clear comprehension, he elucidates that their functions are obvious in the third *dhyāna* because the comparative subtlety of this *dhyāna* needs the mind acting with efficient mindfulness and clear comprehension in order to prevent the presence of rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and the attachment to pleasure (*sukha*)²⁸⁰

The *Visuddhimagga* explains that after emerging from the first *dhyāna*, a meditator reviews *vitarka* and *vicāra* as gross *dhyāna* factors with mindfulness and clear

²⁷⁵ TS at T1646, 342c19 問曰：何故四禪不說安慧？答曰：若說憶念清淨，當知已說安慧，以此二法不相離故

²⁷⁶ Mhv at T1545, 413a2 問：輕安行捨一切地有，何故初二靜慮立輕安為支非行捨？413b25 問：慧遍諸地，何故唯於第三靜慮立為支耶？413c10 問：念遍諸地，何故唯在後二靜慮立念為支？

²⁷⁷ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 158, 163

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 158

²⁷⁹ *Ibid*

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*

comprehension, and then abandons these two gross *dhyāna* factors so as to enter the second *dhyāna*.²⁸¹ This statement shows that mindfulness and clear comprehension are conducive to the stilling of *vitarka* and *vicāra*, as the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra* suggest. However, the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra* do not suggest that one has to emerge from the *dhyāna* for reviewing and abandoning gross *dhyāna* factors.

Regarding the relationship between the meditation object and *dhyāna* factors, the *Yogācārabhūmi* explains that *vitarka* and *vicāra* steady the mind in the meditation object while one is in the first *dhyāna*, inner clarity (*adhyātmasamprasāda*) steadies the mind in the meditation object while in the second *dhyāna*, equanimity (*upekṣā*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), and clear comprehension (*samprajanya*) steady the mind in the meditation object while in the third *dhyāna*, and purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness steady the mind in meditation object while in the fourth *dhyāna*.²⁸² These *dhyāna* factors not only steady the mind in the meditation object in each *dhyāna*, according to the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and the *Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, they also function as abandoning agitations of each *dhyāna*.²⁸³

Sthiramati, in his **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* points out that *vitarka* and *vicāra* abandon thoughts connected with sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty pertaining to the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*), and give rise to rapture and pleasure in the first *dhyāna*. Inner clarity stills the agitation of *vitarka* and *vicāra*, leading to refined rapture and pleasure in the second *dhyāna*. Equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 151.

²⁸² YB at T1579, 330c19: 初靜慮中，尋伺為取所緣，三摩地為彼所依，喜為受境界，樂為除羶重。第二靜慮中，內等淨為取所緣，三摩地為彼所依，餘如前說。第三靜慮中，捨念正知為取所緣，三摩地為彼所依，餘如前說。第四靜慮中，捨淨念淨為取所緣，三摩地為彼所依，餘如前說。

²⁸³ AS at T1605, 683b21: 對治支故。ASV at T1606, 736b.

tranquilize the agitation of refined rapture, leading to the most sublime pleasure in the third *dhyāna*. Purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness calm the agitation of the most superior pleasure, resulting in the presence of neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling in the fourth *dhyāna*.²⁸⁴ In other words, in order for a meditator to focus on the meditation object and still the agitation of each *dhyāna*, equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension are combined with *vitarka* and *vicāra* in first *dhyāna*, turn into inner clarity in the second *dhyāna*, become *dhyāna* factors in the third *dhyāna*, and reach purity of equanimity and purity of mindfulness in the fourth *dhyāna*.

Gross *Vitarka/Vitakka* and Subtle *Vicāra*

As *dhyāna* factors, *vitarka* is “gross” and *vicāra* is “subtle,” which is shown in the three types of samādhi: samādhi with *vitarka* and *vicāra*, samādhi without *vitarka* but with *vicāra* only, and samādhi without both *vitarka* and *vicāra*. These three samādhis are described in the *Āgamas*, the *Nikāyas*, and the Mahāyāna sūtras.²⁸⁵ According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, the first of these samādhis includes access concentration and the first *dhyāna*, the second is the *dhyānāntara* between the first *dhyāna* and the second *dhyāna*, and the last cover the three higher *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments.²⁸⁶ These three samādhis illustrate that

²⁸⁴ ASV at T1606, 736b8 初靜慮中，尋伺二種是對治支，能斷欲界欲害等尋伺故，喜樂二種是利益支，由尋伺支治所治已得離生喜樂故，心一境性是彼二所依自性支，依止定力尋等轉故。第二靜慮中，內等淨是對治支，由此能治尋伺故，喜樂是利益支，心一境性是彼二所依，自性支義如前說。第三靜慮中，捨念正知是對治支，由此三能治喜故，樂是利益支，心一境性是彼二所依，自性支義如前說。第四靜慮中，捨清淨念清淨是對治支，由此二能治樂故，不苦不樂受是利益支，心一境性是彼二所依，自性支諸無色中不立支分。

²⁸⁵ MĀ 72, MĀ 76, MN 128, DN33, *Satasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* 大般若波羅蜜多經, and *Pañcavimsatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitāsūtra* 摩訶般若波羅蜜經

²⁸⁶ Mhv, T1545, 269c19 云何有尋有伺？調在欲界及初靜慮。云何無尋唯伺？調在靜慮中間。云何無尋無伺？調在上三靜慮及四無色。YB at T1579, 294b26 此中欲界及色界初靜慮，除靜慮中間若定若

as concentration deepens, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are abandoned in turn from gross to subtle. In other words, *vitarka* is gross and *vicāra* is subtle.

The explanation of these three samādhis in the *Visuddhimagga* is similar, and the difference is that this work defines the third samādhi as including the three higher *dhyānas* without the mention of the four formless attainments.²⁸⁷ In the *Visuddhimagga*, *vitarka* is said to be gross and inspective with the characteristic of directing the mind towards an object, and *vicāra* is subtle with the characteristic of sustaining the mind on this object.²⁸⁸ The popular simile of a bird is used for explaining the grossness of *vitarka* and the subtlety of *vicāra* thus: like a bird taking off by flapping its wings is gross *vitarka*, the stretching out of wings in the sky is subtle *vicāra*. This is shown in the *Visuddhimagga*, the *Vimuttimagga*, the *Dharmaskandha*, and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*.²⁸⁹ *Vitarka* and *vicāra* function to steady the mind on the meditation object. It is shown in the simile of the bath man in early discourses.²⁹⁰ The simile of the bath man describes *vitarka* and *vicāra* working on a meditation object as a bath man heaps bath powder in a metal basin, sprinkling it with water, kneading it till no part of it is not pervaded by moisture.²⁹¹ Here kneading the ball of the bath powder is the vivid description of how *vitarka* and *vicāra* perform in a meditation object.

According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, a sūtra says that grossness of mind is *vitarka*

生，名有尋有伺地；即靜慮中間若定若生名無尋唯伺地，隨一有情由修此故得為大梵；從第二靜慮餘有色界及無色界，全名無尋無伺地。MP at T1509, 234a20: 欲界未到地初禪與覺觀相應故，名有覺有觀；二禪中間但觀相應故，名無覺有觀；從第二禪乃至有頂地非覺觀相應故，名無覺無觀。

²⁸⁷ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 87.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 139.

²⁸⁹ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 140. Vim at T1648, 415c12: 覺者求引將來，觀者守持隨逐，如鳥陵虛，奮翅為覺，遊住為觀。Dsk at T1537, 483b21: 又如眾鳥飛翔虛空，鼓翼踊身方得隨意，鼓翼喻尋，踊身喻伺，是謂尋伺二相差別。Mhv at T1545, 219b1: 如鳥飛空鼓翼翔翥，前羸後細，尋伺亦爾。

²⁹⁰ MĀ 81, MĀ 98, MN 119

²⁹¹ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 953.

and subtlety of mind is *vicāra*. On the basis of this sūtra, the Dārṣṭāntika maintains that the mind's grossness and subtlety occur from the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*) up to the highest level of existence (*bhavāgra*), and thus *vitarka* and *vicāra* are also present in the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*), the form realm (*rūpadhātu*), and the formless realm (*arūpadhātu*).²⁹² Harivarma, in his **Tattvasiddhīśāstra*, upholds this viewpoint.²⁹³ He quotes the Buddha's words that *vitarka* originates from perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*) to explain that when there is perception, there must be *vitarka*; hence, *vitarka* is present up to the highest level of existence (*bhavāgra*).²⁹⁴ *Vitarka* originates from perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*) as shown in the *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and its Chinese parallel, the *Miwanu jing* 蜜丸喻經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*, thus:

Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as condition there is feeling. What one feels, that one perceives. What one perceives, that one thinks about. What one thinks about, that one mentally proliferates. With what one has mentally proliferated as the source, perceptions and notions [born of] mental proliferation beset a man with respect to past, future, and present forms cognizable through the eye.²⁹⁵

In the process of cognition, “What one perceives, that one thinks about” suggests that perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*) is the cause of thinking or *vitarka*. Then perceptions and notions born of mental proliferation (P. *papañca-saññā-sankhā*) have its origin in *vitarka*. This discourse illustrates that *vitarka* arises from perception, giving rise to perceptions and notions born of mental proliferation.

In the *Sakkapañha Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the causal process is reversed,

²⁹² Mhv at T1545, 269b9: 調或有執，從欲界乃至有頂皆有尋伺，如譬喻者。彼何故作此執？依契經故，調契經說：心麤性名尋，心細性名伺。然麤細性從欲界乃至有頂皆可得，故知三界皆有尋伺。

²⁹³ TS at T1646, 288c3: 是二法者遍在三界，以是心之麤細相故。

²⁹⁴ TS at T1646, 286a6: 佛經中說想因緣覺，是中有想云何無覺，故知覺法乃至有頂為麤覺故。

²⁹⁵ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 203. MĀ 115 at T26, 604b2: 緣眼及色生眼識，三事共會便有更觸，緣更觸便有所覺。若所覺便想，若所想便思，若所思便念，若所念便分別。

showing that *vitarka* arises from perceptions and notions born of mental proliferation.²⁹⁶ In other words, perceptions and notions born of mental proliferation (P. *papañca-saññā-sankhā*) and *vitarka* support each other in their arising. The *Samañamañḍikā Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Wuzhiwuzhu jing* 五支物主經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* also indicate that wholesome intentions—intentions connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty, and unwholesome intentions—intentions connected with sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty—have their origin in perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*).²⁹⁷ In *dhyāna* practice, perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*) gives rise to skillful *vitarka*, namely thoughts connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty which enable a meditator to remain in the first *dhyāna*. Perception may also give rise to unskillful *vitarka* or perceptions and notions born of mental proliferation, which act as perception and attention accompanied by sensuality leading the meditator to lose his/her *dhyāna*.²⁹⁸

Vitarka, or thinking, originates from perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*), but this does not mean that all thinking is *vitarka*. In the **Tattvasiddhisāstra*, Harivarṇa upholds the Dārśāntika's viewpoint that *vitarka* and *vicāra* are present in the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*), the form realm (*rūpadhātu*), and the formless realm (*arūpadhātu*), because the mind's grossness and subtlety occur in the three realms.²⁹⁹ Harivarṇa adds that *vitarka* originates from perception (*saṃjñā/saññā*), and thus when there is perception,

²⁹⁶ "Sakka-pañha Sutta: Sakka's Questions" (DN 21), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, August 8, 2010, http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn_21_2x_than.html.

²⁹⁷ Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 651-652, MĀ 179 at T26, 721a22. 不善念從何而生？我說彼所從生，當知從想生...善念從何而生？我說彼所從生，當知從想生。

²⁹⁸ SN 40:1 states that once when Maudgalyāyana/Moggallāna dwelt in the first *dhyāna*, perception and attention accompanied by sensuality arose in him. Then the Buddha appeared through spiritual power to admonish him for abandoning unskillful thoughts and steadying the mind in the first *dhyāna*.

²⁹⁹ Mhv at T1545, 269b9. 謂或有執，從欲界乃至有頂皆有尋伺，如譬喻者。彼何故作此執？依契經故，謂契經說：心麤性名尋，心細性名伺。然麤細性從欲界乃至有頂皆可得，故知三界皆有尋伺。TS at T1646, 288c. 是二法者遍在三界，以是心之麤細相故。

vitarka must be present up to the highest level of existence (*bhavāgra*).³⁰⁰ This explanation is questionable.

In the *Nian jing* 念經 of the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Dvedhāvītakka Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, *vitarka* (thought) is divided into two sorts: the three skillful thoughts connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty; and the three unskillful thoughts connected with sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty.³⁰¹ The definition of *vitarka* indicates that not all thought is *vitarka*. According to the *Samañamañḍikā Sutta*, the three unskillful thoughts or unwholesome intentions cease while one is in the first *dhyāna*, and the three skillful thoughts or wholesome intentions cease while one is in the second *dhyāna*.³⁰² This discourse shows that *vitarka* and *vicāra* cease in the second *dhyāna*. In other words, according to the *Samañamañḍikā Sutta*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are not present throughout the three realms as the Dārṣṭāntika and Harivarman state.

According to the Dārṣṭāntika, *vitarka* and *vicāra* means mind, while according to the **Mahāvībhāṣā*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are mental factors (*caitasika*).³⁰³ The **Mahāvībhāṣā* refutes the Dārṣṭāntika's viewpoint. According to the **Mahāvībhāṣā*, *vitarka* makes mind gross and *vicāra* makes mind subtle; this is what a sūtra says that grossness of mind is *vitarka* and subtlety of mind is *vicāra*.³⁰⁴ The *Dharmaskandha* also

³⁰⁰ TS at T1646, 286a6: 佛經中說想因緣覺，是中有想云何無覺，故知覺法乃至有頂為羶覺故。

³⁰¹ MĀ 102 at T26, 589c6: 若比丘多念無欲念者，則捨欲念，以多念無欲念故，心便樂中。若比丘多念無恚念無害念者，則捨恚念害念，以多念無恚念無害念故，心便樂中。彼覺觀已息，內靜一心，無覺無觀，定生喜樂，得第二禪成就遊。彼離喜欲，捨無求遊，正念正智而身覺樂，謂聖所說聖所捨念樂住室，得第三禪成就遊。彼樂滅苦滅，喜憂本已滅，不苦不樂捨念清淨，得第四禪成就遊。彼如是定，心清淨無穢無煩，柔軟善住得不動心，趣向漏盡通智作證。 Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 209.

³⁰² Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 651-652.

³⁰³ Mhv at T1545, 218c28: 謂或有執，尋伺即心，如譬喻者。為遮彼執，顯尋與伺是心所法。

³⁰⁴ Mhv at T1545, 219a18: 評曰：應作是說，此中顯示即一心中，羶性名尋，細性名伺。若作是說，顯一心中有尋有伺，尋令心羶，伺令心細。 Dsk at T1537, 483b17: 尋與伺何差別？令心羶性是尋，令心細性是伺。

says that *vitarka* makes mind gross and *vicāra* makes mind subtle. The problem of the Dārśāntika's viewpoint is: if *vitarka* and *vicāra* are the mind's grossness and subtlety present up to the highest level of existence, how does one distinguish the three samādhis: samādhi with *vitarka* and *vicāra*, samādhi without *vitarka* but with *vicāra* only, and samādhi without both *vitarka* and *vicāra* in early discourses? *Vitarka* and *vicāra* cease while one is in the second *dhyāna*, and both should not mean mind's grossness and subtlety present up to the highest level of existence.

In the Yogācāra texts, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are two mental factors (*caitasika*) which make mind gross and subtle respectively. This is shown in Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Vasubandhu's *Pañcaskandhakaparakaraṇa* (*Dacheng wuyun lun* 大乘五蘊論), and Sthiramati's **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* and **Pañcaskandhaparakaraṇavaibhāṣya* (*Dacheng guang wuyun lun* 大乘廣五蘊論).³⁰⁵ This position is consistent with the Sarvāstivāda texts—the *Dharmaskandha* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*. According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, *vitarka* is a rough mental activity on an object in conjunction with gross *mano-jalpa*, and *vicāra* is a gentle mental activity keeping on this object in conjunction with subtle *mano-jalpa*.³⁰⁶ Sthiramati points out *mano-jalpa* means mind-consciousness.³⁰⁷ In other words, according to him, *vitarka*

³⁰⁵ AS at T1605, 665b22: 何等為尋？謂或依思或依慧，尋求意言，令心羸轉為體。何等為何？謂或依思或依慧，伺察意言，令心細轉為體。Psk at T1612, 849b27: 云何為尋？謂能尋求意言分別，思慧差別，令心羸為性。云何為何？謂能伺察意言分別，思慧差別，令心細為性。ASV at T1606, 699c24: 尋者：或依思或依慧，尋求意言，令心羸為體。依思依慧者，於推度不推度位，如其依第追求行相意言分別。伺者：或依思或依慧，伺察意言，令心細為體。依思依慧者，於推度不推度位，如其次第伺察行相意言分別。如是二種安不安住所依為業，尋伺二種行相相類故，以羸細建立差別。Pss at T1613, 854a18: 云何尋？謂思慧差別，意言尋求，令心羸相分別為性。意言者，謂是意識。是中或依思或依慧而起分別羸相者，謂尋求瓶衣車乘等之羸相，樂觸苦觸等所依為業。云何伺？謂思慧差別，意言伺察，令心細相分別為性。細相者，謂於瓶衣等，分別細相成不成等差別之義。

³⁰⁶ YB at T1579, 467a23: 若在定地，於緣最初率爾而起，匆務行境，羸意言性，是名為尋。即於彼緣隨彼而起，隨彼而行，徐歷行境，細意言性。

³⁰⁷ Pss at T1613, 854a19: 意言者，謂是意識。

initially acts with gross mind-consciousness on its object, and *vicāra* steadily acts with subtle mind-consciousness on the object

Concerning verbal formations, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are described in many early discourses³⁰⁸ According to the *Cūḷavedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, “First one applies thought and sustains thought, and subsequently one breaks out into speech, that is why applied thought and sustained thought are the verbal formation”³⁰⁹ Here applied thought is *vitarka* and sustained thought is *vicāra* With regard to the verbal formation, the *Yogācārabhūmi* explains that *vitarka* and *vicāra* derive from volition (*cetanā*) or discernment (*prajñā*), and dependent on groups of names, groups of phrases, and groups of consonants, *vitarka* acts as seeking and *vicāra* acts as examining, giving rise to speech³¹⁰

The Agitation of *Vitarka* and *Vicāra* Involving Bodily Pain and Mental Pain

Whether or not *vitarka* and *vicāra* are present involves the cessation of the pain faculty (*duḥkhendriya*) and the cessation of the displeasure faculty (*daurmanasyendriya*) as discussed in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature According to the *Uppāṭika Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, the pain faculty or bodily pain ceases without remainder while one is in the first *dhyāna*, and the displeasure faculty or mental pain ceases without remainder while one is in the second *dhyāna*³¹¹ On the contrary, a sūtra called *Wudao jing* 無倒經 quoted by the *Yogācārabhūmi* shows a reverse order, that is, the displeasure

³⁰⁸ MN 44, SN 41 6, SĀ 568

³⁰⁹ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 399

³¹⁰ YB at T1579, 302b23 尋伺體性者，謂不深推度所緣思為體性，若深推度所緣慧為體性應知。尋伺所緣者，謂依名身句身文身義為所緣。尋伺行相者，謂即於此所緣尋求行相是尋，即於此所緣伺察行相是伺。尋伺等起者，謂發起語言

³¹¹ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1683-84

faculty ceases without remainder while one is in the first *dhyāna*, and the pain faculty in the second *dhyāna*³¹² The **Mahāvībhāṣā*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra* also indicate that a sūtra says that the displeasure faculty ceases while one is in the first *dhyāna*, and the pain faculty ceases while one is in the second *dhyāna*, as the *Wudao jing* 無倒經 says³¹³ Regarding this issue, the interpretations of the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimaggā* are consistent with the statement of the *Uppāṭika Sutta*³¹⁴ By focusing on this controversial issue, I will explain how *vitarka* and *vicāra* are involved in the cessation of the displeasure faculty and the cessation of the pain faculty

According to the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimaggā*, the cessation of the pain faculty (*duḥkhendriya*) occurs while one is in the first *dhyāna*, because the fullness of rapture (*prīti/pīti*) gives rise to bodily ease, and then bodily ease leads to the removal of the pain faculty³¹⁵ The displeasure faculty (*daurmanasyendriya*) is said to cease while one is in the second *dhyāna* due to the stilling of *vitarka* and *vicāra* The *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimaggā* maintain that with *vitarka* and *vicāra* as a condition, bodily weariness and mental vexation arise, and then mental vexation leads to the arising of the displeasure faculty³¹⁶ In other words, the displeasure faculty or mental pain arises through *vitarka* and *vicāra* as its condition, and it ceases when *vitarka* and *vicāra* are

³¹² YB at T1579, 331a19 復次此四靜慮，亦得名為出諸受事，謂初靜慮出離憂根，第二靜慮出離苦根，第三靜慮出離喜根，第四靜慮出離樂根，於無相中出離捨根，如薄伽梵無倒經中說如是言

³¹³ Mhv at T1545, 418c28 如契經說：初靜慮憂根滅，第二靜慮苦根滅 AK at T1558, 67a3 經說苦根第二靜慮滅 TS at T1646, 285b4 問曰：如經中說：憂根初禪中滅，喜根三禪中滅，樂根四禪中滅，捨根滅盡定中滅，是故汝說不然。答曰：若汝信此經者，則苦根應在初禪，而汝法中初禪實無苦根

³¹⁴ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 162 Vim at T1648, 420a22 問：何處苦根起無餘時滅？答：佛告比丘，初禪成就離欲，是處苦根起無餘時滅。問：何故於初禪苦根滅？答：以喜滿故身樂，身樂故苦根滅，以斷對治故，是故於初禪苦根滅 何故第二禪憂根滅？若有覺觀，久隨覺觀，成身解怠，成心懈惰。若心懈惰，憂根即起。於第二禪覺觀滅，說憂根滅

³¹⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 162 Vim at T1648, 420a23 何故於初禪苦根滅？答：以喜滿故身樂，身樂故苦根滅

³¹⁶ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 162 Vim at T1648, 420a28 何故第二禪憂根滅？若有覺觀，久隨覺觀，成身解怠，成心懈惰。若心懈惰，憂根即起。於第二禪覺觀滅，說憂根滅

abandoned

In the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are not the condition for the arising of the displeasure faculty, but the arising of the pain faculty³¹⁷ This treatise explains that the cessation of the pain faculty occurs through the stilling of *vitarka* and *vicāra* in the second *dhyāna*, because wise people have perception of suffering in relation to *vitarka* and *vicāra*³¹⁸ For wise people, the presence of *vitarka* and *vicāra* gives rise to perception of suffering, and thus the pain faculty or bodily pain ceases without remainder when *vitarka* and *vicāra* have been abandoned in the second *dhyāna* With regard to the cessation of the pain faculty, this treatise also expounds that the pain faculty arises dependent on sensory consciousnesses, and in the first *dhyāna* plane, sensory consciousnesses are still present, hence the pain faculty does not cease while one is in the first *dhyāna*³¹⁹

The viewpoint of the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra* is similar to the **Mahāvibhāṣā* According to the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra*, the mind of the first *dhyāna* is unsteady and this unsteady mind may cause sensory consciousnesses to arise Because sensory consciousnesses are present, the pain faculty or bodily pain also arises dependent on them while one is in the first *dhyāna*³²⁰ Both the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra* indicate that the pain faculty or bodily pain does not cease without remainder while one is in the first *dhyāna* due to the presence of sensory consciousnesses

The **Tattvasiddhīsāstra* explains that the displeasure faculty based on desire

³¹⁷ Mhv at T1545, 419a13 有作是說：第二靜慮苦根滅者，謂尋伺滅，以諸賢聖於尋伺中發生苦想，過諸異生厭地獄苦，能生苦想故名苦根

³¹⁸ Ibid

³¹⁹ Mhv at T1545, 419a5 調離欲雜位雖斷苦根，而未過苦所依族姓。於初靜慮得離雜時，過苦所依及苦族姓，故說苦滅。所依族姓，謂諸識身

³²⁰ TS at T1646, 341b18 問曰：今何故說二禪中苦根滅？答曰：初禪近不定心，不定心者能生欲界繫諸識，於中生苦根，是故不說初禪苦滅

arises dependent on joy based on desire, and joy based on renunciation arises when joy based on desire is abandoned. Hence, it is said that the displeasure faculty or mental pain is abandoned while one is in the first *dhyāna*, because joy based on renunciation arises while one is in the first *dhyāna*.³²¹ This text suggests that joy based on renunciation arises through tranquility meditation and it is equivalent to the rapture (*prīti/pīti*) of the first *dhyāna*. This statement is consistent with the description of the *Salāyatanavibhaṅga Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.

According to the *Salāyatanavibhaṅga Sutta*, grief based on the household life is abandoned by relying on grief based on renunciation; grief based on renunciation is surmounted by relying on joy based on renunciation.³²² With regard to joy based on renunciation, the Pāli commentary suggests, “This is the joy that arises when one has set up insight and is sitting watching the breakup of formations with a current of sharp and bright insight knowledge focused on formations.”³²³ This statement shows that joy based on renunciation arises through insight meditation. In other words, joy based on renunciation could arise when one practices insight meditation, or when one practices tranquility meditation. By practicing tranquility meditation, joy (*sāumanasya/somanassa*) based on renunciation arises, equivalent to the rapture (*prīti/pīti*) of the first *dhyāna*; meanwhile, there exists neither grief based on renunciation nor grief based on desire. According to the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra*, the implication of the *Salāyatanavibhaṅga Sutta* is that the displeasure faculty is abandoned by depending on joy based on renunciation while one is in the first *dhyāna*.

Regarding the cessation of the pain faculty, the *Yogācārabhūmi* explains that even

³²¹ TS at T1646, 341b22: 依欲憂根從依欲喜生，得淨喜則不淨喜滅，是故初禪中無憂根。

³²² Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1070.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 1348.

though bodily pain is not present while one is in the first *dhyāna*, physically debilitating hindrances such as physical discomfort and pain to the body are not abandoned. Hence, the treatise indicates that the pain faculty or bodily pain does not cease while one is in the first *dhyāna*³²⁴. This treatise indicates that the abandoning of debilitating hindrances occurs when *vitarka* and *vicāra* are stilled³²⁵. Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, says that while being in the second *dhyāna*, a meditator experiences rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) like water moistens the whole body, and thus the body becomes supple and all debilitating hindrances to the body are also abandoned³²⁶. He explains that all debilitating hindrances to the body are abandoned by relying on rapture and serenity, and thus a sūtra says the cessation of the pain faculty or bodily pain occurs while one is in the second *dhyāna*³²⁷.

In *dhyāna* practice, one experiences rapture (*prīti/pīti*) while in the first and the second *dhyānas*. What is the distinction between rapture of the first *dhyāna* and rapture of the second *dhyāna*? The **Tattvasiddhīsāstra* explains that rapture of the first *dhyāna* arises through the cessation of the displeasure faculty, and rapture of the second *dhyāna* arises through the cessation of the pain faculty³²⁸.

The **Mahāvībhāṣā* and the *Yogācārabhūmi* agree that the pain faculty ceases while one is in the second *dhyāna*, and they also recognize that the pain faculty is not

³²⁴ YB at T1579, 649c16 問：何緣故知初靜慮中苦根未斷？答：彼品羸重未遠離故。若於是處苦根已斷，便與第二靜慮住時應無差別，是故當知是處未斷。

³²⁵ YB at T1579, 331b19 若初靜慮已斷苦根，是則行者入初靜慮及第二時，受所作住差別應無，由二俱有喜及樂故，而經中說，由出諸受靜慮差別。又此應無尋伺寂靜，羸重斷滅，所作差別。

³²⁶ AK at T1558, 67a1 第二靜慮喜受為內災，與輕安俱屬身如水故，遍身羸重由此皆除，故經說苦根第二靜慮滅。

³²⁷ Ibid

³²⁸ TS at T1646, 341c5 問曰：初禪中喜二禪中喜有何差別？答曰：初禪以威憂故喜，二禪滅苦故喜。

present while one is in the first *dhyāna*.³²⁹ In other words, both the pain faculty and the displeasure faculty are absent while one is in the first *dhyāna*. If one maintains that the pain faculty or bodily pain ceases while one is in the second *dhyāna*, then *vitarka* and *vicāra* are the condition for the arising of the pain faculty as the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Yogācārabhūmi* suggest.³³⁰ In contrast, if one maintains that the displeasure faculty or mental pain ceases while one is in the second *dhyāna*, then *vitarka* and *vicāra* are the condition for the arising of the displeasure faculty as the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimaggā* suggest.³³¹ It is clear that the problem of the first *dhyāna* is the agitation of *vitarka* and *vicāra*.

In meditation practice, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are skillful thoughts or right intentions connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty which enable a meditator to withdraw from sensual pleasures and unwholesome states, so as to enter the first *dhyāna*. After one attains the first *dhyāna*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* accompanied by mindfulness (*smṛti/sati*), clear comprehension (*samprajanya/sampajañña*), and equanimity (*upekṣā/upekkhā*) steady the mind in the first *dhyāna*. In comparison with the serenity of the second *dhyāna*, the activities of *vitarka*, which are gross, and those of *vicāra*, which are subtle, become an agitation. Then, one has to still the agitation of *vitarka* and *vicāra* in order to enter the second *dhyāna*.

³²⁹ Mhv at T1545, 313b23: 佛經說：憂根以初禪滅，苦根以第二禪滅。問曰：二根俱離欲時滅，佛何故說憂根以初禪滅苦根以第二禪滅耶？答曰：佛說過對治法。YB at T1579, 331b17: 問：何緣生在初靜慮者，苦根未斷而不現行？答由其助伴相對，憂根所攝諸苦，彼已斷故。

³³⁰ Mhv at T1545, 419a5: 調離欲染位雖斷苦根，而未過苦所依族姓。於初靜慮得離染時，過苦所依及苦族姓，故說苦滅。所依族姓，謂諸識身...有作是說：第二靜慮苦根滅者，謂尋伺滅，以諸賢聖於尋伺中發生苦想，過諸異生厭地獄苦，能生苦想故名苦根。YB at T1579, 649c16: 問：何緣故知初靜慮中苦根未斷？答：彼品羶重未遠離故。若於是處苦根已斷，便與第二靜慮住時應無差別，是故當知是處未斷。

³³¹ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Nānamoli, 162. Vim at T1648, 420a28: 何故第二禪憂根滅？若有覺觀，久隨覺觀，成身解怠，成心懶惰。若心懶惰，憂根即起。於第二禪覺觀滅，說憂根滅。

3. *Prīti/Pīti* and *Sukha*: the Experience of Bodily and Mental Pleasant Feelings

In meditation practice, it is said that the five *dhyāna* factors—applied thought (*vitarka/vitakka*), sustained thought (*vicāra*), rapture (*prīti/pīti*), pleasure (*sukha*), and unification of mind (*ekāgratā/ekaggatā*)—are all present in the first *dhyāna*.³³² As concentration deepens, the grosser *dhyāna* factors are successively eliminated; that is, applied thought and sustained thought are abandoned in the second *dhyāna*, rapture in the third *dhyāna*, and pleasure in the fourth *dhyāna*. In these five *dhyāna* factors, *prīti* and *sukha* are experienced while one is in the first and second *dhyānas*. In the third *dhyāna*, *sukha* is present but *prīti* is absent. This shows that *prīti* and *sukha* are the two significant, unique characteristics of the *rūpa-dhyānas*.

In the scheme of the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and the 810th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, *prīti* and *sukha* are present in steps 5 and 6 among the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing. These sixteen steps could be divided into four tetrads, in which the second tetrad refers to the contemplation of feeling (*vedanā*): experiencing rapture (*prīti*), experiencing pleasure (*sukha*), experiencing the mental formation, and calming the mental formation.³³³ These early discourses clearly state that *prīti* and *sukha* are “pleasant feelings” classified under the aggregate of feeling (*vedanāskandha*). In the practice of mindfulness of breathing, Ven. Buddhadaśa indicates that with the calming of the bodily formation, a meditator is able to experience a certain degree of *prīti* and *sukha* before entering *dhyāna*, and when one is in *dhyāna*, the experience of *prīti* and *sukha* will become full-fledged.³³⁴ This shows that the pleasant feelings—*prīti* and *sukha*—can be used as a theme or topic of investigation before and while one is in *dhyāna*.

³³² MN 43, MĀ 210

³³³ MN 118, SĀ 810

³³⁴ Buddhadasa, *Mindfulness with Breathing*, 69.

However, according to the *Visuddhimagga*, *prīti* of the first two *dhyānas* is not a pleasant feeling, but a mental concomitant (*cattasika/cetasika*) belonging to the aggregate of mental formations (*saṃskāraskandha*)³³⁵ The *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, an Abhidharma text of the Theravāda, also suggests that *prīti* is included in the aggregate of mental formations³³⁶ In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Dharmaskandha* maintain that *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* is pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhu/passaddhi*) which is included in the aggregate of mental formations, and only *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* is a mental pleasure belonging to the aggregate of feeling³³⁷ These diverse interpretations of *prīti* and *sukha* reflect the fact that there is a difference between the understanding of *dhyāna* in sūtras and the latter Abhidharma and commentarial literature

The *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra* suggest that *prīti* and *sukha* involve both mental pleasure and bodily pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*³³⁸ The **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra* definitely indicates that both *prīti* and *sukha* belong to the aggregate of feeling³³⁹ Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhīśāstra*, also says that both *prīti*

³³⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Nānamoli, 142 Ven Anālayo indicates that the point behind the placing of *prīti* into the aggregate of mental formations is the outcome of a shift of perspective in the Abhidharma and commentarial traditions, whereby the fourth aggregate became an umbrella term for any mental factor that was not easily allocated to feeling, perception, and consciousness See Anālayo, "Sankhāra," 733

³³⁶ Davids, trans, *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, 26

³³⁷ Mhv at T1545, 412b5 初二靜慮是輕安樂，第三靜慮別是受樂；初二靜慮樂行蘊攝，第三靜慮樂受蘊攝 Dsk at 1537, 484b25 身受樂者：身調意身，由意身中有受樂故，四大種身亦得安適，由此因緣名身受樂。此中樂者：調離喜時已斷身重性心重性，乃至身調柔性心調柔性，總名為樂。此是受樂，非輕安樂

³³⁸ YB at T1579, 467c2 言喜樂者：謂已獲得所希求義，及於喜中未見過失，一切羶重已除遣故，及已獲得廣大輕安，身心調暢有堪能故，說名喜樂，468a17 彼於爾時色身意身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂。第三靜慮已下諸地，無如是樂及無間捨 PS at T1602, 487a3 喜者：謂已轉依者依於轉識，心悅心勇心適心調安適受受所攝。樂者：謂已轉依者依阿賴耶識能攝所依，令身怡悅安適受受所攝

³³⁹ PS at T1602, 487a3

and *sukha* are pleasant feeling³⁴⁰ The position of these three texts, in contrast, is consistent with the description of *prīti* and *sukha* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* In order to explore the nature of *prīti* and *sukha* and their functions, I will focus on the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, and then compare with the Abhidharma and commentarial literature, and the Mahāyāna texts

Prīti/pīti* and *Sukha* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas

It is said that when a meditator develops tranquility (*śamatha*) and insight (*vipaśyanā*), *prīti* and *sukha* serve to facilitate that process This process begins with the establishment of virtuous conduct, listening to the Dharma, arousal of faith, and/or the practice of the six recollections the Buddha, the Dharma, the Samgha, morality, generosity, and the devas According to the *Kimattīya Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, the sequence progresses from virtuous conduct to higher forms of training as follows

[V]irtuous ways of conduct have non-remorse as their benefit and reward, non-remorse has gladness as its benefit and reward, gladness has joy as its benefit and reward, joy has serenity as its benefit and reward, serenity has happiness as its benefit and reward, happiness has concentration as its benefit and reward, concentration has knowledge and vision of things as they really are as its benefit and reward, knowledge and vision of things as they really are has revulsion and dispassion as its benefit and reward, revulsion and dispassion have the knowledge and vision of liberation as their benefit and reward³⁴¹

This discourse reveals that because of one's virtuous conduct, non-remorse and gladness arise in him/her, giving rise to joy/rapture (*prīti/pīti*), serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*), happiness/pleasure (*sukha*), and concentration (*samādhi*) Then, concentration leads to knowledge and vision as they really are, revulsion and dispassion, and finally to the

³⁴⁰ TS at T1646, 341a3 又樂受即是喜，但差別說，亦從猗別說為樂，如經中說得身猗則受樂

³⁴¹ Bodhi and Nyanaponika, trans and ed, *Anguttara Nikāya*, 237-38

knowledge and vision of liberation. This causal sequence shows that *prīti* and *sukha* could arise before *dhyāna*, and both are supporting conditions for the attainment of *dhyāna*.

The Chinese counterpart to the *Kimatthiya Sutta* is the *Heyi jing* 何義經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*. This discourse indicates that *prīti* results in serenity, namely, “serenity of body.”³⁴² Then, serenity of body leads to *sukha*. This explains that *sukha* specifically involves bodily pleasant feeling, but is not restricted to bodily pleasure because serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) is said to include serenity of body and serenity of mind.³⁴³ With serenity of body and serenity of mind as conditions, *sukha* is experienced as bodily pleasure and mental pleasure. With gladness as condition, *prīti* refers to mental pleasant feeling.

The *Cetanākaraṇīya Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* also shows that joy/rapture (*prīti/pīti*) arises through gladness, giving rise to “serenity of body,” and then serenity of body leads to happiness/pleasure (*sukha*) as follows.

It is a natural law that joy will arise in one who is glad at heart. For one who is joyful, there is no need for an act of will: ‘May my body be serene!’ It is a natural law that the body will be serene for one who is joyful. For one of serene body, there is no need for an act of will: ‘May I feel happiness!’ It is a natural law that one who is serene will feel happiness.³⁴⁴

The Chinese parallel, the *Busi jing* 不思經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*, also depicts *prīti* leading to “serenity of body” and then *sukha*.³⁴⁵ The causal relationship between *prīti* and *sukha* is that one cultivates mental pleasure (*prīti*) first, and then serenity arises in

³⁴² MĀ 42 at T26, 485a24: 若有喜者，便得止身。

³⁴³ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1570.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 238.

³⁴⁵ MĀ 43 at T26, 485b27: 阿難！有喜者不應思令我止。阿難！但法自然，有喜者便得止身。阿難！有止者不應思令我樂。阿難！但法自然，有止者便得覺樂。

him/her; with serenity of body and serenity of mind as condition, *sukha* arises, namely bodily pleasure and mental pleasure.

Listening to the Dharma is conducive to the arising of *prīti* and *sukha*, as shown in the *Shuo chu jing* 說處經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*. In this discourse, one listens to the Dharma and understands its meaning. Due to this understanding, gladness arises in him/her, giving rise to *prīti*, serenity of body, *sukha*, and concentration. With concentration as condition, there arise knowledge and vision as they really are, which give rise to revulsion, dispassion, and liberation.³⁴⁶ The causal sequence discloses that *prīti* and *sukha* are two important factors for the attainment of *dhyāna*, culminating in liberation. The nature of *prīti* and *sukha* is pleasant feeling (*vedanā*) with gladness and serenity as their respective conditions, and their functions are to give refreshment and ease for both body and mind leading to the stability of concentration.

Faith, which arises through critical scrutiny, leads to the arising of *prīti* and *sukha* shown in the liberative sequence in the *Upanisa Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*. According to this discourse, the liberative sequence progresses from faith, via gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, concentration, knowledge and vision of things as they are, disenchantment, dispassion, emancipation, and finally to knowledge of destruction of the taints.³⁴⁷ This discourse reveals that *prīti* and *sukha* are supporting conditions for the development of both tranquility (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassyanā*) on the path to deliverance.

The six recollections—recollection of the Buddha, the Dharma, the Saṃgha,

³⁴⁶ MĀ 86 at T26, 563c28: 彼聞法已，便知法解義。彼因知法解義故，便得歡悅。因歡悅故，便得歡喜。因歡喜故，便得止身。因止身故，便得覺樂。因覺樂故，便得心定。阿難！比丘比丘尼因心定故，便得見如實知如真。因見如實知如真故，便得厭。因厭故，便得無欲。因無欲故，便得解脫。

³⁴⁷ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 554-55.

morality, generosity, and the devas—in the *Mahānāma Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* also facilitate the arising of *prīti* and *sukha*. When one practices each one of the six recollections, one’s mind is straight with that recollection as its objects, giving rise to gladness. Then, *prīti* arises when one is gladdened. The body becomes serene when the mind is uplifted by *prīti*. *Sukha* is experienced for one serene in body. Finally, the mind becomes focused for one who experiences *sukha*.³⁴⁸ This also illustrates that *prīti* and *sukha* are the crucial factors for the attainment of *dhyāna*.

When a meditator commences with the establishment of virtuous conduct, listening to the Dharma, arousal of faith, and/or the practice of the six recollections, there arises gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and concentration successively. According to the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, when a meditator abandons the five hindrances—sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and remorse, and doubt—there arises gladness.³⁴⁹ Gladness leads to *prīti*. When there is *prīti* in mind, the body becomes serene, giving rise to *sukha* and then concentration.³⁵⁰ These five fundamental factors—gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and concentration—form a meditative formula for the attainment of the first *dhyāna*.

According to the 482nd sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, a noble disciple has to detach from five things, and completely fulfill another five things when he/she intends to learn the rapture and pleasure of seclusion and directly experiences with the body.³⁵¹ The five things which one has to detach from are whatever joy is connected with sensual desire, whatever grief is connected with sensual desire, whatever equanimity is connected

³⁴⁸ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 151-53.

³⁴⁹ Walshe, trans., *Dīgha Nikāya*, 102.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ SĀ 482 at T99, 123a14: 世尊！若使聖弟子學遠離喜樂，具足身作證，得遠離五法，修滿五法。

with sensual desire, whatever joy is connected with the unwholesome, and whatever grief is connected with the unwholesome. Another five things which one has to fulfill are gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and unification of mind.³⁵² Through the fulfillment of these five things, there is the rapture and pleasure of seclusion, namely the attainment of the first *dhyāna*.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* also states that one attains the first *dhyāna* through detaching from five things and fulfilling another five things, as the 482nd sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* describes.³⁵³ The 482nd sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* is also cited in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* to indicate that one attains the first *dhyāna* through the elimination of five things and the fulfillment of another five things—gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and concentration.³⁵⁴ These five things in Buddhist meditation form a meditative formula for the achievement of the first *dhyāna* shown in the early discourses and the Abhidharma texts. In the development of concentration, *prīti* and *sukha* concerning mental pleasure and bodily pleasure are required for the attainment of *dhyāna*, after one attains the first *dhyāna*, *prīti* and *sukha* grow in momentum to become *dhyāna* factors.

In early discourses, the simile of the bath man, the simile of the lake, and the simile of lotuses in a pond vividly describe how, when one is in *dhyāna*, the experience of *prīti* and *sukha* pervades both body and mind.³⁵⁵ The simile of the bath man depicts that *prīti* and *sukha* born of seclusion pervade the whole body while one is in the first *dhyāna*,

³⁵² SĀ 482 at T99, 123a16 云何遠離五法？謂斷欲所長養喜，斷欲所長養憂，斷欲所長養捨，斷不善所長養喜，斷不善所長養憂，是名五法遠離。云何修滿五法？謂隨喜、歡喜、猗息、樂、一心

³⁵³ YB at T1579, 329a7 復次初靜慮中說離生喜，由證住此斷除五法，謂欲所引喜，欲所引憂，不善所引喜，不善所引憂，不善所引捨；又於五法修習圓滿，謂歡喜安樂及三摩地

³⁵⁴ AK at T1558, 147a16 又契經說：若於爾時諸聖弟子於離生喜身作證具足住，彼於爾時已斷五法，修習五法皆得圓滿，廣說乃至。何等名為所修五法？一歡二喜三輕安四樂五三摩地

³⁵⁵ MĀ 81, MĀ 98, MN 119

as a skilled bath man kneads his ball of bath powder till the moisture fills it inside and out.³⁵⁶ The simile of the lake draws that *prīti* and *sukha* born of concentration suffuse the whole body while one is in the second *dhyāna*, as cool waters well up in the lake, and there is no part of the whole lake unpervaded by the cool waters.³⁵⁷ The simile of lotuses in a pond describes that *sukha* divested of *prīti* permeates the whole body while one is in the third *dhyāna*, as lotus in a pond thrive immersed in the water, and they are filled with cool water from their roots to their tips.³⁵⁸ Here the ball of bath powder, the lake, and the lotus represent the physical body in the first, second, and third *dhyānas*, stressing that *prīti* and *sukha* pervade the whole physical body, and there is no part of the entire body unpervaded by them. Clearly, these similes illustrate that bodily feeling occur while one is in *dhyāna*, specifically referring to physical pleasure and ease.

Feeling (*vedanā*) in the five aggregates (*skandha*) is placed between the form aggregate and the other three mental aggregates, consisting of both bodily and mental components. In other words, feeling is the place where the interplay between the body and mind takes place. With regard to the unique function of feelings, Ven. Anālayo says:

Feelings can thus be seen as an intermediary between body and mind that has a conditioning effect on both. One aspect of this intermediary role is that whatever happens in the body is mentally felt through the medium of feelings, while the other aspect is that the affective tone of mental processes affects and influences the body through the medium of feelings. The actual experience of feeling thus usually involves body and mind.³⁵⁹

He gives examples of how feelings involve both body and mind thus: joyful feeling may result in raising of the hair and goose pimples; pain to tension and cramps may influence

³⁵⁶ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 953.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 954.

³⁵⁹ Anālayo, "Vedanā," 515.

the heart beat and blood circulation.³⁶⁰ According to the *Salla Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, when an unwise person experiences physical pain and reacts with mental anguish to this pain, he/she suffers both physical pain and mental pain, just as if shot by two darts. In contrast, a wise person does not react physical pain with mental agony, and thus suffers only one pain caused by one dart alone.³⁶¹ This simile of two darts also explains that feeling (*vedanā*) is the place where the interaction between the body and mind happens. *Prīti* and *sukha* are pleasant feelings experienced in the same way involving the interplay between the body and mind.

Gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and concentration form a meditative formula in many of early discourses. This meditative formula illustrates that gladness (*prāmodya/pāmojja*), *prīti*, and *sukha* have a close causal relationship. What is the distinction among these three factors? In the development of concentration, when one is glad, *prīti* arises in him/her. Ven. Gunaratana indicates that the Pāli commentary explains *prāmodya/pāmojja* as “the initial forms of rapture,” and *prīti/pīti* as “the stronger forms.”³⁶² According to the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, *prāmodya/pāmojja* and *prīti/pīti* are mental factors belonging to the aggregate of mental formations (*saṃskāraskandha*), not mental pleasant feelings.³⁶³ This definition is questionable.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* also treats *prāmodya/pāmojja* as the initial rapture, and *prīti* the stronger, deeper rapture.³⁶⁴ But, this treatise defines *prīti* as mental pleasure included in the aggregate of feeling (*vedanāskandha*), not belonging to the aggregate of mental

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1264.

³⁶² Gunaratana, *Path of Serenity and Insight*, 64.

³⁶³ Davids, trans., *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, 26.

³⁶⁴ YB at T1579, 329a24: 歡者：調從本來清淨行者觀資糧地所修淨行無悔為先，慰意適悅心欣踊性。喜者：調正修習方便為先，深慶適悅心欣踊性。

formations.³⁶⁵ This position, in contrast, is consistent with the definition of *prīti* in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, and is also applied to the development of concentration.

In meditative development, one experiences *prāmodya/pāmojja* as the initial mental pleasant feeling, which may arise through the abandoning of the five hindrances. *Prīti* is the stronger mental pleasant feeling which affects the body leading to physical ease. When *prīti* reaches maturity, serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) arises. That is, with rapture in the mind, the body becomes serene and the mind becomes serene. When serenity of body and serenity of mind grow stronger, *sukha* is experienced in both body and mind, involving bodily pleasant feeling and mental pleasant feeling. In other words, *prāmodya/pāmojja*, *prīti* and *sukha* are different degrees of pleasant feeling, and they all belong to the aggregate of feeling (*vedanāskandha*). When one attains *dhyāna*, the pleasant feelings—*prīti* and *sukha*—are unworldly referring to the happiness of *dhyāna*, which differ from sensual pleasures as worldly. Despite their alleged common basis in the early discourses, the later Abhidharma and commentarial literature give rise to a variety of definitions of *prīti* and *sukha*.

***Prīti/pīti* and *Sukha* in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature**

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *prīti/pīti* is said to be of an “endearing” property, and its function is “to refresh the body and the mind.”³⁶⁶ This work points out five grades of *prīti* which successively arise with the development of concentration thus: minor rapture, momentary rapture, showering rapture, uplifting rapture, and pervading rapture. Minor rapture is the initial one which can only raise the hairs on the body.

³⁶⁵ YB at T1579, 330c20. 喜為受境界。

³⁶⁶ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 141.

Momentary rapture is experienced as flashes of lightning appearing at different moments. Showering rapture is like waves on the seashore breaking over the body again and again. Uplifting rapture is powerful and even causes the body to levitate. Pervading rapture completely suffuses the whole body as a filled bladder or a rock cavern filled by a huge inundation.³⁶⁷ All these raptures affect the physical body in different degrees; and this is consistent with what the early discourses tell us: that *prīti* gives rise to serenity of body, leading to physical comfort and ease. The highest “pervading rapture” which permeates the entire body is said to be experienced in association with the attainment of *dhyāna*.³⁶⁸ The interplay between body and mind is clearly shown in the five grades of *prīti*, which illustrates that *prīti* is mental pleasant feeling (*vedanā*) experienced before and while one is in *dhyāna*.

The *Visuddhimagga* does not define *prīti/pīti* as a pleasant feeling, but a mental factor belonging to the aggregate of mental formations (*saṃskāraskandha*).³⁶⁹ *Prīti* is said to be “the contentedness at getting a desirable object,” and *sukha* is “the actual experiencing of it” when the object is obtained.³⁷⁰ A simile is given to explain the distinction between *prīti* and *sukha* thus: When an exhausted man travels in a desert, he occasionally sees a pond and thrills at the water. The contentment and delight directed at the water, namely a desirable object, is the experience of *prīti*. While drinking the water, the direct experience of a desirable object is *sukha*.³⁷¹ *Sukha* is said of a “gratifying” property, and its function is “to intensify” the mental states associated with meditation.³⁷²

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 141-42.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 142.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

The *Visuddhimagga* defines *sukha* as a pleasant feeling included in the aggregate of feeling (*vedanāskandha*)³⁷³ Being a *dhyāna* factor, *sukha* is treated as a mental pleasant feeling, not a bodily pleasant feeling, because when one is in *dhyāna*, “consciousness at that time does not occur by way of the five doors”³⁷⁴ Hence, according to the *Visuddhimagga*, neither *prīti* nor *sukha* involves bodily pleasure In the Theravāda Abhidharma, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* also states that *prīti* belongs to the aggregate of mental formations, and *sukha* of the first three *dhyānas* is mental pleasure included in the aggregate of feeling³⁷⁵

Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, refutes a certain school’s viewpoint that *prīti* is not mental pleasant feeling (*saumanasya-vedanā*) but a mental factor, and *sukha* of the first three *dhyānas* is identical to mental pleasant feeling³⁷⁶ In the **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra*, Samghabhadra further indicates that this school treats *prīti* as a mental factor belonging to the aggregate of mental formations³⁷⁷ Clearly, this school refuted by Vasubandhu and Samghabhadra has a close relationship with Theravāda

Vasubandhu cites a sūtra called *Bian diandao qujing* 辯顛倒契經 to emphasize that the joy faculty (*saumanasyendriya*) ceases without remainder while one is in the third *dhyāna*, and the pleasure faculty (*sukhendriya*) ceases without remainder while one

³⁷³ Ibid

³⁷⁴ Ibid, 323

³⁷⁵ Davids, trans, *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, 25-6

³⁷⁶ AK at T1558, 147b28 喜即喜受。以何為證知決定然？汝等豈言喜非喜受，如餘部許，我亦許然。餘部云何許非喜受？謂別有喜是心所法，三定中樂皆是喜受，故喜喜受其體各異。非三定樂可名喜受

³⁷⁷ ANS at 1562, 762b3 有餘部說：喜非喜受，喜是行蘊心所法攝，三定中樂皆是喜受，故喜喜受其體各異。非三定樂可名喜受

is in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁷⁸ Based on the *Bian diandao qiujing*, Vasubandhu clarifies that the joy faculty or mental pleasure does not occur while one is in the third *dhyāna*, and thus the joy faculty cannot be identical to *sukha* of the first three *dhyānas*, but is equivalent to *prīti* of the first two *dhyānas*. According to Vasubandhu, *prīti* is mental pleasure belonging to the aggregate of feeling, not a mental factor included in the aggregate of mental formations³⁷⁹ This viewpoint is contrary to that of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* and the *Visuddhimagga*.

The *Bian diandao qiujing* is not found in the Chinese *Āgamas*, but its parallel is preserved in the Pāli Canon called *Uppāṭika Sutta*³⁸⁰ Controversially, the *Uppāṭika Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* describes a reversal of the order: the pleasure faculty or the bodily pleasant feeling ceases without remainder while one is in the third *dhyāna*, and the joy faculty or the mental pleasant feeling ceases without remainder while one is in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁸¹ This reversal order could be used to confirm that *sukha* is mental pleasant feeling identical to the joy faculty occurring while one is in the first, the second, and the third *dhyānas*, as the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* and the *Visuddhimagga* maintain that *sukha* of the first three *dhyānas* is mental pleasure belonging to the aggregate of feeling. The Chinese *Vimuttimaggā* and the Pāli *Visuddhimagga* are consistent with the *Uppāṭika Sutta* that the pleasure faculty ceases without remainder while one is in the third *dhyāna*, and the joy faculty ceases without remainder while one is in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁸²

³⁷⁸ AK at T1558, 147c4 如辯顛倒契經中說：漸無餘滅憂等五根，第三定中無餘滅喜，於第四定無餘滅樂

³⁷⁹ AK at T1558, 147b28 喜即喜受

³⁸⁰ SN 48 40

³⁸¹ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 1685

³⁸² Vim at T1648, 420b2 如世尊說：何處樂根起無餘時滅？於此比丘厭於喜故，第三禪入正受住，是處樂根已起無餘時滅。問何故於第三禪樂根滅？答：喜滅故，喜為因樂成滅，是故於第三禪樂根

However, according to the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra*, a sūtra explains the gradual cessation of feelings as the joy faculty ceases in the third *dhyāna*, and the pleasure faculty ceases in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁸³ In the Yogācāra texts, the *Yogācārabhūmi* also cites a sūtra called *Wudao jing* 無倒經 to explain that one is free from the joy faculty while in the third *dhyāna*, and the pleasure faculty while in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁸⁴ Asanga, in his **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra*, also says the successive cessation of feeling as the cessation of the joy faculty occurring while one is in the third *dhyāna*, and the cessation of the pleasure faculty while in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁸⁵ In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the *Dharmaskandha* and the *Abhidharmāmṛtasāstra* (*Apitan ganluwei lun* 阿毘曇甘露味論) are also consistent in stating that the joy faculty ceases while one is in the third *dhyāna*, and the pleasure faculty while in the fourth *dhyāna*³⁸⁶

Therefore, it is quite possible that the *Uppātika Sutta* is to be modified when a school's viewpoint is questioned by other schools In the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, the Buddha frequently says that the body (*kāya*) feels pleasure while one is in the third *dhyāna*³⁸⁷ This suggests that the pleasure faculty or bodily pleasure ceases not in the third *dhyāna*, but in the fourth *dhyāna*

Feeling (*vedanā*) could be divided into five kinds pleasure, pain, joy, displeasure,

滅。問：若苦樂憂於三禪處已滅，何故於此四禪說滅？答：三禪是四禪道路，於三禪已滅受，是故於第四禪說滅 *Buddhaghosa, Visuddhimagga, trans Nānamoli, 162*

³⁸³ TS at T1646, 285b4 如經中說：憂根初禪中滅，喜根三禪中滅，樂根四禪中滅，捨根滅盡定中滅

³⁸⁴ YB at T1579, 331a19 復次此四靜慮亦得名為出諸受事，謂初靜慮出離憂根，第二靜慮出離苦根，第三靜慮出離喜根，第四靜慮出離樂根，於無相中出離捨根，如薄伽梵無倒經中說如是言

³⁸⁵ PS at T1602, 504a27 出離建立者：謂初靜慮出離憂根，第二靜慮出離苦根，第三靜慮出離喜根，第四靜慮出離樂根，無相心法三摩地出離捨根

³⁸⁶ Dsk at T1537, 484c29 復次入初靜慮時憂得斷遍知，入第二靜慮時苦得斷遍知，入第三靜慮時喜得斷遍知，入第四靜慮時若樂若苦若喜若憂皆得斷遍知 AAS at T1553, 979b4 五根憂根初禪滅，無餘苦根二禪滅，無餘喜根三禪滅，無餘樂根四禪滅，無餘護根無想三昧滅

³⁸⁷ MĀ 3, SĀ 347, EĀ 12 1, AN 7 63, and MN 119

and equanimity³⁸⁸ These five feelings could be classified as three modes the joy faculty and the pleasure faculty are pleasant feeling, the pain faculty and the displeasure faculty are painful feeling, and the equanimity faculty is neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling³⁸⁹ According to the *Vibhanga Sutta (1)* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, any bodily pleasure born of body-contact is called the pleasure faculty, any bodily pain born of body-contact is called the pain faculty, any mental pleasure born of mind-contact is called the joy faculty, any mental pain born of mind-contact is called the displeasure faculty, and any feeling, bodily or mental, is neither comfortable nor uncomfortable called the equanimity faculty³⁹⁰ A corresponding text is not found in the Chinese *Āgamas*

In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the *Dharmaskandha*, the *Dhātukāya (Apīdamo jieshenzu lun)* 阿毘達磨界身足論, and the **Mahāvibhāṣā* define the pleasure faculty as both bodily pleasure and mental pleasure born of “pleasure-contact,” while in the *Vibhanga Sutta (1)* mental pleasure is not included in the pleasure faculty³⁹¹ According to the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the joy faculty means mental pleasant feeling, and the pleasure faculty denotes both bodily pleasant feeling and mental pleasant feeling

The Sautrāntika indicates that the inclusion of mental pleasure in the pleasure faculty is added by the Sarvāstivādins, and also points out that the pleasure faculty in other schools’ sūtras involves only bodily pleasure, without mental pleasure³⁹² The

³⁸⁸ SĀ 485, SN 36 19

³⁸⁹ SN 48 37

³⁹⁰ Bodhi, trans, *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1681

³⁹¹ Dsk at T1537, 499b12 云何樂根？謂順樂觸所生身樂心樂，平等受受所攝，是名樂根。復次脩第三靜慮順樂觸所生心樂平等受，受所攝。是名樂根 DK at T1540, 615b14 樂根云何？謂觸順樂受，觸者所起身心樂，平等受受所攝，是名樂根 Mhv at T1545, 732b28 樂根云何？答依順樂觸所生身心樂，平等受受所攝，是謂樂根

³⁹² AK at T1558, 147a7 若爾何故有契經說：云何樂根？謂順樂觸力所引生身心樂受。有餘於此增益心言，諸部經中唯說身故。又第三定所立樂支，契經自說為身所受樂故

Theravāda *Nikāyas* confirm the Sautrāntika's argument.³⁹³ According to the Sautrāntika, body-consciousness can occur while one is in *dhyāna*.³⁹⁴ Thus the Sautrāntika insists that *sukha* of the first three *dhyānas* is identical to the pleasure faculty, involving bodily pleasure only.³⁹⁵ The experience of *sukha* is said to be bodily pleasant feeling which arises dependent on the body and a serene wind born of superior samādhi.³⁹⁶ This serene wind is serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) acting as an internal energy flow which pervades the whole body leading to physical pleasure and ease.

Bodily pleasant feeling could occur while one is in *dhyāna*, which does not damage the stability of *dhyāna*, because physical pleasure has its origin in the stilling of body and mind, compatible to samādhi and beneficial to the unification of mind. Is *sukha* restricted to bodily pleasure only as the insistence of the Sautrāntika? In fact, *prasrabdhi* includes serenity of body and serenity of mind, giving rise to bodily comfort and mental ease. In other words, with serenity of body and serenity of mind as a condition, *sukha* arises and fills the whole body and mind. *Sukha*, in reality, covers both bodily pleasure and mental pleasure. According to the *Cūḷavedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, *sukha* or pleasant feeling is defined as, “whatever is felt bodily or mentally as pleasant and soothing is pleasant feeling.”³⁹⁷ Here *sukha* is pleasant feeling which involves both bodily pleasure and mental pleasure. This definition is appropriate to the experience of *sukha* before and while one is in *dhyāna*. There is no need to equate *sukha*, the *dhyāna* factor, with the joy faculty (*saumanasyendriya*) or with the pleasure faculty (*sukhendriya*), because the experience of *sukha* is not restricted to mental pleasure or to

³⁹³ SN 48.36

³⁹⁴ AK at T1558, 147a21: 若言定中寧有身識，有亦無失。

³⁹⁵ AK at T1558, 147a6: 有說：無有心受樂根，三靜慮中說樂支者，皆是身受所攝樂根。

³⁹⁶ AK at T1558, 147a21: 許在定中有輕安風勝定所起，順生樂受遍觸身故。

³⁹⁷ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 401.

bodily pleasure.

The *Visuddhimagga* maintains that *prīti/pīti* of the first two *dhyānas* is a mental factor belonging to the aggregate of mental formations, and *sukha* of the first three *dhyānas* is mental pleasure included in the aggregate of feeling.³⁹⁸ This work cannot put both *prīti* and *sukha* under the aggregate of feeling, because only one of the two could be mental pleasant feeling. Hence *sukha* is said to be mental pleasant feeling equivalent to the joy faculty; neither *prīti* nor *sukha* is identical to bodily pleasant feeling or the pleasure faculty. According to Buddhaghosa, the body (*kāya*) feels pleasure while one is in the third *dhyāna*, which means that one experiences *sukha* or pleasant feeling with one's "mental body," not physical body.³⁹⁹ He also adds that after emerging from this *dhyāna*, one experiences *sukha* in the "physical body" because the physical body has been influenced by "the exceedingly superior matter originated by that bliss associated with the mental body."⁴⁰⁰ This statement shows that *sukha* is experienced in both body and mind.

The *Vibhaṅga*, an Abhidharma text of the Theravāda, also maintains that a meditator experiences *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* by way of the body of mental aggregates.⁴⁰¹ That is, what the body is meant is the aggregates of perception (*saṃjñāskandha*), the aggregate of mental formations (*saṃskāraskandha*), and the aggregate of consciousness (*viññānaskandha*).⁴⁰² The body (*kāya*) is redefined as "mental body," so as to emphasize that there is no bodily feeling while one is in *dhyāna*.

According to the *Kāya Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, serenity

³⁹⁸ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 142.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 159.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰¹ Thīṭṭila, trans., *Vibhaṅga*, 338.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*

(*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) includes serenity of body and serenity of mind.⁴⁰³ The Pāli commentary states: “Tranquility of body (*kāyappassaddhi*) is the tranquilizing of distress in the three mental aggregates (feeling, perception, and volitional formations), tranquility of mind (*cittappassaddhi*) the tranquilizing of distress in the aggregate of consciousness.”⁴⁰⁴ This statement is consistent with the account of the Theravāda Abhidharma, such as the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.⁴⁰⁵ Regarding the statement of the Pāli commentary, Ven. Bodhi clarifies, “It seems, however, that in such passages as the present one, ‘body’ was intended quite literally as meaning the physical body, considered as actively contributing to the qualitative tone of an experience.”⁴⁰⁶

In the Theravāda Abhidharma, the concept of “mental body” is used to explain the experience of serenity and the experience of *sukha*. Serenity is the supporting condition for the arising of *sukha* in the meditative formula—gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and concentration. When “serenity of body” is defined as the serenity of mental body, namely the aggregates of feeling, perception, and volitional formations, and “serenity of mind” as the serenity of the aggregate of consciousness, it seems logical to say that serenity of mental body and serenity of mind give rise to *sukha* that pervades not the entire “physical body,” but the whole “mental body.” The Abhidharma system redefines the “body” (*kāya*) in early discourses as *mental body*, so as to rationalize the Abhidharma system’s interpretation of the *rūpa-dhyānas*. This redefinition reflects that what the *rūpa-dhyānas* mean in the Abhidharma system is different from what they mean in the sūtra system.

The *Vimuttimaggā*, a Chinese text which has a close affinity with the

⁴⁰³ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 1570.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 1901.

⁴⁰⁵ Thīṭṭila, trans., *Vibhaṅga*, 301; Davids, trans., *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, 21.

⁴⁰⁶ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 1901.

Visuddhimagga, also explains that *sukha* is mental pleasure experienced with “mental body” while one is in the third *dhyāna*⁴⁰⁷ This text defines “mental body” as the aggregate of perception, the aggregate of mental formations, and the aggregates of consciousness⁴⁰⁸ This definition is the same as that of the *Vibhanga*⁴⁰⁹ Contradictorily, when the *Vimuttimaggā* interprets the simile of the bath man, the simile of the lake, and the simile of lotuses in a pond in early discourses, the interpretation is that both body and mind are filled with *prīti* and *sukha* while one is in *dhyāna*⁴¹⁰ This contradiction reflects that Upatisya is also aware that what the “body” is meant in the early discourses is the “physical body”

In the *Vimuttimaggā*, a question is raised *prīti* and *sukha* are immaterial states, how can they pervade the whole physical body? Upatisya replies *nāma*, which signifies the aggregates of feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness, exists dependent on *rūpa* (form), namely the physical body, and *rūpa* exists dependent on *nāma*⁴¹¹ In other words, the body and the four mental aggregates exist dependent on each other Hence, it is said, when *nāma* or mental aggregates are full of *prīti* and *sukha*, the whole body is also filled with pleasure⁴¹² The whole body and mind experience *prīti* and *sukha*, which illustrates that both *prīti* and *sukha* are pleasant feelings (*vedanā*) concerning the interplay between the body and mind leading to physical ease and mental contentment

According to the *Bian diandao qujing* 辯顛倒契經 or the *Wudao jing* 無倒經, the

⁴⁰⁷ Vim at T1648, 419c9 問云何身？答：想陰行陰識陰，此謂為身。此樂以身受，謂身受樂

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid

⁴⁰⁹ Thuttula, trans, *Vibhanga*, 338

⁴¹⁰ Vim at T1648, 417c-20a

⁴¹¹ Vim at T1648, 417b24 問：名喜樂非色法無有對相，何以遍住於身？答：名者依色，色依名色

⁴¹² Vim at T1648, 417b26 是故若名已成喜，色亦成喜；若名已成樂，色亦成樂。

pleasure faculty (*sukhendriya*) or bodily pleasure ceases without remainder while one is in the fourth *dhyāna*, this shows that bodily pleasure can be present while one is in the lower three *dhyānas*.⁴¹³ According to the *Uppāṭika Sutta*, the pleasure faculty ceases while one is in the third *dhyāna*, this suggests that bodily pleasure can occur while one is in the lower two *dhyānas*.⁴¹⁴ The simile of the bath man, the simile of the lake, the simile of lotuses in a pond, and the simile of white cloth in early discourses describe the experience of the whole-body awareness while one is in *dhyāna*.⁴¹⁵ According to MĀ 3, EĀ 12.1, AN 7.63, and MN 119, it is said that the body (*kāya*) feels pleasure while one is in the third *dhyāna*. All these cases illustrate that “bodily pleasant feeling” can occur while one is in *dhyāna*. In other words, *prīti* and *sukha* are pleasant feelings involving bodily pleasure and mental pleasure. Thus we can see that both *prīti* and *sukha* are placed under the aggregate of feeling in the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and the 810th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*.

In Sarvāstivāda, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* defines *prīti* as mental pleasure, namely the joy faculty (*saumanasyendriya*), belonging to the aggregate of feeling.⁴¹⁶ This treatise treats *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* as pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) included in the aggregate of mental formations, and *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* as mental pleasure, namely the pleasure faculty (*sukhendriya*), belonging to the aggregate of feeling.⁴¹⁷ Both *prīti* and *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* are mental pleasant feeling, but the former is identical to the joy faculty and the latter is equivalent to the

⁴¹³ AK at T1558, 147c4; YB at T1579, 331a19.

⁴¹⁴ SN 48.40

⁴¹⁵ MĀ 81, MĀ 98, and MN 119

⁴¹⁶ Mhv at T1545, 415c23: 唯初靜慮獨名離生。喜樂者：喜謂喜根，樂謂輕安樂。復次喜受蘊攝，樂行蘊攝

⁴¹⁷ Mhv at T1545, 412b5: 初二靜慮是輕安樂，第三靜慮別是受樂，初二靜慮樂行蘊攝，第三靜慮樂受蘊攝

pleasure faculty In the Pāli *Nikāyas*, the *Vibhanga Sutta (I)* says that the pleasure faculty is, “Whatever bodily pleasure there is, whatever bodily comfort, the pleasant comfortable feeling born of body-contact ”⁴¹⁸ In this discourse, mental pleasure is not included in the pleasure faculty, while in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma mental pleasure is included in the pleasure faculty ⁴¹⁹

According to the *Dharmaskandha*, the sūtras say that the body (*kāya*) which feels *sukha* or pleasure in the third *dhyāna* means the *mental body*, not the physical body ⁴²⁰ Yet, this treatise also adds that when the mental body is filled with pleasure, the physical body also feels ease, this is what the sūtras mean that the body feels pleasure ⁴²¹ The **Mahāvibhāṣā* also states that the body which feels pleasure in the third *dhyāna* is *mental body* ⁴²² This text also adds that some people say when the mind is full of pleasure, the physical body also feels comfortable ⁴²³ As the *Dharmaskandha* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā* suggest, the *Vimuttimaggā* and the *Visuddhimaggā* also define *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* as mental pleasure experienced with *mental body*, and add that when the mind is filled with pleasure, the physical body also feels ease ⁴²⁴ All these texts recognize that pleasant feeling involve both body and mind In other words, the body (*kāya*) that feels pleasure in the third *dhyāna* covers both mental body and physical body

⁴¹⁸ Bodhi, trans , *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1681

⁴¹⁹ Dsk at T1537, 499b12 云何樂根？調順樂觸所生身樂心樂，平等受受所攝，是名樂根。復次脩第三靜慮順樂觸所生心樂平等受，受所攝，是名樂根 DK at T1540, 615b14 樂根云何？調觸順樂受，觸者所起身心樂，平等受受所攝，是名樂根 Mhv at T1545, 732b28 樂根云何？答依順樂觸所生身心樂，平等受受所攝，是謂樂根

⁴²⁰ Dsk at 1537, 484b25 身受樂者：身調意身

⁴²¹ Dsk at 1537, 484b26 由意身中有受樂故，四大種身亦得安適，由此因緣名身受樂

⁴²² Mhv at T1545, 416c8 身受樂者，身調意身

⁴²³ Mhv at T1545, 416c8 有作是說：意有樂時，亦令大種所造色身有適悅樂，此即意識相應樂受名身受樂

⁴²⁴ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimaggā*, trans Ñānamoli, 159 Vim at T1648, 419c9 問云何身？答：想陰行陰識陰，此謂為身。此樂以身受，謂身受樂 Vim at T1648, 417b24 問：名喜樂非色法無有對相，何以遍住於身？答：名者依色，色依名色

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *sukha* of the three lower *dhyānas* is mental pleasure belonging to the aggregate of feeling, while according to the *Dharmaskandha* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, only *sukha* of the third *dhyāna* is mental pleasure included in the aggregate of feeling, and *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* is pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) belonging to the aggregate of mental formations.⁴²⁵ The definition of *sukha* is debatable in Buddhist schools.

The Sautrāntikas refute the Sarvāstivāda viewpoint that *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* means pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) included in the aggregate of mental formations.⁴²⁶ In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, there are three points which explain the position of the Sautrāntikas thus: First, serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) of the fourth *dhyāna* is superior to that of the first two *dhyānas*, but *sukha* does not occur while one is in the fourth *dhyāna*. Hence, *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* should not be identical to serenity.⁴²⁷ Second, the Sarvāstivādins argue that serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) is called *sukha* only when it is beneficial to the arising of pleasant feeling. The Sautrāntikas reject this point, because serenity of the third *dhyāna* is also beneficial to the arising of pleasant feeling, but serenity of the third *dhyāna* is not called *sukha*. The Sarvāstivādins explain that equanimity (*upekṣā*) counteracts serenity, and thus serenity is not beneficial to the arising of pleasant feeling while one is in the third *dhyāna*. The Sautrāntikas reply that this statement is not the truth, because equanimity and serenity are not opposed, but support each other. That is, serenity of the

⁴²⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Nānamoli, 142. Dsk at 1537, 483c2. 云何樂？調離欲惡不善法者，已斷身重性心重性，身不堪任性，心不堪任性，所得身滑性心滑性，身軟性心軟性，身堪任性心堪任性，身離蓋性心離蓋性，身輕安性心輕安性。 Dsk at T1537, 499b14. 復次脩第三靜慮順樂觸所生心樂平等受，受所攝，是名樂根。 Mhv at T1545, 412b5. 初二靜慮是輕安樂，第三靜慮別是受樂，初二靜慮樂行蘊攝，第三靜慮樂受蘊攝。

⁴²⁶ AK at T1558, 147a6. 三靜慮中說樂支者，皆是身受所攝樂根。

⁴²⁷ AK at T1558, 147a12. 又第四定輕安倍增，而不說彼有樂支故。

third *dhyāna* is also beneficial to the arising of pleasant feeling, and is superior to serenity of the first two *dhyānas*. Hence, the Sautrāntikas insist that if serenity of the third *dhyāna* is not *sukha*, serenity of the first two *dhyānas* should not be *sukha*.⁴²⁸ Third, a sūtra says that by abandoning five things and fulfilling another five things—gladness, *prīti*, serenity, *sukha*, and concentration, one attains the first *dhyāna*.⁴²⁹ Here serenity and *sukha* are two separate things. Thus *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* must not be serenity belonging to the aggregate of mental formations.⁴³⁰

Why do the Sarvāstivādins maintain that *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* is pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*) belonging to the aggregate of mental formations? In Sarvāstivāda, *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* cannot be pleasant feeling, because it is not equivalent to the pleasure faculty (*sukhendriya*) or to the joy faculty (*saumanasyendriya*). Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, explains the position of the Sarvāstivādins thus: *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* cannot be the pleasure faculty (*sukhendriya*), because the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while one is in *dhyāna*, and thus bodily pleasant feeling or the pleasure faculty does not occur at that time.⁴³¹ He expounds that one does not experience the pleasure faculty as a mental pleasant feeling while in the first two *dhyānas*, because one experiences the joy faculty as a mental pleasant feeling while in the first two *dhyānas*; that is, one cannot experience two mental pleasant feelings, namely the pleasure faculty and the joy faculty, together in

⁴²⁸ AK at T1558, 147a13: 若謂輕安要順樂受方名為樂，第三靜慮輕安順樂應是樂支。若謂彼輕安為行捨所損，不爾！行捨增輕安故，又彼輕安勝前二故。

⁴²⁹ This discourse is SĀ 482 at T99, 123a16: 云何遠離五法？謂斷欲所長養喜，斷欲所長養憂，斷欲所長養捨，斷不善所長養喜，斷不善所長養憂，是名五法遠離。云何修滿五法？謂隨喜、歡喜、猗息、樂、一心。

⁴³⁰ AK at T1558, 147a16: 又契經說：若於爾時諸聖弟子於離生喜身作證具足住，彼於爾時已斷五法，修習五法皆得圓滿，廣說乃至。何等名為所修五法？一歡二喜三輕安四樂五三摩地。此經輕安與樂別說，故初二樂非即輕安。

⁴³¹ AK at T1558, 147a1: 初二定中無樂根故，非初二定有身受樂，正在定中無五識故。

one mind.⁴³² Therefore, neither the pleasure faculty nor the joy faculty, *sukha* of the first two *dhyānas* can only be pleasure arising from *prasrabdhi* belonging to the aggregate of mental formations.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* maintains that the body (*kāya*) which experiences *sukha* while one is in the third *dhyāna* means both the physical body and the mental body experiencing pleasant feeling and pleasure arising from serenity (*prasrabdhi/passaddhi*).⁴³³ This interpretation reflects the author's position on the argument about what the body (*kāya*) is meant in early schools. This treatise explains the body (*kāya*) as including both the physical body and the mental body, that is, *sukha* is experienced in both body and mind, involving bodily pleasure and mental pleasure. Asaṅga, in his **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, indicates that both *prīti* and *sukha* are experienced as pleasant feelings belonging to the aggregate of feeling while one is in *dhyāna*.⁴³⁴ His statement also means that one is able to feel both bodily pleasure and mental pleasure while one is *dhyāna*.

Sthiramati, in his **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, explains that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*, but it is *ālaya*-consciousness that sustains the body to experience bodily pleasure.⁴³⁵ Vasubandhu and Asvabhāva, in their respective commentaries on Asaṅga's **Mahāyānasamgraha*, also indicate that the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while one is in *dhyāna*, but that mind-consciousness depends on the body to experience bodily pleasure through similar body-

⁴³² AK at T1558, 147a3: 亦無心受樂，以說有喜故。喜即喜受，無一心中二受俱行故。

⁴³³ YB at T1579, 468a17: 彼於爾時色身意身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂。

⁴³⁴ PS at T1602, 487a3: 喜者：謂已轉依者依於轉識，心悅心勇心適心調，安適受受所攝。樂者：謂已轉依者依阿賴耶識，能攝所依令身怡悅，安適受受所攝。

⁴³⁵ ASV at T1606, 726a27: 三摩呬多位餘識無故。云何為樂？謂已轉依者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依。所依怡悅安適受者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依，所依怡悅安適受受所攝，此經意說。

contact⁴³⁶ Their discussion of bodily feeling is based on the position of six consciousnesses, not eight consciousnesses

In Buddhist meditation, what is said to provide “a pleasant abiding here and now” is not the formless attainments (*ārūpya-samāpatti*), but the four *rūpa-dhyānas* which include rapture and pleasure born of seclusion in the first *dhyāna*, rapture and pleasure born of concentration in the second *dhyāna*, pleasure divested of rapture in the third *dhyāna*, and the happiness of equanimity in the fourth *dhyāna*⁴³⁷ When one attains the four *dhyānas*, one experiences the unworldly rapture (*prīti*), pleasure (*sukha*), and equanimity (*upekṣā/upekkhā*) throughout the whole body and mind. The unworldly *prīti* and *sukha* occur only when one is in the *rūpa-dhyānas*, because they specifically involve mental pleasant feeling and bodily pleasant feeling, conducive to the development of tranquility meditation (*samatha*) and insight meditation (*vipāśyanā*)

⁴³⁶ MhsV, trans Paramārtha, at T1595, 185a25 若在有色界，意識依身故生。釋曰：何故有身處必似觸，以意識必依身生故，似觸顯現。由此意識依身似觸生故，觀行人正入觀時，五識雖復不起，中間於色身有喜樂受生。MhsV, trans Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14 又一切處亦似所觸影像而生：謂有色處於定位中無五識時，在色身中內領受起。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止於身，由此諸根依止身故，於自所依能起損益；意識亦爾，依止身故，應知於身能作變異。MhsA at T1598, 402a17 又一切處亦似所觸影像而轉者：謂於定中領納分別輕重等觸，而非散亂隨順彼故。有色界中者：非於無色界，何以故？即此意識依止身故。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益

⁴³⁷ DN 33, AN 4 41, SĀ 16

Chapter IV

The Exploration of Mindfulness of Breathing

1. Meditation Object: Mental Counterpart Image vs. Breath Sensations

According to the *Ānāpānasati Sutta*, there are sixteen steps in mindfulness of breathing, which are grouped evenly into four tetrads correlating to the four foundations of mindfulness. As such, the first tetrad is connected with the contemplation of the body (*kāya*), the second tetrad with the contemplation of feeling (*vedanā*), the third tetrad with the contemplation of the mind (*citta*), and the fourth tetrad with the contemplation of the dharmas.⁴³⁸ Ven. Nyanatiloka indicates that the first three tetrads apply to both tranquility meditation and insight meditation, and the fourth tetrad merely refers to insight meditation.⁴³⁹ In other words, each tetrad can apply to insight meditation.

The *Visuddhimagga* explains that the first tetrad is set forth for a beginner, and the other three tetrads are for one who has attained *dhyāna/jhāna*.⁴⁴⁰ About which Ven. Anālayo remarks:

[T]he description given in the *Visuddhimagga*, however, awareness of the breath disappears before entering a *jhāna*, being replaced by a mental *nimitta* as the object of concentration. From this it would follow that the instructions given during the second and subsequent tetrads of mindfulness of breathing could be carried out only when one emerges from a *jhāna* attainment, since it is only at that time that one would be able to feel the breath again. This seems a rather narrow perspective on the sixteenfold instruction.⁴⁴¹

Without awareness of the breath in *dhyāna*, a shift in meditation object from breath

⁴³⁸ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 943-44.

⁴³⁹ Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*, 11.

⁴⁴⁰ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 270.

⁴⁴¹ Anālayo, "Mindfulness of Breathing in the *Samyukta-āgama*", 145.

sensations to a mental counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga nimitta*) is suggested by the *Visuddhimagga*.⁴⁴² Yet, this suggestion is unique to the *Visuddhimagga*, and its validity is also questionable. The *Vimuttimagga*, on the other hand, suggests a tactile sign different from this mental counterpart sign.⁴⁴³

In-breathing and out-breathing is said to cease while one is in the fourth *dhyāna*.⁴⁴⁴ Even though the breath occurs in the first three *dhyānas* and ceases in the fourth *dhyāna*, the *Visuddhimagga* suggests that the breath should be replaced by a mental *nimitta* because there is no awareness of the body and no awareness of the breath while one is in *dhyāna*.⁴⁴⁵ *Nimitta* is a mental image born of perception (*saññā*), and appears differently because individual meditators' perceptions are different.⁴⁴⁶

The *Visuddhimagga* describes *nimitta* as:

[L]ike a star or a cluster of gems or a cluster of pearls, to others with a rough touch like that of silk-cotton seeds or a peg made of heartwood, to others like a long braid string or a wreath of flowers or a puff of smoke, to others like a stretched-out cobweb or a film of cloud or a lotus flower or a chariot wheel or the moon's disk or the sun's disk.⁴⁴⁷

With the arising of the mental counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga nimitta*), a yogin is said to have succeeded in suppressing the five hindrances⁴⁴⁸ (*pañcanivarana*), and then attains access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*).⁴⁴⁹ The yogin focuses on the mental counterpart image, as it is used for the earth *kaṣiṇa*,⁴⁵⁰ leading to the fourfold *dhyāna* and fivefold

⁴⁴² Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 279.

⁴⁴³ Upatissa, *Vimuttimagga*, trans. Ehara et al., 68; Vim at T1648, 412a8: 又一行處，以觸應取相，調念數息。

⁴⁴⁴ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 1271; SĀ 474 at T99, 121b04: 第四禪正受時，出入息寂滅。

⁴⁴⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 279, 323.

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 277.

⁴⁴⁸ They are sensual desire, ill-will, stiffness and torpor, restlessness and regret, and doubt.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 279.

⁴⁵⁰ *kaṣiṇa* is a meditation object for one to practice tranquility meditation. The ten *kaṣiṇa* are said earth *kaṣiṇa*, water *kaṣiṇa*, fire *kaṣiṇa*, wind *kaṣiṇa*, blue *kaṣiṇa*, yellow *kaṣiṇa*, red *kaṣiṇa*, white *kaṣiṇa*, space

dhyāna.⁴⁵¹ When the yogin emerges from *dhyāna*, he feels the breath again and thus develops insight via awareness of the breath.

In regard to meditation practice in the *Visuddhimagga*, Ven. Thanissaro states:

The Path of Purification—the cornerstone of the commentarial system—takes as its paradigm for meditation practice a method called *kasīna*, in which one stares at an external object until the image of the object is imprinted in one's mind. The image then gives rise to a countersign that is said to indicate the attainment of threshold concentration, a necessary prelude to jhana. The text then tries to fit all other meditation methods into this mold, so that they too give rise to countersigns, but even by its own admission, breath meditation does not fit the mold very well.⁴⁵²

Ven. Thanissaro's claim that in the *Visuddhimagga*, mindfulness of breathing is modeled on *kasīna* practice is questionable. The *Visuddhimagga* itself does not treat mindfulness of breathing as subordinate to the *kasīna* practice; it is simply that, in the *Visuddhimagga*, both *kasīna* meditation and mindfulness of breathing give rise to a *paṭibhāga-nimitta*, which then becomes the object of the *dhyāna*.⁴⁵³ According to Ven. Thanissaro, in-and-out breath can be the object of concentration before and while one is in *dhyāna*, because, “In fact, there are body sensations in all four rūpa jhānas.”⁴⁵⁴ His position is that in-and-out breath throughout the body maintains the whole-body awareness.

Some meditators enter *dhyāna* without the presence of *nimitta*; yet, there are meditators who purportedly attain *dhyāna* with the experience of clear and bright visually luminous *nimitta*. Ajahn Brahmavamso analyzes the features of *dhyāna* in accordance with the commentaries, and employs *nimitta* for attaining *dhyāna*. He points out the

kasīna, and consciousness *kasīna*. In the case of the earth *kasīna* one prepares a disk full of clay to be used as meditation object.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 279. There are two schemes of *jhānas/dhyānas* in the Theravāda Abhidhamma system: the fourfold and the fivefold. The fourfold scheme is the same as the *Nikāyas* state; the fivefold scheme is based on the former fourfold scheme with the addition of the *samādhi* without *vitarka* but with *vicāra* only.

⁴⁵² Thanissaro, *Wings to Awakening*, 249.

⁴⁵³ In an email communication of January 10, 2010 Ven. Anālayo wrote to me that the light experienced is the *paṭibhāga-nimitta* of mindfulness of breathing, not that of a *kasīna*.

⁴⁵⁴ Cited in Shankman, *Experience of Samādhi*, 126.

landmarks of all *dhyānas* thus:

1. There is no possibility of thought;
2. No decision-making process is available;
3. There is no perception of time;
4. Consciousness is nondual, making comprehension inaccessible;
5. Yet one is very, very aware, but only of bliss that doesn't move;
6. The five senses are fully shut off, and only the sixth sense, mind, is in operation.⁴⁵⁵

According to Ajahn Brahmavamso, a meditator has let go of the awareness of body and of the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch while in the first *dhyāna*, and he/she has let go of will, choice, controlling, and directing while in the second *dhyāna*.⁴⁵⁶

With the cessation of sensory awareness in *dhyāna*, so the logic follows, it is impossible for one to be aware of the breath in *dhyāna*. Even though one is very aware of bliss in *dhyāna*, the development of insight is also impossible while in *dhyāna*, because mind-consciousness is “nondual, making comprehension inaccessible.” Ajahn Brahmavamso upholds the viewpoint of the *Visuddhimagga* that the five sensory consciousnesses cease while one is in *dhyāna*; hence, he also suggests that the breath should be replaced by a mental counterpart image. He depicts the experience of *nimitta* as beautiful lights, such as a white light, a golden star, a blue pearl to be seen not by eyes, but by mind-consciousness.⁴⁵⁷ *Nimitta*, so the account goes, is a pure mental phenomenal, vivid and brilliant, to be experienced by advanced meditators.

Pa Auk Sayadaw indicates that when one breathes in and out experiencing the whole breath-body, *nimitta* may appear during this time.⁴⁵⁸ He suggests: If *nimitta* arises, one still focuses on the breath, and does not shift the mind to the *nimitta*; if *nimitta* does

⁴⁵⁵ Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 155.

⁴⁵⁶ Cited in Shankman, *Experience of Samādhi*, 169-170.

⁴⁵⁷ Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 21.

⁴⁵⁸ Pa Auk, *Knowing and Seeing*, 44.

not appear, one moves on to the next stage: calming the bodily formation, while one breathes in and out. According to him, the calming of the breath facilitates the appearance of *nimitta*. When *nimitta* appears in a stable form at the places where the breath touches, *nimitta* seems to be the breath itself or the breath itself seems to be the *nimitta*. Then, one shifts the meditation object from the breath to this *nimitta*.⁴⁵⁹ When this *nimitta* becomes a pure white like cotton wool, it is called *uggaha-nimitta* (learning sign). One focuses the mind on this *uggaha-nimitta* for few hours, and then it becomes clear, bright, and brilliant called the *paṭibhāga-nimitta* (counterpart sign).⁴⁶⁰ *Nimitta* becomes clear and bright when one's mind becomes concentrated, and then the arising of the counterpart sign is said to be used for *dhyāna* practice.

The *Visuddhimagga* states that the *uggaha-nimitta* (learning sign) arises when a sign is perceived as if it were seen with one's eyes open, and the *paṭibhāga-nimitta* (counterpart sign) arises when "the hindrances eventually become suppressed, the defilement subside, the mind becomes concentrated with access concentration."⁴⁶¹ The experience of the counterpart sign is crucial for one to attain access concentration and *dhyānas*. *Uggaha-nimitta* and *paṭibhāga-nimitta* are found only in commentaries, and both do not appear in the *Nikāyas* or the *Āgamas*.

Regarding the concept of bright *nimitta* in early discourses, Cousins says: "Nevertheless the most striking evidence for the antiquity of the concept is to be found in the *Upakkilesa-sutta*."⁴⁶² The *Upakkilesa Sutta* describes the experience of meditative

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 46-49.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 49.

⁴⁶¹ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 124-25.

⁴⁶² Cousins, "Buddhist *Jhāna*," 38.

light and visions of forms, namely *obhāsa-nimitta* and *rūpa-nimitta*.⁴⁶³ According to this discourse and its Chinese parallel, the *Changshouwang benqi jing* 長壽王本起經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*, it seems as if a meditator has to abandon mental imperfections (*upakkilesa*) which occur in the meditation process, so as to perceive the meditative light and vision of forms steadily which leads to the attainment of *dhyāna*.⁴⁶⁴

With regard to the *Changshouwang benqi jing* or the *Upakkilesa Sutta*, the *Yogācārabhūmi* interprets that a meditator can concentrate on meditative light, forms, or both as object of concentration in order to enter *samādhi*.⁴⁶⁵ According to Kuiji's commentary on the *Yogācārabhūmi*, when a meditator concentrates the mind on *obhāsa-nimitta* as the meditation object, he/she practices the first liberation of eight liberations (*aṣṭā-vimokṣa/aṭṭha-vimokkhā*). When a meditator concentrates the mind on *rūpa-nimitta* as meditation object, he/she practices the second liberation. When a meditator concentrates the mind on both; he/she practices the third liberation.⁴⁶⁶ In the *Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the first liberation is that one possessed of material form sees visible forms; the second liberation is that not having form internally, one perceives visible forms externally; the third liberation is that one is resolved only upon the pure.⁴⁶⁷ These three liberations are the meditation practices for a meditator to attain the four *dhyānas*, but not the formless attainments. According to the Pāli commentary, one develops these three liberations by using a *kaṣiṇa* derived from a

⁴⁶³ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1012.

⁴⁶⁴ MĀ 72 at T26, 536c16: 我等得光明便見色。彼見色光明尋復滅。

⁴⁶⁵ YB at T1579, 338c05: 復次：云何一分修三摩地？謂於此中，或唯作意思光明相，或唯作意思惟色相，而入於定。如是二種隨其次第，或了光明，或睹眾色。云何具分修三摩地？謂俱思惟而入於定，亦了光明亦見眾色。

⁴⁶⁶ *Yuqieshidulun luezuan* 瑜伽師地論略纂 at T1829, 81c28: 初一分修，思光明相如初解脫，思惟色相如第二解脫，具思惟二如淨解脫未成滿時。

⁴⁶⁷ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 638.

colored object in one's own body, a *kaṣiṇa* derived from an external object, and a very pure and beautiful colored *kaṣiṇa* as meditation objects respectively.⁴⁶⁸ In other words, meditative light and forms could be used as the object of concentration, which may involve *kaṣiṇa* practice, but this does not mean that light and vision of forms are necessary for one to attain *dhyānas*.

In regard to the meditative experience of an inner light in tranquility meditation (*śamatha*) and insight meditation (*vipaśyanā*), Ven. Anālayo says:

The light is a natural by-product of deepening concentration, referred to in a few stray sutta passages as *obhāsa*, and presumably underlying the concept of the *pabhassara citta* that is temporarily freed of *upakkilesas*. A passage of significance here is the *Upakkilesa-sutta*, where the light and vision of forms and their stability or disappearance shows if concentration develops or not. Taking it from there, it seems there is a point to the commentarial idea of an inner light experience that develops with concentration, though to see it as the only way to deepening concentration might be going too far.... From the perspective of insight, the light has no value in itself. And if mistaken as having a value in itself, it actually becomes an *upakkilesa* of *vipassanā* practice.⁴⁶⁹

He explains that when concentration deepens, meditative light and vision of forms become steady, but the stability of inner light is not the only way for one to deepen concentration. In fact, not every meditator has the experience of an inner light. Without perceiving an inner light, a meditator can also attain *dhyānas*. He further explains that in the practice of mindfulness of breathing, a meditator may experience a light *nimitta* in the course of meditation, and uses it to attain *dhyāna*. But another meditator may not perceive a light *nimitta*. He/she can use another aspect of meditative experience to attain *dhyāna*, for instance, the feeling of inner happiness (*sukha vedanā*), which arises when

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., 1284-85.

⁴⁶⁹ Bhikkhu Anālayo, email communication, July 23, 2010.

concentration deepens⁴⁷⁰ In other words, both light *nimitta* and *sukha vedanā* develop with concentration and could be used as mental objects for meditators to attain *dhyānas*

When an inner light is present in meditation, could one discern its arising and passing away for the development of insight? Ven Anālayo replies that “the light has no value in itself”⁴⁷¹ He points out that insight is developed based on actual experience instead of imagination To discern the arising and passing away of the light does not challenge the inherent sense of a stable self behind experience, and thus the key aspect of insight meditation is to see the five aggregates arising and passing away as they really are⁴⁷² When one perceives an inner light and attaches to it, the light becomes an obstruction to one’s development of insight According to the *Visuddhimagga*, light (*obhāsa*) is one of the ten imperfections of insight⁴⁷³ When light arises in a meditator, it is said, this meditator should understand that the light is only a by-product of insight, and without attachment to this light, he/she simply concentrates on insight contemplation

The Chinese *Vimuttimaggā* defines mindfulness of breathing as a practice that takes tactile signs to be the meditative object, and air *kaṣṇa* as a practice that uses either visual signs or tactile signs⁴⁷⁴ Mindfulness of breathing differs from air *kaṣṇa* because of its emphasis on bodily contact only, namely the tactile sensations of in-and-out breath Clearly, *nimitta* of the *Vimuttimaggā* is a tactile sign, namely breath sensation, which differs from *nimitta* of the *Visuddhimagga* as a mental counterpart image born of perception (*saññā*)

⁴⁷⁰ Bhikkhu Anālayo, email communication, September 17, 2010

⁴⁷¹ Ibid

⁴⁷² Ibid

⁴⁷³ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 656-57 The ten imperfections of insight are aura, zest, tranquility, resolution, exertion, happiness, knowledge, mindfulness, equanimity, and attachment

⁴⁷⁴ Vim at T1648, 412a9 又一行處，以觸應取相，調念數息；又一行處，或以見或以觸應取，調風一切入

According to the *Vimuttimaggā*, *nimitta* arises with:

[A] pleasant feeling similar to that which is produced in the action of spinning cotton or silk cotton. Also it is likened to the pleasant feeling produced by a breeze. Thus in breathing in and out, air touches the nose or the lip and causes the setting-up of air perception mindfulness. This does not depend on color or form.⁴⁷⁵

This text definitely indicates that a visual image which arises dependent on color and form is not the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness breathing. As concentration deepens, a meditator may experience a light *nimitta* as described in the *Upakkilesa Sutta*.⁴⁷⁶ The *Visuddhimaggā* maintains that in the practice of mindfulness of breathing, an inner light develops with concentration, and then a meditator uses it to attain *dhyāna*.⁴⁷⁷ Yet, the *Vimuttimaggā* does not suggest one to use a visual image or light *nimitta* for the practice of mindfulness of breathing. Regarding this issue, Ven. Sona explains:

The sentence "This does not depend upon color or form" make it quite clear that the meditator should not expect the sign of respiration mindfulness as a visual image, since it is not possible to conceive of a visual percept lacking color and form. What may be inferred from the sentence is that the sign is a tactile percept. Incidentally, in the *Patisambhidamaggā*, the earliest and most extensive source treatise on breathing, there is no mention in the whole section on breathing meditation of a visual or "light" *nimitta*.⁴⁷⁸

This statement shows that in the practice of mindfulness of breathing, a mental counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga nimitta*) or visual *nimitta* described in the *Visuddhimaggā* is a latter development, and it seems not to be appropriate for this practice.

The suggestion of the *Vimuttimaggā* for a yogin is to let go of visual images. This

⁴⁷⁵ Upatissa, *Vimuttimaggā*, trans. Ehara et al., 158-59. Vim at T1648, 430a29: 如抽綿抽古貝觸身成樂觸，如涼風觸身成樂觸，如見入出息風觸，鼻口唇念作風想，不由形色，此謂相。

⁴⁷⁶ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1012.

⁴⁷⁷ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimaggā*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 278-79.

⁴⁷⁸ Sona, "The Mystery of the Breath Nimitta."

text says:

He sees various forms such as smoke, mist, dust, sand of gold, or he experiences something similar to the pricking of a needle or to an ant's bite. If his mind does not become clear regarding these different images, he will be confused. Thus he fulfills overturning and does not gain the perception of respiration. If his mind becomes clear, the yogin does not experience confusion. He attends to respiration and he does not cause the arising of other perceptions. Meditating thus he is able to end confusion and acquire the subtle image.⁴⁷⁹

When a meditator perceives visual images in the course of meditation, it is said that he/she should let go of these visual images so as not to be distracted by them. In other words, if one has doubt about visual images, the doubt becomes a mental obstruction to the deepening of concentration. Without doubt, one simply knows what happens and lets it go, when a visual image arises.

With regard to visual images, Ven. Sona says, "The *Visuddhimagga* however both mistakenly takes the similes 'smoke,' 'mist,' 'dust,' 'gleam,' 'glows,' 'shines' and 'moon,' as literal visual images, but also misapprehends them as the counter-sign, (the mark of success!) in direct opposition to the *Vimuttimagga*."⁴⁸⁰ He points out the problem of the *Visuddhimagga* and draws his conclusion: "From the evidence presented in this note, it may seem advisable to consider both the *Vimuttimagga* and the *Patisambhidamagga* as more reliable texts as far as breathing meditation is concerned."⁴⁸¹ Both the *Patisambhidamagga* and the *Vimuttimagga* do not suggest that one develops a mental counterpart image as the meditation object for practicing mindfulness of breathing.

Moreover, without sensory awareness, perception of the breath is said to be the

⁴⁷⁹ Upatissa, *Vimuttimagga*, trans. Ehara et al., 159. Vim at T1648, 430b5: 初見異相，如煙如霧如塵如碎金，猶如針刺，如蟻所嚙，見種種色。若坐禪人心不明了，於彼異相心作異想成顛倒，不成出入息想。若明了坐禪人，不作異意想，念現入息，念現出息，離作餘想。若如是作意，異相即滅，是坐禪人得微妙相。

⁴⁸⁰ Sona, "The Mystery of the Breath Nimitta."

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

meditation object for one who attains *dhyāna*. According to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra*, the position of the Sarvāstivāda is that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*⁴⁸². The **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra* and the **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdayasāstra* (*Za apitan xin lun* 雜阿毘曇心論) state that in the practice of mindfulness of breathing, one concentrates on perception of the breath to discern in-and-out breath throughout the whole body like a thread through a pearl, and at that time there is no occurrence of body-consciousness⁴⁸³.

The **Mahāvibhāṣā* also indicates that one is unable to hear sounds while in the first *dhyāna*, which reflects the position that sensory awareness does not occur while one is in *dhyāna*⁴⁸⁴. In this context, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* also states that a meditator concentrates on perception of the breath to discern in-and-out breath throughout the entire body as a thread through a pearl⁴⁸⁵. In other words, without awareness of the breath, a meditator simply employs perception of the breath as meditation object while in *dhyāna*.

Dharmatrāta, in his **Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdayasāstra*, says that one discerns the entire body like a bamboo tube, and the breath flows throughout the body like a thread through a pearl, and at that time body-consciousness does not arise while one is in *dhyāna*⁴⁸⁶. Yet, Dharmatrāta adds that some meditators suggest that body-consciousness

⁴⁸² AK at T1558, 147a2 正在定中無五識故 ANS at T1562, 760a27 正在定中無五識故

⁴⁸³ ANS at T1562, 675a3 若觀行者注想觀息微細徐流，調想遍身如筒一穴，息風連續如貫末尼，不能動身，不發身識 SH at T1552, 934b10 彼修行者於出入息作一想，觀身如竹筒，觀息如穿珠。出入息不動，於身不發身識，是名安般念成

⁴⁸⁴ Mhv at T1545, 929c9 住初靜慮者尚不聞聲，何況住無所有處定

⁴⁸⁵ Mhv at T1545, 135a17 住心觀息遍住身中如珠中縷

⁴⁸⁶ SH at T1552, 934b10 彼修行者於出入息作一想，觀身如竹筒，觀息如穿珠。出入息不動，於身不發身識，是名安般念成

can occur when the breath flows throughout the whole body within *dhyāna*⁴⁸⁷ In addition, even though the **Mahāvibhāṣā* suggests that one employs perception of the breath as the meditation object while in *dhyāna*, this treatise also records the statement of Vasumitra, a Sarvāstivāda scholar monk, thus when one breathes in and out experiencing the whole body, one can still remain in *dhyāna* because of the employment of *upāya*⁴⁸⁸ These two cases illustrate that some Sarvāstivādins maintain that awareness of the body and awareness of the breath can occur while one is in *dhyāna*, and thus breath sensations can be used as meditation object before and while one is in *dhyāna*.

Vasubandhu, in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, also describes that the breath flows throughout the whole body like a thread through a pearl, a popular simile in Sarvāstivāda, but points out that one is aware of the breath cool or warm, having a benign or malign influence to the body⁴⁸⁹ He suggests that awareness of the body and awareness of the breath can occur while one is in *dhyāna*

In the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, mindfulness of breathing belongs to “attention directed at [a perception that is fabricated by] determination” (*adhimuktimanaskāra*, 勝解作意), while according to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, it is not “attention directed at [a perception that is fabricated by] determination,” but “attention directed at reality” (*tattvamanaskāra*, 真實作意)⁴⁹⁰ When mindfulness of breathing is included in “attention

⁴⁸⁷ SH at T1552, 934b12 有說：亦起身識，但不傷於身

⁴⁸⁸ Mhv at T1545, 136a29 息念成已，觀身毛孔猶如藕根，息風周遍於中入出。問：若爾何故非出定耶？答：意樂加行俱未息故。如菩薩時雖作此觀而不出定，亦以意樂加行未息故，無有過。尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾

⁴⁸⁹ AK at T1558, 118b10 觀息住身如珠中縷，為冷為煖，為損為益

⁴⁹⁰ Mhv at T1545, 423a2 勝解作意者：如不淨觀、持息念、解脫、勝處、遍處等俱生作意。問此四無量於三種中，為與何等作意俱生？答：唯與勝解作意俱生假想起故 AK at T1558, 118b7 有餘師說：息出極遠，乃至風輪或吠嵐婆。此不應理，此念真實作意俱故

directed at [a perception that is fabricated by] determination,” the perception of the breath is the meditation object for this practice, without the acting of body-consciousness, but mind-consciousness working there. In contrast, when mindfulness of breathing is included in “attention directed at reality,” the breath sensations are the meditation object, which is the function of both body-consciousness and mind-consciousness.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* suggests the possibility of hearing sounds while one is in a meditative attainment, that is, when one’s ear-consciousness perceives sounds and then mind-consciousness searches for sounds while in a meditative attainment, because of this searching one has to emerge from the meditative attainment.⁴⁹¹ The example of hearing sounds illustrates that sensory awareness can occur while one is in *dhyāna*, but it causes one to lose one’s *dhyāna*. Regarding bodily feeling, the *Yogācārabhūmi* maintains that pleasant feeling (*sukha*) is experienced in both body and mind while one is in the third *dhyāna*.⁴⁹² But, this treatise does not point out which consciousness experiences bodily pleasure. The Yogācārin—Sthiramati, Vasubandhu, and Asvabhāva—definitely indicate that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*.⁴⁹³ Hence, according to them, it is not the body-consciousness aware of bodily pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹¹ YB at T1579, 650c20 若遇聲緣從定而起，與定相應意識俱轉餘耳識生，非即彼定相應意識能取此聲。若不爾者，於此音聲不領受故，不應出定。非取聲時即便出定，領受聲已，若有稀望，後時乃出。

⁴⁹² YB at T1579, 468a17 彼於爾時色身意身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂。第三靜慮已下諸地，無如是樂及無間捨。

⁴⁹³ ASV at T1606, 726a27 三摩呬多位餘識無故 MhsV, trans Paramārtha, at T1595, 185b1 五識雖復不起 MhsV, trans Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14 謂有色處於定位中無五識時 MhsA at T1598, 402a21 如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益。

⁴⁹⁴ ASV at T1606, 726a27 云何為樂？謂已轉依者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依。所依怡悅安適受者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依，所依怡悅安適受受所攝，此經意說 MhsV, trans Paramārtha, at T1595, 185a25 若在有色界，意識依身故生。釋曰：何故有身處必似觸，以意識必依身生故，似觸顯現。由此意識

The *Yogācārabhūmi* does not state whether or not body-consciousness perceives pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*. According to this treatise, breath sensations or tactile sensations that are reminiscent of those created by the rubbing of cotton or fluff against one's skin are suggested to be the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing.⁴⁹⁵ Both the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the *Vimuttimaggā* describe tactile sensations to be the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing. However, can one continue using tactile sensations or breath sensations as the meditation object after one attains *dhyāna*? These two works do not clearly state what meditation object should be used for the practice of mindfulness of breathing after one attains *dhyāna*.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* indicates that mindfulness of breathing leads to the development of *śamatha*, namely, the first three *dhyānas* and the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*.⁴⁹⁶ The fourth *dhyāna* is excluded, because the breath is said to cease there.⁴⁹⁷ When a meditator practices mindfulness of breathing leading to the development of insight (*vipāśyanā*), insight is said to be cultivated within any of the three lower *dhyānas* or the access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*.⁴⁹⁸

依身似觸生故，觀行人正入觀時，五識雖復不起，中間於色身有喜樂受生。MhsV, trans Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14 又一切處亦似所觸影像而生：謂有色處於定位中無五識時，在色身中內領受起。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止於身，由此諸根依止身故，於自所依能起損益；意識亦爾，依止身故，應知於身能作變異。MhsA at T1598, 402a17 又一切處亦似所觸影像而轉者：謂於定中領納分別輕重等觸，而非散亂隨順彼故。有色界中者：非於無色界，何以故？即此意識依止身故。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益。

⁴⁹⁵ YB at T1579, 464b20 如妒羅綿或疊絮等諸輕飄物，於是諸相而起勝解。彼若於內入息出息流轉不絕作意思惟，爾時名為於其內身住循身觀。

⁴⁹⁶ YB at T1579, 433b8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。

⁴⁹⁷ Bodhi, trans, *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1271, SĀ 474 at T99, 121b04

⁴⁹⁸ YB at T1579, 433b8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。今依無常隨觀，復於毘鉢舍那修瑜伽行。如是以奢摩他毘鉢舍那重修心已，於諸界中從彼隨眠而求解脫。

2. The Contemplation of the Body in the Initial Four Steps

According to the *Ānāpānasati Sutta*, mindfulness of breathing proceeds through sixteen steps, including the cultivation of awareness of the breath, and of a comprehensive awareness of the whole physical body, feelings, states of mind, and the so-called dharmas. These sixteen steps could be divided into four tetrads, in each of which insight could be developed. The first tetrad refers to the contemplation of the body (*kāya*): 1) know long breath, 2) know short breath, 3) experience the whole physical body, and 4) calm the bodily formation. The second tetrad refers to the contemplation of feelings (*vedanā*): 5) experience joy (*pīti/prīti*), 6) experience pleasure (*sukha*), 7) experience the mental formation, 8) calm the mental formation. The third tetrad refers to the contemplation of the mind (*citta*): 9) experience the mind, 10) gladden the mind, 11) concentrate the mind, 12) liberate the mind. The fourth tetrad refers to the contemplation of the dharmas: 13) contemplate impermanence (*anicca*), 14) contemplate fading away (*virāga*), 15) contemplate cessation (*nirodha*), 16) contemplate relinquishment (*paṭinissagga*).⁴⁹⁹

The first tetrad concerning the contemplation of the body is from awareness of the breath, as long or short, via awareness of the whole physical body, and to the calming of the bodily formation. The fulfillment of these four steps could lead to the attainment of *dhyāna*, or the achievement of insight. The *Yogācārabhūmi* explains: one initially breathes in and out from the nostrils or the mouth to the navel, or from the navel to the nostrils or the mouth. Then in the third step, the breath flows throughout the whole

⁴⁹⁹ Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 943-44.

physical body, namely, through every bodily pore⁵⁰⁰ The **Mahāvibhāṣā* has the same position when one is unskillful at the practice of mindfulness of breathing, one breathes in and out through the nostrils. In contrast, when one is skillful at this practice, one breathes throughout the whole body, and the entire bodily orifices are like a lotus root full of the breath coming in and out⁵⁰¹ These two treatises explain that initially a meditator is unskillful at the practice of mindfulness of breathing, and thus merely discerns the breath as long or short from the nostrils or the mouth to the navel, and vice versa. It is not until a meditator is skillful at this practice, he/she advances to the third step and breathes in and out experiencing the whole physical body.

Unlike the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Visuddhimagga* suggests that the third step involves not the whole physical body, but the whole breath-body. The whole breath-body includes the beginning, middle, and end of each breath, namely the nose-tip, heart, and navel, and vice versa⁵⁰² The word *kāya* (body) is explained in different ways as the physical body or the whole breath-body. Regarding this issue, Ven Anālayo indicates

To then understand the third phase as implying awareness of the whole length of the breath, as suggested by the *Visuddhimagga*, would not introduce anything new to the practice. In contrast, if the third phase is taken to refer to awareness of the whole physical body, then this would offer a new perspective and result in a meaningful progression from the second to the third phase in the sixteenfold scheme⁵⁰³

⁵⁰⁰ YB at T1579, 430c28 入息出息有二種地，何等為二？一麤孔穴，二細孔穴。云何麤孔穴？謂從臍處孔穴，乃至面門鼻門；復從面門鼻門，乃至臍處孔穴。云何細孔穴？謂於身中一切毛孔。YB at T1579, 464b16 彼復先於微細息風經心胸處，麤穴往來而起勝解；然後漸漸於眾多風而起勝解，所謂乃至一切毛孔風皆隨入而起勝解。如是所有一切身分風聚所隨，風聚所攝，風聚藏隱，無量風聚於中積集。如妒羅綿或疊絮等諸輕飄物，於是諸相而起勝解。

⁵⁰¹ Mhv at T1545, 136a27 問：此觀息風從鼻而入，還從鼻出。何故乃說我覺遍身入出息耶？答：息念未成，觀入出息從鼻入出；息念成已，觀身毛孔猶如藕根息風周遍於中入出。

⁵⁰² Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 266

⁵⁰³ Anālayo, "Mindfulness of Breathing in the *Samyukta-āgama*," 145

In other words, the distinction between the second and the third steps is that one's discernment of the breath is from nose-tip, heart, and navel to the extension of the whole physical body. When the word *kāya* (body) is defined as the whole breath-body in the third step, this definition cannot explain what the difference is between the second and the third steps. It is only when the word *kāya* (body) is defined as the whole physical body that one's progression in this practice from unskillful to skillful is shown.

In the *Vimuttimaggā*, one breathes in and out experiencing the whole body, and knows the whole body through two ways: non-confusion and object.⁵⁰⁴ First, when a meditator practices mindfulness of breathing and attains concentration, the entire body and mind are filled with rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*). Thus, the whole body is known by way of non-confusion.⁵⁰⁵ That is, a meditator discerns his/her body and mind through the feelings (*vedanā*) of rapture and pleasure without confusion. Second, in-and-out breath is the meditation object for mindfulness of breathing, dependent on the physical body. This object is said to be discerned by the mind and mental factors, that is, *nāma-kāya* or mental body experiences the breath. When a meditator knows and sees the physical body and the mental body through in-and-out breath, the whole body is said to be known by object.⁵⁰⁶ Through the two ways of non-confusion and object, a meditator breathes in and out knowing the whole body, which also explains that the word *kāya* (body) in the third step signifies the physical body not the whole breath-body.

In the fourth step of mindfulness of breathing, the *Yogācārabhūmi* explains that

⁵⁰⁴ Vim at T1648, 430c8 復次坐禪人，以事令分明相起，是事當修。知一切身我入息，如是學者以二種行知一切身，不愚癡故以事故。

⁵⁰⁵ Vim at T1648, 430c10 問曰：云何無愚癡知一切身。答曰：若坐禪人念安般定，身心喜樂觸成滿，由喜樂觸滿，一切身成不愚癡。

⁵⁰⁶ Vim at T1648, 430c13 問曰：云何以事知一切身。答曰：出入息者，所謂一處住色身，出入息事心心數法名身，此色身名身，此謂一切身。彼坐禪人，如是以見知一切身。

the calming of the bodily formation involves pacifying rough, unpleasant contacts, and giving rise to gentle, pleasant contacts⁵⁰⁷ The bodily formation is defined as in-breathing and out-breathing in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*⁵⁰⁸ In the practice of mindfulness of breathing, when a meditator makes the breath more and more refined, this meditator calms the bodily formation. When there is the calming of the bodily formation, the breath as the energy flow spread throughout the whole body, then, rough, unpleasant contacts are stilled, and gentle, pleasant contacts arise. In other words, when a meditator is unskillful at the practice of mindfulness of breathing, there arise uncomfortable contacts. Later, the uncomfortable contacts are removed when the meditator is skillful at this practice. With the remove of unpleasant contacts, there arise pleasant contacts giving rise to rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*), and finally leading to the attainment of *dhyāna*⁵⁰⁹

In the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the calming of the bodily formation signifies the gradual pacification of in-and-out breath, from coarse to subtle, and finally to its complete cessation in the fourth *dhyāna*⁵¹⁰ This treatise states a meditator discerns in-and-out breathing in the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*), he/she discerns the shorter breath to enter the first *dhyāna*, the longer breath to enter the second *dhyāna*, the breath throughout the entire body to enter the third *dhyāna*, and finally the cessation of the breath to enter

⁵⁰⁷ YB at T1579, 432c19 又即於此若修若習，若多修習為因緣故，先未串習入出息時，所有剛強苦觸隨轉，今已串習入出息故皆得息除，有餘柔軟樂觸隨轉。便作念言：於息除身行入息，我今能學息除身行入息；於息除身行出息，我今能學息除身行出息

⁵⁰⁸ SĀ 568, SN 41 6

⁵⁰⁹ In many early discourses, *prīti/pīti* and *sukha* are said conducive to the development of concentration before one attains *dhyāna*, such as MĀ 42, MĀ 43, AN 10 1, and AN 10 2

⁵¹⁰ Mhv at T1545, 136b07 止身行者：謂令息風漸漸微細乃至不生。應知此中念入出息者是總，念短入出息等是別。復次念入出息者是欲界持息念，念短息者是初靜慮，念長息者是第二靜慮，覺遍身者是第三靜慮，止身行者是第四靜慮。Avb at T1546, 106c28 復有說者：觀息短時，名入初禪。觀息長時，入第二禪。知息遍身，入第三禪。止息身行，入第四禪。

the fourth *dhyāna*⁵¹¹ Through the calming of the bodily formation from coarse to subtle, a meditator can enter the four *dhyānas*

When the breath gradually becomes subtler and subtler, does this proceed from longer breath to shorter breath or from shorter breath to longer breath? The **Mahāvibhāṣā* maintains that the calming of the bodily formation progresses from short and coarse breath, to longer and subtler breath, and finally to its cessation⁵¹² Its simile illustrates that in-and-out breath proceeds from short to longer thus When a person carries a heavy burden to pass a steep path, this results in his/her breaths to be short and rapid After arriving on a smooth road, this person's breaths gradually become calm, longer, and subtler⁵¹³

According to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and its Chinese parallel, a meditator initially breathes in and out mindfully, and then discerns the length of each breath as long or short⁵¹⁴ Ven Anālayo explains “Nevertheless, the progression from knowing longer breaths to knowing shorter breaths reflects the fact that the breath naturally becomes shorter and finer with continued contemplation, owing to increasing mental and physical calmness”⁵¹⁵ That is, when one sits in meditation, at first the breath becomes longer As practice deepens, the breath becomes finer, calmer, and shorter, until it eventually ceases In the practice of mindfulness of breathing, meditators have different experiences in the breath when it becomes finer and finer When concentration deepens, the breath becomes refined and finally disappears

In the *Visuddhimagga*, the calming of the bodily formation commences with

⁵¹¹ Ibid

⁵¹² Mhv at T1545, 136a22 問：入出息為先短後長？為先長後短耶？答先短後長

⁵¹³ Mhv at T1545, 136a25 如人擔重經峻難處其息速疾，後至平道息便安住，故入出息先短後長

⁵¹⁴ MN 10, MĀ 98

⁵¹⁵ Anālayo, *The Direct Path to Realization*, 130

tranquillizing body and mind, ultimately leading to the calming of the breath ⁵¹⁶

According to this work, before a monk sets out to practice mindfulness of breathing, his body and mind are disturbed and coarse. Because of the coarseness of body and mind, his in-breaths and out-breaths are also coarse. With the practice of mindfulness of breathing, his body and mind become still and tranquil. Hence, his in-breaths and out-breaths grow subtler, to the point where whether they exist or not is barely discernible ⁵¹⁷. A simile used to explain the calming of the bodily formation from coarse to subtle is: after running down a hill or removing a burden from the head, one's in-breaths and out-breaths are coarse. Then, one drinks water and lies in a cool shade. The in-breaths and out-breaths become finer and finer ⁵¹⁸. This text does not specify whether the calming of the breath proceeds from short to longer or from long to shorter breaths.

According to the *Vimuttimaggā*, in-breathing and out-breathing are the bodily formation, and the calming of the bodily formation culminates in the attainment of the four *dhyānas* ⁵¹⁹. That is, one attains the four *dhyānas* through gradually stilling the breath from coarse to subtle, to the point where it altogether ceases in the fourth *dhyāna*. This text states: a meditator initially stills the coarse bodily formation, and then focuses on the subtle bodily formation so as to attain the first *dhyāna*. By stilling the subtle bodily formation, this meditator focuses on the subtlest bodily formation, in order to progress to the second *dhyāna* and to the third *dhyāna*. Through the cessation of the breath without

⁵¹⁶ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 267

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.* 267-68

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.* 268

⁵¹⁹ *Vim* at T1648, 430c22. 云何名身行者？此謂出入息。以如是身行，曲申形隨申動踊振搖，如是於身行現令寂滅。復次於羸身行現令寂滅，以細身行修行初禪，從彼以最細修第二禪，從彼最細修行學第三禪，令滅無餘修第四禪。

remainders, a meditator advances to the fourth *dhyāna*⁵²⁰ Here the question is If one brings the breath to cessation without remainders, how does he/she practice mindfulness of breathing? The *Vimuttimaggā* replies “Because he has grasped well the general characteristics, the image arises even when the respirations lapse And because of these many characteristics, he is able to develop the image and enter into meditation, *jhāna*”⁵²¹

In the practice of mindfulness of breathing, the contemplation of the body covers the four steps of knowing long breath, knowing short breath, experiencing the whole body, and calming the bodily formation When the breath becomes more and more refined, some meditators experience this progression from short and comparatively coarse breath to longer and subtler breath, while some experience going from longer and coarse breath to shorter and subtler breath When concentration deepens, the breath becomes finer and eventually ceases In the third step, a meditator breathes in and out throughout the whole body (*kāya*), here *kāya* signifies the entire physical body not the whole breath-body, showing that this meditator is skillful at this practice

Regarding the fourth step, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Vimuttimaggā* suggest that the calming of the bodily formation means the stilling of the breath from coarse, via subtle, to its complete cessation leading to the attainment of the four *dhyānas* In the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the calming of the bodily formation is said to pacify rough, unpleasant contacts so as to arise gentle, pleasant contacts, giving rise to mental pleasure and bodily pleasure namely rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*) In the *Visuddhimaggā*, the calming of the bodily formation means that a meditator starts with tranquillizing body

⁵²⁰ Vim at T1648, 430c24 復次於羸身行現今寂滅，以細身行修行初禪，從彼以最細修第二禪，從彼最細修行學第三禪，令滅無餘修第四禪

⁵²¹ Upatissa, *Vimuttimaggā*, trans Ehara et al, 161, Vim at T1648, 430c26 問曰：若無餘滅出入息，云何修行令安般？答曰：善取初相故。以滅出入息，其相得起成修行相

and mind, and finally leads to the stilling of the breath. These texts have different emphases on the calming of the bodily formation, giving a complete picture of how the breath is stilled from coarse to subtle.

3. Insight Meditation: Should It Be Done While in or Subsequent to *Dhyāna*?

Mindfulness of breathing facilitates the attainment of both tranquility meditation (*śamatha*) and insight meditation (*vipaśyanā*). Does one practice *vipaśyanā* while in *dhyāna* or after emerging from *dhyāna*? Regarding this controversy of *vipaśyanā* practice, Ven. Bodhi says:

The commentarial method of explanation stipulates that the meditator emerges from the *jhāna* attainment and practices insight contemplation with a mind made sharp and supple by the *jhāna*. However, the suttas themselves say nothing about emerging from the *jhāna*. If one reads the suttas alone, without the commentaries, it seems as if the meditator examines the factors within the *jhāna* itself.⁵²²

It is true that if one simply studies the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, one will draw the conclusion that insight is developed within *dhyāna*. If one reads the *Nikāyas* with the Pāli commentaries, the conclusion may be that the development of insight takes place after one emerges from *dhyāna*.

Regarding the development of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, the *Samyukta Āgama* and the *Anguttara Nikāya* explain that there are four paths leading to noble liberation. First, one develops *vipaśyanā* preceded by *śamatha*. Second, one develops *śamatha* preceded by *vipaśyanā*. Third, one develops *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* joined in pairs. Fourth, the path is born in the case when one's mind is seized by agitation concerning the Dharma,

⁵²² Bodhi, *In the Buddha's Words*, 452.

his/her mind is still under control and becomes internally steadied and unified⁵²³ These four paths illustrate that *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* could be developed separately, but finally, noble liberation is attained through the conjunction of both

According to the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimaggā*, the union of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* occurs after one emerges from *dhyāna*⁵²⁴ In contrast, according to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and the **Tattvasiddhīśāstra*, this union takes place while one is in *dhyāna*⁵²⁵ Unequivocally, *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā* are one path for a yogin to extirpate defilements leading to ultimate deliverance Yet, whether the development of insight takes place after one emerges from *dhyāna* or while one is in *dhyāna* is debatable

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, there is no awareness of the breath while one is in *dhyāna*, and thus one has to emerge from *dhyāna* so as to feel the breath again⁵²⁶ This work states “On emerging from the attainment, he sees that the in-breaths and out-breaths have the physical body and mind as their origin”⁵²⁷ After a yogin emerges from *dhyāna*, insight is said to be developed as follows he initially discerns that in-and-out breath has its origin in the physical body and mind Then he defines in-and-out breath and

⁵²³ SĀ 560 and AN 4 170

⁵²⁴ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 279-80 Vim at T1648, 461b24 云何令起者？彼坐禪人入寂寂住，或坐或臥，樂滅音樂滅入初禪。入已安詳出，無間見彼禪無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。如第二禪第三禪第四禪，虛空處識處無所有處，入已安詳出，無間見正定無常苦無我，乃至行捨智

⁵²⁵ YB at T1579, 433b8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。今依無常隨觀，復於毘鉢舍那修瑜伽行，如是以奢摩他毘鉢舍那重修心已，於諸界中從彼隨眠而求解脫 Mhv at T1545, 136b4 尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾 Avb at T1546, 106c16 問曰：繫念在鼻端，云何復知入出息遍身耶？答曰：尊者和須蜜作如是說：遍知此身是無常法，而不失念。問曰：若然者，不名起定耶？答曰：不名起，以不捨其方便故。如是展轉觀此身，是苦、空、無我、穢污不淨性 Ak at T1558, 118b11 觀謂觀察此息風已，兼觀息俱大種造色，及依色住心及心所，具觀五蘊以為境界。轉謂移轉緣息風覺，安置後後勝善根中乃至世間第一去位。淨謂昇進入見道等 TS at T1646, 338a6 佛示定中亦有智慧，非但繫心。行者修習定時若生煩惱，於中生智除此煩惱，欲令三昧為聖清淨

⁵²⁶ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 323

⁵²⁷ Ibid, 279

the body as *rūpa* (materiality), and the mind and mental states as the immaterial or *nāma* (mentality). After the ascertainment of *nāmarūpa*, he discerns the supporting conditions for the arising of *nāmarūpa*. By discerning these supporting conditions, he eliminates doubts about the occurrence of *nāmarūpa* in the three periods of time—past, present, and future. With the elimination of doubts, he comprehends the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and not-self and further removes the ten imperfections of insight.⁵²⁸ By abandoning the contemplation of the arising of formations, he attains the contemplation of the cessation of formations. With the contemplation of the cessation of all formations, he becomes disenchanted with them, dispassionate toward them, and liberated from them.⁵²⁹ The whole process of insight contemplation is said based on awareness of the breath to develop after one emerges from *dhyāna*.

As the development of insight into the true nature of the body, one is said to emerge from a *dhyāna* in order to penetrate the true nature of feelings, mind, and dharmas.⁵³⁰ In the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing, rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*) are taken as meditation objects in the fifth and sixth steps. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, one experiences rapture in two ways: with the object and with non-confusion.⁵³¹ First, when a yogin enters one of the lower two *dhyānas* in which rapture is present, the yogin experiences rapture with the object. That is, one experiences rapture by way of tranquility meditation. Second, after emerging from that *dhyāna*, the yogin contemplates, with insight, that rapture associated with *dhyāna* is subject to destruction. Rapture is experienced with non-confusion, which means that one experiences rapture by

⁵²⁸ The ten imperfections of insight are illumination, knowledge, rapturous happiness, tranquility, bliss, resolution, exertion, assurance, equanimity, and attachment.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, 279-80.

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*, 279-82.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, 280.

way of insight meditation ⁵³² The experience of rapture in two ways also explains the position of the *Visuddhimagga*, that insight is developed after one emerges from *dhyāna*

The *Vimuttimagga* also suggests that the development of insight occurs after one emerges from *dhyāna* ⁵³³ This viewpoint is shown in the statement of how one reaches the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) According to this treatise, one achieves the attainment of cessation through the two powers of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, that is, one enters the first *dhyāna* and emerges from it so as to see that *dhyāna* is impermanent, suffering, and not-self Likewise, one enters and emerges from the second, the third and the fourth *dhyānas*, the base of infinite space, the base of infinite consciousness, up to the base of nothingness, so as to see those meditative attainments as impermanent, suffering, and not-self Then he/she attains and emerges from the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and finally enters the attainment of cessation ⁵³⁴ According to the *Visuddhimagga*, one also reaches the attainment of cessation by the two powers of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, and develops insight after emerging from a meditative attainment ⁵³⁵

Ajahn Brahmavamsa says

It is true that one cannot gain deep insight while experiencing *jhāna* This is because *jhāna* states are too still for the mental activity of contemplation to occur Nevertheless, the *jhāna* experience serves the purpose of firmly suppressing the five hindrances for long periods of time after emerging from a *jhāna*, and it is then that deep insight is possible ⁵³⁶

⁵³² Ibid

⁵³³ Vim at T1648, 461b24 云何令起者？彼坐禪人入寂寂住，或坐或臥，樂滅音樂滅入初禪。入已安詳出，無間見彼禪無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。如第二禪第三禪第四禪，虛空處識處無所有處，入已安詳出，無間見正定無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。爾時無間入非非想處，從彼或二或三，令起非非想心，起已令心滅。心滅已不生不現入，此謂入滅想定

⁵³⁴ Ibid

⁵³⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 734

⁵³⁶ Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 178

According to him, when one emerges from *dhyāna/jhāna*, he/she remains in access concentration (*upacārasamādhi*), and this access concentration is where deep insight occurs. Ajahn Brahmavamsa further explains when access concentration arises prior to *dhyāna*, this state is not steady for one to contemplate the Dharma, hence, if one uses the access concentration prior to *dhyāna* to develop insight, he/she will lose this access concentration and the five hindrances will return. In contrast, when access concentration arises after *dhyāna*, the five hindrances with weariness do not invade one's mind, and thus one can develop insight while in this stable access concentration.⁵³⁷

The concept of “access concentration” is implicitly suggested in the Chinese *Saṃyukta Āgama*. According to the 347th sūtra of the *Saṃyukta Āgama*, the Arhats who were liberated by wisdom (*prajñāvimukti*) eradicated all defilements without depending on the four *dhyānas* or the formless attainments.⁵³⁸ The **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, and the *Yogācārabhūmi* interpret that those Arhats depend on access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* to attain their enlightenment.⁵³⁹ BSĀ 160, SĀ 936, and MĀ 195 also say that those Arhats who are liberated by wisdom do not directly experience any of the eight liberations.⁵⁴⁰ That is, the *prajñāvimukti* Arhats do not have any of the *dhyānas*. Neither the *Saṃyukta Āgama* nor these texts suggest that a

⁵³⁷ Ibid., 178-79

⁵³⁸ SĀ 347 at T99, 97a20 云何不得禪定而復記說？比丘答言：我是慧解脫也。

⁵³⁹ Mhv at T1545, 572b16 蘇尸摩當知：先有法住智，後有涅槃智。蘇尸摩曰：我今不知何者法住智？何者涅槃智？佛言：隨汝知與不知，然法應爾。時蘇尸摩不果先願。然彼五百應真苾芻依未至定得漏盡已後，方能起根本等至。由此故知：近分地智是法住智，根本地智是涅槃智。MP at T1509, 270b21 有二種三昧：一種慧解脫分，二種共解脫分。前者慧解脫分不能入禪定，但說未到地中三昧；此中說共解脫分，具有禪定解脫三昧。YB at T1579, 835c19 復次若有苾芻，具淨尸羅，住別解脫清淨律儀；增上心學增上力故，得初靜慮近分所攝勝三摩地以為依止；增上慧學增上力故，得法住智及涅槃智。

⁵⁴⁰ SĀ 936 at T99, 240a16 不得八解脫身作證具足住，然彼知見有漏斷，是名聖弟子不墮惡趣，乃至慧解脫。BSĀ 160 at T100, 434c4 慧解脫阿羅漢不得八解脫。MĀ 195 at T26, 751b20 云何比丘有慧解脫？若有比丘八解脫身不觸成就遊，以慧見諸漏已盡已知，如是比丘有慧解脫。

meditator enters *dhyāna* and emerges from it, so as to depend on access concentration for the development of insight.

The Pāli parallel to the 347th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* is the *Susīma Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*. According to the *Susīma Sutta*, the Arhats who were liberated by wisdom did not attain any psychic powers or the formless attainments.⁵⁴¹ This discourse does not mention whether or not these Arhats had reached the four *dhyānas*. In other words, the Pāli *Susīma Sutta* does not suggest that access concentration serves as a basis for the Arhats who were liberated by wisdom to achieve realization, but the Chinese 347th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* has this implication, and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, and the *Yogācārabhūmi* confirm this point.

Unlike Ajahn Brahmavamso, Pa Auk Sayadaw maintains that it is momentary concentration (*khaṇikasamādhi*) which serves as a basis for a yogin to develop insight.⁵⁴² When one enters *dhyāna* and emerges from it, it is said that there is still a samādhi called momentary concentration for one to discern the meditation object as impermanent, suffering, and not-self. He analyzes that there are two types of momentary concentration: momentary concentration in *śamatha* meditation and momentary concentration in *vipaśyanā* meditation. These two types of momentary concentration have their sources in the *Visuddhimagga*. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, the threefold samādhi is momentary concentration, access concentration, and absorption concentration.⁵⁴³ Pa Auk Sayadaw explains that this mode of momentary concentration is a type of preparatory concentration which takes a counterpart sign (*paṭibhāga nimitta*) as an object of

⁵⁴¹ SN 12:70

⁵⁴² Pa Auk, *Knowing and Seeing*, 188.

⁵⁴³ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Nānamoli, 142.

concentration included in *śamatha* meditation.⁵⁴⁴ The other mode of momentary concentration shown in the *Visuddhimagga* is:

Or alternatively, when, having entered upon those jhanas and emerged from them, he comprehends with insight the consciousness associated with the jhana as liable to destruction and to fall, then at the actual time of insight momentary unification of the mind arises through the penetration of the characteristics [of impermanence, and so on].⁵⁴⁵

Here momentary unification of the mind is said to be a kind of momentary concentration included in *vipāśyanā* meditation. Pa Auk Sayadaw says, “His concentration is at that time deep and profound, and does not go to other objects. This is momentary concentration, because the object is momentary; as soon as it arises, it passes away.”⁵⁴⁶ The object of momentary concentration is momentary, and thus one can depend on momentary concentration to penetrate the impermanent nature of all formations.

The concept of “momentary concentration” appears only in the commentaries, and is not found in the *Nikāyas* or the *Āgamas*. The unique function of momentary concentration in the development of insight is for a yogin to thoroughly see the impermanence, suffering, and not-self of all physical and mental phenomena after emerging from the *dhyānas* or the formless attainments. In fact, the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments also have this function for a yogin to penetrate the impermanent, suffering, and selfless nature of human existence. According to the *Wuxiafenjie jing* 五下分結經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*, a yogin knows and sees the arising and the passing away of phenomena while in the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments. This discourse shows that the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments can serve as a foundation for a yogin to penetrate the

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid., 187.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., 282.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., 188.

impermanence of phenomena ⁵⁴⁷ In other words, according to the *Wuxiafenjie jing* 五下分結經, it is unnecessary for the yogin to develop insight after emerging from a meditative attainment

The Pāli parallel to the *Wuxiafenjie jing* 五下分結經 is the *Mahāmālunkya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. This Pāli discourse also states that insight is developed while one is in the first seven meditative attainments leading to the removal of fetters. The development of insight occurs dependent on the first *dhyāna* as follows

[A] bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. Whatever exists therein of material form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, he sees those states as impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a tumour, as a barb, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as void, as not self ⁵⁴⁸

The discourse explains that a meditator attains the four *dhyānas* and discerns the five aggregates contained therein as impermanent, suffering, and not-self, and then reaches the three lower formless attainments and discerns the four aggregates of feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness as impermanent, suffering, and not-self. Hence, this meditator attains either arahantship or non-returning (*anāgāmi*) ⁵⁴⁹. Both the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* do not suggest that one emerges from a meditative attainment for the development of insight, but rather instruct one to practice insight *within* the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments. In contrast, the Pāli commentarial system maintains that the development of insight occurs after one emerges from a meditative attainment, dependent on a *samādhi* such as access concentration or

⁵⁴⁷ MĀ 205 at T26, 779c18 離欲離惡不善之法，有覺有觀，離生喜樂，得初禪成就遊。彼依此處觀覺興衰，彼依此處觀覺興衰已，住彼必得漏盡

⁵⁴⁸ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 539-40

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid

momentary concentration. Both access concentration and momentary concentration are later-arisen notions for a later scheme of interpretation.

The *Visuddhimagga* maintains that all supramundane paths and fruits are attained through the development of insight, and they must occur at a level of samādhi corresponding to a particular *dhyāna* level.⁵⁵⁰ This work says:

According to governance by insight, the path arisen in a bare-insight (dry-insight) worker, and the path arisen in one who possesses a jhana attainment but who has not made the jhana the basis for insight...are paths of the first jhana only.⁵⁵¹

Here “a bare-insight (dry-insight) worker” refers to one who practices insight without previous *dhyāna* experience. When a dry-insight meditator reaches the supramundane path and fruit, it is said that the supramundane path and fruit takes place at a level corresponding to the first *dhyāna*. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, the first *dhyāna* is the lowest admissible level for the occurrence of the supramundane path and fruit, and hence when a meditator, without previous *dhyāna* experience, reaches the supramundane path and fruit, the experience of the supramundane occurs by itself at the level of the first *dhyāna*.

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, there are three theories held by ancient elders about what determines the *dhyāna* level of the supramundane path and fruit.⁵⁵² The first theory maintains that the *dhyāna* level of the supramundane path and fruit is determined by the *dhyāna* that a meditator enters before the development of insight. That is, when the supramundane path and fruit arise, there is a samādhi that is the same level of the *dhyāna* which a meditator used as the basis for concentration prior to developing insight. The

⁵⁵⁰ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 690.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵² *Ibid.*, 689-90.

second theory holds that the *dhyāna* which a meditator practices insight determines the *dhyāna* level of the supramundane path and fruit. For instance, after entering and emerging from the fourth *dhyāna*, a meditator reaches the supramundane path and fruit while practicing insight on the third *dhyāna*. The meditator will attain the supramundane path and fruit at the level of the third *dhyāna*. The third theory suggests that a meditator's personal disposition can determine the *dhyāna* level of the supramundane path and fruit.⁵⁵³ That is, a meditator attains the supramundane path at the level of the *dhyāna* he/she used as the basis for concentration before developing insight, or at the level of the *dhyāna* he/she is practicing insight. The position of the *Visuddhimagga* is one practices insight after emerging from *dhyāna*, and when the supramundane path and fruit arise, there must be a *samādhi* in the supramundane path and fruit equivalent to a particular *dhyāna* level.

In the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the **Abhidharmavibhāṣāsāstra*, a question is raised in relation to awareness of the breath while one is in *dhyāna* thus: If one is aware of in-and-out breath throughout the entire body, why does one not emerge from a *dhyāna*? Regarding sensory awareness, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the **Abhidharmanyāyānusārasāstra* show that the orthodoxy of the Sarvāstivāda maintains that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*, and the **Mahāvibhāṣā* also maintains that one is unable to hear sounds while in the first *dhyāna*.⁵⁵⁴ In this context, if there is no occurrence of sensory awareness while one is in *dhyāna*, why does one not emerge from a *dhyāna* when one is aware of breath sensations? The answer is that one's aspiration to practice does not cease, and skillful

⁵⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁵⁴ AK at T1558, 147a2 正在定中無五識故 ANS at T1562, 760a27 正在定中無五識故 Mhv at T1545, 929c9 住初靜慮者尚不聞聲，何況住無所有處定

means (*upāya*) is employed⁵⁵⁵ Vasumitra says when one breathes in and out experiencing the whole body as impermanent, suffering, empty, and not-self, one is aware of the breath and does not need to emerge from *dhyāna* because of the employment of *upāya*⁵⁵⁶ This statement clearly shows that awareness of the breath occurs while one is in *dhyāna*, and insight is developed based on awareness of the breath while one is in *dhyāna* The position of the **Mahāvibhāṣā* is that sensory awareness is not present while one is in *dhyāna*, but the treatise also cannot disregard Vasumitra's viewpoint that awareness of the breath facilitates the development of insight while one is in *dhyāna* because of the employment of *upāya*

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the practice of mindfulness of breathing includes five kinds breath-counting practice, the practice for realization of the five aggregates (*skandha*), the practice for realization of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), the practice for realization of noble truths (*āryasatya*), and the superior sixteen-step practice⁵⁵⁷ The initial breath-counting practice is said to be conducive to tranquility of body and tranquility of mind, leading to unification of the mind⁵⁵⁸ The second, third, and fourth practices involve the development of insight The

⁵⁵⁵ Mhv at T1545, 136a27 問：此觀息風從鼻而入還從鼻出，何故乃說我覺遍身入出息耶？答：息令未成，觀入出息從鼻入出；息令成已，觀身毛孔猶如藕根，息風周遍於中入出。問：若爾何故非出定耶？答：音樂加行俱未息故，如菩薩時雖作此觀而不出定，亦以音樂加行未息故，無有過 Avb at T1546, 106c 若此阿那般那令未成時，繫念在鼻端；後若成已，觀身毛孔猶如藕根風從中入出。問曰：若然者，云何不名起定耶？答曰：以不捨方便所期心故，不名起定

⁵⁵⁶ Mhv at T1545, 136b4 尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾 Avb at T1546, 106c16 問曰：繫念在鼻端，云何復知入出息遍身耶？答曰：尊者和須蜜作如是說：遍知此身是無常法，而不失念。問曰：若然者，不名起定耶？答曰：不名起，以不捨其方便故。如是展轉觀此身，是苦、空、無我、穢污不淨性

⁵⁵⁷ YB at T1579, 431a17 又此阿那皮那令應知略有五種修習，何等為五？一算數修習，二悟入諸蘊修習，三悟入緣起修習，四悟入聖諦修習，五十六勝行修習

⁵⁵⁸ YB at T1579, 431c14 於此加行，若修若習若多修習為因緣故，起身輕安及心輕安，證一境性，於其所緣愛樂趣入。

last is the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing concerning the development of both tranquility meditation (*samatha*) and insight meditation (*vipāśyanā*)

Regarding the practice for realization of the five aggregates, the *Yogācārabhūmi* states that a meditator discerns in-and-out breath and the body for realization of form (*rūpa*) aggregate. By being mindful of in-and-out breath, the meditator discerns what feeling feels for realization of feeling (*vedanā*) aggregate, what perception perceives for realization of perception (*saṃjñā*) aggregate, what volition and wisdom act for realization of formations (*saṃskāra*) aggregate, and what consciousness is aware for realization of consciousness (*viññāna*) aggregate.⁵⁵⁹ This practice is based on mindfulness of breathing for one to penetrate the selfless nature of the five aggregates, and to penetrate the five aggregates: form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, which are impermanent, conditioned, dependently arisen, eventually subject to destruction.

The practice for realization of dependent origination is said to begin with the investigation of what is the condition for in-and-out breath. Then, the meditator contemplates that in-and-out breath comes to be with the body and mind as its condition, the body and mind come to be with life faculty (*jīvita*) as condition, life faculty comes to be with previous volitional formations as condition, and previous volitional formations come to be with ignorance as a condition. One penetrates the chain of conditions by way of origination, and then brings this causal chain to its end by way of cessation.

Subsequently, it is said, with the cessation of ignorance, volitional formations cease, with the cessation of volitional formations, life faculty ceases, with the cessation of life

⁵⁵⁹ YB at T1579, 431c18 云何悟入？調於入息出息及息所依身，作意思惟悟入色蘊。於彼入息出息能取念相應領納，作意思惟悟入受蘊。即於彼念相應等了，作意思惟悟入想蘊。即於彼念若念相應思及慧等，作意思惟悟入行蘊。若於彼念相應諸心意識，作意思惟悟入識蘊。如是行者，於諸蘊中乃至多住名已悟入，是名悟入諸蘊修習。

faculty, the body and mind cease, and with the cessation of the body and mind, in-and-out breath ceases⁵⁶⁰ The meditator is based on mindfulness of breathing to penetrate the origination of individual existence and its cessation Through the comprehension of dependent origination, the meditator realizes that without a substantial self to hold the causal sequence together, all phenomena arise and cease through conditions

In the practice for realization of noble truths (*āryasatya*), the development of insight is associated with mindfulness of breathing for one to achieve the breakthrough to the noble truths (*satya-abhisamaya*) In this stage, it is said, by comprehending dependent origination, the meditator realizes the impermanence of all formations, that is, all formations come into being without having been, and after having been, they vanish⁵⁶¹ Then the meditator discerns that the arising and passing away of formations stand for birth, aging, sickness and death, and birth, aging, sickness and death mean *duḥkha* (suffering) The meditator contemplates that whatever is impermanent results in *duḥkha*, all of which do not belong to him/her or is not his/hers Further, it is said that the meditator realizes the truth of *duḥkha* by penetrating all formations as impermanent, suffering, empty, and not-self The meditator discerns that all formations are dependently arisen, and the nature of formations is suffering as a disease or a carbuncle, because they come to be with craving as condition Then, by seeing craving as the origin of *duḥkha*, the meditator realizes the truth of the origin of *duḥkha* Through the removal of craving without residue, the meditator realizes the truth of the cessation of *duḥkha* By

⁵⁶⁰ YB at T1579, 431c28 云何悟入？謂觀行者，如是尋求此入出皂何依何緣，既尋求已，如實悟入此入出皂依身緣身依心緣心。復更尋求此身此心何依何緣，既尋求已，如實悟入此身此心依緣命根。復更尋求如是命根何依何緣，既尋求已，如實悟入如是命根依緣先行。復更尋求如是先行何依何緣，既尋求已，如實悟入如是先行依緣無明。如是了知無明依緣先行，先行依緣命根，命根依緣身心，身心依緣入皂出皂。又能了知無明滅故行滅，行滅故命根滅，命根滅故身心滅，身心滅故入出皂滅，如是名為悟入緣起

⁵⁶¹ YB at T1579, 432a13 謂悟入諸行是無常，故本無而有，有已散滅

comprehending the way leading to the cessation of craving, he/she realizes the truth of the path. Finally, the meditator is said to achieve the breakthrough to the noble truths (*satya-abhisamaya*), that is, he/she extirpates the coarse defilements which are destroyed by the path of insight (*darśana-prahātavya*)⁵⁶²

In order to eradicate the subtle defilements which are destroyed by the path of cultivation (*bhāvanā-prahātavya*), the meditator is instructed to cultivate the superior sixteen-step practice, namely the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing⁵⁶³. In this context, the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing are the practice for the enlightened ones who have destroyed the coarse defilements. In fact, the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing are the practice for both the enlightened ones and the unenlightened ones. In mindfulness of breathing, rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*) are experienced in the fifth step and the sixth step, and the *Yogācārabhūmi* treats both as *dhyāna* factors. That is, *prīti/pīti* and *sukha* are experienced in the first and second *dhyānas*, and *sukha* devoid of rapture is experienced in the third *dhyāna*⁵⁶⁴. According to this treatise, when a meditator experiences *prīti/pīti* and *sukha* in *dhyāna*, illusory thoughts may temporarily arise, giving rise to attachment to the view of a self and the conceit “I am”⁵⁶⁵. When a meditator is aware of these unskillful mental states in *dhyāna*, he/she rapidly develops wisdom so as to detach from these unskillful mental states. This process covers the seventh and eighth steps, that is, one breathes in and out experiencing the mental formation, and one

⁵⁶² YB at T1579, 432a14 若是本無而有，有已散滅，即是生去老去病去死去。若是生去老去病去死去，即是其苦。若是其苦，即是無我不得自在遠離宰主。如是名為由無常苦空無我行，悟入苦諦。又彼如是能正悟入諸所有行眾緣生起，其性是苦如病如癰，一切皆以貪愛為緣。又正悟入即此能生眾苦貪愛，若無餘斷即是畢竟寂靜微妙。我若於此如是了知，如是觀見，如是多住，富於貪愛能無餘斷，如是名能悟入集諦滅諦道諦。於此悟入能多住已，於諸諦中證得現觀，是名悟入聖諦修習。如是於聖諦中善修習已，於見道所斷一切煩惱皆悉永斷

⁵⁶³ YB at T1579, 432a27 唯餘修道所斷煩惱，為斷彼故復進修習十六勝行

⁵⁶⁴ YB at T1579, 432c25

⁵⁶⁵ YB at T1579, 433a3

breathes in and out calming the mental formation ⁵⁶⁶ The process of meditative experience takes place while one is in *dhyāna*. In other words, insight is developed within *dhyāna*, in order for a meditator to abandon defilements which may arise while experiencing rapture and pleasure

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, when one practices mindfulness of breathing leading to the conjunction of *śamatha* and *vipāśyanā*, one can develop insight dependent on access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* and the three lower *dhyānas* ⁵⁶⁷ The fourth *dhyāna* is not included, because in-and-out breath is said to cease for one who has attained the fourth *dhyāna* ⁵⁶⁸ These four meditative attainments serve as a basis to penetrate the true nature of the five aggregates, dependent origination, and the four noble truths

Harivarman, in his **Tattvasiddhīśāstra*, also shows that insight is developed while one is in *dhyāna* ⁵⁶⁹ He points out that the Buddha says wisdom occurs while one is in *dhyāna*, because when one attains *dhyāna* and defilements arise, then one develops wisdom so as to abandon defilements and make this samādhi as “noble purity” ⁵⁷⁰ That one abandons defilements by wisdom while in *dhyāna* illustrates that insight is developed within *dhyāna*, as the *Yogācārabhūmi* states that a meditator develops wisdom while in *dhyāna* in order to eliminate unskillful mental states which arise from the experience of rapture and pleasure ⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid, 433a3

⁵⁶⁷ YB at T1579, 433a8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。今依無常隨觀，復於毘鉢舍那修瑜伽行，如是以奢摩他毘鉢舍那重修心已，於諸界中從彼隨眠而求解脫

⁵⁶⁸ SN 36 11

⁵⁶⁹ TS at T1646, 338a6 佛示定中亦有智慧，非但繫心。行者修習定時若生煩惱，於中生智除此煩惱，欲令三昧為聖清淨

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid

⁵⁷¹ YB at T1579, 433a8

In the 864th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, when a meditator attains and dwells in the first *dhyāna*, he/she does not focus on the components of this *dhyāna*, but discerns the impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and not-self of all physical and mental phenomena⁵⁷² That is, when a meditator experiences *prīti/pīti* and *sukha* throughout the whole body within the first *dhyāna*, the most important thing is to discern his/her body, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness, so as to penetrate the five aggregates (*skandha*) as impermanent, suffering, empty, and not-self This discourse illustrates that insight is developed while one is in the first *dhyāna* as the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Tattvasiddhīsāstra* suggest thus

If a bhikṣu is of such practice, manifestation, and characteristics, secluded from sensual pleasures and unwholesome states, accompanied by applied thought and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion, he enters and dwells in the first *dhyāna*. If he does not attend in such practice, manifestation, and characteristics, he contemplates form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness as a disease, as a carbuncle, as a dart, as a murderer, as impermanent, suffering, empty, and not-self

若比丘，若行、若形、若相，離欲惡不善法，有覺有觀，離生喜樂，初禪具足住。彼不憶念如是行、如是形、如是相，然於彼色受想行識法，作如病、如癰、如刺、如殺，無常、苦、空、非我思惟。⁵⁷³

The *Anupada Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* also reveals that the development of insight occurs while one is in the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments

When Sāriputta is in the first *dhyāna*, insight is developed thus

And the states in the first *jhāna*—the applied thought, the sustained thought, the rapture, the pleasure, and the unification of mind, the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind, the zeal, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred, known to him those states arose, known they were present, known they disappeared. He understood thus ‘So indeed, these states, not having been, come into being, having been, they

⁵⁷² SĀ 864 at T99, 219c2

⁵⁷³ SĀ 864 at T99, 219b29

vanish.⁵⁷⁴

Sāriputta develops insight by discerning the impermanence of *dhyāna* factors, of the five aggregates, and of the mental states present within that *dhyāna*. The *Amupada Sutta* and SĀ 864 clearly show that a meditator is aware of the activities of mind while in *dhyāna*, and is able to develop insight within that *dhyāna*.

The Pāli *Jhāna Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* also indicates that insight is developed while one is in the first seven meditative attainments—the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments—called “attainments with perception” (*saññāsamāpatti*).⁵⁷⁵ This explains that perception (*saññā/samjñā*) is the decisive factor for the development of insight. Due to the limitation of perception in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and the absence of perception in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), there is no development of insight within these two attainments. In the *Jhāna Sutta*, a yogin develops insight for the destruction of the taints while in the first *dhyāna* thus:

Here, monks, secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a monk enters and dwells in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by thought and examination, with rapture and happiness born of seclusion. Whatever states are included there comprised by form, feeling, perception, volitional formations or consciousness; he views those states as impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a boil, as a dart, as misery, as affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as empty, as non-self. Having viewed them thus, his mind then turns away from those states and focuses upon the deathless element.⁵⁷⁶

The parallel of the *Jhāna Sutta* is not found in the Chinese *Āgamas*, but is completely preserved in the *Dharmaskandha*, one of the six pāda works in the Sarvāstivāda

⁵⁷⁴ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 899.

⁵⁷⁵ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 235.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Abhidharma⁵⁷⁷ It is called *Qiyi jing* 七依經 in the Chinese canon, and is cited by the Abhidharma masters of different schools to demonstrate that the *śamatha* needed by a yogin to develop insight is the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments, namely the “attainments with perception”⁵⁷⁸ The **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the **Tattvasiddhiśāstra*, the **Prakaraṇāryavākāśāstra*, and the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* all cite the *Qiyi jing* 七依經 to explain that the extirpation of taints occurs dependent on the first seven meditative attainments, that is, insight is developed while one is in the attainments with perception⁵⁷⁹

In the *Nibbāna Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, Venerable Ānanda asks Venerable Sāriputta a question why do some people not attain nirvāna/nibbāna in this very life? He replies they do not discern the perception leading to decline as it really is, the perception leading to stagnation as it really is, the perception leading to progress as it really is, and the perception leading to penetration as it really is⁵⁸⁰ In contrast, when some people discern these four perceptions as they really are, they are able to attain nirvāna here and now In Buddhist meditation, *śamatha* practice and *vipāśyanā* practice are specifically connected with perception (*saññā/samññā*) These four perceptions are the very four samādhis in the *Dasuttara Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*⁵⁸¹

According to the *Dasuttara Sutta*, there are four samādhis that are difficult for a

⁵⁷⁷ Dsk at T1537, 493c28 謂世尊說：苾芻當知！我說依初靜慮能盡諸漏，如是我說依第二第三第四靜慮，空無邊處、識無邊處、無所有處能盡諸漏

⁵⁷⁸ AN 9 36, Dsk at T1537, 494b3 乃至想定能辦如是所應作事

⁵⁷⁹ Mhv at T1545, 311a3 因七依經造此論故，彼經唯說七根本地，謂四靜慮下三無色，非根本地有世俗道能斷煩惱，故知唯聖者用無漏道斷 TS at T1646, 338c18 論者言有七依，依初禪得漏盡，乃至依無所有處得漏盡 PS at T1602, 496b28 由依者：謂由依止七依定故斷諸煩惱，謂初靜慮乃至第七無所有處 ASV at T1606, p 770a24 謂七依定如經言：我說依初靜慮能盡諸漏，乃至依無所有處亦爾

⁵⁸⁰ AN 4 179

⁵⁸¹ DN 34

meditator to discern: samādhi conducive to decline (*hāna-bhāgiyo*), samādhi conducive to stagnation (*thiti-bhāgiyo*), samādhi conducive to progress (*visea-bhāgiyo*), and samādhi conducive to penetration (*nibbedha-bhāgiyo*).⁵⁸² The *Visuddhimagga* explains that decline (*hāna*) refers to the presence of opposing qualities, such as the perception of sense desire arising in the first *dhyāna*; stagnation (*thiti*) is the stability of mindfulness persisting the samādhi; progress (*visea*) is the attainment of higher samādhi; and penetration (*nibbedha*) is the presence of perception and attention in conjunction with dispassion.⁵⁸³

These four samādhis conducive to decline, stagnation, progress, and penetration are also shown in the *Shuo jing* 說經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*.⁵⁸⁴ According to this discourse, these four samādhis cover the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments. This discourse mentions the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception at the end, but without giving any explanation about it. The samādhi conducive to penetration is for a meditator to develop insight while in the first *dhyāna* thus:

In regard to the practice, the characteristics, and the distinguishing marks of being secluded from sensual pleasures and from other unwholesome states, with applied thought and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion, a bhikṣu attains and masters the first *dhyāna*. In the case he does not keep that practice, and is not mindful of those characteristics and distinguishing marks; he merely partakes in the mindfulness and perception pertaining to cessation, and becomes dispassionate. That bhikṣu should understand thus: “such a state that arises in me is neither leading to regression, stagnation, or progression [to a higher state]; such a state will [instead] arise in me a sense of disenchantment. Like this, I shall bring about the destruction of taints before long.”

比丘所行、所相、所標，離欲離惡不善之法，有覺有觀，離生喜樂，得初禪成就遊。彼不受此行，不念此相標，唯行滅息相應念想，無欲

⁵⁸² Walshe, trans., *Dīgha Nikāya*, 514.

⁵⁸³ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 89.

⁵⁸⁴ MĀ 177

具。彼比丘應當知：我生此法不退，不住亦不昇進，我生此法能令我厭，如是不久當得漏盡。⁵⁸⁵

The *Yogācārabhūmi* also cites a sūtra, which seems to be this *Shuo jing* 說經, to expound how a meditator examines his/her own samādhi through the four characteristics: decline (*hāna*), stagnation (*sthiti*), progress (*viśeṣa*), and penetration (*nirvedha*).⁵⁸⁶ These four characteristics are the four perceptions in the *Nibbāna Sutta* and the four samādhis in the *Dasuttara Sutta*. All samādhis are said to be examined through these four characteristics, in order for the meditator to not deviate from the liberating path. According to Xuanzang's interpretation, the samādhi conducive to penetration could be any of the four *dhyānas* or any of the three lower formless attainments, but it could not be the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.⁵⁸⁷ His interpretation shows that only the first seven meditative attainments can serve as a basis for the development of insight; this statement is consistent with that of the *Shuo jing* 說經.

The explanation of the four samādhis in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* is decline (*hāna*) conducive to the presence of taints, stagnation (*sthiti*) to the stability of its own sphere, progress (*viśeṣa*) to the attainment of a higher sphere, and penetration (*nirvedha*) to the arising of the taintless.⁵⁸⁸ Vasubandhu says that in the practice of mindfulness of breathing, when one is aware of the breath to develop insight, the development of insight depends on the four good roots (*kuśalamūla*): heat (*uṣmagata*), summit (*mūradhan*),

⁵⁸⁵ MĀ 177 at T26, 716c9.

⁵⁸⁶ YB at T1579, 342c12: 復次如分別四檢行定經中，由四種相檢行一切三摩地等，謂此等持是順退分，乃至此是順決擇分。

⁵⁸⁷ Cited in Kuiji 窺基, *Yuqieshidulun luezuan* 瑜伽師地論略纂, T1829, 177c14.

⁵⁸⁸ Ak at T1558, 148c22: 順退分能順煩惱，順住分能順自地，順勝進分能順上地，順決擇分能順無漏。

acquiescence (*kṣānti*), and the supreme worldly dharma (*laukikāgradharma*)⁵⁸⁹ He indicates that these four good roots are called “parts conducive to penetration” (*nirvedhabhāgīya*), that is, the four good roots are connected with the samādhi conducive to penetration⁵⁹⁰ In other words, when a meditator is aware of the breath to develop insight, the development of insight occurs dependent on the samādhi conducive to penetration, namely the first seven meditative attainments

In brief, both the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* say that insight is developed while one is in *dhyāna* This is shown in the *Jhāna Sutta*, the *Mahāmālunkya Sutta*, the *Anupada Sutta*, the *Wuxiafenjie jing* 五下分結經, and the *Shuo jing* 說經 The *Yogācārabhūmi*, the **Mahāvībhāṣā*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and the **Tattvasiddhīśāstra* are consistent with the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas* to point out that insight is developed while one is in *dhyāna*⁵⁹¹ In contrast, the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimagga* maintain that one has to emerge from *dhyāna* for practicing insight⁵⁹² Through the development of insight, a meditator attains the supramundane path and fruit According to the *Visuddhimagga*, when the supramundane path and fruit arises, there must be a samādhi corresponding to a particular *dhyāna* level⁵⁹³ After one emerges from *dhyāna*, Ajahn Brahmavamso and Pa

⁵⁸⁹ Ak at T1558, 118b11 觀謂觀察此息風已，兼觀息俱大種造色，及依色住心及心所，具觀五蘊以為境界。轉謂移轉緣息風覺，安置後後勝善根中乃至世間第一法位。淨謂昇進入見道等

⁵⁹⁰ Ak at T1558, 120a17 此煖頂忍世第一法，四殊勝善根名順決擇分

⁵⁹¹ YB at T1579, 433a8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。今依無常隨觀，復於毘鉢舍那修瑜伽行，如是以奢摩他毘鉢舍那重修心已，於諸界中從彼隨眠而求解脫 Mhv at T1545, 136b4 尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾 Ak at T1558, 118b11 觀謂觀察此息風已，兼觀息俱大種造色，及依色住心及心所，具觀五蘊以為境界。轉謂移轉緣息風覺，安置後後勝善根中乃至世間第一法位。淨謂昇進入見道等 TS at T1646, 338a6 佛示定中亦有智慧，非但繫心。行者修習定時若生煩惱，於中生智除此煩惱，欲令三昧為聖清淨

⁵⁹² Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 279-80 Vim at T1648, 461b24 云何令起者？彼坐禪人入寂寂住，或坐或臥，樂滅意樂滅入初禪。入已安詳出，無間見彼禪無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。如第二禪第三禪第四禪，虛空處識處無所有處，入已安詳出，無間見正定無常苦無我，乃至行捨智

⁵⁹³ Ibid, 689-90

Auk Sayadaw suggest access concentration and momentary concentration respectively serving as a basis for practicing insight ⁵⁹⁴ The *Yogācārabhūmi*, the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* also agree that one could develop insight dependent on access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, and the access concentration is implicitly suggested in SĀ 347, BSĀ 160, SĀ 936, and MĀ 195 ⁵⁹⁵ Yet, these three texts say nothing about momentary concentration All of these show that *śamatha* and *vīpaśyanā* are one path which is developed dependent on a samādhi, and this samādhi could be a *dhyāna* or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna* That is, the liberating path could occur while one is in *dhyāna* or after emerging from *dhyāna* dependent on access concentration

⁵⁹⁴ Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 178-79 Pa Auk, *Knowing and Seeing*, 188

⁵⁹⁵ YB at T1579, 835c19 復次若有苾芻，具淨尸羅，住別解脫清淨律儀；增上心學增上力故，得初靜慮近分所攝勝三摩地以為依止；增上慧學增上力故，得法住智及涅槃智 Mhv at T1545, 572b16 蘇尸摩當知：先有法住智，後有涅槃智。蘇尸摩曰：我今不知何者法住智？何者涅槃智？佛言：隨汝知與不知，然法應爾。時蘇尸摩不果先願。然彼五百應真苾芻依未至定得漏盡已後，方能起根本等至。由此故知：近分地智是法住智，根本地智是涅槃智 MP at T1509, 270b21 有二種三昧：一種慧解脫分，二種共解脫分。前者慧解脫分不能入禪定，但說未到地中三昧；此中說共解脫分，具有禪定解脫三昧

Chapter V

Consciousness and Meditation

1. *Nāma*: Its Definition and Function in Insight Meditation

In insight meditation, the most important thing is to see things as they really are. Whether one is able to see things as they really are depends on how meditative consciousness (*viññāna*) and its mental factors—attention (*manaskāra*), contact (*sparśa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saṃjñā*), and volition (*cetanā*)—perform in the act of knowing objects. Consciousness, attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition are said to be the fundamental factors of cognition.⁵⁹⁶ In the Buddhist system, *nāma* (name or mentality) covers all the process of cognition to be the decisive factor in the development of insight. Below, I will examine the definition of *nāma* in early discourses, and compare its variant explanations in the Abhidharma and commentarial literature, so as to expound its essential function in meditation practice.

According to the *Nāma Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*,

Name has weighted down everything,
 Nothing is more extensive than name
 Name is the one thing that has
 All under its control.⁵⁹⁷

The Pāli commentary states: “There is no living being or entity that is free from a name, whether the name be natural or fabricated. Even a tree or stone with no known name is

⁵⁹⁶ SĀ 298, MĀ 29, SN 12.2, MN 9, Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 78, YB at T1579, 601c10. 問：諸識生時與幾遍行心法俱起？答：五。一作意、二觸、三受、四想、五思。

⁵⁹⁷ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 130.

still called ‘the nameless one’⁵⁹⁸ Here *nāma* is defined as “name” This definition shows that name is one of the significant meanings for *nāma* According to the *Ekottara Āgama*, “When there are words, there is the fetter of birth and death When words do not exist, there is nirvāna”⁵⁹⁹ This discourse indicates that word Zi 字 is the key to one’s rebirths and deliverance Regarding the significance of words or names, the *Aṣṭasāhasrikāpraññāpāramitāsūtra* (*Daoxing banruo jing* 道行般若經) explains that when words exist, there must be perception (*saṃjñā*), giving rise to attachment⁶⁰⁰ Attachment arises with words and perception as its conditions, which leads one to the cycle of birth and death Deliverance also arises through words and perception to abandon attachment These discourses illustrate that names or words are crucial to one’s rebirth and deliverance

The Chinese parallel to the Pāli *Nāma Sutta* has two versions one is the 1020th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, and the other one is 247th sūtra of the shorter *Samyukta Āgama* According to SĀ 1020, *nāma* is also translated as “name,” while in BSĀ 247, *nāma* is translated as the “four aggregates,” namely feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness⁶⁰¹ These two translations disclose that the term *nāma* includes these two meanings in the Buddhist system In the *Nāma Sutta*, the verse is “Name is the one thing that has all under its control”, in the shorter *Samyukta Āgama*, the four aggregates of feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness are *nāma* which is the one thing that has all under its control

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid , 380

⁵⁹⁹ EĀ 30 1 at T125, 659b9 有字者，是生死結；無字者，是涅槃也

⁶⁰⁰ App at T224, 442b25 有字者便有想，以故著

⁶⁰¹ SĀ 1020 at T99, 266a24 名者映世間 名者世無上 唯有一名法 能制御世間 BSĀ 247 at T100, 461a29 於諸世物中 四陰名最勝 善於彼處處 皆得為最上 四陰名一法 於世間自在

With regard to this verse, the *Yogācārabhūmi* states that *nāma* has two meanings the four immaterial aggregates and name as shown in SĀ 1020, BSĀ 247, and SN 1 61⁶⁰² This treatise interprets that the purpose of this verse is for a meditator to abandon attachment to an illusory self and attachment to the reality of all phenomena⁶⁰³ When *nāma* is defined as the four immaterial aggregates, it is said for the meditator to penetrate the selfless nature of a person. When *nāma* is defined as name, name is said to be the object of the four immaterial aggregates, in order for the meditator to abandon attachment to the reality of phenomena. Hence, the abandoning of attachments is also through the four aggregates and name to penetrate that all phenomena arise dependently, without an essence of their own. The *Yogācārabhūmi* clearly explains that the two significant meanings of *nāma* in the development of insight are for a meditator to see the selfless nature of individual existence and the unsubstantial nature of all phenomena. The **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* also indicate that *nāma* has these two meanings: the four immaterial aggregates and name⁶⁰⁴

Moreover, in the Chinese *Āgamas*, the definition of *nāma* in *nāma-rūpa* (name-and-form) is the four immaterial aggregates of feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, concerning all mental phenomena shown in the 298th sūtra of the

⁶⁰² YB at T1579, 663a16 此中顯示補特伽羅無我者：謂善了知四無色蘊，能斷一切自境界相，是故說名能映一切。顯示法無我者：謂善了知遍計所執自性，善了知世俗言名，能除一切彼所依相，是故說名能映一切。

⁶⁰³ Ibid

⁶⁰⁴ Mhv at T1545, 73b1 何故佛說四蘊名名？答：佛於有為總立二分，謂色非色，色是色蘊，非色即是受等四蘊。非色聚中，有能顯了一切法名，故非色聚總說為名。AK at T1558, 52a28 無色四蘊何故稱名？隨所立名，根境勢力於義轉變，故說為名。云何隨名勢力轉變？謂隨種種世共立名，於彼義轉變詮表，即如牛馬色味等名。

Samyukta Āgama and the *Daṅchiluo jing* 大拘絺羅經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*⁶⁰⁵ The **Mahāyānasamgraha* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā* also point out that *nāma* in the *nāma-rūpa* stands for the four immaterial aggregates⁶⁰⁶ In the causal chain of dependent origination, *nāma-rūpa* and consciousness (*viññāna*) depend on each other to arise The *Naḷakalāpa Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya* says “Just as two sheaves of reeds might stand leaning against each other, so too, with name-and-form as condition, consciousness [comes to be], with consciousness as condition, name-and-form [come to be]”⁶⁰⁷ Its Chinese counterpart is the 288th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, which also shows the mutual dependence of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* by the simile of three sheaves of reeds⁶⁰⁸ The two sheaves of reeds represent consciousness and *nāma-rūpa*, the three sheaves of reeds are consciousness, *nāma*, and *rūpa* Here the question is when consciousness is included in *nāma-rūpa*, how does the consciousness act as the condition for *nāma-rūpa*?

Asanga, in his **Mahāyānasamgraha*, explains that *nāma* includes the four mental aggregates in which the aggregate of consciousness denotes the six consciousnesses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking The consciousness, which occurs as the condition for *nāma-rūpa*, is *ālaya*-consciousness (*ālayaviññāna*), not any of the six consciousnesses⁶⁰⁹ In Theravāda, this consciousness is called “rebirth-linking

⁶⁰⁵ SĀ 298 at T99, 85a28 緣識名色者，云何名？謂四無色陰：受陰、想陰、行陰、識陰 MĀ 29 at T26, 463c23 謂有比丘知名色如真，知名色習，知名色滅，知名色滅道如真。云何知名？謂四非色陰為名

⁶⁰⁶ Mhs at T1594, 136a16 若離異孰識，識與名色更互相依，譬如蘆束相依而轉，此亦不成 Mhv at T1545, 118c19 識俱諸蘊是名色

⁶⁰⁷ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 608-09

⁶⁰⁸ SĀ 288 at T99, 81b3 而今復言名色緣識，此義云何？尊者摩訶拘絺羅答言：今當說譬，如智者因譬得解。譬如三蘆立於空地，展轉相依而得豎立，若去其一，二亦不立，若去其二，一亦不立，展轉相依而得豎立。識緣名色亦復如是，展轉相依而得生長

⁶⁰⁹ Mhs at T1594, 136a16 若離異孰識，識與名色更互相依，譬如蘆束相依而轉，此亦不成

consciousness” (P. *paṭisandhiviññāṇa*), which links the new life with the previous one.⁶¹⁰

This consciousness is not an eternal entity transmigrating from life to life, but the impermanent stream of consciousness. According to Yogācāra, when *ālayavijñāna* descends into the mother’s womb, *nāmarūpa* takes shape in the womb to grow, develop, and reach maturity; that is, the five aggregates come to be through the mutual dependence of *ālaya*-consciousness and *nāma-rūpa*.

In the Pāli *Nikāyas*, the definition of *nāma* in the *nāma-rūpa* does not include consciousness. The Pāli parallels to SĀ 298 and MĀ 29 are the *Vibhaṅga Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* and the *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* respectively.

Regarding *nāma* in the *nāma-rūpa*, the *Vibhaṅga Sutta* says:

And what, bhikkhus, is name-and-form? Feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention: this is called name. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called form. Thus this name and this form are together called name-and form.⁶¹¹

In the *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta*, *nāma* also denotes feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention concerning mental activities of individual existence.⁶¹² Ven. Bodhi explains:

“*Nāma* is the assemblage of mental factors involved in cognition: feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention. These are called ‘name’ because they contribute to the process of cognition by which objects are subsumed under conceptual designations.”⁶¹³

The definition of *nāma* in the Pāli *Nikāyas* shows its important function in the process of cognition. In the Mahāyāna sūtras, the *Mahāratnakūṭasūtra* (*Da baoji jing* 大寶積經) also defines *nāma* as feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention, in which volition, contact, and attention pertain to the aggregate of formations; that is, *nāma* is the

⁶¹⁰ Bodhi, *Great Discourse on Causation*, 18.

⁶¹¹ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 535.

⁶¹² Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 141.

⁶¹³ Bodhi, trans., introduction to *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 48.

three aggregates of feeling, perception, and formations⁶¹⁴ This definition is the same as that of the Pāli *Nikāyas*

With regard to the function of *nāma* in cognition, Ven Ñānananda says *nāma* means name And, feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention are called “name”, this illustrates that the prototype of name is feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention⁶¹⁵ He gives an example A little child, who is unable to speak or understand language, obtains a rubber ball This little child tries to know this ball through smelling it, feeling it, eating it, and finally rolling it on the floor At that time, he/she realizes that the ball is a plaything Ven Ñānananda explains that this child has recognized this ball not by the name which people call it, but by feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention, which are the factors included under “name”⁶¹⁶ These mental factors associated with consciousness fulfill the act of cognition

Buddhaghosa, in his *Visuddhimagga*, defines *nāma* as the three aggregates of feeling, perception, and formations when he explains that *nāma-rūpa* and consciousness occur as mutual conditions in the chain of dependent origination⁶¹⁷ Here consciousness is excluded from *nāma* because it is the condition for *nāma-rūpa* He also includes consciousness in *nāma* when he explains the stage of insight called ‘discernment of mentality-materiality’⁶¹⁸ In the context of insight practice, consciousness is included in *nāma* for a meditator to examine In the *Visuddhimagga*, *nāma* could be the three aggregates or the four aggregates, whether or not consciousness is included in *nāma* depends on the context

⁶¹⁴ Mhr at T310, 200a15 云何為名色？所謂受想思觸作意，四大界及四大界之所造色，是名名色

⁶¹⁵ Ñānananda, "Nibbana Sermons - Part 1-7," 4

⁶¹⁶ Ibid

⁶¹⁷ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 573

⁶¹⁸ Ibid, 609

The *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* states: “Consciousness and mental factors, which comprise the four immaterial aggregates, and Nibbāna, are the five kinds that are immaterial. They are also called ‘name.’”⁶¹⁹ Ven. Bodhi adds: “The four immaterial aggregates are called *nāma*, ‘name,’ in the sense of bending (*namana*) because they bend towards the object in the act of cognizing it. They are also called *nāma* in the sense of causing to bend (*nāmana*) since they cause one another to bend on to the object.”⁶²⁰ *Nāma* specifically involves the act of knowing objects. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *nāma* has the characteristic of “bending.”⁶²¹ In the process of cognition, attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition are the fundamental cognitive factors called *nāma*. These five mental factors associated with consciousness cover the cognitive side of individual existence; that is, *nāma* is the four mental aggregates of feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness cover all mental phenomena of individual existence.

How do contact, feeling, perception, and volition work in the act of cognition? It is said that contact, feeling, perception, and volition arise simultaneously in each act of consciousness.⁶²² The 306th sutra of the *Samyukta Āgama* says:

In dependence on eye and forms, there arises eye-consciousness. The meeting of These three things is contact. Contact, feeling, perception, and volition arise simultaneously. The dharmas of these four immaterial aggregates, eye, and forms are named a person.
 眼色緣生眼識，三事和合觸，觸俱生受、想、思。此四無色陰、眼色，此等法名為人。⁶²³

This discourse illustrates that when the sensory object is present, contact, feeling, perception, and volition associated with consciousness arise together in the act of

⁶¹⁹ Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 325.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 606.

⁶²² SĀ 306

⁶²³ SĀ 306 at T99, 87c26.

knowing the object In this discourse, volition represents the aggregate of formations (*saṃskāra*) According to the 41st sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama* and its parallel *Upādāna Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, the aggregate of formations is defined only as the six classes of volition ⁶²⁴ According to Vasubandhu, volition alone is mentioned because it is the dominant factor in the aggregate of formations ⁶²⁵ Asanga states, “Thus—except for feeling and perception—this volition, with the other mental things (*cattasika dharma*) and also formations dissociated from the mind (*cittaviprayukta saṃskāra*), is called the aggregate of formations” ⁶²⁶ Ven Bodhi explains the Theravāda treatment of the fourth aggregates thus, “[T]he *sankhārakkhandha* is treated as an ‘umbrella category’ for classifying all mental factors other than feeling and perception Volition is mentioned only as the most important factor in this aggregate, not as its exclusive constituent” ⁶²⁷

The inseparable relationship among feeling, perception, and volition is explained in the 211th sūtra of the *Madhyama Āgama* thus

Feeling, perception, and volition, are these three dharmas conjoined or disjoined? Is it possible to separately distinguish these three dharmas? Venerable Mahākotthita replies Feeling, perception, and volition, these three dharmas are conjoined, not disjoined It is impossible to separately distinguish these three dharmas What is the reason? For what one feels, that one perceives and intends Therefore, these three dharmas are conjoined, not disjoined And these three dharmas cannot be separately distinguished

覺想思此三法為合？為別？此三法可別施設耶？尊者大拘絺羅答曰：覺想思此三法合不別，此三法不可別施設。所以者何？覺所覺者，即是想所想，思所思，是故此三法合不別，此三法不可別施設。⁶²⁸

Feeling, perception, and volition simultaneously arise and function together, but on some

⁶²⁴ SĀ 41 at T99, 9c7 云何行如實知？謂六思身 Bodhi, trans, *Samyutta Nikāya*, 896

⁶²⁵ AK at T1558, 4a7 餘一切行名為行蘊。然薄伽梵於契經中說六思身為行蘊者，由最勝故。所以者何？行名造作，思是業性造作義強，故為最勝

⁶²⁶ Asanga, *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, trans Walpola Rāhula and Sara Boin-Webb, 8

⁶²⁷ Bodhi, trans, *Samyutta Nikāya*, 1065

⁶²⁸ MĀ 211, T26, 791b1

occasions, the function of one is predominant. Whenever they perform their functions, consciousness must be present. Feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness are conjoined; it is impossible to separate one from the others or to have one without the others. The Pāli parallel, the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, also shows their inseparable relationship thus:

Feeling, perception, and consciousness, friend—these states are conjoined, not disjoined, and it is impossible to separate each of these states from the others in order to describe the difference between them. For what one feels, that one perceives; and what one perceives, that one cognizes.⁶²⁹

Consciousness and its mental factors depend on each other to arise, while consciousness is principal and its mental factors belong to it. The relationship between consciousness and its mental factors is shown in the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*: “The fifty-two states associated with consciousness that arise and cease together (with consciousness), that have the same object and base (as consciousness) are known as mental factors.”⁶³⁰ This text explains that the interdependent relationship between consciousness and its mental factors has four characteristics: arising together, ceasing together, having the same object, and having the same base.⁶³¹ Consciousness and its mental factors act interdependently. There is no arising of mental states without the presence of consciousness.

In meditation practice, attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition associated with meditative consciousness are crucial for a meditator to penetrate the true nature of all phenomena. These mental factors conjoined with meditative consciousness perform the act of cognition shown in the *Anupada Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*.

⁶²⁹ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 389.

⁶³⁰ Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 76.

⁶³¹ *Ibid.*, 77.

According to this discourse, Venerable Sāriputta mastered the four *dhyānas*, the four formless attainments, and the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*). In these meditative attainments, perception is too subtle in the fourth formless attainment, and it is absent in the attainment of cessation; therefore, it is said, these two attainments cannot serve as a foundation for insight. On the basis of the first seven meditative attainments, Venerable Sāriputta developed “insight into states one by one as they occurred.”⁶³² He discerned the meditative consciousness and its mental factors as they arose, persisted, and disappeared.⁶³³

According to the *Anupada Sutta*, meditative consciousness and its mental factors are present in the first *dhyāna* thus:

And the states in the first jhāna—the applied thought, the sustained thought, the rapture, the pleasure, and the unification of mind; the contact, feeling, perception, volition, and mind; the zeal, decision, energy, mindfulness, equanimity, and attention—these states were defined by him one by one as they occurred.⁶³⁴

By discerning the impermanence of the meditative consciousness and these mental factors, Venerable Sāriputta deeply understood their empty nature as “these states, not having been, come into being; having been, they vanish.”⁶³⁵ They come into being without having been before, and vanish after having been. By practicing the union of tranquility (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassyanā*) during two-week period, Venerable Sāriputta attained mastery and perfection in noble wisdom, and reached the final fruit of arahantship. In this early discourse, attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition are all present from the first *dhyāna* up to the base of nothingness; these mental factors

⁶³² Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 899.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, 899-902.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, 899.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*

are called “name” or *nāma* performing essential cognitive functions in the whole development of both *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*. The *Amupada Sutta* has no counterpart in the Chinese *Āgamas*, but the *Dharmaskandha* (*Abhidharma fayun zu lun* 阿毘達磨法蘊足論), an Abhidharma text of the Sarvāstivāda, also specifies the presence of meditative consciousness and its mental factors corresponding to those of the *Amupada Sutta*⁶³⁶

According to the *Dharmaskandha*, in the state of the first *dhyāna*, there are present meditative consciousness, the five *dhyāna* factors—applied thought, sustained thought, rapture, pleasure, and unification of mind—attention (*manaskāra*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saṃjñā*), volition (*cetanā*), desire (*chanda*), decision (*adhimokṣa*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), samādhi, and wisdom (*prajñā*)⁶³⁷ In these mental factors, the *dhyāna* factors are successively eliminated from coarse to subtle and only one-pointedness remains in each meditative attainment. The other nine mental factors are all present in the four *dhyānas*. These nine mental factors plus contact (*sparsā*) are called ten *Mahābhūmikas* (the universal groundings) in the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, such as the *Dhātukāya* (*Apīdamo jieshenzu lun* 阿毘達磨界身足論), the *Prakaraṇapāda* (*Apīdamo pinlei zu lun* 阿毘達磨品類足論), and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*⁶³⁸ According to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the ten *Mahābhūmikas* are said to be preset in every state of

⁶³⁶ Dsk at T1537, 483c11 靜慮者：謂在此定中尋伺喜樂心一境性，總此五支，名初靜慮。Dsk at T1537, 483c28 在此定中諸心意識，名初靜慮俱有之心。諸思等思，現前等思，已思當思，造心意業，名初靜慮俱有意業。諸心勝解，已勝解當勝解，名初靜慮俱有勝解。在此定中若受若想，若欲若作意，若念若定若慧等，名初靜慮俱有諸法，如是諸法亦得名初靜慮。

⁶³⁷ Ibid

⁶³⁸ DK at T1540, 614b15 十大地法云何？一受、二想、三思、四觸、五作意、六欲、七勝解、八念、九三摩地、十慧。PP at T1542, 698c 十大地法云何？謂受想思觸作意欲勝解念定慧。Mhv at T1545, 220a2 復次此中因說心所，應說大地等法，謂大地法有十種：一受、二想、三思、四觸、五欲、六作意、七勝解、八念、九三摩地、十慧。

mind⁶³⁹ However, according to the Yogācārin, only attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition arise in any act of consciousness called five universals (*sarvatraga*), and desire, decision, mindfulness, samādhi, and wisdom are present in particular objects, not in all types of consciousness, called five specifics (*vimyata*) as shown in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the *Pañcaskandhakaparakaraṇa* (*Dacheng wuyun lun* 大乘五蘊論), and the **Pañcaskandhaparakaraṇavaibhāṣya* (*Dacheng guang wuyun lun* 大乘廣五蘊論)⁶⁴⁰

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the five universals (*sarvatraga*)—attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition—are common to wholesome (*kuśala*), unwholesome (*akuśala*), and indeterminate (*avyākṛta*) minds, they are present in the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*), the form realm (*rūpadhātu*), and the formless realm (*arūpadhātu*), they are common to every consciousness at all times, and they are present in each other⁶⁴¹ Theravāda adds to these five mental factors two more factors—one-pointedness and the mental life faculty—to make seven universals⁶⁴² According to the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, the seven universals are “common to every consciousness”⁶⁴³ Ven Bodhi adds “The seven universals are the *cetasikas* common (*sādhāraṇa*) to all consciousness (*sabbacitta*) These factors perform the most rudimentary and essential cognitive functions, without which consciousness of an object would be utterly

⁶³⁹ AK at T1558, 19a12 此中若法大地所有名大地法，謂法叵於一切心有。彼法是何？頌曰：受想思觸欲 慧念與作意 勝解三摩地 遍於一切心

⁶⁴⁰ YB at T1579, 601c10 問：諸識生時與幾遍行心法俱起？答：五。一作意、二觸、三受、四想、五思。問復與幾不遍行心法俱起？答：不遍行法乃有多種，勝者唯五：一欲、二勝解、三念、四三摩地、五慧 Psk at T1612, 848c10 是諸心法，五是遍行，五是別境 Pss at T1613, 851b29 是諸心法，五是遍行，此遍一切善不善無記心，故名遍行；五是別境，此五一一於差別境，展轉決定，性不相離，是中有一，必有一切

⁶⁴¹ YB at T1579, 291b26 名心所有法遍一切處一切地一切時一切生

⁶⁴² Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 78

⁶⁴³ Ibid

impossible.”⁶⁴⁴ These universals are common to every consciousness at all times, functioning as essential cognitive elements to complete the act of cognition.

A comparison of mental factors respectively found in the *Anupada Sutta* and the *Dharmaskandha* shows that the mental factors present in the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments are mainly constituted of the *dhyāna* factors, the universals (*sarvatraga*), and the specifics (*vinīyata*). In the *Anupada Sutta*, the five universals (*sarvatraga*)—attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition—are all present in the first seven meditative attainments; and there are three specifics (*vinīyata*)—desire, decision, and mindfulness—enumerated in the first seven meditative attainments. In contrast, in the *Dharmaskandha*, contact is absent and the other four universals—attention, feeling, perception, and volition—are enumerated in the four *dhyānas*; and the five specifics—desire, decision, mindfulness, *samādhi*, and wisdom—are all present in the four *dhyānas*. The universals and the specifics are the two categories of mental factors in the Abhidharma systems of Buddhist schools. This illustrates that the classification of mental factors in the Abhidharma systems originates from the profound investigation into the activities of meditative consciousness and its mental states while one is in deep meditative absorption.

The *Anupada Sutta* and the *Dharmaskandha* show that the universal and specific mental factors operate together in the experience of the four *dhyānas* and of the three lower formless attainments, which explains their essential functions in meditation practice. The five universals arise together with consciousness; they are, in reality, the four mental aggregates of feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, because attention, contact, and volition are included in the aggregate of formations. These four

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

mental aggregates, along with the aggregate of form, are the five aggregates that constitute all physical and mental phenomena. What is called “a person” is nothing, but the arising and passing away of all physical and mental phenomena. According to the *Samanupassanā Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, “those ascetics and brahmins who regard [anything as] self in various ways all regard [as self] the five aggregates subject to clinging, or a certain one among them.”⁶⁴⁵ The delusion of personal selfhood originates from the five aggregates or any of the five aggregates. The four mental aggregates of feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness cover all cognitive elements, creating an illusory self from themselves. With the establishment of identity view (that is, view of self), all other wrong views come to be, as the *Isidatta Sutta (2)* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* says: “[W]hen there is identity view, these views come to be; when there is no identity view, these views do not come to be.”⁶⁴⁶

What is called a person is the complex unity of the five aggregates. Because of the five aggregates affected by clinging, there is identity view which attaches to a self and what belongs to a self. According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the Dārṣāntika upholds that the cognitive referent for identity view is absent because a self is nonexistent; for instance, when a person perceives a rope and mistakes it for a snake, there is no real snake for the cognitive distortion.⁶⁴⁷ Hence, identity view is said without cognitive object because there is nothing to be found as a self. In contrast, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* maintains that the cognitive referent for identity view is present because the five aggregates of clinging are

⁶⁴⁵ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 885.

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 1317.

⁶⁴⁷ Mhv at T1545, 36a17: 調譬喻者作如是說：薩迦耶見無實所緣。彼作是言：薩迦耶見計我我所，於勝義中無我我所，如人見繩謂是蛇，見杻謂是人等，此亦如是，故無所緣。

existent⁶⁴⁸ That is, identity view wrongly perceives the five aggregates as a self and what belongs to a self, and the five aggregates are the real object as the rope exists, but it is incorrectly seen as a snake

In the conjunction of *samatha* and *vipāśyanā*, the five universals (*sarvatraga*)—attention, contact, feeling, perception, and volition—and the five specifics (*vimyata*)—desire, decision, mindfulness, samādhi, and wisdom are present in the first seven meditative attainments. The assemblage of these mental factors is *nāma* which is crucial for a meditator to penetrate the selfless nature of individual existence and to abandon attachment to the reality of phenomena. The five universals (*sarvatraga*) associated with consciousness are the four mental aggregates, and they along with the aggregate of form represent the presence of the five aggregates to be the particular objects for the five specifics (*vimyata*) in the development of insight. The five specifics—desire, decision, mindfulness, samādhi, and wisdom—act in particular objects, especially meditative objects. The *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Pañcaskandhaprakaraṇavābhāṣya* explain. First, desire (*chanda*) is the desire for an object that one delights in, and the desire to act for this object. Second, decision (*adhimokṣa*) is the ascertainment of this object without groping. Third, mindfulness (*smṛti*) is for one to keep this object in mind without forgetfulness. Fourth, samādhi is the unification of mind on this object without distraction, and supports wisdom to discern this object. Fifth, wisdom (*prajñā*) is the discernment of this object as it really is.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁸ Mhv at T1545, 36a20 為止彼執，顯示此見實有所緣，故作斯論。問：於勝義中無我我所，云何此見實有所緣？答：薩迦耶見緣五取蘊計我我所，如緣繩杙謂是蛇人，行相顛倒非無所緣，以五取蘊是實有故。

⁶⁴⁹ YB at T1579, 291c12 欲作何業？謂發動為業。勝解作何業？謂於所緣任持功德過失為業。念作何業？謂於久遠所思所作所說憶念為業。三摩地作何業？謂智所依為業。慧作何業？謂於戲論所行染污清淨隨順推求為業。Psk at T1613, 851c17 云何欲？謂於可愛樂事希望為性。愛樂事者，所謂可

In the development of insight, the five specifics direct the mind onto particular objects, namely the five aggregates. First, one has the desire (*chanda*) for the five aggregates and the desire to perform an action for the five aggregates to function as the meditation object. Second, one understands what the five aggregates are, this is decision (*adhimokṣa*) of what the objects are. With regard to decision (*adhimokṣa*), Sthiramati explains that one ascertains the five aggregates, as the Buddha says that form is like a lump of foam, feeling like a water bubble, perception like a mirage, volition like a plantain trunk, and consciousness like an illusion.⁶⁵⁰ Mindfulness (*smṛti*), the third specific, enables the five aggregates to be clearly present in every state of consciousness without forgetfulness. The fourth specific is *samādhi*. Sthiramati indicates that *samādhi*, the mental factor, fixes the mind on the five aggregates, impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and non-self, that is, the unification of the mind on these objects supports wisdom to see things as they really are.⁶⁵¹ Finally, the fifth specific wisdom (*prajñā*) discerns that each of the five aggregates is not identical with a self, contains a self, or is contained within a self, meanwhile, there is no self to be found as possessing any of these five aggregates. Wisdom penetrates the true nature of the five aggregates as impermanent, suffering, empty, and not-self. In the *Anupada Sutta* and the *Dharmaskandha*, the universals (*sarvatraga*) and the specifics (*vimyata*), which are the mental factors present

爰見聞等事，是願樂希求之義，能與精進所依為業。云何勝解？謂於決定境，如所了知，印可為性。決定境者，謂於五蘊等。如日親說。色如聚沫，受如水泡，想如陽炎，行如芭蕉，識如幻境，如是決定。或如諸法所住自相，謂即如是而生決定。言決定者，即印持義，餘無引轉為業，此增勝故，餘所不能引。云何念？謂於慣習事，心不忘失，明記為性。慣習事者，謂曾所習行，與不散亂所依為業。云何三摩地？謂於所觀事，心一境性。所觀事者，謂五蘊等，及無常苦空無我等。心一境者，是專注義，與智所依為業。由心定故。如實了知。云何慧？謂即於彼擇法為性，或如理所引，或不如理所引，或俱非所引。

⁶⁵⁰ Psk at T1613, 852a 云何勝解？謂於決定境，如所了知，印可為性。決定境者，謂於五蘊等。如日親說。色如聚沫，受如水泡，想如陽炎，行如芭蕉，識如幻境，如是決定。

⁶⁵¹ Psk at T1613, 851c20 云何三摩地？謂於所觀事，心一境性。所觀事者，謂五蘊等，及無常苦空無我等。心一境者，是專注義，與智所依為業。由心定故。如實了知。

in the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments, show that insight is developed while one is in a meditative attainment

Without a substantial self, feeling feels, perception perceives, volitional formations construct the conditioned, and consciousness cognizes as shown in the *Khajjanīya Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* and the 46th sūtra of the *Saṃyukta Āgama*⁶⁵² These early discourses explain that feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, not a self, are the subjective component of experience According to the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (*Bian zhongbie lun* 辯中邊論), consciousness knows an object, and its mental factors—feeling, perception, and volition—know the distinctive qualities of the same object⁶⁵³ This treatise illustrates that in the act of knowing an object, consciousness is aware of what feeling feels, what perception perceives, and how volitional formations construct In the practice of insight meditation, consciousness is that which is aware of the other three mental aggregates Ven Anālayo indicates

A problem often encountered by advanced meditators is that they are aware of body and mind passing away, but are not aware of their own awareness also passing away In doctrinal terms, they can see *nāma* and *rūpa* as changing, and therefore as unsatisfactory and not-self, but fail to catch out consciousness The instruction given at that junction of insight meditation is to direct awareness to that which is aware of the flux⁶⁵⁴

Here *nāma* is the three aggregates of feeling, perception, and volitional formations In this context, *nāma* and consciousness are independent and coexist When one discerns the arising and passing away of body and mind, one is aware of *nāma* and *rūpa* as impermanent, unsatisfactory, and not-self Then, to catch out “that which is aware” is important for one to discern the changing of consciousness, leading to the realization of

⁶⁵² Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 915

⁶⁵³ MV at T1600, 465a20 唯能了境總相名心，亦了差別名為受等諸心所去

⁶⁵⁴ Bhikkhu Anālayo, email communication, December 17, 2009

not-self

Feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness are the subjective part of experience, and they can also become objects of consciousness. According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the three mental aggregates of feeling, perception, and formations are the objects of mind-consciousness, and they are also the concomitants of mind-consciousness in the act of knowing an object.⁶⁵⁵ In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, the three immaterial aggregates—feeling, perception, and formations—are put in the mental-object base (*dharmāyatana*) of the twelve sense bases⁶⁵⁶ (*dvādaśāyatanaṃ*) and the mental-object element (*dharmadhātu*) of the eighteen elements⁶⁵⁷ (*aṣṭādaśa-dhātavaḥ*).⁶⁵⁸ Here the question is: in the state of samādhi, when one penetrates the selfless nature of the five aggregates, how do feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness act as the subjective component and the objective component of experience? In other words, does consciousness cognize itself?

According to the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, “mental object is sixfold: sensitive matter, subtle matter, consciousness, mental factors, Nibbāna, and concepts.”⁶⁵⁹ This text states that consciousness and its mental factors could be the objects of consciousness. Ven. Bodhi adds:

Citta is also a type of mental object. Though citta experiences objects, citta in turn can become an object. It should be noted that a citta in its immediacy cannot become its own object, for the cognizer cannot cognize

⁶⁵⁵ YB at T1579, 280b11 彼所緣者：謂一切法如其所應，若不共者所緣，即受想行蘊，無為無見無對色，六內處及一切種子。彼助伴者：謂作意觸受想思

⁶⁵⁶ The twelve sense bases are: the eye base, ear base, nose base, tongue base, body base, mind base, visible form base, the sound base, smell base, taste base, tangible base, and mental-object base

⁶⁵⁷ The eighteen elements include the twelve sense bases and the six consciousnesses which are eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness

⁶⁵⁸ AK at T1558, 4a15 即此所說受想行蘊，及無表色三種無為，如是七法，於處門中立為法處，於界門中立為法界 AS at T1605, 667b05 心所有法，謂受蘊想蘊相應行蘊，及法界法處一分

⁶⁵⁹ Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 135

itself; but a *citta* in an individual mental continuum can experience earlier *cittas* in that same continuum as well as the *cittas* of other beings. The fifty-two *cetasikas* can also become objects of a mind-door process, as for example, when one becomes aware of one's feelings, volitions, and emotions.⁶⁶⁰

Consciousness and its mental factors—feeling, perception, and volition—are the subjective part of experience. They can become objects of consciousness; on the occasion when one becomes aware of one's feelings and examines them, or when one is aware of one's perceptions and reflects on them, or when one is aware of the activities of mind and cognizes the earlier mind. In other words, the present feeling cannot feel itself; the present perception cannot perceive itself; the present volition cannot consider itself; and the present consciousness cannot cognize itself, just like a finger cannot point to itself; as an eye cannot see itself; and as a knife cannot cut itself.

Therefore, in this context, Ven. Bodhi explicates the development of insight for a meditator to penetrate the selfless nature of the five aggregates thus:

In the actual course of practice, the meditator sees the impermanence, etc., of the present aggregates: those aggregates that are present within the theoretical framework of the suttas, not the Abhidhamma. He sees that whatever aggregates arise, immediately pass away. On this basis he can infer that all aggregates of the past (even before his birth into this lifetime) have also passed away and are thus impermanent; and he can infer that whatever aggregates will arise in the future will also pass away. Everything, past and future, is subject to the same law discerned in the present: whatever arises is subject to immediate cessation. From the sutta standpoint, one can be aware of the present. From the Abhidhamma standpoint, the “present” of which one is aware consists of events that have already perished.⁶⁶¹

This statement shows that the explanation of the Abhidharma system is different from that of the sutta system. According to the Abhidharma system, on the occasion when one's feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness become objects of consciousness,

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁶⁶¹ Bhikkhu Bodhi, email communication, August 18, 2009.

they are, in reality, the past feeling, past perception, past volition, and past consciousness. On that occasion, a new feeling, a new perception, and a new volition associated with the present consciousness participate in the act of knowing the past feeling, or past perception, or past volition, or past consciousness.

According to the *Samādhinirmocanasūtra*, the subject and object are not different, and there is no object which exists independently from the mind, the relationship between the subject and object is like a mirror image which reflects what the subject is.⁶⁶² In other words, both subject and object are present. When the five aggregates become the objects, they are the reflection of the subject. On that occasion, the present feeling, perception, volition associated with the present consciousness, which belong to the subjective part of the experience, share in the work of experiencing the objects, namely the present five aggregates. The simile of a mirror image illustrates that feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness could act as the subjective component and the objective component of experience, and both the subjective and objective parts are all present.

2. Samādhi and the Activities of *Manas* and Ego-consciousness

Samādhi is a supporting condition for the knowledge and vision of things as they really are. Yet, unenlightened meditators are afflicted with craving (*tṛṣṇā*), conceit (*māna*), views (*dṛṣṭi*), and ignorance (*avidyā*). When unenlightened meditators attain the *dhyānas*, the *dhyānas* are tainted by these four defilements, called “*dhyāna* dominated by

⁶⁶² SS at T676, 698b02 若彼所行影像即與此心無有異者，云何此心還見此心？善男子！此中無有少法能見少法，然即此心如是生時，即有如是影像顯現。善男子！如依善瑩清淨鏡面，以質為緣還見本質，而謂我今見於影像，及謂離質別有所行影像顯現。如是此心生時，相似有異三摩地所行影像顯現。

craving,” “*dhyāna* dominated by views,” “*dhyāna* dominated by conceit,” and “*dhyāna* dominated by doubt”⁶⁶³ Here doubt arises due to ignorance⁶⁶⁴ These four kinds of *dhyāna* show that craving, conceit, views, and ignorance are the main defilements active in *dhyāna* states which include the four *dhyānas* and the formless attainments⁶⁶⁵ This four defilements are termed as the four indeterminate roots (*avyākṛtamūlāni*) by the Sarvāstivādins—Vasumitra and Ghosa, so as to explain the activities of subtle defilements in deep concentration

Craving, conceit, views, and ignorance are the four defilements specifically associated with *manas*, or the seventh consciousness, in Yogācāra According to the **Mahāyānasamgraha*, *manas* is *kliṣṭa-manas* (the defiled *manas*) that is contaminated by its association with the four defilements of identity view (*satkāya-dṛṣṭi*), self-conceit (*ātma-māna*), self-love (*ātma-sneha*), and ignorance (*avidyā*)⁶⁶⁶ When a meditator attains the four *dhyānas* and the formless attainments, these meditative attainments are said to be a worldly path because the four indeterminate roots associated with mind-consciousness⁶⁶⁷ Without the presence of mind-consciousness, the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*) is said to still be mundane because *manas* and its four

⁶⁶³ Asanga, *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, trans Walpola Rāhula and Sara Boin-Webb, 149-150 AS at T1605, 683b6 由有愛故味上靜慮雜染所染，由有見故見上靜慮雜染所染，由有慢故慢上靜慮雜染所染，由無明故疑上靜慮雜染所染 YB at T1579, 335b8 復次有四得靜慮者：一愛上靜慮者，二見上靜慮者，三慢上靜慮者，四疑上靜慮者

⁶⁶⁴ AS at T1605, 683b8 由無明故疑上靜慮雜染所染

⁶⁶⁵ Mhv at T1545, 815c15 此諸煩惱與不染污靜慮無色展轉相續而現在前 AS at T1605, 683b9 如是煩惱恒染其心，令色無色界煩惱隨煩惱相續流轉

⁶⁶⁶ Mhs at T1594, 133c7 第二染污意與四煩惱恒共相應，一者薩迦耶見，二者我慢，三者我愛，四者無明

⁶⁶⁷ AS at T1605, 683b1 云何世間道？謂世間初靜慮、第二靜慮、第三靜慮、第四靜慮，空無邊處、識無邊處、無所有處、非想非非想處。如是靜慮無色由四種相應廣分別，謂雜染故清白故建立故清淨故，何等雜染故？謂四無記根，一愛二見三慢四無明

defilements—identity view, self-conceit, self-love, and ignorance are present.⁶⁶⁸

In Theravāda, craving (*tr̥ṣṇā/taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*), and views (*dr̥ṣṭi/diṭṭhi*) are the underlying springs of conceiving (*maññanā*) and of conceptual proliferation (*papañca*).⁶⁶⁹ Ignorance is the underlying root of craving, conceit, and views. Ven. Ñāṇananda indicates, “Craving, Conceit, and Views (*taṇhā, māna, diṭṭhi*) are but three aspects of the self-same ego-consciousness.”⁶⁷⁰ Consciousness (*vijñāna*) is the principal element in the act of cognition, and its problem is tinged by craving, conceit, views, and ignorance. Hence, as concentration develops, diverse wrong views are said to stem from the experiences of samādhi. For instance, dependent on the four *dhyānas*, meditators do not see things in their true nature, but attach to the four *dhyānas* as supreme nirvāṇa/nibbāna here and now, all of which result from the activities of consciousness associated with craving, conceit, and views. By focusing on *manas*, the four indeterminate roots, *maññanā*, and ego-consciousness, I will elucidate the activities of subtle defilements in different degrees of samādhi, and the arising of wrong views due to the experience of deep concentration.

Samādhi and *Manas*

According to Yogācāra, *citta*, *manas* and *vijñāna* refer respectively to the eighth consciousness or *ālaya*, the seventh or *manas*, and the first six consciousnesses, while for Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda, these three terms are synonymous.⁶⁷¹ *Manas* is related to

⁶⁶⁸ Mhs at T1594, 133c16: 調無想定染意所顯.

⁶⁶⁹ Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 8, 41.

⁶⁷⁰ Ñāṇananda, *Concept and Reality*, 12.

⁶⁷¹ According to Vasubandhu, “The names mind (*citta*), spirit (*manas*), and consciousness (*vijñāna*) designate the same thing. The mind is termed *citta* because it accumulates (*cinoti*); it is termed *manas* because it knows (*manute*) and it is termed *vijñāna* because it distinguishes its object (*ālambanam vijñānāti*).” See Vasubandhu, *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam*, trans. Louis de La Vallée Poussin and Leo M.

ego-consciousness in association with identity view (*satkāya-dṛṣṭi*), self-conceit (*ātma-māna*), self-love (*ātma-sneha*), and ignorance (*avidyā*)⁶⁷² Vasubandhu interprets that ignorance is the underlying root of the first three defilements⁶⁷³ The Sanskrit *manas* is derived from the root *man*, “to think”, the Pāli *maññanā* is also from the root *man*, “to think”, both signify perverted thinking involving the notion “I am ” The essential difference between the two is that the former *manas* and its four defilements are “hindered indeterminate” (*nivṛtāvyaḅkṛta*), and the latter *maññanā*, namely the three conceivings of craving, conceit, and views, is unwholesome (*akuśala*)⁶⁷⁴ In Yogācāra, when craving, conceit, and views are classified as unwholesome, they pertain to the sixth consciousness, that is the activity of ego-consciousness with its unwholesome craving, conceit, and views in Theravāda

Manas is “hindered” (*nivṛta*) because of its association with the four defilements that hinder a meditator from the attainment of the supramundane path Neither wholesome (*kuśala*) nor unwholesome (*akuśala*), *manas* is “indeterminate” (*avyāḅkṛta*) because its activity is extremely subtle Its subtle activity influences its four defilements, and thus they all are hindered indeterminate The seventh *manas* is “hindered indeterminate” (*nivṛtāvyaḅkṛta*), this is concerned with the nonreturner’s (*anāgāmin*) defilements which are all indeterminate⁶⁷⁵ This case illustrates that *manas* is the extremely subtle consciousness concerning the manifestation of defilements in subtle

Pruden, I 205 Ven Bodhi states, “While technically the three terms have the same denotation, in the *Nikāyas* they are generally used in distinct contexts ” See Bodhi, trans , *Samyutta Nikāya*, 769

⁶⁷² Mhs at T1594, 133c7 第二染污意與四煩惱叵共相應，一者薩迦耶見，二者我慢，三者我愛，四者無明

⁶⁷³ MhsV at T1597, 325b19 如是三種無明為因

⁶⁷⁴ Mhs at T1594, 134a4 此意染污故，有覆無記性 Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 6

⁶⁷⁵ JP at T1544, 929c28 五順上分結唯無記 Mhv at T1545, 261c4 五順上分結唯無記 In the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, the five higher fetters (*pañcaūrdhvaḅhāgīya-samyojanāni*)—craving for existence in the form realm, craving for existence in the formless realm, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance—are indeterminate

states In addition, according to the **Mahāyānasamgraha* and the *Chengweishih lun* 成唯識論, when an unenlightened worldling's defilements (*klesā*) are associated with the states of the form realm (*rūpadhātu*) and the formless realm (*ārūpadhātu*), the defilements are all hindered indeterminate due to the power of deep samādhi ⁶⁷⁶ As concentration develops, an unenlightened worldling's defilements become attenuated from unwholesome to indeterminate

According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the Vaibhāsikas of Kāśmīr maintain that craving (*trṣṇā*), wisdom (*prajñā*), and ignorance (*avidyā*) are the three indeterminate roots (*avyākṛtamūlāni*), while the Western masters uphold the four indeterminate roots craving (*trṣṇā*), view (*drṣṭi*), conceit (*māna*), and ignorance (*avidyā*) ⁶⁷⁷ Here the Western masters are Vasumitra and Ghosa, and the four indeterminate roots are recorded in their *Prakaraṇapāda* (*Apīdamo pinlei zu lun* 阿毘達磨品類足論) and *Abhidharmāmṛtaśāstra* (*Apitan ganluwei lun* 阿毘曇甘露味論) ⁶⁷⁸ In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Vasubandhu explains that the four indeterminate roots set by the Western masters are for the reason that “the ignorant worldlings who practice superior samādhis depend on nothing but the three craving, view, and conceit, and these three all act in dependence on ignorance” ⁶⁷⁹ Neither wholesome nor unwholesome, the four roots are “indeterminate” (*avyākṛta*) due

⁶⁷⁶ Mhs at T1594, 134a4 如色無色二纏煩惱，是其有覆無記性攝，色無色纏為奢摩他所攝藏故 ChI at T1585, 23c9 如上二界諸煩惱等，定力攝藏是無記攝

⁶⁷⁷ Mhv at T1545, p 795a18 迦毘彌羅國毘婆沙師說：無記根有三，謂無記愛慧無明 西方諸師說：無記根有四，謂無記愛見慢無明 The Vaibhāsikas' indeterminate wisdom (*prajñā*) is equivalent to the western masters' indeterminate view (*drṣṭi*) The **Mahāvibhāṣā* explains that conceit (*māna*) results in the exaltation of the mind and thus is not defined as the indeterminate root by the Vaibhāsikas, because the root is downward, however, the western masters define conceit as the indeterminate root, because strength is the meaning of root and the power of conceit is strong enough

⁶⁷⁸ PP at T1542, 693a25 無記根云何？謂四無記根，即無記愛無記見無記慢無記無明 AAS at T1553, 968c7 四種無記根，無記愛無記無明無記見無記慢

⁶⁷⁹ AK at T1558, 103a19 以諸愚夫脩上定者不過依託愛見慢三，此三皆依無明力轉，故立此四為無記根

to the power of samādhi. The indeterminate roots originate from Sarvāstivāda, finally, it is Vasumitra and Ghosas' four indeterminate roots, rather than the *Mahāvibhāṣā*'s three indeterminate roots, which were assimilated by Mahāyāna, specifically Yogācāra.

Asanga, in his *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, indicates that the four *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments are the worldly path, because they all are defiled due to the presence of the four indeterminate roots.⁶⁸⁰ When the four *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments are tainted by craving, they all are called “*dhyāna* dominated by craving”, for instance, a meditator indulges in the enjoyment of a taste for samādhi. When the eight meditative attainments are tainted by view, they are called “*dhyāna* dominated by views”. An example is given thus: a meditator sees previous lives within the state of samādhi, generating the wrong view as he/she and the world are eternal.⁶⁸¹ When the eight attainments are tainted by conceit, they are called “*dhyāna* dominated by conceit,” such as a meditator thinking that “I attain the samādhi but others cannot.” When the eight attainments are tainted by ignorance, they are called “*dhyāna* dominated by doubts.” This can happen when a meditator seeks deliverance but is unable to attain the realization of the noble paths, and then doubts whether others' realization is true or not.⁶⁸²

The Sarvāstivāda's four indeterminate roots explain the presence of defilements in the states of the four *dhyānas* and the states of the four formless attainments. However, when mind-consciousness and its mental factors cease in the states of the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*) and the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*),

⁶⁸⁰ AS at T1605, 683b1 云何世間道？謂世間初靜慮、第二靜慮、第三靜慮、第四靜慮，空無邊處、識無邊處、無所有處、非想非非想處。如是靜慮無色由四種相應廣分別，謂雜染故清白故建立故清淨故，何等雜染故？謂四無記根，一愛二見三慢四無明。

⁶⁸¹ YB at T1579, 335b17 入初靜慮或所餘定，如是入已，能自憶念過去多劫，逐生是見：我及世間皆是常等。從定起已，即於此見，堅執不捨。

⁶⁸² YB at T1579, 335c1 入諸靜慮或所餘定，如是入已，復於上定勤修方便為得未得，於四聖諦勤修現觀，性暗鈍故不能速證聖諦現觀，由此因緣，於餘所證便生疑惑。

without the presence of defilements these four indeterminate roots cannot be used for the explanation of the distinction between the attainment of non-perception and the attainment of cessation. Different from the Sarvāstivāda's four indeterminate roots, the Yogācāra's *manas* is consciousness in essence which implies the two levels of defilements: one is underlying tendencies (*amuśaya*) in the latent state, and the other is obsessions (*pariyavasthāna*) in the active state. Through the combination of the latent and active defilements in the subtle seventh consciousness, the presence or absence of *manas* reveals the essential difference between the attainment of non-perception and the attainment of cessation.

When an unenlightened one reaches the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*), there is no presence of the four indeterminate roots because mind-consciousness is interrupted. When an enlightened one reaches the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), without the activity of mind-consciousness, there is no presence of an enlightened one's residual defilements. However, even though mind-consciousness is suspended in these two meditative attainments, in the attainment of non-perception the two extremely subtle consciousnesses, the eighth *ālaya* and the seventh *manas*, continue to operate, and in the attainment of cessation, *ālaya* alone is present.⁶⁸³ *Manas* is associated with the four defilements of identity view, self-conceit, self-love, and ignorance, working in the state of the attainment of non-perception. This shows that the attainment of non-perception is a mundane samādhi due to the presence of *manas* and its four defilements. Distinct from the mundane attainment of non-perception, the attainment of cessation is a supramundane samādhi attained through the union of tranquility meditation (*śamatha*) and insight meditation (*vipāśyanā*), and thus the defiled *manas* is

⁶⁸³ Mhs at T1594, 133c17 謂無想定染意所顯非滅盡定

terminated by the power of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*⁶⁸⁴ In the attainment of cessation, nonreturners' (*anāgāmin*) underlying tendencies (*anuśaya*) lie in the eighth *ālaya* in the form of seeds (*bīja*) When mind-consciousness is terminated in the two states—the attainment of non-perception and the attainment of cessation—the presence or the absence of *manas* explains the distinction between these two attainments as one is mundane and the other is supramundane

According to Yogācāra, the learners (*śaikṣa*) or those in higher training, still have the activity of *manas* The problem is that the learners have uprooted identity view (*satkāya-dṛṣṭi*), but *manas* is associated with identity view The Yogācārins, therefore, explain that identity view is of two kinds one is the inherent identity view (*ju sheng satkayajian* 俱生薩迦耶見) and the other is the conceptual identity view (*fen bie satkayajian* 分別起薩迦耶見)⁶⁸⁵ The inherent identity view is the sense of “I am,” which is indeterminate The conceptual identity view is unwholesome when it is associated with the state of the sense-sphere realm, but because of the power of *samādhi* it is indeterminate when it is associated with the states of the form realm and the formless realm⁶⁸⁶ According to the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, what the learners have extirpated is the conceptual identity view not the inherent identity view⁶⁸⁷ For the learners (*śaikṣa*), the inherent identity view is the residual notion “I am,” namely, the

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid*

⁶⁸⁵ YB, at T1579, 622a26 復次，俱生薩迦耶見唯無記性，數現行故，非極損惱自他處故。若分別起薩迦耶見，由堅執故與前相違，在欲界者唯不善性。若在上地，奢摩他力所制持故，多白淨法所攝受故，成無記性

⁶⁸⁶ *Ibid*

⁶⁸⁷ ASV at T1606, 726c11 何等名為修所斷？俱生薩迦耶見。謂聖弟子雖見道已生，而依止此故我慢現行

impression (*vāsanā*) of personality view, which is associated with *manas*.⁶⁸⁸

These two kinds of identity view are advocated by the Sautrāntikas and are also presented in the *Lankāvatārasūtra*.⁶⁸⁹ According to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the Sautrāntikas maintain two kinds of identity view (*satkāya-dṛṣṭi*): the inherent identity view (*jusheng shenjian* 俱生身見), which is classified as indeterminate, and the conceptual identity view (*fenbie shenjian* 分別身見), which is classified as unwholesome.⁶⁹⁰ The theory of the two kinds of identity view is co-opted by the Yogācārins. The Yogācārins further assert that the inherent identity view pertains to the seventh *manas* and the sixth consciousness, and the conceptual identity view pertains only to the sixth consciousness.

In the *Khemaka Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya*, Venerable Khemaka, a learner (*śaikṣa*), states:

I do not regard anything among these five aggregates subject to clinging as self or as belonging to self, yet I am not an arahant, one whose taints are destroyed. Friends, [the notion] ‘I am’ has not yet vanished in me in relation to these five aggregates subject to clinging, but I do not regard [anything among them] as ‘This I am.’⁶⁹¹

This shows that a learner is able to eliminate the view of a self, but not the sense of “I am.” The sense of “I am” is still in him; therefore, Venerable Khemake says, “even though a noble disciple has abandoned the five lower fetters, still, in relation to the five aggregates subject to clinging, there lingers in him a residual conceit ‘I am,’ a desire ‘I

⁶⁸⁸ ASV at T1606, 726c17: 如是佛聖弟子。雖以見道永斷分別身見之垢，若未以修道熏習相續，無始串習虛妄執著習氣所引不分別事我見隨轉，復以隨道熏習相續彼方永滅。

⁶⁸⁹ *Lankāvatārasūtra* at T670, 495a2; T671, 537a16; T672, 604c23.

⁶⁹⁰ AK at T1558, 102c25: 軌範師作如是說: 俱生身見是無記性，如禽獸等身見現行，若分別生是不善性。In Chinese, *jusheng satkayajian* 俱生薩迦耶見 and *fenbie satkayajian* 分別起薩迦耶見 are equivalent to *jusheng shenjian* 俱生身見 and *fenbie shenjian* 分別身見。

⁶⁹¹ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 943.

am,’ and an underlying tendency ‘I am’ that has not yet been uprooted”⁶⁹² Then, he elucidates the sense of “I am” by using the similes of the flower’s scent and the laundered cloth. That is, after being washed, the cloth becomes pure and clean, but it still retains “a residual smell” until it is put in a scented casket.⁶⁹³ Ven. Bodhi calls this the “odor of subjectivity”⁶⁹⁴

The Chinese parallel is the 103rd sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*. The *Yogācārabhūmi* interprets that the learner’s identity view is eradicated, but the impression (*vāsanā*) of personal identity or the residual smell is still in him.⁶⁹⁵ In the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā*, Sthiramati expounds that this elder extirpates the conceptual identity view (*fenbie shenjian* 分別身見), but not the inherent identity view (*jusheng shenjian* 俱生身見) that is the impression of personal identity, namely, the residual odor.⁶⁹⁶

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi*, after eliminating identity view, the learner still experiences the conceit “I am”, the reason is the residual impression of personal identity.⁶⁹⁷ Sthiramati indicates because the inherent identity view has not yet vanished, there is still the conceit “I am” in this elder.⁶⁹⁸ Yet, Samghabhadra, a Sarvāstivādin,

⁶⁹² Ibid, 945

⁶⁹³ Ibid, 944-5

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid, 1083

⁶⁹⁵ YB at T1579, 797c25 又薩迦耶見聖相續中隨眠與纏皆已斷盡，於學位中習氣隨逐未能永斷

⁶⁹⁶ ASV at T1606, 726c11 何等名為修所斷？俱生薩迦耶見，謂聖弟子雖見道已生，而依止此故我慢現行。如經言長老馱索迦，當知我於五取蘊不見我我所，然於五取蘊有我慢、我欲、我隨眠，未永斷、未遍知，未滅、未吐。猶如乳母有垢膩衣，雖以鹵土等水澆濯極令離垢，若未香重臭氣隨轉，復以種種香物重塗臭氣萬盡。如是佛聖弟子。雖以見道永斷分別身見之垢，若未以修道重習相續，無始串習虛妄執著習氣所引不分別事我見隨轉，復以隨道重習相續彼萬永滅

⁶⁹⁷ YB at T1579, 797c16 薩迦耶見雖復永斷，以於聖道未善修故，猶起現行。薩迦耶見唯有習氣常所隨逐，於失念時，能與我慢作所依止

⁶⁹⁸ ASV at T1606, 726c11 俱生薩迦耶見，謂聖弟子雖見道已生，而依止此故我慢現行

rejects these two kinds of identity view in his **Abhidharmanyāyāmusārasāstra*⁶⁹⁹ He says that the inherent identity view is contrary to liberation by the realization of not-self⁷⁰⁰ In Theravāda, only one kind of identity view is recognized, no distinction is made between an inherent and a conceptual identity view Ven Bodhi explains that if, in the absence of any view of a self in the five aggregates, a residual conceit and desire “I am” is still in the learner, that is because “so long as a trace of ignorance remains unabolished in the deeper strata of his mental continuum, an attenuated sense of egohood lingers over his experience in the form of a subtle craving and conceit ”⁷⁰¹ In the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, there is no explicit statement concerning the two kinds of identity view, but the similes of the flower’s scent and the laundered cloth suggest the presence of a residual impression This could have been the basis for the idea of an inherent identity view, which in Yogācāra is finally associated with the *manas*

Wrong Views and Ego-consciousness

Consciousness (*viññāna*) is said to arise dependent on sense faculty and object, when there is the coming together of consciousness, sense faculty, and object, contact (*sparśa*) takes places⁷⁰² Contact is said to be the commencement of perceptual experience and the initiation of cognitive process⁷⁰³ Wrong views leading to the bonds of attachment arise through contact, right views conducive to the eradication of clinging also arise through it According to the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, one

⁶⁹⁹ ANS at T1562, 618a17 經主言：俱生身見是無記性，如禽獸等身見現行，若分別生是不善性。此不應理，不能分別而言見攝，見道所斷理不成故，此不應言是修所斷，與無我解正相違故

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid

⁷⁰¹ Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 16

⁷⁰² SĀ 306, MN 148

⁷⁰³ Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 78

transcends all sixty-two views by understanding, “as they really are the origin and passing away of the six bases of contact, their satisfaction, unsatisfactoriness, and the escape from them.”⁷⁰⁴ In the *Kosala Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, the “supreme nibbāna in this very life” that the Buddha teaches differently from the non-Buddhists is also attained by seeing, “the six bases of contact as they really are, namely, their arising and passing away, the gratification and danger in them, and the escape from them.”⁷⁰⁵ The full understanding of the six bases of contact is the Buddha’s unique technique of meditation, *vipāśyanā* (insight meditation), culminating in the elimination of wrong views and the attainment of final deliverance. These two discourses reveal that contact (*sparśa*) is the key to insight meditation, because the process leading to perverted perception and distorted cognition begin with ignorance-contact (P. *avijjāsamphassa*), and the full understanding of contact eliminates ignorance from ignorance-contact and arouses true knowledge (*vidyā*).

In order to reach the cessation of suffering and the attainment of ultimate happiness, distinct meditative techniques were developed by recluses, brahmins, and the Buddha. Through the development of tranquility (*śamatha*), meditators are able to experience the rapture and happiness born of seclusion in the first *dhyāna*, the rapture and happiness born of concentration in the second *dhyāna*, unworldly pleasure in the third *dhyāna*, and further refined happiness in the fourth *dhyāna*. Because each of the four *dhyānas* is accompanied by their respective spiritual happiness, these four *dhyānas* were mistaken for “supreme nirvāṇa in this very life” by some recluses and brahmins.⁷⁰⁶

Without any meditative experiences, some recluses and brahmins indulged in the five

⁷⁰⁴ Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views*, 87.

⁷⁰⁵ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 247.

⁷⁰⁶ Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views*, 81-2.

objects of sensual pleasure, proclaiming the sensual enjoyment to be “supreme nirvāṇa in this very life.” During the time of the Buddha, the five wrong views about “supreme nirvāṇa in this very life” prevailed among recluses and brahmins.⁷⁰⁷

However, the absence of suffering in the experience of *dhyāna* is merely temporary. These five kinds of happiness arise through conditions; whatever is conditioned is impermanent, subject to cessation. They are, in reality, not the ultimate happiness. In contrast, the Buddha’s direct vision of supreme nirvāṇa is unborn, unbecome, uncreated, and unconditioned that is attained through understanding as the six sense bases of contact really are the arising and passing away, the gratification and danger, and the escape.⁷⁰⁸ By way of the full understanding, there is the eradication of clinging; that is the liberation-without-clinging, supreme nirvāṇa.

The five kinds of erroneous views of “supreme nirvāṇa in this very life” are included among the sixty-two views in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*. The Buddha indicates that all these views arise based on “only the feeling of those who do not know and do not see; that is only the agitation and vacillation of those who are immersed in craving.”⁷⁰⁹ The Pāli commentary says, “By the words ‘who do not know and do not see’ ignorance is shown; by the words ‘the agitation and vacillation of those immersed in craving’ craving is shown.”⁷¹⁰ This shows that ignorance (*avidyā/avijjā*) and craving (*trṣṇā/tanhā*) are the fundamental driving forces of wrong views. The “feeling of those who do not know and do not see” signifies the feeling born of ignorance-contact. In other words, all these views stem from a feeling born of ignorance-contact. When one is

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ Masefield, trans., *Udāna*, 166; Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 247.

⁷⁰⁹ Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views*, 84-5.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid., 219.

contacted by a feeling born of ignorance-contact, there arises the activity of conceiving (P. *maññanā*), such as:

‘I am’ occurs to him; ‘I am this’ occurs to him; ‘I will be’ and ‘I will not be,’ and ‘I will consist of form’ and ‘I will be formless,’ and ‘I will be percipient’ and ‘I will be nonpercipient’ and ‘I will be neither percipient nor nonpercipient’—these occur to him.⁷¹¹

With the conceiving in terms of the notion “I am” as condition, identity view (that is, view of self) comes to be. Then, on the basis of identity view, all diverse wrong views arise. According to the *Isidatta Sutta* (2) of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Citta the householder asks: “Now when what exists do these views come to be?” Venerable Isidatta replies: “when there is identity view, these views come to be; when there is no identity view, these views do not come to be.”⁷¹²

In dependence on a feeling born of ignorance-contact, there is the activity of conceiving (P. *maññanā*), namely distortional thinking; then, identity view arises through the activity of conceiving. Finally, all these other views come to be when there is identity view. The sequence proceeds from ignorance as the root that associates with contact (*sparśa/phassa*), giving rise to feeling, advancing to conceiving, then forming identity view, and consequently creating the sixty-two views. A meditator transcends all these views by understanding, “as they really are the origin and passing away of the six bases of contact, their satisfaction, unsatisfactoriness, and the escape from them.”⁷¹³ According to the *Kosala Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*, through the understanding of “the six bases of contact as they really are, namely, their arising and passing away, the gratification and danger in them, and the escape from them,” a meditator attains “supreme nibbāna in this

⁷¹¹ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 886.

⁷¹² *Ibid.*, 1317.

⁷¹³ Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views*, 87.

very life.”⁷¹⁴ The six bases of contact themselves have no problem. The problem consists in their association with ignorance, giving rise to feeling born of ignorance-contact, perverted perception, and distortional cognition. Where the problem arises, that is the place where the problem ceases.

In the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, the five views on supreme nirvāṇa/nibbāna state, “nibbāna here and now for an existent being,” which reflect the deep, subtle perverted perception.⁷¹⁵ Wrong views arise through unwise people’s identity view referring to the cognitive distortion, namely, “an existent being.” With ignorance-contact as condition, a meditator feels and perceives the mind to be an existent being. According to the *Assutavantu Sutta (1)* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, an uninstructed worldling is able to experience revulsion towards the body, becomes dispassionate towards it, and gains liberation from it; however, the uninstructed worldling is unable to experience revulsion towards his/her *citta*, *mano*, and *viññāṇa* (mind, mentality, and consciousness), because for a long time the mind has been grasped as “This is mine, this I am, this is my self.”⁷¹⁶ The Pāli commentary explains that “This is mine” stands for the grip of craving, “this I am” represents the grip of conceit, and “this is my self” means the grip of views.⁷¹⁷ Here craving, conceit, and views all involve the notion “I am.” Ven. Ñāṇananda indicates, “Craving, Conceit, and Views (*taṇhā*, *māna*, *diṭṭhi*) are but three aspects of the self-same ego-consciousness.”⁷¹⁸ Due to the activity of ego-consciousness, meditators can wrongly perceive that a self-existent subject indulges in the five objects of sensual pleasure, or experiences the happiness of the four *dhyānas* as supreme nirvāṇa in this very life.

⁷¹⁴ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 247.

⁷¹⁵ Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views*, 81.

⁷¹⁶ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 595.

⁷¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 770.

⁷¹⁸ Ñāṇananda, *Concept and Reality*, 12.

With regard to the *Assutava Sutta*, its Chinese parallel is the 289th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*. The *Yogācārabhūmi* interprets non-Buddhists can contemplate the impermanence of body and gain release from it, hence, in the state of samādhi, they can transcend the sense-sphere realm (*kāmadhātu*) and the form realm (*rūpadhātu*) to achieve the formless realm (*arūpadhātu*)⁷¹⁹ Yet, in the state of meditative attainments, the most difficult task is to see the impermanent nature of the *citta*, *manas* and *viññāna*, as a result, non-Buddhist meditators often mistake the impermanent mind for a permanent, substantial self⁷²⁰ Unaware of the meditative distortion, non-Buddhists may perceive the four *dhyānas* as “for an existent being supreme nibbāna here and now”

According to the *Mūlapariyāya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, “He perceives Nibbāna as Nibbāna. Having perceived Nibbāna as Nibbāna, he conceives [himself as] Nibbāna, he conceives [himself] in Nibbāna, he conceives [himself apart] from Nibbāna, he conceives Nibbāna to be ‘mine.’ He delights in Nibbāna.”⁷²¹ This shows the cognitive process of an unenlightened worldling. The Pāli commentary indicates that “nibbāna” here refers to the five views on “supreme nibbāna here and now,” and explains an unenlightened worldling relishes the nibbāna through the conceiving of craving, prides the attainment through the conceiving of conceit, and holds it to be permanent through the conceiving of views.⁷²² Ven. Bodhi analyzes the cognitive pattern of an unenlightened worldling thus: under the power of ignorance, when one perceives the cognitive object, there arises perverted perception, then one conceives through the three conceivings

⁷¹⁹ YB at T1579, 829c29 復次有諸愚夫外道種類，雖能觀見四大種身羸無常性，由觀此身雖久住立而有增減，死時生時有捨取故，便於其身能厭能離能起勝解，以世間道離欲界欲，離色界欲極至有頂

⁷²⁰ YB at T1579, 829c29 然彼於身當知仍名未得解脫，所以者何？由於彼彼所得定中，瑩磨其識執取為我，雜糅而住。復於後時壽盡業盡，還退生下，以於緣起不善巧故

⁷²¹ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 87

⁷²² Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 58

(*maññanā*) of craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*), and views (*diṭṭhi*), all of these are under the operations of ego-consciousness⁷²³ Craving, conceit, and views are the three underlying springs of conceiving (*maññanā*) and of conceptual proliferation (*papañca*), they are also the three factors of ego-consciousness⁷²⁴ Samādhi is said to be a supporting condition for a meditator to know and see things as they really are However, due to the activities of ego-consciousness, when meditators attain the four *dhyānas*, they do not see things in their true nature, but attach to the four *dhyānas* as supreme nirvāna/nibbāna here and now

Craving, Views, Conceit, and Ignorance

According to the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (*Dazhi du lun* 大智度論), non-Buddhists' samādhis are dominated by ego-consciousness, craving, views, and conceit, without abandoning attachment to all phenomena, therefore, there is no true wisdom in them⁷²⁵ The *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (*Dasheng zhuangyanjing lun* 大乘莊嚴經論) states “Bodhisattvas' samādhis separate from craving, views, conceit, and thus the samādhis are free and supreme ”⁷²⁶ These two texts illustrate that the key distinction between the samādhis of non-Buddhists and the enlightened ones is the presence or absence of craving, views, and conceit Craving, views, and conceit plus ignorance are the four indeterminate roots (*avyākṛtamūlāni*) which are used to explain that when unwise meditators attain the four *dhyānas* and the formless attainments, these meditative attainments are still mundane samādhis in association with these four defilements

⁷²³ Ibid , 4-8

⁷²⁴ Ibid , 8, 41

⁷²⁵ MP at T1509, 191c14 外道以我心逐禪故，多愛見慢故，不捨一切法故，無有實智慧

⁷²⁶ Msl at T1604, 601c6 菩薩所得禪定遠離愛見慢等故，自在最上

In Yogācāra, craving, views, conceit, and ignorance are combined with a subtle consciousness, that is, *manas* is associated with the four defilements of identity view, self-conceit, self-love, and ignorance⁷²⁷ *Manas* is present when one attains the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*), and is absent when one attains the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), this explains that the attainment of non-perception is a mundane samādhi and the attainment of cessation is a supramundane samādhi

In Theravāda, craving, conceit, and views are the underlying springs of *maññanā* or distortional thinking, and are also the three factors of ego-consciousness⁷²⁸ Ignorance is the underlying root of craving, conceit, and views Meditators experience the four *dhyānas* as supreme nirvāna/nibbāna here and now due to the activities of ego-consciousness conjoined with *maññanā* According to the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the Vibhajyavādins (P Vibhajjavādins) advocate that views, craving, conceit, ignorance, and mind are the five omnipresent dharmas (*wubian xingfa* 五遍行法) that create a variety of suffering⁷²⁹

Craving, views, conceit, and ignorance are discussed by Buddhist schools in different forms for explaining the problems of samādhi, the primordial set is craving, conceit, and ignorance, which are the subtlest defilements uprooted by an Arhat The three fetters of identity view (*satkāya-dṛṣṭi*), doubt, and attachment to rules and observances are eliminated by a stream-enterer (*srotāpanna*) A once-returner (*sakṛdāgāmin*) abandons these three fetters and attenuates lust, hatred, and delusion A nonreturner (*anāgāmin*) eradicates all five lower fetters—identity view, doubt,

⁷²⁷ Mhs at T1594, 133c7 第二染污音與四煩惱恒共相應，一者薩迦耶見，二者我慢，三者我愛，四者無明

⁷²⁸ Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 8, 41

⁷²⁹ Mhv at T1545, 90c21 或復有執五法是遍行，謂無明愛見慢及心，如分別論者

attachment to rules and observances, sensual desire and ill will—but is still bound by the five higher fetters (*pañcaūrdhvaḥbhāgīya-samyojanāni*) desire for existence in the form realm, desire for existence in the formless realm, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance

According to the *Jñānaprasthāna* and the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the five higher fetters are neither wholesome nor unwholesome, but all are indeterminate (*avyākṛta*)⁷³⁰ These five higher fetters show that the presence of defilements in the form realm and formless realm are craving, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance In other words, craving, conceit, and ignorance, which are the remaining defilements of nonreturners, add identity view to be the archetype for the four indeterminate roots in Sarvāstivāda, *manas* in Yogācāra, the five omnipresent dharmas in the Vibhajyavādins, and *maññanā* and ego-consciousness in Theravāda

3. *Ālaya*-consciousness and Mind-consciousness in Yogācāra Meditation

In Yogācāra meditation, consciousness (*viññāna*) is the key aspect to the development of insight (*vipaśyanā*) The significance of consciousness in insight meditation is shown in the Buddha's enlightenment On the eve of his awakening, the Buddha searched for the conditions beginning with aging-and-death and then traced the sequence of conditions back to consciousness He discovered

This consciousness turns back, it does not go further than name-and-form It is to this extent that one may be born and age and die, pass away and be reborn, that is, when there is consciousness with name-and-form as its condition, and name-and-form with consciousness as its condition With name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases, with the six sense bases as condition, contact Such is the origin of this whole mass of

⁷³⁰ JP at T1544, 929c28 五順上分結唯無記 Mhv at T1545, 261c4 五順上分結唯無記

suffering⁷³¹

With regard to, “This consciousness turns back,” Ven Bodhi precisely indicates “It is possible the Bodhisatta had been seeking a self of the Upanisadic type, a self-subsistent subject consisting of pure consciousness that requires nothing but itself in order to exist”⁷³² The Buddha discovered that without a substantial self in the round of rebirths, consciousness (*viññāna*) arises dependent on name-and-form (*nāma-rūpa*), and through the mutual dependency of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa*, rebirth and suffering take place. To discern the origin of rebirths and suffering is the best way to reach an end to their cessation, all of which is the task of insight-consciousness, namely mind-consciousness.

In Yogācāra, it is said that a new life begins when *ālaya*-consciousness (*ālayaviññāna*) and *nāma-rūpa* mutually support one another⁷³³ *Ālaya* is taught by the Buddha in the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*, and is defined as consciousness by the Yogācārins, as concerning the maintenance of the present existence and the continuity of the next⁷³⁴ Below I will focus on *ālaya*-consciousness to discuss the origin of rebirth, and on mind-consciousness to expound the four stages of insight in Yogācāra meditation.

***Ālaya* and Rebirth**

According to the **Mahāyānasamgraha*, *ālaya*-consciousness is said connected with rebirths and nirvāna shown in the Buddha’s verse

From time without beginning,
There is a *dhātu* as the support of all [conditioned] dharmas

⁷³¹ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 602. The corresponding text is SĀ 287 at T99, 80c2. 我作是思惟時，齊識而還不能過彼，謂緣識名色，緣名色六入處，緣六入處觸，緣觸受，緣受愛，緣愛取，緣取有，緣有生，緣生老病死憂悲惱苦，如是如是純大苦聚集。

⁷³² Ibid 777

⁷³³ Mhs at T1594, 136a16. 若離異孰識，識與名色更互相依，譬如蘆束相依而轉，此亦不成。

⁷³⁴ MN 26, SN 6 1, AN 4 128, EĀ 25 3

On the basis of this, there are various states of existence
 And the attainment of nirvāna
 無始時來界 一切法等依
 由此有諸趣 及涅槃證得⁷³⁵

This verse is cited by Asanga for proving that *ālaya*-consciousness is taught by the Buddha⁷³⁶ According to Asvabhāva, this verse explains that *ālaya*-consciousness with its seeds is the support for the arising of all conditioned dharmas, that is, with *ālaya*-consciousness and its seeds as condition, a new existence begins with the appearance of a world⁷³⁷ In other words, both who we are and how the world appears depend on *ālaya*-consciousness with its karmic seeds An instance in the **Mahāyānasamgraha* clearly illustrates this situation the same water perceived by celestials, humans, fish, and hungry ghosts is totally different for each in accordance with their karmas⁷³⁸ The water is seen by celestials as jeweled land, by humans as water, by hungry ghosts as pus and blood, and by fish as their dwelling place What the world is depends on the manifestation of each individual *ālaya*-consciousness. The concept of *ālaya*-consciousness explains that the movement of life and the world is like a circle without a beginning, which comes into being through a process of dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*)

According to Asvabhāva's commentary, when *ālaya*-consciousness with its tainted seeds exists, the round of rebirths comes to be, with the gradual destruction of tainted seeds, *ālaya*-consciousness with taintless seeds conduces to the cessation of

⁷³⁵ Mhs at T1594, 133b15

⁷³⁶ Ibid

⁷³⁷ MhsA at T1598, 383a12 由此有諸趣及涅槃證得者：如決擇處當廣分別。謂生雜染等那落迦等，若離阿賴耶識皆不得有等生等

⁷³⁸ Mhs at T1594, 139a14 如餓鬼傍生及諸天人同於一事，見彼所識有差別故 MhsA at T1598, 402c15 如餓鬼傍生及諸天人等者：謂於餓鬼自棄變異增上力故，所見江河皆悉充滿膿血等處，魚等傍生即見舍宅遊從道路，天見種種寶莊嚴地，人見是處有清冷水波浪湍回

rebirths and finally culminates in nirvāna⁷³⁹ This statement corresponds to the principle of conditionality, “When this exists, that comes to be, with the arising of this, that arises When this does not exist, that does not come to be, with the cessation of this, that ceases”⁷⁴⁰ The comprehension of dependent origination is the indispensable foundation for the development of insight meditation, just as the Buddha attained supreme enlightenment by awakening to dependent origination in the fourth *dhyāna*⁷⁴¹ The Buddha states, “whether there is an arising of Tathāgatas or no arising of Tathāgatas, that element still persists, the stabledness of the Dhamma, the fixed course of the Dhamma, specific conditionality A Tathāgata awakens to this and breaks through to it”⁷⁴² *Ālaya*-consciousness, which arises and ceases through conditions, binds a being to the round of rebirths, and one’s release from rebirths and suffering is also through its cessation

According to the 294th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, “For the foolish and uninstructed worldling, obstructed by ignorance and fettered by craving, this conscious body has attained With the internal conscious body and the external name-and-form as two conditions, contact arises”⁷⁴³ Asanga, in his **Prakaraṇāryavākāśāstra*, indicates that the conscious body is *ālaya*-consciousness⁷⁴⁴ Driven by ignorance and craving, the impermanent *ālaya*-consciousness commences each new life and sustains the body and existence Ignorance, craving, and *ālaya*-consciousness are the primary factors that cause unwise people to run in the round of rebirths In other words, the end to suffering and

⁷³⁹ MhsA at T1598, 383a12 由此有諸趣及涅槃證得者：如決擇處富廣分別。調生雜染等那落迦等，若離阿賴耶識皆不得有等生等。雜染畢竟止息，名為涅槃

⁷⁴⁰ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 927

⁷⁴¹ SN 12 65, MN 36

⁷⁴² Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 551

⁷⁴³ SĀ 294 at T99, 83c24 愚癡無聞凡夫，無明覆愛緣繫，得此識身。內有此識身，外有名色，此二因緣生觸

⁷⁴⁴ PS at T1602, 480c10 如薄伽梵說：無明所覆愛結所繫，愚夫感得有識之身，此言顯有異熟阿賴耶識

rebirths occurs when there is the cessation of ignorance, craving, and *ālaya*-consciousness.

This early discourse indicates that contact (*sparśa*) arises through the internal conscious body and the external name-and-form (*nāma-rūpa*); that is, the

Mahānidāna Sutta of the *Dīgha Nikāya* states:

[T]his is the cause, source, origin, and condition for consciousness, namely, mentality-materiality. It is to this extent, Ānanda, that one can be born, age, and die, pass away and re-arise, to this extent that there is a pathway for designation, to this extent that there is a pathway for language, to this extent that there is a pathway for description, to this extent that there is a sphere for wisdom.⁷⁴⁵

The Pāli commentary explains that the juncture of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* is the five aggregates, which are “the pathway for designation, language, and description,” and “the sphere for wisdom.”⁷⁴⁶ When consciousness begins a new existence, contact arises. Contact is said to give rise to feeling, perception, and volitional formations.⁷⁴⁷ That is, contact initiates the act of cognition, giving rise to designation, language, description, and wisdom.

With the mutual dependence of *ālaya*-consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* as condition, there begins a new life, namely, the five aggregates (*skandhas*) in which the four aggregates of form, feeling, perception, and formations become the “home of consciousness” or the four “stations of consciousness.”⁷⁴⁸ Through the support of these four aggregates, consciousness grows and flourishes. For instance, mind-consciousness along with the four aggregates feels, perceives, thinks, and cognizes permanence in the impermanent, happiness in suffering, a self in what is not-self, and beauty in what the

⁷⁴⁵ Bodhi, *Great Discourse on Causation*, 51.

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 22, 89.

⁷⁴⁷ SN 22:56

⁷⁴⁸ SN 22:3, SN 22:54. See Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 860, 891.

foul. Hence, the duality of illusory self and world is created as nutrient for the growth of tainted consciousness. All mental phenomena appear as a feeler different from feeling, a perceiver different from perception, an intender different from volition, and a knower different from consciousness. All of these seem to be a substantial self who perceives and conceives a real world. All names, words, concepts, and linguistic expressions appear as the duality of a self and its belongings. When tainted consciousness is bound by lust to the five aggregates, inevitably, there is a round of rebirths. On the contrary, when attachment to the five aggregates is abandoned, the support for the establishing of consciousness ceases.⁷⁴⁹

According to the *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the *Āyācana Sutta* of the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the Buddha initially did not have the intention to teach the Dharma after his awakening. His reason was that the generation delighted in “*ālaya*” and thus it was difficult for them to see the profundity of the Dharma—dependent origination and nirvāṇa.⁷⁵⁰ Later, due to the appeal of Brahmā Sahampati, the Buddha taught the Dharma to the world.

In Theravāda, *ālaya* is not regarded as “consciousness, but as “attachment” as shown in the translations of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. According to the *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta* translated by Ven. Bodhi:

But this generation delights in *attachment*, takes delight in *attachment*, rejoices in *attachment*. It is hard for such a generation to see this truth, namely, specific conditionality, dependent origination. And it is hard to see this truth, namely, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nibbāna.⁷⁵¹

⁷⁴⁹ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 892.

⁷⁵⁰ Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 260.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid.* (my italics)

The *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta* translated by Ven. Thanissaro states:

But this generation delights in *attachment*, is excited by *attachment*, enjoys *attachment*. For a generation delighting in attachment, excited by attachment, enjoying attachment, this/that conditionality & dependent co-arising are hard to see. This state, too, is hard to see: the resolution of all fabrications, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the ending of craving; dispassion; cessation; Unbinding.⁷⁵²

The Pāli commentary explains, “*ālaya* as comprising both objective sense pleasures and the thoughts of craving concerned with them,”⁷⁵³ and “*ālaya* objectively as the five cords of sensual pleasure, called ‘adhesions’ because it is these to which beings adhere; and again, subjectively, as the 108 mental examinations driven by craving.”⁷⁵⁴ The definition of *ālaya* is controversial in Buddhist schools.

In the **Mahāyānasamgraha*, Asaṅga quotes the Buddha’s words for explanation that *ālaya*-consciousness is the Buddha’s teaching thus:

As the *Ekottara Āgama* says: “Worldly people love *ālaya*, delight in *ālaya*, enjoy *ālaya*, and rejoice in *ālaya*. When the Tathāgata preaches the Dharma for the abandoning of such *ālaya*, they respectfully give ear, steady the mind for understanding, and practice the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma. With the advent of a Tathāgata, such extremely marvelous and uncommon Dharma appears in the world.”

如彼增壹阿笈摩說：「世間眾生愛阿賴耶，樂阿賴耶，欣阿賴耶，喜阿賴耶。為斷如是阿賴耶故，說正法時，恭敬攝耳，住求解心，法隨法行。如來出世，如是甚奇希有正法出現世間。」⁷⁵⁵

According to Asaṅga, what the Buddha taught here is *ālaya*-consciousness, and *ālaya*-consciousness is said to appear in distinct forms in early Buddhist schools, such as the “root consciousness” (*mūlavijñāna*) in the Mahāsamghika and the “aggregate that

⁷⁵² "Ariyapariyesana Sutta: The Noble Search" (MN 26), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. *Access to Insight*, June 14, 2010, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.026.than.html>. (my italics)

⁷⁵³ Nāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 1218.

⁷⁵⁴ Bodhi, trans., *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, 430.

⁷⁵⁵ Mhs at T1594, 134a18.

sustains birth and death” in the Mahīsāsaka⁷⁵⁶ The “root consciousness” is said to be the base for the arising of the six consciousnesses as the root of a tree for its branches⁷⁵⁷ The “aggregate that sustains birth and death” is suggested for explaining that when one is reborn in the formless realm (*ārūpya-dhātu*) where the material form is disrupted, or when one reaches the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*) where the six consciousnesses are also discontinued, the “aggregate that sustains birth and death” can persist till there is an end to rebirths⁷⁵⁸ Asanga indicates that *ālaya* is incorrectly interpreted as the five clinging-aggregates, a pleasant feeling accompanied by desire, or identity view (*satkāya-dṛṣṭi*) by other Buddhist schools⁷⁵⁹

Asvabhāva’s **Mahāyānasamgrāha-bhāṣya* (*Shedasheng lun shi* 攝大乘論釋)

indicates that “*bhavāṅga* consciousness” is another form of *ālaya*-consciousness⁷⁶⁰

Regarding the *bhavāṅga* consciousness, the *Chengweishih lun* 成唯識論 explains that the *bhavāṅga* consciousness taught by the Sthaviras and the Vibhajyavādins denotes the cause (*anga*) for all the three realms of existence (*bhava*)⁷⁶¹ *Ālaya*-consciousness, root consciousness (*mūlavijñāna*), and *bhavāṅga* consciousness illustrate that a subtle consciousness concerning the maintenance of the present life and the continuity of the next life was developed differently in early Buddhist schools The subtle consciousness

⁷⁵⁶ Mhs at T1594, 134a23 於大眾部阿笈摩中，亦以異門密意說此名根本識，如樹依根。化地部中亦以異門密意說此名窮生死蘊，有處有時見色心斷，非阿賴耶識中彼種有斷

⁷⁵⁷ MhsV at T1597, 327a10 大眾部中名根本識，如樹依根者：謂根本識為一切識根本因故，譬如樹根莖等總因，若離其根莖等無有，阿賴耶識名根本識，當知亦爾。

⁷⁵⁸ MhsV at T1597, 327a13 化地部中異門說為窮生死蘊，為釋此因說有處等。言有處者：謂無色界無有諸色。言有時者：謂無想等諸定位中無有諸心。非阿賴耶識中彼種有斷者：謂阿賴耶識中色心重習，由此為因色心還有

⁷⁵⁹ Mhs at T1594, 134b3 謂薄伽梵所說：眾生愛阿賴耶，乃至廣說。此中五取蘊說名阿賴耶，有餘復謂貪俱樂部受名阿賴耶，有餘復謂薩迦耶見名阿賴耶

⁷⁶⁰ MhsA T 1598, 386b16 如是等分別說部亦說此識名有分識，由如是等諸部聖教為定量故，阿賴耶識如大王路

⁷⁶¹ ChI at T1585, 15a21 上坐部經分別論者俱密意說此名有分識，有謂三有，分是因義，唯此恒遍為三有因

explains that without the presence of a substantial self, an impermanent consciousness links the present life to the next till there is an end to rebirths

The *Ekottara Āgama* cited by Asanga is found in the Chinese *Ekottara Āgama* and the Pāli *Anguttara Nikāya*. According to the *Tathāgatacchariya Sutta (2)* of the *Anguttara Nikāya*

People generally find pleasure in *attachments*, take delight in *attachments* and enjoy *attachments*. But when the Dhamma of non-attachment is taught by the Tathāgata, people wish to listen to it, give ear and try to understand it. This is the first wonderful and marvelous thing that appears on the manifestation of a Tathāgata, an Arahant, a Fully Enlightened One.⁷⁶²

Here *ālaya* is translated as “attachment”, in the Chinese *Ekottara Āgama*, it is also rendered as attachment—“著”⁷⁶³. In early discourses, unwise people find pleasure in *ālaya*, take delight in *ālaya* and enjoy *ālaya*, hence, it is said, they are unable to see dependent origination and nirvāna.⁷⁶⁴ Dependent origination is explained in a sequence of twelve factors as shown in SN12 1, SN 12 2, SĀ 297, and SĀ 298. With regard to the causal chain of dependent origination, Ven. Bodhi says “Without a self to hold the sequence together, what connects one life to the next is nothing other than the principle of conditionality.”⁷⁶⁵ Without a substantial self in the round of existence, *ālaya*-consciousness is said to hold karmic seeds running from life to life, which explains karmic continuity in the round of rebirths.

In Yogācāra, *ālaya*-consciousness is dependently arisen as impermanent, changing, and insubstantial.⁷⁶⁶ *Ālaya* is not an eternal, pure consciousness running from

⁷⁶² Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans. and ed., *Anguttara Nikāya*, 109

⁷⁶³ EĀ 25 3 at T125, 631b20. 爾時世尊告阿難曰：若如來出現於世時，便有四未曾有法出現於世。云何為四？此眾生類多有所著，若說不雜著法時，亦復承受，令修行之，心不遠離。

⁷⁶⁴ MN 26, SN 6 1

⁷⁶⁵ Bodhi, *In the Buddha's Words*, 314

⁷⁶⁶ Mhs at T1594, 134b29. 謂即依彼雜染品法無始時來所有薰習，阿賴耶識相續而生。

one life to the next. In the Pāli *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the monk Sāti says, “As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another”⁷⁶⁷ Sāti misunderstands that an eternal, unchanging, and substantial consciousness transmigrates from one existence to the next, and “experiences here and there the result of good and bad actions”⁷⁶⁸ The Buddha rebuked him for his attachment to the idea of an eternal consciousness transmigrating from life to life, and emphasized “consciousness to be dependently arisen”⁷⁶⁹

How does *ālaya*-consciousness link the previous life with the new one?

According to the *Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sutta*, “when there is the union of the mother and father, and the mother is in season, and the *gandhabba* is present, through the union of these three things the descent of the embryo takes place”⁷⁷⁰ Driven by karma, *gandhabba* is the intermediate state between death and rebirth. Ven. Bodhi explains, “Thus we might identify the *gandhabba* here as the stream of consciousness, conceived more animistically as coming over from the previous existence and bringing along its total accumulation of kammic tendencies and personality traits”⁷⁷¹ The stream of consciousness is regarded as *ālaya*-consciousness by the Yogācārins. According to Asaṅga, *ālaya*-consciousness enters the mother’s womb and combines with a *kalala*, which is the initial stage of an embryo, then a new existence begins⁷⁷²

⁷⁶⁷ Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 350

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid*

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid*

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 358

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid*, 1234

⁷⁷² Mhs at T1594, 135c27 依中有位意起染污意識結生相續，此染污意識於中有中滅，於母胎中識羯羅藍更相和合。若即意識與彼和合，既和合已依止此識於母胎中有意識轉。若爾，即應有二意識於母胎中同時而轉。又即與彼和合之識是意識性，不應道理。若此和合識是一切種子識，即是阿賴耶識。

When a new life begins in the mother's womb, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* says: if a being is shallow in merit, while remaining in the mother's womb this being thinks that he/she enters a thicket or a hut, or takes shelter at the foot of a tree or wall, because he/she feels to encounter a dreadful army or severe wind and rain. In contrast, if a being is rich in merit, while remaining in the mother's womb this being thinks that he/she enters a wonderful garden or a palace.⁷⁷³ This shows that what a being perceives in the mother's womb depends on what he or she had done before.

In Theravāda, a consciousness which links the two successive existences together is called rebirth-linking consciousness. A rebirth-linking consciousness arises at the moment of conception, and when the rebirth-linking has ceased, *bhavaṅga* consciousness arises from conception to death.⁷⁷⁴ According to the *Visuddhimagga*, “When the rebirth-linking consciousness has ceased, then, following on whatever kind of rebirth-linking it may be, the same kinds, being the result of that same kamma whatever it may be, occur as *life-continuum* consciousness with that same object.”⁷⁷⁵ Here life-continuum consciousness is *bhavaṅga* consciousness. Ven. Bodhi explains, “*Bhavaṅga* is the function of consciousness by which the continuity of the individual is preserved through the duration of any single existence, from conception to death.”⁷⁷⁶ The function of *bhavaṅga* consciousness concerns the maintenance of life. In the Chinese Canon, *bhavaṅga* consciousness is mentioned in Asvabhāva's **Mahāyānasamgrāha-bhāṣya* and

⁷⁷³ AK at T1558, 47b6: 且諸有情若福微薄，入母胎位起倒想解，見大風雨毒熱嚴寒，或大軍眾聲威亂逼，遂見自入密草稠林葉窟茅廬投樹牆下，住時見已住在此中，出位見身從此處出。若福增多入母胎位起倒想解，自見己身入妙園林升花臺殿居勝床等，住出如前。

⁷⁷⁴ Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 122-23.

⁷⁷⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñāṇamoli, 460.

⁷⁷⁶ Bodhi, *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, 122-23.

the *Chengweishih lun* 成唯識論⁷⁷⁷ According to these two texts, *bhavanga* consciousness is regarded as another form of *ālaya*-consciousness⁷⁷⁸

Ālaya-consciousness, which links death and rebirth, is the last consciousness that departs from the body before the death. According to the Pāli *Mahāvedalla Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, Venerable Mahā Kotthita asked Venerable Sāriputta “Friend, when this body is bereft of how many states is it then discarded and forsaken, left lying senseless like a log?”⁷⁷⁹ Venerable Sāriputta replied, “Friend, when this body is bereft of three states—vitality, heat, and consciousness—it is then discarded and forsaken.”⁷⁸⁰

Asanga indicates that the consciousness sustains the body with vitality and heat is *ālaya*-consciousness⁷⁸¹ He explains that at the final moment of life, eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, and mind-consciousness are ended, and there must be a subtle consciousness which supports the body with vitality and heat, namely, *ālaya*-consciousness. He says that an individual body gradually becomes cold from his/her feet upward because of good karmas, whereas the body gradually becomes cold from his/her head downward on account of bad karmas⁷⁸²

⁷⁷⁷ MhsA at T 1598, 386b16 如是等分別說部亦說此識名有分識，由如是等諸部聖教為定量故，阿賴耶識如大王路 ChI at T1585, 15a21 上坐部經分別論者俱密意說此名有分識，有謂三有，分是因義，唯此恒遍為三有因

⁷⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁷⁹ Ñānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 392

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid

⁷⁸¹ Mhs at T1594, 136b3 又將沒時造善造惡，或下或上所依漸冷，若不信有阿賴耶識，皆不得成。是故若離一切種子異熟識者，此生雜染亦不得成

⁷⁸² Mhs at T1594, 136b3 又將沒時造善造惡，或下或上所依漸冷 MhsV at T1597, 333a10 釋曰：將捨命時造善造惡，或下或上身分漸冷，以造善者必定上昇，若造惡者必定下墜

Mind-consciousness Acting in the Four Stages of Insight Meditation

In Yogācāra, consciousness (*viññāna*) is the core of insight meditation. The development of insight begins with the existence of consciousness shown in the verse of the *Madhyāntavibhāga*.⁷⁸³ According to the *Madhyāntavibhāga*,

In dependence on existence of consciousness,
 There is nonexistence of objects.
 In dependence on nonexistence of objects,
 There is nonexistence of consciousness.
 Consciousness is existent
 Also to be nonexistent.
 Therefore, it is known that both existences [of the grasper and the grasped]
 Are equal to be nonexistent.
 依識有所得 境無所得生
 依境無所得 識無所得生
 由識有得性 亦成無所得
 故知二有得 無得性平等⁷⁸⁴

This verse shows that one discerns the existence of consciousness in the initial stage of insight meditation, the nonexistence of objects in the second, the nonexistence of consciousness in the third, and finally the realization of non-duality in the fourth. In Yogācāra, all phenomena are examined in terms of consciousness. In the four stages of insight meditation, a meditator initially discerns the existence of consciousness, as the Buddha, on the eve of his enlightenment, searched for the conditions for suffering headed by aging-and-death, and then traced back to consciousness. He discovered that, “This consciousness turns back.”⁷⁸⁵ That is, the whole mass of suffering comes to be when there is the mutual dependency of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa*.⁷⁸⁶ The Buddha’s discovery may account for why Yogācāra meditation commences with the existence of

⁷⁸³ The *Madhyāntavibhāga* has two Chinese translations: Xuanzang’s *Bian zhongbie lun* 辯中邊論 and Paramārtha’s *Zhongbian fenbie lun* 中邊分別論.

⁷⁸⁴ MV at T1600, 465a5.

⁷⁸⁵ Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 602.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid.

consciousness

According to Asanga, with the mutual dependence of *ālaya*-consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* as condition, a new existence begins⁷⁸⁷ Hence, it is said, life begins and the world appears all through *ālaya*-consciousness with its seeds All are the manifestations of *ālaya*-consciousness Then, mind-consciousness entertains “I-making, mine-making or underlying tendency to conceit either in regard to this conscious body or in regard to all external objects”⁷⁸⁸ The extirpation of all I-making, mine-making and underlying tendency to conceit is also the task fulfilled by mind-consciousness Mind-consciousness, which acts together with feeling, perception and mental formations, develops insight leading to the cessation of suffering and rebirths In the first stage of insight meditation, a meditator first investigates that suffering and rebirths arise through consciousness as condition, also, suffering and rebirths cease through consciousness as condition⁷⁸⁹ The investigation into their origin, their cessation, and the way leading to their cessation shows that the mutual dependency of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* is the origin of suffering and of rebirths, with the mutual cessation of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa*, there is an end to suffering and rebirths To ascertain the existence of consciousness in the first stage is for a meditator to discern dependent origination in two ways by way of origination and by way of cessation

Moreover, in Yogācāra meditation, the emphasis on the existence of consciousness is also shown in the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra* (*Jieshenmi jing* 解深密經)

According to the *Samdhinirmocana Sūtra*, the Bodhisattva Maitreya asks the Buddha

⁷⁸⁷ Mhs at T1594, 136a16 若離異孰識，識與名色更互相依，譬如蘆束相依而轉，此亦不成

⁷⁸⁸ Nyanaponika and Bodhi, trans and ed, *Anguttara Nikāya*, 48

⁷⁸⁹ MV at T1600, 464c20 虛妄分別：由此義故成非實有；如所現起非真有故，亦非全無，於中少有亂識生故。如何不許此性全無？以許此滅得解脫故。若異此者，繫縛解脫則應皆無

Are the images, the objects of the union of tranquility and insight, different from or not different from the mind? The Buddha replies, “They are not different Why is it so? It is because those images are merely consciousness Good man! I state that the object of consciousness is merely the manifestation of consciousness”⁷⁹⁰ A consciousness arises with two aspects of subject and object, and there is no object which exists apart from the consciousness The simile of a mirror image is used to explain why a consciousness and its object are not different as one stands in front of a mirror and sees one’s image clearly, the object of consciousness is like the mirror image to reflect what the consciousness itself is ⁷⁹¹ Without the duality of subject and object, both are nothing more than the nature of consciousness

In the second stage of insight meditation, a meditator focuses on the discernment of the nonexistence of objects These objects appear as the duality of the grasper and grasped, which are nothing but the manifestations of consciousness To ascertain the nonexistence of objects is for a meditator to discern the selfless nature of the five aggregates and the empty nature of all conditioned phenomena This stage of insight practice facilitates the cessation of illusory duality—a self-existent subject and the reality of phenomena, such as a substantial self and a real world When a meditator penetrates the illusory nature of a self and of the world, this meditator knows and sees objects as they really are Then, the contemplation of the nonexistence of consciousness in the next stage is to discern that mind-consciousness is that which constitutes awareness of the illusory object, also arising and passing away

⁷⁹⁰ SS at T676, 698a27 諸毘鉢舍那三摩地所行影像，彼與此心富言有異？富言無異？佛告慈氏菩薩曰：善男子！富言無異。何以故？由彼影像唯是識故。善男子！我說識所緣，唯識所現故

⁷⁹¹ SS at T676, 698b4 然即此心如是生時，即有如是影像顯現。善男子！如依善瑩清淨鏡面，以質為緣還見本質，而謂我今見於影像，及謂離質別有所行影像顯現。如是此心生時，相似有異三摩地所行影像顯現

In the third stage of insight meditation, a meditator discerns the nonexistence of consciousness through the nonexistence of objects. In this stage, when mind-consciousness along with its mental factors—feeling, perception, and volition—feels, perceives, thinks, and cognizes impermanence as impermanence, suffering as suffering, the selfless as empty of self, and the foul as the foul, then the illusory duality, namely the illusion of a true self and a real world, is ended. Meanwhile, a meditator discerns that consciousness itself as the subtlest basis for the sense of self is also conditioned, dependently arisen, and subject to cessation. In other words, consciousness is being aware of objects also passing away. When the subject-object duality is eradicated, craving for each of the five aggregates is also abandoned. Hence, “with the abandoning of lust the basis is cut off; there is no support for the establishing of consciousness.”⁷⁹² That is, the four aggregates—form, feeling, perception, mental formations—are no longer the “home of consciousness” or the four “stations of consciousness.” Finally, consciousness becomes unestablished. Because the object—the illusory duality—is absent, there is no support for the establishing of tainted consciousness. Tainted consciousness does not exist without the support of the illusory duality. Both tainted consciousness and the illusory duality arise and cease together. No one can exist without the arising of the other, and consciousness itself is also impermanent, conditioned, and subject to vanishing.

In the fourth stage of insight meditation, a meditator discerns that tainted consciousness becomes unestablished through the nonexistence of objects; neither the grasper nor the grasped is existent, and thus profound insight into non-duality, namely, *śūnyatā* arises. Without attachment to anything in the world, a meditator directly knows and sees everything in its true nature.

⁷⁹² Bodhi, trans., *Samyutta Nikāya*, 892.

With the development of these four stages of insight meditation, a meditator uproots the subject-object duality, destroys ignorance and craving, and eradicates the tainted seeds of *ālaya*-consciousness. With the complete destruction of tainted seeds, *ālaya*-consciousness ceases. Then, the mutual dependence of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa* is broken. When there is the mutual cessation of *ālaya*-consciousness and *nāma-rūpa*, the whole mass of suffering is ended, as the Buddha says

I have discovered this path to enlightenment, that is, with the cessation of name-and-form comes cessation of consciousness, with the cessation of consciousness comes cessation of name-and-form, with the cessation of name-and-form, cessation of the six sense bases, with the cessation of the six sense bases, cessation of contact. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.⁷⁹³

These four stages of Yogācāra meditation are also shown in the verse of the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*. According to this treatise, the verse stated by the Buddha is

A Bodhisattva in the state of samādhi
 Contemplates that images are mind only
 By eliminating perception of objects,
 He discerns that there is merely his own perception
 With his mind abiding in itself,
 He realizes the nonexistence of what is grasped,
 And next the nonexistence of what can grasp
 Finally, he directly experiences nothing to be obtained
 菩薩於定位 觀影唯是心
 義想既滅除 審觀唯自想
 如是住內心 知所取非有
 次能取亦無 後觸無所得⁷⁹⁴

This verse also shows that the development of insight proceeds from the contemplation of the existence of consciousness to the realization of non-duality. The simile of a snake and rope used by Asanga to expound the realization of the three natures (*trīsvabhāva*) is also

⁷⁹³ Ibid, 603

⁷⁹⁴ AS at T1605, 687b18

appropriate for the explanation of the four stages of insight⁷⁹⁵ In the dark when one notices a rope, because it is dark he/she is unable to see the rope as it really is, he/she wrongly perceives it as a snake The real rope illustrates that consciousness is existent In the first stage of insight, one discerns the existence of consciousness thus *ālaya*-consciousness is existent, and it is driven by ignorance and craving running from life to life Mind-consciousness is existent, and through the activities of mind-consciousness, identity view (that is, view of self) and other wrong views arise and bind one in the round of rebirths Deliverance from suffering and rebirths is also attained through mind-consciousness knowing and seeing its objects and itself as they really are

On the basis of the existence of consciousness, one advances to the second stage That is, the subject-object confrontation as a true self and a real world is nothing but the conceptual expressions of consciousness The illusory objects, namely the subject-object duality, are nonexistent, as in the darkness of ignorance, unwise people are unable to see the truth of what they perceive, inevitably mistaking a rope for a snake This unreal snake represents that a substantial self and a reality of the world are nonexistent When one discerns that the subject-object duality is illusory, he/she understands not a snake but a rope And, this rope is dependently arisen, subject to destruction, that is, consciousness is conditioned, and it becomes nonexistent when its object is absent In the third stage of insight, tainted consciousness becomes unestablished when its object is absent Finally, neither a snake nor a rope exists, without the presence of the grasper and the grasped, both tainted consciousness and its object become nonexistent Hence, one realizes the non-duality, namely, *śūnyatā*

⁷⁹⁵ Mhs at T1594, 143a2 如闇中繩顯現似蛇，譬如繩上蛇非真實，以無有故。若已了知彼義無者，蛇覺雖滅繩覺猶在。若以微細品類分析此又虛妄，色香味觸為其相故，此覺為依繩覺當滅。如是於彼似文似義六相意言，伏除非實六相義時，唯識性覺猶如蛇覺亦當除遣，由圓成實自性覺故

Chapter VI

Conclusion

Due to the quest for enlightenment, the Buddha approached Āḷāra Kālāma to learn the technique of meditation and attained the third formless attainment, the base of nothingness. He was soon disillusioned. He left his first teacher and next went to Uddaka Rāmaputta. His meditative technique led to the highest formless attainment, called the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, which is also not the ultimate deliverance. Both of these highest formless attainments cannot lead to “disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna,” but rather to a rebirth in higher realms of mundane existence.⁷⁹⁶ Unlike other recluses and brahmins, the Buddha realized that the meditative attainments from the four *dhyānas* up to the four formless attainments, on their own, could not shatter ignorance (*avidyā*) or destroy defilements (*kleśa*). The ultimate deliverance, nirvāṇa, is attained by abandoning ignorance and achieving true knowledge; this is not reached by *śamatha* (tranquility) alone, but by the union of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* (insight).

The union of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* is connected with the different schemes of *śamatha*—the fivefold scheme, the sixfold scheme, the sevenfold scheme, the eightfold scheme, and the ninefold scheme. In Chapter II, I discussed these schemes of *śamatha*, so as to deal with the three questions: 1) What kinds of *śamatha* does a meditator need as the basis for the development of insight? 2) Could the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, serve as an adequate basis for a meditator to

⁷⁹⁶ Nānamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 258-59.

eradicate all taints? 3) What samādhis can serve as the adequate basis for the initial stage of enlightenment?

The following lists of conclusions are reached through the analysis of different schemes of *samatha* in response to these three questions

The scrutiny of the first question is

- 1 Both the Chinese *Āgamas* and the Pāli *Nikāyas* are consistent to show that the sevenfold scheme—the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments—is the adequate basis for the development of insight ⁷⁹⁷
- 2 The eightfold scheme of *samatha* in the Chinese *Āgamas*, which includes the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception to the set of formless attainments usable as a basis for the development of insight, is an addition by copyist's error ⁷⁹⁸
- 3 Enlightenment is not possible in all meditative attainments. A meditator has to discern what kinds of samādhi are adequate basis for insight development

The analysis of the second question is

- 1 A meditator can depend on a samādhi lower than the first *dhyāna*, namely the *anāgāmya*-samādhi or access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, to eliminate all defilements, as shown in SĀ 347, BSĀ 160, SĀ 936, and MĀ 195 ⁷⁹⁹
- 2 The *anāgāmya*-samādhi illustrates that one can eradicate all taints without *dhyāna* experience

⁷⁹⁷ MĀ 205, MN 64, MN 111

⁷⁹⁸ The eightfold scheme of *samatha* is shown in the 745th sūtra and the 870th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*, the *Bacheng jing* 八城經 of the *Madhyama Āgama*, and the *Foshuo shizhijushi bachengren jing* 佛說十支居士八城人經

⁷⁹⁹ SĀ 347 at T99, 97a20 云何不得禪定而復記說？比丘答言：我是慧解脫也。BSĀ 160 at T100, 434c4 慧解脫阿羅漢不得八解脫。SĀ 936 at T99, 240a16 不得八解脫身作證具足住，然彼知見有漏斷，是名聖弟子不墮惡趣，乃至慧解脫。MĀ 195 at T26, 751b20 云何比丘有慧解脫？若有比丘八解脫身不觸成就遊，以慧見諸漏已盡已知，如是比丘有慧解脫。

In regard to the third question, here are the responses

- 1 In light of *śamatha*, the formless attainments are deeper than the *dhyānas*, while in terms of the union of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, the *dhyānas* are superior to the formless attainments. It is the *dhyānas*, not the formless attainments, that can serve as the adequate basis for the initial stage of enlightenment.
- 2 The sixfold scheme of *śamatha*, consisting of the *anāgāmya*-samādhi, the *dhyānāntara*, and the four *dhyānas*, joins with insight leading to the initial breakthrough to enlightenment, as shown in the **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the **Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*⁸⁰⁰
- 3 The fivefold scheme of *śamatha*, without including the *dhyānāntara*, leads to the initial breakthrough to enlightenment, as shown in the *Yogācārabhūmi*⁸⁰¹
- 4 Insight (*vipaśyanā*) is the key to making the breakthrough to the Dharma, yet, the different degrees of samādhi also influence the power of insight in the extirpation of defilements.

In Chapter III, I examined the nature of *dhyāna/jhāna*. In order to explore the characteristics of *rūpa-dhyāna*, first I focused on the controversy of Venerable Maudgalyāyana/Moggallāna hearing sounds in meditation. This debatable issue involves whether or not sensory awareness can occur while one is in *dhyāna*. According to the Theravāda *Vinaya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds while in a meditative attainment, because this attainment was not wholly purified.⁸⁰² In contrast, the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, and the

⁸⁰⁰ Mhv at T1545, 311a16 三結或依四或依未至滅者：四謂四靜慮地，未至謂未至地及靜慮中間

⁸⁰¹ YB at T1579, 682b27 復次，唯依諸靜慮及初靜慮近分未至定能入聖諦現觀

⁸⁰² Horner, trans., *Vinaya-pitaka*, 1:189-90. The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* at T1428, 984c26 時目連告諸比丘言：我入空慧定，聞八萬四千象入曼陀延池水聲。佛言：有如是定但不清淨

Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* record that Venerable Maudgalyāyana heard sounds after emerging from the formless attainment⁸⁰³

Regarding this point, the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācasāstra* state that because of hearing sounds and searching for them, one will emerge from the meditative attainment⁸⁰⁴ In other words, Venerable Maudgalyāyana perceived sounds indistinctly when the meditative attainment was not purified Then he emerged from the meditative attainment and clearly heard sounds of elephants plunging into water, crossing over and trumpeting on the bank of the river The conclusion is that it is possible to hear sounds while one is in a meditative attainment, but hearing sounds is an obstacle for one to stay in the meditative attainment

The four *dhyānas* are “*rūpa*” (form) *dhyānas*, and the characteristics of the four *dhyānas* differ from those of the four formless attainments (*ārūpya-samāpatti*) In the formless attainments, a meditator transcends all perceptions of form (*rūpa*), hence, one cannot use the formless attainments as bases to develop insight into the selfless nature of the form aggregate (*rūpa-skandha*)⁸⁰⁵ In contrast, perceptions of form are still present in the four *dhyānas*, and thus a meditator can depend on the four *dhyānas* for knowing and seeing the form aggregate as it really is

⁸⁰³ The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* at T1425, 466a5 佛告諸比丘：目連實得無色定，不善知出入相，出定聞，非入定聞 The Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1435, 441a1 佛語諸比丘：汝等莫說目連是事過罪。何以故？目連見先事不見後事，如來亦見先亦見後。目連在耆闍崛山中，入虛空無色定，善取入定相，不善取出定相。是人從三昧起，聞薩卑尼也岸上象聲已，還疾入虛空無色定，便謂我入定聞聲 The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* at T1442, 680b6 世尊告曰：汝諸苾芻如大目連所言無妄，雖復現入無所有處定，諸色聲想悉皆遠離。然大目連獲得靜慮解脫勝妙等持，速出速入，雖是出定謂在定中，便以其事告諸苾芻，我在定中聞象吼叫

⁸⁰⁴ YB at T1579, 650c20 若遇聲緣從定而起，與定相應意識俱轉餘耳識生，非即彼定相應意識能取此聲。若不爾者，於此音聲不領受故，不應出定。非取聲時即便出定，領受聲已，若有希望，後時方出 PS at T1602, 576b24 又處定中取外聲時，當知由二種取：一由了別定所緣境及種種所緣境意識故，二由此俱生耳識故

⁸⁰⁵ In many early discourses, such as MN 64 and AN 9 36, one penetrates the selfless nature of the five aggregates dependent on the four *dhyānas*, and penetrates the true nature of the four mental aggregates dependent on the formless attainments

In insight meditation, *prīti/pīti* and *sukha* comprise both mental pleasant feeling and bodily pleasant feeling, which are crucial factors for the development of insight into the selfless nature of the five aggregates, specifically for one to know and see the true nature of the form aggregate. The **Mahāvibhāṣā* and the *Visuddhimagga* maintain that sensory awareness does not occur while one is in *dhyāna*, and thus they cannot treat both *prīti* and *sukha* as pleasant feelings, because this cannot occur bodily pleasure. The statement of these two treatises is inconsistent with the description of the *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and the 810th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* suggests that both the physical body and the mental body experience *sukha* while one is in the third *dhyāna*, that is, *sukha* involves bodily pleasant feeling and mental pleasant feeling.⁸⁰⁶ Asanga, in his **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, indicates that both *prīti* and *sukha* are pleasant feelings belonging to the aggregate of feelings. In contrast, the position of the *Yogācārabhūmi* and Asanga is consistent with the description of *Ānāpānasati Sutta* and the 810th sūtra of the *Samyukta Āgama*.⁸⁰⁷ These two treatises do not state that body-consciousness is aware of bodily pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*. The Yogācārin—Sthiramati, Vasubandhu, and Asvabhāva—say that the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while one is in *dhyāna*.⁸⁰⁸ Sthiramati suggests that *ālaya*-consciousness sustains the body to experience bodily pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*.⁸⁰⁹ In terms of the six consciousnesses, Vasubandhu and Asvabhāva point out that mind-

⁸⁰⁶ YB at T1579, 468a17 彼於爾時色身意身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂

⁸⁰⁷ PS at T1602, 487a3 喜者：謂已轉依者依於轉識，心悅心勇心適心調，安適受受所攝。樂者：謂已轉依者依阿賴耶識，能攝所依令身怡悅，安適受受所攝。MN 118, SĀ 810

⁸⁰⁸ ASV at T1606, 726a27 三摩呬多位餘識無故。MhsV, trans Paramārtha, at T1595, 185b1 五識雖復不起。MhsV, trans Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14 謂有色處於定位中無五識時。MhsA at T1598, 402a21 如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益

⁸⁰⁹ ASV at T1606, 726a27 云何為樂？謂已轉依者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依。所依怡悅安適受者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依，所依怡悅安適受受所攝，此經意說

consciousness depends on the body to experience bodily pleasure through similar body-contact.⁸¹⁰ Sthiramati, Vasubandhu, and Asvabhāva recognize the presence of bodily pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*, but body-consciousness is not present.

The Sautrāntika maintains that body-consciousness is present while one is in *dhyāna*, hence, *sukha* is regarded as bodily pleasure only, and mental pleasure is not included.⁸¹¹ According to MĀ 3, EĀ 12.1, AN 7.63, and MN 119, it is said that the body (*kāya*) feels pleasure while one is in the third *dhyāna*. These early discourses illustrate that “bodily pleasant feeling” is present while one is in *dhyāna*. The presence of bodily pleasure is the unique characteristic of the *rūpa-dhyānas*. The *rūpa-dhyānas* are called “*rūpa*” (form), because a feeling of the body is still there. When one attains *dhyāna*, body and mind become one to experience the unworldly happiness of the *dhyāna*, and it is difficult to discern which consciousness is being aware of the unworldly happiness. Meditators are based on their subjective evaluations to claim that *ālaya*-consciousness, mind-consciousness, or body-consciousness is aware of bodily pleasant feeling.

In meditation practice, *vitarka/vitakka* (directed thought) and *vicāra* (examination) are two typical mental qualities of a meditator while in the first *dhyāna*.

The contrast of the definitions of *vitarka* and *vicāra* in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the **Tattvasiddhiśāstra*, the *Visuddhimagga*, the *Vimuttimagga*, the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the

⁸¹⁰ MhsV, trans. Paramārtha, at T1595, 185a25: 若在有色界，意識依身故生。釋曰：何故有身處必似觸，以意識必依身生故，似觸顯現。由此意識依身似觸生故，觀行人正入觀時，五識雖復不起，中間於色身有喜樂受生。MhsV, trans. Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14: 又一切處亦似所觸影像而生：謂有色處於定位中無五識時，在色身中內領受起。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止於身，由此諸根依止身故，於自所依能起損益；意識亦爾，依止身故，應知於身能作變異。MhsA at T1598, 402a17: 又一切處亦似所觸影像而轉者：謂於定中領納分別輕重等觸，而非散亂隨順彼故。有色界中者：非於無色界，何以故？即此意識依止身故。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益。

⁸¹¹ AK at T1558, 147a21: 若言定中寧有身識，有亦無失。147a6: 有說：無有心受樂根，三靜慮中說樂支者，皆是身受所攝樂根。若言定中寧有身識，有亦無失。

**Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, and the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* show that the definitions of the latter three Yogācāra texts are comparatively closer to the descriptions of the Chinese *Āgamas* and the Pāli *Nikāyas*.

The *Yogācārabhūmi*, the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, and the **Abhidharmasamuccayavyākhyā* define *vitarka* and *vicāra*, these two *dhyāna* factors, as skillful thoughts connected with renunciation, non-ill will, and non-cruelty for one to abandon unskillful thoughts connected with sensual desire, ill will, and cruelty, giving rise to rapture (*prīti/pīti*) and pleasure (*sukha*).⁸¹² In meditation practice, *vitarka* and *vicāra* are skillful thoughts which enable a meditator to withdraw from sensual pleasures and unwholesome states, so as to enter the first *dhyāna*. After one attains the first *dhyāna*, *vitarka* and *vicāra* still act as skillful thoughts which steady the mind in this *dhyāna*.

According to the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the **Prakaraṇāryavācaśāstra*, equanimity (*upekṣā*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), and clear comprehension (*samprajanya*) are present in all four *dhyānas*.⁸¹³ *Vitarka* and *vicāra* give rise to equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension in the first *dhyāna*. After that, equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension turn into inner clarity (*adhyātmasamprasāda*) in the second *dhyāna*, transform into *dhyāna* factors in the third *dhyāna*, and achieve purity of equanimity and

⁸¹² YB at T1579, 467b27: 有尋有伺者：由於尋伺未見過失，自地猶有對治欲界諸善尋伺，是故說名有尋有伺。PS at T1602, 486c29: 尋者：調能對治二種雜染，出離尋無恚尋無害尋。伺者：調能對治二種雜染，出離伺無恚伺無害伺。ASV at T1606, 736b: 初靜慮中尋伺二種是對治支，能斷欲界欲恚害等尋伺故。喜樂二種是利益支，由尋伺支治所治已得離生喜樂故。

⁸¹³ YB at T1579, 649b8: 初靜慮中念正知捨，由尋伺門之所引發，是故雖有而不宣說。第二靜慮由彼自性能有作業，又由踊躍心隨煩惱之所纏縛，是故顯示內等淨名。第三靜慮心隨煩惱已遠離故，顯彼自相，是故說彼離喜貪故。初靜慮中離欲貪故，非離喜貪。第二靜慮離尋伺貪故，非離喜貪。第四靜慮即彼顯示最極清淨，是故當知一切靜慮皆隨轉如其所應。PS at T1602, 575c29: 問：念正知捨一切處有，何故於初靜慮等不說耶？答：初靜慮中由尋伺門所引發故，雖有不說。第二靜慮中有踊躍自體之所作業，及心所有少分煩惱所纏覆故，總以內等淨名顯之。第三靜慮中彼心所有少分煩惱皆遠離故，顯彼自相，故經中說遠離喜貪。初靜慮中雖離欲貪，未離喜貪。第二靜慮中雖離尋伺貪，未離喜貪。第四靜慮中即此捨念極善清淨顯了，是故於諸靜慮中如其所應彼差別應知。

purity of mindfulness in the fourth *dhyāna*⁸¹⁴ Equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension are significant mental qualities for the development of both tranquility meditation and insight meditation. In insight meditation, mind-consciousness associated with equanimity, mindfulness, and clear comprehension discerns all physical and mental phenomena while one is in *dhyāna*.

In Chapter IV, I discussed the practice of mindfulness of breathing. This chapter involves two controversial issues. First, does a meditator still experience bodily sensations while in *dhyāna*? The *Visuddhimagga* maintains that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*⁸¹⁵. Hence, this work suggests a mental counterpart image to be the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing when one attains *dhyāna*⁸¹⁶. The Chinese *Vimuttimaggā* does not mention whether or not the five sensory consciousnesses are present while one is in *dhyāna*. This work suggests tactile signs or breath sensations to be the meditative object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing⁸¹⁷. After one attains *dhyāna*, can one still use breath sensations to be the meditation object? There is no clear response found in this work.

According to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the **Abhidharmanyāyānusāraśāstra*, the orthodoxy of the Sarvāstivāda is that the five sensory consciousnesses do not occur while one is in *dhyāna*⁸¹⁸. On the basis of this position, the **Mahāvibhāṣā* states that after attaining *dhyāna*, one uses perception of the breath for the practice of mindfulness of breathing, that is, a meditator concentrates on perception of the breath to discern in-and-out breath throughout the entire body as a

⁸¹⁴ Ibid

⁸¹⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans. Ñānamoli, 323

⁸¹⁶ Ibid, 279

⁸¹⁷ Vim at T1648, 412a9 又一行處，以觸應取相，謂含數息

⁸¹⁸ AK at T1558, 147a2 正在定中無五識故 ANS at T1562, 760a27 正在定中無五識故

thread through a pearl.⁸¹⁹ However, Vasumitra and Vasubandhu, the Sarvāstivādins, suggest that breath sensations can occur while one is in *dhyāna*, and thus one simply uses the breath as the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing before and while one is in *dhyāna*.⁸²⁰ This is probably because when one breathes in and out experiencing the whole body, the breath becomes refined as a good energy flow throughout the entire body, which facilitate the steadiness of one's *dhyāna*.

The *Yogācārabhūmi* maintains that bodily pleasant feeling can be experienced while one is in *dhyāna*, while this treatise does not state body-consciousness aware of bodily pleasure while one is in *dhyāna*.⁸²¹ The Yogācārin—Sthiramati, Vasubandhu, and Asvabhāva—say that the five sensory consciousnesses are not present while one is in *dhyāna*, and thus bodily pleasure is present but it is not body-consciousness aware of bodily pleasure.⁸²² In this context, even though the *Yogācārabhūmi* suggests breath sensations or tactile sensations to be the meditation object for the practice of mindfulness of breathing, this does not mean that one still uses breath sensations as the meditation

⁸¹⁹ Mhv at T1545, 135a17: 住心觀息遍住身中如珠中縷。

⁸²⁰ AK at T1558, 118b10: 觀息住身如珠中縷，為冷為煖，為損為益。Mhv at T1545, 136b04: 尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾。

⁸²¹ AK at T1558, 147a06: 有說：無有心受樂根，三靜慮中說樂支者，皆是身受所攝樂根。YB at T1579, 468a17: 彼於爾時色身意身領納受樂及輕安樂，是故說言有身受樂。第三靜慮已下諸地，無如是樂及無間捨。

⁸²² ASV at T1606, 726a27: 三摩呬多位餘識無故。云何為樂？謂已轉依者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依。所依怡悅安適受者，依阿賴耶識攝受所依，所依怡悅安適受受所攝，此經意說。MhsV, trans. Paramārtha, at T1595, 185a25: 若在有色界，意識依身故生。釋曰：何故有身處必似觸，以意識必依身故，似觸顯現。由此意識依身似觸生故，觀行人正入觀時，五識雖復不起，中間於色身有喜樂受生。MhsV, trans. Xuanzang, at T1597, 340a14: 又一切處亦似所觸影像而生：謂有色處於定位中無五識時，在色身中內領受起。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止於身，由此諸根依止身故，於所依能起損益；意識亦爾，依止身故，應知於身能作變異。MhsA at T1598, 402a17: 又一切處亦似所觸影像而轉者：謂於定中領納分別輕重等觸，而非散亂隨順彼故。有色界中者：非於無色界，何以故？即此意識依止身故。如餘色根依止於身者：如餘眼等有色諸根依止身故，即於此身能作損益。意識亦爾，有色界中依止身故，即於此身領納分別能作損益。

object after attaining *dhyāna*⁸²³ After one attains *dhyāna*, what meditation object should be used for the practice of mindfulness of breathing is not clearly explained in the *Yogācārabhūmi*. How a meditator practices mindfulness of breathing is based on how he/she interprets the nature of *dhyāna* After one enters *dhyāna*, what meditation object should be used for the practice of mindfulness of breathing is a debatable issue

The other controversial issue is insight meditation Should insight be developed while in or subsequent to *dhyāna*? A meditator can develop insight without *dhyāna* experience After one attains *dhyāna*, insight is developed while in *dhyāna*, as shown in the *Jhāna Sutta*, the *Mahāmālunkya Sutta*, the *Anupada Sutta*, the *Wuxiafenjie jing* 五下分結經, and the *Shuo jing* 說經 The *Yogācārabhūmi*, the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and the **Tattvasiddhisāstra* are consistent with these early discourses to indicate that insight is developed while one is in *dhyāna*⁸²⁴

The *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimagga* maintain that one attains *dhyāna* and then emerges from *dhyāna* for practicing insight⁸²⁵ After one emerges from *dhyāna*, Ajahn Brahmavamsa and Pa Auk Sayadaw suggest access concentration and momentary concentration respectively serving as a basis for the development of insight⁸²⁶ The concept of “access concentration” is implicitly suggested in SĀ 347, BSĀ 160, SĀ 936,

⁸²³ YB at T1579, 464b20 如妒羅綿或疊絮等諸輕飄物，於是諸相而起勝解。彼若於內入息出息流轉不絕作意思惟，爾時名為於其內身住循身觀

⁸²⁴ YB at T1579, 433b8 又彼先時或依下三靜慮，或依未至依定，已於奢摩他修瑜伽行。今依無常隨觀，復於毘鉢舍那修瑜伽行，如是以奢摩他毘鉢舍那重修心已，於諸界中從彼隨眠而求解脫 Mhv at T1545, 136b4 尊者世友作如是說：如觀一切大種造色所合成身，皆是無常、苦、空、無我，如病、如癰、如箭、不淨，以不捨離緣息風覺，不名出定，此亦應爾 Ak at T1558, 118b11 觀謂觀察此息風已，兼觀息俱大種造色，及依色住心及心所，具觀五蘊以為境界。轉謂移轉緣息風覺，安置後勝善根中乃至世間第一去位。淨謂昇進入見道等 TS at T1646, 338a6 佛示定中亦有智慧，非但繫心。行者修習定時若生煩惱，於中生智除此煩惱，欲令三昧為聖清淨

⁸²⁵ Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga*, trans Ñānamoli, 279-80 Vim at T1648, 461b24 云何令起者？彼坐禪人入寂寂住，或坐或臥，樂滅音樂滅入初禪。入已安詳出，無間見彼禪無常苦無我，乃至行捨智。如第二禪第三禪第四禪，虛空處識處無所有處，入已安詳出，無間見正定無常苦無我，乃至行捨智

⁸²⁶ Brahm, *Mindfulness, Bliss, and Beyond*, 178-79 Pa Auk, *Knowing and Seeing*, 188

and MĀ 195.

In Buddhist meditation, insight and tranquility can be developed separately, but one attains the ultimate deliverance through the combination of both. Insight and tranquility are one path which is developed dependent on a samādhi, and this samādhi can be the *dhyānas*, the three lower formless attainments, access concentration preceding the first *dhyāna*, or the *dhyānāntara*. A meditator can develop insight while in *dhyāna* or after emerging from *dhyāna* dependent on access concentration. It is not necessary that one emerges from *dhyāna* and then depends on access concentration or momentary concentration for the development of insight. The *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vimuttimaggā* suggest that one attains *dhyāna* and then emerges from *dhyāna* for insight practice; this seems to be questionable.

In Chapter VI, I discussed consciousness and meditation. In the Chinese *Āgamas*, *nāma* in *nāma-rūpa* (name-and-form) is the four immaterial aggregates of feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness, while in the Pāli *Nikāyas*, *nāma* in *nāma-rūpa* is feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention, namely the three mental aggregates of feeling, perception, and formations.⁸²⁷ In the Pāli *Nikāyas*, consciousness is not included in *nāma*. The *Anupada Sutta* and the *Dharmaskandha* show that feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention, and consciousness are the principal elements in the development of both tranquility and insight present in the four *dhyānas* and the three lower formless attainments.⁸²⁸ They work together in the knowing of all physical and mental phenomena. This explains that insight can be developed while one is *dhyāna*.

If a meditator practices the four *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments,

⁸²⁷ SĀ 298, MĀ 29, SN 12:2, MN 9

⁸²⁸ MN 111, Dsk at T1537, 483c28.

without the development of insight, these meditative attainments will be tinged with craving (*tr̥ṣṇā*), conceit (*māna*), views (*dr̥ṣṭi*), and ignorance (*avidyā*) Craving, conceit, views, and ignorance are designated the four indeterminate roots (*avyākṛtamūlām*) by the Sarvāstivādins—Vasumitra and Ghosa, so as to explain that when one attains the four *dhyānas* and the four formless attainments, these meditative attainments are still mundane due to the presence of these four defilements⁸²⁹

Here the question is when mind-consciousness ceases in the states of the attainment of non-perception (*asaṃjñi-samāpatti*) and the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), the four indeterminate roots are not present Then, what is the distinction between the attainment of non-perception and the attainment of cessation? *Manas*, the seventh consciousness, is said to be associated with the four defilements of identity view, self-conceit, self-love, and ignorance, acting in the subtle state of the attainment of non-perception⁸³⁰ Due to the presence of *manas* and its four defilements, the attainment of non-perception is still a mundane samādhi In contrast, the attainment of cessation is a supramundane samādhi because the defiled *manas* is terminated by the power of tranquility and insight⁸³¹ In Yogācāra, the presence or the absence of *manas* is used to explain the distinction between the attainment of non-perception and the attainment of cessation

When meditators attain the four *dhyānas*, because they experience the rapture and happiness born of seclusion in the first *dhyāna*, the rapture and happiness born of concentration in the second *dhyāna*, unworldly pleasure in the third *dhyāna*, and further

⁸²⁹ PP at T1542, 693a25 無記根云何？謂四無記根，即無記愛無記見無記慢無記無明 AAS at T1553, 968c7 四種無記根，無記愛無記無明無記見無記慢

⁸³⁰ Mhs at T1594, 133c16 謂無想定雜意所顯非滅盡定

⁸³¹ Ibid

refined happiness in the fourth *dhyāna*, the four *dhyānas* are said to be mistaken for supreme nirvāṇa/nibbāna here and now.⁸³² Ven. Bodhi indicates that cognitive errors arise through the three conceivings (*maññanā*) of craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*), and views (*diṭṭhi*), all of which are under the operations of ego-consciousness.⁸³³ When meditators attain the four *dhyānas*, because ego-consciousness is associated with craving, conceit, and views, meditators cannot see things as they really are, but attach to the four *dhyānas* as supreme nirvāṇa here and now.

In *dhyāna* practice, one should carefully discern the presence of the four indeterminate roots, the activities of *manas*, and the operations of ego-consciousness, so as to understand the problems of one's meditative attainments. When one can realize what problems of one's meditative attainments are, then these meditative attainments become the supporting condition for the achievement of one's awakening.

In Yogācāra meditation, the four stages of insight meditation focus on consciousness (*viññāna*) to penetrate the selfless nature of individual existence, and to abandon attachment to the reality of phenomena.⁸³⁴ The essence of these four stages is not different from that of the *Āgamas* and the *Nikāyas*.

The comparative study of Buddhist meditation shows different possible explanations for the development of tranquility meditation and insight meditation. Buddhist meditators developed various systems of meditation in the one-taste of Dharma. All systems of meditation are the unchangeable taste of deliverance. These distinctive systems enrich meditation practice to be accessible to different dispositions of meditators.

⁸³² Bodhi, *Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views*, 81-2. Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, trans., *Majjhima Nikāya*, 87.

⁸³³ Bodhi, *Discourse on the Root of Existence*, 8.

⁸³⁴ MV at T1600, 465a5. AS at T1605, 687b18.

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