Chapter 1  Introduction

Overview and Statement of the Problem

A continuing central issue in Buddhist meditation, a popular substitute for the Pāli term ‘bhāvanā’ which literally means ‘development’ or ‘culture,’ i.e., mental development or mental culture, is how two interconnected processes are related. These processes are samatha (tranquility) or samādhi (concentration) on the one hand and vipassanā (insight) or paññā (wisdom) on the other.¹

Samatha which denotes calmness, tranquillity, serenity and concentration possesses the function of calming, centering and unifying the mind by means of which the mind and its concomitants remain focussed on a single object. The mental unification cannot be attained all at once but develops in a graded sequence of absorption levels, namely the jhānas.² Vipassanā aims to gain direct understanding of the true nature of phenomena as they really are, in terms of the three characteristics; anicca (impermanence), dukkha³ (unsatisfactoriness) and anattā (not-self). It is generally regarded as the unique discovery of the Buddha and of central importance for the achievement of nibbāna.⁴ The issue of the relationship between these processes is crucial because meditation provides the reliable means for the achievement of Buddhist liberation from the circle of existences and supreme security from bondage to ignorance.

² The grammatical rules for the use of the plural forms of Pāli terms, are very complex and depend on such things as the gender and final vowel of the term. For example, the term jhāna could be pluralized as jhānāni, and khandha as khandhā. To avoid explaining each different individual use of Pāli pluralization, and for the sake of simplicity and readability, this study will add the suffix “s” in non-italic type to the Pāli term, in italic type, in order to represent two or more units of the terms.
³ The term “dukkha” is occasionally interpreted as different meanings such as; pain, suffering, ill, unsatisfactoriness, according to its certain connections (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, p. 54). In this research, it will be rendered as unsatisfactoriness in connection with the three characteristics, as suffering with four noble truths, as pain with the mode of feeling.
In the varying opinions about and practice of Buddhist meditation, the relationship between *samatha* and *vipassanā* can be abstracted into three categories: 1) regarding the development of *vipassanā* as a direct approach to enlightenment in which the development of *samatha* is not essential; 2) the contemplation of the meditation methods independently of each other as a path to enlightenment; 3) the concomitant contemplation of *samatha* and *vipassanā* in order to achieve enlightenment.

From these three diverse positions, the relationship between *samatha* and *vipassanā* can be seen as potentially problematic. In particular, *vipassanā* practice lacks clarity due to differing and contradictory interpretations of the Buddhist canon. To date, this conflict of practice remains unresolved and the debate continues. The principle purpose of the current study is to determine what the intrinsic characteristics of *vipassanā* are and how they are related to *samatha*. To contribute to the debate of *vipassanā* which is generally related to *samatha*, the later chapters attempt to examine *samatha* and *vipassanā* individually and then to draw out the ideas about and understanding of their relationship in Theravāda Buddhism. This work attempts to determine which position may be correct. Moreover, some suggestions will be posited to help clarify what Buddhist soteriological practice is actually all about. It is useful to present a body of evidence which may contribute in a minor way to an eventual resolution of the question.

This introductory chapter has three main aims. It will first introduce the three main positions in the debate about the relationship between these two processes and to position this thesis in this debate. It will then give a methodological

---

approach to the issue of the relationship between samatha and vipassanā and a preliminary description of our scriptural sources. The third aim is to give an overview of the thesis by introducing the individual concept of each chapter.

Regarding the first position, most scholars (e.g. Nārada, Nyanaponika, and Bucknell) argue for the significance of vipassanā alone. For instance, Nārada states that samatha is not essential and is regarded as an asset only; the meditator can direct him/herself to vipassanā alone in the pursuit of arahantship. Dependant on the unique practice of vipassanā, Nyanaponika classifies the practice of bare insight (sukkha-vipassanā) into the direct and exclusive practice of vipassanā without the progress of samatha into the state of jhānas. In *The Twilight Language*, Bucknell says: “It is stated that tranquillity meditation, though valuable as a foundation for insight meditation, is not indispensable, and may be bypassed by exceptionally gifted meditators.” While these scholars attempt to interpret vipassanā as essential and samatha as inessential in the pursuit of ultimate goal, one might ask why the Buddha taught numerous methods of meditation to bring about one-pointedness of mind.

Moreover, the Buddha says:

> Perfect concentration, Ānanda, when developed and made much of, has as its final goal the removal of desire, the removal of hatred, and the removal of delusion.

At this point, the opinion of the first category which disregards samatha as non-essential appears to be controversial.

---

6Nārada, op. cit., p. 537.
9 S.V.5-6: “Sammāsamādhi Ānanda bhāvito bahulīkato rāgavinayapariyosāno hoti, dosa... mohavinayapariyosāno hoti.”(All translations from Pāli to English throughout are the author’s own translations unless otherwise stated.)
Regarding the second position, a few scholars propose that both *samatha* and *vipassanā* are clearly distinguished in relation to the Buddhist soteriology and Buddhist philosophical theory. For example, Griffiths focuses on the independency of these two meditative techniques as a result of their different soteriological methods and goals. On the one hand, he says about *vipassanā*: “Those who follow and advocate the analytical techniques tend to perceive the basic human problem as one of ignorance, an inaccurate understanding of the way things are.”\(^\text{10}\) Regarding *samatha*, on the other hand, he says: “the practitioners of the enstatic\(^\text{11}\) techniques aimed at tranquillity tend to perceive the basic human error as one of attitude rather than cognition; the key Buddhist term here is ‘thirst’ (*tanhā*), a term that denotes all types of passionate desire and attachment.”\(^\text{12}\) However, if *samatha* and *vipassanā* are clearly independent, why are their synonymous terms, *samādhi* and *paññā* arranged in the group of threefold training (*sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*)? Indeed, Griffiths’ point about the inconsistency between *samatha* and *vipassanā* seems to contradict the Buddha’s statement of their identical responsibility for obtaining knowledge (*vijjā*).

> These two things, monks, are partaking of knowledge. What two? Tranquillity and insight.\(^\text{13}\)

Regarding the third position, a considerable number of scholars (e.g. Pathak, Anālayo) attempt to portray both meditative processes as equal for Buddhist liberation. For example, Pathak states in regard to their cooperation continuing up to *nibbāna*, that *samatha* and *vipassanā* must be combined into a single process to *nibbāna*.\(^\text{14}\) In support of this, Anālayo states: “…not two different approaches to realization but two aspects of the meditative path, one of which is

---

\(^\text{10}\) Paul J. Griffiths, op. cit., p. 14.

\(^\text{11}\) The word ‘enstatic,’ derived from the Greek word ‘en-statis,’ provides the meaning of ‘standing within.’ It is generally employed in the opposite of ecstatic which means standing without (Amjol Shrestha). The enstatic meditation aims to reduce the contents of consciousness, to focus awareness upon a single point (Paul J. Griffiths, op. cit., p. 18).

\(^\text{12}\) Paul J. Griffiths, loc. cit.

\(^\text{13}\) A.I.61: “Dve me, bhikkhave, dhammā vijjābhāgiyā. Katame dve? Samatho ca vipassanā ca.”

\(^\text{14}\) Prakash Pathak, op. cit., p. 140.
not sufficient by itself to bring realization."\textsuperscript{15} His statement can be justified as it coincides with the \textit{Samathasutta} where the Buddha advises monks to put effort into both \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} processes:

\begin{quote}
\ldots a monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself, but have not gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish the tranquillity of heart within oneself and to insight into dhamma through higher wisdom.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\ldots a monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom, but have not gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish insight into dhamma through higher wisdom and to the tranquillity of heart within oneself.\textsuperscript{16}
\end{quote}

Although both processes seem to be useful and necessary in a quest for \textit{nibbāna}, the definite answer of “how and when to develop both processes” is unclear. Consequently, we use the psychological and analytical approaches to the specific relationship between both processes. In order to determine the specific relationship between \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā}, in the quest for \textit{nibbāna}, this research clarifies the two issues: 1) Is \textit{samatha} required prior to commencing \textit{vipassanā}?; and 2) At what level of \textit{samatha} can we begin \textit{vipassanā}?

It is useful to present the various opinions relating to the two issues. Having addressed the relationship between \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā}, Sujato claims that both are important, but the meditator can begin \textit{vipassanā} without any practice of \textit{samatha}: “Thus \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} function as a pair, not only in the preliminary training, but also right up to the ultimate liberation.”\textsuperscript{17} Dhammavuddho shares this sentiment: “Both \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} are needed for final liberation. But the order of practice is not important. One can

\textsuperscript{16} A.V.99: “…bhikkhu paccavekkhamāno evam jānātī– ‘lābhāṁhi ajjhattāṁ cetosamathassā, na lābhī adhipaññādhammañcetosamathassā ‘tī, tena, bhikkhave, bhikkhunā ajjhattaṁ cetosamathassā yogo karāniyā.
…bhikkhu paccavekkhamāno evam jānātī– ‘lābhāṁhi adhipaññādhammañcetosamathassā ‘tī, tena, bhikkhave, bhikkhunā adhipaññādhammañcetosamathassā yogo karāniyā.”

\textsuperscript{17} Bhikkhu Sujato, \textit{A Swift Pair of Messengers} (Penang Malaysia: Inward Path, 2001), p. 27.
either practise samatha first or vipassanā first.”18 Out of this idea, the meditator can realize the true nature of all phenomena without the mental stability of samatha practice. In contrast, Buddhadāsa refers to various states of concentration: “Each of the various states of concentration is a basis for insight (vipassanā), that is, seeing impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-selfhood.”19 Gunaratana agrees with Buddhadāsa about the significance of samatha, and speaks of the particular level of momentary concentration (khaṇikasamādhi) to be the basis of vipassanā practice: “…for no insight (vipassanā) is possible without momentary concentration.”20 However, Soma disregards the momentary concentration as insufficient to support vipassanā, and points to the concentrative levels of the jhānas as sufficient.

Of no state before the first jhāna has it been said by the blessed one that it is separate from sense-desires and separate from other evil states, that is to say, aloof from the hindrances that obstruct clear vision,21

Scholars, such as Sujato, Dhammavuddho and Gunaratana, disagree, and even provide contradictory evidence, as to whether one can practice samatha or vipassanā alone, in order to reach nibbāna. Or, if one should be practiced before the other. Or, indeed, whether they should be practiced together. This thesis aims to clarify whether samatha is essential before starting vipassanā. If it is essential, then, to which level does samatha need to be developed?

Scope and Methodology of the Study

The methodological approach to these questions begins with an etymological definition of samatha and vipassanā in terms of the roots of these expressions, the types of compounds employed, and so on. Following this, the psychological characteristics of the expressions will be examined. The technique of

---

20 Henepola Gunaratana, op. cit., p. 173.
examination consists principally in (1) semantically interpreting the various Pāli terms such as; jhāna, vipassanā and arūpa as they refer to meditative practice and (2) analysing the scriptural context in order to evaluate how these terms reflect the psychological development of samatha and vipassanā.

The characteristics of samatha will be evaluated by means of a detailed examination of its etymology as well as of its principle equivalent term, ‘samādhi.’ These characteristics will be explored further through an examination of its structural levels, that is, the levels of absorption (jhānas).

In a similar manner, the characteristics of vipassanā will be explored through a discussion of the connection between the psychological experiences22 and the four noble truths as they appear in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta (Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth).23 Thereafter, the psychological interaction between samatha and vipassanā will be clarified through a response to the question of whether or not samatha is an essential prerequisite to the foundation of vipassanā and, if it is, what level of samatha is sufficient for the subsequent development of vipassanā. Moreover, this issue will be explored further through four related doctrinal analyses. The first two are; an examination of the threefold training (sīla, samādhi and paññā), and a similar investigation of satipaṭṭhāna (foundation of mindfulness) practice. Subsequently an evaluation of the cessation of perception and feeling will be carried out together with an examination of the eventual goal of freedom (vimutti) from the cankers (āsavas) and defilements (kilesas).

In other words, the present study aims to contribute to the existing scholarship on the relationship between samatha and vipassanā by examining the textual

22 The psychological experiences are vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāṇa), wisdom (paññā), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka).
23 S.V.422-423. The Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, the first sermon of the Buddha, contains some of the most significant teachings of the contemplative practices that lead to enlightenment.
evidence of the doctrines as presented in the Pāli canon. Since it represents a detailed exposition of the discourses on Buddhist meditative practices, the Pāli canon is understood as the most authoritative source on the topics relating to samatha and vipassanā. The Sutta Piṭaka forms part of the Tipitaka (The Three Baskets), which is comprised of a large collection of canonical scriptures belonging to the Theravāda school of Buddhism. The Sutta Piṭaka is divided into five separate collections known as Nikāyas. For these collections, the Pāli Text Society’s publications provide the original texts, while the author, as noted above, will provide all translations unless stated otherwise. The editions of the Pāli Text Society provide the systems of transliteration used in citations of the Romanized Pāli texts.

For the reasons stated above, the primary emphasis will be on material from the Sutta Piṭaka. Therefore, in each instance where a principle needs to be demonstrated, the Sutta Piṭaka will be consulted first. The Abhidhamma Piṭaka is a collection of psychological and philosophical implications of the doctrines set out in the discourses. As such, these texts will contribute a second level of interpretation. That is, where a demonstration or example is not readily available in the Sutta Piṭaka, or where additional interpretation is needed, a reference will be provided from the Abhidhamma Piṭaka.

A third level of investigation will take as its object material drawn from post-canonical texts such as Buddhaghosa’s Visuddhimagga. Of the numerous sources of commentary in the later Theravāda tradition, Ānānāmoli’s translation

---


25 The first collection is Vinayapiṭaka incorporating the injunctions of the Buddha on monastic discipline. The second is Suttapiṭaka which contains the Buddha’s discourses and sermons on various occasions. The third is Abhidhammapiṭaka which is composed of the psycho-philosophical aspect of the Buddha’s teaching (U Ko Lay, p.18).

26 They are Dīgha Nikāya (Long Discourses), Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Length Discourses), Samyutta Nikāya (Kindred Sayings), Anguttara Nikāya (Gradual Sayings), and Khuddaka Nikāya (Miscellaneous Discourses).
of Buddhaghosa’s (*The Path of Purification*) was found particularly useful for the purposes of this study. The *Visuddhimagga* from around 412 C.E. continues to be regarded in the Theravāda tradition as an important text on meditation. Moreover, Upatissa’s *Vimuttimagga* (*The Path of Freedom*) translated from the Chinese by Ehara, Soma Thera and Kheminda has been found valuable as a practical instruction for the path of deliverance. The present contribution of these two post-canonical texts and the later canonical *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, as stated above, is supplementary to the primary research on the *Sutta Piṭaka*.

In addition, the modern commentaries of such authors as Nyanatiloka Thera, Richard Gombrich and L.S. Cousins will be consulted. They represent an analytical interpretation of the Pāli canon from a present-day perspective. These modern interpretations of the early Buddhist material will help to clarify both the etymological investigations and the phenomenological interpretations of the original meditative and psychological practices.

A comprehensive comparison of aspects of the *Sutta Piṭaka* and the later canonical *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, as well as an evaluation of the additional material provided by the early and modern commentaries, will be fruitful areas of this research. These scriptural sources propose varied methodologies for combining *samatha* and *vipassanā*. In its emphasis, the present task evaluates these attempts at reconciliation and combination as they are related to the psychological and contextual points of view.

---

An Outline of the Work

The first chapter provides an overview of the thesis and statement of the problem, including methodology and definitions of terms, and examines the relevant textual evidence. The above mentioned methodological considerations regarding textual sources are expanded on. It also includes a brief description of each chapter.

The second chapter presents an analytical approach to the understanding of the crucial roles of samatha in order to develop the path of enlightenment and its culmination. The main analysis which is discussed proceeds along the examination of the two sets of the attainment of altered states of consciousness, namely rūpajjhānas and arūpajjhānas. Finally, this chapter will explore the potentiality of the forty subjects of concentration for the quality of concentration and for the initiation of vipassanā.

The third chapter examines the phenomenological and psychological characteristics of vipassanā as a profound internal vision arising from the role and function of samatha. The examination continues to determine the specific level of samatha which facilitates the development of a methodological approach to vipassanā. It will also be shown how the profound internal vision of vipassanā incorporates the five instrumental factors of insight, vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāna), wisdom (paññā), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka) that augment and expand upon the psychological paradigm of samatha.

The fourth chapter is an analytical and psychological study of the mutual relationship between samatha and vipassanā, with a focus on how they can be

---

30 Ńāna and vijjā are usually rendered as knowledge. This research will render ŋāna as intuition and vijjā as knowledge. When ōṣa is a member of the compound term referring to mode of vijjā and abhiññā, it will be rendered as knowledge.
used together in practice. That is, that they are in fact, not separate things, but that they are different aspects of the same process of meditation practice. This critical concept of yoking together of samatha and vipassanā is based on an examination of the four other frameworks of the Buddha’s teachings: the threefold training (sīla, samādhi and paññā), the four foundations of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna), the cessation of perception and feeling (saññāvedayitanirodha), and both types of freedom (vimutti).

The fifth chapter concludes the evidence and discussion regarding samatha, vipassanā and their intrinsic relationship. It is determined that the ultimate goal of Buddhist deliverance is the aim of neither samatha nor vipassanā as distinct practice paths. Rather, it is the complementary and simultaneous practice of both samatha and vipassanā. This practice must be based on the foundation of first practicing samatha.

From the above overview and description of the methodological approach to the research, we now begin the study with a detailed examination of the first meditative process, samatha.
Chapter 2  Samatha

Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed analysis of the first of two meditative practices, samatha. The main reason to study samatha is to determine its precise role in relevance to the second technique, vipassanā, and the way towards liberation of the mind in the sequences that follow.

To begin, this chapter examines samatha through its etymological characteristic as well as the detailed examination of the principle equivalent term, ‘samādhi’. The next part explores the significance of samatha by presenting its benefits in regard to three aspects as follows: 1) the establishment of vipassanā, 2) the attainment of fivefold supernatural knowledge and 3) its importance for the development of the ultimate goal: nibbāna. The moral requirements that are prerequisite to initiation of the process of samatha will be investigated in reference to the discourse entitled, Gaṇakamoggallānasutta (Discourse to Gaṇaka-Moggallāna). Thereafter, for the purpose of approaching an important set of concentrative attainments, namely the jhānas, this chapter will evaluate two overlapping themes that are the subject of mental images and the degree of concentration.

The jhānas are a set of altered states of consciousness achieved through the process of samatha. They comprise eight progressive stages of mental

---

31 The term ‘samādhi’ signifies the unified state of mind and the method applied to attain that state (Vajirañāṇa, p. 17).

32 The fivefold supernatural knowledge is attainable through the perfection in mental concentration, consisting of: 1) supernormal power (iddhi), 2) divine ear-element (dibbasotadhātu), 3) knowledge of the others’ minds (cetopariyāhā), 4) divine eye (dibbacakkhu), 5) knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatiñā) (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, p. 2).

33 Nibbāna, the ultimate goal of all Buddhist aspirations, constitutes the complete deliverance from all suffering and misery (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, p. 105).

34 M.III.1-7.
absorption: the four ṛūpajjhānas and the four arūpajjhānas.\textsuperscript{35} The analysis of the jhānas is based on three principal inquiries.

The first inquiry explores the analytical and psychological approach to the term ‘jhāna’ in reference to the ultimate goal through a detailed consideration of its derivation and definition.

The second inquiry is to examine individually the four ṛūpajjhānas in terms of their stereotype formulas and their factors. In the case of the first jhāna, the appointed task is to answer the question of “Whether or not the one-pointedness of mind exists in the first jhāna.” The second jhāna will be examined in order to determine the proper method for its development and the relationship between its two factors; pīti\textsuperscript{36} and ekaggatā.\textsuperscript{37} For the third jhāna, this study will investigate the type of happiness (sukha)\textsuperscript{38} derived from it and whether or not the happiness obstructs mental development. Subsequently, this research will examine the fourth jhāna to evaluate its relation with satipaṭṭhāna\textsuperscript{39} practice and to survey the existence of happiness in the fourth jhāna.

The third inquiry examines the four arūpajjhānas by referring to the following aspects: the interpretation of the term ‘arūpajjhāna,’ the appropriate method for their development, an investigation of the true meaning of the sphere of no-

\textsuperscript{35}The ṛūpajjhānas refer to the preceding set of concentrative attainments; the first, second, third and fourth jhānas. The arūpajjhānas are the set of higher concentrative states; the sphere of infinite space (ākāsānaññāyatana), the sphere of infinite consciousness (viññānaññāyatana), the sphere of no-thing-ness (ākiñcaññāyatana), and the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (nevasaññāsaññāyatana). They are individually designated by the way of their respective objects (Henepola Gunaratana: 1980, p. 129).

\textsuperscript{36}Pīti, rendered by joy, is one of the mental factors. A higher degree of pīti is characteristic of certain stages in concentration (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, p. 142).

\textsuperscript{37}Ekaggatā or one-pointedness is related to concentration (Henepola Gunaratana: 1980, p. 90).

\textsuperscript{38}This work uses the term ‘happiness’ for the translation of Pāli term ‘sukha’ not to describe happiness from sense pleasure, such as telling a good joke. But a more profound happiness derives from lack of self preoccupation.

\textsuperscript{39}Satipaṭṭhāna, treated in the discourse entitled the Satipaṭṭhānasutta, is the meditative practice depending four objects; body, feeling, mind and dhamma (M.I.56-62).
thing-ness (ākiñcaññāyatana), and their contribution to attainment of the ultimate Buddhist goal of nibbāna.

The last section is devoted to an examination of the forty subjects of concentration. Since these forty subjects are essential for the development of samatha, this section will clarify them, targeting the following three aims: the first is to determine the prominent factor in selecting the type of subject for the development of samatha. Secondly, this section seeks to clarify the characteristics of the four subjects of arūpa states. Finally, the type of subjects needed for the commencement of vipassanā will be evaluated.

The Main Characteristic of Samatha

Samatha is a Buddhist meditative method that seeks to attain certain states of consciousness by achieving increasingly refined levels of mental tranquillity and stillness. It is related to the essential mental quality for Buddhist deliverance and its means. In the Udumbarikasīhanādasutta, the Buddha appears to possess the quality of samatha and states the practice of samatha with the words: “The Blessed One is calm and preaches dhamma for the sake of tranquillity.” The term is employed throughout various Buddhist works, such as the Visuddhimagga, as a representation of a meditative process. According to various scholars, the Pāli term ‘samatha’ denotes such things as, calmness, tranquillity, serenity or concentration. An analysis of the characteristics of samatha contributes to our understanding of how the process of samatha can be developed. The following analysis of these characteristics will be conducted in

---

40 Most scholars translate the term ‘ākiñcaññāyatana’ as nothingness. This research uses that convention. However, no-thing-ness should not be mistaken for nothing, but rather a state of realizing all phenomena have no inherent existence.

41 D.III.54: “santo so Bhagavā samathāya dhamma/FL1 43h deseti.”

42 See: for example, Vism., p. 148-149 (tr. Ñāṇamoli pp. 154-155), for a discussion of the concept of samatha and issues concerning its characteristics.

43 For example Buddhaghosa, Ñāṇamoli and Nārada. Theirs and others use of the term will be discussed in the section ‘Definition of Samatha.’
terms of the definition, the mental states, and the distinguishing marks of *samatha*.

**Definition of Samatha**

The cognitive processes arising during meditation practice can be clarified through a definition of the word ‘*samatha*.’ Its definitions, derived from the *Pāli* sources are shown to involve the cognitive processes of tranquillity. In the *Pāli* canon, the *Uddhaccasutta* demonstrates that the mental state in which *samatha* is well-developed can abandon restlessness. This connotation of *samatha* as opposing restlessness relates *samatha* to the ability of tranquilizing the mind. This definition of *samatha* as tranquillity is found in the commentaries. For example, the *Atthasālinī* defines the word ‘*samatha*’ as referring to its function of tranquilizing: “It causes the opposing states to calm down, thus it is called tranquillity (*samatha*).” The opposing states are related to the five hindrances; sensual desire (*kāmachanda*), ill-will (*byāpāda*), sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*), restlessness and worry (*uddhaccakukkucca*), doubt (*vicikicchā*). The ceasing of the five hindrances coincides with the development of *samatha*. The term ‘*sameti*’ is derived from the root *sam* in the causative form, meaning ‘causes to calm.’ This meaning of *samatha* is found in the *Paramatthamañjūsā*, where Dhammapāla explains: “It is called tranquillity (*samatha*) because of suppressing the opposing states with distinction.” Dhammapāla derives *samatha* from the root *sam* which provides its characteristic mark of putting down the five hindrances. In the *Majjhimanikāyatṭhakathā*, Buddhaghosa offers an implication of *samatha* as referring to tranquilizing the mental activities: “Even tranquillity (*samatha*)

---

44 A.III.449: “*Uddhaccassa pahāṇāya samatho bhāvetabbo.*”
45 As.53: “*Paccanikadhamme sameti ti samatho.*”
46 As.131: “*Kāmacchandādayo (such as sensual desire) paccanīkadhāmme sametī ti samatho.*”
48 Vism-mḥt.I. 173: “*savisesam paccanīkadhammānaṃ vūpasamanato samatho.*”
exists in this peace, thus it is called one-pointedness.” Therefore, the traditional definition of *samatha* is related to the sense of tranquilizing or subduing the mind’s functions and then its defilements.

Moreover, most scholars define *samatha* as being in collaboration with its formal definition in commentaries and sub-commentaries. For example, Nārada derives *samatha* from the root *sam*, which means ‘to lull’ or ‘to subdue.’ He also demonstrates that during the process of *samatha*, the principal mental characteristic is mental quiescence and the suppressing of the unwholesome states respectively. Griffiths clearly agrees with Nārada about the first derivation. After identifying *samatha* with *samādhi*, Griffiths defines *samatha* as the process of mental tranquillity.

...a kind of meditation designed to exclude unwanted stimuli from awareness, to reduce the content of consciousness, and ultimately to issue in a state in which the mind has no content...

Keown agrees that *samatha* practice, continuing into the stages of *jhāna*, conduces to the elimination of discursive thought. The study of the outcome of *samatha* practice confirms this derivational characteristic of *samatha* as Gimello points out: “Psychic and intellectual activity is reduced to the barest minimum.” Solé-Leris shares this sentiment: “…the mind withdraws more and more from all physical and mental stimuli.” This means that the word ‘*samatha*’ refers to the development of tranquillity and serenity in the mind constituents which include feelings (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), mental-formations (*sañkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāna*), rather than the body.

---

49 Ps.II.401: “Ettha (nibbutiya) ca samathoti ekaggatā.”
51 Paul Griffiths, op. cit., p. 607.
Thus, cognitively, the process of *samatha* enables the mind to become tranquil so that feelings, perceptions, mental-formations, and consciousness are lulled or subdued during the process of *samatha*. Even though modern scholars generally define *samatha* as diminishing mental activity, its definition, in term of suppressing the opposing states, seems to be a by-product of mental tranquillity.

Hence, there is reason to suggest that the principal meaning of *samatha* is ‘to lull’ in relation to calming the mind, and ‘to subdue’ in relation to overcoming the mental hindrances in the meditation process. From the viewpoint of mental development, the definitions of *samatha* as ‘to lull’ or ‘to subdue’ are the most accurate representations of the corresponding mental process.

**Samādhi: the Synonymous Term of Samatha**

The definition and analysis of *samatha* itself can help in the understanding of the practice of *samatha*. To further clarify the mental state of ‘*samatha*,’ an examination of the synonymous term ‘*samādhi*’ (concentration), which the Buddha refers to in various discourses,\(^{55}\) should be considered. For example in the discourse of concentration (*Samādhisutta*), the Buddha states: “Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are.”\(^{56}\) Indeed, the two terms have been used interchangeably in the Pāli literature. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* explains *samatha* and *samādhi* as being similar, using both terms to refer to a mental state of non-agitation or non-distraction.\(^{57}\) A close relationship is also shown in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*.

What is tranquillity (*samatha*) on that occasion? That stability, station, steadiness, absorption and not moving of mind, unperturbed mental procedure, tranquillity (*samatha*), the faculty and the power of

---

\(^{56}\) S.III.13: “*samādhiṃ bhikkhave bhāvetha samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhūtam pajānāti.*”
\(^{57}\) Paṭis.1.74: “Avikkhepaṭṭhena sammāsamādhi, Avikkhepaṭṭhena samatho.”
concentration (samādhi), the perfect concentration - this is called tranquillity (samatha) on that occasion.  

Buddhaghosa suggests in the same way that the expressions samatha and samādhi closely approach one another and are in principle equivalent. Most scholars equate samatha with samādhi according to this identification of the characteristics of samatha. For instance, Gunaratana indicates that the practice and cultivation of samādhi are equivalent to the development of samatha. Likewise, Griffiths speaks of their identity and interchangeability. Gimello states the relationship between samatha and samādhi: “…that of ‘concentration’ or ‘collectedness’ (samādhi), which term is in many circumstances synonymous with samatha.” Moreover, Vimalaramsi interprets the word ‘samādhi’ as “calmness, unified mind, tranquillity, peacefulness, stillness, composure of mind, quiet mind,” which signifies the same mental characteristics as samatha. It can therefore be concluded that the method of practice, characteristics and application of samatha can be identified as samādhi.

Even though their prominent aspects are identical, Vimalo’s interpretation of samatha as an ‘inner’ stillness reveals a particular aspect which distinguishes it from samādhi. However, this small difference in meaning does not affect the identity of samatha and samādhi. Vimalo’s interpretation of samatha reveals his understanding of samatha as a sense of mental tranquillity (samatha) within oneself, which the Buddha describes as being the essential quality or necessity

---

58 Dhs.16: “Katamo tasmiṇī samaye samatho hoti? Yā tasmiṇī samaye cittassa ṛhiti saññhi ti avaṭṭhiti avisāhāro avikkheto avisāhañāmañasaṭā samatho samādhindriyaṃ samādhībalaṃ sammāsamādhi– ayaṃ tasmiṇī samaye samatho hoti.”

59 Sv III 983: Samatho Samādhi.

60 Henepola Gunaratana, op. cit., p. 20.


for getting rid of all cankers (āsavas). Further evidence of support for Vimalo’s view appears in the discourse of Rohitassa, in which it is stated that the end of suffering is accomplished within one’s own body. From this, it becomes apparent that the undistracted mental state of samatha, experienced through an object of concentration, remains within the body. Vimalo’s definition of ‘inner stillness’ as samatha and the definition of ‘concentration,’ as samādhi are based on different contexts. However, the characteristics and qualities of the two terms are in fact identical. Therefore, samatha (inner stillness) is synonymous with the concentrative state known as samādhi.

The Distinguishing Marks of Samatha

The study of the characteristics of samatha by means of its distinguishing marks provides an understanding of how concentration relates to mindfulness (sati). In a discussion between the Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā and the devotee Visākha, preserved in the Cūḷavedallasutta, refers to mental states, distinguishing marks and prerequisites of samādhi (concentration) as being interchangeable with samatha.

Visākha asks:

What, sister, is concentration? What are the distinguishing marks of concentration? What are the requisites for concentration? What is the concentrative development?

The sister replies:

Friend Visākha, whatever is one-pointedness of mind, this is concentration; the four foundations of mindfulness are the distinguishing marks of concentration; the four right endeavours are the requisites for concentration; whatever is the repetition, the development, the increase of these very things, this is herein the concentrative development.

65 A.II.93: “yvāyam puggalo lābhī ceva hoti ajjhattaṃ cetosamathassa lābhī ca...puggalena tesyeva kasalesu dharmesu patiṭṭhaya uttarī āsavānaṃ khayāya yogo karaṇīyo.”
66 S.I.62: “Api ca khvāha/FL143h āvuso imasmi/FL143hyeva byāmamatte kaṭevilāre sasāṁnikhī samanake lokaṇca paniṇapemi lokasamudayaṇīca lokanirodhaṇīca lokanirodhaṇīṃñiṇīca paṭipadanti.”
67 M.I.301: “Katamo pan’iṣye samādhi, katame samādhinimittā, katame samādhiparikkhārā, katamā samādhibhāvanā ti. Yā kho āvuso Visākha cittassa ekaggatā ayāṃ samādhi, cattāro satipaṭṭhānā samādhi, cattāro sammappadhānā samādhiparikkhārā, yā tesanā yeva dhammānaṃ āsevanā bāhavanā bahullakammaṃ ayāṃ tattha samādhibhāvanā ti.”
In the above quotation, the state of one-pointedness of mind (cittassa ekaggatā) relates to the sense of the concordance of consciousness and its concomitants in usually focusing on a single object. We also see that mindfulness (sati) plays a crucial role as a prerequisite of the one-pointedness, i.e. the mental state samādhi. In contrast to this, Gunaratana states that concentration and mindfulness have distinct functions during the meditative process. While concentration represents the usual focusing of mind on one object without interruption, mindfulness, by its wide form of attention, can feature a limitless number of objects. This would mean that mindfulness and concentration are two clearly different spiritual practices with distinct functions. On the contrary, an opposite interpretation is found in the Dvedhāvitakkasutta, where the meditative practice is concluded to be the collaboration between mindfulness and concentration.

In order to demonstrate this relationship, it is significant to refer to one of Buddha’s similes, which describes how a cowherd relaxes, sits under a tree and observes his cows from a distance. The term ‘sati’ is employed to refer to this comparatively relaxed and distant observation. This simile implies the prominent aspect of mindfulness as a relaxed and calm observation as opposed to the skillful thought in order to develop concentration. After having given the simile, the Buddha said “unconfused mindfulness was established, the body was tranquil and untroubled, the mind concentrated and one-pointed” on the path to the soteriological goal. So, there is considerable evidence that inner stillness, i.e. samatha, needs to be cultivated on the foundation of mindfulness (sati) so that they can progress together along the path towards enlightenment.

---

68 Henepola Gunaratana, Mindfulness in Plain English (Singapore: The Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, 1990), p. 155.
69 Ibid., pp. 156-158.
70 M.I.116-117.
71 Ibid.
72 M.I.117: “upaṭṭhitā sati asammutṭhā, passaddho kāyo asāraddho, samāhitam cittam ekaggam.”
It can thus be asserted that there exists a widespread practice to use the term *samatha* in the place of *samādhi*. Despite this, a closer analysis reveals that *samatha* is related to one particular aspect of *samādhi*, which is calmness inside of one’s own body. During *samādhi*, however, the mind can be focused on objects within or outside of the body. Both processes have in common the fact that they need to be developed on the foundation of mindfulness (*sati*).

An understanding of the characteristics of *samatha* will facilitate the meditators in their meditation practice and promote their meditation progress. It will be presented below how the successive development of *samatha* will be advantageous for the path of enlightenment.

**The Benefits of Samatha**

The Buddha emphasizes that mental development is the single most important activity that one can undertake to realize true benefits in his/her life.\(^{73}\) Indeed, the Buddha clearly states the importance of a well-trained mind. During the process of *samatha*, consciousness calms down to a peaceful state in order to cleanse the residual contaminants that pollute the mind, cloud the emotions and darken wisdom. This section argues that these peaceful mental states of *samatha*, in fact, play a crucial role in attaining several advantages, some of which cannot be attained through *samatha* alone since they require the collaboration of other meditative processes, especially *vipassanā*.\(^{74}\)

This section outlines the three main benefits of *samatha*. Firstly, it examines how *samatha* is the essential prerequisite for the development of *vipassanā*. The second benefit is closely related to the previous one, that is, *samatha*

---

\(^{73}\) A.1.5: “Nāhaṁ bhikkhave aṅhaṁ ekadhammaham pi samanupassāmi yaṁ evaṁ bhāvitaṁ mahato atthāya saṁvattati yathayidam cīttaṁ.”

\(^{74}\) The development of *vipassanā* generates degrees of profound intuitive insight. The practice of *vipassanā* is not clearly defined or explained in the *suttas*. Chapter 3 is an in depth discussion of *vipassanā*. 
provides the basic steps in the attainment of supernatural knowledge (*abhiññā*), but needs the collaboration of *vipassanā* to attain a more profound step. Finally, it will describe how the accomplishment of the ultimate goal also needs the basis of *samatha*.

The first main benefit of *samatha* is that it is necessary for the later practice of *vipassanā*. There has been some debate about this since most scholars, such as Rahula and Gunaratana, have regarded *vipassanā* practice as being more important than *samatha* practice for mental development. One group of scholars, such as Abeysekera and Piyadassi, classifies the psychological processes involved in *samatha* as being essential for the commencement of *vipassanā*, whilst another group, such as Rahula and Gunaratana, classifies it as being non-essential. Among the scholars of the former group, Abeysekera arrives at the importance of *samatha* in accordance to his particular interpretation of *samatha* as the basis of *vipassanā*: “Before one starts *vipassanā* meditation one needs to strengthen, develop and discipline the mind through *samatha* meditation.”

This is because *samatha* meditation develops the mind so that it takes on the characteristics of a purified, calm and undistracted state that strengthens the mental ability for the true penetration of reality. Piyadassi agrees with the importance of *samatha* for the commencement of *vipassanā* practice: “It is this insight, with calm concentration of mind as its basis that enables the yogi to purge his mind of all defilements and see reality.”

Even though Nārada states that “…insight alone enables one to see things as they really are, and consequently reach the ultimate goal,” he also agrees that, for clearing obstacles from *vipassanā*’s path and for inhibiting the passions, *samatha* is still the significant process toward the development of

---

76 Piyadassi, op. cit., p. 204.
Furthermore, the work of Kheminda regards *samatha* as the preliminary of *vipassanā*: “When the commoner (*puthujjana*) practices serenity (*samatha*) followed by insight (*vipassanā*) the path (*magga*) arises.” He emphasizes the statements of Ānanda\(^{80}\) and Sāriputta,\(^{81}\) which mention the significance of getting rid of the five hindrances in order to develop the wisdom.\(^{82}\) In support of this viewpoint, the *Mahāvedallasutta* asserts again that the attainment of the first *jhāna* eliminates the five hindrances.\(^{83}\) From this it emerges that before the commencement of *vipassanā*, the meditator must develop *samatha* into the psychological state of, at least, the first *jhāna* for the suppression of the five hindrances.

Thus, it appears that *samatha* techniques are the means by which the mind can be restructured, to have the proper affective state for the practice of *vipassanā*. However, there is some argument about this. Some scholars, such as Rahula and Gunaratana, disregard *samatha* as an unessential process for the development of *vipassanā*. For instance, Rahula considers *samatha* as mental quiescence, where the mind is calm, and he states that this form of practice existed before the Buddha.\(^{84}\) Rahula also seems to use the term ‘*vipassanā*’ to indicate a more analytical practice of becoming aware of, and labelling each physical, emotional and mental action. He concludes that *samatha* is, therefore, unessential for the realization of *nibbāna*. Furthermore, Rahula supports mindfulness, awareness, vigilance and observation to be the prerequisites of *vipassanā*.\(^{85}\) It is generally accepted that *samatha* practice is common to both

---

78 Ibid.
80 A.V.195.
82 Kheminda Thera, op. cit., pp. 15-17.
85 Ibid, 68-69.
Buddhist and non-Buddhist contemplative practices. However, one might ask why the prior quiescent states of *samatha* are unessential for *nibbāna*. Still disregarding *samatha*, Gunaratana agrees with Rahula: “Concentration is merely focusing of the mind, rather like a laser beam. It has the power to burn its way deep into the mind and illuminate what is there. But it does not understand what it sees.”\(^8\) He regards mindfulness (*sati*) as the crucial attribute of *vipassanā*. The meditator needs to practice concentration together with mindfulness because mindfulness is the center of meditation. He asserts that *samatha* does not seem to be as inherently valuable as mindfulness. Yet the Buddha recommends one *samatha* technique (contemplation on feeling, perception and thought) as being conducive to the production of mindfulness:

> Monks, how does concentrative meditation, when developed and made much of, conduces to mindfulness and awareness?
> Here, Monks, for a monk feelings are known as they arise, as they remain and as they come to an end…the perceptions…the thoughts…  

This consistency between *samatha* and mindfulness explicitly implies the essential role of *samatha* for the development of *vipassanā*. Moreover, as the Buddha regards the four important attainments of the process of *samatha*, namely the *jhānas*, as perfect concentration (*sammāsamādhi*),\(^8\) then *samatha* is of considerable significance for awakening. Hence, the purified, calm and undistracted mental states of *samatha* are beneficial for the commencement of *vipassanā*.

The second major benefit of *samatha* is that these profound states of concentration provide the basic step to gain the five supernatural knowledges (*abhiññā*); supernormal power (*iddhidāhi*), divine ear-element (*dībba-sotadāthu*), the knowledge of others’ minds (*ceto-pariyaññā*), the

---

\(^8\) A.II.45: “Katamā ca bhikkhave samādhi-bhāvanā bhāvitā bahūlikatā satisampajaññāya sañvattati? Idha bhikkhave bhikkhuno viditā vedanā uppa-jantītī viditā upaṭṭha-hanti viditā abhhatthūm gacchanti, viditā saññā …vitakkā….”
\(^8\) D.II.313.
knowledge of recollection of former lives (\textit{pubbenivāsānussatiṇāna}) and divine eye (\textit{dibbacakku}).^{89}\textsuperscript{89} Indeed, these spiritual benefits are regarded by most scholars as the outcome of \textit{samatha} alone. For instance, Vajiraṇāṇa states that this fivefold \textit{abhiññā} is based on the successful concentration practice.\textsuperscript{90}\textsuperscript{90} Similarly Narāsabho emphasizes the strong relationship between \textit{samatha} and \textit{abhiññā}, arguing that even the meditator who employs \textit{vipassanā} from the very beginning through to the accomplishment of the final goal, has to develop \textit{samatha} for the development of \textit{abhiññā}.\textsuperscript{91}\textsuperscript{91} Saddhatissa suggests that \textit{samatha} development for tranquilization of the mind is necessary up to an advanced level, namely the \textit{jhānas}, as a prerequisite for entry into the mode of \textit{abhiññā}.\textsuperscript{92}\textsuperscript{92} These sources suggest that the entire process of \textit{samatha} allows the ability to achieve psychic benefits of \textit{abhiññā} and indeed, is the essential process for the development of \textit{abhiññā}.

While \textit{samatha} is beneficial to the development of fundamental \textit{abhiññā}, regarding \textit{vipassanā}, they appear to have a combined purpose for the attainment of a more profound state of \textit{abhiññā}. Even though most scholars classify the fivefold \textit{abhiññā} as the consequence of the concentrative practice of \textit{samatha} only, its relation with the mode of wisdom (\textit{paññā}) which is the term generally used to define \textit{vipassanā}\textsuperscript{93}\textsuperscript{93} is, in fact, found in many places throughout the canonical texts. First, according to the discourse entitled \textit{Sonadaṇḍasutta}, the arrangement of these psychic powers is proposed under the mode of wisdom.

Monk enjoys the various supernormal power- having been one, he becomes many, or having been many, he becomes one… he applies and bends down his mind to the divine ear-element… he applies and bends down his mind to the knowledge of the others’ minds… to the knowledge of the recollection of former lives… to the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings. With the divine eye, purified and

\textsuperscript{89} Upatissa, op. cit., p. 41.
\textsuperscript{90} Vajiraṇāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., pp. 441–442.
\textsuperscript{93} Vajiraṇāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 22.
surpassing that of men, he sees beings passing away... This, Brähmin, is that wisdom.\footnote{D.I.124: “So anekavihita iddhividham paccanubhoti– ekopi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhāpi hutvā eko hoti...dibba ya sotadhātuyā cittaḥ abhinīharati abhinimmāmeti... cetopariyāhānāya cittaḥ abhinīharati abhinimmāmeti...pubbenivāsānussatiñāya...sattānaṃ cutūpapātañāyā... So dibbena cakkhunā visuddhena atikkantamānusakena satte passati cavamāne... (this detail of fivefold supernatural knowledge is referred to the full recollection of the Sīmaṇṇaphalasutta D.I.77-83) avaṃ kho sā, brāhmaṇa, paññā.”}

Second, in the Mahāsīhanādasutta, the strong relationship between the two categories of meditative practice is emphasized through the classification of supernatural knowledge into the mode of blissful attainment in \textit{paññā}.\footnote{D.I.174. (Rhys Davids has abbreviated the text here. This detail of fivefold supernatural knowledge is referred to the full recollection of the Sīmaṇṇaphalasutta D.I.77-83)} The explanation of supernatural knowledge in this discourse is equivalent to the above passage.

Third, the Subhasutta, in which Ānanda attempts to classify the supernatural knowledge into the noble body of doctrine regarding wisdom (\textit{paññā}),\footnote{D.I.208-209. (Rhys Davids has abbreviated the text here. This detail of fivefold supernatural knowledge is referred to the full recollection of the Sīmaṇṇaphalasutta D.I.77-83)} he also demonstrates the association between supernatural knowledge and wisdom. All statements of the three discourses have the identical explanation to interpret wisdom (\textit{paññā}) in relation to the fivefold \textit{abhiññā}.

Therefore, this evidence in the canonical texts suggests the relationship between \textit{vipassanā} and \textit{abhiññā} whereby \textit{paññā} involves the capability for the spiritual powers of \textit{abhiññā}. In this light, it should be noted that the Buddha and his disciples identify the process of \textit{vipassanā} as the essential meditation technique for the arising of \textit{abhiññā}. If \textit{samatha} is an essential process only for the arising of \textit{abhiññā} in the view of scholars, by regarding the meditative aspect of the Buddha, there is no reason to classify \textit{abhiññā} in the mode of \textit{paññā}. However, these dichotomous viewpoints can be reconciled through a consideration of the various levels within each type of \textit{abhiññā}. For instance, the ability of the knowledge of recollection of former lives (\textit{pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa}) can be
categorized into six levels depending on the time interval of recollection of specific persons.\textsuperscript{97} For example, the recollection of former lives of yogic practices covers a shorter time interval than that of the recollection of former lives of the Buddha and his disciples. This may be because the yogic meditators acquired the mental development of \textit{samatha} technique, while the Buddha discovered other forms of meditation such as \textit{vipassanā}, which was taught to his disciples.\textsuperscript{98} The process of \textit{vipassanā} and the fivefold \textit{abhiññā} are seen to be interrelated as a result of which the former is the supportive aspect of the latter. Perhaps, it can be argued that both \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} result in the cultivation of fivefold \textit{abhiññā}, but the former induces the superficial levels, whereas the latter induces the profound states.

While the last main benefit of \textit{samatha} is that it is an essential means of attaining enlightenment, this has been disputed sometimes. In considering the benefit of \textit{samatha} for the attainment of Buddhist release, the central question of “Whether or not \textit{samatha} has to be performed together with \textit{vipassanā},” is subsequently also considered. Certainly the Buddha points to both \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} as the consequent processes of supernatural knowledge (\textit{abhiññā}).

Monks, what things should be developed through supernatural knowledge? Tranquillity and insight-these are the things that should be developed through supernatural knowledge.\textsuperscript{99}

Thus, \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} proceed together and they progress simultaneously. Piyadassi also claims that \textit{samatha} combines with \textit{vipassanā} as interdependent steps, whereby the former leads to the latter.\textsuperscript{100} Moreover, Pathak states in regard to their cooperation continuing up to \textit{nibbāna}, that \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} perform as a synthetic process to \textit{nibbāna}.\textsuperscript{101} In support

\textsuperscript{97} Vism. 411 (tr. Ŋañamoli p. 452).
\textsuperscript{98} Walpola Rahula, op. cit., p. 68.
\textsuperscript{99} M.III.289: “Katame ca, bhikkhave, dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā? Samatho ca vipassanā ca, ime dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā.”
\textsuperscript{100} Piyadassi, op. cit., p. 204.
\textsuperscript{101} Prakash Pathak, op. cit., p. 140.
of this, Anālayo states that they are: “not two different approaches to realization but two aspects of the meditative path, one of which is not sufficient by itself to bring realization.”¹⁰²

On the contrary, according to Nārada, samatha is not essential and is regarded as an asset only; the meditator can proceed directly to vipassanā alone in the pursuit of arahantship.¹⁰³ Still relying on the unique practice of vipassanā, Nyanaponika classifies the practice of bare insight (sukkha-vipassanā) into the direct and exclusive practice of vipassanā without the progress of samatha into the state of jhānas.¹⁰⁴ Bucknell says: “…that tranquillity meditation, though valuable as a foundation for insight meditation, is not indispensable, and may be bypassed by exceptionally gifted meditators.”¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, these aspects of the inconsistency between samatha and vipassanā contradict the Buddha’s statement of their identical responsibility for obtaining knowledge (vijjā): “These two things, monks, are partaking of knowledge. What two? Tranquillity and insight.”¹⁰⁶ This suggests that samatha and vipassanā have identical significance for Buddhist liberation. Therefore, an important benefit of samatha is as an indispensable meditative practice for the achievement of realization through collaboration with vipassanā.

From the discussion above, we can see that there are three main benefits of samatha as evident in the Buddhist scriptures and modern research. The first benefit of samatha is that the purified, calm and undistracted mental state of samatha provides the significant state which strengthens the mental ability necessary to the establishment of vipassanā. The second benefit of samatha is linked to the previous one in that samatha alone causes the basic fivefold

¹⁰² Anālayo, op. cit., p. 90.
¹⁰³ Nārada, The Buddha and His Teachings, op. cit., p. 537.
¹⁰⁴ Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 103.
¹⁰⁵ Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., p. 6.
¹⁰⁶ A.I.61.
abhiññā to arise and be cultivated, while the progress of abhiññā into its profound states is based on both samatha and vipassanā. The last benefit of samatha is that it provides the prerequisite required to attain the soteriological goal, since it can be obtained only through the collaboration of samatha and vipassanā. Although many scholars, such as Nārada, Nyanaponika and Gunaratana, do not share this view of the crucial role of samatha in attaining these benefits, the above discussion shows that samatha constitutes the basic process for vipassanā and Buddhist deliverance.

A Consideration of Moral Preparation for Samatha

Like any other construction, samatha requires a foundation—one of wholesome mental, verbal and physical actions, consisting of the preparatory practices developed in order to refrain from committing unwholesome physical, verbal and mental deeds. Since these practices need to be fulfilled before the development of samatha can commence, the aim of this section is to clarify the proper method of mental preparation and its relationship with samatha. This section will survey the moral requirements of samatha in reference to each of the components of the gradual method of mental training as discussed in the discourse entitled Gaṇakamoggallānasutta. In this discourse, the Buddha demonstrates the step-by-step process of mental development in the following procedure. The first step is to cultivate virtue (sīla). The second step comprises three exercises: 1) guarding the sense doors (indriyasamvara), 2) moderation in eating (bhojane mattaññutā) and 3) a habit of vigilance (jāgariyānuyoga); the third is composed of two exercises, mindfulness (sati) and awareness (sampajañña). The last step is to maintain seclusion (viveka). This section argues that the development of these practices constitutes the fundamental processes of samatha and that they are all subsumed together with samatha into one process of mental development (bhāvanā).

107 M.III.2-3.
Before the commencement of the samatha process, the first preparation is the Buddhist moral training by means of disciplining speech and action in the right manner. According to the Buddha’s explanation in various discourses, the short, middle and large sections on virtue are the preliminary practices for the concentrative practice. The meditators, after the fulfilment of moral practice, in fact, can achieve the development of samatha according to the Dutiya-agāravasutta: “Without fulfilling the body of virtue, that monk should fulfil the body of concentration is not possible.” Therefore, the meditators who are morally stable and ethically sincere in their efforts can achieve the fulfilment of mental calmness. They should practice the moral discipline as taught by the Buddha to guide his lay followers in the mode of pañcasīla (five precepts) - abstinence from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech and intoxicating drugs and drinks. For monks or nuns participating in the monastic life of renunciation, the Visuddhimagga states of the fourfold mode of purification of virtue (catupārisuddhisīla) as follows:

1. the virtue of restraint regarding the monk’s rule (pātimokkhasaṃvarasīla);
2. the virtue of restraint of the senses (indriyasāṃvarasīla);
3. the virtue of purification of livelihood (ājīvapārisuddhisīla);
4. the virtue regarding the use of the requisites (paccayasannissitasīla).

Śīla appears to be the fundamental quality of not only samatha, but also of other wholesome practices, such as sati and paññā. That is what the following discussion between the Bhikkhu Nāgasena and the king Milinda refers to:

Milinda asks: “Venerable sir, what is the characteristic mark of virtue?”

---

108 D.I.63-76, D.I.147, D.I.172-174, D.I.206-208. (Rhys Davids has provided the full text in D.I.63-76 and has abbreviated for the other parts.)
109 A.III.15: Silakkhandham aparīṛeratvā samādhikhandham pariśuddhī sati n’etam thānam vijjati.
110 For a brief explanation of the fourfold mode of purification of virtue see Vism. 15-16 (tr. Nānamoli pp. 16-17).
111 Śīla, rendered as virtue or morality, implies all good qualities which are included in the category of moral and ethical teaching (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, pp. 170-171).
The monk replies:

Great King, virtue has supporting as its characteristic mark. Virtue is the basis of all wholesome qualities: the five controlling faculties … the four modes of concentration …. And to him who builds upon virtue, all these wholesome qualities will not decrease.\textsuperscript{112}

The conduct of \textit{sīla} nourishes mental characteristics and makes the mind steady and calm.

Conversely, Keown argues that the resultant process of concentration is only a technique for the development of \textit{sīla}.\textsuperscript{113} Likewise, he writes: “technique of \textit{samatha} meditation exists to enrich and deepen the capacity for human sympathy which exists in all to some degree.”\textsuperscript{114} According to Keown’s viewpoint, \textit{samatha} is the means by which the mind is reconstructed to have the proper state of moral concern. Considering this, the question of how exactly \textit{samatha} techniques cultivate moral concern, should be examined. From textual evidence in the canonical texts, his marginalization of \textit{samatha} is not warranted as shown in the work entitled the \textit{Mahāparinibbānasutta},\textsuperscript{115} where it is stated: “Concentration, when fully developed by virtue, brings great fruit and profit.” Additional evidence found in the \textit{Rathavinītasutta} also verifies the role of \textit{sīla} as the foundation of \textit{samatha}: “In this way, friend, purity of virtue is of purpose as far as purity of mind; purity of mind is of purpose as far as purity of view.”\textsuperscript{116} Consequently, there is an underlying implication of gradual meditative practice that \textit{samatha} requires the preliminary practice of \textit{sīla}.

The next proceeding practices as prerequisites to \textit{samatha} involve the three exercises: guarding the sense doors (\textit{indriyasamvara}), moderation in eating

\textsuperscript{112} Mil.33: “\textit{Kim lakkhaṇaṁ bhante sīlanti?} Patiṭṭhānalakkhaṇaṁ mahā rāja sīlaṁ. Sabbesaṁ kusalānaṁ dhammānaṁ indriya…samādhi… sīlaṁ patiṭṭhā. Sīle patiṭṭhitaṁ kho mahārāja sabbe kusalā dhammā na parihāyantī.”
\textsuperscript{113} Damien Keown, op. cit., p. 38.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid. p. 77.
\textsuperscript{115} D.II.84: \textit{Sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahāpphalo hoti mahānissamso}.
\textsuperscript{116} M.I.149: \textit{Ekam-evō kho, āvuso, sīlavīsuddhi yāvad-eva cittavisuddhatthā, cittavisuddhi yāvadeva Diṭṭhisuddhatthā.}
(bhojane mattaññutā), and a habit of vigilance (jāgariyānuyoga). They are relevant to the fourfold mode of purification of virtue and are essential for the cultivation of concentration. The first exercise of guarding the sense-organs implies restraining the sense faculties regarding objects of sight (rūpa), sound (sadda), smell (ghāna), taste (rasa), touch (phoṭṭhabba) and thought (dhammārammaṇa).117 While the agreeable objects tend to arouse desire and attachment, the disagreeable objects cause the arising of antipathy and sorrow. Having guarded the senses in their experience with objects, the meditator can avoid this dualistic pattern of emotional involvement which influences the mind to roam. The second exercise of moderation in eating (bhojane mattaññutā) denotes careful reflection while eating a meal.118 By taking food mindfully, the meditator avoids the indulgence which causes the mind to become agitated and, instead, comfortably cultivates samatha. The last exercise of a habit of vigilance (jāgariyānuyoga) implies lying down during the middle watch of the night, and wakefully dwelling during the rest of the day.119 Jāgariyānuyoga leads to an absence of stupor (uddhacca) and agitation (kukkucca), the two factors that make the mind cloudy and dull and result in the mind losing clarity and stability.

In summary of these three exercises, a close investigation shows that the first exercise refers to the second moral discipline of renounced monks or nuns, the second to the fourth moral discipline (paccayasannissitasīla), and the third exercise to the third moral discipline (ājīvatipārisuddhisīla). Because of this, the three exercises can be arranged into the mode of moral practice. As they cleanse the mind of unwholesome states, the meditator has to accomplish these exercises before moving on to the next stage of mindfulness and awareness.

117 M.III.2.
118 Ibid.
119 M.III.3.
However, in the *Living Buddhist Masters*, edited by Jack Kornfield, Buddhadāsa disregards the organized training of concentration as an excessive process of marginal usefulness. He regards natural concentration as the appropriate process for introspection and insight.\(^{120}\) Though natural concentration seems to approach the perfect mental qualities without any influence of the cankers (āsavas), it cannot be justified according to the discourses of the Buddha for several reasons. First, the *Agāravasutta*\(^{121}\) clearly justifies the essence of moral practice for the development of samatha, while suggesting that, without having mastered virtue (sīla), it is not possible to fulfil concentration. Second, in the entire process of concentration, the meditator has to train the mind in the mode of training in higher consciousness. Instead of advancing spontaneously, the mind needs to be cultivated through decreasing mental activity by which the mode of gradual training of the jhānas progresses from the first state to the fourth.\(^{122}\) Third, the confirmation of the need for concentrative practice comes from the *Samādhisutta*:

Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are.\(^{123}\)

Consequently, it is clear that there are no grounds for neglecting the moral preliminaries of concentration and mental training for the practice and the attainment of deep concentration.

The third moral preparation for the development of samatha, arranged into mindfulness (sati) and awareness (sampajañña), is together with samatha, actually subsumed into the one process of mental development. In the *Gaṇakamoggallānasutta*, mindfulness and awareness are the significant

---


\(^{121}\) A.III.15.

\(^{122}\) A.I.235.

\(^{123}\) S.III.13: “samādhim bhikkhave bhāvetha samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhātam pajānāti.”
processes in the gradual path of mental development and are interpreted as follows:

Come, monk, be endowed with mindfulness and awareness, acting with awareness whether you are approaching or departing, acting with awareness whether you are looking ahead or looking round, acting with awareness whether bending in or stretching out (arms), acting with awareness whether bearing the outer cloak, the bowl or robe, acting with awareness whether eating, drinking, munching, tasting, acting with awareness whether obeying the calls of nature, acting with awareness whether going, standing, sitting, lying, awake, talking or being silent. The Buddha here gives an interpretation of mindfulness (sati) and awareness (sampajaña) as pure attention to every activity of our daily life. To illustrate their relation, Gunaratana proposes the strong relation between mindfulness and awareness through his definition of the former as the present-time aspect of the latter. According to Sujato, mindfulness is the basis of samādhi and its role is like a gatekeeper allowing samatha to enter into the city. This is the exact sentiment, which the Buddha and Sāriputta express: it is to be expected that the disciple, who resolves in energy and establishes mindfulness, will gain concentration and one-pointedness of mind. Namto, in contrast, disagrees with the collaboration between mindfulness and deep concentration. Correspondingly, he states that, when concentration progresses into the profound states, namely the jhānas, the meditator inclines to the weakening state of mindfulness. In his additional statement of the marginalization of samatha, the meditator cannot develop insight wisdom through the highly tranquilized mind.

---

124 M.III.3: “Ehi tvaṁ, bhikkhu, satisampajaññena samannāgato hōhi, abhikkante paṭikkante sampajānakārī, ālokite vilokite sampajānakārī, saviñjite pasārite sampajānakārī, saṅghāṭiptattacivaradhāraṇe sampajānakārī, asite pīte khāyite sāyite sampajānakārī, uccārapassāvakamme sampajānakārī, gate thiṁ nisinne sutte jāgarite bhāsīte tuññībhāve sampajānakārī.”

125 Henepola Gunaratana, Mindfulness in Plain English, op. cit., p. 145.

126 Bhikkhu Sujato, op. cit., p. 35.

127 S.V.225: “upaṭṭhitassatino etam pāṭikaṅkham yam vossaggārammanam karitvā labhissati samādham, labhissati citissa ekaggatam.”

It would seem here that the development of samatha and its predominant factor which is mindfulness cannot be reconciled. In that case, the focusing of the jhāna’s absorption states into a single mental object sounds nothing like mindfulness at all. But according to Buddha’s teaching, the deep states of concentration called jhānas are the right or perfect concentration,\(^\text{129}\) which accompanies mindfulness as detailed in the Mahācattārisakasutta:

> Now what, monks, is noble perfect concentration with its means and requisite conditions? Monks, one-pointedness of mind, equipped with these seven factors -- perfect view… perfect mindfulness -- is called noble perfect concentration with its means and requisite conditions.\(^\text{130}\)

Another relevant factor concerning the analysis of the very deep concentrative state of the fourth jhāna encounters its constituent called upekkhasatipārisuddhi which is rendered as “purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.”\(^\text{131}\) So, the purpose of mindfulness is clearly to get the mind to settle down into states of deep concentration. Thanissaro too confirms the accompaniment of deep concentration and mindfulness by saying that the attainment of deep concentration does not weaken mindfulness at all; instead, it brings about the very broad sense of awareness.\(^\text{132}\) This is the point where mindfulness and deep concentration progress together; both are deeply involved as parts of one process. So there should be no problem in combining mindfulness practice with concentrative practice in the process of mental development.

The choice of dwelling place is the last consideration of the moral preparation for samatha: although a secluded place is the major factor, the individual personality of the meditators must be considered as well. In fact, the proper choice of dwelling place is the secluded or solitary place, as the Buddha

---

\(^{129}\) D.II.313.
\(^{130}\) M.III.71: Katamo ca, bhikkhave, ariyo sammāsamādhi sa-uperissitā saparikkhāro? Seyyathidā: sammādiṭṭhi… sammāsati. yā kho, bhikkhave, imehi satiṁgehi cittaṁ ekaggatā pariṇāmā, āyanā vuccati, bhikkhave, ariyo sammāsamādhi sa-uperissītī pi, saparikkhāro iti pi.

\(^{131}\) Vism. 165 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 171).

\(^{132}\) Thanissaro, "The Path of Concentration & Mindfulness" (adapted from the course The Role of the Four Noble Truths, Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, 1996).
explains: “choose a secluded lodging in a forest, at the root of a tree, on a mountain slope, in a gorge, a hill cave, a charnel-ground, a jungle-thicket, in the open air or on a heap of straw.”

Indeed, isolation from noise is an important issue for meditators, especially beginners, who want to progress in mental development. From a different viewpoint, the Upālisutta takes issue with Venerable Upāli’s request to the Buddha for a remote lodging in a forest. The Buddha, in contrast, did not allow him to go and responded by saying: “It is hard to maintain seclusion; it is hard to delight in being alone.”

It would appear, then, that the necessity for a secluded place must be considered in relation to the individual’s personality in order to choose the perfect living area for samatha practice. The argument for the importance of individual personality is found in the Sevanāsutta, which remarks on the personal result of mental development that the choice of dwelling place depends on the decreasing of unwholesome mental states and increasing of wholesome states. The Visuddhimagga comments on the solitary places that, if held with attachment, can become an impediment as the attachment tends toward a distracted mind. Just as meditators themselves excessively participate with maintenance works or with the belongings they have stored there, so all their dwelling places, secluded or not secluded, are to be rejected. Likewise, U Pandita interprets this consideration as regarding mental development through the aspects of concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā). That is, if one meditates in a secluded place and sīla, samādhi and paññā are progressing, then one should stay there. If not, then the meditator should move and find a more appropriate place for one’s temperament. Hence, although a remote place can

133 M.III.3: “vivittaṃ senānaṃ bhaja araṇāṃ rukkhamūlaṃ pabbataṃ kandaraṃ girigahaṃ susānaṃ vanapatthaṃ abbhokṣaṃ palākappuṭṭhan.”
134 A.V.202: “Dukkaraṃ pavivekaṃ durabhiramaṃ ekatte.”
135 A.IV.366.
136 Vism. 90 (tr. Ānāmoli p. 91).
be a useful factor in choosing a suitable dwelling place, the resolution of individual concentrative experience is a predominant factor to consider.

The success of samatha depends on the attainment of the preliminary requirements. For the foundation of all good qualities including samatha, sīla is the first essential requirement to discipline in speech and action before embarking on the process of samatha. Furthermore, the three exercises—guarding the sense doors, moderation in eating, and dwelling intent on vigilance—are prerequisite practices for the moral preparation of samatha. These practices satisfy the fulfilment of concentration by gradual development, which is more effective than natural concentration. The next foundations of samatha are awareness and mindfulness; in addition, the synthetic process of these three qualities advances simultaneously. All these preceding exercises of samatha have to be performed at the dwelling place appropriate for the fulfilment of concentration. Although there are various viewpoints of mental development, this structure of moral preparation proceeding to samatha is indispensable in cultivating the mind.

**Entrance to Jhāna**

After having considered the preliminary requirements for samatha, it is now necessary to discuss the path to cultivate samatha from the beginning. How samatha starts and progresses into the mental states, which are arranged in a set of concentrative attainments, namely the jhānas, is important in obtaining a complete understanding of the practice. According to the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta*, jhānas are the consequences of samatha development, in the right mode, into the structure of deep states of mental unification. Indeed, there are two overlapping themes of concentrative practice that leads to the arising of jhāna; they include mental images and degrees of

---

138 D.II.313.
concentration. In order to cultivate *vipassanā*, the meditator needs to enhance inward calmness through the simultaneous advancement of both themes. This should occur until the preceding stable state of an acquired image\(^{139}\) is advanced into, or at least, until absorption concentration\(^{140}\) is reached instead of merely momentary concentration. This section will discuss the role of concentration including subjects of mental images\(^{141}\) and the degree of concentration as well as the relationship between them. Firstly, the evaluation of an acquired image will be considered, then the correct methodology of mental image development, next the discussion of the concentrative levels, and lastly the proper stage of concentration for *vipassanā* development.

The evaluation of the *samatha* process through the aspect of mental images requires that the characteristics of the acquired image are stable and clear rather than unreliable. In fact, the mode of mental images can be arranged as a consequence of *samatha* practice; these include the preparatory image (*parikammanimitta*), the acquired image (*uggahanimitta*), and the counterpart image (*paṭibhāganimitta*).\(^{142}\) In the preliminary work of locating attention on a single object, such as soil, water or light, the original object employed for meditation is defined as the preparatory image (*parikammanimitta*).\(^{143}\) Subsequently the second mental image obtained during *samatha* practice will appear in the mind when a certain level of mental unification is attained. This acquired image will then appear clearly whether the eyes were opened or closed. After continued *samatha* practice, the power of concentration will

---

\(^{139}\) Acquired image (*uggahanimitta*) is the ability to consistently maintain a mental image as the subject of Concentration (Abhi-s.IX.5 and Guide to 5).

\(^{140}\) Absorption concentration (*appanāsamādhi*) is full absorption in meditation to the exclusion of all senses and perceptions (Abhi-s.IV.14).


\(^{142}\) Abhi-s.IX.5.

\(^{143}\) Abhi-s.IX.17.
develop an acquired image, progressing into a purified, subtle and radiant reproduction of itself that is the counterpart image.\textsuperscript{144}

Buddhaghosa describes the appearance of an acquired image (\textit{uggahanimitta}) as apparently seen by means of the physical eyes.\textsuperscript{145} Besides this, Ācariya Anuruddha states that mental development becomes concentrated during the recognition of \textit{uggahanimitta} (acquired image).\textsuperscript{146} This qualified term ‘concentrated,’ of course, refers to the meaning of steadiness, firmness and clarity. Moreover, Vajirañāṇa makes the following comment about \textit{uggahanimitta}: “When this image is once established in the mind of the aspirant, he is able to visualize it whenever he wishes.”\textsuperscript{147} This ability to reach visualization of \textit{uggahanimitta} according to one’s wish seems to correspond with a stable state of concentration rather than an unstable and unclear state. However, Nyanatiloka disregards it as an unstable and unclear image relating to a weak degree of concentration.\textsuperscript{148} He points to the next stage of concentrative practice, which is \textit{paṭibhāganimitta}, as the clear and stable image.\textsuperscript{149} Although the appearance of \textit{uggahanimitta} refers to the lower stage of concentration than of \textit{paṭibhāganimitta}, there is substantial concentration to be gained when the visualized object of \textit{uggahanimitta} clearly appears to the mind even with closed eyes. In that case, \textit{uggahanimitta} implies the steady state of the appearance of a clear mental image.

The right mental development needs to be clarified in order to protect against the potentially defective mental image that arises from the wrong practice of

\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{145} \textit{Visn.} 125 (tr. Ē. Ē. Ñāṇamoli p. 130).
\textsuperscript{146} Abhi-s.IX.17.
\textsuperscript{147} Vajirañāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 32.
\textsuperscript{149} Ibid.
As some scholars, such as Nyanatiloka, highlights. Although the development of the mental image facilitates the potentiality of psychic power, Desaransī suggests that some mental images are not reliable or real. These unreliable mental images are symbolic representing some truth, but the meditator interprets them incorrectly. In addition, Nyanatiloka remarks that dangerous mental images, such as the outward mental image, can arise from incorrect development. To avoid this wrong method, he suggests that the meditator protects the mind from all outside impressions. His argument agrees with Vimalo’s interpretation of samatha as ‘inner stillness.’ Their view of concentrative practice coincides with the term ‘mental tranquillity (samatha) within oneself,’ which the Buddha describes as the essential quality or necessity for getting rid of all cankers.

Therefore, the meditator should maintain the whole of attention on the inner mental image without paying attention to any external image; otherwise disturbing and dangerous mental images may arise. For instance, when Acharn Mun decided to fix his attention on an image (nimitta) in front of him, he found the image transformed into a variety of objects and scenes as if he is watching an endless panorama. He then continued his contemplation on these images for three months with a distracted mind. He eventually concluded that: “directing the attention toward external images is in contrast to the principle of mental

---

150 Wrong concentration is concentration associated with all unwholesome consciousness (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, p. 156).
154 Outward mental image refers to the means whereby the meditator focuses the continuous attention outwardly or to the mental image arising externally.
155 Nyanatiloka, The Buddha's Path to Deliverance in Its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity, op. cit., p. 77.
156 Vimalo, op. cit., p. 61.
157 A.II.93.
development.” For this reason, attention directed to internal images is appropriate for the correct path of samatha practice.

Although the intensive analysis of concentrative development comprises two overlapping categories: the two concentrative levels and the three levels, the latter category is more suitable to represent the concentrative practice. That is to say, the first category is generally arranged into two basic levels which are access concentration (*upacārasamādhi*) and absorption concentration (*appanāsamādhi*). The second category is the arrangement of the three concentrative levels, which are access (*upacāra*), and absorption (*appanā*) and their preceding so-called preliminary concentration (*parikammasamādhi*). In this process of mental development, the focusing of the mental attention onto any meditation object, even though intermittent, produces preliminary concentration (*parikammasamādhi*). Now, while continuing to focus progressively on the object, the mental attention becomes steady and intense with the disappearance of the mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), at which point it turns into the second stage called ‘access concentration (*upacārasamādhi*)’. Subsequently, by becoming fully absorbed in the meditation, the mind is entirely united, and, due to the exclusion of all other thoughts or perceptions, this subsequent concentration in the last stage is called absorption concentration (*appanāsamādhi*).

There are two groups of scholars who classify the levels of concentration into two or three levels depending on whether or not the preliminary stage is

---


159 Five qualities namely: sensual desire (*kāmachanda*), ill-will (*byāpāda*), sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*), restlessness and worry (*addhacakkukkucca*), doubt (*vicikicchā*) are obstacles to the mind and blind our mental vision (Nyanatiloka: *Buddhist Dictionary*, p. 110).

included. For example, Gunaratana,\textsuperscript{161} Mererk,\textsuperscript{162} and Cousins\textsuperscript{163} share the opinion of two degrees of concentration, whereas Nyanatiloka,\textsuperscript{164} Solé-leris,\textsuperscript{165} and Sangharakshita\textsuperscript{166} distinguish the concentrative development into three levels. Further investigation of the classification of concentration is found in the work entitled ‘Visuddhimagga,’ which concurs with the two levels of concentration.\textsuperscript{167} In the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa points to preliminary concentration as part of the mental development necessary for access and absorption consciousness.\textsuperscript{168}

This work, therefore, considers the three levels of concentration in terms of momentary, access and absorption that are the mental phenomena following the maturation of happiness (sukha).\textsuperscript{169} This treatment is indeed surprising; for the momentary concentration as given by Buddhaghosa seems to involve the state of preliminary concentration. It would appear that his aspect of two concentrative levels distinguishes the particular process of profound and stable mental unification. However, the other aspect of three levels refers to a complete process of concentration including the first step of carrying out a concentrative process. For this reason, it is appropriate to categorize concentration into three levels. References supporting this categorization can be found in other commentaries entitled Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha.\textsuperscript{170} In addition, after taking a different approach by comparing the mental images, Vajirañāna proposes this exact categorization. His statement indicates that the three stages

\begin{footnotes}
\item[167] \textit{Vism.} 126 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 131).
\item[168] \textit{Vism.} 137-138 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 142).
\item[169] \textit{Vism.} 144 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 150).
\item[170] Abhi-s.IX.4.
\end{footnotes}
of intense concentration—preliminary, access and absorption—are attained according to the arising of mental images described as preparatory, acquired and counterpart respectively.\textsuperscript{171} Vajirañāṇa’s idea is most suitable to provide the causal connection between the two subjects which present different aspects of one approach to \textit{jhāna}.

An examination of how momentary concentration encourages \textit{vipassanā}, reveals the significance of absorption concentration (\textit{appanāsamādhi}) rather than momentary concentration (\textit{khaṇikasamādhi}) as the basis of \textit{vipassanā}. Indeed, many scholars such as Yupho,\textsuperscript{172} Ńañārāma\textsuperscript{173} and Pandita,\textsuperscript{174} also propose the three levels, but imply the first concentrative state as momentary concentration rather than preliminary. Among these scholars, for example, Ńañārāma regards momentary concentration as mental unification arising through the process of \textit{vipassanā} and disregards the other two as arising through the process of \textit{samatha}.\textsuperscript{175} Pandita attempts further to emphasize momentary concentration as an original teaching of the Buddha through the \textit{Pāli} term ‘\textit{khaṇikacittekaggatā}’.\textsuperscript{176}

Through an examination of the \textit{Pāli} discourses, though momentary concentration is confirmed as arising during the process of \textit{vipassanā}, the concept is taken from the commentaries of the \textit{Paṭisambhidāmagga},\textsuperscript{177} rather than from the Buddha’s teaching in canonical texts. In fact the Buddha regards absorption concentration of the four \textit{jhānas}, excluding momentary

\textsuperscript{171} Vajirañāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 33.
\textsuperscript{173} Matara Sri Ńañārāma, \textit{The Seven Stages of Purification and the Insight Knowledges} (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1983), p. 15.
\textsuperscript{174} Sayadaw U Pandita, op. cit., p. 180.
\textsuperscript{175} Matara Sri Ńañārāma, loc. cit.
\textsuperscript{176} Sayadaw U Pandita, op. cit., p. 181.
\textsuperscript{177} Sdp.II. 503.
concentration, as perfect concentration (sammāsamādhi). Further evidence shows that the expression to “develop unlimited concentration,” stated by the Buddha, seems to differ from the circle of arising and falling of concentration defined by the term ‘momentary (khanika).’ Similarly, when the Buddha points out the particular cultivation of concentration as leading to the benefits of direct intuition and insight and the destruction of cankers, he employs the term ‘bahulīkatā’ that means ‘enlarged’ or ‘increased,’ not just arising ‘only in some moment.’ This theme of the enlargement of concentration is also suggested in the work entitled the Sāketasutta. In this sutta, it is stated that one can comprehend deliverance by cultivating, and making much of, the five controlling faculties (indriyāni), including concentration. There is not sufficient supportive evidence in the canonical texts for an assertion that momentary concentration is sufficient for the establishment of the process of vipassanā. However, it is certainly true that concentrative development has to be continually performed at the concentrative level of absorption in order to fulfil the establishment of vipassanā.

Clearly the interpretation of both concentration and the production of mental image in achievement of the jhāna state can be seen as two distinct subjects, but they are essentially complementary to a single approach to jhāna. The subject of concentration has three levels, each achieving a more intense level of concentration, but with absorption concentration being the most profound and stable state of concentration. Absorption concentration is necessary as a prelude to the commencement of vipassanā. The production of mental images also has three levels, with each level progressively leading to a more reliable image. It

---

178 D.II.313, “Katamo ca, bhikkhave, sammāsamādhi? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu viviceeva kāmehi vivicca aksalehi dhammehi savitakkaṃ savicāram vivekajam pitisukhaṃ paṭhamam jhānam upasampajja viharati. ....duṭṭhajam jhānam upasampajja viharati. ....tatiyajam jhānam upasampajja viharati....catuttthagam jhānam upasampajja viharati.”

179 A.III.24: “Samādhiṃ bhikkhave bhāvetha appamānaṃ....”

180 D.III.223.

181 S.V.220.
has been argued that an evaluation of acquired image is necessary to ensure that it possesses a stable state, and to evaluate its needs for further advancement in order to achieve vipassanā. The study of concentrative levels and mental images concludes that they tend to correspond with each other, at each level, as processes of samatha. Before the commencement of vipassanā, the process of samatha must be fully developed through both subjects, advancing beyond the momentary concentration through to the robust concentration level of absorption. For this reason, this advanced level of absorption has to be discussed by means of an analytical study of a set of concentrative attainments called the jhānas.  

**Discussion of the concentrative states of jhāna**

The study of samatha practice, relying on the absorption (appanā) level, approaches perhaps the most important aspect of Buddhist meditation, namely jhānas. The intensity of samatha at the absorption level is classified into eight attainments, the four rūpajhānas and the four arūpajhānas, each marked by greater purity and subtlety than its predecessor. In fact, this advanced concentrative level of jhāna constitutes the instrumental process in the Buddha’s own achievement of enlightenment as a preparatory path for proceeding to the three knowledges (vijjā). Accordingly, the precise role played by the jhānas in the spiritual development of Buddhism involves the path of deliverance from suffering. The analysis of the jhānas reveals that the gradual development of samatha into the entire process of jhānas is essentially

---

182 The jhāna (Sanskrit: ‘dhāyān’) attainments are the progressive states of absorption meditation where the mind is free from the five hindrances, namely, sensual desire (kāmachanda), ill will (byāpāda), sloth and torpor (thīnamiddha), restlessness and worry (uddhaccakukkucca) and doubt (vicikicchā) (D.I.71-76).

183 The three knowledges comprise the knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatiñā), the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings (cutūpapātañā) and the knowledge of the destruction of the cankers (āsavakkhayañā) (M.I.22-23).

184 M.I.247-249.
a path leading to the ultimate Buddhist goal. An analytical study of the \( jhānas \) will survey their roles in relating to the Buddhist spiritual discipline involving three perspectives; the overview of \( jhānas \), discussion on the four \( rūpajjhānas \), and the four \( arūpajjhānas \).

**Overview of the Jhānas**

The term ‘\( jhāna \) (Sanskrit \( dhyāna \))’ appears frequently across the scriptural texts of early Buddhism. An understanding of the \( jhānas \) contributes to a correct practice of \( samatha \) in the profound states, and to its relationship with the ultimate goal. The study of their general characteristics reveals that no appropriate English word could be found to fulfill the interpretation of \( jhāna \) as a mental unification and purification which demonstrate its relationship with the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Our dealing with the general characteristics of the term ‘\( jhāna \)’ will be confined to its semantic analysis and its interpretation or translation.

By employing the techniques of etymology, \( jhānas \) could be interpreted as mental unification and purification and as providing the opportunity to realize full insight knowledge. The \textit{Patisambhidāmagga} defines the term \( jhāna \) in the sense of “to burn” by employing the verb \( jhāpeti \): “\( Ajāta/FL1\text{-43h} jhāpeti jātena, jhānaṃ tena pavuccati \) (One burns the unborn (defilement) through the born (\( jhāna \)), therefore it is called \( jhāna \)).”\(^{185}\) The purport of this definition of \( jhāna \) is that it burns up or gets rid of the hindrances. Alternatively, the term \( jhāna \) in the sense of “to meditate,” which is related to the verb \( jhāyati \), occurs in the \textit{Aggaññasutta}.

\(^{185}\) \textit{Paṭis.67} (Burmese script), Thai script has “\textit{Ajātaṃ jhāpeti jātena, jhānantenā pavuccati} (p.101).” \textit{PTS.} (p. 70) has “\textit{Ajātaṃ nāpeti jātena nānān tena pavuccati.”} The statement in Burmese script matches that of in Thai script.
Having obtained food, they meditate again in their leaf-huts in the forest place. “They meditate,” Vāseṭṭha, is the meaning of jhāyaka.\(^{186}\) The definition of jhāna as “to meditate” relates jhāna to the ability of bringing the mind to the concentration. That one comes to understand the link between spiritual progress and the two definitions of jhāna is exemplified in a passage in the Sāmaññaphalasutta: “evaṃ samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte…ṭhite āneñjappatte (When his heart was thus concentrated, purified, bright,…, steady, and attained to imperturbability).”\(^{187}\)

This mention of a serene and pure heart makes it clear that purification and unification play a prominent role in the significance of the jhānas and that they are essential attributes of supernatural knowledge (abhiññā).

In agreement with these canonical texts, Buddhaghosa proposes the two etymological interpretations of the Pāli term jhāna. One is the verb jhāpeti, to burn defilement, and the other is jhāyati, to meditate.\(^{188}\) Jhāpeti relates to overcoming the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa) and eliminating the gross factors, such as vitakka (initial application) and vicāra (sustained application), which are prejudicial to higher progress. In contrast, Buddhaghosa suggests that the term jhāna derives from the verb jhāyanti which means ‘to meditate,’ implying that jhāna involves dealing with a given object as an object of meditation.

These derivations can be further characterized through considering the issue of ‘mental purification’\(^{189}\) and mental unification.\(^{190}\) Thus, the relationship between the two interpretations of jhāna, as burning and as meditation, can be characterized as a relationship between mental purification and unification.

\(^{186}\) D.III.94: “Te ghāsaṃ paṭilabhitvā punadeva araṇāyatane paṇṇakūṭisu jhāyanti. jhāyantiṭī kho pana, Vāseṭṭha, jhāyakā,” the action noun jhāyakā means “one who attains jhāna.”

\(^{187}\) D.I.76.

\(^{188}\) Sp.I.145.

\(^{189}\) Henepola Gunaratana, A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation, op. cit., p.15.

\(^{190}\) Ibid., p. 12.
Nevertheless, some scholars disagree with the importance placed on tranquillity meditation techniques in relation to the two terms ‘samatha and jhāna.’ For example, Rahula considers jhāna as simply referring to peaceful living.\footnote{Walpola Rahula, op. cit., p. 68.} Burns agrees and adds: “there is the danger of one becoming enamoured with them (jhānas) and not striving for further progress.”\footnote{Douglas M. Burns, Buddhist Meditation and Depth Psychology, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994), p 42.} Although the Buddha himself accepts this (peaceful) aspect of the term, he points out that indulgence in the pleasure of jhānas could also lead to supernatural knowledge, enlightenment and nibbāna.\footnote{D.III.131-132.} So long as indulgence in the jhānas does not disturb further progress, they are an extremely important part of meditation practice. Hence, opposing the assertions of Rahula and Burns in ignoring the (jhāna) aspects of mental purification and unification is necessary. It is clear from the Sāmaññaphalasutta that the jhāna attainment produces a progressive purification and unification of mind in order to contribute to the ultimate goal of meditation practice.\footnote{D.I.76.}

After the examination of the various ways in which the term ‘jhāna’ has been translated, the characteristics of jhāna can be clarified. K.R. Norman who interprets it as ‘meditation,’ suggests a broad application of the term over the entire process of mental development.\footnote{K. R. Norman, The Word of the Doctrine (Dhammapada), Translation Series (London, England); No. 46. (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1997), p. 53.} I.B. Horner’s interpretation of jhāna as ‘musing’ is inappropriate as it signifies thoughtfulness, the opposite to the sense of ‘letting go’ which is a central characteristic of jhāna.\footnote{I. B. Horner, The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected : A Study of the Arahan Concept and of the Implications of the Aim to Perfection in Religious Life, Traced in Early Canonical and Post- Canonical Pali Literature (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1975), p. 121.} In his translation of the Dialogues of the Buddha, Rhys Davids proposes ‘rapture,’ which points to the emotional consequence of jhāna which cannot be considered as a
predominant characteristic.  

Edward Conze and Mererk introduce the equally misleading of the translation of the term as ‘trance,’ which implies a cataleptic or hypnotic state. The term ‘trance,’ in fact, suggests a weak and dull state of mindfulness, which is firmly distinct from the semantic interpretations of *jhāna* as mental unification and purification. Therefore ‘trance’ is an unsuitable interpretation of ‘*jhāna.*’ The word ‘absorption’ used by Ānāmoli covers the sense of ‘mental unification,’ but excludes the complementary sense of ‘mental purification,’ discussed above. Due to the complexity of translations and the absence of a standard English translation, the term *jhāna* will be employed untranslated throughout this thesis.

The present study argues that a survey of the term *jhāna* shows that *jhāna* can be generally characterized as mental ‘purification’ and ‘unification.’ These two characteristics contribute to an overcoming of the defiling mental factors (*nīvaraṇa*) and to a focussing of the mind onto the object of concentration, which constitute significant attributes for absolute realization. Next, the term ‘trance,’ a common translation of *jhāna,* conflicts with both characteristics of *jhāna* because it introduces the suggestion of a weak and dull state of mindfulness. Thus, as was stated above, the term ‘*jhāna*’ is to be left untranslated. After brief understanding of *jhāna,* its development will be clarified through the analysis of the four concentrative states, namely, *rūpajjhānas.*

The four *Rūpajjhānas*  

The *samatha* process is not attained all at once but develops in a graded sequence of *jhānas.* In every state of concentrative development, the

---

199 Phramaha Prayoon Mererk, op. cit., p. 123.  
201 The four *rūpajjhānas* or simply the four *jhānas,* refer to the set of concentrative attainments: the first, second, third and fourth *jhānas.*
determination of the intensification of mental factors can clarify the characteristics of each jhāna. A textual analysis of the jhānas from two separate sources, sutta and Abhidhamma, in which the stereotype formulas of jhānas are listed, gives different interpretations of their characteristics.

**Sutta** sources usually provide textual descriptions of the four jhānas:

*Jhāna* 1: Quite secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental qualities, I entered and remained in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by initial and sustained application with joy and happiness born of seclusion.

*Jhāna* 2: With the settling of initial and sustained application, I entered and remained in the second jhāna, which has internal confidence and one-pointedness of mind without initial and sustained application, with joy and happiness born of concentration.

*Jhāna* 3: With the fading of joy, I remained in equanimity, mindful and aware, and I experienced with my body that happiness of which the nobles say: “happily remained he who has equanimity and is mindful,” and so I entered and remained in the third jhāna.

*Jhāna* 4: With the abandoning of happiness and pain and with the earlier disappearace of pleasures and sorrows, I entered and remained in the fourth jhāna, which has neither pain nor happiness and has purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

The Buddha repeatedly applies the above description of the four jhānas throughout the four Nikāyas. Here the four jhānas are characterized in terms of meditative experience such that their attributes are not described explicitly.

Another interpretation comes from the Abhidhamma sources, which present the constitution of jhānas individually through an expression of their factors.

*Jhāna* 1: vitakka (initial application), vicāra (sustained application), pīti (joy), sukha (happiness), cittassekaggatā (one-pointedness of mind)

*Jhāna* 2: pīti, sukha, cittassekaggatā

*Jhāna* 3: sukha, cittassekaggatā

*Jhāna* 4: upekkhā, cittassekaggatā

Vibh.263-264
This interpretation in the *Abhidhamma* shows a process of progressive elimination and refinement of *jhāna* factors, hence, allows the *jhānas* to be presented explicitly. The implicit expression of the characteristics of *jhānas* in the *Nikāyas* is understood as different and quite distinct from their expression in the *Abhidhamma*. An investigation of the different interpretations of *jhānas*, and a focussed the individual analysis of each *jhāna* follows.

**The first rūpajhāna**

The initial state of absorption called the first *jhāna* arises from the cultivation of the five wholesome factors and the absence of five hindrances. The former is composed of five mental components: *vitakka* (initial application), *vicāra* (sustained application), *pīti* (joy), *sukha* (happiness), *cittassekaggatā* (one-pointedness of mind). The latter group comprises unwholesome states, namely, sensual desire (*kāmachanda*), ill will (*byāpāda*), sloth and torpor (*thīnamiddha*), restlessness and worry (*uddhaccakukkucca*) and doubt (*vicikicchā*). Although the first *jhāna* involves both arising and fading away, these phenomena are the consequence of the one-pointedness of mind (*cittassekaggatā*), which is the predominant factor of the first *jhāna*. This section aims to support notion that the mental one-pointedness is the predominant factor for the arising of the first *jhāna* and for eliminating all hindrances. This hypothesis will be explored through the detailed examination of the means, by which the five hindrances are eliminated, and the existence of one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) in the first *jhāna* in terms of the four inquiries: the textual evidence, the characteristics of *vitakka*-vicāra, the meaning of the term ‘*jhāna*’ and the development of the first *jhāna*.

203 M.I.294-295.
During the development of the first jhāna, the two overlapping techniques are presented to abolish the five hindrances. On the one hand, in the chapter of ‘Abandoning the Hindrances’ in the Aṅguttaranikāya, the Buddha provides the ways and means by which one can abolish the five hindrances as follows:

1. Discernment of repulsiveness (asubhanimitta) contributes to the abandonment of sensual desire (kāmachanda).
2. Freedom of mind through loving-kindness (mettācetovimutti) contributes to the abandonment of ill will (byāpāda).
3. Effort (viriya) contributes to the abandonment of sloth and torpor (thīnamiddha).
4. Tranquillity of mind (vūpasantacitta) contributes to the abandonment of restlessness and worry (uddhaccakukkucca).
5. Right attitude of attention (yoniso manasikāra) contributes to the abandonment of doubt (vicikicchā).

A.I.4-5

This passage from the Nīvaraṇapahānavaṇga underlines the importance of the five meditation practices for a proper elimination of the five hindrances. On the other hand, it is found in the Visuddhimagga that the five factors of the first jhāna arise and counteract the five hindrances one by one. Buddhaghosa states that each jhāna factor is responsible for the elimination of a particular hindrance. Vitakka, through its role of lifting the mind up to the object, inhibits sloth and torpor (thīnamiddha). Vicāra, by keeping the mind on the object, temporarily dispels doubt (vicikicchā), pīti keeps out ill will (byāpāda), sukha excludes restlessness and worry (uddhaccakukkucca), and ekaggatā counters sensual desire (kāmachanda).\textsuperscript{204} He further concludes: “…the jhāna factors are incompatible with them (hindrances), eliminate them, abolish them.”\textsuperscript{205}

The examination of the two techniques found in the suttas and discussed in commentaries shows that the five practices are the predominant technique to overcome the five hindrances in relating to four reasons. First, they are clearly

\textsuperscript{204} Vism. I41 (tr. Ānāmodi p. 147).
\textsuperscript{205} Ibid.
mentioned in the canonical text, whereas the functions of the five factors as abandoning the five hindrances one by one are stated in commentaries. Second, it should be noted that, if each jhāna factor individually causes the corresponding hindrance to fade away, then, due to the absence of vitakka and vicāra in the second jhāna, there is a risk that sloth, torpor and doubt may arise in that jhāna. This risk however is non-existent since the second jhāna is more profound than the first jhāna and far removed from the five hindrances.206 Third, the factor of mental unification (one-pointedness of mind) participates in all of the jhāna states and becomes more intense in the higher states. The ascendant states of jhāna are progressively remote from the hindrances. It would be a reasonable assumption that mental unification entirely plays a crucial role in overcoming the five hindrances. Mererk shares this sentiment: “In the state of concentration, the mind is freed from five hindrances.”207 Beyer proposes the suppression of hindrances through the development of mental focusing upon the representational sign that echoes Mererk’s opinion.208 Lastly, the five practices have the benefit of being more accessible to meditators who are not yet at the absorption concentration level. From these reasons, the two differing perspectives, the above five practices and the unification of mind, are directed towards the one purpose of dispelling the hindrances. The two perspectives can be reconciled since the five practices are the most appropriate meditative techniques of concentrative development. For this reason, it can be concluded that the unification of mind, developed through any meditation practice which corresponds with a particular hindrance, is the key factor in overcoming the five hindrances.

Attention must now be directed to the often argued question “Does cittassekkatā (one-pointedness of mind) exist in the first jhāna, or not?” This

206 Vism.155 (tr. Ēnāmoli p. 161).
207 Phramaha Prayoon Mererk, op. cit., p. 121.
question arises from the term *ekaggatā*, which is a well established factor of the first *jhāna* according to the *Abhidhamma*. However, *ekaggatā* is not specifically mentioned in the general stereotype formula of the first *jhāna* in the *sutta*. Certainly, commentators and modern scholars have consistently preferred the listing of *jhāna* factors in the *Abhidhamma*. For example, Buddhaghosa, clearly confirming the absence of *ekaggatā* from the first *jhāna* in the *sutta*, still selects the *Abhidhamma*, where *ekaggatā* in the first *jhāna* factors is included.209 According to the *Vimuttimagga*, the inclusion of *ekaggatā* in first *jhāna* is also rendered as the consequent factor following the first four factors (*vitakka, vicāra, pīti, sukha*): “With these four qualities the mind becomes peaceful.”210 Khantipalo also directly adds *ekaggatā* to the first four factors in the *sutta*: ‘Now some explanation should be given to the four factors in italics above (initial and sustained application, rapture and bliss), plus the fifth one which is one-pointedness of mind.’211 Moreover, Gunaratana claims that *ekaggatā* is the prominent factor for the development of *jhāna* states, so that it is therefore not necessary to mention this factor explicitly.212 It can be argued that, although the term ‘*ekaggatā*’ is not found in the standard description of the first *jhāna* in the *sutta*, the *Abhidhamma* inclusion of this *jhāna* factor is a sufficient reason to include it in the list.

Nevertheless, having investigated the compatibility between *ekaggatā* and the first *jhāna*, some scholars argue that *ekaggatā* does not exist in the account of the first *jhāna*. For instance, Stuart-Fox points out the absence of *ekaggatā* in the stereotype formula of the first *jhāna*: “First *jhāna* in the *sutta* account is the stage before mental one-pointedness is established.”213 Throughout the

---

209 Vism. 147 (tr. Ānāmoli p. 153).
210 Upatissa, op. cit., p. 93.
discussion on the relation between ekaggatā and vitakka-vicāra, he firmly contradicts the coexistence of ekaggatā and vitakka-vicāra.\(^{214}\) Bucknell also supports this viewpoint of disregarding ekaggatā in the first jhāna according to the sutta.

The jhāna 1 of the Nikāya account is a rather preliminary stage in which mental one-pointedness has not yet been established. The condition attained by the meditator who has mastered appāna-samādhi cannot be identical with the stage which the Nikāyas call 'the first jhāna.'\(^{215}\)

Furthermore, Bucknell recognizes the first jhāna as the distracted mental state associated with the flow of thought.\(^{216}\) Still relying on the inconsistency of ekaggatā in the first jhāna, Griffiths also suggests that the full mental operation of basic cognitive functions continue in the first jhāna.\(^{217}\) Though these scholars consider that there is a degree of incompatibility between ekaggatā and the first jhāna, the reconciliation of ekaggatā and the first jhāna can be investigated through four aspects: textual evidence, the characteristics of vitakka-vicāra, the meaning of jhāna and the development of the first jhāna.

Even though ekaggatā is not mentioned explicitly in the general formula identifying the first jhāna in the sutta, three references to the appearance of ekaggatā in the first jhāna are referred to as follows. The first reference is found in the Mahāvedallasutta where Sāriputta says:

> Friend, the first jhāna has five factors. Here friend, for the monk who attains the first jhāna, there are initial and sustained application, joy, happiness and one-pointedness of mind.\(^{218}\)

Sāriputta’s description of the first jhāna clearly expresses the existence of ekaggatā as one factor of the first jhāna. In this discourse, Sāriputta, while asked what the first jhāna is, gives his answer according to its stereotype

---

\(^{214}\) Ibid., p. 96.
\(^{216}\) Ibid., p. 396.
\(^{218}\) M.I.294: "Paṭhamam kho, āvuso, jhānaṁ paṭīcaṅgiṁ: Idh'āvusos, paṭhamam jhānaṁ samāpānassa bhikkhuno vitakko ca vattati vicāro ca pītī ca sukhaṁ-ca cittekkaggaṁ ca."
formula in the *sutta*. But, when asked how many factors there are in the first *jhāna*, he speaks of the five factors as shown above. Due to Sāriputta’s answer, Stuart-Fox argues that Sāriputta’s description contains an inconsistency in that Sāriputta’s answer could be the influence of early *Abhidhammic* texts.\(^{219}\)

Nonetheless, it should be considered that Sāriputta’s answer arises from his direct realization of first *jhāna* experience, where he recognizes the coexistence of *ekaggatā* and the mental state of the first *jhāna*. The second reference occurs in the *Paṭhamajhānapañhāsutta*, in which the Buddha states the repetition of identical statements for each *jhāna* in order to advocate his disciple, Moggallāna, to develop the unification of mind. He gives a valuable suggestion for the first *jhāna* in stating that: “Moggallāna, Moggallāna, do not be careless, Brahmin, regarding the first *jhāna*. Steady your mind in the first *jhāna*, make your mind one-pointed in the first *jhāna*, and compose your mind in the first *jhāna*.\(^{220}\) Thus, this identical set of statements for every *jhāna* implies that there is certainly the occurrence of *ekaggatā* in the first *jhāna* and in the rest as well. Third, the existence of *ekaggatā* in the first *jhāna* is attributed in the *Anupadasutta* to the Buddha.\(^{221}\) There the Buddha clearly lists the sixteen characteristics including the presence of *ekaggatā* in the first *jhāna*. According to this textual evidence in the *sutta*, the importance of *ekaggatā* in the attainment of *jhānas* is so apparent that it is unnecessary to make explicit mention of it in the stereotype formula.

By investigating the characteristics of *vitakka* and *vicāra*, the existence of *ekaggatā* in the first *jhāna* can be further clarified. This investigation is to provide an answer to the question of “whether or not *ekaggatā* can possibly

\(^{219}\) Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., p. 89.

\(^{220}\) S.IV.263: “moggallāna moggallāna Mā brāhmaṇa paṭhamam jhānam pamādo paṭhame jhāne cittaṁ sanāthapahi paṭhame jhāne cittaṁ ekodi-karohti, paṭhame jhāne cittaṁ samādahāti.”

\(^{221}\) M.III.25
coexist with *vitakka-vicāra* in the first *jhāna*?” When considering the meaning of *vitakka* and *vicāra*, it can be categorized into two groups; 1) general meaning and 2) specific meaning. The *PTS Pali-English Dictionary* notes that, in considering both *vitakka* and *vicāra* together, the meaning should be read as “just thought or thinking.” Alternatively, regarding the specific meaning, it analyzes *vitakka* and *vicāra* individually. It renders *vitakka* as “directing of concomitant properties towards the object” and *vicāra* as “continued exercise of the mind on that object.”

Two groups of scholars are divided in their analysis of *vitakka* and *vicāra*.

Among the first group, for instance, Stuart-Fox interprets the combination of *vitakka* and *vicāra* as “all varieties of thinking, including sustained and focused thought” that is suppressed through concentrative practice. Bucknell also shares this interpretation: “*vitakka-vicāra* simply denotes the normal flow of thought, the stream of imagery and verbalizing which, like a television program that is rarely switched off.” While he interprets *vitakka-vicāra* as the thought-stream, *ekaggatā* was interpreted as continued freedom from thought, which then made it impossible for *ekaggatā* to coexist with *vitakka-vicāra*. While interpreting *vitakka* as linear thinking and *vicāra* as rational thinking, Beyer also classifies *vitakka* and *vicāra* into the systematic thinking. Varma obviously agrees: “In the first *jhāna* the Yogi concentrates his mind on reasoning (*vitakka*) and investigation (*vicāra)*.” Subsequently, their approach to the meaning of *vitakka-vicāra* in the general way contradicts the approach to achieving the mental state of one-pointedness. If *vitakka-vicāra* refers to mental

---

223 Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., p. 82.
activity in the general meaning, we can assume that they have no connection to ekaggatā.

On the contrary, the other group of scholars assigns specific meaning to vitakka-vicāra, which complements the state of mental unification. For example, Ṭhitavaṇṇo defines vitakka as a mental state which is in secure contact with the object of meditation, and involves the absence of ordinary thought. According to him, vitakka facilitates the mind directing its attention to the object, while vicāra supports and keeps vitakka functioning uninterruptedly. Therefore, he regards vitakka-vicāra as the essential factors for mental development in support of a state of unification. In addition, Brahmavamso clearly negates the first group: “In fact, thinking ceases a long time prior to jhāna. In jhāna, vitakka and vicāra are both sub-verbal and so are not acceptable to thought.”

Khantipalo’s interpretation of vitakka-vicāra also disagrees with the first group:

Although in other contexts vitakka can mean ‘thinking’ it is misleading to translate it in the jhāna-formula in this way...It is certainly very wrong to translate this (vicāra) ‘discursive thinking,’ as some authors have done.

If vitakka-vicāra do not convey a general pattern of thinking, it is important to discover their true meaning, which will have implications for how they can coexist with ekaggatā. Khantipalo defines vitakka as the fine and soft constant attention to focus the mind pointed on the object, and vicāra as the following attention to sustain the focus of mind on the object. According to Gunaratana’s clarification of vitakka, it always plays a role in directing the mind onto the object; in the jhāna state, this role becomes more reliable and

---

229 Bhikkhu Khantipalo, op. cit., p. 57.
230 Ibid.
gentle.\textsuperscript{231} He distinguishes the characteristics of *vitakka* in relating to the two occasions by the following comparison. In general, *vitakka* can be compared to a hollow ball held down under the water by external force, while *vitakka* at the *jhāna* state can be compared to a solid body sinking into the bottom of water and remaining there without any external force.\textsuperscript{232} Gunaratana’s explanation of the characteristic of *vitakka* in the *jhāna* state agrees with the book entitled the *Milindapañha*, in which the role of *vitakka* is compared to the action of fixing an accurately cut tenon into a mortice of the carpenter.\textsuperscript{233} Concerning *vitakka* in the *jhāna* state, he points out not only the characteristic of *vitakka*, but also the object of *vitakka*, that is the counterpart sign (*paṭībhaṅganimitta*).

Investigation of the meaning of *vitakka-vicāra* indicates that *vitakka-vicāra*, while qualifying the fine and soft constant attention, keeps the mind firmly and naturally on the mental object of the counterpart sign (*paṭībhaṅganimitta*). According to the evaluation of *vitakka* in reference to the development of *ekaggatā*, both groups of scholars agree that thought cannot simultaneously exist with *ekaggatā*. It seems a suitable judgement because the term ‘thought’ implies the process of thinking which tends to be the multitude pointedness of mental activities, while *ekaggatā* implies only one-ness of mental activity or freedom from thought. What distinguishes both groups is the interpretation of *vitakka-vicāra*. The first group interprets *vitakka-vicāra* as thought, whereas the second interprets it as the refinement and formation of profound yet subtle attention that keeps the mind united uninterruptedly with the object of meditation. Consequently, the first group contradicts the collaboration of *vitakka-vicāra* and *ekaggatā*, while the second points out *vitakka-vicāra* as the basic process for the development of *ekaggatā*, hence their coexistence. The

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{231} Henepola Gunaratana, *A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation*, op. cit., p. 76.
  \item \textsuperscript{232} Ibid., p. 77.
  \item \textsuperscript{233} Mil.62: “Yathā mahārāja vaṭṭāṭhakī suparikkamakataṁ dārumā sandhismiṁ appeti, evameva kho mahārāja appaṇālakkhaṇo vitakko.”
\end{itemize}
second opinion can reconcile the inconsistency arisen from the description of the first jhāna between the stereotype formula in the sutta and its constitution in the Abhidhamma. Moreover, it provides the answer to the question of “how ekaggatā can be developed.” If ekaggatā means one-pointedness, there has to be a mental factor in the first jhāna. Ṭhitavaṇṇo’s statement is acceptable when he says vitakka as an essential mental factor for the arising of ekaggatā. If vitakka does not function at all, the mind will draw back to what is called the bhavaṅga, the condition of unconsciousness, resulting in the mind being drifted to slumber. Such is how vitakka in this sense is indispensable in the development of mind to the level of jhāna.234

Of course, vitakka-vicāra are the predominant factors intensifying the cognitive act of focusing on the mental image. Furthermore Gunaratana describes the process of mental development through vitakka-vicāra, by which the meditator cultivates the mental image in the progression from parikammanimitta (preparatory image), uggahanimitta (acquired image) and paṭibhāganimitta (counterpart image) respectively.235 It is clear that vitakka-vicāra are the essential factors to thrust the mind onto a mental image, keep it fixed and focused until the arising of a full one-pointedness in the first jhāna. Therefore, while the first group of scholars disagrees with the coexistence of vitakka-vicāra and ekaggatā, the view of their coexistence as expressed by the second group is more applicable in clarifying the process of mental development in progression through each mental image (nimitta) for attaining complete one-pointedness (ekaggatā) in the first jhāna.

Since the term ‘jhāna’ itself is generally accepted as being the one-pointedness of mind, it is then unnecessary to mention ekaggatā again in the stereotype formula of the first jhāna in the suttas. Indeed in the discourse entitled the Cūḷavedallasutta, Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā identifies the term ‘samādhi’ with

234 Ṭhitavaṇṇo, op. cit., p. 127.
‘cittassa ekaggatā (the one-pointedness of mind).\textsuperscript{236} This identification corresponds with the Dhammasaṅgāti, where samādhi is interpreted as: “the stability, solidity, absorbed steadfastness of mind (citta).”\textsuperscript{237} Regarding the canonical texts and Buddhist scholars, samādhi is identical to not only ekaggatā but also the attainment of the four jhānas. For instance, in the discourse entitled the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta, the Buddha employs the stereotype formula of the four jhānas to refer to perfect concentration, namely, sammāsamādhi.\textsuperscript{238} A similar interpretation of jhāna as samādhi is also proposed by Desaraṃsi.\textsuperscript{239} This relation between samādhi and jhāna could be seen in the progression of the three kinds of samādhi: parikammamasamādhi, upacārasamādhi and appanāsamādhi. The absorption state of appanāsamādhi is related to the intensification of mental factors of the first jhāna and its advancement.\textsuperscript{240}

The term ‘jhāna’ is relevant to a high degree to samādhi. Therefore, it exclusively signifies one-pointedness of mind without the direct statement of one-pointedness in the first jhāna formula. If one-pointedness of mind and the first jhāna refer to two different levels of concentration, then there is inconsistency in the textual evidence of the meaning of jhāna and samādhi. Nevertheless, Stuart-Fox mentions that ekaggatā is not present as a factor of the first jhāna in the sutta.\textsuperscript{241} His opinion is convincing as far as the textual analysis of the stereotype formula of the first jhāna; but according to other suttas, the detailed examination of the term ‘jhāna’ confirms the presence there of ekaggatā. Further evidence from meditative experience, as Brahmavamso describes, shows that in the jhāna states, there is no possibility of thought, there is no perception of time, and consciousness is non-dual.\textsuperscript{242} Consequently while

\textsuperscript{236} M.I.301
\textsuperscript{237} Dhs.11.
\textsuperscript{238} D.II.313.
\textsuperscript{239} Desaraṃsi, op. cit., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{240} Henepola Gunaratana, A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation, op. cit., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{241} Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
\textsuperscript{242} Brahmavamso, op. cit., pp. 41–42.
the *jhāna* states are the stages of letting go of the process of thinking, the profound sustained attention on the subject of concentration is necessary for the development of *jhānas*. It could be that, although the term ‘*ekaggatā*’ is not present in the standard formula of the first *jhāna*, its typical aspect is already known within the first *jhāna* through its meaning.

Examination of the characteristics of the first *jhāna* during its development emphasizes the quality of one-pointedness within it. Indeed, during this process of concentrative development, the five hindrances are explicitly stated to be removed prior to the arising of the first *jhāna*. It is found that the tranquillity of mind (*vūpasantacitta*), widely stated throughout the *sutta*, precedes the first *jhāna* in order to erase one hindrance, namely, restlessness and worry (*uddhaccakukkucca*). If the tranquillity of mind does not arise yet, the first *jhāna* cannot come into existence. Considering the above evidence, this study proposes that the strong connection between *ekaggatā* and the tranquil mind is profound. *Ekaggatā* is the principle mental factor in keeping the mind still and rested, and this exists prior to the arising of the first *jhāna*.

The next characteristic of the first *jhāna* is *vivekajām* (born from seclusion). It is to be analysed with reference to the presence of *ekaggatā* in the first *jhāna*. The analysis of the term ‘*viveka*’ demonstrates that there are three kinds of seclusion: bodily seclusion (*kāyaviveka*), mental seclusion (*cittaviveka*) and seclusion from the substrata of existence (*upadhiviveka*). Bodily seclusion refers to the physical withdrawal from the society for the purpose of devoting oneself to mental development. Mental seclusion means the mental withdrawal from its entanglement with distracted thought; it is recognized as the mental unification of the level of access concentration (*upacārasamādhi*) and above.

---

243 A.I.4.
The last type of seclusion refers to the complete liberation from all defilements.\textsuperscript{245} It appears that the mental seclusion, helping to drive away all distracted thoughts, implies mental stillness or \textit{ekaggata}. Sangharakshita also shares the same sentiment by identifying the term ‘\textit{viveka} (seclusion)’ as \textit{samadhi} or the unification of mind.\textsuperscript{246} Nevertheless, Griffiths regards the first \textit{jhana} in the stereotype formula as seclusion from contact with \textit{kama} or worldly pleasure and \textit{akusaladhamma} or negative mental states exclusively.\textsuperscript{247} But it is unclear whether that characteristic of \textit{viveka} is able to overcome restlessness and achieve mental seclusion. Moreover, Solé-Leris, while considering the stereotype formula of the second \textit{jhana}, confirms this view. In its stereotype formula, \textit{samadhijam} (born out of concentration) implies that the second \textit{jhana} arises from the degree of concentration that already exists in the first \textit{jhana}.\textsuperscript{248}

Hence a close determination of the characteristics of the first \textit{jhana} shows that \textit{ekaggata} is its main factor in maintaining the mind in a tranquil and secluded state, and a foundation for the arising of the second \textit{jhana}.

In summary, the two principal themes have been discussed. Firstly, this section has introduced the five meditation practices; discernment of repulsiveness (\textit{asubhanimitta}); freedom of mind through loving-kindness (\textit{mettacovimutti}); effort (\textit{viriya}); tranquillity of mind (\textit{vupasantacitta}) and right attitude of attention (\textit{yoniso manasikara}). These practices are considered the appropriate meditative techniques to eliminate the five hindrances. Consequently, mental unification, arising through any meditative method, is the predominant factor in overcoming all hindrances. Secondly, an analysis of the first \textit{jhana} based on four aspects suggests that \textit{ekaggata} exists in the first \textit{jhana}. The first aspect evaluates the three references in the \textit{suttas} that reveals the validity of \textit{ekaggata}.

\textsuperscript{245} Henepola Gunaratana, \textit{A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation}, op. cit., p. 49.
\textsuperscript{246} Sangharakshita, op. cit., p. 165.
\textsuperscript{248} Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 63.
in the first jhāna. The second aspect investigates the characteristics of vitakka and vicāra to support the coexistence of ekaggatā and vitakka-vicāra in the first jhāna. The third aspect interprets the term ‘jhāna’ as the one-pointedness of mind by emphasizing the comprehensiveness of ekaggatā in the first jhāna such that it is not required to mention ekaggatā anymore. The fourth aspect is to determine how to overcome restlessness and examine the characteristics of vivekajām. This confirms the existence of ekaggatā and its indispensability within the first jhāna. Although some scholars, such as Bucknell and Stuart-Fox, reject the notion of ekaggatā coexisting with the first jhāna, an examination of the above four aspects has shown that it is reasonable to argue that a thorough one-pointedness (ekaggatā) does arise in the first jhāna. This concludes the detailed examination of the first jhāna. Clarification of the process of samatha by the analysis of the second jhāna follows.

The Second Rūpajjhāna

The development of jhānas is a process in which the gross factors are successively eliminated and the subtler ones are brought to greater prominence. In the second jhāna, vitakka and vicāra are abandoned and the three factors, pīti, sukha and ekaggatā still remain. By attaining these profound factors, the mental state of the second jhāna becomes more tranquil and more thoroughly unified. The purpose of this section is to substantiate the arising of the second jhāna through the five kinds of mastery only whilst excluding a review of the defective features of the first jhāna, and to point out the collaboration of its two factors; pīti and ekaggatā. The discussion of the second jhāna will aim at establishing the method by which the second jhāna is attained and to clarify how pīti relates to ekaggatā.
In particular, this research argues that Buddhaghosa’s first method provides sufficient techniques to develop the second jhāna, whilst his second technique is unnecessary as well as being insufficient. This is despite of Buddhaghosa’s claim that the two methods, which include the five kinds of mastery and the contemplation of the defective features of the first jhāna, are required to attain the second jhāna. Indeed, in the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa suggests the meditator to achieve the five kinds of mastery in order to be skillful in the first jhāna. These include mastery in adverting (āvajjana), mastery in attaining (samāpajjana), mastery in resolving (adhitthāna), mastery in emerging (vuttohāna), and mastery in reviewing (paccavekkhāna). To master the first jhāna, it is required that the meditator enters it repeatedly and skilfully until the meditator can attain it, remain in it, emerge from it, and review it without any trouble or difficulty. After having achieved such mastery, Buddhaghosa suggests that the meditator should emerge from the first jhāna and contemplate its defective features. These imperfect or defective features are composed of two aspects: first this attainment has a risk of nearness of the five hindrances, and second, the grossness of vitakka and vicāra weakens the factors of the first jhāna. In a contribution to the Vimuttimagga, Upatissa concurs with this two-stepped process of attaining the second jhāna.

Considering the two aspects, the contemplation of the defective features of the first jhāna is inessential for the development of the second jhāna; rather it is the five kinds of mastery. Firstly, the examination of the Gāvīsutta reveals that

\[249\] The meditator who has just attained the first jhāna practices to reflect upon the first jhāna, wherever one pleases, whenever one pleases, and for so long as one pleases, without sluggishness in reflecting (Vism. 154 tr. Nāṇamoli p.160).

\[250\] Having mastered in the first jhāna, the meditator emerges from it and contemplates its defective features (Vism. 155 tr. Nāṇamoli p. 161).

\[251\] Vism. 154 (tr. Nāṇamoli p.160).

\[252\] Vism. 155 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 161).

\[253\] Upatissa, op. cit., p. 100.

\[254\] A.IV.418-422.
the viewpoint of these scholars on the method for mastering the first jhāna as preparation for the attainment of the second jhāna sounds reasonable. In this discourse, the Buddha recommends monks to become skilled in entering and abiding in the first jhāna before proceeding to the second. The Buddha compares the unskilled monks of the two jhānas with a foolish cow that, without knowledge of field and skill in roaming on the rugged mountains, would neither go to the new place nor get back to its own place. Lastly, the second method of contemplating the defective features of the first jhāna seems contradictory as it does not support the psychological application of the meditator during the attainment of the second jhāna, and would cause further psychological withdrawal from the first jhāna back to normal thought processes. According to Buddhaghosa and Upatissa, the meditator has to review the imperfect features of the level of jhāna he has just mastered before proceeding to the next jhāna.

The contemplation of the defective features of the first jhāna is inappropriate for the initiation of the second jhāna, because this reviewing and assessing of the jhāna experience that the meditator has just emerged from indicates the jhāna approach of mental development as an interrupted process.²⁵⁵ Contrary to this practice, canonical texts show how the Buddha interprets the mental development of jhānas as a smooth and continuous mode of progress. For instance in the canonical text entitled the Poṭṭhapādasutta, the Buddha describes the particular theme of ascending to the higher state of jhāna as follows:

So from the time, Poṭṭhapāda, that monk has gained this own (controlled) perception, he proceeds from one stage to the next, and from that to the next until he gradually touches the summit of perception.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 61.
²⁵⁶ D.I.184: “Yato kho poṭṭhapāda bhikkhu idha saka-saññī hoti, so tato amutra tato amutra anupubbena saññhaggam phasati.”
This discourse portrays the jhāna approach of mental development from the first jhāna up until the concentrative state termed ‘summit of perception (saññagga),’ which Buddhaghosa\textsuperscript{257} interprets as the arūpajjhāna state called ‘ākiñcaññāyatana (the sphere of no-thing-ness).’ Obviously, the Buddha is describing how the gradual development is central to the jhānas practice until the sphere of no-thing-ness is achieved. Another illustration of this gradual development is found in the discourse entitled the Gaṇakamoggallānasutta, in which the Buddha mentions the concept of his teaching including the four jhānas as a matter of gradual training, gradual doing and gradual practice.\textsuperscript{258} In spite of this, one might argue that samatha has nothing to do with the gradual process, because they are distinct stages as indicated; the first jhāna, the second jhāna etc. and not a continuum. In response to this argument, according to the psychological characteristics of samatha, the mental unification and purification are gradually developed, while the mental distinguishing sign of each jhāna manifests on the progressive path of samatha. Thus it is evident that, although the great commentators mention the surveying process of imperfections in the first jhāna as a significant factor for the arising of the second jhāna, all four jhānas have to be attained through gradual development. That is, each subsequent jhāna is continuously cultivated out of mastery of the immediately preceding level.

Even though some scholars, such as Griffiths, disregard pīti (joy) as a diminishing factor to ekaggata, the detailed examination of pīti and ekaggata indicates that they encourage each other during the samatha process of the second jhāna. Their causal relationship is described in the Upanisasutta. The description points out that pīti leads to passaddhi (rapture), passaddhi to sukha, and sukha to sammāsamādhi (perfect concentration).\textsuperscript{259} Thus we can see that

\textsuperscript{257} Sv.II.373.  
\textsuperscript{258} M.III.2-4.  
\textsuperscript{259} A.V.4-5.
pīti precedes the arising of ekaggatā. In turn, the stereotype formula of the second jhāna refers to pīti and sukha (happiness) as born from concentration (samādhijāna). 260 Ṭhitavaṇṇo agrees: “This (pīti) is one of the beneficial results occurring when the mind is calmed down.” 261 At this point, pīti and ekaggatā link together in a very close relationship, so that it may be difficult to distinguish them. Therefore, there is certainly no reason to suppose that pīti and ekaggatā refer to different qualities of jhāna factors.

Nevertheless Griffiths argues for the incompatibility between pīti and ekaggatā through the marginalization of pīti, as shown in the following quotation:

> Even the fairly restrained affective experiences of joy (pīti) and happiness, while still present, are toned down and begin to shade into equanimity and internal tranquillity; factors which we shall see become more important. 262

Among the three factors of the second jhāna, Griffiths regards ekaggatā as the important factor to proceed through the jhānas, but disregards pīti as a diminishing factor to ekaggatā. This work agrees with him about the importance of ekaggatā because only ekaggatā can initiate each and every jhāna state. However, his interpretation of pīti as a distinctive factor from ekaggatā is questionable when we examine the description of the seven factors 263 of awakening (bojjhaṅga). In this description, the Buddha states that pīti leads to passaddhi (rapture), passaddhi to samādhi (concentration). 264

As ekaggatā is associated causally with pīti, it is clear that the distinction of pīti from ekaggatā is not warranted according to Buddhist sources. Griffiths’ marginalization of pīti is perhaps borne out by a misunderstanding of pīti.

260 M.I.22.
261 Ṭhitavaṇṇo, op. cit., p. 128.
263 The seven factors of awakening are: mindfulness (sati), investigation of dhamma (dhammavicaya), effort (viriya), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi) and equanimity (upekkhā).
264 A.V.1-2.
According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *pīti* is graded into five categories as follows:265

1. *Khuddikā pīti* (the small joy): It appears in various ways such as hair rising, tears streaming down. It is the preceding mental phenomena appearing in the progressive development of meditation.
2. *Khanikā pīti* (the momentary joy): It is like momentary flashes of lightning arising and disappearing.
3. *Okkantikā pīti* (the showering joy): It appears in (to) the body like waves beating on the shore.
4. *Ubbegā pīti* (the uplifting joy): It has enough power to cause the body to spring up into the air and levitate.
5. *Pharaṇā pīti* (the pervading joy): It is the inner joy pervading every part of the body. Buddhaghosa states that what is meant in the stereotype formula of *jhāna* is this pervading joy: “which is the root of absorption and comes by growth into association with absorption.”266

Among the five categories of *pīti*, Griffiths seems to imply the first four types as *pīti* in the second *jhāna*. Bucknell too seems to imply *pīti* as the first type: “Concentration-born *pīti*, the phenomenon of trembling, gooseflesh.”267 Of course, their interpretation of *pīti* can lead to an erroneous understanding of the relation between *pīti* and *ekaggatā*. Therefore, an examination of *pīti* in the *Pāli* canon and commentaries suggests that the correct interpretation of *pīti* in the second *jhāna* would be that of a subtle and broad pervading joy, which is compatible with *ekaggatā*.

The interpretation of the Buddhist criteria for mental development has led to the conclusion that *jhāna* development is achieved from a process of gradual training and practice. In this sense, the second *jhāna* can be cultivated once the proficiency in the first *jhāna* has been attained without the interruption of reflecting on the imperfection features of the first *jhāna*. Next the aspects of *pīti*

---

265 *Vism.* 143-144 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 149-151).
266 *Vism.* 144 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 151).
as concentration-born and as the precursor to concentration confirm the compatibility between pīti and ekaggatā in the second jhāna. The analysis of the levels of intensity of pīti shows that subtle and broad pervading joy is most conducive to deepening concentration.

**The Third Rūpajjhāna**

After the mastery of the second jhāna, the meditator can focus his mind on cultivating the third jhāna. Having abandoned one factor, pīti, one subsequently enters the third jhāna in which only two factors, sukha (happiness) and ekaggatā (mental unification), remain. Further details and elements are revealed by the suttas:

> With the fading of joy, I remained in equanimity, mindful and aware, and I experienced with my body that happiness of which the nobles say: “happily remained he who has equanimity and is mindful,” and so I entered and remained in the third jhāna.²⁶⁸

The formula expresses, besides the jhāna factors, three additional mental properties: equanimity (upekkhā), mindfulness (sati) and awareness (sampajañña). This section aims to clarify the meaning of the passage “I experienced with my body that happiness (sukhaṅca kāyena paṭisāmvedesīm).” This clarification relies on the exegetical issues of which type of happiness, and then whether or not this sukha (happiness) obstructs further mental development.

Although the literal translation of this passage is “I experienced with my body that happiness,” the happiness belonging to the third jhāna is a pleasant mental feeling rather than physical feeling. In the Bahuvedaniyāsutta, the Buddha distinguishes the happiness belonging to the third jhāna from the happiness associated with the sense pleasures, since the former is more excellent and more

---

²⁶⁸ M.I.22: “Pītyā ca virāgā upekkhako ca vihāsiṃ sato ca sampajāno sukhaṅ-ca kāyena paṭisāmvedesīm yantaṃ ariyā ācikkhanti: upekkhako satimā sukhavihārī ti tatiyāṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja vihāsiṃ.”
sublime than the latter. Moreover, the Pāsādikasutta points to the happiness arising from the third jhāna as a spiritual happiness born of the detachment from sense-desires without any indulgence in the pleasures of the five senses. On these discourses, the happiness in the passage “I experienced with my body that happiness” is mental happiness born of mental contact rather than of physical feeling. According to the later canonical Abhidhamma Piṭaka, it is explicitly defined in this sense in the Vibhaṅga: “That mental concomitant which is ease, mental concomitant which is happiness, the felt ease and happiness born of mental contact, easeful and happy feeling born of mental contact. This is called happiness.” The misinterpretation of the term “kāya (body)” could lead to the wrong conclusion that the happiness arising from the third jhāna is born of sense pleasures. In the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa interprets the term ‘kāya’ here as a mental body (nāmakāya): “he would feel the bliss associated with his mental body” and then specifies a pleasant mental feeling in the third jhāna. Upatissa agrees with him through the explanation of kāya as perception (saññā), mental-formation (sañkhāra) and consciousness (viññāṇa), which are the constituents of the mind. Gunaratana not only claims that the term ‘sukha’ refers to mental happiness, rather than physical, but he further remarks that the exceedingly mental happiness causes physical happiness to arise. Solé-Leris, while explicitly interpreting kāya as physical body, also proposes that happiness of the third jhāna existing at the mental level comprises of a pleasant feeling at the physical level. We can see here that the canonical texts and the commentaries coincide with the nature of jhāna attainment, which is inaccessible by the five senses: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body.

269 M.I.398-399.
270 D.III.131.
271 Vibh.259: “Yaṃ cetasi-kāmaṃ sātaṃ cetasi-kāmaṃ sukkhaṃ cetosamphassojaṃ sātaṃ sukkhaṃ vedayitaṃ cetosamphassajā sāta sukhā vedanā: idam vuccati sukkhaṃ.”
272 Vism. 163 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 169).
274 Henepola Gunaratana, A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation, op. cit., p. 117.
275 Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 64.
Nonetheless, after saying that *sukha* is felt with the body, and is the meditator’s experience of delightful bodily feelings, Bucknell interprets the happiness in the third *jhāna* as physical feeling rather than pleasant mental feeling.\(^{276}\) Varma shares this opinion.\(^{277}\) Their viewpoint shows that they interpret the passage “I experienced with my body that happiness” as always perceiving happiness with the physical body. Instead of perceiving bodily feeling, Brahmavamso argues that all five senses are totally shut off within all *jhāna* states.\(^{278}\) His assessment of *jhāna*’s characteristic is reasonable because it concurs with the two qualities of the third *jhāna* which are one-pointedness of mind (*cittassekaggatā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). These characteristics of the *jhānas* and *sukha* are also compatible with Gunaratana’s statement: “The happiness of *jhāna* is a spiritual happiness born of seclusion from sense pleasures and the hindrances.”\(^{279}\) Therefore, it is evident that *sukha* in the third *jhāna* is mental happiness isolated from sense pleasures.

This evaluation of *sukha* in the third *jhāna* indicates that the happiness arising from the process of *samatha* signifies the correct path of mental development. According to the discourse entitled the *Laṭṭikopamasutta*, the Buddha classifies two types of happiness as happiness of sense pleasure and happiness of its renunciation. He disregards the former as fearful and unsuitable but regards the latter, which is linked to the four *jhānas* as happiness of self-awakening and as suitable to be involved in and developed.\(^{280}\) That the happiness of the four *jhānas* contributes to the soteriological goal is similarly reflected in the *Pāsādikasutta*.\(^{281}\) Some scholars, in contrast, argue that the happiness of *jhānas* obstructs the ultimate truth or misleads. For instance,

---

\(^{276}\) R. Bucknell, "Reinterpreting the Jhanas," op. cit., p. 399.
\(^{277}\) Vishwanath Prasad Varma, op. cit., p. 289.
\(^{278}\) Brahmavamso, op. cit., p. 42.
\(^{279}\) Henepola Gunaratana, op. cit., p. 85.
\(^{280}\) M.I.454.
\(^{281}\) D.III.131-132.
Rahula argues that the *jhāna* states have nothing to do with reality and that they are involved only with happy living.²⁸² Besides this, Khantipalo interprets the happiness in the third *jhāna* as leading to attachment to happiness, without progression to higher states.²⁸³

It would appear from the above viewpoints that happiness in the *jhāna* does not entail the soteriological goal and is a potential object of attachment. However, if the meditator should fear the grasping of happiness in the *jhānas*, why then would the Buddha offer the following statement on the first *jhāna*:

> I am not afraid of that happiness, which has nothing to do with other than sense pleasures, and nothing to do with unwholesome states of mind.²⁸⁴

He not only rejects the fear of happiness in the *jhāna*, but further proclaims that this happiness is the way to awakening.²⁸⁵ From the Buddha’s words, we can see that the fearful attachment refers to the comfort and pleasure perceived through the five senses, but not to the wholesome phenomena that *jhānas* offer. This aspect of happiness in *jhānas* is explained by Brahmavamso: “*Jhāna* states are stages of letting go. One cannot be attached ‘to letting go;’ just as one cannot be imprisoned by freedom”²⁸⁶ Thus the meditator should not fear the happiness arising from the process of ‘letting go’ in *samatha*. As *nibbāna*, the ultimate goal of Buddhism, is the best happiness,²⁸⁷ during the process wherein *samatha* is accompanied by *vipassanā*, this happiness will impel the meditator along the path to enlightenment.

Finally, there are some issues involved in the term ‘*sukha* (happiness)’ when it is used in relation to the third *jhāna*. This type of happiness, of course, is a

²⁸² Walpola Rahula, op. cit., p. 68.
²⁸³ Bhikkhu Khantipalo, op. cit., p. 59.
²⁸⁴ M.I.247: “na kho ahaṃ tassa sakkhaṃ bhāyāmi yan-taṃ sukhaṃ aṇṇatī eva kāmehi aṇṇatra akusalehi dhammehi.”
²⁸⁵ M.I.247.
²⁸⁶ Brahmavamso, op. cit., p. 8.
²⁸⁷ Dhp 203.
mental feeling born of seclusion from pleasures of the senses and unwholesome states. As this happiness arises from the stage of letting go involved in samatha, the meditator should not fear any attachment to it. Moreover, not only does this type of happiness serve as a good indicator of the proper method of mental development but also needs to be accumulated through the process of samatha and vipassanā in order to attain nibbāna.

The fourth Rūpajjhāna

Having achieved the fivefold mastery in the third jhāna, the meditator will continue with the process of samatha to cultivate the more profound peaceful state of the fourth jhāna. After giving up all happiness and pain to realize the state beyond pleasure and sorrow, the progress of mental development which leads from the third to the fourth jhāna is accomplished. While concentration advances with a higher intensity, the one factor, namely sukha, is abandoned with the concomitant occurrence of neither-pain-nor-happiness feeling (adukkhamasukha-vedanā). Simultaneously; there are only two distinctive factors remaining: equanimity (upekkhā) and mental unification (ekaggatā).

The standard formula of the fourth jhāna is as follows:

With the abandoning of happiness and pain and with the earlier disappearance of pleasures and sorrows, I entered and remained in the fourth jhāna, which has neither pain nor happiness and has purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.  

Concurrently, considering the phrase “has purity of mindfulness due to equanimity,” this formula announces collaboration between samatha and sati. The goal of the appraisal of the fourth jhāna is to inquire into the relationship between the two meditative practices, samatha and satipaṭṭhāna, and into the existence of sukha within the fourth jhāna. This issue can be examined through

---

288 M.I.22: “Sukhassa ca pahānā dukkhassa ca pahānā pubbeva somanassadomanassānaṁ atthaṅgamā adukkhamasukhaṁ upekkhāsatipārisuddhiṁ catuttham jhānam upasampajja vihāsim.”
the exegetical account of the two Pāli terms, upakkāsatipārisuddhi\textsuperscript{289} and adukkhamasukha (neither-pain-nor-happiness).

According to an analysis of the term ‘upekkhāsatipārisuddhi,’ the processes of samatha at the state of fourth jhāna is compatible with the satipaṭṭhāna practice. Before commencing the analysis, the two terms, satipaṭṭhāna and upkkekkhāsatipārisuddhi need to be explained. First, the term ‘satipaṭṭhāna’ involves the meditative practice mentioned in the discourse entitled the Satipaṭṭhānasutta, in which the Buddha describes the four foundations of mindfulness as contemplation of body (kāyānupassanā), feeling (vedanānupassanā), mind (cittānupassanā) and dhamma (dhammadīnapassanā).

Second, the term ‘upekkhāsatipārisuddhi’ deals with the grammatical link between upekkhā (equanimity) and sati (mindfulness). The Vibhaṅga interprets their relationship as a causal connection: “This mindfulness, because of this equanimity, is cleared, purified and clarified. Therefore, this is called the purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.”\textsuperscript{290} Buddaghosa accepts this interpretation and renders upkkekkhāsatipārisuddhi as “having purity of mindfulness due to equanimity;” that this is an attribute of the fourth jhāna.\textsuperscript{291} Horner employs a tappurisa compound\textsuperscript{292} to render upkkekkhāsatipārisuddhi “purified by equanimity and mindfulness.”\textsuperscript{293} These interpretations of upkkekkhāsatipārisuddhi share the viewpoint that the fourth jhāna and mindfulness are mutually dependent. Indeed, the right mindfulness is always identified with the four foundations of mindfulness (satipaṭṭhāna).\textsuperscript{294}

\textsuperscript{289} Upekkhāsatipārisuddhi, one element in the fourth jhāna, means the purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.
\textsuperscript{290} Vibh.261: “Ayaṁ sati imāya upekkhāya vivajā hoti parisuddhā pariyođātā, tena vuccati Upekkhāsatipārisuddhin ti.”
\textsuperscript{291} Vism. 167 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 174).
\textsuperscript{292} Tappurisa compounds are those in which the first member of the compound is in some case relationship with the second member (Warder, pp. 77-78).
\textsuperscript{294} D.II.313.
By means of these interpretations of the term ‘upekkhāsatipārisuddhi,’ we can see the phenomenological link between the process of samatha and satipaṭṭhāna in the fourth jhāna. Nonetheless, some scholars interpret samatha to be less important and separate from satipaṭṭhāna. For example, Nyanaponika classifies satipaṭṭhāna in the category of bare insight (sukkh-vipassanā), which is the meditative practice exclusive of attainment of any level of jhāna.295 Likewise, in The Light of Wisdom, Ruberu differentiates satipaṭṭhāna from the attainment of jhāna as an independent course of meditation for the sole purpose of developing pañnhā bhāvanā.296 But these opinions do not agree with what the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta conveys. In this discourse, the section that explains the preparatory exercise of the four foundations of mindfulness concludes with the expression “having removed craving and aversion towards the world (vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassam).”297 In the clarification of the term ‘abhijjhādomanassam,’ Buddhaghosa interprets abhijjhā as kāmachanda (sensual desire) and domanassam as byāpāda (ill will), which are two of the five hindrances. He then goes further in this preparatory exercise to identify abhijjhādomanassam with the removal of the entire set of the five hindrances.298 Indeed, as explained earlier, the removal of the five hindrances can be fulfilled through the process of samatha at the level of the first jhāna. Therefore, Buddhaghosa’s interpretation of the term ‘abhijjhādomanassam’ highlights the relation between satipaṭṭhāna and samatha.

Further examination of the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta, in the light of the six sections of the observation of body reveals that the process of samatha agrees with satipaṭṭhāna practice. The six sections299 the Buddha proclaims in the

---

295 Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 103.
297 D.II.290.
298 Sv.III.759.
299 The six sections are: section on respiration (ānānapaṭṭha), section on postures (iriyāpakaṭṭha), section on awareness (sampajaṇa), section on reflections on repulsiveness (pāṭikkālaṇaśikāra),
Mahāsatipatthānasutta\textsuperscript{300} match with the meditative practice of mindfulness of body described in the Kāyagatāsatisutta.\textsuperscript{301} In this discourse, it is found that this meditative practice regarding the mindfulness of body results in the attainment of the four jhānas.\textsuperscript{302} If samatha and satipaṭṭhāna are totally different from each other, there would be no causal link between the practices of observing the body in meditation and the development of the four jhānas. Further consideration of their relation is revealed by the discourse pertaining to the Great Forty (Mahācattārīśakasutta) which specifies perfect mindfulness (sammāsati) as a prerequisite to perfect concentration (sammāsamādhi):

> And what, monks, is noble perfect concentration with its causes and its requisites? That is, perfect view, perfect intention, perfect speech, perfect action, perfect livelihood, perfect effort and perfect mindfulness. Whatever one-pointedness of mind, monks, is equipped with these seven factors. This, monks, is called noble perfect concentration with its causes and its requisites.\textsuperscript{303}

This relationship between satipaṭṭhāna and samatha, in the Mahācattārīśakasutta discourse, indicates that satipaṭṭhāna, as perfect mindfulness (sati), plays a pre-conditional role to samatha. Thus, an examination of the satipaṭṭhāna discourse accompanied by textual evidence collaborate the relation between samatha and satipaṭṭhāna, as does the evaluation of the term ‘upekkhāsatipārisuddhi’ in the fourth jhāna.

The detailed examination of the term ‘adukkhamasukha (neither-pain-nor-happiness)’ reveals that samatha, the process of achieving absorbed concentration, is also the process that gives rise to spiritual happiness. Although the factor of happiness (sukha) is abandoned in the fourth jhāna, the canonical

\textsuperscript{300} D.II.290-298.
\textsuperscript{301} M.III.89-92.
\textsuperscript{302} M.III.97-98.
\textsuperscript{303} M.III.71: “Katamo ca, bhikkhave, ariyo sammāsamādhi sa-upaniso saparikkhāro? Seyyathidaṃ: sammādiṭṭhi, sammāsaṅkappo, sammāvācā, sammākammanto, sammāājīvo, sammāvāyāmo, sammāsati. Yā kho, bhikkhave, imehi sattahānghei cittassa ekaggatā parikkhatā, ayaṃ vuccati, bhikkhave, ariyo sammāsamādhi sa-upaniso iti pi, saparikkhāro iti pi.”
texts through their interpretation of the term ‘adukkhamasukha’ substantiate the presence of happiness peculiar to the fourth jhāna. It is clear in the classification of concentration that all four jhānas represent the category of concentration and, when practiced and expanded, that leads simultaneously to happiness.\textsuperscript{304} Likewise, in the Bahuvedaniyāsutta, the Buddha states that the ascent from jhāna to jhāna coincides with the progressive experience of happiness.\textsuperscript{305} Based on the Buddha’s teaching, it is obvious that happiness exists in the attainment of the fourth jhāna. In contrast, Rhys Davids points out the absence of happiness there as indicated by the term ‘adukkhamasukha’ which means ‘without pain and without ease.’\textsuperscript{306} In the Middle Length Sayings, I.B. Horner seconds this sentiment when she refers to: “the fourth meditation (jhāna) which has neither anguish nor joy.”\textsuperscript{307}

If their interpretation of adukkhamasukha is correct, the argument for the absence of sukha in the fourth jhāna would agree with the Buddha’s statement. An assertion is given in the translation of Pāsādikasutta that a type of sukha is perpetuated despite the removal of sukha and dukkha vedanā (feeling) as expressed in the following statement “Monk enters and remains in the fourth jhāna, which has neither pain nor happiness and has purity of mindfulness due to equanimity (the stereotype formula of the fourth jhāna). These are the four kinds of beings addicted and devoted to happiness (Ayaṃ catuttho sukhallikānuyogo).”\textsuperscript{308} These dichotomous viewpoints can be reconciled through the evaluation of adukkhamasukha. The Saṅgītisutta classifies adukkhamasukha into one of the threefold division of vedanā (feeling).\textsuperscript{309} The Vibhaṅga qualifies the Sāriputta’s statement further and explains

\textsuperscript{304} D.III.222-223.  
\textsuperscript{305} M.I.398-400.  
\textsuperscript{307} I.B. Horner, (tr.), op. cit., p. 28.  
\textsuperscript{308} D.III.131-132.  
\textsuperscript{309} D.III.216.
adukkhamasukha as: “That mental concomitant which is neither ease nor unease, the felt neither-pain-nor-happiness born of mental contact, neither-pain-nor-happiness feeling born of mental contact – therefore, this is called adukkhamasukha.”

In collaboration with these canonical texts, the Visuddhimagga interprets adukkhamasukha as the equanimous feeling (upekkhāvedanā) that is opposed to pain (dukkha) and to happiness (sukha). It should be noted here that the term adukkhamasukha does not signify the mere absence of dukkha and sukha. This feeling is called ‘neither-pain-nor-happiness (adukkhamasukha),’ whose role is the experience of the neutral feeling.  

Gunaratana agrees with this interpretation of adukkhamasukha: “This is the feeling of neither-pain-nor-pleasure (adukkhamasukha).” Gunaratana also proposes an important point that adukkhamasukha figures as a factor of the fourth jhāna and substitutes the factor of sukha. This substitution corresponds with the substitution of perception of happiness with that of the perception of adukkhamasukha as shown in the Poṭṭhapādasutta

His earlier perception of a refined truth of happiness born from equanimity ceases, and on that occasion there is a perception of refined truth of neither-pain-nor-happiness.

In the fourth jhāna, the perception of sukha passes away but not sukha itself. Moreover, upekkhāvedanā (equanimous feeling) in terms of adukkhamasukha performs the abandonment of sukha through its predominant feature of perceiving neutrality. Therefore the interpretation of adukkhamasukha as equanimity provides validity to the existence of sukha and the absence of the perception of happiness (sukhavedanā) in the fourth jhāna.

310 Vibh.261: “yam cetasikam neva sātaṃ nāsātaṃ cetosamphassajam adukkhamasukham vedayitaṃ cetosamphassajā adukkhamasukhā vedanā, Tena vuccati adukkhamasukhā ti.”

311 Vism. 167 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 174).


Adukkha-m-asukha-sukhuma-sacca-saññā tasmiṃ samaye hotī
In conclusion, a detailed study of the term ‘upekkhāsatipārisuddhi’ in the fourth jhāna provides evidence for the development of samatha in association with the process of satipaṭṭhāna. In addition, these two rather distinct qualities of samatha and satipaṭṭhāna were to be harmonized by examining the preparatory exercise and the six sections of the observation of body in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta. In the fourth jhāna, while the factor of happiness is abandoned, the detailed study of the term ‘adukkhamasukha’ indicates the existence of sukha therein. Indeed sukha advances into the subtle state influenced by the perfect peace of equanimity; that is, it seems to disappear because the perception of sukha is dominated by the perception of equanimity.

The Four Arūpajjhānas (Non-rūpajjhānas)

Beyond the four rūpajjhānas lie the four higher attainments, namely, arūpajjhānas, attained by replacing a relatively gross object with a subtler one. The term ‘arūpajjhāna’ is commonly rendered as ‘immaterial’\(^{314}\) or ‘formless’\(^{315}\) jhāna. Despite this, in the following section, the psychological and terminological analysis of the term ‘arūpajjhāna’ points to ‘non-rūpajjhāna’ as its appropriate translation. These four attainments can be individually designated by way of their respective objects: the sphere of infinite space (ākāsānañcañcāyatana), the sphere of infinite consciousness (viññānañcāyatana), the sphere of no-thing-ness (ākiñcaññañcāyatana), and the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (nevasaññañcaññañcāyatana). While the rūpajjhānas progress by the elimination of mental factors, the two factors of the arūpajjhānas, equanimity and one-pointedness of mind, remain constant, but the factors in each higher attainment become subtler and more peaceful than those in its preceding states. The determination of the characteristics of the arūpajjhānas reveals the existence of their purified and subtle mental factors gradually advancing from the fourth rūpajjhāna and providing the Buddhist

\(^{314}\) Henepola Gunaratana, A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation, op. cit., p. 129.

\(^{315}\) Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 67.
deliverance. The characteristics of *arūpajjhānas* come to light by considering the translation of the term ‘*arūpajjhāna,*’ the development of the first *arūpajjhāna,* the implication of the term ‘ākiñcaṇṇāyatana’ and their relationship with the path of liberation.

The implication of the technical terminology of the term ‘*arūpajjhāna*’ points out that ‘formless’ or ‘immaterial’ is not an appropriate translation for the meaning of *arūpa*; rather ‘non-*rūpa*’ is a suitable translation. Most scholars tend to translate *arūpa* as ‘formless or immaterial.’ For instance, Gunaratana gives two reasons for referring to it as ‘immaterial.’ The first reason is that it surmounts all perception of material forms including the concentrative object of the *rūpajjhānas.* The second reason is that after passing away, the meditator, who can attain the *arūpajjhānas,* is reborn in the realm of the immaterial.316 Solé-Leris supports the first reason: “…considers the precarious and unsatisfactory nature of physical matter in all its forms (the concentrative object of the *rūpajjhānas*), and of the perceptions relating thereto and, in order to transcend this situation.”317 Likewise, Bhikkhu Bodhi renders it as ‘immaterial’ through the interpretation of the term ‘*rūpa*’ as perception of visualized images: “in which the mind transcends even the subtlest perception of visualized images still sometimes persisting in the *jhānas.*”318 Indeed, all emotional and intellectual contact with the material form has already been withdrawn at the preceding states of *rūpajjhāna.*319 Accordingly, the translation of *arūpajjhāna* as ‘formless’ due to its surmounting of all material forms appears to be redundant. In addition, if *rūpa* means the subtle material form of the concentrative object, the question arises as to how formless attainment depends on the perception of

---

317 Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 68.
the concentrative object. The study argues that the classification of the *arūpajjhānas* relies on their mental object of concentration.\(^{320}\)

It may be that the discrepancy between formless attainments and their object of concentration should be reconciled through the other semantic feature of the term ‘*arūpa.*’ The semantic application of compounds comprises two main approaches to the meaning of *arūpa*: one, by analysing it as a *bahubbīhi* compound,\(^{321}\) the other as a *kammadhāraya* compound.\(^{322}\) Most scholars, of course, employ the first type of compound to interpret it as ‘formless’ or ‘immaterial,’ which seems to express the vacuity of a mind passing into a confused state of unconscious exaltation. By contrast, there is a very peaceful perception in the *arūpajjhānas* because they induce a greater depth of happiness.

The happiness which has *rūpajjhāna* as an object and the happiness which has *arūpajjhāna* as an object. These, monks, are the two happiness. Of these two happiness, monks, the happiness, which has *arūpajjhāna* as an object, is the best.\(^{323}\)

This discourse in the *Sukhavagga* reflects the existence of a mental object of concentration in the *arūpajjhāna*, which is more subtle than the *rūpajjhāna*. It is therefore more reasonable to employ the second type of compound to render *arūpajjhāna* as non-*rūpajjhāna* because *arūpajjhāna* employs objects of concentration that are more subtle and distinctly separate from the *rūpajjhāna*. Besides this, the distinction between the two concentrative attainments is clearly stated in the *Poṭṭhapādasutta*, where the Buddha describes the concentrative practice which leads to the graded series of perception (*saññā*). During the progression of concentration, the refined perception of the first

---

\(^{320}\) Edward Fitzpatrick Crangle, op. cit., p. 196.

\(^{321}\) *Bahubbīhi* compound is a class of compounds, which function as adjectives. The meanings of words are more specific than their members. Prefix *a* of *arūpa* means ‘less.’ (Warder, p. 137)

\(^{322}\) *Kammadhāraya* compound is a class of compounds which the first member is an attribute of the second. For the word *arūpa*, prefix *a* acts as the negative formation of *rūpa*. (Warder, p. 108)

\(^{323}\) A.I.82: “Rūpārammaṇānca sukhāṃ arūpārammaṇānca sukhāṃ. Imāni kho bhikkhave dve sukhāni. Etadaggaṃ bhikkhave imesan dvinnaṃ sukhānaṃ yadayān arūpārammaṇaṃ sukhān ti.”
arūpajjhāna arises as a result of the cessation of the perception of the fourth rūpajjhāna. Since arūpajjhāna has a subtle and actual ‘object’ of perception which is separate from the rūpajjhāna, it is therefore appropriate to define arūpajjhāna as non-rūpajjhāna.

Regarding the continual progress of samatha in the jhānas, the first arūpajjhāna should be directly developed from the fourth rūpajjhāna without being limited by the type of the object of meditation. Indeed, Buddhaghosa proposes two concentrative techniques that could be used to attain the first arūpajjhāna. These include mastery over the fourth rūpajjhāna and the contemplation of the defective features of the fourth rūpajjhāna. After having mastered of the fourth rūpajjhāna, Buddhaghosa suggests that the meditator consequently emerge from the fourth rūpajjhāna and contemplate on its defective features. On the one hand, this work agrees with him in the first concentrative technique because the first arūpajjhāna and the fourth rūpajjhāna share the same two factors, namely, equanimity and one-pointedness, but these factors are more subtle in the former. On the other hand, the second technique implies that it is apparently not possible to go directly from the fourth rūpajjhāna to the first arūpajjhāna. In order to review the imperfect features of the fourth rūpajjhāna, the meditator needs to return to the normal state of consciousness, and go through the usual concentrative stages of acquired image, counterpart image and access concentration. This technique of reviewing imperfect features causes the process of samatha to be discontinued, and the course of concentration to be retrograded. In addition, this review process disagrees with the viewpoint of gradual mode of spiritual progress without abruptness as proclaimed by the Buddha in the Pahārādasutta:

Pahārāda, just as the great ocean has a gradual incline, a gradual leading, a gradual slope, not in an abrupt way like a precipice; even so, Pahārāda, in

---

324 D.I.183.
325 Vism.327 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 355).
this dhamma and discipline there is a gradual training, a gradual practice, a gradual mode of progress; there is no penetrated final knowledge in an abrupt way.\[^{326}\]

It appears from the above statement that the first \textit{arūpajjhāna} has to be directly developed from the fourth \textit{rūpajjhāna} without the retrogressive practice of the contemplation of the defective features of the fourth \textit{rūpajjhāna}. Also according to Kamalashila, Buddhist concentrative practice does not involve any manipulating techniques:

\begin{quote}
Getting into \textit{dhyānas} (jhānas), remaining in it, and moving ‘up’ into higher \textit{dhyānas}, is not only a matter of manipulating techniques like recognizing sinking and drifting. The \textit{dhyāna} state is best not regarded as something you ‘get into.’ It is more like something that you are.\[^{327}\]
\end{quote}

The ascent from the fourth \textit{rūpajjhāna} to the first \textit{arūpajjhāna}, as Kamalashila’s statement illustrates, is brought about by a natural mental development into a more subtle, less difficult and less troublesome state, and not by manipulating techniques such as considering or reviewing the imperfect features of fourth \textit{rūpajjhāna}.

Now that the concentrative technique of reviewing has been evaluated, the appropriate object of concentration that this concentrative technique refers to needs to be evaluated as well. For the development of the first \textit{arūpajjhāna}, Buddhaghosa suggests that the meditator has to employ any of the nine \textit{kasi/}\[^{328}\]s - earth, water, fire, wind, blue, yellow, red, white and light- except limited space (\textit{paricchinnākāsa}) as the object of concentration for the attainment of the fourth \textit{jhāna}.\[^{329}\] Gunaratana agrees with him and further explains: “the limited space \textit{kasiṇa} is unsuitable because it does not allow for a

\[^{326}\]A.IV.200-201: “\textit{Seyyathā pi pahārāda mahāsamuddo anupubbaninno anupubhapono anupubbapabbhāro, na āyataken’ eva papāto, evam eva kho pahārāda imasmīṁ dharmavinnaya anupubbasiikkhā anupubbakiriyā anupubbapajjāpaddā, na āyataken’ eva aññāpātivedho.”


\[^{328}\]\textit{Kasiṇa} is device used as an initial subject of concentration.

separation between the *kasiṇa* itself and the space it covers.”\(^{330}\) However, Goleman is not concerned with the limitation of the limited space *kasiṇa* and proposes the development of the fourth *rūpajjhāna* through any type of *kasiṇa*.\(^{331}\)

In both cases, if the review of the defective features of the fourth *rūpajjhāna* is the prerequisite process for the development of the first *arūpajjhāna*, the meditator requires a form of *kasiṇa* to contemplate for surmounting the materiality of *kasiṇa* and entering into the first *arūpajjhāna*. It can be concluded that the first *arūpajjhāna* should be approached directly from the fourth *rūpajjhāna* without the interruption of the reviewing process. Moreover, since the selection of a concentrative object is effective at the basic step of preparatory image (*parikammanimitta*), such selection does not facilitate the arising of the very profound state of the first *arūpajjhāna*. Therefore, the meditator should cultivate the first *arūpajjhāna* directly from the fourth *rūpajjhāna* through any type of object of concentration initially.

The third *arūpajjhāna* (*ākiñcaññāyatana*) can be understood as the sphere consisting of no-thing-ness (*ākiñcañña*), whereas *ākiñcaññāyatana* signifies the very subtle state of perception. The reference to perception in *ākiñcañña* is found in the discourse entitled the *Poṭṭhapādasutta*, where the Buddha indicates the arising of a perception of the refined truth of *ākiñcañña* during the attainment of the third *arūpajjhāna*.\(^{332}\) In this discourse, the term ‘*ākiñcañña*’ represents something like a refined perception. Other support for this idea comes from the *Bahuvedaniyasutta* that expresses the

---

332 D.I.184.
sublime happiness of entering and abiding in the third arūpajjhāna. The next reference is found in the Dhammasaṅgaṇī:

Having surpassed completely the sphere of infinite consciousness, one enters and remains in the fourth jhāna which is accompanied by the perception of a sphere of nothingness.

The attainment of the third arūpajjhāna appears to rely on focusing upon the perception of a sphere of nothingness. However, most scholars, for example Henepola Gunaratana, Nyanatiloka and Rhys Davids, translate ākiñcaññāyatana as the ‘base of nothingness’ or ‘sphere of nothingness,’ which seems to imply the state of ‘nothing-at-all.’ Likewise, Beyer renders it as the ‘realm of nothing-at-all.’ Varma shares this approach with his translation of ākiñcaññāyatana as ‘no-thing-ness.’ Goleman, in addition, interprets it as the ‘non-existence of any object:’ “that is, consciousness has as its object the awareness of absence of any object.” They seem to reject any perception or consciousness in the stage of no-thing-ness. Desaraṇī also promotes this sentiment: “no perception appears to exist.”

Nevertheless, this interpretation of ākiñcaññāyatana as non-existence of any object could still be questioned on the grounds that the refined perception actually exists therein. If there is nothing at all in the state of ākiñcaññāyatana, it would be inexplicable why the canonical texts explicitly mention happiness and perception (saññā) in this state. The Jhānasutta, expresses not only perception (saññā) but also feeling (vedanā), mental-formations (sañkhāra) and

---

333 M.1.399.  
334 Dhs.56: “Sabbaso viññāsacchāyatanam samatikkhamma ākiñcaññāyatanasaññāsahagatam...catuttha jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.”  
341 Desarāṇī, op. cit., p. 30.
consciousness (*viññāṇa*) arising with this state.\(^{342}\) Similarly, Gunaratana suggests the very subtle state of consciousness in it that the third *arūpajjhāna* possesses the two profound mental factors, equanimity (*upekkhā*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*), as well as one objective sphere, the sphere of no-thing-ness (*ākiñcaṇṇāyatana*).\(^{343}\) His viewpoint is reasonable in that the other three *arūpajjhānas* also possess these factors and objective sphere. Therefore, the term ‘*ākiñcaṇṇāyatana*’ implies an immensely subtle consciousness, which seems to be characterized by no-thing-ness because there exists no discrimination between subject and object.

The emphatic aim of *samatha* development into the mode of *arūpajjhānas* is a spiritual unification and purification which approaches the ultimate goal. This aim can be fulfilled by verifying “whether or not the meditator can achieve the Buddhist liberation through the concentrative path of *arūpajjhānas*.” Having regarded all *jhānic* processes, including the *arūpajjhānas*, as prior conditions to the destruction of the cankers, the *Jhānasutta* indicates the requirement of *arūpajjhānas* for the ultimate goal.\(^{344}\) Furthermore, Vajirāṇāṇa gives an explanation that the attainment of *arūpajjhāna* leads to supernatural knowledge (*abhiññā*), and that all is subsumed into the one single process which induces the eternal peace of *nibbāna*.\(^{345}\) This explanation is acceptable because the mind, progressing into the *arūpajjhāna* states, becomes intense and gets rid of all defiling factors.\(^{346}\)

However, some scholars contest the relationship between *arūpajjhāna* and the path of liberation. For instance, Gunaratana writes: “the attainment of the immaterial *jhānas* and the exercise of supernormal powers (*iddhi*) are not

---

\(^{342}\) A.IV.425-426.

\(^{343}\) Henepola Gunaratana, op. cit., pp. 129-130.

\(^{344}\) A.IV.425-426.

\(^{345}\) Vajirāṇāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 336.

\(^{346}\) Prakash Pathak, op. cit., p. 144.
essential to achieving the ultimate Buddhist goal.”\textsuperscript{347} Besides, Bhikkhu Bodhi also disregards the \textit{arūpajjhāna} as lacking in wisdom: “these absorptions reached by the path of serenity meditation, as exalted as they are, still lack the wisdom of insight, and so are not yet sufficient for gaining deliverance.”\textsuperscript{348} This marginalization of \textit{arūpajjhānas} is questionable when you analyze the list of eight liberations (\textit{vimakkha}) and of the seven stations of consciousness (\textit{viññāṇaṭṭhiti}).

The examination of the two groups of meditative practices demonstrates that \textit{arūpajjhānas} are of crucial importance in the Buddhist liberating path. The graded exercises of eight liberations are described as follows:

1). Whilst remaining in the fine-material sphere (\textit{rūpi}), one perceives corporeal forms.

2). Not perceiving corporeal forms on one’s own person, one perceives corporeal forms externally.

3). By thinking of the beautiful, one is filled with confidence.

4). The sphere of infinite space (\textit{ākāśaṇaṇcāyatan}a).

5). The sphere of infinite consciousness (\textit{viññāṇaṇcāyatan}a).

6). The sphere of no-thing-ness (\textit{ākiñcaṇṇ}aṇṇyatanan).

7). The sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (\textit{neva}s\textit{a}ṇṇ\textit{nāsa}ṇṇyatanan).

\textsuperscript{347} Henepola Gunaratana, op. cit., p. 129.

\textsuperscript{348} Bhikkhu Bodhi, op. cit., p. 51.
8). The cessation of perception and feeling (*saññāvedayitanirodha*).\(^{349}\)

In the *Mahānidānasutta*, the Buddha lists these eight liberations including the four *arūpajjhānas*, and suggests that it is necessary to master and perfect them in order to achieve Buddhist liberation.

Now, Ānanda, when a monk attains these eight liberations in forward order, and attains in reverse order, and attains in both orders consecutively, attaining them and emerging from them wherever he wishes, however he wishes, and for as long as he wishes, through his own supernatural knowledge in here and now and through the destruction of canker, he realizes, enters into and remains in the canker-free freedom of mind and freedom through wisdom.\(^{350}\)

The eight liberations including the four *arūpajjhānas* convey the process of mental unification and purification until the cessation of perception and feeling (*saññāvedayitanirodha*) is attained. This leads to the invariable conclusion that in the Buddhist scheme of salvation, the proficiency in the eight liberations turns out to be the most efficient tool. The four *arūpajjhānas* are admittedly not an ultimate goal in itself, but the one and reliable means for the achievement of the ultimate goal. Moreover in the *Mahānidānasutta*, the Buddha lists the seven stations of consciousness (*viññāṇatthiti*) and two spheres (*āyatana*). The seven stations of consciousness are as follows:\(^{351}\)

1). There are beings, which are different in body, and different in perception.

2). There are beings, which are different in body, but equal in perception.

3). There are beings, which are equal in body, but different in perception.

4). There are beings, which are equal in body, and equal in perception.

---


\(^{350}\) D.II.71: “Yato kho ānanda bhikkhu ime anulomam paññāvedeyi nirodham pi samāpajjati, paññāvedeyi nirodham pi samāpajjati, anulomam paññāvedeyi nirodham pi samāpajjati, yathā icchāya yad icchāya yāvad icchāya samāpajjati pi vutthāti pi, āsavānañca khayañca anāsavāñca ceto vimuttim paññā-vimuttim diṭṭheva dhamme sayañ abhiññā sacchikavā upasampajja viharati.”

\(^{351}\) D.II.69-70.
5). There are beings, which are reborn in the sphere of infinite space
(ākāsānañcāyatana).

6). There are beings, which are reborn in the sphere of infinite consciousness
(viññānañcāyatana).

7). There are beings, which are reborn in the sphere of no-thing-ness
(ākiñcaññāyatana).

The two spheres are; the sphere of beings without consciousness (asaññīsattā)
and the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana). It is the comprehension of origination, passing away,
advantages, disadvantages, and exit of the seven stations of consciousness and
the two spheres induces the Buddhist liberation.

This passage leaves no doubt that the meditator needs to perform the mastery of
the four arūpajjhānas in order to achieve the freedom through wisdom. So at
least, looking from this aspect of the Buddha’s teachings, the mastery of
the four arūpajjhānas is one of the meditative exercises leading the meditator into
the path of Buddhist deliverance.

This research has introduced and related the four aspects of the arūpajjhānas.
Firstly, arūpa does not mean ‘formless’ or ‘immaterial,’ but implies ‘non-rūpa’
according to the semantic aspect of a kammadhāraya compound. The
interpretation of non-
"rūpa" demonstrates that the arūpajjhānas are distinctly separate from the rūpajjhānas because of the sequential occurrence and refinement of objects. Secondly, the development of the first arūpajjhāna relies on the mastery of the fourth rūpajjhāna, but not on the contemplation of the defective features of the fourth rūpajjhāna. Consistent with the process of samatha, this advancement does not relate to any manipulating techniques, or to the limitation of the type of concentrative objects. Thirdly, the term ‘ākiñcaññāyatana’ implies the immensely subtle consciousness endowed with the two profound mental factors, equanimity (upekkhā) and one-pointedness (ekaggatā). This can be suggested to be no-thing-ness because it does not perform the discrimination between subject and object. Finally, the development of samatha into the mode of the four arūpajjhānas is the correct path leading to Buddhist liberation.

This chapter has so far considered samatha through three prominent features of the jhānas: an overview, the rūpajjhānas and the arūpajjhānas. Firstly, a semantic study of the term ‘jhāna’ reveals that the cultivation of jhānas gives rise to the progression of mental unification and purification, as does the process of samatha. Next, the process of samatha, understood through an examination of the rūpajjhānas, is a gradual and continual development into the more immense and subtle states of ekaggatā (one-pointedness) and sukha (happiness). And lastly, the development of samatha into the mode of the arūpajjhānas is an extremely pure and subtle perceptual structure and not the absence of any mental form, for the purpose of reaching the Buddhist ultimate goal.

Here the process of samatha becomes clear within the framework of the concentrative stages: rūpajjhānas and arūpajjhānas. Considering this, it would
be appropriate to further examine the process of *samatha* in terms of subjects of concentration.

**Forty Concentrative Subjects**

The *Pāli* canonical texts widely present various techniques whereby the process of *samatha* can be developed. For instance, in the *Mahāsakuludāyisutta*, the Buddha indicates the contemplation of ten spheres of *kasiṇas* for the consummation of supernatural knowledge. These are earth-*kasiṇa*, water-*kasiṇa*, fire-*kasiṇa*, air-*kasiṇa*, blue-*kasiṇa*, yellow-*kasiṇa*, red-*kasiṇa*, white-*kasiṇa*, space-*kasiṇa*, and consciousness-*kasiṇa*.

Again, Udāyi, I have declared the path whereby my disciples develop the ten spheres of *kasiṇa*. One perceives the earth-*kasiṇa* above, below, across, undivided and immeasurable. Another perceives the water-*kasiṇa*... And thereby many of my disciples remain having reached the perfection and consummation of supernatural knowledge.

The *sutta* points to the contemplation of ten spheres of *kasiṇas* as support for the whole meditative process. The *Kāḷīsutta* points to the specific relationship between *kasiṇas* and *samatha*. In the discourse, Kāḷī, a female devotee, asks the Bhikkhu Mahākaccāna about the *jhāna* attainment of the Buddha. In his replies, the Buddha realized the origination, the danger, the escape, and the intuition and vision with regard to the right path and the wrong path, of these ten *kasiṇas*.

Having supernaturally known that (utmost attainment of the earth-*kasiṇa*), the Blessed One saw the origination, saw the miseries, saw the way of escape from and saw intuition and vision of what is path and not-path. As a cause of seeing the origination, a cause of seeing the miseries of, a cause of seeing the way of escape from and a cause of seeing intuition and vision of what is path and not-path, the accomplishment of goodness was known by the Buddha as peace of heart.

---

353 *Kasiṇa* is a material object used as the physical basis to develop mental concentration (Nyanatiloka: *Buddhist Dictionary*, p. 80). It is a technical term and best left untranslated.
354 M.II.14-15.
355 M.II.14-15: “Puna ca paraṁ, Udāyi, akkhātā mayā sāvakānaṁ paṭipadā, yathā paṭipannā me sāvakā dasa kasiṇayatanāni bhāventi. Pathavākasiṇam ēko sañjānāti uddhaṁ adho tiriyāṁ advayaṁ appamāṇaṁ, āokasiṇam ēko sañjānāti… Tatra ca pana me sāvakā bahū abhiññāvāsānāmpamappatā viharanti.”
357 A.V.47: “Tad abhiññāya bhagavā ādim addasa ādīnavam addasa nissaraṇam addasa
From this realization, the Buddha attained peace of heart.

The next set of techniques\textsuperscript{358} concerns the impurities (\textit{asubha}), which the \textit{Mahāsatipāṭhānasutta} explains as nine stages of the decay of corpses.\textsuperscript{359} The greater number of ten stages is given in the \textit{Dhammasaṅgaṇī} in relation to the first \textit{jhāna}.\textsuperscript{360} Next, the six recollections\textsuperscript{361} are grouped in the \textit{Saṅgītisutta}.\textsuperscript{362} Thus we can see the various techniques of concentration are found collectively and briefly in the canon.

The \textit{Visuddhimagga} and the \textit{Abhidhammaṭṭhasaṅgaha} appear to arrange these techniques via drawing out the implication of various canonical texts. This later Theravāda Buddhist tradition calls for forty specific subjects divided into seven categories enumerating the various concentrative subjects. These are the ten \textit{kasiṇās}, the ten impurities (\textit{asubha}), the ten recollections (\textit{anussatti}), the four divine abodes (\textit{brahmavihāra}), the perception of repulsiveness of food (\textit{āhārepaṭikūlasaṅnā}), one analysis of the four elements (\textit{catudhātuvatthāna}) and the four non-\textit{rūpa} states.\textsuperscript{363}

First, the ten \textit{kasiṇās} consist of the four elements (earth, water, fire and air), the four colours (blue, yellow, red and white), light and limited space. Each \textit{kasiṇa} is either a natural appearance of the element or a colour chosen, or a produced object such a coloured or elemental disk that the meditator uses for convenience.

\textsuperscript{358} the dead body has been left for one, two or three days, 2) being devoured by animals, 3) a skeleton with flesh and blood, 4) a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, 5) a skeleton without flesh and blood, 6) disconnected bones scattered in all directions, 7) bones bleached white, 8) year-old bones heaped up, 9) bones having rotted away to powder.  
\textsuperscript{359} D.II.295-298.  
\textsuperscript{360} Dhs.55.  
\textsuperscript{361} the recollections of Buddha (\textit{buddhānussati}), the recollections of Dhamma (\textit{dhammānussati}), the recollections of Saṅgha (\textit{saṅghānussati}), the recollections of virtue (\textit{silānussati}), the recollections of generosity (\textit{cāgānussati}), and the recollections of the deities (\textit{devatānussati}).  
\textsuperscript{362} D.III.250.  
\textsuperscript{363} Vism.110-111 (tr. Ānāgami pp. 112-113), Abhi-s.IX.6-12.
during the concentrative practice. As mentioned above, both Buddhaghosa and Anuruddha appear to replace the space-*kasiṇa* and consciousness-*kasina* of the *Mahāsakuludāyisutta* and the *Kāḷīśutta* with the limited space-*kasiṇa* and light-*kasiṇa*. Although the limited space-*kasiṇa* refers to the boundaries of the mental object of the space-*kasiṇa*, both *kasiṇas* are relevant to the same meditation object. It should be noted that the light-*kasiṇa* here is different from the consciousness-*kasiṇa* in the suttas. The light-*kasiṇa* pertains to the senses of sight and touch, while consciousness-*kasiṇa* is related to that of the mind.

Second, the ten impurities are the ten stages of the decay of corpses: the bloated, the livid, the festering, the cut-up, the gnawed, the scattered, the hacked and scattered, the bleeding, the worm-infested, and a skeleton. These stages of the decaying process of corpses serve to reduce the sensual pleasures derived from the appearance and wellbeing of one’s own body. A similar form of meditative subjects appears in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta* where the ensuing decomposition in nine stages, mentioned above, is described. Rather than drawing the method from the *sutta*, the commentators seem to draw these meditative subjects from the later canonical *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* which connects them with attainment of the first *jhāna*.\(^{364}\) These two texts may provide the different stages of practice but their discernment of the body’s anatomical constitution correspondingly counteracts the sensual desires.

Third, the ten recollections (*anussati*) are: the recollections of Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, virtue (*sīla*), generosity (*cāga*), and the deities (*devatā*), as well as mindfulness of death (*maraṇānussati*), mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatāsati*), mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*), and the recollection of peace (*upasamānussati*). The *Saṅgītisutta*,\(^{365}\) the *Dasuttarasutta*\(^{366}\) and the

\(^{364}\) Dhs. 55
\(^{365}\) D.III.250.
Anussatiṭṭhānasutta\(^{367}\) list a set of the first six recollections. Other discourses\(^{368}\) provide an ample discussion of the practices associated with them, as well as listing their consequential advantages. The Atthānavagga\(^{369}\) places all ten recollections into the same category including the highest goal, that of nibbāna. The later commentaries, the Visuddhimagga and the Abhidhammaṭṭhasaṅgaha, take the ten recollections as the set of means for developing faith and concentration.

Fourth, the four divine abodes (brahmavihāra) are the development of outwardly directed social attitudes: loving kindness (mettā), compassion (karuṇā), sympathy (muditā) and equanimity (upekkhā). These subjects are also referred to as immeasurable (appamaññā)\(^{370}\) because they are to be gradually extended in range until they encompass all living beings without qualification or exclusiveness. The methods and purposes of these meditative techniques appear throughout the Pāli canonical texts.\(^{371}\) The Visuddhimagga seems to broaden these methods and purposes within the contexts of meditative subjects and of the moral values required for the maintenance of a harmonious society.\(^{372}\)

Fifth, the perception of repulsiveness of food (āhārepaṭikūlasaṅnā) is the perceptual and reflective mode to contemplate on the disagreeable and repulsive aspects of food in order to avoid attachment. The Dutiyasaṅnāsutta states that āhārepaṭikūlasaṅnā, when developed, causes the goal of the deathless (amata) state to arise.\(^{373}\) The Visuddhimagga presents āhārepaṭikūlasaṅnā as an

\(^{366}\) D.III.280.
\(^{367}\) A.III.284.
\(^{368}\) The Mahānāmasutta (A.II.284-288) and the Anussatiṭṭhānasutta (A.III.312).
\(^{369}\) A.I.30.
\(^{370}\) Vism.321 (tr. Ñañamoli p. 347).
\(^{373}\) A.IV.49-50.
individual meditative subject of perception that arises as a means of reflecting on the repulsiveness of food.

Sixth, the analysis of the four elements (*catudhātuvatthāna*) is the contemplation on the various parts of the body so as to reflect them as composed of four primary elements: earth, water, fire and air. The *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta* briefly explains it in this way:

> Again, monks, a monk considers this body, however it is placed, however disposed, as consisting of elements: ‘In this body, there are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element.’

A detailed account of each element is found in the *Mahāhatthipadopamasutta*, the *Dhātuvibhaṅgasutta* and the *Mahārāhulovādasutta*. Buddhaghosa vividly draws out and explores the method and technique of the contemplation of *catudhātuvatthāna* from these discourses.

Lastly, the four non-*rūpa* states are the objective bases for deep levels of concentration, namely, the sphere of infinite space (*ākāsānañcāyatana*), the sphere of infinite consciousness (*viññānañcāyatana*), the sphere of no-thingness (*ākiñcaññāyatana*), and the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*nevasaṅña-nāsaññāyatana*). Their standard formulas of attainment appear throughout the *suttas*. The explanation found in the *Visuddhimagga* apparently belongs to the later canonical texts. In the *Visuddhimagga*, the formulas of the four non-*rūpa* states, as presented in the *suttas*, are further

---

374 D.II.294: “*Puna ca param bhikkhave bhikkhu imam eva kāyaṁ yathā-thitaṁ yathā-panihiitaṁ dhātuso paccekkhati*: ‘Atthi imasmiṁ kāye paṭhavī-dhātu āpo-dhātu tejo-dhātu vāya-dhātūti.’”
375 M.I.185-188.
376 M.II.240-241.
377 M.I.421-422.
380 Vibh.261-163.
explained. Indeed, the forty subjects are always employed in reference to two aspects- their ability to effectuate the different by-products of concentration and their suitability for different personality types.

Before the commencement of *vipassanā, samatha* needs to be cultivated into a profound state through any subjects of concentration which are selected according to one’s personality type. In order to evaluate subjects of concentration in relation to *samatha* and *vipassanā*, this section will explore their potentiality for the quality of concentration, the determination of the subjects of *arūpas* and the relation between the type of subjects and the commencement of *vipassanā*.

The purpose of selecting the type of subjects is to promote a stilling of the thought process according to different personality types, but it is not conducive to the quality of concentration. In the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa classifies the forty subjects according to their ability to lead to a definite level of concentration. Of them, eight recollections excepting mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatāsati*) and mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*) plus perception of repulsiveness of food (*āhārepāṭikūlasaṅgā*) and analysis of four elements (*catudhātu-vavatthāna*) lead only to access concentration (*upacārasamādhi*). The ten impurities (*asubha*) together with mindfulness of the body yield the first *jhāna*. The first three divine abodes lead to the lower three *jhānas*, whereas the divine abode of equanimity (*upekkhā*) will lead to the fourth *jhāna*. The ten *kasiṇa* and mindfulness of breathing can induce all four *jhānas*. The four *arūpa* themes are characteristics of four *arūpajjhānas* only.³⁸²

³⁸² *Vism.*111 (tr. Ṛṇamoli p. 113).
Buddhaghosa’s classification of the subjects of concentration through consideration of their ability to lead to the quality of concentration, however, appears to be problematic in regard to consideration of two themes: the mental characteristics of jhāna and the development of mental images. First, regarding the development of samatha, the mental characteristics of the jhānas seems to leave out the external objects as Bhikkhu Bodhi states: “samādhi, as wholesome concentration, collects together the ordinarily dispersed and dissipated stream of mental states to induce an inner unification.”

Moreover, Gunaratana rejects the perception of sense objects: “the mind entering upon the jhānas draws inwardly more deeply into itself – away from the sense objects.” It should be noticed that the mind, while entering the jhānas, rids itself of paying attention to all external objects. This idea would fit in with the second theme of the development of mental images. To approach the arising of the first jhāna, the meditator should cultivate the acquired image (uggahanimitta), which is the metallized kasiṇa disk produced and seen only through the mind independent of the sense activity of the eyes. This metallized kasiṇa disk would be the cooperative effect of all subjects, progressing into a higher level. Therefore, due to the concentrative states produced by a given subject, the different techniques of the forty subjects are distinguished at the concentrative state prior to the state of acquired image.

From this state, the quality of concentration depends on the conversion of the mental image into more profound, steadier and purer states, but not on the reflection of any type of subject. It can be concluded that the subjects of concentration, excepting the four arūpa states which lead to the four arūpajjhānas, play a role in inducing the level of concentration upon the

---

383 Bhikkhu Bodhi, op. cit., p. 46.
385 Nyanatiloka, The Buddha's Path to Deliverance in Its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity, op. cit., p. 77.
acquired image; while in the higher stages of concentration, the meditator needs to develop the mental image into a more profound state without directing concentration toward any subject.

Even though the selection of the type of concentrative subjects is not necessary at a high quality of concentration, it might be necessary according to the consideration of different personality types. Of course, the meditator who possesses any one of the six temperaments; the greedy, the hating, the deluded, the faithful, the intelligent and the speculative can benefit from a subject that is suitable for promoting a slowing down and stilling of the thought process. These subjects of concentration are assigned as pragmatic guidelines to bring about the appropriate temperament for the development of samatha. Thus, the ten impurities and the mindfulness of the body are most suitable for the greedy type. The four divine abodes and four colour kasiṇas are best for the hating type. The first six recollections are most effective for the faithful type. Mindfulness of breathing is one recollection suitable for both the deluded and speculative types. The four subjects, mindfulness of death, recollection of peace, analysis of the four elements and perception of repulsiveness of food, are especially efficient for the intelligent type. The remaining six kasiṇas and the non-rūpa states are the proper subjects for all types of temperaments.\footnote{Vism. 114 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 117).}

According to a psychological analysis of the term ‘rūpasaññā (perception of matter),’ the subjects of arūpa states are immensely profound perceptions arising from the fourth rūpajjhāna. In the Sallekhasutta, the passing entirely beyond rūpasaññā indicates a progression from the fourth rūpajjhāna to the first arūpajjhāna.\footnote{M.I.41.} The term rūpasaññā means both rūpajjhānas and their objects as identified in the Vibhaṅga.
Therein, what are *rūpasaññās*? The perception, perceiving and perceivedness of one who has attained a fine-material-sphere attainment or of one who has been reborn there or of one who is dwelling in happiness in this present life. These are called *rūpasaññās*.

The passage brings to mind the perceiving quality of *rūpasaññā* in relation to the object of attainment of the *rūpajjhānas*. Buddhaghosa recommends the four *arūpa* states as suitable subjects for the arising of the four *arūpajjhānas*. In a detailed examination of the phrase “with the complete surmounting of perceptions of matter,” he interprets the terms ‘perceptions of matter’ as the concentative states of the *rūpajjhānas* which have the refined matter of the *kasiṇas* for their objects. His interpretation of the *arūpajjhānas* as the advancement of concentration from the foundation of the *rūpajjhānas* coincides with the list of meditative stages stated in the *Anupubbavihārasutta*. Thus, according to the suttas, the Vibhaṅga and the commentarial interpretation, the subjects of *arūpa* states can be understood to imply the profound state advancing from the fourth *rūpajjhāna*.

Nonetheless, Bucknell, while rejecting the arising of *arūpa* states from the fourth *jhāna*, interprets ‘*rūpa*’ as “with the complete surmounting of perceptions of matter.” For example, a physical object such as an actual *kasiṇa* disk, the breathing, or a chanted *mantra*. Then he further states that the transition to *arūpajjhāna* is fulfilled through the arising of mental image, namely *uggahanimitta* (acquired image). If *rūpa* means a physical object only, it is appropriate to interpret the subject of sphere of infinite space (*ākāsānañcāyatana*) as an acquired image. But this meaning of *rūpa* causes the interpretation of the sphere of infinite space to contradict the early Buddhist

---

389 Vism.329 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 357-358).
390 A.IV.410.
391 *Mantra* is one of the subjects of concentration in relation to the voice repetition.
392 R. Bucknell, "Reinterpreting the *Jhanas;" op. cit., p. 395.
texts. For instance, the *Poṭṭhapaṭṭasutta* clearly represents the arising of the perception of the sphere of infinite space (ākāsānañcāyatana-sukhumasaccasaññā) as a consequence of the perception of the fourth rūpajjhāna. Because the mind is ceased from all physical objects at the state of rūpajjhāna, the Buddha does not need to suggest surmounting them again in the state of the arūpajjhānas. Therefore, the four subjects of arūpa states are not the acquired images but are the refined objective spheres advancing from the fourth rūpajjhāna.

On a close investigation of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*, the arising of vipassanā relies on the deep state of concentration produced through any subjects of concentration. The relation between the intensity of concentration and the cultivation of intuition and vision is found in the *Saṅgītisutta*: “Here, friends, concentrative meditation, when developed and made much of, conduces to obtaining intuition and vision.” This relationship between samādhi and ānāpānasati shows that the deep state of concentration developed through any subject of concentration is the predominant factor for the commencement of vipassanā. However, Dhammavisuddhikavi regards the mindfulness of breathing (ānāpānasati) as the effective subject for both samatha and vipassanā. Vajiraṅga agrees: “Unlike other subjects of meditation ānāpānasati comprises both the samādhi and vipassanā methods.” In addition, he regards the subject of impurities as a suitable object for both samatha and vipassanā. He employs the two subjects only leading to vipassanā because they appear in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*. If the descriptions of

---

393 Brahmavaṃso, *The Jhānas*, p 43
397 Ibid., p. 169.
398 M.I.56.
ānāpānasati\textsuperscript{399} and the impurities (asubha)\textsuperscript{400} are completely consistent with the same sequence of the contemplation of the body in the Satipaṭṭhānasutta, both subjects would easily lead to the development of samatha and vipassanā. There is, however, a notable difference between the descriptions of both subjects and the mode of practice of satipaṭṭhāna. This mode of practice occurs after each of the meditation exercises described in the discourse as forming a necessary background for meditation techniques as shown:

Thus he remains experiencing body in the body internally, or externally, or both internally and externally. He remains experiencing origination-factors in the body, or he remains experiencing dissolution-factors in the body, or he remains experiencing both origination- and dissolution-factors in the body.\textsuperscript{401}

The mode of practice indicates that the scope of satipaṭṭhāna practice includes the state of deep concentration, which has the ability to contemplate the nature of the arising and passing away of the body.

Therefore, rather than typical concentration, the ability for deep concentration is of central importance in the development of vipassanā. This demonstrates that the mode of practice which is consequential of deep concentration performs the process of vipassanā, while the meditative exercises related to the subjects of ānāpānasati and impurities (asubha) cultivate the process of samatha. It has been shown that the intense level of concentration is the true factor for the arising of vipassanā, but the type of subject of concentration is not.

This conclusion suggests that, firstly, the choice of the appropriate types of concentrative subjects is due to one’s temperament rather than to the limits of their concentrative effects. As a consequence, the concentrative experience

\textsuperscript{399} Vism.267 (tr. Ņāṇamoli p. 286).
\textsuperscript{400} Vism.178-179 (tr. Ņāṇamoli p. 185-186).
\textsuperscript{401}M.I.56: “ītī ajjhattaṁ vā kāye kāyānupassi viharati, bahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassi viharati, ajjhattabahiddhā vā kāye kāyānupassi viharati; samudayadhāmmanupassi vā kāyaṁśīṁ viharati, vayadhammanupassi vā kāyaṁśīṁ viharati, samudayavayadhammanupassi vā kāyaṁśīṁ viharati.”
according to personal types merges at the concentrative state of the acquired image and progresses through the development of mental image without being concerned with any physical subjects. Next, the subjects of the arūpa states are not acquired images, but very profound perceptions arising from the advancement of samatha until ascending beyond the fourth rūpajjhāna. Lastly, this section has argued that the commencement of vipassanā depends on a sufficiently profound level of concentration, cultivated through the process of samatha instead of through the particular type of concentrative subjects.

**Conclusion**

It has been argued in this chapter that samatha is related to one particular aspect of samādhi which is inner calmness. While some scholars distinguish it from mindfulness (sati), actually samatha is more closely associated with mindfulness because mindfulness is its prerequisite process and contributes to the attainment of the second and third jhānas. During the process of samatha, vipassanā, arising on the basis of samatha, has a crucial role to fulfil in the attainment of the profound state of supernatural knowledge and in Buddhist liberation. Both processes require antecedent practices that are: Buddhist moral habit (sīla), the three exercises- guarding the sense doors (indriyasamvara), moderation in eating (bhojane mattaññutā), and a habit of vigilance (jāgariyānuyoga)-, awareness (sampajañña) and mindfulness (sati), and dwelling in a secluded place (viveka). In this light, awareness (sampajañña) and mindfulness (sati) are not distinctly separate from samatha; rather these three qualities advance simultaneously, and are subsumed into one synthetic process. Consequently, samatha is developed through a relationship between two complementary subjects, the degree of concentration and the mental image, which correspond with one another at each level. Prior to the establishment of vipassanā, samatha needs to be cultivated through the conversion of the inward mental image into the set of advanced levels of absorption called jhānas, rather
than momentary concentration. The derivation of the term ‘jhāna’ implies the mental unification and purification that facilitate the development of full insight.

The arguments put forward in chapter two in regard to the rūpajhānas can be summarized as follows. Even though one-pointedness is absent from the description of the first jhāna in the sutta, a detailed examination of the first jhāna shows that it is implicit there. During the development of the first jhāna, the following are the proper meditative techniques for the elimination of the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa), rather than the five factors: 1) discernment of repulsiveness (asubhanimitta), 2) mind’s release through loving-kindness (mettācetovimutti), 3) effort (viriya), 4) tranquillity of mind (vūpasantacittā), and 5) right attitude of attention (yoniso manasikāra) that are the proper meditative techniques for the elimination of the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa). Consequently, mental one-pointedness (ekaggatā), through whatever meditative method it arises, is the predominant factor in overcoming all hindrances. Since samatha is a gradual and uninterrupted process, then the ascent from jhāna to jhāna is fulfilled through the fivefold mastery of the preceding state, but not through reflection on the imperfection of its predecessor. An analysis of the third jhāna reveals that happiness born from the stage of letting go in samatha is the essential effect of proper meditative practice and needs to be accumulated through a process entailing both samatha and vipassanā in order to attain nibbāna. An examination of the term ‘upekkhāsatipārisuddhi (have purity of mindfulness due to equanimity)’ that is an attribute of the fourth jhāna suggests that these two rather distinct qualities of samatha and satipaṭṭhāna are harmonized.
Four issues have been discussed in the section on the *arūpajjhāna*. The first issue is to render *arūpa* as non-*rūpa* instead of saying formless or immaterial. The second is to develop the first *arūpajjhāna* through the mastery of the fourth *rūpajjhāna* without the manipulating technique of contemplating the defective features of the fourth *rūpajjhāna*. The third is to imply the term ‘ākiñcaññāyatana’ to be the immensely subtle consciousness rather than nothingness. In fact, it seems to be ‘no-thing-ness’ because it neglects the discrimination between subject and object. The last issue is a presentation of the evidence for the essence of the four *arūpajjhānas* in the attainment of the Buddhist liberation.

A study of the subjects of concentration has demonstrated that the concentrative subjects are all equally effective in inducing a deeper level of concentration. Hence, the appropriate type of concentrative subject is selected according to one’s own temperament. Next, the subjects of the four *arūpa* states are the very subtle perceptions which issue from the fourth *jhāna*. Lastly, the predominant factor for the commencement of *vipassanā* is a sufficiently profound level of concentration which is cultivated through any type of concentrative subject. Therefore, the development of *samatha* facilitates the arising of *vipassanā* and increases its potential for realizing the ultimate goal. In this chapter, an analytical and psychological approach to *samatha* has been explored in accordance to meditative practice and a clarification of its characteristics and its development into the structure of the *jhānas*. To clarify the path of complete realization, an analysis of not only *samatha*—as has been accomplished in this chapter—but also of *vipassanā*, is necessary. This thesis will therefore focus on *vipassanā* in the next chapter.
Chapter 3  Vipassanā

Introduction

While some related aspects of vipassanā were introduced in the previous chapter, in regard to the role and significance of samatha, this chapter is devoted to a detailed examination of the second meditative practice, vipassanā. The aim of this examination is to clarify the term ‘vipassanā,’ its effects, and its relationship with the other mental qualities, especially samatha.

Before embarking on a closer investigation of the process of vipassanā, the first section will examine vipassanā through its etymological characteristics. The study of the etymology focuses on the different semantic interpretations of vipassanā and the etymological analysis of the two terms: ‘vi’ and ‘passanā.’ The next section explores the significance of vipassanā by presenting its benefits in regard to three aspects: 1) the jhānas, 2) the cultivation of fivefold supernatural power (abhiññā) and 3) the so-called two Buddhist meditation paths leading to deliverance: the vehicle of serenity (samathayāna) and the vehicle of insight (vipassanāyāna).

Next, an investigation of the role of samatha in the context of vipassanā meditation and a survey of the level of samatha needed for the initiation of vipassanā are performed. This investigation involves two issues; 1) whether samatha is required at the beginning, the middle or the final stage of the process of vipassanā, and 2) which specific level of samatha operates at that state. This chapter continues to examine the general contribution of samatha to the development of vipassanā by means of an evaluation of five central features of samatha: 1) unsettled state of concentration, 2) momentary concentration, 3) access concentration, 4) deep concentration on jhānas, and 5) the ‘beyond’ mode of the jhānas. The study of the commencement of vipassanā in relation to
the four noble truths refers to the instructions drawn out from the
Dhammacakkappavattanasutta (Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth) which
originates from the Buddha’s own experience and that he taught a method he
himself had just discovered and employed.

Then, this chapter will explore a product of samatha which must be developed
in order to realize the four noble truths, which comprises the five instrumental
factors of insight and that can be described as transcendental knowledge. These
five factors are: 1) vision (cakkhu), 2) intuition (ñāna), 3) wisdom (paññā), 4)
knowledge (vijjā) and 5) light (āloka). The analysis of vision (cakkhu) is based
on three aspects: the analytical and psychological approach to the term
‘cakkhu,’ its relationship with the process of samatha, and the proper type of
cakkhu for the arising of vipassanā. The term ‘ñāna’ will be examined in order
to determine its implication, and whether or not it obstructs vipassanā. Its two
aspects that relate to the vipassanā-ñāna and the fivefold supernatural
knowledge (abhīñā) will also be discussed. An analysis of wisdom (paññā)
will be performed by means of a phenomenological approach, together with an
evaluation of the appropriate type of wisdom for vipassanā and then in regard
to its relationship with samatha. Subsequently, the term ‘vijjā’ will be
examined in regard to four issues: 1) the verification of the Buddhist threefold
knowledge, 2) whether or not the jhānas are essential for the development of
vijjā, 3) whether or not the Buddha is omniscient, and 4) according to an
individual evaluation of each threefold vijjā. This work aims to explore some
ideas and perspectives relating to the last instrumental factor, āloka, in regard
to two topics: its contribution to the attainment of vipassanā and its
characteristics during the process of vipassanā.

Finally, this chapter attempts to determine the true obstruction of vipassanā and
then evaluates the three groups of mental factors: the ten imperfections of
vipassanā (vipassanūpakkilesa), the five hindrances, and the eleven defilements (upakkilesa). The last section is devoted to an examination of the main functions of vipassanā and an analysis of two of its central aspects, that is, of the mental illumination and of meditation on the three characteristics of the five aggregates.

The Main Characteristic of Vipassanā

Vipassanā is a perfect realization of objective psychological reality which leads to a process of continually reflecting on phenomena as they really are; based on the three characteristics: impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) and not-self (anattā). The correct understanding and practice of vipassanā aims to gain perfect understanding of the real nature of phenomena and thus the end of suffering. Schools of vipassanā meditation teach different methods. Accordingly, clarification of the main characteristic of vipassanā can lead to the correct meditative practice. Unlike most scholars’ interpretation of vipassanā as the process of perception, an etymological examination of the term vipassanā leads to the interpretation of its main characteristic as visual intuition. This examination will proceed to investigate the overview of scholars’ opinions, the root meaning of the terms ‘passanā’ and ‘vi,’ and the translation of vipassanā.

An investigation of Buddhist psychology shows that vipassanā is a process involving mental vision, not a perceptual process as identified by some scholars, such as Goenka and Janakabhivamsa. Regarding Buddhist

---

402 the ten imperfections of vipassanā are; illumination (obhāsa), intuition (ñāna), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), happiness (sukha), resolution (adhimokkha), exertion (paggāha), assurance (upāsāna), equanimity (upekkhā), and attachment (nikanti). (Visn.633 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 739))

403 the eleven defilements are; doubt (vicikicchā), lack of proper attention (amanasikāra), sloth and torpor (thinamiddha), consternation (chambhitatta), elation (uppila), distress (duṭṭhalla), too much energy (accāraddhāviriya), too feeble an energy (atilīnaviriya), perception of diversity (nānattasaññā), state of being too intent (rūpa-atininjjhāvittatta). (M.III.158-161.)

404 Vimalo, op. cit., p. 60.

405 Visual intuition refers to the ability of mind for perceiving the internal profound knowledge and vision.

406 S.N. Goenka, “Moral Conduct, Concentration, and Wisdom,” in An Introduction to the Buddha and His Teachings Entering the Stream, ed. Samuel and Sherab Bercholz (Boston USA: Shambhala Publications,
psychological approach, the knowledge penetrating through illusion and misconception mainly takes the form of profound visual images. In fact, visual intuition seems to be the representative sense of the Buddhist prominent symbol of unmediated access to the ultimate truth. A good representation of this spacious mental ‘seeing’ of reality as a whole, from the vantage point of ‘sighted’ people, can be found in the discourse entitled the Pāsarāsisutta where Brahma Sahampati says:

Like one, who stands on top of a rocky mountain, would see the people on all around. O Wise One, All-seeing Sage, the comparison is that; do ascend the palace of the dhamma. Let you, whose grief is removed, look down upon mankind sunken in grief, overcome by birth and old age.  

The profound extravisual discernment gained through meditative experiences is the most important means for the acquisition of ultimate knowledge. Likewise, Thrangu interprets vipassanā as looking at phenomena in an especially clear way with the eye of wisdom. He not only agrees that vipassanā is a process of excellent ‘visual’ perception, but further recommends the eye of wisdom as the proper experiential device for the profound consciousness of internal vision. Similarly, in a passage from the Dutiyanidānasutta, the profound consciousness of internal vision arises through the acquisition of wisdom (paññā). Alternatively, visual consciousness, which makes sense of objects through recognition of colour, shape, and size, arises because of physical eyes and material shapes. In this sense, the profound consciousness of internal vision, which fully discerns and penetrates dhamma, arises because of the eye of wisdom (paññā) and mental objects (dhamma). The visual consciousness performs the extent of sensual perception, while the profound consciousness of


\[\text{407 M.I.168: “Sele yathā pabbatamuddhani-ṭṭhito yathāpi passe janatāṁ samantato, tathāpamam dhammamayam sumedha pāsādam-ārāya samantacakkhu sokāvatinnaṁ janatāṁ-apetasoko avakkhassu jāti.jarābhībhūtaṁ.”}\\]


\[\text{409 A.I.265, “cetasā abhinivijjhitvā paññāya ativijjha passati (having dispelled by mind, he penetratively sees through wisdom.”}\\]
mental vision leads to the perfect comprehension and realization. Since *paññā* is a significant tool for internal vision, it is noteworthy that the deep concentrative states of the *jhānas* are of central importance for the development of *vipassanā*, as the Buddha says:

There is no *jhāna* for one who is without wisdom. There is no wisdom for one who does not attain *jhāna*.  

Further consideration of the modern English shows that vision is strongly associated with knowledge and intellect. The term ‘vision’ is always rendered as the synonymous term ‘knowing.’ For example: “I see what you mean,” or “I see your point of view.” It is apparent that this linkage of knowledge and vision, generally accepted by modern English speakers is also accepted for the interpretation of meditative experience.

Bucknell also justifies *vipassanā* contemplation as the process of ‘seeing’ the mind and its mental process. He then interprets this visual process as the moving of awareness with the flow of thought. This study agrees with him that *vipassanā* is the process of looking at the mind. Nonetheless, the theme that of “awareness of the flow of thought implies the process of seeing the mind” seems to contradict the theme of seeing with the eye of *paññā* (wisdom). Since *paññā* closely associates with the thoughtless states of *jhāna*, the awareness of the flow of thought appears unable to signify the characteristics of *vipassanā*, unless awareness has been cultivated into the profound state in accompaniment with the *jhānas*. Elsewhere, some scholars interpret *vipassanā* as the process of perceiving phenomena through any of the sense faculties; eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. For instance, Goenka states that *vipassanā* is the process of directing attention to one’s own physical sensations. Janakabhivamsa agrees with him by interpreting *vipassanā* as the observation of every bodily and

---

410 Dhp.372: “N’atthi jhānam apaññassa paññā n’atthi ajhāyato.”
411 Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
mental process starting with the notion of the sensual body through observation of the abdominal movements. Tatia supports this theme of vipassanā as the perception of altered states of body and mind. Nyanaponika also agrees with this theme, that the perception of one’s own bodily and mental processes is the prominent aspect of insight meditation (vipassanābhāvanā). He suggests that the meditative exercise of bare attention, which is the key to the perceptual process, refers to a clear perception through the six senses, without judgement or reflection. Without the limitation of contemplating one’s own body and mind, Anālayo points out the prominent aspect of vipassanā as contemplating all phenomena. He further describes how mindfulness (sati) performs in the process of vipassanā: “the task of sati is to penetrate beyond the surface appearance of the object under observation and to lay bare the characteristics it shares with all conditioned phenomena.” His idea seems to be that awareness through sensual perception is applied together with the conceptual process of the nature of reality, in vipassanā contemplation.

However, the interpretation of vipassanā can be found in the Theravāda Buddhist canon that inner vision, rather than sensual perception, plays the crucial role in Buddhist realization. For instance, the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta demonstrates the role of inner vision in support of the path of realization and states that the Buddha became an awakened person as a consequence of the development of purified (suvisuddhi) intuition (ñāṇa) and vision (dassana) of the four noble truths (ariyasacca).

As long as, monks, my intuition and vision as they really are, in these three aspects, in these twelve ways, regarding the four noble truths, was

---

413 Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa, op. cit., p. 23.
415 Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 59.
416 Ibid., p. 30.
417 Anālayo, op. cit., pp. 93-94.
418 The conceptual process of nature of reality is the contemplation on the natural concept of phenomena, which comprises the three characteristics: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.
not fully purified in this way. I did not claim to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment…

It can be concluded that the process of mental vision, in relating to deep concentration rather than to the process of sensual perception, is the main characteristic of vipassanā. Now this main characteristic is further clarified through the etymological analysis of the term ‘vipassanā’ itself.

The etymological determination of the root meaning of the term ‘passanā’ reveals that the main characteristic of vipassanā is the mental vision. Vipassanā is a term of Buddhist meditation synthesizing a prefix ‘vi (superior)’ and an action noun ‘passanā (seeing),’ which is derived from the verb ‘passati (one sees).’ While the term ‘passati’ represents ‘seeing’ or ‘vision,’ the prefix ‘vi’ is always interpreted as ‘two aspects,’ ‘diverse ways’ or ‘superior process.’ An examination of the term ‘passati (seeing),’ based on the Buddhist meditative experiences, provides the understanding of the characteristics of vipassanā. In fact, without inner visual awakening, direct extrasensory knowledge, such as the four noble truths, can cause mistaken views on aspects such as their characteristic or relationships between them, among meditators. This can be verified through the parable of the blind men, which the Buddha announces to illustrate the dangers of relying entirely on one’s own rational thought without mental vision. Here, a king had several blind men each come in contact with each part of an elephant. When the king asked about the nature of the elephant, each blind man provided an entirely different statement as the only right and true representation of an elephant. Although what each of the blind men recognized was experientially true, each direct acknowledgement without vision had made clear in some degree only. This parable goes to show that the direct

---

419 S.V.422-423: “Yāva kīvañca me bhikkhave imesu catusu ariyasaccesu evaṃ tiparivatāṃ dvādasākāraṃ yathābhūtaṃ niñnadassanam na suvisuddham aho… anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhim abhisambuddho ti paccaññāsi”

420 Ud.68-69.
recognition, without knowledge of inner vision, should not be realized as a necessary basis for the perfect knowledge.

The next evidence that vipassanā refers to is the process of inner vision as it appears in the Mahāassapurasutta which compares the process of perfect understanding with the comprehension of picturesque images:

This might occur to him: this lake of water is clear, limpid, and undisturbed. There are these oysters and shells, pebbles and gravel, and shoals of fish moving about and resting. Even so, Monks, a monk understands as they really are: This is suffering...: this is the path leading to the cessation of the cankers.\textsuperscript{421}

In this passage, we see that perfect realization can be known in mental pictorial form. Hence, through the root meaning of ‘passanā’ together with the interpretation of the Buddhist texts discussed above, vipassanā can be interpreted as the means of cultivation of visual intuition in order to realize the ultimate truth.

As well as the examination of the term ‘passanā,’ the clarification of the root meaning of the prefix ‘vi’ specifies the main characteristic of vipassanā as superior vision of mind. Indeed, the prefix ‘vi’ is generally interpreted as referring to the two aspects: diverse ways, or to the superior process. The first aspect is derived from the Pāli term ‘vividha’ meaning ‘divers’ or ‘manifold,’\textsuperscript{422} whereas the second is from the term ‘vīsesa’ meaning ‘excellence’ or ‘extraordinary.’\textsuperscript{423} It is useful to categorize expressions of the interpretation of vipassanā into two groups regarding the etymological approach to the term ‘vi.’ The first group implies that vipassanā is based on the consideration of the meaning of ‘vi’ as diverse ways (vividha). For example, the commentaries of the Dhammasaṅgaṅī clearly employ vividha to interpret vipassanā in relation to

\textsuperscript{421} M.I.279-280: “Tassa evam-assa: ayam kho udakarahado accho vippasanno anāvilo, tat’ime sippisambukā pi sakkharakatalā pi macchagumbā pi caranti pi ttihanti pit; evam-eva kho bhikkhave bhikkha: idam dukhan-ii yathabhūtām pajānti …ayam āsavarirodhagāminī paśipadā tī.”

\textsuperscript{422} T. W. Rhys Davids and William Stede, op. cit., p. 638.

\textsuperscript{423} Ibid., p. 641.
the three characteristics (impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self) as seeing in many ways.\textsuperscript{424} The meaning of ‘diverse ways’ leads to the conceptual contemplation of phenomena according to the doctrine of three characteristics: impermanence (\textit{anicca}), unsatisfactoriness (\textit{dukkha}) and not-self (\textit{anattā}). In addition, Vajirañāṇa renders \textit{vipassanā} as “to see in many ways” which means “to penetrate an object thoroughly.”\textsuperscript{425} This interpretation of \textit{vipassanā} is in accordance with Nārada: “\textit{vipassanā} literally means perceiving in diverse ways.”\textsuperscript{426} According to the interpretation of ‘\textit{vi}’ as ‘diverse ways,’ if the conceptual contemplation involves meditative practice, the process of \textit{vipassanā} would be an analytical process rather than a profound process of mental vision.

Having employed the term ‘\textit{vīsesa} (excellence)’ to represent the abbreviated term ‘\textit{vi},’ the second group of expressions confirms the interpretation of \textit{vipassanā} as the process of superior mental vision. For instance, in the \textit{Sandakasutta}, Ānanda’s statement that the meditative practice leads to the mental ability of internal vision can claim to promote the derivation of ‘\textit{vi}’ as referring to superior mental vision. He remarks that knowing (\textit{jānatā}), and seeing (\textit{passatā}), teachers are the omniscient (\textit{sabbaññū}) persons who possess superior internal vision and clearly know everything they want.\textsuperscript{427} His assertion suggests the meditative process of \textit{vipassanā} as the exercise of internal vision. This connotation of \textit{vipassanā} as visual intuition also appears in the \textit{Mahāpadānasutta}.\textsuperscript{428} In this discourse, the divine eye (\textit{dibbacakkhu}) manifested to the Prince Vipassī, allowed him to see for a league, all around, both day and night. When he was young and seated on his father’s lap, having used the ability of his divine eye, he drew a conclusion regarding a legal case. So Prince Vipassī was all the more appropriately called ‘vipassī (one who posses the
superior vision).’ We thus find an association between vipassanā and internal vision, since both can be developed through the ability of the divine eye. This association can be sustained through the scholars’ interpretation of the abbreviated term ‘vi’ as visesa. Thrangu uses the meaning of ‘special,’ ‘superior’ or ‘particular’ for the abbreviated term ‘vi.’429 In addition, Gunaratana states that the term ‘vi’ implies the meaning of ‘in a special way.’430 This study agrees with him in regard to the textual transformation of visesa, but disagrees in regard to his interpretation of visesa as ‘including clarity and precision.’ This is because this interpretation of visesa expresses a meaning of ‘careful supervision through the physical senses.’ Dhammavaro argues in a similar way to Thrangu, while saying: “vipassanā means seeing beyond what is ordinary, clear vision.”431 He further explains that vipassanā is not seeing mere appearance, but seeing things as they really are through the conscious awareness of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.

This makes it clear that the prefix ‘vi’ of vipassanā is the abbreviated term of visesa, which is thus rendered as ‘superior’ or ‘excellent,’ further denoting the visual sense of the subtle perception. The connotation of ‘vi’ as excellent or superior is particularly prominent in the process of visual intuition of vipassanā and contributes to inwardly seeing in many ways, i.e. according to the Buddhist metaphysic; impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) and not-self (anattā). In fact, vividha does not correspond to the main characteristic of vipassanā directly, but represents vipassanā in a secondary role. As a consequence, it does not refer to the object that makes it vipassanā meditation, but refers to the profound state of mind that attains the visual intuition of seeing the reality of phenomena in manifold ways.

429 Rinpoche Thrangu, op. cit., p. 12.
After briefly surveying some of its translations, the main characteristic of vipassanā can be conveniently illustrated. Translators have rendered the Pāli word *vipassanā* into English in various ways. Although the *PTS Pali-English Dictionary* gives several meanings; e.g. inward vision, insight, intuition and introspection, most scholars, such as Gunaratana, Vajirañāṇa, Nyanatiloka, use ‘insight.’ The general term ‘insight’ suggests that the meaning of intuitive meditation approaches the characteristics of vipassanā. Representing *vipassanā* in the Ākaṅkheyyasutta, Sister Upalavanna employs ‘wisdom,’ which corresponds closely to *vipassanā*, but that is used for the *Pāli* paññā. As the term ‘paññā’ is generally used to define *vipassanā*, they can be interpreted interchangeably. Woodward, while rendering paññā as insight, applies the other term ‘introspection’ for *vipassanā* which implies thoughtful observation. Horner’s vision refers to the perceptual experience of seeing. Gimello uses the word ‘discernment’ expressing an inappropriate sentiment toward the ability of intuitive vision. These translations of *vipassanā* are the features of the interpretation of *vipassanā* relating to their own peculiar understanding of different canonical parts. By adopting an etymological approach to *vipassanā*, it seems reasonable to define the word as *insight*, though this is perhaps limited in meaning. It is still virtually impossible to find an appropriate English term which captures the intrinsic value of *vipassanā*. For this reason, it is preferred to leave the *Pāli* *vipassanā* untranslated in an

---

434 Vajirañāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 22.
440 Except for author’s own translation of *Pāli* passages, the *Pāli vipassanā* is translated as insight.
attempt to remind the reader that it is a complex technical term without a precise English equivalent.

The above way of considering the main characteristic of *vipassanā* is related to the various interpretations of *vipassanā* and the implication of Buddhist canons in relation to meditative practice. Most scholars, of course, imply that *vipassanā* is a process of sensual perception. Despite this, considering the idea of some scholars and the traditional Buddhist texts, its interpretation as ‘visual intuition’ is more suitable. The main characteristic of *vipassanā* can be explored through investigating the definition of *vi* and *passanā*. Certainly *vi* is conspicuously signified as ‘excellent’ rather than as its aspect of ‘in diverse ways,’ whilst *passanā* always refers to ‘seeing.’ During the process of *vipassanā*, the path of perfect realization essentially connects with the visual activity of mind rather than with sensual perception. Therefore, the mental process of visual intuition plays an important part in the characteristics of *vipassanā*. In this section, the critique of the characteristics of *vipassanā* is none other than to verify the nature of *vipassanā* through its linguistic analysis combined with its various interpretations. Below, it will be presented how the successive development of *vipassanā* is advantageous for the understanding of the relation between the *vipassanā* process and the path of enlightenment.

**Benefits of Vipassanā**

The Buddha emphasizes that mental development makes a most important contribution to great benefit. Indeed, the Buddha’s clarification of the importance of the well-trained mind and the benefits of mental development in the process of *vipassanā* are differently presented. During *vipassanā* meditation, the mind is developed through the process of visual intuition in

---

441 See, for example, S.N. Goenka, op. cit., p. 114, Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa, op. cit., p. 23, Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 59.

442 A.I.5.
order to disperse ignorance and to penetrate and overcome the residual contaminants, such as conceit. These developed mental states, in fact, play a crucial role in attaining several advantages, including the ultimate truth that cannot be attained through simple vipassanā, since it requires the collaboration of samatha. This section discusses the three main benefits of vipassanā. Firstly, it will explore its advantage for the peaceful mental states of the jhānas. Secondly, it will examine how vipassanā relates to and benefits the fivefold supernatural knowledge. The third benefit of vipassanā is due to the examination of whether or not the path of enlightenment can be attained through the single process of vipassanā.

Although there is evidence that vipassanā can develop jhānas, some scholars deny this. The Samathasutta reveals that vipassanā possesses a chance of producing jhāna.

A monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom, but have not gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish insight into dhamma through higher wisdom and to the tranquillity of heart within oneself.444

The precise denotation of the relation between samatha and vipassanā can be found in this discourse, suggesting that both processes can promote each other. Some scholars agree. For instance, U Pandita proposes that vipassanā, practiced through characterizing nāma-rūpa (mentality and materiality) objects attributing impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self, leads to one kind of jhāna, vipassanājhāna. He totally distinguishes vipassanājhāna from the samathajhāna.

443 The fivefold supernatural knowledge comprises of supernormal power (iddhividha), divine ear-element (dibbasotadhātu), knowledge of the others’ minds (cetopariyañā), knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatiñā) and divine eye (dibbacakkhu).
444 A.V.99.
445 Sayadaw U Pandita, op. cit., p. 182.
446 Vipassanājhāna refers to the collaborative state between samatha and vipassanā.
...though samatha jhāna will bring concentration and peace of mind and serve as a precursor to higher spiritual power, it is a mundane achievement and is inferior, though it lends support to vipassanā jhāna. The jhāna sammādiṭṭhi, which arises in samatha jhāna, is unable to nāma-rūpa phenomena.\footnote{Ibid., p. 189.} Sujato also points out that the emotional qualities of jhāna such as rapture (pīti), serenity and bliss (sukha) occurring in the process of vipassanā, which are known as vipassanājhāna.\footnote{Bhikkhu Sujato, A Swift Pair of Messengers, op.cit., p. 20.} However, he equates it with the jhāna arising in the process of samatha. While answering Silva, Premaratne agrees with Sujato: “samatha and vipassanā are two different pathways leading to the same stage of concentration.”\footnote{Kumar de Silva and Bogoda Premaratne, Dialogues on Dhamma (Tharanga Dharshana Perera, 2004), p. 350.} Since the prominent aspect of each jhāna is their constituents rather than their causal meditative process, the jhāna states arising from vipassanā or samatha comprise the same constituents. The point here is that there is calm and integrated mind of the jhāna states to be gained when vipassanā is developed.

Nevertheless, after contradicting their correspondence, some scholars reject the benefit of vipassanā for the development of jhānas. As Sumedho puts it: “Thus samatha and vipassanā are the two divisions in meditation”\footnote{Venerable Ajahn Sumedho, The Four Noble Truths (Hertfordshire England: Amaravati Publications, 1992), p. 63.} Besides this, Griffiths states that the aims and results of vipassanā are radically opposed to those of samatha.\footnote{Paul Griffiths, “Concentration or Insight: The Problematic of Theravada Buddhist Meditation-Theory,” op. cit., p. 614.} Janakabhivamsa agrees with Sumedho and Griffiths: “Samatha meditation is different from vipassanā meditation in both the purpose and result.”\footnote{Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa, op. cit., p. 21.} He further says that the attainment of deep concentration, jhāna states, is the benefit of samatha exclusively. To set vipassanā apart from samatha, nonetheless, is problematic. According to the discourse entitled the

---

Yuganaddhasutta, samatha and vipassanā are bound in a pair, going together and occurring simultaneously.\textsuperscript{453} Indeed, Crangle argues for the synthesis of samatha and vipassanā.\textsuperscript{454} Consequently, the meditator can fulfil Buddhist deliverance from yoking samatha and vipassanā together so that they pull evenly. In addition, Brahmavamso repeats the statement of Ajahn Chah, the great modern meditator, for supporting the collaboration between samatha and vipassanā by comparing them to the two faces of a coin.\textsuperscript{455} In sum, then, both samatha and vipassanā should be developed in skilful cooperation. Moreover, Ānāsampanno states that the presence of wisdom facilitates deeper levels of concentration.\textsuperscript{456} So, there are grounds to demonstrate that the visual intuitive process of vipassanā is beneficial for the development of altered states of mind, which lead to the deep concentration structure, namely the jhānas.

In addition to the jhānas, this section argues that vipassanā is beneficial for the cultivation of the fivefold supernatural knowledge (abhiññā), whereas most scholars classify the fivefold abhiññā into the mode of samatha alone. References to the canonical texts of the Sutta Piṭaka throw some interesting light on the reconciliation between vipassanā and the fivefold abhiññā. The first reference in the discourse entitled the Mahāsaḷāyatanikasutta exhibits their harmony: “Tranquillity and insight - these are the things that should be developed by supernatural knowledge.”\textsuperscript{457} The second reference is portrayed in the Sāmaññaphalasutta in which the eightfold knowledge (vijjā) is listed; the knowledge arising through insight (vipassanāñāṇa), the psychic power of the mind (manomayiddhi), the supernormal power (iddhividha), the divine eye (dibbacakkhu), the divine ear-element (dibbasotadhātu), the knowledge of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{453} A.II.157.
\item \textsuperscript{454} Edward Fitzpatrick Crangle, op. cit., p. 250.
\item \textsuperscript{455} Venerable Ajahn Brahmavamso, "Satipatthana the Fourfold Focus of Mindfulness," Buddhist Society of Western Australia, Newsletter, July-October 1997.
\item \textsuperscript{457} M.III.289: “samatho ca vipassanā ca, ime dharmā abhiññā bhāvetabbā.”
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
others’ minds (cetopariyañāna), the knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatiñāna), and the knowledge of destruction of cankers (āsavakkhayañāna). The following passage referring to vipassanānāna shows that samatha is the necessary prelude to a mental vision exercise of vipassanā.

When his mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from imperfection, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he applies and bends down his mind towards intuition and vision.

Still in the context of the Sāmaññaphalasutta, the Buddha specifies the fivefold abhiññā as being arisen in the consequence of vipassanānāna (knowledge arising through insight).

The ascent from vipassanānāna to the fivefold abhiññā signifies that the development of fivefold abhiññā is one of the advantages of vipassanā. Modern scholars, in contrast, have tended to state that the fivefold abhiññā must be undertaken through the foundation of the fourth jhāna. For example, Gunaratana proposes the four rūpajjhānas and four arūpajjhānas instead of vipassanā as the prerequisites of the fivefold abhiññā. Similarly, Nāgasena denies any relationship between vipassanā and the fivefold abhiññā. Goleman not only declares the fivefold abhiññā to be the consequent mental states of samatha, but he further disregards the fivefold abhiññā as the impediment of vipassanā. We can see that most scholars argue for the irreconcilability between vipassanā and the fivefold abhiññā. Nonetheless, this theme of meditative phenomena is incompatible with the Buddha’s teaching in

---

458 The eightfold knowledge is the profound spiritual powers arising from psychic insight. For example, the divine eye is the ability to perceive objects at remote distances or to see beings passing away and being reborn again. The divine ear is the ability to hear the sounds of deities, and to hear sounds that are far off.

459 D.I.76: “So eva samāhite citte parisuddhe partiyodāte anaṅgane vigatūpakilese mudubhūte kammaniye thīte āneñjappatte hānadassanāya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti.”

460 D.I.76-83.


463 Daniel Goleman, op. cit., p. 332.
In this discourse, the Buddha suggests that Bhikkhu Vacchagotta cultivates both samatha and vipassanā for the fulfilment of the fivefold abhiññā. Likewise, Buddhaghosa regards vipassanā as reinforcing the process of the fivefold abhiññā: “And if he has had no practice in insight (vipassanā), his direct-knowledge (abhiññā) is sluggish. If he has, it is swift.” As a consequence, the process of vipassanā is the essential meditative approach to the arising of the fivefold abhiññā. Regarding this implication of the canonical texts and commentaries, it is reasonable to conclude that vipassanā is advantageous for the development of the fivefold abhiññā.

The third benefit of vipassanā is that it contributes to the perfect outcome of Buddhist meditation through the vehicle of serenity (samathayāna), which involves the collaboration between vipassanā and samatha. A support of this collaboration comes from the strong tension between paññā and the jhānas in the Dhammapada:

There is no jhāna for one who is without wisdom. There is no wisdom for one who does not attain jhāna. He, in whom there are jhāna and wisdom, is indeed close to nibbāna.

It appears that samathayāna is appropriate to practice for attainment of the ultimate goal. Moreover, the Pāli literature on the discourses of the Buddha shows the indispensable role of the jhānas. For instance, the Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta points to the four jhānas as the definition of the perfect concentration (sammāsamādhi) in the noble eightfold path. Some scholars agree that nibbāna is achieved through the joint operation of vipassanā and samatha, rather than only through vipassanā in case of the vehicle of insight (vipassanāyāna). One such scholar is Jhanananda: “It is clear to me that the

---

464 M.I.494-496.
465 Vism.87 (tr. Ānāgamoli p. 88).
466 Dhp.372: “N’atthi jhāna/FL143h apaññassa paññā n’atthi ajhāyato, yamhi jhānañca paññā ca sa ve nibbānasantiye.”
467 D.II.313.
Buddha taught neither absorption nor insight as distinct practice paths.\textsuperscript{468} Furthermore, Sujato proposes that \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} are seen as a complementary pair from the preliminary mental training to the end of liberation.\textsuperscript{469} It is evident that the meditator must develop the collaboration between \textit{vipassanā} and \textit{samatha}, to arrive at the supramundane path (\textit{lokuttaramagga}).

While this evidence suggests that \textit{vipassanā} is beneficial to enlightenment only through the \textit{samathayāna}, other scholars believe that the pure \textit{vipassanā} can lead to supramundane path. Most scholars speak of the meditator who follows the vehicle of insight (\textit{vipassanāyāna}), namely, \textit{vipassanāyānīka} or \textit{sukkhavipassaka} (a dry insight worker),\textsuperscript{470} and thus does not need to attain any \textit{jhānas} prior to practicing \textit{vipassanā}. For example, Vajiraṇāṇa disregards \textit{samatha}: “The process of \textit{samatha}, therefore, seems to be optional,” and then says that \textit{vipassanā} is the significant practice for the attainment of \textit{nibbāna}.\textsuperscript{471} His disregarding of \textit{samatha} can be questioned. Gunaratana also endorses the meditative path of \textit{sukkhavipassaka}: “The \textit{vipassanāyānīka}, in contrast, skips over mundane \textit{jhāna} and goes directly into insight-contemplation.”\textsuperscript{472} Solé-Leris agrees with the viewpoint of \textit{sukkhavipassaka}: “…certain meditators soon started practicing pure insight (\textit{sukkhavipassanā}), i.e. pursuing the development of insight without the parallel development of the advanced stages of tranquillity.”\textsuperscript{473} It is contended that the meditator should skip over \textit{samatha} and direct to \textit{vipassanā}.


\textsuperscript{469} Bhikkhu Sujato, \textit{A Swift Pair of Messengers}, op. cit., p. 27.

\textsuperscript{470} Vajiraṇāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 141.

\textsuperscript{471} ibid., p. 343.

\textsuperscript{472} Henepola Gunaratana, \textit{A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation}, op. cit., p. 169.

\textsuperscript{473} Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 24.
On the contrary, *vipassanā* alone cannot lead to Buddhist ultimate goal, because the canonical texts never distinguish the themes of meditation into either *samatha* or *vipassanā*. Kheminda does not accept the practice of pure insight and points to the attainment of eight *jhānas* as the prerequisite of *vipassanā* practice. His viewpoint relies on the *Sumaṅgalavilasini*, which interprets the purification of mind as the attainment of eight *jhānas*. Consequently, there is the substantial relationship between the purified mind resulting from the *jhāna* attainments and the superior mental vision of *vipassanā*. Both *samatha* and *vipassanā* need to be developed to support perfect view for final liberation.

Friend, if perfect view is assisted by five factors there comes to be the fruit of freedom of mind, freedom of mind for its fruit and advantage, the fruit of freedom through wisdom, freedom through wisdom for its fruit and advantage. Here, friend, perfect view is assisted by virtue, and it is assisted by hearing, and it is assisted by discussion, and it is assisted by tranquillity and it is assisted by insight.

Here we see the full impact not only of *vipassanā* but also of *samatha* on the meditative goal. Therefore, all accounts which are critical of the meditative path of *sukkhavipassaka* suggest that *vipassanā* is beneficial to Buddhist liberation since it requires the collaboration of other meditative processes especially *samatha*.

From the discussion above, we can see the three main benefits of *vipassanā* as evident in the Buddhist scriptures and modern research. Indeed, according to the interpretation of most scholars, *vipassanā* is distinguished from the

---

476 Sv.III.1062, “Cittavisuddhī vipassanāya padaṭṭhānabhūtā aṭṭha paguṇasamāpattiyo.”
477 M.I.294: “Puñcahi kho āvuso anissai anugghahita sammaditthi cetovimuttiphalā ca hoti cetovimuttiphalāṁsāsa ca pāññāvimitthiphalā ca hoti pāññavimitthiphalāṁsāsa ca: Idh’ āvuso sammaditthi sīlānugghahita ca hoti sūkṣmapuggahita ca hoti sākacchānuggahitā ca hoti samathānuggahitā ca hoti vipassanānuggahitā ca hoti.”
development of the jhānas. Despite this interpretation, a closer analysis reveals that the first benefit of vipassanā is the ability for developing the profound states of samatha practice, the jhānas. Whereas the fivefold abhiññā is a product of samatha, the arising of their profound states is closely related to vipassanā. Accordingly, the second benefit of vipassanā is the development of these abhiññās. Since early Theravāda Buddhist texts do not point to the meditator who practices pure vipassanā for the fulfilment of the path of enlightenment, the third benefit of vipassanā is that it, in collaboration with samatha, conduces to the Buddhist ultimate goal. Although many scholars do not share this view of the crucial role of vipassanā in attaining these benefits, the above investigation substantiates the role of vipassanā in achieving these benefits. After the determination of its advantages, the next section discusses the issue of how vipassanā begins.

**The Commencement of Vipassanā**

The discussion in the previous chapter clarifies that the meditator can begin the process of samatha through the development of the concentrative levels or the progression of the mental images, and that vipassanā requires samatha for the attainment of enlightenment. At this point, it is important to further clarify two issues; 1) whether samatha is required at the beginning or the middle or the final state of the process of vipassanā, and 2) which certain level of samatha operates at that state. This chapter continues the examination of the relationship between samatha and vipassanā and argues that the development of samatha into the very profound consciousness of the fourth arūpajjhāna and beyond is required for the commencement of vipassanā. The section will survey this examination through the discrepancies between the viewpoints of several scholars in the issues of whether or not samatha is essential and which level of samatha is necessary for the commencement of vipassanā.
The two main branches of Buddhist meditation techniques, samatha and vipassanā, are essential for mental purification. The previous chapter examined the gradual conversion of consciousness advancing along the mode of samatha. To clarify the enlightenment path, this chapter will investigate vipassanā in comparison with the process of samatha. This investigation continues with the inquiry of how samatha is essential for the initiation of vipassanā. This inquiry relates to the two viewpoints of many scholars, such as U Ba Khin and Gimello: 1) the essence of samatha, or 2) its non-essence, for the commencement of vipassanā.

The concerns of this discussion are to strengthen some scholars’ viewpoint that samatha is significant at the beginning state of vipassanā. Among these scholars, U Ba Khin states that the practice of vipassanā can begin only after the development of concentration to a proper level.\textsuperscript{478} He explains simply that excellent concentration leads to the excellent awareness of anicca (impermanence).\textsuperscript{479} Similarly, Gimello characterizes the beginning of the reviewing process of vipassanā as the adequate stillness of mind.\textsuperscript{480} Story echoes Gimello’s opinion: “When concentration has been attained and is fully under the control of the meditator, it becomes possible to advance to the next exercise, that of vipassanā.”\textsuperscript{481} Piyadassi not only agrees with them, but further includes moral habit (sīla): “So the meditator training himself in virtue and concentration, develops vipassanā.” The development of concentration is never

\textsuperscript{479} Ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{480} Robert M Gimello, op. cit., p. 181.
an end in itself, he claims, because it is only a means to a more sublime process, *vipassanā*.\(^{482}\)

This view is justifiable because the process of mental vision of *vipassanā* needs the clear consciousness and mindfulness arising from the process of *samatha*. Additionally, concentration seems to be employed instrumentality to improve the mind. Kamalashila clarifies the objective of concentration as the elimination of dullness and excitement for the development of *vipassanā*:

> Therefore, to actualize that special insight realizing ultimate reality, you must first become proficient in calm abiding meditation. Since this single-pointed concentration is a positive thought, subtle mental dullness and excitement must be abandoned.\(^{483}\)

Goenka confirms this tension between *vipassanā* and *samatha* by the simile which compares *vipassanā* to an activity of seeing into a deep pool and *samatha* to undisturbed and clean water. Since it is impossible to see into the depths of a pool when the water is turbulent and contaminated, then it is inconceivable to gain insight into the depths of our reality with agitated mind.\(^{484}\) As the Buddha says:

> Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are.\(^{485}\)

It can thus be shown that the role of *samatha* in bringing about mental unification and purification is the condition required for starting *vipassanā* practice.

On the basis of a detailed examination of the psychological relationship between *samatha* and *vipassanā*, it should be argued that many scholars’ idea of marginalizing *samatha* in the initiation of *vipassanā* has far reaching and


\(^{484}\) S.N. Goenka, op. cit., p. 98.

\(^{485}\) S.III.13: “*samādhiṃ bhikkhave bhāvetha samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yaṭṭhābhātām pajānāti.*”
controversial implications. First of all, it is useful to categorize those scholars who have written on the independency of samatha and the beginning of vipassanā into three groups. This categorization relies on their interpretation of how samatha and vipassanā interact: independently, supportively or counteractively. The first group of scholars attempts to distinguish clearly between samatha and vipassanā in relation to the Buddhist soteriology and Buddhist philosophical theory. For instance, Griffiths speaks of the independency of these two meditative techniques as a result of their different soteriological methods and goals. On the one hand, he says about vipassanā: “Those who follow and advocate the analytical techniques tend to perceive the basic human problem as one of ignorance, an inaccurate understanding of the way things are.”486 His idea is acceptable that, if the problem is ignorance, the solution must be knowledge. On the other hand, this is what he says about samatha: “the practitioners of the enstatic techniques aimed at tranquillity tend to perceive basic human error as one of attitude rather than cognition; the key Buddhist term here is ‘thirst’ (taṇhā), a term that denotes all types of passionate desire and attachment.”487 This idea is also reasonable in that, if the attitude arising from thirst causes suffering, then we must tranquilize our thirst with mental stillness.

Although Griffiths suggests an inconsistency between the process of samatha and vipassanā, close investigation confirms a relation between them. In the Brāhmaṇasutta, the goal of getting rid of ignorance appears to be relevant to samatha.

Perfect concentration, Ānanda, when developed and made much of, has as its final goal the removal of desire, the removal of anger, and the removal of delusion.488

487 Ibid.
488 S.V.5-6: “Sammāsamādhi Ānando bhāvito bahulikato rāgavinayapariyosāno hoti dosa... mohavinayapariyosāno hoti.”
Apart from the destruction of ignorance, the role of understanding the way things are appears to involve the process of samatha: “Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are.” It is found that, the meditator needs to cultivate both samatha and vipassanā in order to disperse ignorance.

Among the second group of scholars, Sujato specifically addresses the consistency between samatha and vipassanā. As he says: “samatha is like the left foot, vipassanā like the right foot - one can only move one foot forward by leaning on the other.” He, while seeking to portray samatha and vipassanā as requiring each other’s support, further describes them as a pair of meditative processes which can be developed from the beginning independently. As he claims: “Thus samatha and vipassanā function as a pair, not only in the preliminary training, but also right up to the ultimate liberation.” This statement signifies that the meditator can begin vipassanā without any basis of samatha. Magness echoes this sentiment: “Samatha and vipassanā, although they may be practiced in isolation, do not prosper without each other’s support.” Likewise, Dhammavuddho, while speaking of the cooperation between samatha and vipassanā for the final liberation, proposes their individual commencement: “Both samatha and vipassanā are needed for final liberation. But the order of practice is not important. One can either practise samatha first or vipassanā first.” However, if samatha and vipassanā perform like walking with both feet, it should be born in mind that while standing on the other foot, one foot has to step first. It would seem that the first step should be samatha in order to develop the mental function of visual intuition up to the appropriate state for commencing the process of vipassanā.

---

489 S.III.13.
490 Bhikkhu Sujato, A Swift Pair of Messengers, op. cit., p. 28.
491 Ibid., p. 27.
493 Ven. Dhammavuddho Thero, op. cit., p. 76.
The third group of scholars interprets both meditative processes as the counterbalancing application. Ruegg, one of them, concerns samatha and vipassanā as complementing functions:

If samatha is in excess, the mind of the meditator will be blunted and dull and paññā will then have to be especially cultivated. But if paññā is in excess, his mind will be agitated and samatha will then have to be cultivated in particular.\(^494\)

Whereas samatha and paññā are opposite characteristics, Ruegg finds the yoking practice of samatha and vipassanā to be in balance. As he proposes: “when samatha and vipassanā are on the contrary in balance, the mind is in equilibrium.”\(^495\) His treatment of the imperfection of excessive samatha and paññā appears to be questionable according to the perspective found in Pāli canonical texts.\(^496\) An examination of the Gaṅgāpeyyālavagga recommends the development of samādhi and paññā into the unlimited degree for the nullification of all cankers (āsavas).\(^497\)

In considering that the counterbalancing functions of samādhi and paññā may possess the opposite characteristics, they then should be cultivated together in balance. However, the Samādhibhāvanāsutta supports the development of a particular type of samādhi to an unlimited degree to achieve the neutralization of cankers (āsavas): “There is, Monks, concentrative meditation, when developed and made much of, conduces to the destruction of the cankers.”\(^498\) Ruegg has created the philosophical problems of implicating both samādhi and paññā as opposite processes. According to the perspective found in Pāli canonical texts, his statement that “if paññā is in excess, his mind will be


\(^{495}\) Ibid.

\(^{496}\) It may be that Ruegg’s statement is based on non-Pāli sources.

\(^{497}\) S.V.249.

\(^{498}\) A.II.44: “atthi bhikkhave samādhibhāvanā bhāvitā bahuliṅkatā āsavānaṃ khayāya samvattati.”
agitated” expresses the contrary attributes of samādhi and paññā. In agreement with Ruegg’s viewpoint, Keown states:

...central to samatha practice are the jhānas and immersion in the jhānas leads directly to the elimination of discursive thought. In this the technique contrasts sharply with vipassanā where discriminating awareness is a sine qua non for propositional knowledge of the paññā kind.⁴⁹⁹

Their opinion regarding irreconcilability between samādhi and paññā proposes a contradiction with the Pāli canonical texts. For example, the Dhammapada clearly states the need for collaboration between paññā and jhāna: “There is no jhāna for one who is without wisdom. There is no wisdom for one who does not attain jhāna.”⁵⁰⁰ Ruegg’s term ‘excessive paññā’ does not appear to make sense. Perhaps he is interpreting paññā as intellectual, discursive or analytical knowledge. If the light of paññā is developed then the darkness of ignorance is abandoned comparatively. It is generally accepted that paññā possesses a superior power essentially directed towards freedom from the circle of existence (saṃsāra) without any negative feature.⁵⁰¹ Thus, samādhi and paññā, performing reconcilable processes, have to be developed and made much of according to the fact that the former is the basis of the latter.

Now we have come so far with the three groups of scholars who speak of the development of vipassanā directly without the basis of concentration. Even if these scholars’ interpretation of the interaction between samatha and vipassanā can be categorized into independent, supportive or counteractive processes, this section has argued for the requirement of samatha in order to begin the process of vipassanā. As shown in the description of the exercise of vipassanāñāṇa (knowledge arising through insight), the Buddha suggests the preliminary exercise of samatha before this exercise: “when his heart was thus

⁴⁹⁹ Damien Keown, op. cit., p. 77.
⁵⁰⁰ Dhp.372.
⁵⁰¹ Jayantha Ruberu, op. cit., p. 254.
concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from imperfection, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability.”

It can be concluded that vipassanā and samatha are developed with each other’s support on the condition that the commencement of vipassanā needs the basis of samatha to initiate the process of profound mental vision.

We can infer from the discussion above that, even though there are two groups of scholars writing on the inquiry “Is samatha necessary to initiate vipassanā?,” the theme that samatha is justifiable appears to be more reasonable. For the process of special mental vision to come about, the meditator must first become proficient in samatha in order to abandon subtle dullness and excitement. Therefore, the interpretation of the relationship between samatha and vipassanā as opposite or autonomous characteristics is unjustified. Although both samatha and vipassanā contribute to the progression of each other, the former needs to be primarily cultivated in order to induce the visual intuition of mind into the appropriate state for commencing the latter.

The Necessary Level of Samatha

The discussion on the essence of samatha notes that the process of vipassanā cannot be carried on by those whose minds and bodies are constantly set upon by agitation from within and distraction from without. For this reason, it is important to investigate which level of samatha is exactly needed for the beginning of vipassanā. In order to help the development of vipassanā, a specific level of samatha is required and this is fostered through momentary and access concentration until the beyond mode of jhānas is reached. This necessary level of samatha will be explored through the examination of the relationship between vipassanā and the five features of samatha; unsettled state

---

502 D.I.76.
of concentration, momentary concentration, access concentration, deep concentration of jhāna and the ‘beyond’ mode of jhānas.

Now this will focus on the question of why is it necessary to identify a specific level of samatha at which it supports the initiation of vipassanā. Some scholars, attempting to propose the significance of samatha for vipassanā exercise, do not specify the minimum level of concentration for starting vipassanā. For instance, Ranasinghe points out the essence of samatha, not its specific level, for the development of vipassanā: “It is when the mind is so settled and pacified that the more significant and far more important vipassanā meditation can be effectively attempted.”

That the minimum level of samatha is changeable may depend on individual personality. Thus Gimello states: “the ideal is a combination of the two members, a judicious balance of quiescence and insight. The exact proportion depends largely on the temperament or aptitude of the individual meditator.” If samatha and vipassanā perform as parts of a yoking process with opposite characteristics, personal temperament should be concerned with determining the ideal proportion between them.

But, in fact, both of them promote each other and vipassanā requires the mental visual ability arising from the minimum requirement of samatha. For this arising of mental vision, Buddhadāsa refers to various states of concentration: “Each of the various states of concentration is a basis for insight (vipassanā), that is, seeing impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-selfhood.” His idea that vipassanā can be based on any level of concentration seems to equate vipassanā with mental noting, or, conceptual thought, without any ability of

---

505 Bhikkhu Buddhadāsa, op. cit., pp. 79-80.
506 Conceptual thought is thinking of any phenomena, the thinking having the three characteristics. That is, that the object thought about is impermanent, that the object can not therefore completely satisfy, and that the object thought about has no inherent existence.
profound mental vision. However, from the etymological analysis of the term ‘vipassanā,’ it is clear that it implies more. It is the state of profound mental vision, beyond just mental noting, or conceptual thinking. The initiation of mental vision corresponds with a certain level of samatha. This argument is recorded in the Vimuttimagga, where Upatissa points out the concentrative level of the fourth jhāna as the basis for the development of the mental vision of divine eye (dibbacakkhu).⁵⁰⁷ This theme coincides with the Bhayabheravasutta.⁵⁰⁸ Therefore, rather than uncertain intensity, a definite degree of samatha initiates and sustains the process of visual intuition of vipassanā.

A samatha level of momentary concentration can fulfil the process of changing attention through the physical senses, but not the vipassanā process of mental vision. Momentary concentration does not refer to a single moment of concentration. Rather, it denotes the dynamic concentration which flows from object to object of phenomena, while retaining a sufficient level of samatha for mental purification. In fact, many scholars state that the momentary concentration is necessary for the commencement of vipassanā. For instance, Payutto refers to the concentrative basis of vipassanā as vipassanāsambhāri, which is the very first level of concentration. He compares this vipassanāsambhāri with the concentrative level between khanikasamādhi (momentary concentration) and upacārasamādhi (access concentration).⁵⁰⁹ This concentrative level is not specified directly as momentary concentration but is very close to it. In addition, U Pandita refers to the appropriate concentrative level for vipassanā as vipassanājhāna which he compares with momentary concentration. As the mind should move from one sense object to another that arises during the vipassanā process, then U Pandita employs the term

⁵⁰⁷ Upatissa, op. cit., p. 244.
⁵⁰⁸ M.I.22-23.
‘momentary concentration’ for *vipassanājāhana*.

Many scholars, such as Ussivakul, Thirasacco, and Bhikkhu Bodhi, consider the idea that the momentary concentration is the prior condition to the development of *vipassanā*. It is found that the theme of momentary concentration relies on the interpretation of *vipassanā* as the process of changing attention through the fivefold physical senses: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. According to these scholars’ interpretation of *vipassanā*, the main characteristic of *vipassanā* should comprise the process of changing attention rather than a particular state of mental vision.

This process of changing attention influences the mind to move from object to object, which is just the untrained mind. Of course, this process is in direct conflict with the abilities of knowing and seeing in the process of *vipassanā* as it influences the mind to move from object to object, as an untrained mind would. In the *Chappāṇakopamasutta*, the Buddha uses the parable of a hunter who catches six animals: a snake, crocodile, bird, dog, jackal and monkey, to illustrate how to train the mind. The hunter ties each to a rope and then ties the six ropes together before releasing them. Those animals, of course, would pull toward their home grounds in six different directions. This is similar to the six different sense objects pulling the untrained mind. However, if the end of each rope was tied to a solid pole, then these animals could only wander around the post until they became exhausted. Subsequently, they would remain near the post. Similarly, if the meditator practises concentrating on only one object; the trained mind will not be distracted because of the sense objects. This parable shows that the trained mind is the result of tying it to one subject of concentration so that one-pointedness of mind occurs.

---


Bhikkhu Bodhi, op. cit., p. 51.

S.IV.200.
Even though the restraining of mind on a single object encourages the internal vision process of *vipassanā*, one might assert that its absorbed state disagrees with the secular world process of paying attention to sensory data. The secluded mind seems to involve a complete withdrawal from the daily life of activity. This work proposes that the more the mind is concentrated; the more the sensory data are recognized. Indeed the simile of the spider illustrates the collaboration between the focused mind and sense perception. The spider hunts by remaining at the centre of its web and waiting for insects to become entangled. Remaining motionless at the centre is the best location for anticipating the movements of its prey. If the spider wanders around, it cannot successfully monitor the movements of the insect. In this simile, the spider corresponds to the mind, and its observation of the movements of the insect signifies the perception of the different sense objects. Therefore, the tranquilized mind is the best state in which to recognize the sense objects and for reinforcing the perception of sensory data. Turning to its benefit for meditation, when the Buddha suggests the particular cultivation of concentration as leading to intuition and vision (*ñāṇadassana*), he employs the term ‘*bahulīkatā*’ which means ‘made much of,’ not just superficial concentration as momentary concentration.\(^5\) Besides this, the *Dussīlasutta* recommends the concentrative development into the state of perfect concentration, which consists of the four *jhāna* s, as a significant factor for ‘intuition and vision of things as they really are (*yathābhūtañāṇadassana*).’

When there is no perfect concentration, then the cause for intuition and vision of things as they really are is destroyed for one who lacks perfect concentration.\(^6\)

That the sufficing condition of *yathābhūtañāṇadassana* is the profound unified and firm mental states of the four *jhānas*, rather than changing attention. Therefore, momentary concentration, moving attention from the sense object to

\(^5\) D.III.222.

\(^6\) A.III.19: “*sammāsamādhiphi asati sammāsamādhivipannassa hatūpanisaṃ hoti yathābhūtañāṇadassanam.*”
another object, can be deemed inappropriate to the developing the mind and to inducing the process of vipassanā.

The progression of samatha into the unreliable state of access concentration is still insufficient to encourage the process of vipassanā. Indeed, access concentration is the concentrative state at the intermediate stage between normal consciousness and full concentration, and is sufficient to suppress the hindrances. Mererk disregards the full concentration of the jhānas as the mental states beyond fivefold sense-activity, lacking reflection upon the five physical senses. Then he proposes access concentration as suitable for facilitating the arising of vipassanā.517 U Ba Khin echoes this idea: “When the student has reached a certain level of samādhi, preferably upacārasamādhi, the course of training is changed to vipassanā or insight.”518 Nyanaponika also prefers access concentration since it possesses the full strength of thought-conception and discursive thinking in collaboration with mental concentration.519 The concept of access concentration (upacārasamādhi) is presented in both the Abhidhamma and in the Buddhist commentaries; however, it can be suggested it is most probably not part of the Buddha's original discourses.520 In addition, Buddhaghosa compares the unreliability of access concentration as the young child who tries to stand but repeatedly falls down on the ground.521

This unstable state of access concentration seems to be unable to support the persistent mental vision of vipassanā. Moreover, the selection of the undependable state of the momentary or access concentration for initiating vipassanā relates to the interpretation of vipassanā as the perceptual process

517 Phramaha Prayoon Mererk, op. cit., p. 124.
519 Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 103.
521 Vism.126 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 131).
through observation of five senses and the analytical process of the three characteristics: impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and not-self (*anattā*). If *vipassanā* is this fivefold perceptual process, to confine concentration to momentary or access concentration is appropriate. But *vipassanā* is the mental process of superior vision, which requires a very profound state of concentration. As the Buddha says:

Four concentrative meditations. This concentrative meditation, friend, when developed and made much of, conduces to 1) happiness here and now; ...2) gaining intuition and vision; ...3) mindfulness and well-awareness; ...4) the destruction of the cankers. 522

This discourse shows that intuition and vision (*ñāṇadassana*) is based on the progression of mental development into the profound attainment of concentration, namely, the *jhānas*. Moreover, the Buddha regards the exclusive concentrative levels of the four *jhānas* as perfect concentration (*sammaśamādhi*). 523 Therefore, the canonical *sutta* texts clearly give considerable importance to *jhānas*. Further evidence in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* explains that the transcendental path must be of at least the degree of the first *jhāna*. 524 Kheminda agrees:

...the development of insight requires previous development of the eight attainments with first *jhāna* as a minimum. Without even this minimal requirement satisfied, purification of mind is not fulfilled and no true insight is possible. 525

This makes it clear that the meditator requires the level of *samatha*, ascending beyond access concentration into the mode of *jhāna*, in order to begin *vipassanā*.

522 D.III.222: “Catasso samādhi-bhāvanā. Atth’āvuso samādhi-bhāvanā bhāvitā bahulī-katā diṭṭhadhamma-sukhavihārāya samvattati. ...ñāṇa-dassana-paṭilābhāya samvattati. ...sati-sampajānīya samvattati. ...āsavāna/FL143h khayāya samvattati.”
523 D.II.313.
524 Dhs.60.
The evaluation of the relation between *vipassanā* and *jhāna* suggests that the profound states of the *jhānas* are inappropriate to stimulate the process of *vipassanā*. Many scholars investigate the connection between both terms in various ways. For example, Jhanananda treats *jhāna* as an equivalent meditation state to *vipassanā*. He claims both meditation exercises to be different aspects of the same meditative process.\(^{526}\) However, as *vipassanā* and *jhāna* are closely related, it could be considered that *vipassanā* is the meditative process itself, or *samatha* is included in *vipassanā*, while the *jhānas* are the reference points of the concentrative process. That is, *vipassanā* is one thing while the *jhānas* are another, referring specifically to the commencement of *vipassanā*. In this regard, the other Buddhist scholars state that the concentrative levels of the *jhānas* are associated with the commencement of *vipassanā*. Soma, among these scholars, clearly specifies the first *jhāna* as the lowest concentration level needed for the application of *vipassanā*. His claim relies on the consideration of the five hindrances:

> Of no state before the first *jhāna* has it been said by the blessed one that it is separate from sense-desires and separate from other evil states, that is to say, aloof from the hindrances that obstruct clear vision,….\(^{527}\)

Just as the clouded sun cannot illuminate the world, the mind clothed and clouded by hindrances, cannot see the truth. Indeed, the five hindrances obstruct the mind from seeing and understanding things clearly.\(^{528}\) The abolishment of this major obstacle makes the mind clear and allows it to perform the process of visual intuition. In addition, Brahmavamso states that the meditative practice leading to enlightenment begins by suppressing the five hindrances temporarily in order to experience *vipassanā*.\(^{529}\)

---

\(^{526}\) Jhanananda. *"The Lack of Evidence in Support of a Dry Insight Practice;"* op. cit.

\(^{527}\) Thera Soma, op. cit., p. 359.

\(^{528}\) Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 94.

\(^{529}\) Venerable Ajahn Brahmavamso, *"The Five Hindrances (Nivarana),"* newsletter April 1999.
Nonetheless, some scholars disregard the *jhānas* as lacking the support of *vipassanā*. For instance, Goenka says: “Such concentration, even if not developed to the level of the trance (*jhāna*) states, is very helpful.”\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^0\) Gunaratana indicates: “Insight cannot be practiced while absorbed in *jhāna*.”\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^1\)

This viewpoint of disregarding the *jhānas* as interfering with *vipassanā* is incompatible with the Buddha’s teaching in the *Samādhisutta*. This discourse reveals that the meditator cannot enter and abide in freedom of mind (*cetovimutti*) or freedom through wisdom (*paññāvimutti*) without the peace of concentration at a high degree, and without the accomplishment of one-pointedness of mind.\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^2\) We can see that the accomplishment of the first *jhāna* is significant in not only disposing of the five hindrances, but also in entering the path leading to enlightenment. So, in order to begin *vipassanā*, at least the hindrances must be eliminated through the first *jhāna*. It is an occasion for a further investigation into whether or not the higher *jhānas* need to be developed. The relation between the *jhānas* and *vipassanā* is found in the *Mahāyāna Buddhist Meditation* where Sopa says: “higher vision is only possible through recourse to some mentality belonging to one of the four trances or the four formless absorptions.”\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^3\) Even if he gives a choice for all *jhāna* states, the fourth *jhāna* is the most valuable for *vipassanā* because it is free from the gross factors of the first three *jhānas* and it is not as refined as the factors belonging to the four *arūpajjhānas*.\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^4\) His opinion, consequently, seems to regard *rūpajjhānas* as more excellent than *arūpajjhānas*.

Of course, according to the more refined in quality of the *arūpajjhānas*, they should be more appropriate than the *rūpajjhānas* in promoting the profound

---

\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^0\) Goenka, “*Moral Conduct, Concentration, and Wisdom*,” op. cit., p. 109.


\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^2\) A.III. 425–426.


\(^5\)\(^3\)\(^4\) Ibid.
mental vision process of vipassanā. The greater advantage of the arūpajjhānas is clearly expressed in the Nivāpasutta where the Buddha describes all eight jhānas. In this discourse, the eight jhānas induce the destruction of cankers by seeing with wisdom (paññācakkhu) and by blinding Māra. The Buddha explains how to achieve the ultimate goal in a practice sequence from each state of rūpajjhānas to each of the arūpajjhānas. This progress of mental development shows that the more profound and peaceful states of the arūpajjhānas produce deeper states of visual intuition.

However, Buddhadāsa disregards the right mental development of the arūpajjhānas as a different meditative path from vipassanā. In addition, Bhikkhu Bodhi, while regarding the arūpajjhānas as the most exalted state of consciousness, does not accept them as the basis of vipassanā and for gaining the Buddhist deliverance. That is because he considers the meditative technique rather than mental quality for vipassanā development, and then he rejects the very profound states of the arūpajjhānas. If the arūpajjhānas do not relate to vipassanā, one might wonder why the Buddha arranges them into the path leading to freedom through wisdom (paññāvimutti).

So, in his Early Buddhism and its Origins, Varma points out the relationship between the arūpajjhānas and mental vision: “the four process stages of arūpajjhānas are stages when supramental vision dawns on the Bhikkhu.” The ascent from rūpajjhānas to arūpajjhānas signifies the progress of visual ability of mind in order to perfectly realize the more profound object.

It is speculated that for the commencement of vipassanā, the arūpajjhānas provide a greater ability of mental vision than the rūpajjhānas. Despite this,
they appear to lack the ability to establish the process of *vipassanā*. What is referred to is an evaluation of the Buddha to the fourth *arūpajjhāna*: “this Dhamma does not lead to giving up, detachment, cessation, appeasement, knowledge enlightenment and extinction: it leads up to the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception only.” If the intensified consciousness of the fourth *arūpajjhāna* can establish the process of *vipassanā*, it is not difficult for Uddaka Rāmaputta, one of the teachers of prince Siddhattha, to experience the process of *vipassanā*. Since it is generally known that *vipassanā* is a specifically Buddhist method, then the level of *samatha* required for the arising of *vipassanā* would also be unique to Buddhism. Before his enlightenment, the Buddha studied *yoga* under different teachers and attained the fourth *arūpajjhāna*, but it did not provide the complete liberation. He later discovered *vipassanā*, which is the appropriate meditative method leading to complete cessation of suffering. It appears that *vipassanā* is a method unique to Buddhism. Thus, for the commencement of *vipassanā*, first of all the level of *samatha* that is unique to Buddhism and more profound than the *yoga* practice of the fourth *arūpajjhāna* has to be developed. It is evident that the mind needs to be further cultivated into a more profound state than the fourth *arūpajjhāna* in order to achieve sufficient ability of mental vision for *vipassanā*.

At this point, one might suggest looking at what follows the attainment of the fourth *arūpajjhāna*, which is the cessation of perception and feeling. This cessation, regarded as the ninth *jhāna*, refers to the process of *vipassanā*. Nonetheless, it is unsuitable as a concentrative level supporting the initiation of *vipassanā* because it arises from the synthetic practice of *samatha* and

---

540 M.I.166.
541 Mererk, op. cit., p. 123.
542 S.II.222.
vipassanā. A detailed examination of the cessation of perception and feeling will be presented in chapter four.

In regard to an evaluation of the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta (Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth), the level of samatha which is the basis of the four noble truths tends to be effective in initiating an exercise of vipassanā. In this discourse, the Buddha regards a series of experiences as the prerequisites for the process of insight into the four noble truths and then enlightenment.

This is the Noble Truth of Suffering: thus, Monks, such was the vision, the intuition, the wisdom, the knowledge, the light, that arose in me in regard to things unheard before.

The five instrumental factors of insight, vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāna), wisdom (paññā), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka), arise along with every step of realization of the four noble truths. In this passage, the phrase ‘unheard before’ indicates that the Buddha did not enter these five instrumental factors of insight before his enlightenment.

A further examination of vipassanā reveals that the development of samatha ascending into the “series of experiences” that accompanied the Buddha’s mental orientation “to each of the noble truths;” vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāna), wisdom (paññā), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka), are the minimum requirement for the arising of the vipassanā process. This research will refer to this series of experiences as the “instrumental factors” of vipassanā. It might be argued that these five factors are merely synonyms for insight and then enlightenment. This may be so because the five factors and insight are closely related to each other. However, in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, cakkhu,

---

544 S.V.422: “Idaṁ dukkham ariyasaccan ti me bhikkhave pubbe anussutesu dhammesu cakkhum udapādi ñānam udapādi paññā udapādi vijjā udapādi āloko udapādi.”
ñāna, paññā, vijjā and āloka are actually instrumental in bringing about vipassanā or insight. This can be stated for the following reasons.

Firstly, these five instrumental factors generate the mental activities of profound vision which together constitute the process of insight. The Buddha stresses these five factors repeatedly in this sutta, stating that these things are being heard for the first time. Thus these mental phenomena, unique to Buddhism, appear to be of more importance than a simple list of synonyms.

Secondly, the continual arising of the five instruments strengthens the process of insight. This can be seen in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta where the graded series of understanding of the four noble truths is intensified as the five instruments are employed over and over again. Simultaneously, the effects of the five instruments become stronger as insight grows. In other words, there is a mutual strengthening between the five instruments and the process of vipassanā.

So what is this relationship between insight or vipassanā and the four noble truths?

a) The four noble truths are objects of insight (along with the five aggregates, the twelve āyatana or sense spheres, the eighteen elements, the twenty two indriyas, and the twelve nidānas or causes that constitute the process of paṭiccasamuppāda). In the sutta in question, however, the particular object referred to is that of the four noble truths.

b) As stated above, there is a gradual intensification of insight as the instrumental factors are employed in the process of realisation of the four noble truths (in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta).

546 S.V.422-423.
547 Nyanatiloka, The Buddha’s Path to Deliverance in Its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity, op. cit., p. 150.
c) There are twelve steps in all to this process of intensification. Each noble truth has three steps; each step brings about a deeper degree of insight. Each begins with “this is the noble truth of …” (the first step). That is, the statement about the first noble truth says “this is the noble truth of suffering”; the statement about the second truth says “this is the noble truth about the origin of suffering” the third says “this is the noble truth about the cessation of suffering”, and the fourth says “this is the noble truth about the path leading to the cessation of suffering. Then: “this noble truth … is to be fully understood (“abandoned” for the second truth, “realized” for the third and “cultivated” for the fourth).” This is the second step. Then: “this noble truth … has been understood” (“abandoned” for the second truth, “realized” for the third and “cultivated” for the fourth)”. This is the third step. Thus there is a gradual intensification during the three steps of each truth;

d) There is also a gradual intensification of insight as one moves from the first truth to the second truth, to the third truth and to the fourth truth. That is, the degree of insight increases as one progresses from the recognition that suffering exists, to the recognition that the suffering has a cause. Then there is a further intensification as it is recognised that the suffering can cease and, finally that there is a path leading to the cessation.

The modern commentaries agree that there is a relationship between vipassanā and the four noble truths. For example, Nyanatiloka suggests that the four noble truths are objects of insight-wisdom (vipassanāpaññā). Vanarat states that the four noble truths are the ground of vipassanā.

---

548 Nyanatiloka, *The Buddha's Path to Deliverance in Its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity*, op. cit., p. 150.
(bhūmi) refers to one of the objects of vipassanā practice. What he means is that an understanding of the four noble truths can strengthen the internal vision of vipassanā and vice versa. Story also proposes an association between vipassanā and the four noble truths: “It is in the latter form of meditation (vipassanā-bhāvanā) that the mind finally penetrates the four noble truths.”550 In addition, Ussivakul speaks of their association by indicating the profound level of wisdom that vipassanā is concerned with, and by means of which the four noble truths are realized.551 These modern scholars appear to agree, in their own ways, that the perfect intuitive realization of the four noble truths is somehow cultivated during the process of vipassanā.

Thus, the arising of the five instrumental factors is a meditative experience unique to Buddhism and the means by which the four noble truths can be realized. This demonstrates that the five factors, which are the transcendental knowledge product of samatha552 developed in order to realize the four noble truths, are also the predominant factors for inducing the process of vipassanā. For the commencement of vipassanā, the meditator has to develop mental purification and unification advancing from the fourth arūpajjhāna. Consequently, the progression into the very profound state of the arising of the five instrumental factors, unique to Buddhism, is significant for the realization of the four noble truths and the commencement of vipassanā.

Once this is done, the degree of samatha needed for the arising of vipassanā is determined. In regard to mental vision rather than individual personality, this definite level of samatha is necessary. A specified level of momentary concentration is suitable for the process of changing attention through the fivefold physical senses; eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, but not for the

---

550 Francis Story, op. cit., p. 52.
551 Ussivakul, op. cit., p. 95.
552 Desaraṭṭhī, op. cit., p. 86.
particular state of mental vision. This changing attention causes the mind to move from object to object inducing the mind to revert to its untrained form. Although the mind is trained into the state of access concentration, it cannot fulfil the development of *vipassanā*. An ascent from access concentration to the *rūpajjhānas* is still ineffective for inducing *vipassanā*. According to modern scholarship, *arūpajjhānas* seem to be less effective than *rūpajjhānas* in supporting *vipassanā*. Despite this theme, the detailed consideration of the eight *jhānas* reveals that the deeper equanimity of *arūpajjhānas* produces the more refined visual intuition. Indeed, even the attainment of a high level of *arūpajjhānas* is insufficient for *vipassanā* since it does not lead to enlightenment. Admittedly, the meditator requires the development of *samatha* beyond the *arūpajjhānas* into the meditative state unique to Buddhism. That is a very profound and subtle state of mental purification and unification from which the five instrumental factors, vision (*cakkhu*), intuition (*ñāṇa*), wisdom (*paññā*), knowledge (*vijjā*) and light (*āloka*), arise in order to completely realize the four noble truths and thus initiate the process of *vipassanā*.

To summarize the discussion on the commencement of *vipassanā*, this section of the study has dealt with the two issues; “Is *samatha* essential or not” and “Which level of *samatha* is required.” Proficiency in the calm abiding of *samatha* is consistently appraised as the fundamental component from which *vipassanā* is begun. The process of *vipassanā* needs the support of *samatha* in order to achieve a very stable and profound state. The appropriate level of *samatha* for the commencement of *vipassanā* is drawn from the study of the relation between *vipassanā* and the four noble truths. The study has shown that the ascent of *samatha* from the *arūpajjhānas* to the arising of the five instrumental factors, vision (*cakkhu*), intuition (*ñāṇa*), wisdom (*paññā*), knowledge (*vijjā*) and light (*āloka*), is the prerequisite for the commencement
of vipassanā. In the next section, discussion of these five factors is important in order to clarify how vipassanā operates.

An Evaluation of Five Instrumental Factors

This section continues to evaluate the relationship between the five instrumental factors and the process of mental vision of vipassanā. In Buddhist psychology, understanding mainly takes the form of visual images. To ‘see and understand’ is a very common in Pāli: “Bhagavatā jānatā passatā … bhāsitam (it was said by the master who knows and sees).” The performing of both psychological aspects depends on the instrumental factor of insight, namely paññā, as can be seen in the expression: ‘paññāya passati (he sees by paññā).’ Accordingly, the vipassanā process of superior and particular seeing is not implemented by means of the physical eyes, but by means of paññā. This instrumental factor, namely, paññā comes into existence along with the simultaneous occurrence of the other four instrumental factors, vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāna), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka). Therefore, these five instrumental factors of insight are acquired for the spiritual insight. The detailed investigation of the psychological qualities of these five factors explores the essential aspects of vipassanā practice and therefore forms a key to understanding the operation of five instrumental factors in the process of vipassanā. This investigation will be pursued through the individual analysis of each term.

Vision (Cakkhu)

The first instrumental factor of insight is vision (cakkhu), which is embedded in relation to the philosophical and mythological discourses. The central truths of the discourses are ‘seen,’ as for example in the Ratanasutta of the Suttanipāta and Khuddakapāṭha it is said that “one comprehends the noble

---

553 M.II.110.  
554 M.II.112.  
555 Sn. 229.
truths and sees them (ariyasaccāni avecca passati).” In order to see the truths, the eye (cakkhu), which is multivalent in meditative practice, should be developed. So, the profound levels based on the cultivation of the internal vision are an essential part of early Buddhist meditation. Incidentally, cakkhu can be clarified by examining the term ‘dassana’ which is used interchangeably. By the examination of both terms, cakkhu is not mere observational analysis but a particular mode of supernormal power based on samatha in which the mode of dhamma-cakkhu is cultivated for the experience of vipassanā. The examination will proceed according to the three issues: its implication, whether or not samatha is essential for its development, and which type of cakkhu is applied in the process of vipassanā.

The term ‘cakkhu’ implies the supernormal mental vision, but not the observational analysis. The example of the implication of cakkhu as supernormal mental vision occurs in the Bhūmicālavagga in the Aṅguttaranikāya:

Monks, before my enlightenment, while I was an unenlightened Bodhisatta, I perceived light but did not see forms. Monks, it occurred to me, “If I were both to perceive light and to see forms, in that case my intuition and vision would be better purified.”

It is quite clear that ‘intuition’ goes with the perception (saññā) of the profound light and that ‘vision’ goes with the seeing of the refined forms. Admittedly, the vision (cakkhu) means, as Rhys Davids and Stede note, “The eye as the instrument of supersensuous perception, "clear" sight, clairvoyance.” The epithet of the Buddha, Buddha-cakkhu, also illustrates the association of vision with wisdom. The Buddha-cakkhu is an essential symbol of his compassion for other beings. One episode in the legend of the Buddha’s life relates that after his

---

556 Khp. p.4.
557 A.IV.302: “pubbāhaṁ bhikkhave sambodhā anabhisaṁbuddho bodhisattova samāno obhāsaṁ hi kho sañjānāmi, no ca rūpāni passāmi. Tassa mayhaṁ bhikkhave etad ahosi ’sace kho aham obhāsaṁ c’eva sañjāneyyaṁ rūpāni ca passeyyaṁ, evam me idam ṇāṇadassanaṁ parisuddhataram assa ’ti.”
awakening, he compassionately surveyed the world with his Buddha eye.\textsuperscript{559} Using his spiritual abilities, he would then manifest himself in the appropriate location to expound the \textit{dhamma} to those who had the potential for immediate enlightenment. It could be seen that the meditative process and its effects involve the experiences of superior mental vision.

Nevertheless, Dhammananda interprets the supernormal mental vision of \textit{cakkhu} as sensual perception, before suggesting that experiencing the eye (\textit{cakkhu}) of the Buddha is neither a supernatural power nor mystical experience.\textsuperscript{560} He further implies that meditative experience of \textit{cakkhu} constitutes effective sensual perception.\textsuperscript{561} His marginalization of the mental ability of the Buddha leads to a misunderstanding of the characteristics of the Buddha. In fact, the Buddha is generally considered as possessing omniscient knowledge (\textit{sabbaññutañāna}). After achieving enlightenment, he immediately gains the eight kinds of spiritual power, which are the fruit of perfect ordination.\textsuperscript{562} Thus, Dhammananda’s viewpoint appears to contradict the meaning of vision which arises from mental development. Having interpreted \textit{nānadassana} as the “forms of observational analysis,” Griffiths echoes Dhammananda’s viewpoint.\textsuperscript{563} Anālayo also shares this sentiment: “It might not be too far-fetched to relate the accompanying aspect of vision (\textit{dassana}) to the activity of watching represented by mindfulness (\textit{sati}).”\textsuperscript{564} Furthermore, Varma interprets \textit{dassana} as the rational process of philosophic insight.\textsuperscript{565} This implication of \textit{dassana} would represent only its superficial meaning. The profound meaning of \textit{dassana} is found in the \textit{Mahāsīhanādasutta},\textsuperscript{566} where the

\textsuperscript{559}Mp.I.67.
\textsuperscript{561}Ibid., p. 10.
\textsuperscript{562}D.I.76-85.
\textsuperscript{564}Anālayo, op. cit., p. 42.
\textsuperscript{565}Varma, op. cit., p. 193.
\textsuperscript{566}M.I.69-71.
Buddha explains his ten kinds of supernormal power. He identifies the experiences of these ten kinds of supernormal power, which are superior intuition and vision worthy of the noble one, as the process of knowing and seeing. Buddhadāsa also confirms the association between ānādassana (intuition and vision) and the supernormal power of divine ear and divine eye.\(^{567}\) Hence, it is concluded that the mental quality of cakkhu for the initiation of vipassanā is not the superficial meaning of observational analysis, but involves the experiences of supernormal power.

The examination of various Buddhist texts\(^ {568}\) reveals that the acquisition of cakkhu is founded on the process of samatha. For instance, the description of vipassanāñāṇa expresses the essence of samatha in relation to the arising of cakkhu:

> When his heart was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from imperfection, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he applies and bends down his mind towards intuition and vision.\(^ {569}\)

Although this statement of the Buddha clearly demonstrates the consistency between the tranquillity process and the experiences of intuition and vision (ānādassana), Griffiths does not accept the appearance of the stereotyped description of the four jhānas in the discourses through proposing its redactional addition.\(^ {570}\) His justification of the incompatibility between concentration and the perceptual processes of seeing (dassana) seems to produce controversial implications.

The first one is that concentration and the perceptual process tend to promote each other. In fact, we still our mind so that we can sense clearly. We perceive

\(^{567}\) Buddhadāsa, op. cit., pp. 89-90.
\(^{568}\) D.I.76, A.III.20, M.I.203.
\(^{569}\) D.I.76.
\(^{570}\) Paul J. Griffiths, Indian Buddhist Meditation-Theory: History, Development and Systematization, op. cit., pp. 82-83.
clearly so that we can better understand why we should still the mind. Like Griffiths, Fronsdal interprets the Buddhist experience of seeing as the sensual perception process. But, in regard to the relation between concentration and seeing, he emphasises their consistency: “Stopping (concentration) supports seeing and seeing supports stopping.” The second implication is that seeing should not be interpreted as understanding in the general way of speaking: as in the phrase “you see what I mean.” In regard to Buddhist meditation, the process of seeing involves supernormal power such as seeing through a mountain or seeing long distance without any obstructions in between. As these forms of extravisual experience arise from deep concentration, then samatha is essential for the extravisual experiences of cakkhu. The third implication is that having disregarded the canonical texts of the four jhānas stereotyped as additional revision, Griffiths rejects the consistency between samatha and ānādassana. From this, it can be argued that many other discourses point out the collaboration between ānādassana and samatha. For example in the Pañcañgikavagga in the Aṅguttaranikāya, the Buddha demonstrates the association between concentration and mental vision:

When there is no perfect concentration, then the cause for intuition and vision of things as they really are is destroyed for one who lacks perfect concentration.

The next discourse is the Cūḷasāropamasutta in which the Buddha indicates ānādassana as the consequent meditative experience of samatha:

He, because of this attainment of concentration, does not praise himself nor disparage others. And he arouses a desire for and endeavours for the realization of those other states which are higher and more sublime than the attainment of concentration. He is neither infatuated nor lethargic. He accomplishes intuition and vision.
If the stereotyped formula of *samatha* (*so evaṁ samāḥite cite*) is presented exclusively in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, it is possible that this is an additional revision to the original texts. However, since the different *nikāyas* and doctrinal structures assert throughout the consistency between *samatha* and *ñāṇadassana*, the stereotyped formula of *samatha* seems to be far from additional revision. Therefore, not only the superficial level of *cakkhu* as the observational analysis, but also its profound state of superior mental seeing are based on the process of *samatha*.

The evaluation of various modes of *cakkhu* indicates that the mode of *dhamma-cakkhu* is the proper quality for experiencing *vipassanā*. Indeed, the Buddha is said to be endowed with five kinds of eye (*cakkhu*): physical eye (*maṁsa-cakkhu*), divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*), wisdom eye (*paññā-cakkhu*), the Buddha eye (*buddha-cakkhu*) and eye of all round knowledge (*samanta-cakkhu*). In applying to all meditators, the Buddha classifies *cakkhu* into three types: namely, physical eye (*maṁsa-cakkhu*), divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*) and wisdom eye (*paññā-cakkhu*). The physical eye consists of the constituent parts of the eye (*sasambhāra-cakkhu*) and the sensitive eye (*pasāda-cakkhu*). Through the material receptacle of *sasambhāra-cakkhu*, the visual consciousness having the sensitive eye as its basis constitutes the instrument of physical seeing. The physical eye supports mere seeing, but not the special mental seeing involved in the process of *vipassanā*. The second type, namely, divine eye is explained as knowledge gained by a pervading light (*āloka*). It is similar to the vision of the deities in its ability to perceive objects at remote distances and to see objects

---

576 Nid.II.448.
577 It.-a.I.99-100.
578 It.-a.II.99-100.
579 It.-a.II.27.
hidden behind walls, etc. Although the divine eye possesses extravisual power, this power seems unable to perfectly intuit the four noble truths.

The clarification of the third type of cakkhu, namely, paññā-cakkhu shows that it refers to vipassanā because of its knowledge leading to the perfect realization of the four noble truths according to the vision (cakkhu) of the five instrumental factors.\(^{580}\) According to the commentator’s opinion, this type of cakkhu, described as cakkhu arising in the process of realizing the four noble truths, is the proper mental quality for the acquisition of vipassanā. Paññā-cakkhu is further divided into five types: Buddha-eye, eye of all round knowledge (samanta-cakkhu), knowledge eye (ñāṇa-cakkhu), divine eye, and eye of the dhamma (dhamma-cakkhu).\(^{581}\)

The evaluation of each type of paññā-cakkhu contributes to the determination of a particular type for initiating vipassanā. First, the Buddha eye is defined as the ‘knowledge of inclinations and dispositions (āsayānusayañāṇa)’ and the ‘knowledge of the senses and inclinations of others (indriyaparopariyattiñāṇa).’\(^{582}\) Since it is said, the commentary reads, that the Buddha surveys the world with this cakkhu, the fact that this characteristic is confined to the Buddha shows that it is inaccessible for the general meditator. Second, the eye of all round knowledge (samanta-cakkhu) is described as omniscient knowledge (sabbaññutañāṇa). The confined characteristic to the Buddha is generally understood as including omniscient knowledge; consequently samanta-cakkhu cannot be widely employed. The next type is ñāṇa-cakkhu, which is identified with paññā-cakkhu; that is, they are

\(^{580}\) Ibid.
\(^{581}\) It.-a.l.199.
\(^{582}\) Spk.l.100.
interchangeable.\textsuperscript{583} When \textit{ñāṇa-cakkhu} is mentioned, can be read as a synonym for \textit{paññā-cakkhu}.

The discussion of the fourth type of \textit{paññā-cakkhu}, divine eye, concludes that it lacks the mental vision for realization of the four noble truths and of \textit{vipassanā}. Buddhādāsa, of course, disregards the divine eye as dissociated with the path to enlightenment: “but not the second (knowledge and vision of the sort called divine ear and divine eye), which has in any case nothing at all to do with the overcoming of suffering.”\textsuperscript{584} However, if the divine eye does not involve the path of enlightenment, one might be confused as to why it is one of the threefold knowledge (\textit{vijjā}) that the Buddha achieved during the process of enlightenment.\textsuperscript{585} According to the threefold knowledge (\textit{vijjā}), the divine eye is called \textit{cutūpapātañāṇa} implying the insight by which the deaths and births of sentient beings are realized in various planes of existence. Perhaps the divine eye of the three types of \textit{cakkhu} is the superficial level based on mere \textit{samatha}, while that of the five types of \textit{paññā-cakkhu} is the profound state based on both \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} and influenced by the next type, namely, \textit{dhamma-cakkhu}.

The fifth type of \textit{paññā-cakkhu} is the \textit{dhamma-cakkhu} which leads the meditator to the complete internal vision applied in the process of \textit{vipassanā}. For instance, Yasa’s mother is described as one “who had seen \textit{dhamma}, mastered \textit{dhamma}, known \textit{dhamma}, was immersed in \textit{dhamma}, who was free from doubt, who had dispelled uncertainty, and who had gained complete confidence, not dependent upon others for the teachings of the teacher.”\textsuperscript{586} The \textit{dhamma} that Yasa’s mother saw is understood in the commentaries as the \textit{dhamma} which is known by means of hearing the four noble truths.

\textsuperscript{583} Spk.III.90.
\textsuperscript{584} Buddhādāsa, op. cit., pp. 89-90.
\textsuperscript{585} M.I.248-249.
\textsuperscript{586} Vin.I.18.
Buddhaghosa interprets dhamma-cakkhu as seeing into dhamma or the eye made of dhamma. As mentioned above, dhamma-cakkhu is included in the list of five eyes of the Buddha. However, according to both canonical and commentarial traditions, it can be shared by anyone, and thus cannot be confined to being a quality of the Buddha alone. Moreover, dhamma-cakkhu appears to be the essential means by which the meditator can know and see things as they really are according to the three characteristics; impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self. In the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, Koṇḍañña with the aid of the dhamma-cakkhu can realize completely that “Whatever is of a nature of origination, all that is of a nature of cessation.” This means that dhamma-cakkhu is the proper type of cakkhu to provide superior mental vision by which the process of vipassanā can be commenced.

In conclusion, a critique of cakkhu reveals a relationship between cakkhu and both samatha and vipassanā. Observational analysis is only the superficial level of cakkhu, whereas its more profound level involves the supernormal power of mental vision. It is evident from the psychological and doctrinal analysis of cakkhu that both levels require the unification of mind in the process of samatha. The gradual improvement of cakkhu into the mode of dhamma-cakkhu denotes a sufficient power of mental vision to activate the process of vipassanā.

**Intuition (Ñāṇa)**

The second instrumental factor of insight is ‘ñāṇa,’ which means “knowledge, intelligence, insight, conviction and recognition.” In the discourses, ñāṇa occurs in intensive couple compounds with terms for ‘sight’ such as ‘cakkhu’ and ‘dassana.’ This is to say that the realization of meditative knowledge is the

---

587 Sv.I.237.
588 S.V.423: “yaṁ kiñce samudayadhammaṁ sabban tathā nirodhamman ti.”
consequence of the mental qualities of knowing and seeing. In the Madhupiṇḍikasutta, Mahākaccāṇa Bhikkhu describes the Buddha as one who “knows what should be known, sees what should be seen, having come to have vision and intuition.” Moreover, ‘the knowing and seeing one’ is a characteristic description of the Buddha, and it is usually said of what he claims to know that he both ‘knows and sees.’  

Moreover, ‘the knowing and seeing one’ is a characteristic description of the Buddha, and it is usually said of what he claims to know that he both ‘knows and sees.’  

Ñāṇa, and its meditative experiences based on the profound state of samatha, is not the impediment of vipassanā, rather its ten kinds of vipassanā-ñāṇa and five kinds of abhiññā are essential to vipassanā and the path of enlightenment. In this section, the term ‘ñāṇa’ will be clarified through the four aspects; its implication, its viewpoint of imperfection of vipassanā, the vipassanā-ñāṇa and the fivefold abhiññā.

Ñāṇa implies the development of profound spiritual experiences of abhiññā (supernatural knowledge) based on the process of samatha, but not mere the perceptual process of awareness (sampajañña). Ñāṇa and the three knowledges (vījjas) are linguistically connected through the Pāli definition; the knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatīñāṇa), the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings (cutūpāpatañāṇa), and the knowledge of the destruction of the cankers (āsavakkhayañāṇa).

In addition to the three vījjas, some suttas mention ñāṇa as six kinds of abhiññā by adding the knowledge of supernormal power (iddhividhañāṇa), the knowledge of divine ear-element (dibbasotadhātuñāṇa) and the knowledge of others’ minds (cetoparīyañāṇa). In some canonical texts, there are two kinds of ñāṇa, knowledge arising through insight (vipassanāñāṇa) and the psychic power of the mind (manomayiddhi), preceding the six abhiññās.

---

590 M.I.111: “So h’āvuso Bhagavā jāna/FL1 jānāti passa/FL1 passati, cakkhubhūto ñāṇabhūto.”
591 M.II.111.
592 M.I.329.
593 A.I.163-165.
594 D.III.281.
When his mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from imperfection, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he applies and bends down his mind towards intuition and vision… He applies and bends down his mind towards the creation of mind-made body…. He enjoys the various supernormal powers - being one, he becomes many, or being many, he becomes one… he applies and bends down his mind to the divine ear-element… he applies and bends down his mind to the knowledge of the others’ minds … to the knowledge of the recollection of former lives… and to the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings. With the divine eye, purified and surpassing that of men, he sees beings passing away…

These various kinds of နှန် in these canonical descriptions appear to indicate the phenomenological experiences of နှန် attainment as the creative power of the mind resulting from the fourth jhāna. Incidentally, Ānanda proposes the relationship between နှန် and the profound spiritual experiences by saying that knowing and seeing teachers are the omniscient persons who possess profound consciousness and clearly know everything they want.

Therefore, the meditative experiential structure of နှန် is not mere intellectual knowledge but contains the various kinds of profound spiritual experience. However, this description seems to contradict the general interpretation of နှန် as T.W. Davids and Stede refer to it as the theory of recognition. Pio agrees with them: “in application it (နှန်) is knowledge or reason which comes to an individual.” Some scholars relate နှန် to the perceptual process of sampajañña (awareness) and sati (mindfulness). For instance, Nyanaponika says: “Clear comprehension is right knowledge (နှန်) or wisdom (ပျဉ်း),

---

596 So evam samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anaṅgane vigatūpakkilese mudubhūte kammanīye thite āneñjappatte နန်adassanīya citaṁ abhinīharaṁ abhinīnāmeti mano-mayaṁ kāyaṁ abhinmnānymāya citaṁ abhinīharaṁ abhinīnāmeti. So anekavihitam iddhividham paccanabhoti- ekopi hútā bahudhā hoti, bahudhāpi hútā eko hoti…dibbāya sotadhātyā cittaṁ abhinīharaṁ abhinīnāmeti… cetopariyāhānāya citaṁ abhinīharaṁ abhinīnāmeti… pubbenivāsānussatiñāya…saṁbhāya cutūpapātañāya… So dibbena cakkhumā visuddhena atikkantamānusakena satte passati cavamāne…
597 M.I.519.
based on right attentiveness (sati).” Meanwhile Anālayo suggests that: “It might not be too far-fetched to relate such growth of knowledge (ñāṇa) to the quality of clearly knowing (sampajāna).” According to these scholars, the Buddhist knowledge appears to pertain to the psychological result of perception, learning and reasoning. Nevertheless, it is found in the texts of the classical canon that नाṇa relies on the process of samatha:

When his heart was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from imperfection, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he applies and bends down his mind towards intuition and vision.

Thitavaṇṇo further specifies the level of samatha with the attainment of jhānas. Moreover, in the Samādhibhāvanāsutta, the profound state of concentration conduces to gaining नाṇa. Sayadaw also speaks of the close relationship between नाṇa and the profound spiritual experiences of abhiññā (supernatural knowledge). Therefore, it is evident that नाṇa is only available through the profound state of samatha in terms of the jhānas and the profound spiritual experiences.

Although some scholars, such as Buddhaghosa, and Gunaratana, disregard नाṇa as an obstruction of the process of vipassanā, this section aims to argue that नाṇa is the essential factor for vipassanā and its completion. In fact, in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, an expression ‘intuition arose (नाṇात्म उदपादी)’ is mentioned twelve times during the process of realizing the four noble truths. We can see that the cultivation of नाṇa is involved with the progression of vipassanā in which the four noble truths are realized. नाṇa does

---

600 Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 46.
601 Anālayo, op. cit., p. 42.
602 D.I.76: “So evam samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anaṅgane vigatıpakkilese mudubbhūte kammaniye thīte āneñjappatte nāṇadassanāya cittam abhiniharati abhīninnāmeti.”
603 Thitavanṇo, op. cit., p. 132.
604 A.II.4.44.
606 S.V.422.
not only contribute to *vipassanā* but also its culmination as shown in the stereotyped formula of the knowledge of the destruction of the cankers (*āsavakkhayānāna*).

When my mind was freed, there came the intuition: I am freed; and I understood: Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing more for any state of thus.  

*Ñāṇa* is even considered one of the great achievements of the Buddha that is omniscient knowledge (*sabbaññutañāna*).

*Ñāṇa* is the essential factor for meditative practice; some scholars, however, consider it to be one of the imperfections of *vipassanā*. For example, Buddhaghosa states that at the state of tender insight (*taruṇavipassanā*), the ten unprecedented experiences are likely to arise in the meditator. Because they can impede his progress, these are called the ten imperfections of insight (*vipassanūpakkilesa*). The ten are: illumination (*obhāsa*), intuition (*ñāṇa*), joy (*pīti*), rapture (*passaddhi*), happiness (*sukha*), resolution (*adhimokkha*), exertion (*paggāha*), assurance (*upaṭṭhāna*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and attachment (*nikanti*). If the meditator does not cautiously attend, he can misinterpret these occurrences and think that he has reached the supramundane path. Modern scholars, such as Ñāṇārāma,  and Gunaratana, have tended to follow Buddhaghosa. Moreover Thavaro compares these ten qualities as the hindrances of *vipassanā*. Vanarat calls them as the defilements of *vipassanā*. These scholars appear to agree that the ten qualities including *ñāṇa* are the base of corruption of *vipassanā*. We noted above that *ñāṇa* corresponds to meditational attainments and then links to the process of

---

607 M.I.23: “vimuttaśmiṃ vimutta-iti ñāṇaṃ ahosi; khīṇa jāti, vusita brahmacariyaṃ, katāṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāpara itthattāyāti abbhaññāsiṃ.”
608 Vism.633 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 739).
609 Matara Sri Ñāṇārāma, op. cit., p. 36.
vipassanā as concomitant. The Milindaqaña states that ānā is the useful quality for getting rid of darkness: “Great king, from the moment when intuition arises, delusion ceases.”

This passage shows that, if the meditators gain a more profound level of ānā, the less misinterpretation and misunderstanding they will deal with. Furthermore, the profound state of ānā, called ‘reviewing knowledge’ (paccavekkhaṇānā), leads to Buddhist liberation. There can be little doubt that ānā is not the imperfection of vipassanā, but a key element in the process of vipassanā and its culmination.

The vipassanā-ānā comprises of the ten graded series through which the vipassanā-practitioner has to pass, since it can be classified in different quantities. The vipassanā-ānā is the structure of ānas leading the meditator to attainment of the first path (magga), and to experience the real fruition of spiritual achievement. From this point of view, vipassanā-ānā is the structure of ānas which are mundane. The arising of vipassanā-ānā signifies the correct practice of vipassanā, as Dhammananda says: “if the meditator does not realize these insights (ānas), either the method of meditation or the meditator is at fault.” The psychological analysis of vipassanā-ānā comprises three overlapping compositions of mode of intuitions (ānas). The first composition, indicated by Buddhaghosa, is comprised of nine types of āṇa:

1. The knowledge of arising and falling (udayabbaya-ānā)

---

613 Mil.42: “Moho kho mahārāja āṇe uppannamatte tattheva nirujjhati.”
615 Magga composes of the four supramundane paths leading to the extinction of suffering.
617 Ibid.
618 Vism.639 (tr. Ñañamoli p. 745).
2. The knowledge of dissolution (bhaṅga-ñāṇa)
3. The knowledge that is awareness of fearfulness (bhayaṭṭhāna-ñāṇa)
4. The knowledge of misery (ādīnava-ñāṇa)
5. The knowledge that is turning away (nibbidā-ñāṇa)
6. The knowledge that is desire for deliverance (muccitukamyatā-ñāṇa)
7. The knowledge that is reflecting contemplation (paṭisāṅkhā-ñāṇa)
8. The knowledge that is equanimity for all formations (saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa)
9. The knowledge that is adaptation (anuloma-ñāṇa)

Sumedho, Thavaro and Desaraṇşī agree with Buddhaghosa for the necessity of this mode of ñāṇa on account of the cultivation of vipassanā. The second composition is composed of the nine ñāṇas of the first composition including the tenth, namely, the knowledge by comprehension (sammasana-ñāṇa). It is held that the system of ten kinds of intuition is first set out in the Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha. Magness also proposes these ten kinds of intuition. The third composition comprises of sixteen types of ñāṇa which are all constituents of the second composition in accompaniment with the other six constituents.

1. The analytical knowledge of mind and body (nāmarūpapariccheda-ñāṇa)
2. The knowledge by discerning conditionality (paccayapariggaha-ñāṇa)
3. The change-of-lineage knowledge (gotrabhū-ñāṇa)
4. The path knowledge (magga-ñāṇa)
5. The Fruition knowledge (phala-ñāṇa)
6. The knowledge of reviewing (paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa)

---

619 Bhikshu Sumedho, op. cit., pp. 72-73.
620 Phra Maha Vira Thavaro, op. cit., pp. 95-98.
621 Desaraṇşī, op. cit., p. 87.
622 Abhi-s.IX.25.
The examination of the three compositions of mode of intuitions (ñāṇas) reveals that rather than the first and the third compositions, the second composition of ten ñāṇas is the most suitable to represent the mode of vipassanā-ñāṇas. This classification of the successive stages of the sixteen vipassanā-ñāṇas is described in the Visuddhimagga in considerable detail.\textsuperscript{625} According to the Visuddhimagga, all the constituents of the sixteen vipassanā-ñāṇas are arranged into five kinds of purification: purification of view (diṭṭhi-visuddhi), purification by overcoming doubt (kaṅkhāvitarāṇa-visuddhi), purification by intuition and vision of what is path and not-path (maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi), purification by intuition and vision of the course of practice (paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi) and purification by intuition and vision (ñāṇadassana-visuddhi). Yupho agrees and illustrates this arrangement.\textsuperscript{626} The practices of these sixteen vipassanā-ñāṇas cover the process of vipassanā from the very beginning till the end of supramundane path.\textsuperscript{627} Therefore, the third composition appears to go beyond the definition of the vipassanā-ñāṇas, which is the entire mundane path. Similarly, Dhammananda supports this theme by saying that vipassanā-ñāṇas are different from the Gotrabhū-ñāṇa, Magga-ñāṇa, and Phala-ñāṇa.\textsuperscript{628} Considering the first and second compositions, both are distinctive features because Sammasana-ñāṇa is added in the second. This ñāṇa involves defining all phenomena in terms of the three characteristics: impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self. From its definition, Sammasana-ñāṇa seems to be accepted as a profound visual intuition arising in the process of vipassanā. Then rather than nine and sixteen kinds, the ten kinds of ñāṇas in the second

\textsuperscript{626} Dhanit Yupho, op. cit., pp. 9-13.
\textsuperscript{627} Sudarat Bantaokul, Solasanan in Theravada Buddhism (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2003), p. 124.
\textsuperscript{628} K. Sri Dhammananda, Meditation the Only Way, op. cit., p. 124.
composition are most suitable for representing the mode ofvipassanā-ñāṇas, which thevipassanā-practitioner has to pass in the mundane path.

The arrangement ofñāṇas into a mode of the fivefold abhiññā relates tovipassanā and its culmination as encouragement instead of obstruction.Ñāṇas, of course, can be arranged into the five kinds ofabhiññā; the knowledge ofsupernormal power (iddhividhāna), the knowledge of divine ear-element (dibandotadātuñāna), the knowledge of others’ minds (cetopariyañāna), the knowledge of the recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsusatāñāna), the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings (cutūpapātañāna). Indeed, theMahāsālayatanikasutta demonstrates the supernatural knowledge (abhiññā) by whichsamatha andvipassanā are to be developed.629 In addition, thesupernatural knowledge is the resultant set of experiences of attaining thepredominant factor of the enlightenment path- the noble eightfold path.630 SeveralPāli discourses groupabhiññā, sambodha (perfect enlightenment) andnibbāna together as a result and culmination of meditative practice.631 It is atthis point that the central importance ofabhiññā takes place, and then theBuddha states that he preaches dhamma for supernatural knowledge.632 Thecontention of these Buddhist texts is that these kinds ofabhiññā deal successfully with the correct meditative practice leading to the ultimate goal ofBuddhism.

But against this, many scholars disregard the fivefold abhiññā, which isessential forvipassanā as an impediment to meditation or as a mere psychicgift. For instance Horner says: “the first five (abhiññā) constitute five psychicgifts.”633 She further distinguishes it from the significant process for the end of

629 M.III.289.
630 S.V.421.
632 M.II.9: “abhīnnaṃ saha gotamo dharmam deseti.”
633 I. B. Horner, The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected: A Study of the Arahant Concept and of the
suffering: “the knowledge of the destruction of the āsava is not psychic at all.” Gunaratana also disregards it as only ornaments of the meditator. Moreover, Burns points out that the fivefold abhiññā can be obstructive for the ultimate goal. Consequently, the fivefold abhiññā seems to have nothing in common with vipassanā or with the Buddhist ultimate goal. On the contrary, Dhammadharo speaks of the association between the fivefold abhiññā and the destruction of cankers. From the Mahāvacchasutta, we also find that the arising of the fivefold abhiññā is based on both meditative processes of samatha and vipassanā. Since the Buddha advises his disciples to develop the fivefold abhiññā through the prior processes of samatha and vipassanā, it is irrational to interpret them as impediments. Much more important is their consistency with the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

It should be noted that the interpretation of ēñā developed in this section has important consequences for our understanding of vipassanā and its final stage. First, ēñā should not be implied to be the intellectual process or the awareness (sampajañña). It is, of course, only accessible through the jhāna states. Second, widespread opinion based on the Visuddhimagga states that ēñā can impede the progress of vipassanā. But it is true that the cultivation of ēñā is a requirement for vipassanā and full awakening. Third, the system of ēñās arising in the process of vipassanā is assigned a proper name to vipassanā-ēñā, which is the entire mundane path. Then the composition of ten kinds of ēñās is the proper classification of vipassanā-ēñās. The last aspect of ēñā deals with the arrangement of ēñās into a mode of the fivefold abhiññā. The examination of the fivefold abhiññā shows that it is not a mere by-product of

---

634 Implications of the Aim to Perfection in Religious Life, op. cit., p. 122.
635 Ibid.
637 Douglas M. Burns, op. cit., pp. 43-44.
639 M.I.494-496.
samma, but the essential factor by which samma and vipassana are to be cultivated.

Wisdom (Pañña)

The third instrumental factor of insight, pañña (wisdom), is an essential mental trait for vipassana contemplation. Many scholars agree that it is the ability to understand and comprehend, in its entirety, the exact or true nature of life and the world. For instance, in the Mahāvedallasutta, Sāriputta defines pañña as understanding: “One understands, One understands, friend, that is why it is called ‘one who has wisdom.’” This definition of the term ‘pañña’ is seen to be composed of the prefix ‘pa’ and the verbal noun ‘jānana’ which is derived from the root ē. Buddhaghosa agrees: “It is called pañña in the sense of understanding.” Moreover, he elaborates pañña in relation to vipassana: “wisdom is knowledge arising through insight, associated with the wholesome thought.” According to the Pali-English Dictionary, pañña connote intelligence, reason, wisdom, insight, knowledge and recognition. Furthermore, Nārada, in A Manual of Abhidhamma, explains the term ‘pañña’ as follows:

Its chief characteristic is understanding as it really is or irresistible understanding, i.e., penetrative knowledge. As Pañña dominates in understanding the real nature and as it overcomes ignorance, it is called a controlling faculty (Indriya). In Abhidhamma Ēna, Pañña, and Amoha are used as interchangeable terms. In types of consciousness connected with knowledge (Ēnasampapayutta) the reference is to this pañña... When purified by samādhi pañña assumes the honourable role of abhiñña (higher knowledge).

From this sense of the term, he defines pañña as seeing things as they truly are, in the light of impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and not-self (anatta). This is achieved by reasoning, by learning and by meditation. During

639 M.I.292: “Pajānāti pajānātīti kho āvuso, tasmā paññavā ti vaccati.”
640 Vism. 436., “pajānanañāthena paññā,”
641 Ibid., “Kusalacittasampapayutta vipassanāñam paññā.”
the process of vipassanā, paññā, based on mental development in the mode of concentration, plays the role of profound internal vision. This hypothesis will be explored through the detailed examination of the implication of paññā, the evaluation of its three kinds and its connection with samādhi.

The term ‘paññā’ implies profound mental vision rather than the intellectual understanding of rational process. The relationship between paññā and the profound spiritual experiences of abhiññā is referred to in the Poṭṭhapādasutta, where the Buddha states:

One enters into and remains in the purity and perfection of wisdom here and now, having realized it through his own supernatural knowledge in here and now.644

From the statement, paññā relies on the cultivation of concentration into the profound spiritual experiences. This finds support in the Mahāparinibbānasutta: “Wisdom, when fully developed by concentration, brings great fruit and profit.”645 Paññā seems to be the superior mental quality resulting from mental purification and unification of samatha. Therefore, its characteristic is more refined than perceptual experience or intellectual understanding. Buddhaghosa supports this. Distinguishing paññā from saññā (perception) and viññāna (consciousness), he considers paññā characteristics.646 Saññā is like the mere perception of a rupee coin by a child. By its colour, shape and form it merely recognizes the coin as a rupee, utterly ignorant of the potential value and usage of the people. A country villager, for instance, discerns its intrinsic values, but is not aware of which are genuine, which are false, and which only half-values are. Viññāna is comparable to the country villager’s knowledge of the rupee. Paññā is like the experiential knowledge of

644 D.I.197: “paññā-pāripūrini vepullattarī ca diṭṭhe va dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissathāti.”
645 D.II.98: “samādhi-paribhāvitā paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisamsā.”
646 Vism.437 (tr. Ṉañamoli p. 480-481).
a professional moneychanger who knows that the coin was made in a certain village or town or city, or by a certain master.

The implication of paññā as the profound mental vision leading to the destruction of cankers (āsava) is found in the *Debate of King Milinda*. For the functions of paññā, Bhikkhu Nāgasena, in response to the questions of King Milinda, compares them with the two similes. First, paññā cuts off the defilements (kilesas) from the mind, in the same way that a barley-reaper uses a scythe to sever a handful of barley from the earth.\(^{647}\) Second, paññā illuminates, banishing the darkness of ignorance (avijjā) from the mind thus causing internal vision to arise to produce the light of understanding. It is compared to the dispersion of darkness from inside a closed room when a lamp is lit therein.\(^{648}\) The two functions of paññā simply describe different aspects of what is basically profound spiritual experience approaching the destruction of cankers.

In the *Nandakovādasutta*, the monk Nandaka defines paññā as a refined mental instrument to eradicate defilements.\(^{649}\) Instructing a group of nuns (bhikkhunis), he compares wisdom (paññā) to a well-sharpened knife for the cutting of defilements (kilesas). Suppose a master butcher were to dissect a cow and, with a sharp knife, skilfully remove the skin from the muscle by cutting off the connecting sinews, blood-vessels, etc. without damaging either the skin or the muscle underneath. This scenario illustrates the following: the muscle inside the cow represents the six internal sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body

---

\(^{647}\) Mil.32-33: "Chedanaluakkhaṇā paññā... Yathā mahārāja yavalavako vāmena hathena yavakalāpaṃ gahetvā dukkhinena hathena dāttam gahetvā dāttena jindati, evameva kho mahārāja yogāvacaro manasikārena mānasam gahetvā paññāya kilese jindati."

\(^{648}\) Mil.39: "Yathā mahārāja puriso andhakāre gehe paḍipam paveseyya, paviṭṭho paṭipā paṇḍhakāraṃ vidhameti, abhāsam janeti, alokaṃ vidamsi, rūpāni pāka/FL16Dhāni karoti, evameva kho mahārāja paññā uppaṭjamānā avijjanakkāraṃ vidhameti, viṭṭhabhāsam janeti, ṇāṇalokam vidamsi, ariyasaccāni pāka/FL16Dhāni karoti. Tato yogāvacaro aniccanti vā dukkhanti vā anuttāṭi vā sammappaññāya passati. Evaṃ kho mahārāja obhāsanaluakkhaṇā paññā.

\(^{649}\) M.III.277.
and mind). The skin outside represents the six external sense objects (visual objects, sound, smell, taste, tactile objects and thoughts). The connecting components such as the sinews, blood vessels, etc. represent the craving that arises through sensation or feeling. The sharp cutting knife corresponds to the noble wisdom (ariya paññā) by which the meditator cuts out all the defilements (kilesas) and fetters (samyojana) that exist between the internal sense organs of an individual and the external sense objects.

In addition, concerning the profound mental vision of paññā, Sayadaw states that paññā constitutes vijjā. Paññā on the solid foundation of sīla (virtue) assisted by the power of samādhi (concentration) signifies the spiritual wisdom enhancing the psychic potency for the comprehension of true nature of life. Regarding the threefold vijjā, paññā implies the essential factor of the means for not only destroying the defilements, but also the way to recollect one’s past lives and other beings’ past lives. While paññā seems to relate to the contemplative element in Theravāda Buddhism, some present scholars imply that it is merely a rational or comprehensive process. For instance, Vetter renders paññā as discriminating insight by which the meditator perceives the five constituents of one’s person as impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self. He further states that the achievement of the culmination of paññā is the consequence of the process of listening and understanding. Griffiths also implies that paññā is the rational process: “it is an awareness which can be contained within a ti clause, a discursive and intellectual understanding. That wisdom is discursive in this sense.” McMahan agrees with him:

---

652 Ibid., p. xxxiv.
Wisdom ((paññā) begins with analysis and observation that lead to direct understanding. Learning to categorize events within experience based on listening to the teachings sharpens the effectiveness of observation.\textsuperscript{654}

This means that paññā refers to the sphere of analytical understanding. In other words, paññā is the comprehensive process, as Keown writes: “Paññā is essentially the knowledge of facts.”\textsuperscript{655} Moreover, Nyanaponika equates paññā with awareness (sampajañña).\textsuperscript{656}

According to these scholars, we can assume that paññā involves only the intellectual techniques or analytical knowledge rather than profound mental vision. This viewpoint is somewhat limited, nonetheless, and cannot cover the intrinsic value of paññā. Certainly, the intellectual component of paññā refers to ecstatic mental vision, but not to the rational or comprehensive process only. Although paññā can exist in accompaniment with all perception and knowledge, they are not necessarily associated with others.\textsuperscript{657} It implies the contemplative process, which is based on spiritual development as, Varma says:

\begin{quote}
The praññā (paññā) which is attained as a consequence of the culmination of the spiritual and moral efforts of a Bhikkhu is not the result of any more rational enquiry.\textsuperscript{658}
\end{quote}

The detail of this spiritual development is apparent in the Discourse to Sonadaṇḍa,\textsuperscript{659} where the Buddha regards paññā as the attainment of the four jhānas and supernatural knowledge (abhijñā). Therefore, paññā does not only stand for the bare mental process of a certain degree of complexity, but also implies the cultivation of mental processes applied to the mode of profound visual intuition.

\textsuperscript{655} Damien Keown, op. cit., p. 80.
\textsuperscript{656} Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 46.
\textsuperscript{658} Varma, op. cit, p. 268.
\textsuperscript{659} D.I.124.
The evaluation of the three kinds of paññā indicates the significance of bhāvanāmayapaññā only for the process of vipassanā. In the Saṅgīrisutta, paññā is distinguished into three kinds: wisdom that is thought out (cintāmayapaññā), wisdom that is learned (from another) (sutamayapaññā), and wisdom that is gained by development (bhāvanāmayapaññā). The first one, cintāmayapaññā, which one acquires through one’s own intellection is the wisdom that kamma is the property of each person. It is also the wisdom that arises through exposure to the truths of the vocational and scientific world. The wisdom that one acquires through learning from others is called “wisdom that is learned from another.” Attaining concentration, one develops all wisdom that is gained by development.

According to Johansson’s explanation, the wisdom gained by development seems to support vipassanā: “…this (bhāvanāmayapaññā) can, as we have seen, result in both personal experience of the truth of the Buddhist teaching, and in liberating effects.” For the development of vipassanā, Goenka points to bhāvanāmayapaññā as well. While considering the first two types as not peculiar to the teaching of the Buddha, he regards bhāvanāmayapaññā as the means of achieving direct realization of truth that is the technique of the process of vipassanā. Besides this, Harvey indicates that the perfection of wisdom results from bhāvanāmayapaññā only. Panth also disagrees with the first two types and supports the third:

Similarly, a non-vipassanā meditator may develop paññā but it may only be sutamayapaññā or cintāmayapaññā, leading one to accept the truth only at the devotional or intellectual level respectively. But a

---

660 D.III.219.
661 Upatissa, op. cit., p. 231.
663 S.N. Goenka, op. cit., p. 114.
It is shown that, rather than *sutamayapaññā* or *cintāmayapaññā*, *bhāvanāmayapaññā* is the key factor to perform the visual intuition which is central to the process of *vipassanā*. Nevertheless, the *Vibhaṅga* tends to prefer *cintāmayapaññā* for initiating *vipassanā*. In this text, *cintāmayapaññā*, which is produced by one’s own reasoning, is expanded from the worldly state of knowledge up to the state of knowledge that is in conformity with truth.666

Furthermore, the commentary on the *Vibhaṅga* explains that the knowledge that is in conformity with truth is knowledge arising through insight (*vipassanāñā*).667 This is of considerable importance, but the term ‘*cintāmayapaññā*’ relies on the function of consciousness and understanding through thinking. Indeed, the state of knowledge endowed with the capacity to reason probably obtains right or wrong information. This is because truth is knowledge that is difficult to realize, tranquilizing and not to be grasped by mere logic, as the Buddha’s teaching in *Brahmajālasutta* demonstrates:

> These, monks, are those things, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathāgata, having realized them through his own supernatural knowledge, proclaims them.668

Because of the difficulty of penetrating truth by reasoning or logic, *cintāmayapaññā* is only knowledge in respect to vocational works or works of science, as is described in the *Vimuttimagga*.669 Closely related to *cintāmayapaññā*, *sutamayapaññā* deals mainly with language-based and conceptually oriented knowledge, mere theoretical or abstract knowledge. This

666 Vibh.324-325.
667 Vibh.-a.411.
668 D.I.17: “Ime kho te bhikkhave dhammā gambhīrā duddasā duranubodhā santā paññā atakkāvacarā nipunā panditavedanīyā ye Tathāgato sayam abhiññā sacchi-katvā pavedeti.”
669 Upatissa, op. cit., p. 231.
is not very helpful in penetrating reality. Moreover, the third type of wisdom, bhāvanāmayapaññā, which is based on concentration (samādhi), gives a great advantage that leads to freedom from the cankers (āsava).

Wisdom, when fully developed by concentration, brings great fruit and profit. The mind, when fully developed by wisdom, becomes completely free from cankers.  

Hence, among the three kinds of paññā, bhāvanāmayapaññā is entirely wisdom-developed and really assists the vipassanā process.

The psychological analysis of paññā in relation to samādhi shows that paññā requires the cooperation of samādhi in order to stimulate vipassanā. In many discourses, the fourth jhāna conduces to the purified, malleable, and workable mind so that the meditator can develop paññā in order to see things as they really are. Moreover, the deep concentration provides an intense happiness and joy, which are essential factors to serve paññā for overcoming sensuality. Clearly, there are substantial advantages of paññā when it is supported by samādhi. Buddhaghosa, of course, states that the proximate cause of paññā is samādhi. Most scholars have tended to follow him for the association of both terms. For instance, Keith writes: “intuition pervaded by concentration is fruitful.” As Sangharakshita quotes “he who is concentrated sees things as they really are,” he then points to the strong relationship between paññā and samādhi. Sujato supports this sentiment: “...sometimes jhāna is classified under wisdom, or one in jhāna is said to ‘know and see.’” Furthermore, Dhammavuddho claims that samādhi is the precondition that

---

670 D.II.81: “Samādhi-paribhāvitā paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānīsamsā, paññā-paribhāvitam cittam sammad eva āsavehi vimuccati.”


672 M.I.91.

673 Vism.438 (tr. Āṇāmoli p. 481).


675 Sangharakshita, op. cit., p.171.

enables pañña to arise.\textsuperscript{677} His opinion is reasonable because the process of mental development is divided into three successive steps; sīla, samādhi and pañña, which progress as a matter of linear sequence.\textsuperscript{678} This makes sense. If the mind has become steadied, made lucent and firm, mental power will be strengthened into a suitable state for the process of visual intuition.

However, some scholars attempt to break the relationship between pañña and samādhi. For example, Ruberu says: “pañña-bhāvanā, practised whichever way, performs a totally different and a much more valuable task than mere tranquillity or calm (samatha) meditation.”\textsuperscript{679} Vetter also shows that pañña is the predominant factor for perceiving the five constituents of one’s person as being transient, unsatisfactoriness and not-self, that is nothing to say of samādhi.\textsuperscript{680} Griffiths agrees: “there are two different types of meditative practice available to the Buddhist. On the one hand, there is samādhi/samatha bhāvanā, and on the other, vipassanā/pañña bhāvanā.”\textsuperscript{681}

According to these scholars, pañña and samādhi would be radically at odds, and it is difficult to see how they can be reconciled. But this viewpoint contradicts what Puṇṇa explains in the Rathavinītasutta.\textsuperscript{682} He compares each stage of the seven stages of purification (visuddhi) to a single chariot in a chariot relay connecting two cities. The meditator has to develop these seven stages of purification in logical sequence. In this sequential development, ethical conduct occupies the first position. Purification of mind is the next stage, followed by purification of view. The fact that purification of mind precedes purification of view implies that samādhi is a necessary basis for

\textsuperscript{677} Venerable Dhammavuddho, op. cit., p.68.
\textsuperscript{678} Thitavanaṇṇo, op. cit., p. 26.
\textsuperscript{679} Jayantha Ruberu, op. cit., p. 271.
\textsuperscript{680} Tilmann Vetter, op. cit., p. xxiii.
\textsuperscript{681} Paul Griffiths, “Concentration or Insight: The Problematic of Theravada Buddhist Meditation-Theory,” op. cit., p. 606.
\textsuperscript{682} M.I.149.
paññā. This is to say that paññā, which arises during the process of vipassanā, is closely related to proficiency in samādhi.

From our inquiry, three important points emerge concerning the intrinsic value of paññā in relation to vipassanā. First, paññā implies profound mental vision, not merely rational or comprehensive processes. Second, cintāmayapaññā and sutamayapaññā depend heavily on theoretical and abstract knowledge, which is different from the ultimate truth. Despite this, bhāvanāmayapaññā provides the ability of visual intuition that induces the process of vipassanā. The third point is that, although on approximative examination, paññā and samādhi might appear different, on detailed examination and actual practice they are both parts of a single whole.

**Knowledge (Vijjā)**

Vijjā is the fourth instrumental factor arising and developing together with the vipassanā contemplation. Some suttas mention its three kinds called the threefold knowledge. ⁶⁸³ These are: the knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatiñāna), the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings (cutūpapātañāna), and the knowledge of the destruction of the āsavas (āsavakkhayañāna). Some suttas mention the eightfold knowledge (aṭṭhavijjā): (1) the knowledge arising through insight (vipassanāñāna), (2) the knowledge of psychic power of the mind (manomayiddhiñāna), ⁶⁸⁴ (3) the knowledge of supernormal power (iddhividhañāna), ⁶⁸⁵ (4) the knowledge of divine ear-element (dibbasotadhātuñāna), (5) the knowledge of others’ minds (cetopariyañāna), (6) the knowledge of recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussatiñāna), (7) the knowledge of divine eye

---

⁶⁸³ M.I.22-23.

⁶⁸⁴ *Manomayiddhiñāna* is the psychic ability to create one or more bodies from the original body and draw them out like a sword from its scabbard.

⁶⁸⁵ *Iddhividhañāna* is the psychic ability to walk through walls, walk on water, dive into the earth, levitate and fly, and so on.
(dibbacakkhuñāna), (8) the knowledge of the destruction of the cankers or āsavas (āsavakkhayañāna). The sixth, seventh and eighth stages of the eightfold knowledge are the same as the threefold knowledge (vijjā). Both classifications of vijjā are the progress of the stages leading by degrees to the attainment of the highest knowledge. Buddhaghosa agrees with both categories of vijjā and its process.

According to the Bhayabheravasutta, the cultivation of three vijjās gains the termination of the darkness of avijjā and the perfect realization. In collaboration with the discourse, the commentaries of the Saṅgītisutta define the two meanings of vijjā as penetration through the darkness of avijjā, and causing realization. The connotation of vijjā as realization is associated with the increasing of vijjā and the reducing of avijjā. Vajirañāṇa also defines vijjā as; breaking and comprehending.

These different types of knowledge are called “Vijja in the sense of “breaking” (vida—vidāraṇe, vida, to break) of ignorance (avijjā), of “comprehending” (vida—ñāne, vida, to comprehend) of the nature of phenomenal existence, or of experiencing (vida—vede, vida, to experience) the happiness of Nirvāṇa.

The evidence seems to indicate that the ways of defining vijjā relate to a single process of perfect realization.

---

686 D.I.76-84: “So evam samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anāṅgane vigatūpakkilese mudabhūte kammaniye ōhte āneñjappatte ṅāsadassanāya cittaṃ abhiniharatī abhininnāmeti mano-mayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimmāṇaṇāya cittaṃ abhiniharatī abhininnāmeti. So anekavihitaṃ iddhibhīdham paccanaubhoti—ekopi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhāpi hutvā eko hoti...dibbāya sotadhātuyā cittaṃ abhiniharatī abhininnāmeti... cetopariyañāṇāya cittaṃ abhiniharatī abhininnāmeti...pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇāya...sattānaṃ cutūpapātañāṇāya... So dibbena cakkhunā visuddhena atikkantamānumaksakaṃ satte passati cavamāne (When his mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from imperfection, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he applies and bends down his mind towards intuition and vision...He applies and bends down his mind towards the creation of mind-made body....He enjoys the various supernormal power-being one, he becomes many, or being many, he becomes one...he applies and bends down his mind to the divine ear-element... he applies and bends down his mind to the knowledge of the others' minds... to the knowledge of the recollection of former lives... to the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings. With the divine eye, purified and surpassing that of men, he sees beings passing away.)”

687 Vism.202 (tr. Nānanīmo p.213) “Tattha vijjāti tissopi vijjā atṭhapi vijjā (Herein, as to vijjā: there are three kinds of vijjā and eight kinds of vijjā.)”

688 M.I.22-23.

689 Sv.III.1006.

690 Vajirañāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 189.
The Buddha can be called omniscient because of his accessibility to the threefold *vijjā*, which is comprised of the visual intuition based solely on deep concentration. An evaluation of *vijjā* will portray these exegetical issues as follows: an analysis of the threefold Buddhist *vijjā*; whether or not the *jhānas* are essential for the development of *vijjā*; whether or not the Buddha is omniscient; and an individual evaluation of each of the threefold *vijjā*.

The threefold *vijjā* which is developed from mental unification and purification relates to genuine knowledge, but is far removed from the threefold knowledge of the brāhmin.\(^{691}\) The threefold *vijjā* refers to the genuine knowledge of Buddhism because the Buddha attained the three *vijjās* in succession, one in each of the three watches of the night. The first *vijjā* arises from sending the memory back prior to the moment of birth to one’s succession of former births, and then, by applying the appropriate mental power, recalling back through innumerable former lives, and even through the many previous aeons of the universe. This is the same as if recalling the towns and regions one has visited during a journey.\(^{692}\)

The second *vijjā* comprises the death and rebirth of sentient beings according to their wholesome and unwholesome conduct of body, speech and mind. The knowledge acquired by virtue of the divine-eye is similar to that of a person who, from a high tower, watches people entering and leaving a building.\(^{693}\) The third *vijjā* is that of the destruction of the āsavas (cankers); kāmāsava (canker of sense-pleasures), bhavāsava (canker of becoming) and avijjāsava (canker of ignorance). Beginning with an understanding of the four noble truths as they

---

691 A brāhmin is a member of Brāhman caste; one who prays or chants hymns.
692 M.I.22.
693 M.I.22-23.
really are, the knowledge attained through the perfect realization of the āsavas then leads the mind to be free from all of the cankers (āsavas). 694

Possession of these three vijjās, in particular the third (āsavakkhayaañāṇa), is the mark of an enlightened being. However, some scholars such as Pio 695 believe that early Buddhists adapted the term ‘vijjā’ from the Brahmaṇic doctrine to their own usage. It is accepted that the meaning of vijjā as knowledge is related to the meaning of Veda of pre-Buddhist texts. Nonetheless, the various discourses point out that the experience of vijjā refers to the spiritual attainment that the Buddha had not heard before. 696 This means that before his enlightenment, the Buddha studied yoga under different teachers and attained the fourth arūpajjhāna. These forms of knowledge and experience are not relevant to his experiences of vijjā. According to the Pāli canon, the arising of vijjā, an instrumental factor of vipassanā, is the exclusive experience for Buddhist meditation. The threefold knowledge of Buddhism is distinctly separate from the threefold knowledge of Brāhmaṇism as the explanation of Tikaṇṇa the brāhmin in the Tikaṇṇasutta demonstrates.

In this case, master Gotama, a brāhmin is well born on both the mother’s and father’s side, of pure descent back through seven generations, unblamed and irreproachable in respect of birth, a scholar, knowing the verses by heart, mastered in the three Vedas with the indices, the ritual, the phonology and the oral tradition as a fifth: he is a man learned in the words and in the grammar, versed in natural philosophy and the signs of the great man. That, master Gotama, is how the Brāhmins describe a brāhmin who has the threefold knowledge. 697

The threefold knowledge of Brāhmaṇism depends heavily on the one’s own lineage and on mastery of the contents of the rituals, especially in relation to the three Vedas. The various hymns in these three Vedic literatures contain a

---

694 M.I.23.
695 Edwina Pio, op. cit., p. 80.
variety of information about the social, political, and religious life of common people in Vedic time. According to Buddhaghosa’s explanation, the three Vedas are Iruveda (Skt. Rg Veda), Yajuveda (Skt. Yajur Veda) and Sāmaveda (Skt. Sāma Veda). The Rg Veda contains hymns that offer praises and prayers to various deities for different favours such as long life and material blessings. The Yajur Veda is the collection of the books of prayers and the Sāma Veda is the collection of the books of chants. Both collections aim to show the rituals used in the context of sacrifice (yajña).

The Buddha replies to Tikaṇṇa the brāhmin that these three Vedas are different from the threefold vijjā in the discipline of noble one. In the Ānāpānasatisutta, the fulfillment of vijjā appears to be derived from the cultivation of the seven factors of awakening which are mindfulness (sati), investigation of dhamma (dhammavacaya), effort (viriya), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi), and equanimity (upekkhā). This passage indicates that the threefold vijjā of the Buddhist relies on mental development, which is based on the tranquilizing process of samatha. It can be concluded that the threefold knowledge (vijjā) of Buddhism is in disagreement with that of Brāhmaṇism, which is quoted above.

The determination of the prerequisite of the eightfold knowledge supports an understanding of the four jhānas as the basis of vijjā. The Sāmaññaphalasutta clearly expresses the eightfold knowledge as the consequent psychological state of the four jhānas. After emerging from the fourth jhāna, the meditator directs attention to his or her own body and mind for the establishment of the first vijjā. Similarly, while pointing to the textual description of the first vijjā,
Gimello states that concentration is really only the necessary prelude to an analytical discernment of the truths of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*).\(^{704}\) It is probable that the mental unification promotes the penetration of truths.

In contrast, Griffiths contradicts the progression from the four *jhānas* to the first *vijjā*, which provides the ability to see clearly into the way things are.\(^{705}\) He seems to attempt to distinguish the key term ‘intuition and vision’ (*ñāṇadassana*) of the first of eightfold *vijjā* from the preliminary concentration and purification of the mind. He proposes instead the redactional addition of a concentrative technique into what were original contents of the eightfold knowledge (*vijjā*).\(^{706}\) It may be that the *Pāli* passage,\(^{707}\) related to concentration, is repeatedly added to original contents of each kind of knowledge for whatever reason. However, the other discourses regard the association between concentration and the ability to see things as they really are as the important concept of spiritual development. For instance, the *Discourse on Concentration* (*Samādhisutta*) states:

> Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are.\(^{708}\)

In addition, the *Discourse on the Unvirtuous* (*Dussīlasutta*) regards concentration as the preceding state of *yathābhūtañāṇadassana* (intuition and vision of things as they really are).

> When there is perfect concentration, then there is the cause for intuition and vision of things as they really are for one who has perfect concentration.\(^{709}\)

---

\(^{704}\) Robert M Gimello, op. cit., p. 181.  
\(^{705}\) Paul J. Griffiths, *Indian Buddhist Meditation-Theory: History, Development and Systematization*, op. cit., p. 82.  
\(^{706}\) Ibid.  
\(^{707}\) So evām samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyođāte anāṅgane vigatūpakkilese mudubbhūte kammaniye ṭhite āneñjappatte.  
\(^{708}\) S.IV.80: “*samādhim bhikkhave bhāvetha samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhūtam pajiñātī*.”  
\(^{709}\) A.III.20: “*samāsāmādhisampannassa upanisasampannam hoti yathābhūtañāṇadassanam.*”
The more evidence of the relationship between concentration and vijjā is found in the Mahāvacchasutta, where there is spiritual power of vijjā to be gained when vipassanā and samatha are developed in skillful cooperation. When these discourses are considered, it is difficult to conclude that the concentrative technique is added to the original contents of vijjās. The development of vijjā is not possible unless and until the meditator develops the perfect concentration, which is the attainment of four jhānas. Therefore, there is cogent reason to conclude that concentration is conducive to the structure of Buddhist knowledge (vijjā).

An evaluation of the threefold vijjā will refer to “whether or not the Buddha is omniscient.” It is generally accepted that the Buddha possesses the two profound spiritual experiences: vijjā and caraṇa (conduct). Consequently, the fulfilment of vijjā causes the Buddha to be regarded as an omniscient person. Nonetheless, in the Discourse on the Three Knowledges to Vacchagotta (Tevijjavacchasutta), the ascetic named Vaccha requests verification of rumours he has heard about the Buddha:

Venerable sir, those, who say this: The recluse Gotama is all-knowing and all-seeing and acknowledges remainderless intuition and vision thus: ‘while I am walking, standing, sleeping or awake, intuition and vision present to me continually and uninterruptedly’.

This statement addresses the Buddha as all-knowing (sabbaññū) which is of semantic relevance to having unlimited knowledge of omniscience. The Buddha informs Vaccha that this statement falsely represents him, rejecting the notion that he is literally omniscient. He states that rather than this omniscience, he possesses the threefold knowledge which is essential for his enlightenment.

---

710 M.I.494-496.
711 Vajirāṇañ Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., pp. 189-190.
712 M.I.482: “Ye te bhante evam-dhamsu: samana Gotamo sabbaññū sabbadassāvi, aparisesaṁ ānādassaneṁ paṭijānāti: carato ca me tiṭṭhato ca sutassa ca jāgarassa ca sataṭaṁ samitaṁ ānādassaneṁ paccupaṭṭhitanti.”
That is to say, a study of the threefold knowledge can clarify the distinction between sabbaññū and this omniscience.

In a remarkable contribution to this discourse, Bucknell and Stuart-Fox imply that the Buddha is not omniscient or is less than perfect due to the inconsistent appearance of the first and second knowledges.\textsuperscript{713} They perhaps see fault in the Buddha’s enlightenment because of his discontinuous ability for mental perception and vision. In the \textit{Tevijjavacchasutta}, it is said that the Buddha can employ the first two knowledges whenever he chooses, but they do not operate all the time. Throughout this discourse, according to the interpretation of Bucknell and Stuart-Fox, the Buddha appears not to be omniscient.

In contrast, a detailed examination of the threefold knowledge reveals that the Buddha is characterised by omniscience. In fact, omniscience and sabbaññū may not be present at all times, but may be available whenever one chooses. The proper attainment of the first and second knowledges should rely on their profound states but not their incessant characteristics. This theme is found in the \textit{Mahāgosīṅgasutta},\textsuperscript{714} where the nature of abiding in attainment (samāpatti) appears to be an intermittent abiding because the meditators can obtain any attainment they want. In the discourse, Sāriputta defines the nature of monks who have well-trained minds as the ability to obtain any attainment (samāpatti) whenever they wish at any time of the morning, afternoon and evening. He gives an example of the nature of achieving only one samāpatti in a moment via the simile of a king who has a wardrobe containing differently dyed clothes. The king can don only one garment at a time according to his pleasure. According to the ascetic named Vaccha’s statement on omniscience, monks who have well-trained minds should abide in samāpattis all the time. Because the king believes that he increases the value of wearing one garment by wearing

\textsuperscript{713} Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., p. 80.
\textsuperscript{714} M.I.214-215.
ten, he puts on all the garments at the same time. Thus, the proper way to achieve the first two knowledges is to perform them one at a time. Moreover, Bucknell and Stuart-Fox clearly understand the attainment of the *jhānas* as prerequisite to attainment of the threefold knowledge.\textsuperscript{715} This means that the unification of mind is the essential factor in attaining omniscience and, therefore, only one attainment can be achieved at one time. Their idea that the first and second knowledges involve incessant processes seems to contrast with the notion of mental unification as the basis of the threefold knowledge. Therefore, even though an intermittent achievement of the first two knowledges of the Buddha is not the same as omniscience in relation to the statement of Vaccha the ascetic, this does not affect the claim to omniscience in regard to its intrinsic value because he can attain them according to his will. The meaning of *sabbaññū* as all-knowing seems compatible with the state of having unlimited knowledge of omniscience. According to the above discussion of the *Pāli* canon, the interpretation of *sabbaññū* as knowing everything whenever one chooses is different from omniscience in the sense of knowing everything all of the time.

The first knowledge is the process of visual intuition based on the fourth *jhāna*, which recollects the specific mental and physical conditions undergone in one’s continuum of previous existences. In the *Bhayabheravasutta*, the Buddha, of course, indicates that the four *jhānas* are the foundations of the first knowledge of recollection of former lives (*pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa*) and clarifies that the former lives have continued through a hundred thousand births and through many aeons. He further organises his former lives into various categories such as name, clan, colour, nourishment and feeling.\textsuperscript{716} The recollection of former lives is intimately related to the doctrine of the circle of existence (*samsāra*),

\textsuperscript{715} Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., p. 78.
\textsuperscript{716} M.I.22.
which is the principal doctrine of Buddhism. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha describes his former deaths and rebirths as ‘a process of running through the journeying-on’ of numerous births until attainment of the termination of cravings (*tāṇhā*).\(^{717}\)

While the Buddhist canons particularly express the substance of rebirth in the description of the first knowledge, Bucknell and Stuart-Fox tend to negate the circle of existences. They propose the first knowledge of recollection of former lives as recollection of the constantly repeating arising and ceasing of momentary mental stages. They then identify this knowledge with the retracing of image sequences.\(^{718}\) According to their analysis, this process of retracing of the thought sequences contrasts with the mental unification of the concentration practice.\(^{719}\)

However, this interpretation of the retracing of image sequences appears to deviate from the textual analysis of the first knowledge related to the Buddhist early texts. According to the conventional pattern of the first knowledge in the *suttas*, the four *jhānas* are fundamental to the first knowledge; in contrast, retracing of image sequences does not involve any deep level of concentration. Further evidence is found in the *Vimuttimagga*, where Upatissa elucidates the meditative approach of recollection of former lives based on the fourth *jhāna*. Meditators accomplish control of mind and recollect on what they have done during a day, during two days and thus backward to a month, a year and a hundred years up to their last birth. They can recollect their past lives; one life, two lives, three lives and so forth by means of the purified mind. For

\(^{717}\) Dhp.153-154.  
\(^{718}\) Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., pp. 80-85.  
\(^{719}\) Ibid., pp. 55-56.
purification of mind, Upatissa proposes the repeated development of *jhāna* as that of burnishing a mirror.\(^{720}\)

According to this interpretation of the canon and *Vimuttimagga*, the mind performs like a video recorder in collecting every event during the circle of existences. Since all the memory of past lives is in there, the meditator does not need to create or bring about any mental objects. While the mind purifies and comes to a standstill in a certain state, meditators realize their preceding existences in *saṁsāra* by deeply penetrating their own minds. The mind is like a deep pool of water. If the water is unpurified and its surface is constantly rippled by the wind, one cannot see what lies beneath the surface. Once the surface movement subsides and the water is purified, then the whole pool becomes visible. The mind’s hidden existence in *saṁsāra* will be revealed once the mind has been stilled and purified through concentration practice. The purification and one-pointedness of mind brought about through the fourth *jhāna* constitute the most essential approach to the first knowledge.

Furthermore, the Buddhist canon and commentaries clearly illustrate the prerequisite (the fourth *jhāna*), process and description of recollection of previous lives. After deliberation, the *arahant* brothers and sisters in the *Apadānapāli* also describe their past lives beyond the moment of birth to their preceding existence in *saṁsāra*.\(^ {721}\) Instead of following the discourse of the Buddha and *arahant* disciples in the canons and commentaries, Bucknell and Stuart-Fox interpret the births and deaths of *saṁsāra* as the frequently repeated arising and ceasing of thoughts only. This mentalistic interpretation of *saṁsāra*, which contradicts most orthodox interpretations, seems to be an example of wrong view (*micchādiṭṭhi*). The interpretation of *saṁsāra* as former lives appears to link *vijjās* with *samatha* and *vipassanā*. In the *Āgantukasutta*, the

\(^{720}\) Upatissa, op. cit., p. 222.

Buddha recommends the developments of *samatha* and *vipassanā* through the supernatural knowledge (*abhiññā*) as follows:

Monks, what things should be developed through supernatural knowledge? Tranquillity and insight—these are the things that should be developed through supernatural knowledge.\(^{722}\)

The supernatural knowledge consists of six knowledges, which already include the three knowledges. They rely on deep concentration progressing to the skilfulness of the fourth *jhāna* contemplation.\(^{723}\) Therefore, it is concluded that *vipassanā* collaborates with the three knowledges on the basis of attainment of *jhānas*, but not on the basis of retracing thought sequences.

The second knowledge is acquired by means of mental vision purified through the fourth *jhāna*, rather than by means of observation of the ceasing and arising of images. As his general explanation, the Buddha clearly defines the second knowledge as the knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings in different aspects according to their actions by deed, word and thought, that is, *kamma*.\(^{724}\) Moreover, he illustrates the second knowledge as observing beings as they pass away from one form of existence and come into another form in relation to their own actions. To perceive in this way is to be like the man who stands on a tower in the midst of where four roads meet and who thus easily watches the people wandering around the village.

However, in *The Twilight Language*, the second knowledge is the knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings, according to their *kamma*, interpreted as observation of the ceasing and arising of images according to previous emotional involvement.\(^{725}\) Here, nothing is said of *jhāna* or any other form of concentration. Indeed, Bucknall and Stuart-Fox refer to the Buddha’s statement

\(^{722}\) S.V.52: “Katame ca bhikkhave dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā samatho ca vipassanā ca ime bhikkhave dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā.”

\(^{723}\) Upatissa, op. cit., p. 209.

\(^{724}\) D.I.82-83.

\(^{725}\) Roderick S. Bucknall and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., pp. 85-89.
of calling volition (cetanā) as kamma to identify kamma as emotional involvement in the mental contents. They imply that the second knowledge is observation of the ceasing and arising of images. If this is correct, we can infer that the fulfilment of the second knowledge does not require any fundamental constituents. In contrast, in the Vimuttimagga, Upatissa proposes that the development of the second knowledge starts from a suppression of the eleven defilements (upakkilesa) and an employment of the light kasiṇa to the fourth jhāna contemplation. The meditator strengthens the mind and increases the light until surpassing the sun in splendour.

Upatissa clarifies how to develop the mental vision of the divine eye in order to obtain the second knowledge of passing away and the arising of beings and knowledge of their kamma. An analytical evaluation of the canon and commentaries reveals that Bucknell and Stuart-Fox’s idea of the observation of the ceasing and arising of images according to previous emotional involvement deviates from the orthodox meditative approach of the second knowledge based on the development of the fourth jhāna. It is conceivable from early Buddhist texts that the second knowledge relies on the ability of profound mental vision, which is based on the fourth jhāna rather than on the mere observation of the ceasing and arising of images.

The third knowledge of destroying all cankers is based on the development of awareness and concentration into the profound contemplative experiences rather than a superficial level of awareness. According to the stereotyped formula of the third knowledge, it is nothing less than knowledge of the destruction of the cankers by means of the serene, pure, translucent and firm

---

726 Upatissa, op. cit., p. 224.
727 The eleven upakkilesas comprise doubt (vicikicchā), lack of proper attention (amanasikāra), sloth and torpor (thīnamiddha), consternation (chambhitatta), elation (uppīla), distress (duṭṭhalla), too much energy (accārauddhāviriya), too feeble an energy (atilinaviriya), longing (abhijappā), perception of diversity (nānattasaññā), state of being too intent (rūpa-atiniḥjāyītassa).
mind. The meditative approach of the third knowledge is the realization of the four noble truths, cankers, origin of the cankers, cessation of the cankers and the path that leads to the cessation of the cankers. After knowing and seeing in this way, the mind is set free from all cankers and ēnā (intuition) arises to support recognition of the disappearance of the cankers.\textsuperscript{728}

Though it is contended that this path of salvation is derived from the path of concentration plus complete realization of the first two knowledges, Bucknell and Stuart-Fox propose a correspondence between the third knowledge and awareness only.\textsuperscript{729} They arrive at this conclusion through the analysis of the term ‘canker (āsava)’ into three categories: kāmāsava (canker of sense pleasure), bhavāsava (canker of becoming) and avijjāsava (canker of ignorance). Accordingly, they give the definition of bhava (existence) as an affective involvement in the content of the thought-stream, based on the identification of samsāra as the stream of images. They combine the first two āsavas and then interpret āsavas into two categories: (1) ignorance, which is failure to perceive the true nature of images and the mechanism of linking, and (2) emotional involvement in sense objects and images. According to their proposal, awareness corresponds to the third knowledge because it is incompatible with ‘ignorance’ regarding the nature of the mental contents, and with emotional involvement of any kind.

Therefore, this interpretation of the third knowledge corresponds to an exercising of awareness. Nonetheless, this interpretation does not convey a clear idea of the early Buddhist texts as the following suttas extract shows:

(1) The Tipitaka illustrates the four jhānas as the foundation for the development of the three knowledges (vijjās), whereas awareness alone is the preceding meditative step before the development of

\textsuperscript{728} D.I.83-84.
\textsuperscript{729} Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., pp. 88-89.
the first jhāna in gradual training according to the 
Gaṇakamoggallānasutta.\textsuperscript{730}

(2) The interpretation of samsāra as the thought-stream (javanacittha) 
is a wrong view (micchādītiṭhi) leading to wrong knowledge and 
limiting ultimate knowledge to the superficial level of awareness.

(3) The realization of the āsavas is based on the development of 
profound internal vision but not mere observation of thoughts. 
After the destruction of all āsavas, īța arises to acknowledge the 
absence of the āsavas.\textsuperscript{731}

In the sequence of practices relating to the third knowledge, the meditator needs 
to realize the four noble truths before realization of the cankers, origin of the 
cankers, cessation of the cankers and the path that leads to the cessation of the 
cankers. Since the five instrumental factors of insight, cakkhu, īţa, paţţa, 
viţjā and āloka, arise twelve times during the process of realization of the four 
noble truths in the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta, they are the main factors for 
the realization of the four noble truths and the process of destroying the 
cankers. The arising of five instrumental factors based on the development of 
the jhānas is the main process involved in recognition through knowing and 
seeing. The meditator should develop these five factors by advancing along the 
path of contemplation of the three knowledges until a sufficiently intensive 
ţa arises to support recognition of the disappearance of the cankers. Finally, 
rather than the superficial level of awareness, the five instrumental factors of 
insight are the common factors of the development of the three knowledges and 
vipassanā contemplation.

From this discussion of viţjā, an evaluation has emerged which involves six 
important aspects. First, the threefold knowledge (viţjā) of the Buddhists, 
differing from that of the Brāhmin through a reliance on mental development, is

\textsuperscript{730}M.III.3-4.  
\textsuperscript{731}D.I.84.
the genuine knowledge of Buddhism. Second, the ability to see things as they really are depends on the degree of mental unification which has been attained. The advanced stage of this ability contributes to the progress of vijjā. Third, the Buddha is not omniscient in the sense of that he lacks the ability to see everything all the time and only intermittently achieves the first two knowledges. Despite this, a closer analysis of the threefold knowledge reveals that the ability to attain these knowledges according to his will is more than enough for him to be called an ‘omniscient person.’ Fourth, modern psychology regards the recollection of former lives (pubbenivāsānussati) as the retracing of image sequences. In contrast to this psychological interpretation, the textual analysis of early Buddhist texts and commentaries regards it as a process of visual intuition based on the fourth jhāna, which recollects the mental and physical aggregates experienced in one’s own personal continuum of former rebirths. While the mind purifies and comes to a standstill after attaining the fourth jhāna, in penetrating their own minds, meditators realize their preceding existences in samsāra. Fifth, the second knowledge presented in the early Buddhist texts is clearly grounded in profound mental vision, which is based on the fourth jhāna rather than on mere observation of the ceasing and arising of images. Therefore, it is the knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings in various manifestations according to their deeds, words and thoughts. Lastly, it is accepted that the meditative practice of awareness leads to the third knowledge. However, the profound spiritual experience of this knowledge is much more advanced than the superficial level of awareness. The third knowledge, of course, relies on the development of the five instrumental factors of insight; cakkhu, ūṇa, paññā, vijjā and āloka, which are based on the development of awareness and concentration until their sufficiently intensive level arises to support recognition of the disappearance of the cankers.

732 Roderick S. Bucknell and Martin Stuart-Fox, op. cit., pp. 80-85.
**Light (Āloka)**

Āloka is the final instrumental factor of insight, which arises with the first four instrumental factors during the development of vipassanā. Its translation as light is used widely to refer to mental understanding as an enlightening experience, for example: “They achieve the light of spiritual experience.” In the Pubbasutta, a more specific application of light to the enlightenment path becomes apparent during the contemplation of the bases for supernormal power (iddhipādas). Here the Buddha proclaims that the collective purpose of developing the iddhipādas is the imbuing of opened mind with luminosity and then the attainment of sixfold abhiññā. Another evidence of a direct application of light can be found in the Mahāsaccakasutta, which states the arising of light together with the spiritual progress in mode of vijjā. Moreover, light appears to be the essential factor for superior mental vision, since Buddhaghosa insists that the light kasina is the best object of the jhāna to initiate the arising of divine eye knowledge (dibbacakkhuñāna). For the development of divine eye, Upatissa also proposes the contemplation of the light kasina in order to obtain the fourth jhāna. Āloka, being the essential factor of vision, can be developed to sustain the main characteristics of particular and special seeing of vipassanā. The cooperation of the five instrumental factors suggests that the cultivation of uninterrupted and strong mental illumination of āloka comprises in collaboration with the whole process of vipassanā. This suggestion will be considered in accordance with the two aspects of āloka; the imperfection of vipassanā and its essential attributes for the commencement of vipassanā.

Āloka is not the imperfection of vipassanā; instead, it contributes to the progresses of not only vipassanā, but also the other skillful (kusala) dhammas.

---

733 S.V.263-265.
734 M.I.247-249.
735 Vism.427-428 (tr. Ṣāṇamoli p. 469-470).
736 Upatissa, op. cit., p. 224.
It is well known that in every version of the first sermon, “Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth (Dhammacakkappavattanasutta),”737 carries the Buddha’s explanation, that when he directed his mind to each of the four noble truths, internal light (āloka)738 occurred twelve times. The four noble truths seem to be the particular type of dhamma, which can be seen internally, as stated by Gavampati;

Friends, in the presence of the Blessed One, I have heard and learnt this:
“Monks, one who sees suffering sees also the origin of suffering, sees also the cessation of suffering and sees also the path leading to the cessation of suffering.”739

Indeed, the consciousness of light enables the meditator to obtain the intuition and vision (ñāṇadassana) as following;

Monks, how does concentrative meditation, when developed and made much of, conduces to gaining intuition and vision?
Here, Monks, monk pays attention to the perception of light, he remains his mind firm in the perception of daylight, by night as by day, by day as by night. In this way, with clear and unclouded mind, he develops the mind to brilliance.740

Ñāṇadassana is the essential factor for supporting the function of visual intuition of vipassanā. From the definition of vipassanāñāṇa, ſañādassana is the predominant factor to initiate vipassanāñāṇa.

He applies and bends down his mind towards intuition and vision. He understands this: “This my body has form, it is composed of the four great elements, born of father and mother…”741

In introducing the link between āloka and vipassanā, these passages show that āloka causes the arising of ſañādassana and subsequently vipassanāñāṇa.

737 S.V.422.
738 Perhaps, internal light, āloka, can be compared to external light. Since visual consciousness arises because of physical eyes, material shapes and external light, the profound consciousness of internal vision arises because of the eye of wisdom (paññā), mental objects (dhamma) and internal light (āloka).
739 S.V.436-437: “Sammukhā me tam āvuso Bhagavato suta/FL143h sammukhā pa/FL16Dhiggahīta/FL143h– yo bhikkhave dukkhampassati dukkhasamudayam pi so passati dukkhanirodham pi passati dukkhanirodhakagaminī- patipadam pi passati.”
740 A.II.45: “Katamā ca bhikkhave samādhibhāvanā bhāvitā bahulikatā ſañānadassanapatilabbhāya samvattati?
Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu ālokasatthāṁ manasikaroti divāsaṇāṁ adhitthāṁ yathā divā tathā rattiṁ yathā Rattiṁ tathā divā. Iti viva/FL16Dhena cetasa aparīyonaḍādhena sappabhāsaṁ cittaṁ bhāveti.”
While the above evidence contributes to the essence of āloka for vipassanā contemplation, Buddhaghosa disregards āloka as the imperfection of vipassanā.

When man is bringing (formations) to mind as impermanent, illumination (āloka) arises in him. He adverts to the illumination thus “Illumination is a (noble one’s) state.” The distraction due to that is agitation.⁷⁴²

Many scholars have attempted to follow him. For instance, Gunaratana says: “ten unprecedented experiences (including āloka) are likely to arise in him. Because they can impede his progress”⁷⁴³ Fuller,⁷⁴⁴ Thavaro⁷⁴⁵ and Vanarat⁷⁴⁶ agree. In spite of this consideration, it is not plausible that āloka, which promotes the process of mental vision, will be the defilement of vipassanā. It is not only vipassanā; āloka is one component inducing the other Dhamma states, as shown in the Mahantattasutta.

Monks, being endowed with six things, a monk attains greatness and expansiveness in dhammas in no long time. What six? Here, monks, a monk has great light…⁷⁴⁷

In this case, āloka is regarded as some form of intellectual insight perfectly realizing the mental objects (dhamma). These dhamma states also include paññā: “There is no radiance like wisdom (natthi paññāsāmā ābhā)”⁷⁴⁸ Furthermore, in regard to the threefold knowledge contemplation, āloka arises in collaboration with each vijjā until the highest vijjā, which is the knowledge of destruction of cankers.⁷⁴⁹ It is clear that āloka provides the ability of

⁷⁴² Vism.633 (tr. Ṛṣṇamoli p. 739).
⁷⁴⁵ Phra Maha Vira Thavaro, op. cit., p. 91.
⁷⁴⁶ Somdet Phra Vanarat, op. cit., p. 37.
⁷⁴⁸ S.I.6.
⁷⁴⁹ M.I.247-249.
profound mental vision, which is the essential factor for the development of *vipassanā*. Therefore, it should not be called the imperfection of *vipassanā*.

During the process of *vipassanā*, āloka is the continual and strong radiance of mind rather than the flashing of a light. A consideration of the wider definition of the English term, of course, shows that light is associated with understanding, or with an enlightening experience. It is recognised also in common parlance that there is a relationship between light and understanding, for example: “I finally saw the light,” or “Can you shed light on this problem.” The comprehensive meaning of light is like the radiance of mind dispelling the mental obstruction, which is darkness. In Buddhist psychology, many scholars tend to interpret *vipassanā* as the comprehensive meaning of light. For instance, Nyanatiloka assigns a meaning to *vipassanā*: “Insight is the intuitive light flashing forth and exposing the truth of the impermanency, the suffering and the impersonal.”\(^{750}\) Pio writes in the similar way: “It (*vipassanā*) was the mental flash and sure knowledge that one had found the answer.”\(^{751}\)

If a light flashing signifies the process of *vipassanā*, one might suspect why the Buddha suggests the continual development of āloka for ṇāṇadassana: “Here, Monks, monk pays attention to the perception of light; he remains his mind firm in the perception of daylight, by night as by day, by day as by night.”\(^{752}\) In place of light flashing, Sangharakshita interprets *vipassanā* as a discrete series of flashes coming with increasing frequency. This series gradually merges into the sustained emissions of radiance and then into the unbroken transcendent illumination of perfect wisdom.\(^{753}\) His rendition agrees with the Buddhist

\(^{751}\) Edwina Pio, op. cit., p. 80.
\(^{752}\) A.II.45.
\(^{753}\) Sangharakshita, op. cit., p.180.
viewpoint of a gradual mode of spiritual progress without abruptness, as proclaimed by the Buddha in the *Pahārādasutta*:

Pahārāda, just as the great ocean has a gradual incline, a gradual leading, a gradual slope, not in an abrupt way like a precipice; even so, Pahārāda, in this dhamma and discipline there is a gradual training, a gradual practice, a gradual mode of progress; there is no penetrated final knowledge in an abrupt way. ⁷⁵⁴

It appears from the above statement that āloka gradually progresses along with the process of *vipassanā*, rather than being the mere flashing of light. Incidentally, Sangharakshita’s viewpoint can be seen as problematic in regard to the initial state of *vipassanā*. During the commencement of *vipassanā*, āloka arises in collaboration with cakkhu, ņāṇa, paññā and vijjā. From their cooperation, the instrumental factor of āloka can be considered in relation with the four latter instrumental factors. Comparing paññā and vijjā to āloka, the radiance of mind which is suitable to penetrate the truth as the function of paññā and to recollect the former lives as the function of the first vijjā seems to be profound, reinforced and incessant. Besides this, the Buddha clearly states in his account of his enlightenment that the fourth *jhāna* is the basis of the threefold knowledge. ⁷⁵⁵ Consequently, the radiance of mind which arises in collaboration with the deep and profound concentration of the fourth *jhāna* seems to be uninterrupted and securely established rather than a mere mental flashing of light. Even though the meditator cultivates the radiance of mind from its intermittent and weak beginnings, it needs to be reinforced and constant before the process of superior mental vision of *vipassanā* can arise.

In this section, the characteristics of āloka which arise and progress in accompaniment with the process of *vipassanā* have been examined. Unfortunately, most scholars tend to disregard āloka as just an impediment of

⁷⁵⁴ A.IV.200-201.
⁷⁵⁵ M.I.21-22.
vipassanā. Despite this, it is found in the above examination that āloka plays a pivotal role with respect to vipassanā practice. Next, the flashing of light cannot represent the superior mental vision of vipassanā. Accordingly, it needs to be cultivated into an uninterrupted and profound state in order to facilitate the process of vipassanā.

This work has so far assessed the practical implication of vipassanā through its predominant factors in relation to the five instrumental factors of insight: vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāṇa), wisdom (paññā), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka). An examination of cakkhu and its interchangeable term, dassana, reveals that a mode of profound mental vision- in terms of ‘dhamma-cakkhu’ based on deep concentration- is of considerable relevance and participates in the development of vipassanā. The advanced stages of vipassanā rely on the profound visual intuition in term of āvīraṇa, which involves the ascent of ten vipassanā-āvīraṇas and of six kinds of supernatural knowledge (abhiññā). Paññā, which is based on mental development in the experience of deep concentration, plays the role of visual intuition that is the main characteristic of vipassanā. With the process of visual intuition based on deep concentration, instead of the retracing image sequences, the mind can be directed towards the development of vipassanā and then vijjā. Although the Buddha cannot attain the threefold vijjā all the time, he is omniscient because he can access the threefold vijjā according to his will. Lastly, the process of vipassanā needs to be initiated and cultivated through the ascending of uninterrupted and profound mental illumination of āloka.

**Obstruction of Vipassanā**

Having discussed the obstruction of vipassanā in relation to āvīraṇa and āloka, this work will attempt now to determine the actual obstruction of vipassanā. The progress of vipassanā comes about through a two-sided process of
development. On one side is the development of five instrumental factors discussed above; on the other is the elimination of the obstruction of *vipassanā*, which needs to be understood and acknowledged. This work has identified the opinion of most scholars- that the ten mental qualities\(^756\) are the imperfections of insight (*vipassanūpakkilesa*) - and has then clarified the perfection of two qualities, illumination (*obhāsa*) and intuition (*ñāna*). This section will argue that the obstructions of *vipassanā* are actually the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) and eleven defilements (*upakkilesa*), but not the ten imperfections of insight (*vipassanūpakkilesa*). This argument will focus on the eight mental qualities\(^757\) which remain unclarified, and the determination of the true obstruction of *vipassanā*.

The evaluation of the eight last mental qualities reveals that they actually promote the process of *vipassanā*. In fact, four of them, joy (*pīti*), rapture (*passaddhi*), happiness (*sukha*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*), are the constituents of the seven essential factors leading to enlightenment (*bojjha*).\(^758\) In the discourse called *Mahāsalāyatanikasutta* (*On the Great Sixfold Sense-field*), the Buddha also lists these seven factors as the preceding process to the cooperation of *samatha* and *vipassanā*.*\(^759\) The meaning of ‘factors of enlightenment’ clearly does not fit with ‘obstruction of *vipassanā*,’ and alternatively seems to encourage *vipassanā*.

Next, resolution (*adhimokkha*) means strong faith arising in association with *vipassanā*, and which has an exceedingly serene effect on the mind.\(^760\) Faith, of course, is a significant mental quality in meditation and must be in balance with

\(^{756}\) illumination (*obhāsa*), intuition (*ñāna*), joy (*pīti*), rapture (*passaddhi*), happiness (*sukha*), resolution (*adhimokkha*), exertion (*paggāha*), assurance (*upaṭṭhāna*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and attachment (*nikanti*).

\(^{757}\) joy (*pīti*), rapture (*passaddhi*), assurance (*upaṭṭhāna*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and attachment (*nikanti*).

\(^{758}\) S.V.126.

\(^{759}\) M.III.289.

\(^{760}\) *Vism.*636 (tr. Ñānamoli p. 742).
paññā. In regard to Buddhist philosophy, faith is not mere confidence; rather it is a confidence born out of understanding of the four noble truths. This means that faith requires the collaboration of paññā or vipassanā. Accordingly, resolution (adhimokkha), which appears to refer to the association between faith and paññā, should support rather than obstruct vipassanā. Incidentally, Buddhaghosa speaks of exertion (paggāha) as energy (viriya), which is associated with vipassanā and is neither too lax nor extremely strenuous, but upright and well established. Indeed, energy (viriya) is an impediment to mental vision and unification because of its deficiency and excessiveness, and due to the fact that it is not well established. In the Soṇasutta, the Buddha compares the balanced energy needed for mental development to the tuning of a violin, whose strings should be neither too tight nor too loose. This comparison demonstrates the well established energy required for mental development and, subsequently, for vipassanā. Of course, it appears impossible that the well balanced energy, which avoids the extremes of excessive and insufficient effort of exertion (paggāha), should be the obstruction of vipassanā. Besides this, the exertion is the important factor for the cultivation of vipassanā.

The next mental quality is assurance (upāṭṭhāna), which Buddhaghosa identifies as mindfulness (sati) associated with vipassanā. Mindfulness is the obvious mental quality in the process of vipassanā. For the realization of mind and body (nāma-rūpa), the meditator must be mindful of each and every mental and physical action until mindfulness becomes sustained and uninterrupted. Therefore, assurance (upāṭṭhāna), as the identity of mindfulness,
does not obstruct *vippasanaṃ* at all; instead, it is the predominant factor of *vippasanaṃ*.

The last mental quality is attachment (*nikantī*), which is the desire arising along with the love of knowledge of *vippasanaṃ*.\(^{768}\) If we see desire in Buddhism as a single aspect of clinging, it is, of course, an obstruction of *vippasanaṃ*. However, the other aspect of subtle desire should be developed in order to get rid of desire, as Ānanda says: “Nun, this body has come into being through craving; by depending on craving, craving is to be abandoned.”\(^{769}\) In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha also speaks of both aspects of desire, in which the subtle is the excellent mental quality for meditation: “delight in the dhamma surpasses every delight”\(^{770}\) In response to the Buddha and Ānanda’s statements, the desire to ‘letting go’ is an important factor in meditation and needs to be developed in order to eradicate desires.

Now we have seen so far that the ten imperfections are actually not obstructions of *vippasanaṃ*. In addition, they support the development of *vippasanaṃ* and closely progress along with it on the enlightenment path.

The detailed examination of the Buddhaghosa’s interpretation of the ten imperfections can clarify the true obstruction of *vippasanaṃ*. His interpretation of illumination (*obhāsa*) shows that, when the meditator deliberates over the nature of impermanence, mental illumination arises. In adverting to illumination as the path (*magga*) or fruit (*phala*), the meditator gets mental disturbance and instability. Then the meditator does not recognize the arising phenomenon as impermanent as it should really be. Thus, the meditator takes up the wrong path as the right one, and the mistaken fruit as the correct one. Thereby, the process

---

\(^{768}\) *Vism.*.636 (tr. Ńāṇamoli p. 742-743).

\(^{769}\) A.II.145: “*tanhaṃ samghāto ayam bhagini kāyo tanhaṃ nissāya tanhā pahātabbā.*”

\(^{770}\) Dhp.354: “*sabhaṃ ratiṃ dhammaratī jināti.*”
of vipassanā usually gets diverted. And, as in the case of illumination, so too in the case of the other imperfections, the meditator assumes the wrong path and fruit as the right ones.\(^{771}\) It is contended that Buddhaghosa’s interpretation of the ten imperfections (vipassanūpakkilesa) gives a certain impression of all the ten imperfections to be an obstruction to vipassanā contemplation. Through deep concern, the distinctly individual imperfection does not obstruct vipassanā for the following reasons;

1. Meditators do not obtain any path (magga) or fruit (phala); however they contemplate vipassanā in the correct course and devote themselves continuously.

2. The ten imperfections result in the correct discernment of meditators through their deliberation on the nature of impermanence.

3. Buddhaghosa disregards the ten imperfections because the meditator is unwary and overcome by the wrong view, which is grasping the wrong path and fruit as the right ones.

Accordingly, wrong view is the true obstruction of the progress of vipassanā contemplation. In commentaries on Kammathavagga,\(^{772}\) Buddhaghosa defines greed (lobha) and delusion (moha) as the root of wrong view. Therefore, greed and delusion are the actual limiting agents of either concentration or insight.

According to this determination of the true obstruction of vipassanā, this section interprets various scholars’ opinions as corroborating the Buddhist canonical texts by suggesting a relationship with the five hindrances and eleven defilements. Among these scholars, U Janakābhivamsa proposes the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa); sense desire (kāmachanda), ill-will (vyāpāda), sloth and torpor (thīnamiddha), restlessness and worry (uddhaccakukkucca) and doubts (vicikicchā) as the defilements of mind. The five hindrances obstruct the

\(^{771}\) Vism.633-637 (tr. ṇāṇamoli p. 739-743).

\(^{772}\) Spk.II.149.
meditator from full realization of any mental or physical process.\textsuperscript{773} Since Gunaratana also considers the five hindrances as the first obstruction of \textit{vipassanā} contemplation, he then clarifies the mind-state which is free of the five hindrances for the commencement of \textit{vipassanā}.\textsuperscript{774} Likewise, Solé-Leris suggests the functions of the five hindrances as confusing the mind, and making the mind sluggish and overexcited. They cause the mind to be unable to see and understand things clearly.\textsuperscript{775} This argument is justifiable because, if the mind is in the weak, deluded, agitated state that the five hindrances have brought about, then the meditator cannot develop visual intuition. Moreover, the Buddha denotes the five hindrances as the cause of blindness, loss of vision (\textit{cakkhu}), loss of intuition (\textit{ñāṇa}) and the obstructions to wisdom (\textit{paññā}), because they consort with pain and conduce not to Nibbāna.\textsuperscript{776} Therefore, due to the cause of the loss of the three essential instrumental factors of insight; \textit{cakkhu}, \textit{ñāṇa} and \textit{paññā}, for initiating \textit{vipassanā}, the meditator must eliminate the five hindrances before \textit{vipassanā} contemplation.

A further determination of the obstruction of \textit{vipassanā} indicates that the eleven defilements, which might occur in the process of \textit{vipassanā}, are considerably important obstructions. Indeed, the eleven defilements comprise:

1. doubt (\textit{vicikicchā})
2. lack of proper attention (\textit{amanasikāra})
3. sloth and torpor (\textit{thīnamiddha})
4. consternation (\textit{chambhitatta})
5. elation (\textit{uppila})
6. distress (\textit{duṭṭhulla})
7. too much energy (\textit{accāraddhāviriya})
8. too feeble an energy (\textit{atilīnaviriya})

\textsuperscript{773} Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa, op. cit., pp. 76-77.
\textsuperscript{774} Henepola Gunaratana, \textit{A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation}, op. cit., p. 57.
\textsuperscript{775} Solé-Leris, op. cit., p. 94.
\textsuperscript{776} S.V.97.
9. longing (abhiṣappā)
10. perception of diversity (nānattasaṃñāṇa)
11. state of being too intent (rūpa-atinijjhāyatatta)

The discourse on the Minor Defilements (Upakkilesasutta) points to these eleven mental qualities as the agents effecting the vanishing of concentration, illumination (obhāsa) and divine form (rūpa) appearance (dassana). In the discourse, the Buddha gives a detailed account of his own struggle to attain light-manifestation and divine form appearance. Since his mental illumination, vision and unification become invisible, he realizes the causes of vanishing which are the eleven defilements. In addition, Pradhan indicates the actual impediments of vipassanā to be the eleven defilements rather than the five hindrances that are often mentioned in connection with the first rūpajjhāna. As the requirement of termination of the five hindrances before the arising of the first jhāna, which appears frequently in the canonical texts, his comment about the five hindrances being related to first jhāna is accurate. So, during the process of vipassanā, the major obstacles to successful meditation take the form of one or more of the eleven defilements.

In summary, in regard to the obstruction of vipassanā, most scholars such as Buddhaghosa, Gunaratana and Vajiraṇa, disregard the ten mental qualities: illumination (obhāsa), intuition (ñāṇa), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), happiness (sukha), resolution (adhimokkha), exertion (paggāha), assurance (upāṭṭhāna), equanimity (upekkhā), and attachment (nikanti), as the imperfections of insight (vipassanaṇūpakkileṣa). In contrast, the progress of

---

*777* M.III.158-161.
*778* Light-manifestation is the essential mental quality for achieving true knowledge and mental vision. It can arise from the internal light, which is ālōka, or the illumination of divine beings.
*779* Divine form appearance is the ability of mental vision arising from the deep concentration in order to fully see the divine beings.
*780* This means his mind is distracted, and then, his mental illumination and vision diminish and are gone.
*783* Vism.633 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 739).
vipassanā requires the ability to develop all ten mental qualities. Actually, the wrong view arising from greed (lobha) and delusion (moha) causes deviation from the right path of vipassanā. Since the five hindrances are the causes of blindness, loss of mental vision and loss of perfect knowledge, they have to be eliminated prior to the process of vipassanā. Subsequently, the meditator must be aware of the eleven defilements and is thus able to spot their approach and take evasive action during vipassanā contemplation.

**Functions of Vipassanā**

Having seen that the five instrumental factors of insight- cakkhu, ānā, paññā, vijjā and āloka- arise and progress along with the process of vipassanā, this work continues to investigate the main functions of vipassanā. This investigation involves, in part, the specific examination of the two associated instrumental factors, paññā and āloka. However, the main task of this section is to explore the main functions of vipassanā in order to facilitate a clear understanding of its processes and the nature of its culmination. This section argues that the principal roles of vipassanā are in supporting the cultivation of mental illumination (pabhā) and the comparative realization of the three characteristics (tilakkhaṇa) of the five aggregates. The argument will survey the important roles of vipassanā in reference to two aspects; that is, to paññā in relation to its particular mode of mental illumination, and in regard to the issue of how to comparatively realize the five aggregates.

An examination of the relation between paññā and mental light reveals that one significant function of vipassanā is to intensify mental illumination. The Bālavagga clarifies that the main function of vipassanā is to cultivate paññā and to abolish avijjā (ignorance):
Monks, if insight is developed, what profit does it receive? Wisdom becomes developed. If wisdom is developed, what profit does it receive? All ignorance is abandoned.\textsuperscript{784}

As presented in the \textit{Atthasālinī}, the term ‘\textit{paññā}’ possesses the two related definitions, illumination (\textit{obhāsana}) and understanding (\textit{pajānana}).\textsuperscript{785} Consequently, the arising of \textit{paññā} affects two aspects of the one process; that is a dispelling of the darkness of ignorance (\textit{avijjā}) and the production of the light of understanding. In addition, the Buddha compares \textit{paññā} to mental illumination: “There is no radiance like wisdom.”\textsuperscript{786} Therefore, the mental state in which \textit{vipassanā} is well established can be characterized as the cultivation of mental illumination.

Nonetheless, some scholars regard the function of \textit{vipassanā} as the cultivation of intellectual knowledge rather than mental illumination. For example, Pio says: “It was the mental flash, and sure knowledge that one had found the answer, and the questing mind was stilled.”\textsuperscript{787} Gimello also points to the function of \textit{vipassanā} as the analytical review of the meaning of the Buddha’s fundamental teachings.\textsuperscript{788} Saddhatissa agrees:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Vipassanā} meditation demands a much more analytical and probing approach. Here, the mind is not encouraged to bathe in the bliss of quiet concentration on a stable object but is driven to question more deeply and observe more closely.\textsuperscript{789}
\end{quote}

According to these scholars, \textit{vipassanā} seems to depend heavily on abstract and inferential knowledge. This intellectual understanding is not very helpful in penetrating through ‘reality,” as the \textit{Brahmajālasutta} states that the truth is

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{784} A.I.61: “\textit{Vipassanā bhikkhave bhāvitā kam attham anubhoti? Paññā bhāvīyati. Paññā bhāvitā kam attham anubhoti? Yā avijjā sā pahīyati.”
  \item \textsuperscript{785} As.122: “\textit{Paññāvā indriya paññindriya, sā panesā obhāsanalakkhaṇā ca paññā pajānanalakkhaṇā ca.”
  \item \textsuperscript{786} S.I.6.
  \item \textsuperscript{787} Edwina Pio, op. cit., p. 80.
  \item \textsuperscript{788} Robert M Gimello, op. cit., p. 181.
\end{itemize}
knowledge, which is difficult to realize, tranquilizing, and not to be grasped by mere logic:

These, monks, are those things, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathāgata, having realized them through his own supernatural knowledge, proclaims them.\footnote{D.I.17.}

This passage leaves no doubt that \textit{paññā} is not merely a word for an intellectual function. Moreover in the \textit{Ābhāvagga}, \textit{paññā} refers to mental illumination as one of the four ‘lamps’ (\textit{pajjota}), together with the moon, the sun and the fire, and is the most important of them.\footnote{A.II.140.} Sujato agrees as he writes: “Intellectual knowledge, due to the ripples in awareness stirred up by the activity of thinking, must disturb clarity of understanding, and deep insight arises only when the mind is still and silent.”\footnote{Bhikkhu Sujato, \textit{A History of Mindfulness: How Insight Worsted Tranquillity}, op. cit., p. 9.} Hence, an examination of the outcome of \textit{vipassanā}, namely \textit{paññā}, shows that the main function of \textit{vipassanā} is to increase mental illumination (\textit{pabhā}).

The function of \textit{vipassanā} involves the comparative realization of the three characteristics: 1) impermanence (\textit{anicca}), 2) unsatisfactoriness (\textit{dukkha}) and 3) not-self (\textit{anattā}), of the five aggregates, which is the process of withdrawal from attachment to sensory experience. This research argues that this realization is based on discerning directly the three unconditioned characteristics: 1) permanence (\textit{nicca}), 2) happiness (\textit{sukha}) and 3) unconditioned nature (\textit{asaṅkhata}), of the ultimate truth, rather than recognizing directly the conditioned characteristics of the five aggregates. The direct approach of contemplation of the unconditioned characteristics, of the ultimate truth, seems to be relevant to the non-rational dimension of mind after attaining jhānas. Indeed, deep concentration is a means of penetrating the deeper layers of consciousness and restructuring them until all traces of self-identification are
gone, and the ultimate reality remains. The strong relationship between the deep concentration of all eight *jhānas* and the perfect realization of the ultimate truth is found in the *Jhānasutta* as follows:

Here, Monks, monk … enters and remains in the first *jhāna*: whatever exists therein comprised by form, feeling, perception, mental formation or consciousness, he perceives those states as impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a tumour, as a barb, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as integrating, as void, as not self. He turns his mind away from those states and, having done so, directs the mind towards the deathless element thus: “This is peaceful, this is sublime, that is, the tranquillity of all mental formations, the relinquishment of all substrata of existence, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, *nibbāna*”

According to this passage, the term ‘deathless element’ (*amatadhātu*) is equivalent to ultimate truth, possessing the characteristics of peaceful (*santa*) and sublime (*pañīta*). The word ‘deathless’ (*amata*), with its characteristics of peaceful and sublime, expresses the literal meaning of permanence (*nicca*) and is utterly incompatible with the unsettled quality of unsatisfactoriness and not-self. This perfect realization of the ultimate truth of the deathless element comprises the positive metaphysical contemplation of the empirical truth of the five aggregates as impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self without the analytical thinking of the five aggregates.

**Vipassanā**’s main function of the positive metaphysical contemplation, based on the reference to the opposite features of the other, can be exemplified by the simile of two men, where a short, dark and thin man stands together with a tall, fair and fat man. A direct analysis of the former involves measurements of height, weight and degree of colour in comparison with the standard formula. But when we see him standing side by side with the other man, the nature of the

---

793 A.IV.422-423: “Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu…pe…pathamam jhānam upasampajja viharati. So yad eva tattha hoti ripagataṃ vedanāgataṃ saññāgataṃ sankhāragataṃ viññāgataṃ, te dhamme aniccato dukkhato rogato gandhato sallato mahato ābuddhato parato palokato suññato anattato samanappassati. So tehi dhammehi citta pañivāpeti, so tehi dhammehi citta pañivāpetvā amatāya dhātuyā cittaṃ upasampaharati ‘etam santam etam pañitaṃ, yad idam sabbasañkhārasamatho sabbāpadhipatissaggo tanhakkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbānan ti.’”
first man can be grasped immediately without the need for any measurement. This second method of classification of the simile is an example of the positive metaphysical contemplation. The first man is a metaphor for the five aggregates, whereas the second is a metaphor for the deathless element (*amatadātu*).

A further understanding of the functions of *vipassanā* is clarified through the description of the characteristic of ultimate truth in the *Pāsarāsisutta*. In the discourse, the Buddha said that *nibbāna* has distinctive qualities in common with *amatadātu*. Before his enlightenment, the Buddha was trying to gain release from *saṃsāra* with its endless series of death and rebirth. For that, he was trying to find “the unborn, supreme and security from the bonds” and finally he could realize *nibbāna*. After enlightenment, the Buddha thought about the *Dhamma* that he had already realized and which is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond dialectic and subtle. We can see that these attributes are the opposites of the characteristics of the five aggregates, which are impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a tumour, as a barb, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as integrating, as void, as not self (*anattā*). According to the *Pāsarāsisutta*, the five aggregates and the *Dhamma* possess opposite characteristics. Responses to these opposing characteristics have spanned the two means: direct and comparative, by which the meditator can realize the three characteristics of the five aggregates. Thus, the main function of *vipassanā* is enabled and fulfilled through the comparative analysis, which allows for the perfect realization of the deathless element.

While this example suggests that *vipassanā* is a process of positive metaphysical contemplation of the five aggregates through an attainment of ultimate reality, other scholars have tended to interpret *vipassanā* as a process

---

794 M.I.167.
795 Ibid.
of negative comprehension of the nature of the five aggregates. Among these scholars, Nyanatiloka states that *vipassanā* refers to a penetrative understanding of impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and not-self (*anattā*) of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence.\(^{796}\) Story agrees: “the object of which (*vipassanā*) is to gain direct intuitive perception of the nature of being through the contemplation of the process of arising and passing away.”\(^{797}\) In the same way, Anālayo claims the relationship between direct experience and wisdom (*paññā*): “Thus the direct experience of impermanence represents indeed the power aspect of meditative wisdom.”\(^{798}\) The process of negative comprehension seems to involve the meditative activity of awareness or mindfulness, as Burns says: “*vipassanā* means full awareness of the three characteristics of existence, i.e. impermanence, suffering (*dukkha*), and impersonality.”\(^{799}\) Furthermore, Rahula implies that *vipassanā* is an activity of awareness or mindfulness: “It (*vipassanā*) is an analytical method based on mindfulness, awareness, vigilance, observation.”\(^{800}\) These scholars’ opinion that the function of *vipassanā* is to realize the nature of the three characteristics of five aggregates is reasonable. However, a process of direct experience, awareness or mindfulness, through sense perception on which the meditative path of this realization is based, would not involve the deep concentration or mental vision which has already been discussed. The additional relevance of the relationship between the deep concentration and meditation on the phenomena of the five aggregates is shown in the *Samādhisutta*:

Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are. And what does he understand things as they really are? The arising and passing away of form, the arising and passing away of feeling, the arising and passing away of

\(^{796}\) Nyanatiloka, *The Buddha’s Path to Deliverance in Its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity*, op. cit., p. 74.
\(^{797}\) Francis Story, op. cit., p. 145.
\(^{798}\) Anālayo, op. cit., p. 103.
\(^{799}\) Douglas M. Burns, op. cit., p. 6.
\(^{800}\) Walpola Rahula, op. cit., p. 69.
perception, the arising and passing away of mental formation, the arising and passing away of consciousness.\footnote{S.III.13-14: “samādhim bhikkhave bhāvetha samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhūta pajānāti. Kiñca yathābhūtam pajānāti? Rūpassa samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca vedanāya samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca saññāya samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca sañkhāraṅaṃ samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca viññāhaṃ samadāṅgaṃ ca.”}

Without a sufficient degree of concentration, it is impossible to achieve the functions of vipassanā characterized as seeing the five aggregates as they really are. Moreover, the Buddha regards the deep concentration in terms of ‘perfect concentration (sammāsamādhi)’ as the predominant factor of the intuition and vision as they really are (yathābhūtañāṇadassana): “When there is perfect concentration, then there is the cause for intuition and vision of things as they really are for one who has perfect concentration”\footnote{A.III.20.} In the Saccavibhaṅgasutta, Sāriputta equates sammāsamādhi with the profound concentrative structure of the four rūpajjhānas.\footnote{M.III.252.}

This implies that the meditator needs to strengthen the awareness and mindfulness into the profound level through the attainment of deep concentration in order to perform the process of vipassanā. Due to sense perception rather than to deep concentration, the negative contemplation of the three characteristics of the five aggregates seems to become dissociated from the function of vipassanā. Therefore, vipassanā is not a metaphysical process; instead, its function is based on penetrating the deep layers of consciousness and restructuring them into an increasingly profound state through the process of samatha until the darkness of ignorance (avijjā) is eradicated. Consequently, intrinsic or essential reality is revealed in order to positively contemplate the three characteristics of the five aggregates. During the process of vipassanā, the meditator continues to transcend the conventional self of the five aggregates through the attainment of the unconditioned nature, until the duality of self and not-self gradually dissolves into a final profound and complete unity of liberation from any self.

\footnote{S.III.13-14: “samādhim bhikkhave bhāvetha samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhūta pajānāti. Kiñca yathābhūtam pajānāti? Rūpassa samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca vedanāya samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca saññāya samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca sañkhāraṅaṃ samudayaṅca atthaṅgamaṅ ca viññāhaṃ samadāṅgaṃ ca.”\footnote{A.III.20.}\footnote{M.III.252.}}
The main concern raised by the above discussion is that of the principal roles of vipassanā in Buddhist spiritual discipline. The process of vipassanā involves the two overlapping profound spiritual achievements. Firstly, the main function of vipassanā is to cultivate paññā, which refers to ‘mental illumination,’ but not to mere intellectual understanding. Thus the development of mental illumination proceeds along with the process of vipassanā. Secondly, the intensification of mental illumination promotes the perfect realization of the deathless element or Dhamma whose characteristics of permanence, happiness and unconditioned nature are opposite to those of the five aggregates. This perfect realization is the predominant factor for the positive metaphysical contemplation of the empirical truth of the five aggregates as impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self, without the analytical thinking of the five aggregates. Despite this, most scholars attempt to employ the superficial level of awareness and mindfulness through sense perception as a mean of metaphysical contemplation on the five aggregates. In fact, it is conceivable that one could achieve the knowledge of seeing the five aggregates as they really are by means of the profound level of awareness and mindfulness, which is relevant to the deep concentration. In conclusion, it can be said that vipassanā is not a negative metaphysical contemplation; instead, it functions as a positive metaphysical contemplation of the three characteristics of the five aggregates through the profound spiritual achievement of the intrinsic reality.

**Conclusion**

We have seen throughout this chapter the notion that the main characteristic of vipassanā, which is derived from investigating the definition of vi (excellence) and passanā (seeing), is the intense visual intuition rather than the process of sensual perception. The ability of excellent mental vision characteristic of vipassanā contributes to the development of the jhānas and to the profound state of the supernatural knowledges. Vipassanā can induce the path leading to
enlightenment, but the fact that samatha has the sole purpose of enhancing vipassanā points to an importance of their collaboration for the attainment of the ultimate goal. Although the interpretations of the interaction between samatha and vipassanā can be classified into three groups: independent, supportive or counteractive processes; they are, in fact, supportive of each other. Moreover, samatha is a significant factor for the commencement of vipassanā.

In order to begin the process of vipassanā, the meditator has to attain a certain state of samatha, being relevant to the mental quality, but not to the meditative subject. Once this is done, the degree of samatha needed for the arising of vipassanā must be determined. According to a phenomenological and psychological analysis, the mental unification needs to be fostered through momentary and access concentration until the beyond mode of the jhānas is reached. Subsequently, the meditator requires a very profound and subtle state of mental purification and unification from which the five instrumental factors of insight, vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāṇa), wisdom (pañña), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka), can arise. This is neatly abstracted from the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta (Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth), which emphasizes the importance of these instrumental factors for the complete realization of the four noble truths and thus for initiating the process of vipassanā.

In order to understand both samatha and vipassanā, an epistemological analysis of each instrumental factor has been discussed. Firstly, cakkhu, which arises in the process of vipassanā, involves the supernormal power of mental vision but not mere observational analysis. The development of cakkhu into the mode of dhamma-cakkhu is of considerable importance for the process of vipassanā. Secondly, āloka is neither the intellectual process nor the impediment of
vipassanā. In fact, the ten kinds of vipassanā-ñāṇa and five kinds of ānāṇa, in the mode of abhiññā, serve as a basis for vipassanā and its culmination. Thirdly, paññā undertaken as part of the concentrative process rather than the rational process, has the sole purpose of enhancing vipassanā. Next, the Buddhist threefold vijjā is the visual intuition based on deep concentration, but is different from the one’s own lineage and acuteness in the ritual contents of the three Vedas. Because of the accessibility of the threefold vijjā according to his will, the Buddha is omniscient. The threefold process of vijjā involves a recollection of the mental and physical aggregates experienced in one’s own personal and all being continuum in former rebirths rather than a mere observation of the ceasing and arising of images. Lastly, āloka is not an impediment to vipassanā. Furthermore, āloka and vipassanā are supplementary and convergent with each other.

In order to reveal the intrinsic obstruction of vipassanā, we have found that all the ten mental qualities; illumination (obhāsa), intuition (ñāṇa), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), happiness (sukha), resolution (adhimokkha), exertion (paggāha), assurance (upaṭṭhāna), equanimity (upekkhā), and attachment (nikanti), which are generally interpreted as the imperfections of insight (vipassanūpakkilesa), do not obstruct vipassanā. Rather, they support the development of vipassanā. Subsequently, during the manifestation of these mental qualities, the wrong view arising from greed (lobha) and delusion (moha) obstructs the progress of vipassanā. Moreover, while the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa) block the beginning of vipassanā, the eleven defilements (upakkilesa) interfere with the process of vipassanā.

It has been demonstrated here that the crucial roles of vipassanā are firstly, that it cultivates profound mental illumination. Secondly, the intensification of mental illumination fulfils the perfect realization of the deathless element or
Dhamma whose characteristics- permanence, happiness and unconditioned nature- are opposite to those of the five aggregates. Because of this realization of the ultimate truth of the deathless element, the meditator can comparatively meditate on the three characteristics; impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self, of the five aggregates without any analytical thinking.

This chapter has considered the definition of, etymology and function of vipassanā. It has been concluded that vipassanā is a profound mental vision, arising from the advanced level of samatha, and that is the main characteristic of vipassanā. The next chapter will deal with how the two factors of samatha and vipassanā are used together in meditation to realize nibbāna.
Chapter 4  Re-evaluation of the Relationship Between
Samatha and Vipassanā

Introduction

The previous chapters covered a detailed discussion of the meditative practices of samatha and vipassanā. Their mutual interdependence and complementarity were discussed briefly. This chapter is an attempt at further clarifying the relationship between them, how to use them together in meditation, and their precise complementary roles on the Buddhist path to liberation.

This will cover five major areas: first the clarification of how samatha and vipassanā are cultivated in collaboration, second an evaluation of the threefold training and its development, third the relationship between each foundation of satipaṭṭhāna and the cooperation of samatha and vipassanā. The fourth area pertains to an examination of the attainment of cessation (nirodhasamāpatti) in terms of its psychological aspects and its development, and the last area deals with the investigation of both types of freedom.

The first area is a discussion of whether or not samatha proceeds along with vipassanā in the entire enlightenment path. This aspect is based on the cooperation between samatha and vipassanā in relation to two philosophical aspects, their corresponding characteristics and their counterbalancing characteristics. Then the recognizable process of vipassanā will be discussed and compared with that of samatha.

The second area presents an evaluation of the threefold training in the following sequence: first an investigation of the dependent characteristics of the
threefold training, next a clarification of their progressive characteristics and finally an examination of the term ‘vipassanājhāna.’

Regarding the third area, this research brings to light several significant aspects of the relationship between satipaṭṭhāna and the twofold meditation, samatha and vipassanā. Firstly, the question of whether or not the serene and pure state of the jhānas is necessary for the commencement of satipaṭṭhāna practice will be answered. Then the examination of the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassī) will proceed in relation to three steps: the examination of the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassī,’ the investigation of the contemplation of inspiration and evaluating the contemplation of the nature of arising and passing away in the body. Next, the psychological state needed for the contemplation of body in body of satipaṭṭhāna practice will be determined. Lastly the contemplation of the other three foundations (feeling, mind and dhamma) will be investigated through a consideration of their basic mental qualities.

The fourth area begins with the reconciliation of two conflicting ideas. They are, the absence of the mental activities in the ninth jhāna which is the attainment of cessation (nirodhasamāpatti), and the Buddha’s announcement that the happiness of entering and abiding in the cessation of perception and feeling (saññāvedayitanirodha) is more excellent than the happiness of any earlier jhāna attainment. Subsequently, the issue of whether or not vipassanā is necessary to cooperate with samatha for the development of the attainment of cessation (nirodhasamāpatti) will be clarified.

The last area will first deal with a discussion of whether ignorance or craving is the predominant factor to be destroyed in the enlightenment path. Next it will

804 Vipassanājhāna refers to the cooperation between samatha and vipassanā.
805 M.1.398–400.
present an evaluation of the culminating result of both types of freedom, especially the freedom of mind (cetovimutti).

**The Relationship between Samatha and Vipassanā**

In the previous chapter, we concluded that samatha is a significant prerequisite for the commencement of vipassanā and the Buddhist ultimate goal. This section aims to clarify the issue of whether or not samatha needs to be strengthened during the process of vipassanā. This section will argue that the process of samatha is not only a fundamental stage of vipassanā, but also the concomitant development process of vipassanā. This section will portray the relationship between samatha and vipassanā in reference to two issues; firstly, whether or not samatha proceeds along with vipassanā and secondly, which type of the psychological process is operating in vipassanā.

In order to fulfil Buddhist liberation, it is essential that samatha is the basis of vipassanā and also that it proceeds alongside vipassanā throughout the contemplative process. To explain the meditative method of enlightenment, the Yuganaddhasutta806 illustrates the relation between samatha and vipassanā. According to Venerable Ānanda, four factors are relevant and these are listed below.

1. “The method of vipassanā development preceded by samatha induces the termination of fetters (sāmyojana) and proclivities (anusaya).”
2. “The method of samatha development preceded by vipassanā induces the termination of fetters (sāmyojana) and proclivities (anusaya).”
3. “The method of the coupled development of samatha and vipassanā induces the termination of fetters (sāmyojana) and proclivities (anusaya).”

---

806 A.II.156-157.
4. “The method of thought (citta) fixing, settling down and composing inside induces the termination of fetters (samyojana) and proclivities (anusaya).”

The first three methods clearly show the mutual relation between samatha and vipassanā processes. Samatha is not only an early fundamental stage of the vipassanā process but also constantly works alongside vipassanā to bring about the aim of that process.

In order to show that samatha proceeds along with vipassanā, it is also useful to refer to the scholars that support this view. These scholars fall into two different groups: one group that speaks of the correspondent characteristics of samatha and vipassanā, and a second group that considers the counterbalancing characteristics of these processes. For the sake of clarity, this work will refer to the first group as ‘correspondent yoking’ and the second group as ‘counterbalancing yoking’ and will discuss the two groups in this order.

In the view of the correspondent yoking group, the psychological processes of samatha and vipassanā are related. McDonald points to the complementary characteristics of samatha and vipassanā:

This method of combining the two kinds of meditation causes the mind literally to become one with the object of meditation. The stronger our concentration, the deeper our insight will be.807

Klostermaier echoes this contention: “…for some people samatha comes first, to be complemented by vipassanā, whereas with others vipassanā comes first, to be complemented by samatha.”808 Similarly, Beyer states that samatha and vipassanā are coordinated techniques of a single process.809 He further explains their yoking exercise:

---

809 Stephan V. Beyer, op. cit., p. 89.
... calm is a process of enstatic withdrawal from sensory experience, while insight is an ecstatic penetration into the true nature of events. The first seems based on the premise that salvation is transcendent and apart from the world, while the second seems to assert the immanence of enlightenment within the world.\(^{810}\)

From this we can see that samatha and vipassanā reinforce each other and combine into an effective process for achieving the Buddhist enlightenment. Dhammavuddho agrees with this description of the correspondence between samatha and vipassanā, but appears to switch over their function in relation to Beyer’s statement: “In other words, samatha meditation pulls one towards nibbāna, in contrast to vipassanā meditation, which pushes one away from the world.”\(^{811}\) Regarding the functions of both processes, these themes may result from the different perspectives of the cooperation between samatha and vipassanā. In fact, both perspectives of pushing away from the world and pulling toward nibbāna represent the same path of enlightenment. This sentiment is illustrated in a way comparable to the half glass of water. The amount of water is illustrated through saying either ‘half full’ or ‘half empty.’ Similarly, vipassanā involves the process of mental vision which is based on samatha. Both vipassanā and samatha can be perceived to be different aspects of a single process, just as half a glass of water can be perceived differently. So both samatha and vipassanā perform the process of withdrawal from the world and pulling toward nibbāna. Moreover, samatha has to progress along with vipassanā into the final state of liberation as, Anālayo writes:

A practitioner might develop one or the other aspect to a higher degree at different times, but in the final stages of practice both calm and insight need to be combined in order to reach the final aim-full awakening—the destruction of both passion and ignorance.\(^{812}\)

\(^{810}\) Ibid., p. 81.

\(^{811}\) Venerable Dhammavuddho, op. cit., p. 77.

\(^{812}\) Anālayo, op. cit., p. 91.
Further evidence in support of the correspondent yoking group is found in the *Kimsukopamasutta*\(^{813}\) in which the Buddha illustrates their cooperation with the help of a parable. In this parable, a swift pair of messengers presents a message, in accordance with reality, to the lord of the city. This swift pair of messengers means *samatha* and *vipassanā*, a message in accordance with reality means *nibbāna* and lord of the city is a designation for consciousness. This parable goes to show that *samatha* and *vipassanā* operate as a mutual psychological support for the ultimate reality.

The view of correspondent yoking group is further clarified through the simplification of the process of walking. *Samatha* is like the left foot, *vipassanā* like the right foot – one can only move one foot forward by relying on the other. It is evident that the meditator must perform the synthesis of *samatha* and *vipassanā* on condition that each process supports the other in approaching the ultimate goal.

A slightly different and rather unsuitable viewpoint on the issue of correspondent yoking is expressed by Gimello; he points to the uncertainty of how long *samatha* needs to be developed before being directed into *vipassanā*.\(^{814}\) The proportion of *samatha* and *vipassanā* depends on the individual personality of the meditator. He points out that *samatha* is limited and the progression of *vipassanā* entirely continues because he interprets *vipassanā* as analytically reviewing the meaning of the fundamental teaching of Buddhism.

The second group of scholars, the counterbalancing yoking group, points to the different psychological processes of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. Piyadassi states

\(^{813}\) S.IV.194-195.
\(^{814}\) Robert M Gimello, op. cit., p. 185.
that \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} progress simultaneously because of their opposite qualities: “Both (\textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā}) gain uniformity of force. Through the overdoing of analysis there can be flurry. And indolence creeps in through too much tranquillity.”\footnote{Thera Piyadassi, \textit{The Buddha's Ancient Path}, op. cit., p. 204.} Ruegg agrees with Piyadassi about the excessive conditions of both processes and concludes: “when \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} are on the contrary in balance, the mind is in equilibrium.”\footnote{David Seyfort Ruegg, op. cit., p. 183.}

Although the view of the counterbalancing yoking group is correct in its support for the cooperation of \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā}, the way it indicates the opposite characteristics of these processes is problematic. According to the \textit{Samādhiphāvanāsutta}, the idea of the opposite characteristics of \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} is unreasonable:

\begin{quote}
Monks, how does concentrative meditation, when developed and made much of, conduces to gaining intuition and vision? Here, Monks, monk pays attention to the perception of light, he remains his mind firm in the perception of daylight, by night as by day, by day as by night. In this way, with clear and unclouded mind, he develops the mind to brilliance. \footnote{A.II.45.}
\end{quote}

In other words, when concentration has been developed, it becomes possible to advance to the process of mental vision, that of \textit{vipassanā}. In addition, we see that the quality of \textit{samatha} is consistent with the process of \textit{vipassanā} because to gain insight into the depths of our reality requires the basis of the calmed mind as the Buddha says; “Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, Monks, understands things as they really are.”\footnote{S.IV.80.} Therefore, \textit{samatha} techniques help develop qualities useful in \textit{vipassanā} meditation.

To summarize the argument so far, according to the two yoking groups, \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} proceed simultaneously; however, the correspondent
yoking group is more plausible than the other group because it reveals how the characteristics of the two processes are identical. Unlike the argument of the two yoking groups, some scholars believe that vipassanā leads exclusively to enlightenment. For example, Mererk regards samatha as a mere foundation of vipassanā: “This is to say that concentration is a preparatory stage which sets the mind ready for the other form of meditation, i.e., vipassanā or insight.”

Nārada supports this sentiment: “Both discipline and concentration are helpful to clear the path of its obstacles but it is insight (vipassanā) alone which enable one to see things as they truly are, and consequently reach the ultimate goal.” Nyanatiloka agrees: “Concentration, in fact, forms the necessary foundation and preliminary condition for insight by freeing the mind from impurities and mental obstacles.” Moreover, Janakābhivamsa states his opinion in regard to the distinction between samatha and right understanding: “…it (samatha) does not enable us to rightly understand the mental and physical phenomena as they really are.” His claim appears to disagree with the association between sammāsamādhi (perfect concentration) and sammādi/FL16Dh/FL16Dhhi (perfect view) as shown in the Mahācattārīsakasutta:

> Now what, monks, is noble perfect concentration with its means and requisite conditions? Monks, one-pointedness of mind, equipped with these seven factors -- perfect view,...., perfect mindfulness -- is called noble perfect concentration with its means and requisite conditions.

However, further evidence of the dual development of samatha and vipassanā, and hence the yoking groups’ interpretation most likely to be correct, is found in the Mahāvacchasutta, where the Buddha proclaims the synthesis of samatha and vipassanā processes as necessary for the fulfilment of six supernatural knowledges (abhiññā). According to the commentaries on the

---

819 Phramaha Prayoon Mererk, op. cit., p. 121.
820 Nārada, Buddhism in a Nutshell, op. cit., p. 54.
821 Nyanatiloka, The Buddha's Path to Deliverance in Its Threefold Division and Seven Stages of Purity, op. cit., p. 74.
823 M.III.71.
824 M.I.494-496.
Mahāvacchasutta, Buddhaghosa interprets both processes and the six abhiññās as two separate sets of meditative practices leading to two separate goals. He comments explicitly that samatha accomplishes the first five abhiññās, whereas vipassanā fulfils the last abhiññā which destroys all of the cankers.825 This approach, which distinguishes vipassanā from samatha, is in contrast to the Samathasutta where the Buddha advises monks to put effort into both the samatha and vipassanā processes:

...a monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself, but have not gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish the tranquillity of heart within oneself and to insight into dhamma through higher wisdom.

...a monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom, but have not gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish insight into dhamma through higher wisdom and to the tranquillity of heart within oneself.826

This passage leaves no doubt in the fact that a more reinforced vipassanā requires the more purified and unified mental state arising from the progress of samatha. Stcherbatsky further explains the significance of the cultivation of samatha along the path of enlightenment in order to destroy a particular part of defilement.827 Therefore, it is reasonable to consider samatha as the stepping stone of vipassanā, but samatha must be further developed in order to achieve Buddhist liberation as the Buddha’s announcement; “Perfect concentration,Ānanda, when developed and made much of, has as its final goal the removal of desire, the removal of anger, the removal of delusion.”828

The connotation of vipassanā as a process of tranquillity points to the need to combine vipassanā with samatha along the path of enlightenment. Indeed, the process of samatha contributes to the progress of inner stillness and integration.

825 Ps.III.202.
826 A.V.99.
828 S.V.5-6.
In this way, the experience of deep concentration fulfils a significant role in strengthening the ability of mental vision during the advanced stages of *vipassanā*. Potentially, *samatha* and *vipassanā* could be conceived as identical cognitive processes applied to different aspects. According to the *Rahogatasutta*, the progress of meditative practice relies on the gradual ceasing of activities (*saṅkhāra*) such as speech, thought, breathing and apparently perception and feeling for the fulfilment of the soteriological goal.\(^{829}\) This means that the consistency between *samatha* and *vipassanā* is essential to the psychological process of establishing tranquillity.

However, most scholars have tended to distinguish *vipassanā* from the concentrative process. These scholars fall into two groups: one group that considers the psychological process of *vipassanā* as the observational process of mindfulness, and a second group that considers it an intellectual process. In the presentation of the issue referring to the first group, Venerable Sujiva regards *vipassanā* as the penetrative observation to realize the true nature of things as they really are.\(^{830}\) He further offers mindfulness (*sati*) as the main factor of *vipassanā*.\(^{831}\) This opinion that mindfulness is the main function of *vipassanā* seems to be generally accepted. In *Mindfulness in Plain English*, Gunaratana also writes: “Mindfulness is the centre of *vipassanā* meditation and the key to the whole process. It is both the goal of this meditation and the means to that end.”\(^{832}\) In regard to the development of *vipassanā*, he not only promotes mindfulness (*sati*), but also disregards *samatha*. In the publication entitled *A Critical Analysis of the Jhānas*, he argues that:

> Insight (*vipassanā*) cannot be practiced while absorbed in *jhāna*, since insight-meditation requires analysis, investigation, and observation, all

---

829 S.IV.217-218.
831 Ibid., p. 148.
of which are impossible when the thought faculty is immersed in one-pointed absorption.\footnote{Henepola Gunaratana, \emph{A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation}, op. cit., p. 170.}

Ruberu agrees with these scholars about the importance of mindfulness: “the key to insight or vipassanā is the development of mindfulness.”\footnote{Jayantha Ruberu, \emph{op. cit.}, p. 279.} However, he still separates vipassanā from samatha: “Insight meditation (paññā bhāvanā), practiced whichever way, performs a totally different and a much more valuable task than mere tranquillity or calm (samatha).”\footnote{Ibid., p.271.}

We can see that the interpretation of the psychological process of vipassanā as an observational process leads to an incorrect practice of distinguishing vipassanā from samatha. It is acceptable to suggest that mindfulness is a significant factor in the practice of vipassanā. Nonetheless, the idea that there is no harmonious interactivity between mindfulness and samatha can be rejected. Anālayo provides the reason for the association between the two processes:

> Although absorption abilities are not directly mentioned in the \textit{Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta}, the general picture provided by the discourses suggests that the ability to attain at least the first absorption is required for the higher two stages of awakening.\footnote{Anālayo, \emph{op. cit.}, p. 82.}

His explanation coincides with the \textit{Anupadasutta},\footnote{M.III.25-28.} where the Buddha states that the continuous presence of a well-established mindfulness (sati) is necessary for the development of samatha from the first jhāna up to the third arūpajjhāna.\footnote{The Buddha does not state the presence of mindfulness in the fourth arūpajjhāna explicitly, still the contents of this discourse indicate its presence there.} Of further relevance to the association between mindfulness and samatha is a story in the \textit{Bhikkhunupassayasutta}.ootnote{S.V.155-156.} In the discourse, when the meditator is distracted while practicing satipaṭṭhāna, the Buddha advises him to develop concentration on some pleasurable object. The meditator enhances
*satipaṭṭhāna* practice through the cultivation of concentration: thus, mindfulness is strengthened as a consequence of the arising of joy and happiness. According to the *Bhikkhuṇīpāpaṭṭhānasutta*, it is clear that the fulfilment of *satipaṭṭhāna* springs up in the realm of concentration. The relationship between *satipaṭṭhāna* and concentration in the discourse reflects that although mindfulness and *samatha* may be different at a superficial level, they must be merged into a psychological process of calmness in the profound state. Therefore, according to the interpretation of *vipassanā* as the penetrative observation of mindfulness, it is found that *vipassanā* is still the same psychological process as *samatha*, which is a process of tranquillity.

After presenting the evidence for the first group and evaluating it, the view of the second group, which is the interpretation of the psychological process of *vipassanā* as an intellectual process, will be evaluated consequently. Griffiths interprets *vipassanā* as a sensual, cognitive and intellectual process and then considers it as the opposite process of *samatha*.840 Gimello agrees with Griffiths in regard to the analytical process of *vipassanā*, but disagrees in regard to its differences from *samatha*.841 Kamalashila shares this theme of *vipassanā* as an analytical process: “We use our thoughts in *vipassanā* practice.”842 Consequently, he establishes the boundary between *samatha* and *vipassanā* up to the first *jhāna*, which comprises the factors of applied and sustained thought. Their opinions show that the analytical process of *vipassanā* influences the limitation of mental unification of *samatha*. Incidentally, Sujato speaks of *vipassanā* as an analytical process and how it requires the development of *samatha* in a balanced way to achieve liberation.843 If *vipassanā* is an analytical or intellectual process, there should be a reciprocal action between the rational

---

841 Robert M Gimello, op. cit., p. 184.
842 Kamalashila, op. cit., p. 89.
thinking of vipassanā and tranquillity process of samatha. Perhaps there is, but only in the earliest phrase of the process, where rational understanding is involved and initiates the path.

Nevertheless, according to the idea of these scholars, the interpretation of vipassanā as an intellectual process seems to contradict the characteristics of the ultimate reality as being beyond dialectic, as in the Pāsarāsisutta.

Monks, it occurred to me: “This thing, attained by me, is profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise.”

This passage clarifies the process of the penetrative realization of truth as subtle and beyond rationality. The term ‘hard to see’ interprets the comprehensible consciousness of ultimate reality as a process of visual intuition but not through an analytical process. The Buddha, furthermore, disregards some recluses or Brahmins who are addicted to logic and reasoning and who reach the eternal conclusion through rational thinking.

Here, Monks, a certain recluse or Brāhmin is logician and examiner. Hammering it out by logic, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him, he said this: “The self and the world are eternal, barren; standing like mountain peaks, standing like pillars.”

It is notable that the analytical reasoning is acquired on the beginning of spiritual path and needs to be abandoned for progress into the profound spiritual attainment. This means of spiritual progress is confirmed in the Kevaṭṭasutta. The Buddha describes the pattern of wonderful instruction: “Consider in this way, do not consider in that, pay attention to this way, not that way, give up

844 M.I.167: “Tassa mayham bhikkhave etad-ahosi: Adhigato kho me ayam dhammo gambhīro duddaso duranubodho santo pañīto atakkāvacaro nīpuṇo pañītavedaniyō.”
845 D.I.16: “Idha bhikkhave ekacco samaṇno vā brāhmaṇo vā takkhi hoti vīmaṇsī so takka-pariyāhataṁ vīmaṇsānucaritaṁ sayam-paṭibhānaṁ evam āha: ‘sassato attā ca loko ca vanījo kūṭāṭṭho esikaṭṭhāvīṭṭhito.’”
that, enter and remain in this.”\textsuperscript{846} In this meditation guide, the analytical thinking has a practical relevance for the beginning of the meditative process, whereas the penetration of mind into \textit{dhamma} is attained at the soteriologically advanced stages along the path of meditation practice. The higher course of meditation practice does not rely on the activity of mind, but is related to the tranquilized mind in order to attain the direct knowledge. In the \textit{Dhammapada}, the Buddha announces the harmonious uniformity between \textit{paññā} and \textit{jhānas}: “There is no \textit{jhāna} for one who is without wisdom. There is no wisdom for one who does not attain \textit{jhāna}.”\textsuperscript{847} Therefore, \textit{vipassanā} proceeds along with the tranquillity process in the same manner as the temperature and illumination of a candle flame. The greater temperature perceived correlates with the increased number of lumens. \textit{Vipassanā} and \textit{samatha} are the two aspects of the one single psychological process of calmness.

The above discussion has shown that \textit{samatha} must proceed along with \textit{vipassanā}, through to the final stage of liberation. This is because, the stronger one’s concentration is, the deeper one’s insight will be. Both \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} reinforce each other along the enlightenment path because their characteristics are correspondent but not counterbalancing. After interpreting \textit{vipassanā} as mindfulness, some scholars might distinguish \textit{vipassanā} from \textit{samatha}. Despite this, mindfulness and \textit{samatha}, which are different at a superficial level, must be merged into a psychological process of calmness found in the more profound state. Moreover \textit{vipassanā} is not an analytical process. In fact it is the same psychological process as \textit{samatha}, which is a tranquillity process. The cooperation of both processes will be clarified through the study of the mutual relation among the three trainings.

\textsuperscript{846} D.I.214: “\textit{evaṁ vitakketha mā evaṁ vitakkayittha, evaṁ manasikarotha mā evaṁ manasākattha, idaṁ pajahatha idaṁ upasampajja viharathāti.”

\textsuperscript{847} Dhp.372.
The Threefold Training

This twofold process of meditation, involving both samatha and vipassanā, is rarely found as a direct teaching of the Buddha as recorded in the Tipiṭaka. Within the framework of the Buddha’s teachings, the twofold meditation is only one doctrine among many and is in relationship with the others. The development of samatha and vipassanā is associated with the threefold training (sīla, samādhi and paññā), which signifies the relation between samatha and samādhi and between vipassanā and paññā.

These two things, monks, are partaking of knowledge. What two? tranquillity and insight. Monks, if tranquillity is developed, what profit does it receive? The mind becomes developed. If mind is developed, what profit does it receive? All desire is abandoned. Monks, if insight is developed, what profit does it receive? Wisdom becomes developed. If wisdom is developed, what profit does it receive? All ignorance is abandoned.

An advance in the threefold training coincides with progress in the twofold meditation process and encourages the comprehension of how samatha and vipassanā collaborate. An evaluation of the threefold training in relation to the twofold meditation reveals that the combined processes of samatha and vipassanā, which result in ‘vipassanājhāna,’ arise from the inter-related and spiral development of the threefold training. This evaluation will continue in accordance with the following sequence: this section will discuss first the relation between the elements of the threefold training, next the clarification of its particular development and lastly the examination of the term ‘vipassanājhāna.’

The examination of the relationship between the components of the threefold training reveals that all of them are significant for mental development and for

both samatha and vipassanā. Referring to the relation of the threefold training; the Buddha appears to have constructed gradations of the relative progress in the threefold training in the Mahāparinibbānasutta.

Concentration, when fully developed by virtue, brings great fruit and profit. Wisdom, when fully developed by concentration, brings great fruit and profit.849

This passage illustrates a strong connection among sīla, samādhi and pañña and the stepwise progression from sīla to samādhi and from samādhi to pañña. Kheminda agrees with this particular order of the threefold training: “virtue is the necessary condition for concentration … concentration is the necessary condition for wisdom”850 Piyadassi also points to their collaboration: “virtue, concentration and wisdom are not isolated qualities but integral parts of the noble eightfold path.”851 This opinion is justifiable. Even though pañña is the most significant factor for Buddhist liberation, it requires the prerequisite of physical, verbal and mental purification, which arises from virtue and concentration.

In contrast, some scholars have significantly different but questionable understandings of the relation between the parts of the threefold training. For instance, in spite of the fact that the Buddha comments on the necessity of samādhi for pañña development, Keown collapses the threefold training into a binary one of sīla and pañña.852 He regards samādhi as a mere technique for the cultivation of the other mode of trainings. His disregard for samādhi implies an incomplete path of enlightenment as compared to the Rathavinītasutta. In the discourse, Puṇṇa compares a series of the seven stages of purification to a series of relay of chariots connecting two locations.853 In this sequence, samādhi, in the form of purification of mind, plays the crucial role of the

849 D.II.84.
850 Kheminda Thera, The Way of Buddhist Meditation, op. cit., p. 11.
852 Damien Keown, op. cit., p. 38.
853 M.I.149-150.
second stage. Keown’s marginalization of samādhi appears to obstruct the path of purification. Another problem with Keown’s interpretation of samādhi is found in the Dutiyasikkhāsutta,854 where the Buddha regards the arahant (one who is liberated) as one who perfectly accomplishes the completeness of sīla, samādhi and paññā. It is most likely that, to achieve full awakening, the meditator must develop the entire process of the threefold training.

While Keown neglects the training of samādhi, Griffiths rejects the important interconnection between the elements of the threefold training by marginalizing sīla in relation to samādhi: “Here the preliminary practice of correct morality is not significant and the soteriological goal aimed at is quite different.”855 Yet, sīla and samādhi lead to different goals, one might ask why the Buddha regards samādhi as the result of sīla. In the Ānisamsavagga, the Buddha states that the correct practice of sīla is the preliminary condition necessary for attaining samādhi.856 Moreover, Sayadaw regards sīla as the prerequisite for the development of both samatha and vipassanā.857

In addition to marginalizing sīla, Griffiths also attempts to break the substantial relationship between samādhi and paññā. As he writes: “we find the distinction between concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) made also at many points in the canon.”858 He then interprets samādhi as a culminating process in the complete cessation of sensation, cognition and intellection, and paññā as the development of sensation, cognition and intellection.859

854 A.I.234.
855 Paul J. Griffiths, "Indian Buddhist Meditation-Theory : History, Development and Systematization" op. cit., p. 76.
856 A.V.1-2.
859 Ibid., p. 614.
Nonetheless, Griffiths’ opinion that *samādhi* and *paññā* involve opposite qualities seems to cause a psychological problem. For instance, the Buddha says upon emerging from deep concentration that the mind is steady and prepared for the penetrative observation of truth. As the Buddha states: “Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are.”860 Besides this, according to Ānātasampanno, it is also possible to develop *samādhi* through *paññā*: “People of this type must therefore train the *citta* (mind) to attain *samādhi* by using wisdom, which may be called ‘wisdom develops *samādhi*.’”861 His statement proposes precisely the reverse sequence to the stages of purification, where purification of the mind precedes purification of view. In fact, they, as well as *viriya*, *sati* and *saddhā*, are the essential factors for mental development; as Conze says: “Spiritual progress depends on the emergence of five cardinal virtues - faith, vigour, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom.”862 Janakābhivamsa also regards the collaboration of the five mental faculties as essential for mental development: “For meditation, these five mental faculties must be strong, powerful and balanced.”863 It can therefore be suggested that the two overlapping themes, *samādhi* and *paññā*, merge and supplement each other. Therefore, the threefold training, *siṅga*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, are interdependent factors; each enhances and supports the other. To attain the fully awakened state, the meditator must develop all three factors until they have enough force to calm the mind and lead to cooperation between *samatha* and *vipassanā*.

The examination of the second aspect of the process examined in this section— the particular development of the components of the threefold training— shows that the threefold training must be particularly developed in concert in a spiral

---

860 S.IV.80.
863 Sayadaw U Janakabhivamsa, op. cit., p. 97.
fashion and so the twofold meditation. Before considering this particular development, some important remarks need to be made concerning the relationship among the twofold meditation, the threefold training and the noble eightfold path. The \textit{Cūlavedallasutta} identifies the collaboration of all factors of the noble eightfold path as concomitant of \textit{sīla}, \textit{samādhi} and \textit{paññā}. This seems based on the fact that right view and right thought being related to \textit{paññā}. Right speech, right action and right mode of livelihood are related to \textit{sīla}. Right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration are, in turn, related to \textit{samādhi}. In the \textit{Kiṃsukopamasutta}, the Buddha illustrates the correlation between the two principle meditation practices (\textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā}) with the threefold training in terms of the noble eightfold path by means of a simile concerning a pair of swift messengers. At a border-town, two swift messengers deliver unto the lord a message of truth, and then return by the same road. In this simile, \textit{samatha} and \textit{vipassanā} are the two messengers, \textit{nibbāna} is the message of truth, and the noble eightfold path is the road by which the messengers arrive. The travelling of the messengers along the road signifies the same pattern of development between the twofold meditation and the noble eightfold path.

As the collaboration of the three discourses has now been asserted, it is time to further discuss the particular development of the three discourses. The threefold training appears to be arranged into various degrees. For example, the Buddha often suggests that lay people establish the threefold training by regarding it as the body (\textit{khandha}). For the priests, he points to the implementation of the threefold training as the business of the recluse (\textit{samaṇa}) in terms of the training in the higher virtue (\textit{adhisīla}), higher mind (\textit{adhicitta}) and higher wisdom (\textit{adhipaññā}). Some scholars agree that \textit{sīla}, \textit{samādhi} and \textit{paññā} sustain each other by twisting together into one composition much like the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{864} M.I.301. \textsuperscript{865} S.IV.194-195. \textsuperscript{866} D.I.206. \textsuperscript{867} A.I.229.}
three strands of a rope. For example, Harvey speaks of the development of the threefold training from the beginning all the way to the liberated state.

With each more refined development of the virtue-meditation-wisdom sequence, the path spirals up to a higher level, until the crucial transition of stream-entry is reached. The holy path then spirals up to Arahatship.\textsuperscript{868}

This image of the spiralling development of the threefold training seems appropriate for representing the varying degrees; the three elements pass through, at every stage of the path toward enlightenment. Harvey classifies the levels of the threefold training in relation to the eightfold path as the ordinary level and the transcendent or holy levels.\textsuperscript{869} The form of the development should be that the wisdom of a lower level advances into the virtue of a higher level. Panth describes the process in the same way: “\textit{Vipassanā} meditator practices \textit{sīla} to strengthen and develop \textit{samādhi} and \textit{paññā}. He practices \textit{samādhi} to strengthen \textit{sīla} and \textit{paññā} and practices \textit{paññā} to strengthen \textit{sīla} and \textit{samādhi}.”\textsuperscript{870}

Indeed, the analytical and psychological development of the threefold training reveals that accomplishments in one area will prove beneficial to the other related areas, which in turn will facilitate further accomplishments of the whole. Govinda agrees with this view through his explanation of the noble eightfold path:

Thus right concentration, again, becomes the basis of right views, right aspirations, and other steps of the noble eightfold path, which is now experienced on a higher level, and this spiral-like progression is continued until complete liberation is attained.\textsuperscript{871}

Further comparison of the development of the threefold training appears in \textit{The Spectrum of Buddhism}. Piyadassi compares it with a tripod:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item Peter Harvey, op. cit., p. 68.
  \item Ravindra Panth, op. cit., p. 52.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
None of them, however, is an end in itself; each is a means to an end. One cannot function independently of the others. As in the case of a tripod, which falls to the ground if even a single leg gives way, so here, one cannot function without the support of the others. Therefore, the progress through the three trainings is intended to be interdependent rather than linear. This progressive characteristic of the three trainings connotes the development of *samatha* and *vipassanā* processes as interdependent and interrelated characteristic. Strengthening any process helps to strengthen the other process.

However, some scholars have tended to ignore the spiral development of the three trainings through proposing the linear practice of the three trainings. For instance Goenka writes: “morality and concentration are valuable, but their real purpose is to lead to wisdom.” Ruberu agrees with Goenka about the linear development of the three trainings: “Being the final stage of the path, it is wisdom (*paññā*) that opens the door to *nibbāna*.” Nonetheless, the theme of linear practice seems to contradict the assertion of various degrees of the threefold training. This theme implies that *samatha* is an end to itself for the commencement of *vipassanā*. If this linear development is correct, one might wonder why some discourses mention the reverse sequence of the threefold training. The *Mahācattārīsakasutta* demonstrates that the other seven steps; right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort and right mindfulness, are occasionally listed as requisites for right concentration. Through the relationship between the noble eightfold path and the threefold training, *samādhi* is encouraged by *paññā* and *sīla*. The next relevant discourse is the *Soṇadaṇḍasutta* in which the Buddha announces that *sīla* develops *paññā* and *paññā* develops *sīla* just as the hands mutually wash.

---

872 Piyadassi, op. cit., p. 205.  
873 S.N. Goenka, op. cit., p. 111.  
874 Jayantha Ruberu, op. cit., p. 254.  
875 M.III.71.
each other. Therefore, the advancement of any training in one area encourages the other two areas and the development of the threefold training proceeds like the three strand rope.

The interrelatedness of the threefold training development is such that it is impossible to develop each factor alone. It can be concluded, therefore, in terms of samatha and vipassanā, that samatha encourages vipassanā, and vipassanā develops samatha. Both processes are colligated in an upward movement at every advanced stage of their development until the soteriological goal is attained.

The third sequence of the analysis of the relationship between the twofold meditation and the threefold training shows that vipassanājhāna arising from the development of the threefold training involves the collaboration between the deep concentration of samatha and the perfect realization of the deathless element of vipassanā. The term ‘vipassanājhāna,’ of course, can be clarified by examining the supramundane jhāna which also refers to the cooperation between samatha and vipassanā. In the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa describes the supramundane jhāna as a balanced state between samatha and vipassanā. In a state of equilibrium, both processes possess the cessation (niruddha) as their object. For the clarification of niruddha, he defines it as having four meanings; escape (nissarana), seclusion (viveka), unconditioned (asaṅkhata) and deathlessness (amata). The Aṭṭhakanāgarasutta describes the supramundane jhāna as follows:

Here, householder, quite secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental qualities, monk enters and remains in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by initial and sustained application with joy and happiness born of seclusion. He reflects on this and understands thus: ‘This first jhāna is conditioned and intentionally produced;

---

876 D.I.124.
877 Vism.682 (tr. Nāṇamoli p. 798).
whatever is conditioned and intentionally produced is impermanent, subject to cessation.’ He is steady in that (tattha), he reaches the destruction of the cankers.  

The key term ‘tattha’ is the indeclinable pronoun used for the locative case and used in the impersonal sense of ‘that.’ In the commentaries, namely, the Papañcasūdanī, Buddhaghosa defines the term ‘tattha’ as ‘that samatha and vipassana’.

It can be noted from the Aṭṭhakanāgarasutta that the psychological states of vipassanājhāna differs from the stereotype of the first jhāna by adding the consciousness activities of reflection on and comprehension of the process of the three characteristics of existence. Buddhaghosa interprets this meditative step as the process of samatha combining with vipassanā. On the one hand, the interpretation of vipassanā corresponds with meditation on the three characteristics of existence. On the other hand, the interpretation of samatha corresponds with the stereotype of the first jhāna. Consequently, the combined psychological process of reflecting on (paṭisañcikkhati) and comprehending the jhāna corresponds with the mode of supramundane jhāna.

In the Mahāmāluṅkayasutta, further clarification of the nature of vipassanājhāna is evident. It is the form of the correspondence between samatha and vipassanā in relation to the perfect realization of the deathless element. It is indubitably clear in this discourse that the process of vipassanā has a crucial role to fulfil in the realm of the jhāna states. After proclaiming the collaboration between samatha and vipassanā, the Buddha indicates the distinguishing mark of their collaboration which is the meditation on the

880 Ps.III.13.
deathless element (*amatadhātu*) leading to the state of destruction of the cankers (*arahant*) or the state of non-returner (*anāgāmī*).

...When he has turned his mind away from those states, he directs the mind towards the deathless element thus: “This is peaceful, this is sublime, that is, the tranquillity of all mental formations, the relinquishment of all substrata of existence, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, and *nibbāna*. 882

According to this passage in the *Mahāmāluṅkyasutta*, the perfect realization of the deathless element (*amatadhātu*) arises during the exercise of *vipassanā*, which is concerned with seeing things in terms of the three characteristics based on *samatha*. The Buddha clarifies the characteristics of the deathless element as peace (*santa*), sublime (*pañīta*) and the tranquillity of all mental formations (*sabbasaṅkhārasamatha*), coinciding with the state of enlightenment. Regarding the commentaries of the *Papañcasūdanī*, Buddhaghosa interprets the term ‘*tattha*’ in the passage as “into *vipassanā* endowed with the three characteristics as object (*ārammaṇa*)” 883 The relationship between the deathless element and the threefold training is found in the *Dutiya-aññatarabhikkhusutta*. 884 Of particular importance here is that the deathless element is perfectly realized through the development of the noble eightfold path (*ariya-āṭṭhaṅgikamagga*). Considered from this perspective, meditation on the deathless element arising from the spiral development of the threefold training is a prominent process for *vipassanā* contemplation due to the implication of seeing things clearly as they really are according to the three characteristics.

The term ‘*Vipassanājhāna*’ signifies the united operation between the transcendent process from the world and the pulling process toward *nibbāna*. If

---

882 M.I.435-436: “...so tehi dhammehi cittam paṭivāpetvā amatāya dhātuyā cittam upasaṃharati: etam santam etam pañītam yadidaṃ sabbasaṅkhārasamatho sabbūpadhipaṭinissaggo taṅhakkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbānan-it.”

883 Ps.III.146.

884 S.V.8.
the meditator is unable to realize the absolute qualities of nibbāna or the deathless element, then the psychological goal of attaining nibbāna will not be fulfilled. This theme is simplified through a simile of a land-discovering process. When a ship gets blown off by gales and goes adrift, with no land in sight, sailors release a bird. It takes off in all directions to look for land. If it sees land, it flies straight to it and does not return. If not, it returns and perches on the mast-head. The bird signifies the meditator. The land signifies the deathless element, while the ship signifies the five aggregates. The simile suggests that, if meditators realize the deathless element or nibbāna, they will detach from the world. If not, they will remain attached to the world, which is their object (ārammaṇa). The evaluation of the supramundane jhāna or vipassanājhāna has now reached its extent here. Since these two words have been used interchangeably, they signify the well-established relationship between samatha and vipassanā, which is based on the spiral development of the threefold training until the realization of the deathless element is fulfilled.

In spite of the interpretation of vipassanājhāna as a profound mental quality resulting from the cooperation of samatha and vipassanā, some scholars still interpret it as an entirely contemplation method. For instance, U Pandita interprets it as khaṇīkasamādhi (momentary concentration): “in vipassanājhāna, one does not fix attention on one object alone, but moves from one sense object (paramattha) to another as they arise, and the concentration is khaṇīkasamādhi.”\textsuperscript{885} Similarly, Premaratne explains the meaning of vipassanājhāna: “vipassanājhāna is gained by the focusing of the mind, on ultimate realities, just the things we can experience directly through the six sense-doors without the medium of conceptualization.”\textsuperscript{886} The momentary concentration through the six sense-doors seems to be unrelated to the meaning

\textsuperscript{886} Kumar de Silva and Bogoda Premaratne, op. cit., p. 349.
of ‘letting go’ of all sensual perception of jhāna. Moreover, the restricted concentration of khaṇīkasamādhi and free development of vipassanā cannot present the cooperation between samatha and vipassanā in the process of vipassanājhāna. In order to avoid the term ‘jhāna,’ Payutto employs the term ‘vipassanāsamādhi’ for the commencement of vipassanā. He interprets this term as the concentrative level between the levels of momentary concentration and access concentration. This interpretation of vipassanāsamādhi as unreliable concentration appears to lack the ability to initiate the process of mental vision characteristic of vipassanā, let alone cultivating vipassanā. For the signification of lokuttara-jhānas, Goenka, of course, specifies the addition of sampajañña (awareness) to a set of concentrative attainments, jhānas. It appears in the Gaṇakamoggallānasutta that the development of awareness is a mere prior preparation for the attainment of the first jhāna.

Despite the interpretation of vipassanājhāna as a meditative method of the above scholars, it actually refers to the mental unification of samatha perceived at the consequence of the commencement of vipassanā. Sujato interprets vipassanājhāna as the attainment of the jhānas in pure samatha. He equates the emotional qualities, such as rapture, serenity and bliss, arising in the process of samatha as that of vipassanā. It is feasible that these emotional qualities of samatha and vipassanājhāna are the same. But those of vipassanājhāna would be in more profound states because they are supplemented through the process of vipassanā. In summary, vipassanājhāna is the reappearing of the eight jhānas at a later stage, when they are directly associated with meditation on the deathless element of vipassanā.

887 Phra Prayudh Payutto, op. cit., p. 271.
889 M.III.3-4.
890 Sujato, A Swift Pair of Messengers, op. cit., p. 20.
In the light of the above discussion, an elaboration of the threefold training can be summarized in three aspects. Firstly, some scholars, such as Griffiths and Keown, indeed, tend to disregard any combined training or promote only one type of training for the attainment of Buddhist enlightenment. Despite this, the threefold training, *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, are inter-dependent factors; each supplements the other. And so the meditator must develop all three factors until they have enough force to calm the mind and lead it toward the cooperation of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. Secondly, since accomplishment in training in one area will prove beneficial in the other areas, the progress through the training in all three areas is intended to be an interdependent instead of a linear process. This progress signifies the relationship between *samatha* and *vipassanā* in that *samatha* encourages *vipassanā*, and that *vipassanā* develops *samatha*. Both processes are associated through every progressive stage of their development until the end of the enlightenment path. Thirdly, *vipassanājīhāna* and its principle equivalent term ‘supramundane *jhāna*’ can be reached from the spiral development of the threefold training. The two terms refer to a combined operation, which involves the withdrawal process from sensual perception and the pulling process toward *nibbāna*. In the state of *vipassanājīhāna*, the eight *jhānas* are cultivated into a more profound stage which is coupled with the perfect realization of the deathless element. The evaluation of the development of the threefold training clarifies the particular development of the twofold meditation.

**Relationship between *Satipaṭṭhāna* and the Twofold Meditation**

The course of meditative practice of both *samatha* and *vipassanā* will be further clarified through the psychological analysis of the *satipaṭṭhāna*. The Buddha announces the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) as the “one and only path leading to the purification of beings and to the ultimate goal
of realization of Nibbāna”. This meditative method comprises four subjects of contemplation; contemplation of body (kāyānupassanā), contemplation of feeling (vedanānupassanā), contemplation of mind (cittānupassanā) and contemplation of mental object (dhammānupassanā). These four subjects of contemplation in the Satipaṭṭhānasutta generally represent the practice of vipassanā. In the Heart of Buddhist Meditation, Nyanaponika provides a history of the specific interpretation of vipassanā. While Venerable U Narada was searching eagerly for a direct practice approaching the highest goal, one forest monk suggested that he study the Satipaṭṭhānasutta. Subsequently, he developed the principles and details of insight meditation from the discourse. The detailed examination of satipaṭṭhāna reveals a connection to samatha and vipassanā. The perfect realization of mental bodies in accompaniment with the arising of the five instrumental factors of insight; cakkhu, ānāna, paññā, vijjā and āloka, based on deep concentration, are of central importance to the development of satipaṭṭhāna, and also vipassanā. This examination will proceed in the following sequence: first the evaluation of the relation between satipaṭṭhāna and jhānas, then the clarification of the contemplation of body (kāyānupassanā), next the discussion of satipaṭṭhāna in relation to these five factors and the deathless element, and lastly, the examination of the contemplation of the other three foundations (feeling, mind and dhamma) in terms of their basic mental qualities.

**The Relationship between Satipaṭṭhāna and the Jhānas**

Before the commencement of satipaṭṭhāna practice, the meditator needs to develop the mind into the serene and pure state of the jhānas. According to the Sūdasutta, the Buddha specifies the calming and concentrating of the mind as a result of the successful practice of satipaṭṭhāna.

---

891 D.II.290.
892 Nyanaponika, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
In this way, monks, here a certain wise, learned and skillful monk remains ardent with awareness and mindfulness, experiencing body in the body, having removed craving and aversion towards the world. While he remains experiencing body in the body, his mind becomes concentrated, his defilements are abandoned.\footnote{S.V.151-152: “Evam eva kho bhikkhave idhekacco paññīto byatto kusalo bhikkhu kāye kāyānupassī Viharati. atāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādhamanassam. Tassa kāye kāyānupassino viharato cittam samādhiyati upakkilesa pahiyanti.”}

The next occurrence of the relationship between satipaṭṭhāna practice and concentration appears in the Dantabhūmisutta, where the meditative practice of the four satipaṭṭhānas requires the preliminary step of abandoning the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa).

Having abandoned these five hindrances which are defilements of the mind and weakening to wisdom, he remains ardent with awareness and mindfulness, experiencing body in the body, having removed craving and aversion towards the world.\footnote{M.III.136: “So ime pañca nīvaraṇa paññāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbālikaraṇe kāye kāyānupassī viharati atāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādhamanassam.”}

Then the meditative process of kāyānupassanā,\footnote{Contemplation of the body (kāyānupassanā) consists of mindfulness of breathing (ānāpānasati), considering the four postures (āriyāpatha), mindfulness and awareness (sati-sampajāna), mindfulness of the body (kāyagatāsati), the analysis of the four elements (catudhātuvavatthāna) and the ten impurities (asubha).} vedanānupassanā,\footnote{Contemplation of all feelings (vedanānupassanā) concerns the clear perception of the various agreeable, disagreeable, and indifferent feelings of both body and mind.} cittānupassanā\footnote{Contemplation of the state of mind (cittānupassanā) employs the clear perception of the consciousness, whether it is greedy or not, hateful or not, deluded or not, ….} and dhammānupassanā\footnote{Contemplation of metal objects (dhammānupassanā) concerns the five hindrance (nīvaraṇa), the five aggregates (khandha), the twelve bases of sense (āyatana), the seven factors of enlightenment (bojjhaṅga) and the four noble truths (ariyasacca).} must be associated initially with the first jhāna in order to eliminate the five hindrances. Keminda agrees on the strong relationship between the first jhāna and satipaṭṭhāna practice. He refers to the Buddha’s attainment of the first jhāna before his enlightenment under the Banyan tree.\footnote{Kheminda Thera, Path Fruit & Nibbāna, op. cit., p. 19.} Similarly, Brahmavamso regards the jhāna states as the prerequisite for satipaṭṭhāna practice.\footnote{Venerable Ajahn Brahmavamso, “Satipatthana the Fourfold Focus of Mindfulness,” op. cit.} He recommends the removal of these hindrances before starting satipaṭṭhāna practice according to the examination of the initial stage of satipaṭṭhāna that is “having put away covetousness and grief for the world (vineyya loke abhijjhādhamanassam).” He claims from the
commentaries to the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*\(^{901}\) that covetousness and grief subsume the five hindrances. Before the contemplation of any subject of mindfulness practice, these hindrances have to be abandoned through the *jāna* practice. It is clear that the meditative process of *Satipaṭṭhāna* can only be performed through the tranquilizing of the distracted mind until mental stillness and calmness are obtained.

In contrast to this theme, many scholars refuse to accept the association between *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice and mental stillness of the *jāna* attainment. For example, Ruberu indicates the incompatibility between *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice and *jānas*: “…*Satipaṭṭhāna* provides an assured, direct access called “pure insight” (*sukkha vipassanā*), for those who have not attained to any absorptions (*jāna*).”\(^{902}\) The next scholar is Nyanaponika when he identifies *Satipaṭṭhāna* practices as the practice of bare insight (*sukkha-vipassanā*) which is developed without any basis of absorption (*jāna*).\(^{903}\) Moreover, having differentiated the *jānas* from the path of enlightenment, Burns distinguishes *Satipaṭṭhāna* from the *jānas*: “Yet, unlike *Satipaṭṭhāna*, the *jānas* are not a prerequisite to enlightenment.”\(^{904}\) From these scholars’ view, it would appear that *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice does not collaborate with the advanced stages of concentration in terms of *jānas*.

No doubt, some practitioners have had successful results by practising *vipassanā* meditation techniques without the prior preparation of *samatha* or *jāna* practices. However, a detailed examination of the passage “*vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassam*” in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* confirms the importance of the attainment of *jānas* for the initiation of *Satipaṭṭhāna* practice. This research

\(^{901}\) Ps.I.244.
\(^{902}\) Jayantha Ruberu, op. cit., p. 287.
\(^{903}\) Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 103.
\(^{904}\) Douglas M. Burns, op. cit., p. 42.
will argue that the preparation provided by initial tranquillity techniques improves the eventual outcome of insight meditation. Although the attainment of the jhānas is not directly mentioned in the Satipaṭṭhāna discourse, if we consider the textual evidence in the sutta, the jhāna attainment is implied. Nevertheless, Anālayo focuses on the successful satipaṭṭhāna practice that is the realization of the two stages of awakening, full awakening or non-returning. He refers to the Mahāmāluṅkayasutta, which explicitly states that at least the first jhāna needs to be undertaken in order to overcome the five lower fetters and thus attain the two stages of awakening. His view coincides with the Buddha’s statement that the noble eightfold path leads to full awakening. The analysis of the noble eightfold path shows that one factor, sammāsamādhi, comprises of the four rūpajjhānas.

Moreover, after a detailed examination of the seven enlightenment factors, Sujato demonstrates the association between satipaṭṭhāna practice and the jhānas. Regarding the seven factors- mindfulness (sati), investigation of dhammas (dhammavacaya), energy (viriya), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi) and equanimity (upekkhā)- he interprets the combination of pīti and samādhi as a psychological state endowed with the attainment of the jhānas. This seems reasonable because pīti is one factor of the first and second jhānas, whereas concentration is the predominant factor for the attainment of all jhānas. He further argues that equanimity (upekkhā) is the essential factor for reaching perfection in the fourth jhāna. According to his viewpoint of these seven factors, mindfulness requires the collaboration of the process of samatha, in the jhāna states, for the perfection of the enlightenment path. The significance of the jhānas for the enlightenment path is also found in the Ākaṅkheyyasutta:

905 Anālayo, op. cit., p. 82.
906 M.I.434.
907 Sujato, A Swift Pair of Messengers, op. cit., pp. 70-71.
Monks, if a monk should wish: ‘May I, through my own supernatural knowledge in here and now and through the destruction of canker, realize, enter into and remain in the canker-free freedom of mind and freedom through wisdom,’ he should be one who fulfils the precepts, be devoted to the tranquillity of heart within oneself, not neglect jhāna, be endowed with vipassanā, and dwell in empty huts.\textsuperscript{908}

The passage shows that meditative practice based on jhāna attainment is indispensable for both freedom of mind (cetovimutti) and freedom through wisdom (paññāvimutti). It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the meditator needs to develop the mind into the serene and pure state of the jhānas, in accompaniment with the development of mindfulness, in order to fulfil the enlightenment path. We can see that the meditator can practice satipatthāna through mindfulness practice alone, while mindfulness, strengthened by jhāna attainment, can attain a more profound practice of satipatthāna.

**Analysis of the contemplation of Body in Body (Kāye Kāyānupassī)**

An examination of the satipatthāna practice and its relationship with the jhānas establishes the nature of the association between samatha and a profound state of clear mindfulness and awareness. The initial practice of mindful attention to the body is clarified through a psychological and etymological analysis of the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassī.’ The Buddha announces the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassī’ twenty-one times throughout the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhānasutta,*\textsuperscript{909} with variations according to which section of the four satipaṭṭhānas one has reached: body, feelings, mind or dhamma. Looking through the whole sutta, the formulaic pattern ‘body in body (kāye kāyānupassī)’ appears again and again with variations according to which section of the four satipaṭṭhānas; body in body (kāye kāyānupassī), feeling in feeling (vedanāsu vedanānupassī), mind in

\textsuperscript{908} M.I.35-36: “‘Ākañkhāya ce bhikkhave bhikkhu: āsavānam khayā anāsavam cetovimuttim paññāvimuttim diṭṭhe va dhamme sayaṃ abhiññāya sacchikatvā upasampajja vihareyyan-ti, sīlesv-ev’assa paripūrakārī ājhattam cetosamatham-amuyutto anirākatajhāno vipassanāya samannāgato brūhetā suññāgārānam.’

\textsuperscript{909} D.II.290-304.
mind (citte cittānupassi), and dhamma in dhamma (dhammesu dhammānupassi) is involved. In the case of the first satipaṭṭhāna, the formulaic pattern reads:

Thus he remains contemplating body in body internally, or remains contemplating body in body externally, or remains contemplating body in body both internally and externally. Or else he remains contemplating the nature of arising in the body, or he remains contemplating the nature of passing away in the body, or he remains contemplating the nature of arising and passing away in the body; or else, mindfulness that ‘There is the body,’ is simply established to him just to the extent necessary for intuition and mindfulness. And he remains independent, not grasping anything in the world. This is how, monks, remains contemplating body in body. 7910

This thesis will argue that the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassi) can be accomplished through the perfect recognition of mental bodies911 rather than by means of contemplation of the physical body or the bodily postures. This argument will proceed in relation to three steps, the examination of the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi,’ the investigation of the section on contemplation of inspiration, and the evaluation of contemplating the nature of arising and passing away in the body.

An examination of the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ reveals that the perfect realization of internal mental bodies, mentioned above, is the predominant factor in the practice of satipaṭṭhāna. In her interpretation of the term ‘kāye,’ I.B. Horner uses the common meaning of the locative case, expressing ‘the place where,’ thus translating the expression as ‘in the body.’912 In agreement with Horner, Goenka renders ‘kāye’ as ‘in the body:’ so that “kāye kāyānupassi viharati:” means “to live witnessing the reality of the body in the body.”913 This


911 Mental bodies are the refined bodies within the physical body, composing of the refined form, feeling (vedanā), perception (saṁjñā), mental-formation (saṁkhāra) and consciousness (viññāṇa).


913 S.N Goenka, Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta Discourses, op. cit., p. 22.
thesis agrees with Horner and Goenka in interpreting ‘kāye’ as ‘within the body’ because the common meaning of the locative case seems more appropriate in this context.

While this interpretation suggests that the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ is related to the perfect realization of mental bodies, some scholars interpret the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ as contemplation of the entire physical body. For instance, T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids render ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ as “as to the body, continue to consider the body.”914 This translation is not satisfactory. In this translation, kāye is understood as the locative case expressing reference, which is an uncommon function. The PTS Pali-English dictionary corroborates this interpretation by rendering it as “contemplating body as an accumulation.”915 T.W. Rhys Davids and Stede declares kāya as having five meanings; group, heap, collection, aggregate, and body. To interpret the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi,’ they interpret ‘kāye’ as ‘collection’ and kāya as ‘body.’ From these two interpretations of kāya, it seems inconsistent to render the meaning of the word ‘kāya’ in two different ways in the same phrase as they do. It is inappropriate for the same root word to represent two different meanings in the same phrase. In addition, according to their interpretation of kāya, the aggregate of a multiplicity of body parts such as hair, nails, and skin represents the meaning of kāya in its physical aspect. Therefore, the meditator sees that the body is clothed in skin, full of all kinds of dirty matter, and that in this body there are thirty-two parts such as hair nails and teeth, and so on.916 According to this interpretation of ‘kāye,’ the purpose of the formulaic pattern is to bring the unattractive aspects to the forefront of one’s attention. The locative of reference, employed for the function of kāye, appears to ignore the existence of the subtle form of body. This form is found in the Ayoguḷasutta where the

916 Ibid.
Buddha states that he can reach the *brahma* realm in his physical body and in the subtle form of the mind-made (*manomaya*) body.

I directly know, Ānanda, having approached the *brahma* realm by means of supernormal power with a mind-made body…with this body composed of the four great elements.\(^{917}\)

The discourse indicates that the Buddha can intentionally employ spiritual power to control his physical body and the subtle body which is created by the power of mind. Although the term “kāye” can be rendered as the locative case expressing reference, the common meaning of the locative case seems to indicate an interpretation in terms of the subtle body.

The analysis of the term ‘kāya’ further clarifies the characteristics of the mental body, which are necessary for the contemplation of body in body. In this phrase ‘body in body,’” it is necessary to clarify what is the outside body and what is the inside body. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* declares that there are two bodies - the mental body (*nāmakāya*) and the material body (*rūpakāya*). The former includes feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volition (*cetanā*), contact (*phassa*), attention (*manasikāra*) and cognizance formations (*cittasaṅkhāra*).\(^{918}\) The material body includes the four principle elements (soil element, water element, wind element and fire element), breathing, characteristics (*nimitta*) and body formations (*kāya saṅkhāra*).\(^{919}\) Regarding the two types of body, let us continue to scrutinize that of the inside body.

If the material body is the proper object of study for medical science, then the mental body is the appropriate object of meditative study. From the point of view of meditation technique, the mental body is the proper interpretation of the inside body. The mental body is the refined form dwelling within the physical body.

\(^{917}\) S.V.282: “*Abhijñāṇāmi khvāham Ānanda iddhiyā manomayena kāyena brahma lokam upasaṅkamitā… iminā cātumahābhūtikena kāyena*”

\(^{918}\) *Paṭis.* I.183.

\(^{919}\) Ibid.
body. The relationship between the mental body and meditation practice is found in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*.

When his mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, free from defilement, malleable, workable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he applies and bends down his mind towards the creation of a mind-made body. He creates from this body another body having form, mind-made, with all its limbs and faculties.\(^{920}\)

After having attained the concentrative level of the fourth *jhāna*, a monk progressively acquires insight into the creation of the mind-made body (*manomaya kāya*). He is able to utilize this power intentionally: he “applies and bends down the mind (*citta/FL1\textsuperscript{h} abhinīharati abhininnāmeti*)” thus creating a mind-made body and illustrating the purity and creative power of the mind. In this discourse, the three analogies of pulling a reed from its sheath, drawing a sword from a scabbard and pulling the snake from its skin demonstrate that the mind-made body differs in nature from the physical body but that they look identical. Because of this creation of the subtle body by means of the power of the mind, the mind-made body can be identified as the mental body. Therefore, during the subtlising process of *samatha*, the meditator attains the subtle and inward state of the mental body.

A further clarification of the mental body is found in the *Aygouḷasutta* where the Buddha describes the method of the journey to the *brahma* realm.

Ānanda, on an occasion when the Tathāgata composes the body in the mind and composes the mind in the body and remains having entered upon the perceptions of bliss and lightness in the body, on that occasion the body of the Tathāgata becomes lighter, softer, more utilitarian and more radiant.\(^{921}\)

\(^{920}\) D.I.77: “So evaṃ samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyoḍāte anāṅgane vigatūpakklese mudu-bhūte kammaniye thīte āneñjappate mano-mayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimmāṇāya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti. So imamhā kāyā aṅhaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimmāṇāti rūpiṃ manomayaṃ sabbaṅga-paccāgām ahiṃindriyaṃ.”

\(^{921}\) S.V.283: “Yasmiṃ Ānanda samaye Tathāgato kāyaṃ pi citte samādahati cittam pi kāye samādahati sukhasaṅkāraṃ lahusaṅkāraṃ kāye okkamitvā viharati; tasmiṃ Ānanda samaye Tathāgatassa kāyo lahutaro ceva hoti mudutaro ca kammaniyatari ca pabhassarataro ca.”
It requires the concentration of the body in the mind and concentration of the mind in the body. He dwells entering the perceptions of bliss and lightness in the body so that his body becomes lighter, softer, more utilitarian and more radiant. This method deals with the mental body in terms of body because its nature is the same as mind and also the manipulations of body and mind are presented in the same way. The textual evidence for the refined form as the inside body appears in the commentaries to the interesting passage “sukhañca kāyena paṭisamvedeti” (experience happiness by means of the body) which accompanies the formulaic pattern of the third jhāna. Since happiness (sukha) is a mental quality and can be experienced by the mind only, then the term ‘kāya,’ here, implies some state which is not a normal body. For an explanation of the term ‘kāya’ in the third jhāna, Buddhaghosa proposes the exceedingly superior form (atipaññātarūpa) arising from the association of mental body and bliss (sukha);

He would feel the bliss associated with his mental body (nāmakāya), and after emerging from the jhāna he would also feel bliss since his material body (rūpakāya) would have been affected by the exceedingly superior (atipaññā) matter (rūpa) originated by that bliss associated with the mental body (nāmakāya).

In reference to this quotation, the term ‘kāya’ in the third jhāna implies the terms ‘nāmakāya’ and ‘atipaññātarūpa’ which correspond with the basic formula ‘contemplation of body in body’ of the Satipaṭṭhānasutta. Nārada agrees that there is a correlation between the mental body and jhāna attainment: “It is stated that Jhāna factors are essential to produce mind-born rūpa.” Regarding the mind-made body (manomaya kāya), Hamilton points to the characteristics of the mental body as being more subtle than that of the physical body: “Our ‘normal’ bodies are gross rūpa (matter), whereas the mind-made body is subtle

---

922 Vism. 163 (tr. Ānāmasoli p. 169).
923 Ibid.
The investigation of the notion of the mental body reveals that this subtle body, which results from jhāna attainment, is that which is referred to by the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassi).

The next examination of the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ will demonstrate the notion of a successful development of mental bodies in the Rohitassasutta. Indeed, an examination of the Rohitassasutta reveals a direct association between the mental bodies and the end of the circle of existence. In this discourse, a son of the devas, namely Rohitassa, comes to the Buddha and asks about the location of the end of the world was and how to get there. The Buddha replies by identifying the end of the world with the end of the circle of existence, which one cannot attain by merely travelling.

Friend, I do not say that the end of the world, where one is not born, does not decay, does not die, is not reborn, and does not arise, can be known, seen, or reached by travelling.

According to this discourse, the end of the world is not to be arrived at by travelling to the end of the physical universe, but by introspection, that is, by looking within the physical body. The Buddha, of course, declared the world, the cause of the world, the cessation of the world, and the course of action that leads to the cessation of the world to be lying in the fathom-long body with its perception and mind. His answer thus implies that the end of the circle of existence is relevant to the perfect realization of the exceedingly superior forms of the inside bodies, which lie within the physical body. It is contended that the realization of the mental bodies within the physical body, which are related to deep concentration, are of central importance for satipaṭṭhāna practice and its culmination.

---

926 S.I.61-62.
927 S.I.61: “Yattha kho āvuso na jāyati na jīyati na miyati na cavati na uppajjati, nāham tām gamanena lokassa antam hāteyyam daṭṭheyyam patteyyan-ṭi vadāmi.”
Having examined the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi,’ we now turn to an investigation of the section on contemplation of respiration in the part on the contemplation of the body. This section also specifies the significance of the realization of the mental bodies (nāmakāya). According to the discourse, the contemplation of respiration can be undertaken in the following way:


The passage introduces the phrase ‘sabbakāyapaṭisamvedī’ which strongly relates to the perfect realization of mental bodies in the contemplation of body in body as described in the following paragraphs.

A terminological analysis of the phrase ‘sabbakāyapaṭisamvedī’ shows that a firm grounding in experiencing mental bodies provides an important basis for the development of the contemplation of respiration and that of body in body. A detailed examination of the term ‘sabba’ in this phrase reveals a strong connection between the perfect realization of mental bodies (nāmakāya) and the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassi). The PTS Pali-English Dictionary gives four meanings for sabba; ‘whole,’ ‘entire,’ ‘all’ and ‘every.’

For ‘sabba’ in the phrase ‘sabbakāyapaṭisamvedī,’ both Rhys Davids and I.B Horner select the meaning of ‘whole.’ According to this viewpoint, the term


'sabbakāya' signifies all the components of one body; it is a meaning which challenges the usual interpretation of ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ as ‘contemplation of body in body’ by suggesting that it refers to the subtle body within the physical body. In addition, the English word ‘whole’ tends to correspond with the word ‘sakala’ or ‘kevala’ in Pāli. Thus, a more appropriate interpretation of ‘sabbakāyapaṭīsamvedī’ by translating ‘sabba’ as ‘every’ is, ‘experiencing every body.’

In contrast, in the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa renders ‘sabbakāyapaṭīsamvedī’ as “making known, making plain, the beginning, middle and end of the entire breathing body.” He further explains sabbakāyapaṭīsamvedī as meaning “both breathing in and breathing out with consciousness (citta) associated with knowledge (ñāna)” and in order to imply the aspect of arousing knowledge (ñāna). Buddhaghosa’s translation of ‘sabbakāyapaṭīsamvedī’ seems to contain a misleading expression of sabbakāya (every body) as the entirety of the breathing. His interpretation of sabba as sakala (entire) appears to support the interpretation of kāya as breathing. While breathing is a highly significant factor of the physical body, it seems to be irrelevant to the mental body. Furthermore, Buddhaghosa’s interpretation of kāya as breathing contradicts the benefit of the mindfulness of breathing. He points to the culmination of its benefit as the attainment of the fourth jhāna. The Rahogatasutta states that the inhalation and exhalation completely stop during this attainment: “For one who attains the fourth jhāna, in-breaths and out-breaths have ceased.”

---

932 Vism.273 (tr. Ńāṇamoli p. 294-295).
933 Vism.111 (tr. Ńāṇamoli p. 113).
934 S.IV.217: “catuttham jhānam samāpānassa assāsapassāsā niruddhā honti.”
middle and end of the entire breathing body” cannot be reconciled with the ceasing of breathing which is the ultimate outcome of the contemplation of respiration. During the ceasing of breathing at the fourth jhāna attainment, the interpretation of kāya as mental body makes more sense if the meditator still performs the contemplation of respiration by experiencing the mental bodies. Thus this interpretation of kāya provides a proper application of the contemplation of respiration and facilitates the contemplation of body in body as well.

Some modern scholars do not accept the connection between the mental body (nāmakāya) and the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassī) because they interpret the phrase ‘sabbakāyapaṭisamvedī’ as the experience of the physical body, rather than the perfect realization of the mental bodies. For instance, Rhys Davids renders it as “conscious of my whole body.”935 I.B. Horner renders it in a similar way as “experiencing the whole body.”936 Anālayo also interprets it as “experiencing the whole physical body.”937 However, from this interpretation, satipatṭhāna practice does not fit well with the deep concentration, but seems rather to be the initiation of sati and sampajaṅṇa practices. The contemplation of body in body is found to be relevant to the deep concentration. It illustrates the pattern of meditative practices, which are the same sequence of practices of mindfulness of the body (kāyagatāsati) stated in the Kāyagatāsatisutta. In this discourse, the attainment of the four jhānas appears to be object and benefit of the kāyagatāsati practices.

Monks, when mindfulness of the body has been practiced, developed, made much of, made as a vehicle, made as a basis, established, consolidated, and well undertaken, these ten profits may be expected… One gains at will, without trouble or difficulty, the four jhānas that

937 Anālayo, op. cit., p. 131.
constitute the higher mind and provide dwelling in happiness here and now.\textsuperscript{938}

The positioning of the four \emph{jhānas} in the \textit{Kāyagatāsatisutta} is linked to the interpretation of ‘\emph{sabbakāyapaṭisamvedī}’ as ‘experiencing every body’ including mental body or mind-made body. The discussion above clearly indicates the link between the four \emph{jhānas} and perfect realization of mental body or mind-made body. Therefore, the analysis of the term ‘\emph{sabbakāyapaṭisamvedī},’ in the section on contemplation of respiration, indicates preliminary states where numerous mental bodies are experienced proceeding to the profound level of the contemplation of body in body.

Considering the nature of the arising and passing away in the body, the last aspect of the contemplation of body in body involves the movement from any mental body to its refined state. This movement is the process of the passing away of the relatively coarse mental body in meditation, and the arising of the subsequent more peaceful and more sublime mental body. The particular nature of arising and passing away is shown in the formulaic pattern:

\begin{quote}
He remains contemplating the nature of arising in the body, or he remains contemplating the nature of passing away in the body, or he remains contemplating the nature of arising and passing away in the body.\textsuperscript{939}
\end{quote}

This interpretation of contemplation of body in body expands the scope of the \textit{satipaṭṭhāna} exercise into a contemplation of the impermanent nature which occurs from the process of passing away and arising. This contemplation of the impermanent nature is related to the attainment of \emph{jhānas} in the \textit{Mahāmāluṅkīyasutta}.

\textsuperscript{938} M.III.97-98: “\textit{Kāyagatāya, bhikkhave, satiyā āsevitāya bhāvitāya bahuliikatāya yāniikatāya vatthukatāya anaṭṭhitidaya paricitāya susamāraaddhāya ime das’ ānisamsā pāṭikaṁkhā... Catunnaṁ jhānaṁ abhicetasikānaṁ diṭṭhadhammasukhavihāranaṁ nikāmalābhī hoti akicchalābhī akasirālābhī.”

\textsuperscript{939} D.II.292.
Here, Ānanda, with seclusion from the substrata of existence, with the abandoning of unwholesome mental qualities, with the complete tranquillization of wicked body, quite secluded from sense pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental qualities, monk enters and remains in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by initial and sustained application with joy and happiness born of seclusion. Whatever exists therein comprised by form, feeling, perception, mental formation or consciousness, he perceives those states as impermanent, as suffering, as a disease, as a tumour, as a barb, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as integrating, as void, as not self.

In this *sutta*, the ascent from *jhāna* to *jhāna* signals the arising of more refined *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* and passing away of these of preceding state. During meditation, the advancement of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* of mental body, we can assume, involves concurrently an intensification of concentration. The spontaneous arising of more refined bodies incorporates with the contemplation of the impermanent nature along the *jhāna* development. Therefore, the *satipaṭṭhāna* exercise and the process of *vipassanā* concur in the perfect realization of mental bodies rather than in the rational process of the physical body.

However, to perform the contemplation of body in body, some scholars do not consider the meditation path through mental bodies; rather, concern the rational thinking of phenomena as the main concept of *satipaṭṭhāna* exercise. For instance, Anālayo regards the arising and passing away of phenomena as the essential factor for *satipaṭṭhāna* exercise and *vipassanā*:

The same is reflected in the commentarial scheme of the insight knowledge, which details key experiences to be encountered during the path to realization, where the stage of apprehending the arising and passing away of phenomena is of central importance.

---


941 Anālayo, op. cit., p. 103.
His proposal seems to link satipaṭṭhāna exercise with rational thinking rather than with deep concentration because the meditator must observe the changeability of phenomena. Since the process of rational thought does not involve the basic step of concentration, Ruberu neglects the basis of satipaṭṭhāna exercise: “Practising satipaṭṭhāna may commence with any physical or mental activity of the day. It needs no prior preparation except a desire for starting on it”942

But it is remarkable that the meditator needs to realize the mental bodies, which result from the development of a certain level of concentration before commencing satipaṭṭhāna exercise. In the Satipaṭṭhānasutta, it is implicit that the practice of satipaṭṭhāna requires the establishment of four particular mental qualities: diligence (ātāpi), bare attention (sampajāna), mindfulness (sati) and freedom from desires and discontent (vineyya abhijjhādamanassa).943 Brahmavamso suggests that these desires and discontent refer precisely to the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa).944 To remove the five hindrances, the meditator must attain at least the first jhāna. Consequently, Practising satipaṭṭhāna has to commence with the basis of deep concentration. Thus, it becomes clear that the contemplation of impermanent nature arising from the perfect realization of mental bodies is a significant factor for satipaṭṭhāna exercise and vipassanā.

From this discussion of the contemplation of body in body, it emerges that the term ‘kāye,’ in the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi,’ does not refer to the meaning of a collection. Indeed, it involves the common meaning of locative case that is ‘in the body.’ From this connotation of ‘kāye,’ the phrase ‘kāye kāyānupassi’ would be rendered as the contemplation of inside mental bodies within the physical body. Regarding the phrase ‘sabbakāyapaṭṭisamvedi,’ the definition of

942 Jayantha Ruberu, op. cit., p. 296.
943 M.I.56.
944 Brahmavamso, Satipatthana The Fourfold Focus of Mindfulness. op. cit.
the term ‘sabba’ would be ‘every’ rather than ‘whole.’ Subsequently, the term ‘kāya’ would be rendered as ‘body’ rather than as ‘breathing.’ Thus, the term ‘sabbakaṇḍagataśamanvedi’ indicates preliminary states where numerous mental bodies are experienced before proceeding to the next part of the contemplation of body in body. The above way of considering the nature of arising and passing away in the body is related to the resultant process of the passing away of the coarse mental body and the arising of the more peaceful, and more sublime mental body. The satipaṭṭhāna exercise and the process of vipassanā concur in the perfect realization of impermanent nature arising from the perfect intuitive realization of mental bodies in meditation rather than from the rational process of the physical body.

A Discussion of Satipaṭṭhāna Practice in relation to the Five Instrumental Factors and the Deathless Element

The next discussion of satipaṭṭhāna in relation to the five instrumental factors of insight and the deathless element reveals that the practice of satipaṭṭhāna and the development of vipassanā concur in the arising of the five instrumental factors of insight; cakkhu, ānāṇa, paññā, vijjā and āloka, and in the perfect realization of the deathless element (amatadhātu). Indeed, we have seen so far that satipaṭṭhāna practice is based on the direct experience of the mental bodies. For the development of this experience, the Paṭisambhidāmagga expresses the notion that the meditator ascertains them by mindfulness (sati) and intuition (paññā), which are established through an understanding of the unification of mind.945 The discourse shows that the direct experience of the mental bodies is based on samādhi, sati, and ānāṇa. This research proposes that the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassi) is based on, not only ānāṇa, but also cakkhu, paññā, vijjā and āloka arising and advancing together. The proposal agrees with the Ananussutasutta as follows;

945 Paṭis.I.183.
This is the contemplation of body in body: thus, Monks, such was the vision, the intuition, the wisdom, the knowledge, the light, that arose in me in regard to things unheard before.  

According to the discourse, the arising and progressing of these five instrumental factors of insight constitute the important satipaṭṭhāna practice of the contemplation of body in body and most prominently fulfil the role of providing a firm grounding for the process of vipassanā.

Now that the significance of the five factors for satipaṭṭhāna practice has been discussed, an inquiry into the significance of the deathless element (amatadātu) is timely. The deathless element is a particular consciousness state of the Buddhist meditator during his mental development. It is known that the Buddha is the giver of the deathless. In the Mahāpadānasutta, the Buddha is the first to reveal the meditative technique of realizing the deathless element (amatadātu). Buddhaghosa defines the deathless element in his commentaries as the ultimate goal called nibbāna. The relationship between the deathless element and the mental body (nāmakāya) is found in the Mahācundasutta in which venerable Mahācunda explains the characteristics of the jhāyin monks.

Friend, this should be trained by you: ‘Though, being dhamma-devotee, we will praise those monks who attain jhānas.’ What is the reason? Friends, it is surprising and rare to find these persons in the world, who remain touching the deathless element with the body.

According to venerable Mahācunda’s explanation, the jhāyin monks are the wondrous persons who live having touched the deathless element with the body.

---

946 S.V.178-179: “Ayaṃ kāye kāyānupassanā ti me bhikkhave pubbe anusutesu dharmesu cakkhaṁ udapādi nānaṁ udapādi pariñjā udapādi vijjā udapādi āloko udapādi.”
947 M.I.111.
948 D.II.39.
949 Sv.II.471, “So hi amatasaṅkhātassa nibbānassa dvāraṁ.”
950 A.III.356.
body. However, the physical body cannot touch or even recognize any psychological state intimately related to the deathless element. The commentaries, of course, clarify the term ‘body (kāya)’ as the mental body (nāmakāya), which performs realization, vision, understanding and attainment of the deathless element (amatadhātu). Since the distinguishing mark of the collaboration between samatha and vipassanā in the mode of the supramundane jhāna is the meditation on the deathless element (amatadhātu), the term ‘jhāyin,’ as interpreted by the venerable Mahācunda, relates to the meditative state of supramundane jhāna. This involves the realization of amatadhātu through the mental body (nāmakāya). The relationship between amatadhātu and the mental body signifies a connection between amatadhātu and the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassī).

Moreover, the Chandasutta confirms this connection through the relationship between meditation on the four foundations of mindfulness and the realization of deathlessness. According to this discourse, when the meditator contemplates the body in body and abandons the desire (chanda) of the body, the meditator will realize the deathless (amata) state. By means of abandoning the desire of feeling (vedanā), mind (citta) and dhamma, the meditator also realizes the deathless (amata) state. Nonetheless, in the Amatasutta, the meditator should dwell with the mind well established in the four foundations of mindfulness in order to realize the deathless (amata) state. It should be noted that, to abandon the desire of the four foundations of mindfulness; body, feeling, mind and dhamma, seems to be incompatible with the consciousness state of being well established in the four foundations. Considering meditation on the four

952 Mp.III.379.
953 S.V.181-182.
954 S.V.181-182.
955 S.V.184.
foundations of mindfulness, the process involves the penetration of numerous profound psychological states of mental bodies, feelings, minds and dhammas.

If the meditator desires the particular state of the mental body during the satipaṭṭhāna practice, the meditator is, in fact, unable to attain the more advanced states of the mental bodies followed by the perfect realization of the deathless element. This can be likened to how a monkey grips a piece of fruit. It needs to release the fruit before gripping a new one. This simile of the monkey suggests that the meditative process progresses to an advanced state by abandoning desire for the four foundations of mindfulness. Accordingly, establishment of the four foundations of mindfulness implies the advancement of the psychological states of the mental bodies until deathlessness is attained. This work proposes that the final stage of the development of the mental body is identical with the deathless state. It could be seen that the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassi) of satipaṭṭhāna practice can be fulfilled on condition that the meditator completely realizes the advanced state of the mental body (nāmakāya) that is the deathless element (amatadhātu).

While the above evidence suggests that the arising of the five instrumental factors of insight and the perfect realization of the deathless state are the prerequisites for the practice of satipaṭṭhāna and the development of vipassanā, other scholars have proposed the particular types of meditation subjects. For instance, Solé-Leris indicates fourteen subjects which are; mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of breathing, the analysis of the four elements, the perception of the repulsiveness of food and the ten impurities as a suitable method for the practice of vipassanā.956 Ruberu suggests the twenty-one subjects of samatha development as the sufficient methods for satipaṭṭhāna.

---

956 Solé-Leris, op. cit., pp. 74-75.
practice. Likewise, Vajirañāṇa points to the ten impurities (asubha) and mindfulness of breathing (ānāpānasati). According to these scholars, it seems possible to practice satipaṭṭhāna without any concentrative attainment of the jhāṇas. If this is correct, the question arises as to why the jhānas are called the “footprints of the Buddha” and the “dwelling of the Buddha” in the Cūḷahatthipadopamasutta. The jhānas are of particular importance because, rather than being mere meditation techniques, the profound mental quality of the jhānas would cause the meditation practice to progress to vipassanā meditation. As Jagaro says:

> It is not the object or the technique that makes it insight meditation. What makes it insight meditation is this passive, alert, clear state of mind that reflects its presence to see the beginning and the end.

So the jhāna attainment leads one to let go of the grosser level of mundane nature, impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self. After withdrawing from sensory experience, the meditator focuses equanimity on the more peaceful and refined object of the deathless element. The process of Buddhist liberation needs both the contemplation on the negative nature of mundane characteristics and the perfect recognition of the positive nature of the supramundane state of the deathless element. Schmithausen agrees with this theme:

> ...the intellectual process effectuating the vanishing of the cankers (āsava) implies two phrases: not only the realization of the negative nature of mundane existence...but also a realization of the positive nature of the supramundane state of nirvāṇa.

To summarize, satipaṭṭhāna, the direct path for the realization of nibbāna, involves the collaboration between samatha (which abandons sensory experience) and vipassanā, which is the visual intuition of the five instrumental

---

957 Jayantha Ruberu, op. cit., p. 266.
958 Vajirañāṇa Paravahera Mahathera, op. cit., p. 169.
959 Ibid., p. 227.
960 M.I.181-182.
961 Ajahn Jagaro, Samatha and Vipassana Meditation, talk on 1988.
factors- cakkhu, ſāna, paññā, vijjā and āloka- into the subtle and peaceful state of the deathless element.

**An Examination of the Contemplation of Feeling, Mind and Dhamma**

Turning now to the final aspect of the relationship between the satipaṭṭhāna practice and the twofold meditation, the examination of the other three foundations of mindfulness reveals that the four foundations of mindfulness are based on the same basic mental qualities. The practice of the second satipaṭṭhāna (vedanānupassanā) deals with the contemplation of nine types of feeling\(^9\) based on the basic three pleasant (sukha), unpleasant (dukkha) and neither-pain-nor-happiness (adukkhamasukha) along with their worldly (sāmisa) or unworldly (nirāmisa) nature. Next, the practice of cittānupassanā (contemplation of mind) deals with the sixteen states of the mind according to the presence or absence of the eight states of the mind which are desire (rāga), anger (dosa), delusion (moha), distraction (vikkhitta), great (mahaggata), surpassable (uttara), concentrated (samāhita) and freed (vimutta). Lastly, the practice of dhammānupassanā (contemplation of dhamma) proceeds from the five sections; the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa),\(^5\) the five aggregates of grasping (upādāna-kkhandha),\(^6\) the six sense-spheres (āyatana),\(^7\) the seven factors of awakening (bojjhaṅga),\(^8\) and the four noble truths (ariya-sacca).\(^9\)

---

\(^9\) Nine types of feeling are- pleasant, unpleasant, neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant, worldly pleasant, worldly unpleasant, worldly neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant, unworldly pleasant, unworldly unpleasant, unworldly neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant.

\(^5\) The five hindrances are- sensual desire (kāmachanda), ill will (byāpādo), sloth and torpor (thīnamidda), restlessness and worry (uddhaccakukkaccā), and doubt (vicikicchā).

\(^6\) The five aggregates of grasping are the arising and passing away of- form (rūpa), feeling (vedanā), perception (saññā), mental formation (saṅkhāra), and consciousness (viññā).

\(^7\) The six sense-spheres are- eye (cakkhu), ear (sota), nose (ghāna), tongue (jivhā), body (kāya), and mind (mana).

\(^8\) The seven factors of awakening are- mindfulness (sati), investigation of dhamma (dhammavicaya), effort (viriya), joy (pīti), rapture (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi), and equanimity (upekkhā).

\(^9\) The four noble truths are- suffering (dukkha), cause of suffering (dukkhasamudayo), cessation of suffering (dukkhanirodha), and the path leading to the cessation of suffering (dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipadā).
The practices of four satipaṭṭhānas are based on the same basic mental quality. They can then subsume into single process as shown in the Satipaṭṭhānasutta. This introduces the four satipaṭṭhānas with the only one path to nibbāna. The term ‘only one path’ also appears in a simile in the Mahāsihanādasutta where the Buddha compares the path of freedom to a single path leading to a pond. From this it emerges that satipaṭṭhāna practice does not involve a separate perception of each contemplative practice; instead, it is based on the sufficient mental quality. This particular mental factor in the initiation of satipaṭṭhāna contemplation is demonstrated in the Ananussutasutta. The discourse illustrates the arising of the five instrumental factors of insight, cakkhu, āna, pañña, vijjā and āloka, as important factors in the contemplation of the four foundations:

This is the contemplation of body in body: thus, Monks, such was the vision, the intuition, the wisdom, the knowledge, the light, that arose in me in regard to things unheard before….The contemplation of feelings in feelings (vedanāsu vedanānupassī)….The contemplation of mind in mind (citte cittānupassī) …The contemplation of dhamma in dhamma (dhammesu dhammānupassī)…. The arising of the five instrumental factors induces the exercise of the four concurrent foundations and these instrumental factors progress to more profound states during the satipaṭṭhāna contemplation.

However, most scholars have attempted to distinguish the contemplation of four foundations. For instance, Brahmavamso says: “the meditator sustains their mindfulness on one of the four focuses: their own body, the pleasure and pain associated with each sense, the mind consciousness and, fourthly, the objects of mind.” Moreover, Sujato suggests one foundation at a time: “One is obviously supposed, in some sense or another, to choose one of these four as

---

969 M.I.56.
970 M.I.76-77.
971 S.V.178-179.
972 Brahmavamso, Satipatthana The Fourfold Focus of Mindfulness. op. cit.
a framework for meditation.”\textsuperscript{973} While Sujato suggests that any of the four foundations is equally suitable to begin, Nyanaponika regards the body as the principal foundation of mindfulness:

The bodily processes selected here as principal object of mindfulness serve for the systematic development of insight throughout the whole practice. The other three of contemplation of satipaṭṭhāna are not taken up in a systematic way but are attended to whenever their objects occur.\textsuperscript{974}

 Nonetheless, Goenka regards feeling as the principal foundation: “All four satipaṭṭhānas can be practiced only with the base of vedanā (feeling).”\textsuperscript{975} From these viewpoints, it can be assumed that a consideration of each foundation’s features induces the various interpretations of satipaṭṭhāna practice. In considering the contemplation of four foundations of mindfulness, Anālayo mentions a progressive pattern. After examining each section of the four foundations, he classifies the contemplation of body, feeling, mind and dhamma as a linear progressive pattern developed in the sequence of body, feeling, mind and dhamma.\textsuperscript{976} In his arrangement, the contemplation of body is the fundamental exercise, while the successful implementation of satipaṭṭhāna is attained through the contemplation of the last section of dhamma which is the four noble truths.

These scholars appear to focus on the detailed exposition of satipaṭṭhāna, but not on the formulaic pattern of the contemplation of body-in-body (kāya), feeling-in-feeling (vedanā), mind-in-mind (citta) and dhamma-in-dhamma. According to the contemplation of the formulaic pattern, the meditator requires the prerequisite of sufficient mental quality in order to attain the profound states of refined and peaceful bodies, feelings, minds and dhammas. It is therefore necessary to determine which level of concentration is appropriate for

\textsuperscript{973} Bhikkhu Sujato, \textit{A History of Mindfulness: How Insight Worsted Tranquillity}, op. cit., p. 86.
\textsuperscript{974} Nyanaponika, op. cit., p. 105.
\textsuperscript{975} S.N Goenka, \textit{Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta Discourses}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{976} Anālayo, op. cit., p. 20.
the prerequisite of the contemplation of the last three foundations of mindfulness.

Turning to the second foundation of mindfulness—“the observation of feeling (vedanānupassanā),” its examination points to the essence of the five instrumental factors of insight as the common means whereby the four satipaṭṭhānas are accomplished simultaneously. Indeed, we can interpret the contemplation of feeling in feeling in the same way as the contemplation of body in body. So the meaning of ‘feeling in feeling’ is ‘subtle feeling in gross feeling’ just as the subtle element of air permeates through the particles of sand. The Jhānasutta⁹⁷⁷ announces an association between the assortment of subtle and gross feelings and the eight jhānas. Indeed, each of these jhānas possesses an object of concentration that is finer than the preceding state; simultaneously, feeling occurs at whatever jhāna state is attained. Since each higher state of jhāna is more subtle than the preceding state, the feeling achieved in the higher state is also more subtle than in the preceding state. With each progressively higher jhāna state, the vedanā experience becomes more refined, more internal; this is the meaning of feeling in feeling, i.e., refined feeling within coarse feeling. That is, the feelings of the mental bodies (nāmakāya) are more refined than the feeling of the coarse (physical) body. In the formulaic pattern of vedanānupassanā,⁹⁷⁸ the meditator requires a perfect recognition of the nature of the arising and passing away of feelings. This requirement is referred to in the Ŋānasutta where the Buddha recommends observation of the arising of the five factors; cakkhu, ŋañña, paññā, vijjā and āloka, during the perfect recognition of feelings, the arising of feeling, the ceasing of feeling and the way leading to the ceasing of feeling.⁹⁷⁹ Thus, these five factors arising from deep concentration are the predominant factor for establishing the contemplation of

⁹⁷⁷ S.IV.422-426.
⁹⁷⁸ M.I.59.
⁹⁷⁹ S.IV.233-234.
feeling in feeling because they are the most appropriate instrument for recognizing the nature of the arising and passing away of feelings.

The examination of the third foundation of mindfulness, observation of the mind, suggests that the deep concentration is the central importance for all the satipaṭṭhāna practices. In fact, this third foundation of mindfulness divides the mental qualities into sixteen states, as already discussed. These sixteen states of the mind are identified with the template of the third supernatural knowledge (abhiññā), which is the knowledge of others’ minds (cetopariyañāna); the third foundation of mindfulness refers to one’s own mind, but cetopariyañāna refers to that of others. In order to develop cetopariyañāna, Upatissa suggests contemplation on the light kasiṇa during the fourth jhāna as the basis for experiencing one’s own mind and the other’s mind.⁹⁸⁰ This proposal of Upatissa is consistent with the conventional formula of cetopariyañāna, which is based on the concentration of mind at the fourth jhāna.⁹⁸¹ Therefore, it is compulsory to develop concentration into the deep state of, at least, the fourth jhāna before advancing to the observation of the mind.

The examination of the last segment of satipaṭṭhāna, the observation of dhamma (dhammānupassanā), asserts for the central importance of the five instrumental factors of insight for all the satipaṭṭhāna practices. The basic requirement for the observation of dhamma will be determined through an interpretation of the key expression ‘dhammesu dhammānupassi (contemplation of dhamma in dhamma).’ The contemplation involves movement from any mental object to its refined mental object. The advancement into more refined mental object depends on the intensification of mental qualities. The term ‘anupassi’ could literally be ‘continue to see,’ which

---

⁹⁸⁰ Upatissa, op. cit., p. 220.
⁹⁸¹ D.I.75-80.
combined with the noun ‘dhamma,’ results in ‘continue to see dhamma.’
Regarding the words ‘see’ and ‘dhamma,’ the term ‘dhammacakkhu’ is important to clarify. Buddhaghosa interprets dhammacakkhu to mean insight into dhammas or “the eye made of dhamma.”

The second meaning reveals that the internal vision characteristic of dhammacakkhu, developed through the profound states of meditation practice, involves the ability of visual intuition applied to dhamma. Therefore, in order to perform ‘dhannesu dhammānupassi’ (contemplation of dhamma in dhamma), the meditator needs to attain the superior mental vision of dhammacakkhu. There it is stated that not only cakkhu in the special form of dhammacakkhu, but also the other four instrumental factors of insight, ūna, paññā, vijjā and āloka, are the predominant factor for the contemplation of dhamma in dhamma.

The preceding section supports that the contemplation of the four foundations of mindfulness coincidentally plays a crucial role in the realm of deep concentration presented in the five meditation terms cakkhu, ūna, paññā, vijjā and āloka. All satipaṭṭhānas are realized through these five instrumental factors based on jhānas, and the integrity of style of cognition is interpreted as the only one way of meditative practice. Just as one can see many things such as a house, a car, people and a sign post at the same time, the five instrumental factors have visual ability to penetrate all dhammas without the analytical thinking of notional thought. In this way, all four aspects of the satipaṭṭhānas receive mindful attention as a by-product of the arising of the five instrumental factors. Moreover, in a passage in the Kimilasutta, the Buddha suggests the essential unity of the four satipaṭṭhānas in terms of the simile of four chariots. At an intersection the chariots come from four directions, each drives through and thereby destroying a heap of dust in the middle. This simile shows that a
monk can overcome the unwholesome states by dwelling in contemplation of each foundation of mindfulness. In all this, the deep concentration which initiates the contemplation of any foundation of mindfulness actually subsumes the initiation of the contemplation of the other three foundations of mindfulness. Therefore, while the Buddha suggests the four foundations of mindfulness as the various systematic methods, he also describes them as the only way (ekāyano maggo). The contemplation of any foundation of mindfulness taken to its own culmination actually subsumes the contemplation of the other three foundations of mindfulness.

In summary, it becomes clear that even though some scholars distinguish satipāṭṭhāna from the jhānas, in the analysis of satipāṭṭhāna practice, jhāna attainment turns out to be the most efficient tool. Admittedly, the meditative process of the four satipāṭṭhānas must be associated initially with the first jhāna in order to eliminate the five hindrances. Next, the contemplation of body in body (kāye kāyānupassī) does not involve experiencing the physical body or the bodily postures; instead, it needs to be developed on the basis of the perfect recognition of mental bodies (nāmakāya). Its ascent is signalled through the resultant process of the passing away of the coarse mental body (nāmakāya) and the arising of the more peaceful and more sublime mental body (nāmakāya). There also exists a widespread practice of employing particular types of meditation subjects for satipāṭṭhāna exercise. Despite this practice, a closer analysis reveals that the firm establishment of satipāṭṭhāna exercise implies the advancement of the psychological states of the mental bodies until the final stage of deathlessness is attained. Lastly, the practice of satipāṭṭhāna needs both samatha and vipassanā for the abandonment of sensory experience and the attainment of visual intuition of the five instrumental factors of insight, cakkhu, āṇa, paññā, vijjā and āloka respectively. Rather than analytical thinking of notional thought, these five factors are the central characteristics of
all four *satipaṭṭhāna* practices. Although the cognitive process of each contemplative practice seems to distinguish the contemplation of the four foundations, these instrumental factors provide the ability to attain the profound states of refined and peaceful bodies, feelings, minds and *dhammas* simultaneously. Through the five instrumental factors based on deep concentration, all *satipaṭṭhānas* are of continual relevance along the path toward enlightenment. Therefore even though the four foundations of mindfulness seem to represent distinct systematic methods, they constitute an essential unity of meditative experience. Hence, the four foundations of mindfulness clarify the meditative exercises of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. The following section will analyse the twofold meditation following the determination of the cessation of feeling and perception (*saññāvedayitanirodha*). This will contribute further to the clarification of the true essence of *samatha* and *vipassanā* in regard to the cessation of feeling and perception (*saññāvedayitanirodha*).

**Determination of the Cessation of Perception and Feeling**

*(saññāvedayitanirodha) in Regard to Samatha and Vipassanā*

The cessation of feeling and perception (*saññāvedayitanirodha*), also called the attainment of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*), is the stage immediately following the fourth *arūpajjhāna* (sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception). The essential prerequisites for the achievement of this stage are the attainment of the eight *jhānas* accompanied with the state of non-returner (*anāgāmī*) or *arahat*.\(^{984}\) It involves the cessation of all mental defilements together with the cessation of feeling (*vedanā*) and perception (*saññā*) for a considerable period of up to seven days. This study aims to reveal that the cooperation of *samatha* and *vipassanā* culminates in the attainment of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*), and that very subtle degrees of perception (*saññā*) and feeling (*vedanā*) remain

---

\(^{984}\) *Vism.* 702 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 824).
when this occurs. This examination of the attainment of cessation, therefore, follows by drawing from the two exegetical issues. First, whether or not the feeling of happiness exists therein? Second, how the attainment of cessation is developed?

That is to say, the work explores the relationship between the cessation of feeling and the existence of happiness during the process. In order to explore that relationship, this section investigates contrary themes in reference to the interpretation of the cessation of perception and feeling: the existence of happiness and the ceasing of mental activity. Of particular relevance to the first theme is the *Bahuvedaniyasutta* in which the Buddha announces that the happiness of entering and abiding in the cessation of perception and feeling is more excellent than the happiness of any *jhāna* attainment.

And what, Ānanda, is this other happiness loftier and more sublime than that happiness? Here, Ānanda, having surpassed completely the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a monk enters into and remains in the cessation of perception and feeling. This, Ānanda, is the other happiness that is loftier and more sublime than that happiness.  

This passage points out the cessation of perception and feeling (*saññāvedayitanirodha*) as the highest state of the structured series of altered states of consciousness in the quiescent process. A rather different context for the attainment of cessation is that one might regard the complete absence of mental activities as its characteristic; nevertheless, the Buddha still emphasizes happiness (*sukha*). Thus, there is an analytical problem of its definition of bringing to a halt all feeling and the refined happiness in the attainment of cessation.

---

The general point here is that ‘happiness (sukha)’ can be declared as an attribute of the attainment of cessation even though the suttas present the second theme, which is the non-existence of any kind of sensation during the attainment. For instance, the Anupubbanirodhasutta states the ceasing of perception and feeling: “Of one who attains to the cessation of perceptions and feelings, perceptions and feelings cease.” The next discourse is the Great Discourse of the Miscellany (Mahāvedallasutta), where the two prominent disciples of the Buddha, Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita, discuss the situation of a monk who has attained the cessation of perception and feeling as follows:

And that monk who has attained to the cessation of perception and feeling, his bodily formations have ceased and subsided, his verbal formations have ceased and subsided, his mental formations have ceased and subsided, his life span is not entirely exhausted, his heat is not extinguished, his faculties become exceptionally clear.

This passage leaves no doubt that the suspension and standstill of bodily, verbal and mental functions signify the ceasing of consciousness, perception and feeling. Sāriputta points to the cessation of mental activities as the constituent of the attainment of cessation. Likewise, while answering the question “Sister, of monk attaining to the cessation of perception and feeling, which dhammas cease first? (Saññāvedayitanirodhå samāpajjantassa pan’ayye bhikkhuno katame dhammā paṭhamamañ nirujjhanti),” Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā says: “Friend Visākha, of monk attaining to the cessation of perception and feeling, verbal formation ceases first, then bodily formation, then mental formation (Saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ samāpajjantassa kho āvuso Visākha bhikkhuno paṭhamamañ nirujjhati vacīsaṅkhāro, tato kāyaśaṅkhāro, tato cittaśaṅkhāro ti).” The cessation of mental process is the last step of cessation achievements; her statement still indicates the absence of mental function. Buddhaghosa, furthermore, says in the corresponding explanation:

986 A.IV.409: “saññāvedayitanirodham saṃśāpānassu saññā ca vedanā ca niruddhā honti.”
987 M.I.296: “yo cāya/ bhikkhu saññāvedayitanirodham saṃśāpanno, tassa pi kāyaśaṅkhārā niruddhā paṭippaśaddhā, vacīśaṅkhārā niruddhā paṭippaśaddhā, cittaśaṅkhārā niruddhā paṭippaśaddhā, āyu aparikkhiṇo, usmā avāpasantā, indriyāni vippasannāni.”
988 M.I.301-302.
What is the attainment of cessation? It is the non-occurrence of mind and mental concomitants as a result of their successive cessation.989

Having considered the cessation of perception and feeling, most scholars attempt to restate its second theme, which specifies the ending of mental activity. For example, Narāsabho writes: “...at this stage (saññāvedayitanirodha) all activities of mind subside into cessation.”990 Schmithausen agrees: “…samjñāvedayitanirodha has come to be regarded as a completely non-conscious state”991 Nārada also mentions that the attainment of cessation is a state of the temporary ceasing of all mental activities.992 It is true that one cannot experience happiness if the mental activities cease. Griffiths directly points to the ending of sensual perception in that it is completely without physical, verbal and mental functions. In other words, this means that consciousness does not exist and that the processes of sensation have come to a complete halt.993

This is a questionable opinion of the complete absence of mental activities, regarded as a principle factor for the attainment of cessation. The opinion contradicts the Buddha’s statement of the existence of happiness in this attainment. It is thus necessary to investigate the genuine characteristic of happiness. Griffiths argues that the happiness in the Buddha’s statement about the attainment of cessation means the absence of pain (dukkha).994 It is certainly true that the mental activity of pain is not possible in the state of attainment of cessation because the Buddha indicates the superior happiness therein. Griffiths’ consideration of feelings of happiness and pain relies on a dual opposition between pleasant and unpleasant feelings, in the same way that cold and hot can be said to be in opposition. If the temperature goes down, it implies

989 Viṣṇ.702 (tr. Ńāṇamoli p. 824).
990 Phra Singhathon Narāsabho, op. cit., p. 52.
994 ibid., p. 21.
more coldness and less heat. On the contrary, the increasing of temperature implies less coldness and more heat. If feelings are composed of two components, then the dual opposition between happiness and pain seems to be appropriate.

However, the study of categorization of feelings contradicts Griffiths’ argument and indicates the possibility of the existence of happiness in the attainment of cessation as well. The Buddha usually arranges feeling into three categories: happiness (sukha), pain (dukkha) and neither-pain-nor-happiness feeling (adukkhamasukha). The third category of feeling, neither-pain-nor-happiness feeling (adukkhamasukha), refers to one kind of equanimity which is called equanimity as a feeling (upekkhā vedanā). The mental state of the absence of pain can be classified into the category of neither-pain-nor-happiness feeling rather than that of happiness. The Buddha, furthermore, appears to oppose the feeling of happiness to the feeling of pain.

Ānanda, on an occasion when one feels a happy feeling, on that occasion one does not feel a painful feeling, one does not feel a neither-pain-nor-happiness feeling; one feels just a happy feeling.

The absence of pain does not mean a happy feeling because of the differentiation between the two feelings. It thus appears that Griffiths’ proposal of dual opposition between the two feelings does not satisfy the requirements of Buddha’s categorization of feeling into three parts. An important aspect of happiness is found in the Jhānasutta where the arising of the structure of feelings (vedanā) corresponds with the consciousness states of the jhānas. This discourse implies that the more the jhāna state progresses, the more subtle and refined the feeling becomes. The result is that an intensification of concentration involves a concurrent increase in the depth and intensity of the

---

995 D.II.66.
996 D.II.66: “Yasmiḥ Ānanda samaye sukhaṃ vedanāḥ vedeti, n’eva tasmiḥ samaye dukkhaṃ vedanāḥ vedeti, na adukkhamasukhaṃ vedanāḥ vedeti; sukhaṃ yeva tasmiḥ samaye vedanāḥ vedeti.”
997 A.IV.422-426.
feeling. Moreover, in the *Poṭṭhapādasutta*, while the more profound perception (*saññā*) arises together with the *jhāna* state, the preceding coarse perception ceases.\(^{998}\) The refined feeling also arises in accompaniment with the advancement of the *jhāna* and with the passing away of the preceding feeling.

Therefore, the argument of the *Poṭṭhapādasutta*, in regard to feeling, can be interpreted to mean that the forward movement of the *jhāna* states causes the existing feeling to cease and an ascending feeling to appear. That is, with the attainment of cessation, the perception and feeling of mental states in the attainment of the lower *jhānas* ceases and a most refined feeling of spiritual happiness arises. The attainment lacks gross perceptions and feelings, but retains very subtle degrees of perception and feeling. This profound feeling of spiritual happiness accompanies the attainment of cessation in apparent contradiction to the fact that the attainment is called *saññāvedayitanirodha* (the cessation of perception and feeling). An explanation for the ambiguous naming of this attainment can be illustrated through the following anecdote. A novice smeared a bowl with oil and a monk asked him to bring a bowl to serve gruel. The novice replied, “Venerable Sir, there is oil in the bowl.” Then the monk told him, “Bring the oil, novice, I shall fill the oil tube.” Thereupon the novice said, “There is no oil, Venerable Sir.” What the novice said is true in both cases: there is no oil since there is not enough to fill the tube yet there is some oil remaining at the base of the bowl. Similarly, the attainment of cessation cannot be said to be present to perception and feeling since they are so subtle that they cannot perform the decisive function of perceiving an object. To summarize, the term ‘cessation (*nirodha*) of feeling (*vedanā*)’ implies the cessation of gross feelings, while the very profound and intense feeling of spiritual happiness still exists within the attainment of cessation. Perhaps the

\(^{998}\) D.I.182-184.
cessation of perception and feeling can be attained through the non-attachment to any perception and feeling.

Besides considering the characteristics of the attainment of cessation, its development will now be discussed according to the criteria of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. In the *Kāmabhūsutta*, Kāmabhū emphasizes that the attainment of cessation needs to be developed on the basis of tranquillity and insight.

For the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, householder, two things are very helpful; tranquillity and insight.999

Buddhaghosa supports this viewpoint. He states that both *samatha* and *vipassanā* are the necessary conditions for cultivating the attainment of cessation. The meditator who endeavours only with tranquillity can reach the meditative state of the fourth *arūpajjhāna* (the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception) and one who endeavours only with insight can reach the attainment of fruit (*phala*).1000 In Buddhaghosa’s opinion, it is necessary that *vipassanā* cooperate with *samatha* in order to develop the attainment of cessation.

Nevertheless, Griffiths argues for the dissociation between the attainment of cessation and *vipassanā* and then arranges this attainment, along with four *rūpajjhānas* and four *arūpajjhānas*, into a group of tranquillity techniques. The arrangement of these nine altered states of consciousness is described as the ‘nine successive attainments (*anupubbanirodha*)’.1001 The aim of these attainments is to cause practitioners to withdraw from emotional attachments to external phenomena and then progressively lead to a complete ceasing of all

---

999 S.IV.295: “Saññāvedayitanirodhasamāpattiya kho gahapati dve dhammā bahūpakārā samatho ca vipassanā ca.”


mental activity. Therefore, he classifies the attainment of cessation as the result of cultivating a process concerned entirely with tranquillity, namely *samatha*. He then differentiates the attainment of cessation from *vipassanā* because the intellectual analysis associated with *vipassanā* is incompatible with the absence of mental activity in the attainment of cessation. If this differentiation is correct, it might reasonably be asked why the Buddha speaks of the consistency between the attainment of cessation and wisdom, as follows:

Ānanda, having surpassed completely the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception, I enter and remain in the cessation of perception and feeling and by seeing with wisdom, my cankers became completely destroyed.

Of interest here is that *paññā* is not only an essential mental property for the development of attainment of cessation, but also for the mental process of visual intuition, which collaborates with the attainment of cessation in bringing about the destruction of all cankers. Furthermore, in the process of the unification of the mind, *paññā* often arises to assist in seeing things as they really are, as stated in the *Jīvakambavanesutta*:

Monks, develop concentration. Monks, things manifest as they really are to a monk who is concentrated.

It thus appears that the meditator cannot cultivate a completely tranquillity process for the purpose of entering the attainment of cessation without the arising of *paññā* or *vipassanā*, in which the meditator can see things as they really are. In addition, Anālayo states that the tension between *samatha* and *vipassanā*, their mutual convergence and supplementation, is realized in actual practice. Therefore, both *samatha* and *vipassanā* are the prerequisite meditative processes for cultivating the attainment of cessation.

1002 Ibid., p. 18.
1003 Ibid., p. 22.
1004 A.IV.448: “So kho ahaṃ Ānanda sabbaso nevasaññānasasaññāyatanam samatikkamma Saññā-vedayitanirodham upasampajja viharāmi, paññāya ca me disvā āsavā parikkhaya agamamsu.”
1005 S.IV.143-144: “saññāhīṃ bhikkhave bhāvetha, saññāhīṃ bhikkhave bhikkhuno yathābhūtāḥ okkhāyati.”
1006 Anālayo, op. cit., p. 91.
It should become clear from the foregoing analysis of the attainment of cessation that it usually signifies a complete halt of mental activities. Despite this interpretation, the happiness of entering and abiding in the attainment of cessation is more excellent than the happiness of any jhāna attainment. Consequently, the term ‘cessation of perception and feeling’ implies a cessation of all gross feelings, but the very profound and intense state of happy feeling still exists. Subsequently, the Buddha arranges the attainment of cessation together with the concentrative attainments— the four rūpajjhānas and the four arūpajjhānas—into one structure of attainment which is known as the ‘nine successive attainments (anupubbanirodha).’ Nevertheless, the attainment of cessation needs to be developed on the foundation of the essential mental property of paññā. The meditator cannot cultivate a completely tranquil process for entering the attainment of cessation without the arising of paññā or vipassanā. The study of the collaboration between samatha and vipassanā will focus on the clarification of Buddhist ultimate goal: the destruction of cankers.

**Determination of the Ceasing of Cankers Regarding Samatha and Vipassanā**

The knowledge of the destruction of cankers is an essential component of the enlightened beings. The study of the relation between the achievement of this knowledge and the two meditative principles, samatha and vipassanā, facilitates the correct practice of the meditator. This thesis has analyzed samatha and vipassanā processes, and will now assess them in terms of a complete liberation of consciousness states from all cankers and in regard to the attainment of the supremely spiritual happiness which leaves no trace of unsatisfactoriness. This work ascertains that the freedom of mind (cetovimutti) and freedom through wisdom (paññāvimutti) are two aspects of a single process which leads to the eradication of both ignorance and craving. This section will first discuss whether ignorance or craving is the predominant factor to be
nullified in the enlightenment path. Second, it will examine both types of freedom according to the criteria of samatha and vipassanā.

In the enlightenment path, both samatha and vipassanā need to be developed for the simultaneous removal of ignorance and craving. Indeed, the Āpañṣasutta illustrates the cooperation between craving and ignorance which prevents beings from achieving enlightenment:

\[
\text{The continued existence is without discoverable beginning. A first point is not apparent to beings hindered by ignorance, fettered by craving, who roam and wander on.}
\]

1007

Ignorance and craving are the most powerful factors obstructing and tying down beings to the continued existence (saṁsāra). The meditator should get rid of both ignorance and craving by means of supernatural knowledge (abhiññā).1008 Schmithausen agrees with this notion: “the cause of bondage to be destroyed by liberating insight is clearly a psychological factor: either craving (tāṇhā) or the cankers interpreted as including both craving and ignorance (avidyā).”1009 In the case of the truth of suffering, Nanayakkara states that craving alone is not a sufficient factor for the cause of suffering. He further suggests ignorance (avijjā) as a further ground of craving.1010 Bhavana shares this viewpoint: “A high level of success in insight meditation results in the complete eradication of ignorance, the cause of cravings.”1011 Ratnam speaks of their association: “one is essentially associated with the other, and the two can never be separated.”1012 Yet clearly this sounds reasonable. The completed removal of craving does not lead directly to enlightenment because the meditator has to destroy it at its roots, as shown in the Catucakkasutta.

---

1007 S.V.226: “Anamataggo kho saṁsāro pubbā koṭi na paññāyati avijjānīvaraṇānaṁ sattānaṁ tāṇhāsavojānaṇānaṁ sandhāvatāṁ saṁsarataṁ.”
1008 M.III.289: “Avijjā ca bhavataññā ca, ime dhammā abhiññā pahāabbā.”
1009 L. Schmithausen, op. cit., p. 208.
1010 Percy Nanayakkara, Path to Freedom (Singapore: Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre), p. 75.
Having completely drawn out craving with its root, thus one will escape from it.\textsuperscript{1013}

The root of craving is defilement, which is abandoned as a result of the abandonment of craving. Buddhaghosa proposes that the root of craving is ignorance.\textsuperscript{1014} Although it seems that ignorance is being portrayed as more primary than craving, the meditator requires the eradication of the mutually conditioning cankers, craving and ignorance.

However, some scholars refer to a different scheme which concerns ignorance alone as to be destroyed. For instance, Gunaratana points to ignorance alone as the main bondage: “the key to liberation lies in the eradication of ignorance by developing its direct opposite, namely wisdom (paññā).”\textsuperscript{1015} Piyadassi agrees: “Ignorance is the crowning corruption. Our greed, hates, conceits and a host of other defilements go hand in hand with our ignorance.”\textsuperscript{1016} Ignorance is the cause for the origin and existence of all defilements because ignorance represents the predominant constituent of cankers according to the Buddha’s statement in the Nibbedhikasutta.

\begin{quote}
And what, monks, is the conditioned source of cankers? Ignorance, monks, is the conditioned source of cankers…
And what, monks, is the cessation of cankers? The cessation of ignorance, monks, is the cessation of cankers.\textsuperscript{1017}
\end{quote}

According to this view, the cessation of ignorance brings about complete cessation of the cankers. Further evidence for the importance of ignorance is found in the formula of dependent origination (\textit{pa\textasciitilde{t}iccasamupp\textasciitilde{a}da}), which establishes a set of causal relations. The arising and cessation of elements relate to other elements through their conditioned responses, therefore the cessation of

\textsuperscript{1013} S.I.16: “\textit{sam\textasciitilde{l}a\textasciitilde{m} ta\textasciitilde{a}ha\textasciitilde{m} ab\textasciitilde{b}uyha, ev\textasciitilde{m} y\textasciitilde{t}\textasciitilde{r}\textasciitilde{\nu} bhavissati t\textasciitilde{i}}.”

\textsuperscript{1014} Spk.I.53.

\textsuperscript{1015} Henepola Gunaratana, \textit{A Critical Analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation}, op. cit., p.163.

\textsuperscript{1016} Piyadassi, \textit{The Spectrum of Buddhism : Writings of Piyadassi}, op. cit., p.198.

\textsuperscript{1017} A.III.414: “\textit{Katamo ca bhikkhave āsavānāṃ nidānasambhavo? Avijjā bhikkhave āsavānāṃ nidānasambhavo… Katamo ca bhikkhave āsavāniruddho? Avijjāniruddho bhikkhave āsavāniruddho.”}
the first element, ignorance, establishes a series of conditioned responses to the cessation of birth, old age, dying, grief, sorrow and suffering.\textsuperscript{1018} So ignorance is the primary root-cause of all unwholesome states (akusaladhamma).\textsuperscript{1019}

Although ignorance is a significant cause of cankers, a detailed examination of the notion of ignorance shows the related significance of the eradication of craving for achieving enlightenment. Of course, a thorough comprehension of the four noble truths can destroy ignorance, because, as we have seen, one of the four noble truths is that craving is the cause of suffering. Hence, the comprehension of craving can destroy ignorance as demonstrated in the Vibhangasutta:

\begin{quote}
And what, monks, is ignorance? Not knowing about suffering, not knowing about the origin of suffering, not knowing about the cessation of suffering, not knowing about the path leading to the cessation of suffering. This, monks, is called ignorance.\textsuperscript{1020}
\end{quote}

The quotation illustrates that cessation of ignorance is born as a condition of the eradication of craving. Further evidence, that both of these mental defilements must be eliminated, is found in the statement in the Dasuttarasutta. As the Buddha announces: “Which two things are to be abandoned? Ignorance and the craving for existence.”\textsuperscript{1021} Regarding the three cankers i.e., kāmāsava canker of sense-pleasures, bhavāsava canker of becoming, and avijjāsava canker of ignorance which have to be neutralized in the enlightenment path, one might see some potential problem here ‘how can three cankers be related to ignorance and craving’, and ‘how can ignorance be both a cause of cankers and one of them.’ In the development of the third vijjā, the mind is freed from the three cankers.\textsuperscript{1022} The term “kāmāsava,” which is interpreted as desire for the sense

\textsuperscript{1018} M.III.63-64.
\textsuperscript{1019} S.II.263.
\textsuperscript{1020} S.II.4: “Katamā ca bhikkhave avijjā? Yaṁ kho bhikkhave dukkhe aṇñāṇaṁ dukkhasamudaye aṇñāṇaṁ dukkhanirodhe aṇñāṇaṁ dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya aṇñāṇaṁ. Ayaṁ vuccati bhikkhave avijjā.”
\textsuperscript{1021} D.III.274: “Katame dve dhammā pahātabbā? Avijjā ca bhavatasāhā ca.”
\textsuperscript{1022} M.I.23.
objects, is referred to craving. Most scholars generally render the second canker, bhavāsava, as desire for continued existence. According to these interpretations of the two āsavas, they can be classified with craving.

Let us turn to the second question concerning ignorance and the three āsavas. The basic point introduced in the description of the third vijjā is the classification of āsavas into three types. Furthermore, the description places emphasis on the destructive arrangement to āsava during the process of third vijjā. The prominent process of the third vijjā is that the eradication of āsavas-kāmāsava, bhavāsava and avijjāsava- becomes subtler and more significant than the eradication of the preceding āsava. The extinction of all āsavas and their cause, which is the last step, is of central importance. This finds support in the Ājīvakasutta in which Ānanda proclaims the elimination of defilements together with their root cause:

What do you think, householder? They whose desire is abandoned, has cut off at the root . . . whose anger is abandoned, has cut off at the root . . . whose delusion is abandoned, has cut off at the root.

The various suttas point to the extinguishable pattern of mental defilements as relating to the Pāli word “ucchinnamūla (cut off at the root). Thus this pattern refers to cutting the root cause of all cankers, which is ignorance, as well as cutting them off individually.

While the above evidence confirms the necessity of destroying both bondages- ignorance and craving, Griffiths proposes that these bondages can be separately destroyed. In Griffiths’ view, there are two distinguishing bondages- the root cause of suffering which is craving (taṇhā), on the one hand, and the root cause

---

1024 A.I.218: “Taṇṭā kim maññasi gahapati-- yesaṁ rāgo pahîno uucchinnamūlo…yesaṁ doso pahîno uucchinnamūlo.”
of the dependent origination (paṭicca-samuppāda) which is ignorance (avijjā), on the other. This radical tension between ignorance and craving is related to the different meditation techniques, samatha and vipassanā. Griffiths states that the meditation technique of samatha aims to eradicate craving and that of vipassanā aims to eradicate ignorance. His viewpoint seems to imply that there are two completely separate goals which are directly related to these radically different types of meditative practice. This tension between craving (tānha) and samatha on the one hand and ignorance (avijjā) and vipassanā on the other is referred to in a passage in the Bālavagga.

Monks, if tranquillity is developed, what profit does it receive? The mind becomes developed. If mind is developed, what profit does it receive? All desire (rāga) is abandoned.

Monks, if insight is developed, what profit does it receive? Wisdom becomes developed. If wisdom is developed, what profit does it receive? All ignorance is abandoned.

According to textual analysis, samatha leads to the abandonment of desire or craving but not of ignorance. The process of samatha seems to be distinguished from the process of vipassanā in regard to the cultivation of paññā and the destruction of ignorance.

Nevertheless, it can be argued that a detailed examination of the Buddha’s other discourses tends to confirm a mutual dependency between samatha and vipassanā in order to get rid of both ignorance and craving. For example, the Dhammapada illustrates the strong relationship between samatha and paññā: “There is no jhāna for one who is without wisdom. There is no wisdom for one who does not attain jhāna.” In addition, the Mahāparinibbānasutta characterizes samatha in terms of samādhi as the fundamental quality for the development of vipassanā in terms of paññā.

1027 Rāga is the synonymous term of tānha (Nyanatiloka: Buddhist Dictionary, p. 148).
1028 A.I.61.
1029 Dhp.372.
Wisdom, when fully developed by concentration, brings great fruit and profit.1030

A further relevance of the association between samatha and vipassanā is found in the Samathasutta.

…a monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself, but have not gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish the tranquillity of heart within oneself and to insight into dhamma through higher wisdom.

…a monk while considering knows thus: ‘I have gained insight into dhamma through higher wisdom, but have not gained the tranquillity of heart within oneself.’ Then, Monks, he should apply himself to establish insight into dhamma through higher wisdom and to the tranquillity of heart within oneself.1031

Since ignorance and craving are essentially associated with one another, then samatha and vipassanā are to be cultivated together to remove both ignorance and craving. This association is also found in the Bālapaṇḍitasutta:

Monks, for the fool hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving, then this body has been originated.1032

Of particular significance here is that these two defilements can be distinguished in relation to their functions only, but can never be separated in regard to the enlightenment path.

Regarding the issue of the knowledge of destruction of cankers (āsavakkhayañāṇa), this section will argue that the two kinds of freedom - freedom of mind (cetovimutti) and freedom through wisdom (paññāvimutti) - are simultaneously required for the complete Buddhist deliverance because they are linked to both samatha and vipassanā. Indeed, these two types of freedom are the synonymous terms in reference to their culminating result. The collaboration of both freedoms with samatha and vipassanā is presented in the Bālavagga.

1030 D.II.81.
1031 A.V.99.
1032 S.II.23-24: “Avijjānīvaranassa bhikkhave bālassa taphāya sampayuttassa evam ayam kāyo samudāgato.”
These two things, monks, are partaking of knowledge. What two? tranquillity and insight. Monks, if tranquillity is developed, what profit does it receive? The mind becomes developed. If mind is developed, what profit does it receive? All desire is abandoned. Monks, if insight is developed, what profit does it receive? Wisdom becomes developed. If wisdom is developed, what profit does it receive? All ignorance is abandoned. A mind defiled by desire, monks, is not freed; nor is wisdom defiled by ignorance developed. Monks, through the fading away of desire, there is freedom of mind; through the fading away of ignorance, there is freedom through wisdom.¹⁰³⁴

This passage shows that the two overlapping processes cannot be separated; together they support each other for the perfect knowledge (vijjā). On the one hand, the development of samatha leads to the abandonment of rāga, which is interpreted as freedom of mind. On the other, the development of vipassanā leads to the abandonment of avijjā, which is an interpretation of the process of freedom through wisdom. Actually, both freedoms lead to the same culminating result of the ultimate goal, whereas their predominant faculties are different, as the discussion between the Buddha and Ānanda demonstrates:¹⁰³⁵

Ānanda asks:

...then how is it that some monks here are said to gain freedom of mind while others are said to gain freedom through wisdom?

The Buddha replies:

As to this, I, Ānanda, speak of the difference in their faculties.

The meditator has to perform the synthesis of both freedoms as well as of samatha and vipassanā for the fulfilment of the ceasing of cankers. The Paññāvimuttasutta implies that the advance of freedom of mind (cetovimutti) in terms of jhāna attainments should be accompanied by paññā as freedom through wisdom (paññāvimutti).¹⁰³⁵


¹⁰³⁵ M.I.437: “...atha kīk-caraṁ idh’ekacce bhikkhū cetovimutti ekacce bhikkhū paññāvimutti ti? Ettha kho tesāham Ānanda indriyavematataṁ vadāmīti.”
Here, friend, the monk who secludes from sense pleasures, ..., enters and remains in the first *jhāna* and understands by wisdom. In this way, friend, the freedom through wisdom has been declared by the blessed one... The cooperation of *cetovimutti* and *paññāvimutti* is beneficial for getting rid of craving and ignorance. The expression ‘*paññāvimutti*’ in terms of *vipassanā* could hardly be interpreted as not involving some degree of concentration of mind. Kheminda echoes this sentiment: “…*paññāvimutta* is a *jhāna*-attainer whether considered relatively or absolutely.” Jhanananda also supports this cooperation: “Through experience it has become clear that insight and absorption are simply two sides of the same coin.” Anālayo agrees: “Although on theoretical examination these two aspects of the path (*samatha* and *vipassanā*) might appear different, in actual practice they tend to converge and supplement each other”

Thus the collaboration between both kinds of freedom is significant for the development of the enlightenment path until the end of path is achieved. In the *Pahārādasutta*, we find that both freedoms tend to merge into one taste of freedom:

> Pahārāda, just as the great ocean has but one taste, the test of salt; even so, Pahārāda, this dhamma and discipline has but one taste, the taste of freedom.

The passage points to the freed state that is entirely different from the double practice strategy of the path to freedom. Gombrich shares this sentiment: “there is no contrast between *ceto-vimutti* and *paññā-vimutti*.” He refers to the passage in the *Paṭhama-cetovimuttiphalasutta*:

---

1036 A.IV.452: “*Idhāvuso bhikkhu vivicc’eva kāmehi pe pa/FL16Dhhama/FL143h upasampajja viharati, paññāya ca nam pujānīti. Eti/FL1vātā pi kho āvuso paññāvimutto vutto bhagavatā pariyāyena.”
1039 Anālayo, op. cit., p. 91.
1040 A.IV.203: “Seyyathā pi pahārāda mahāsamuddo ekaraso lo/FL147haraso, evam eva kho pahārāda aya/FL143h dhammavinayo ekaraso vimuttiraso.”
1041 Richard F. Gombrich, op. cit., p. 120.
Monks, when these five things are developed and made much, there comes to be the fruit of freedom of mind, freedom of mind for its fruit and advantage, the fruit of freedom through wisdom, freedom through wisdom for its fruit and advantage.\(^\text{1042}\)

The five things include perception of the impurity of the body, of the repulsiveness of food, of the unsatisfying character of everything in the world, of the impermanence of all compounded things, and of one’s own impending death.\(^\text{1043}\) One might argue that although both freedoms are arranged in the same group of benefits as these five meditation techniques, paññāvimutti refers to the ultimate goal but cetovimutti does not. Gombrich points to the cooperation of cetovimutti and paññāvimutti as assisting in the elimination of all cankers and in the comprehension of the enlightenment through the passage in the third knowledge (destruction of cankers):

> When he knows and sees thus, his mind is freed from the canker of sense-pleasures and his mind is freed from the canker of becoming and his mind is freed from the canker of ignorance. When it is freed, the intuition comes to be: “I am freed;” and he understands: Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing more for any state of thus.\(^\text{1044}\)

The statement “his mind is freed from the canker of sense-pleasures” obviates the possibility of reaching nibbāna by ignoring the freedom of mind. In addition, since ceto can be transformed with citta and vimutti with vimuccati, the term ‘his mind is freed’ expresses the process of cetovimutti. Furthermore the word ‘understands (pajānāti)’ is related to the noun ‘paññā.’\(^\text{1045}\) The freedom from cankers, as depicted in this passage, requires the process of mental purification of cetovimutti in combination with full knowledge of paññā.

\(^{1042}\) A.III.84: “Pañc’ime bhikkhave dharmā bhāvitā bahulikatā cetovimuttiphalā ca honti cetovimuttiphalānisa/FL1\#43hsā ca paññāvimuttiphalā ca honti paññāvimuttiphalānisa/FL1\#43hsā ca.”

\(^{1043}\) A.III.84.

\(^{1044}\) M.I.348: “Tassa eva/FL1\#43h jānato eva/FL1\#43h passato kāmāsavā pi cittam/FL1\#43h vimuccati, bhavāsavā pi cittam/FL1\#43h vimuccati, avijjāsavā pi cittam/FL1\#43h vimuccati, vimuttasmi/FL1\#43h vimuttam/FL1\#43h-iti īṭāna/FL1\#43h hoti; khī/FL1\#47hā jāti, vusita/FL1\#43h brahmacariya/FL1\#43h, kati/FL1\#43h kara/FL1\#47hīya/FL1\#43h nāpara/FL1\#43h itthattāyāti pajānāti.”

\(^{1045}\) Richard F. Gombrich, op. cit., p. 117.
So as well as the collaboration between *samatha* and *vipassanā*, the collaboration between both freedoms in terms of the freed-both-ways (*ubhatobhāgavimutti*) brings about the complete aspect of the supreme refined state of freedom. According to the freed-both-ways, the meditator experiences the peaceful liberations of *arūpajjhānas* and the visual intuition of wisdom.

And which, monks, is the person who is freed both ways? Here, monks, some person remains touching, with the body, those peaceful liberations, which are *arūpajjhānas* surpassing *rūpajjhānas*, and his cankers are entirely exhausted by his seeing with wisdom. This, monks, is called the person who is freed both ways.\(^{1046}\)

The further interpretation of the freed-both-ways as a single approach to freedom by combining of *samatha* and *vipassanā* is found in the *Mahānidānasutta*. This discourse contains an interesting discussion on the relationship between the freed-both-ways and the eight peaceful states of liberation. This relationship can be further understood from the excerpt below.

Now, Ānanda, when a monk attains these eight liberations in forward order, and attains in reverse order, and attains in both orders consecutively, attaining them and emerging from them wherever he wishes, however he wishes, and for as long as he wishes, through his own supernatural knowledge in here and now and through the destruction of canker, he realizes, enters into and remains in the canker-free freedom of mind and freedom through wisdom. This, Ānanda, is called the monk who is freed both ways. And, Ānanda, there is no other freed-both-ways that is higher and more sublime than this freed-both-ways.\(^{1047}\)

As discussed in the section of the attainment of cessation, the cooperation between *samatha* and *vipassanā* is the prerequisite for the development of this attainment. Therefore, when *cetovimutti* and *paññāvimutti* are joined together in terms of *ubhatobhāgavimutti*, they are taken to indicate the two perfect aspects

---

\(^{1046}\) M.I.477: "Katamo ca bhikkhave puggalo ubhatobhāgavimutto: Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phusitvā viharati, paññāya c’assa divā āsavā parikkhīhā honti. Ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave puggalo ubhatobhāgavimutto.”

\(^{1047}\) D.II.71: “Yato kho Ānanda bhikkhu ime aṭṭha vimokkhe anulomam pi samāpajjati, paṭṭilomam pi samāpajjati, anuloma-paṭṭilomam pi samāpajjati, yathā icchākam yad icchākam yāvad icchākam samāpajjati pi vuṭṭhāti pi, āsavānāt ca khayā andśaṃ ceto vimutīṃ paññāvimutīṃ diṭṭhe va dhamme sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikavā upasampajja viharati, ayaṃ vuccati Ānanda bhikkhu ubhatobhāgavimutto, imāya ca Ānanda ubhatobhāga-vimutiyā aṁña ubhatobhāga-vimutti uttaritarā va paññattatarā vā n’atthīti.”
of meditation, the perfect meditative practice, which is the collaboration of samatha and vipassanā, on the one hand, and the perfect release from all cankers, on the other.

Despite evidence of the necessary collaboration between cetovimutti and paññāvimutti, some scholars regard paññāvimutti as the predominant factor for the destruction of cankers, and attempt to diminish the significance of cetovimutti and also samatha. For example, Schmithausen states that the attainment of the jhānas is unnecessary for bringing about the liberating insight.\textsuperscript{1048} He argues that the realization of the negative nature of mundane existence- impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self- does not need the basis of deep concentration. If this realization were a rational process, this would make sense. But it is a realization, which seems to be related to the process of tranquillity. The Samādhisutta demonstrates the consistency between concentration and the realization of the three characteristics, impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.

Monks, develop concentration. A monk, who is concentrated, monks, understands things as they really are. And what does he understand things as they really are? The arising and passing away of form, the arising and passing away of feeling, the arising and passing away of perception, the arising and passing away of mental formation, the arising and passing away of consciousness.\textsuperscript{1049}

Likewise, Buddhaghosa regards the rūpajjhānas and arūpajjhānas as prerequisites for the contemplation of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.\textsuperscript{1050}

While it should be adequately clear that cetovimutti involves paññā and then paññāvimutti, Saddhatissa attempts to separate both kinds of freedom: “The assumption that ‘ceto-vimutti’ and ‘paññā-vimutti’ are synonymous is

\textsuperscript{1048} L. Schmithausen, op. cit., p. 222.
\textsuperscript{1049} S.III.13-14.
\textsuperscript{1050} Vism.628-629 (tr. Ñāṇamoli p. 732).
According to his explanation, the culminating result of the development of cetovimutti is all four Brahmovihāras, mettā (loving-kindness), karunā (compassion), muditā (sympathy) and upekkhā (equanimity), but not paññā. Saddhatissa tends to focus on the examination of the Tevijjasutta. alone. If, instead, we survey the several discourses, we see that the term ‘cetovimutti’ is inclined to be relevant to paññāvimutti and paññā. For instance, the Cūlasaccakasutta shows that mental release refers to the fruit (phala) of enlightenment.

In this way, Aggivessana, a monk becomes a perfected one with the cankers destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, the burden laid down, his own goal reached, the fetter of becoming entirely exhausted, and is freed through perfect intuition. Aggivessana, monk, whose mind is thus freed, is endowed with three unsurpassable qualities: unsurpassable vision, unsurpassable path, and unsurpassable freedom.

In the next discourse, the Meghiyasutta, the Buddha regards wisdom (paññā) as the essential factor for the development of cetovimutti into its mature state.

Again, Meghiya, a monk has wisdom, endowed with wisdom regarding rise and fall that is noble and penetrative and leads to the perfect destruction of suffering. Meghiya, for the immature freedom of mind, this is the fifth thing conducing to maturity.

Moreover, when cetovimutti is qualified by the adjective akuppā (unshakeable), it refers to the perfect liberation: “And it is this, monks, unshakeable freedom of mind that is the goal of this holy life, its essence and its end.” Consequently, it appears from these discourses that the benefit of cetovimutti is broadened into the attainment of the ultimate goal, which is generally accepted

---

1052 D.I.250-251.
1053 M.I.235: “Atātā kho aggivessana bhikkhu arahān hoti kħiṇāsavo vusitavā katakaraṇīyo ohitabhāro anuppattasadatto parikkhiṇābhavasanyojano samma-d-ānīhā vimutto. Ēvān vimutticittā kho aggivessana bhikkhu tīhi anuttariyehi samannaṅgato hoti: dassanānuttariyena paṭipadānuttariyena vimuttaṃuttariyena.”
1054 A.IV.357: “Puna ca paraṃ meghiya bhikkhu paññāvā hoti, udayatthagāminiyā paññāyā samannaṅgato arīyāya nibbadhikāya sammādakkhhakkhayagāminiyā. Aparipakkāya meghiya cetovimuttiyā ayaṃ paṭicamo dharmo paṭippakkāya samvattati.”
1055 M.I.197: “yā ca kho ayaṃ bhikkhave akuppā cetovimutti, etadatthattham-idaṃ bhikkhave brahmacariyaṃ etamāsāraṃ etamparīyosānan-ī.”
as the benefit of *paññāvimutti*. They can be taken to indicate the two aspects of the *arahat’s* deliverance.

In conclusion, many scholars disregard *cetovimutti* as insufficient to achieve the ultimate goal; there is evidence in the *suttas* that *cetovimutti* and *paññāvimutti* involve the synonymous culmination of the destruction of all cankers. While *cetovimutti* refers to *samatha* and *paññāvimutti* to *vipassanā*, we find that the collaboration between *cetovimutti* and *paññāvimutti* signifies the perfect cooperation of *samatha* and *vipassanā*.

Throughout this section, the destruction of cankers has been discussed in terms of the two aspects. Firstly, ignorance is the cause of the origin and existence of all cankers. Besides ignorance, craving is the other powerful canker, which obstructs beings and ties them down to the circle of existence. Thus, the meditator must overcome ignorance and craving through the development of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. Secondly, the term ‘*paññāvimutti*’ is almost invariably employed in relation to the Buddhist deliverance, whereas the term ‘*cetovimutti*’ may have a broader meaning on occasion. They, in fact, involve the synonymous culmination of the destruction of all cankers. Of course, their collaboration in terms of ‘freed-both-ways’ (*ubhatobhāgavimutti*) indicates two perfect aspects of a single process of liberation.

**Conclusion**

It has been argued in this chapter that both *samatha* and *vipassanā* supplement each other along the path of enlightenment to perform the process of withdrawal from the world and the pulling toward *nibbāna* respectively. In fact, *vipassanā* is not distinctly separate from *samatha*; rather both meditative processes are subsumed into the psychological process of calmness. Both processes arise from the spiral development of the threefold training, *sīla,*
samādhi, and paññā. The meditator must develop all three interdependent factors until they have enough power to calm the mind and lead it toward the cooperation of samatha and vipassanā, a process which is characterized as vipassanājhāna or supramundane jhāna.

The argument related to the practice of satipaṭṭhāna that this work has given will be summarized as follows. Even though some scholars radically separate satipaṭṭhāna from the jhānas, in a thorough analysis of satipaṭṭhāna practice, jhāna attainment turns out to be a most efficient tool. Next, the contemplation of body in body does not involve experiencing the physical body or the bodily postures; instead, it is developed through a process which involves the passing away of the coarse mental body and the arising of the more peaceful and more sublime mental body. This process allows the advancement of the psychological states of the various mental bodies (nāmakāya) until the final stage of deathlessness is attained. It is a process that implies a firm establishment of the satipaṭṭhāna exercise. Subsequently, the five instrumental factors of insight, cakkhu, ñāna, paññā, vijjā and āloka, which are central to all four satipaṭṭhāna practices, are immediately then drawn in as the appropriate psychological state for the perfect realization of all mental bodies. These instrumental factors are the most reliable means for the achievement of the refined and peaceful bodies, as well as the feelings, minds and dhammas simultaneously. Therefore, even though the four foundations of mindfulness (sati) seem to imply various systematic methods, they constitute essentially a unity of meditative experience, which involves the arising and advancing of all these instrumental factors.

It becomes clear from an analysis of the attainment of cessation that, while it usually signifies a complete halt of all mental activities, there is an agreement between the cessation of feeling and the existence of profound happiness
therein. In fact, it needs to be developed through a process of mutual meditative practices, *samatha* and *vipassanā*.

There are two main components, which the study of the destruction of cankers deals with. The first component is the implication that both ignorance and craving are the predominant factors to be destroyed during the path toward enlightenment. The second is a presentation of the evidence, which makes possible an interpretation of the culminating result of *cetovimutti* as the destruction of cankers. This evidence demonstrates a synonymous culmination between *cetovimutti* and *paññāvimutti*.

In conclusion, this chapter shows the importance of the combined and interdependent practice of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. *Samatha* practiced initially, and later augmented with the profound inner vision of *vipassanā*, together are necessary for the successful practice of meditation along the path to enlightenment. Accomplishment in *samatha* relies on the attainment of the *jhānas*, while attainment in *vipassanā* relies on the arising of the five instrumental factors. The skilful use of these two meditative practices together leads to the supramundane *jhāna*, or *lokuttara-jhāna*.

Following is a summation of the conclusions drawn from this research.

---

1056 *Vism.* 682 (tr. Āṇāmarāja p. 798).
Chapter 5 Conclusion

This work has examined the issue of the use of *samatha* and *vipassanā* as practices on the Buddhist path to *nibbāna* or liberation. The meanings of these terms and the three common views of the relationship between *samatha* and *vipassanā* have been evaluated. The examination and evaluation of both contemplative practices rely primarily on an analysis of materials derived from the *Sutta Piṭaka*. Further analysis of the source texts is provided from the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*, the *Visuddhimagga*, the *Vimuttimagga* and modern commentaries and is supplementary to the primary research. The analysis concludes that, based on an initial foundation of *samatha*, they can be used together and that they are in fact indispensable and interdependent facets of meditation practice. This chapter aims to reinforce the significance of *samatha*, the main characteristic of the profound internal vision of *vipassanā*, and their collaborative practice as one synthetic process.

The concept of *samatha*, which is inner calmness, and is delineated as one particular aspect of *samādhi*, is very important to meditation practice and experience. At the beginning of meditation practice, *samatha* and *sati* (mindfulness) appear to be in opposition, whereas at the advanced stages of the practice, *sati* in collaboration with *sampajañña* (awareness) is relevant to the process of *samatha*. Subsequently, the more profound states of *samatha* are brought into close relationship with the intensified *sati* and *sampajañña*, providing a solid foundation for the development of *vipassanā*. The apparent opposition is thus resolved.

An extension of the significance of *samatha* practice is that it provides a stable state of mind for the arising of the fivefold supernatural knowledge (*abhiññā*).
Practicing *samatha* alone causes *abhiññā* to arise and be cultivated. However, in order to achieve profound states and *nibbāna, samatha* and *vipassanā* need to be used together.

Another element of the importance of *samatha* has emerged from the investigation of the tension between the *jhāna* attainments and *vipassanā*. That is, if *vipassanā* is considered only as changing attention to arising sense objects, the psychological state of *samatha* at the momentary concentration (*khanikasamādhi*) might be sufficient to initiate *vipassanā*. In fact, the meditator has to develop the profound mental vision of *vipassanā* via the advanced levels of absorption called *jhānas*.

An etymological analysis of the term ‘*jhāna*’ indicates two main advantages of *samatha* practice which are mental ‘unification’ and ‘purification.’ These mental qualities progress together and supplement each other until a more profound psychological state arises in which the meditator can develop the full insight and then overcome cankers (*āsava*).

An examination of *jhāna* factors shows that one-pointedness of mind and happiness -born from the stage of letting go of *samatha*- are the essential qualities for *jhāna* attainment and consequently for Buddhist liberation. Although happiness appears to be abandoned during the process of letting go in the path of *samatha* development, the psychological factor of happiness is sublimated into the more profound state of equanimity, which results from a fusion of *samatha* and *vipassanā* and through which *nibbāna* is attained eventually. The role and import of *samatha* has also been noted in an evaluation of the high *jhāna* attainments, *arūpajjhānas*. The characteristics of *samatha* do not progressively bring about the complete elimination of the concentrative object; rather, its characteristics are recognised as the refined perceptions of the
concentrative object which have advanced along with the process of samatha. Of central importance here is that the gradual transformation of samatha process into the arūpajjhānas is required to empower the perfect insight of vipassanā and to bring about liberation from all mental defilements.

The central point of the importance of samatha for the initiation of vipassanā is the need for the sufficient level of samatha arising from any subjects of concentration, but not limited to a particular subject. Many scholars, such as Buddhaghosa, maintain that practicing with the forty subjects of concentration leads to particular attainments, depending on the subject chosen. The present study concludes that this is not the case. Rather, the choice of a suitable concentration subject depends on one’s own individual temperament. Therefore, the transition from the samatha process into the vipassanā process is based on a sufficiently profound level of samatha, cultivated from any of the forty concentrative subjects, not just from one particular subject.

In the discussion of the phenomenological and psychological characteristics of vipassanā, its main characteristic is that of profound mental vision arising from the mental stillness of samatha. This can be observed in an examination of its etymological constituents, vi (excellence) and passanā (seeing).

This examination of the main characteristic of vipassanā demonstrates that samatha is indeed indispensable to the operation of vipassanā and, that specific level of samatha is needed. That is, before starting vipassanā, it is best to first bring about mental unification, passing initially through practices like, momentary (khaṇika) and access (upacāra) concentration, on through all of the jhānas. As the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta (Setting in Motion the Wheel of Truth) emphasizes, the five instrumental factors, vision (cakkhu), intuition (ñāṇa), wisdom (paññā), knowledge (vijjā) and light (āloka) are central
thorough appreciation of the four noble truths. Therefore, it is necessary that the meditator should first establish a subtle and profound state of mental purification and unification so that these instrumental factors can arise, thus facilitating the superior functioning of vipassanā.

These higher functions can be brought about through an implication of the main characteristic of vipassanā as the profound mental vision (cakkhu), which can be clarified, in turn, through an epistemological evaluation of its relationship with each of these instrumental factors. During vipassanā meditation, the mental vision of cakkhu needs to be strengthened into the superior mode of dhamma-cakkhu, which denotes the sufficient power of mental vision to activate the vipassanā process. The direct intuition of ānāna does not obstruct the progress of vipassanā; rather, the ten kinds of ānānas, which are of central significance in representing the mode of the vipassanā-ānānas, must be developed. The role of panna in the development of vipassanā serves to further demonstrate the association between the psychological characteristics of samatha and vipassanā. That is, panna, arising from the deep concentration of samatha, can enhance the process of vipassanā, while panna developed through thinking and learning cannot. The investigation of vijjā argues that the recollection of one’s own personal past lives is to be undertaken through the process of vipassanā. Once the mind has been stilled and purified at this profound level of samatha, the ability to attain the mental vision of vipassanā will penetratively realize one’s preceding existences in saṃsāra. An examination of āloka points to this psychological characteristic of internal illumination as an important factor in the process of vipassanā. Indeed, āloka does not work against vipassanā; rather, it promotes the development of vipassanā.
The emergence of these five instrumental factors is the basis for ultimate internal vision of *vipassanā* and leads to the perfect realization of the deathless element (*amatadhātu*). This realization of the positive nature of supramundane states, permanence, happiness and unconditioned nature, is an essential factor in the process of *vipassanā* and also induces a comparative realization of the three characteristics of the five aggregates: impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and not-self (*anattā*).

An analytical and psychological study of both collaborative practices, *samatha* and *vipassanā*, reveals that the progress of any practice relies on the basis of the other. Both processes contribute to the spiritual process of withdrawal from *samsāra* and advancing toward *nibbāna*. That is, on the path towards enlightenment, *samatha* and *vipassanā*, both of which arise from the spiral development of the threefold training, *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*, simultaneously support and allow each other to progress. Moreover, the meditator must develop all three aspects of the training to initiate the combined operation between *samatha* and *vipassanā*, *vipassanājhāna*.

An exploration of *satipaṭṭhāna* practice indicates its practical relevance to the synthetic contemplative practice of *samatha* and *vipassanā*. This relevance is substantiated through the attainment of the psychological states which accompany experiential knowledge of the mental bodies and the subsequent attainment of deathlessness. The *satipaṭṭhāna* exercises were seen as related to the synthesis between *samatha* and *vipassanā* because they are founded on the achievement of refined and peaceful bodies, feelings, minds and *dhammas*, which accompany them, and which are coincident with the arising of the five instrumental factors.
An analysis of the cessation of perception and feeling strengthens the collaboration between samatha and vipassanā. This cessation seems to belong exclusively to samatha practices. But, a closer analysis shows that the cessation of perception and feeling, as well as the satipaṭṭhāna exercise, is accomplished on the basis of the collaboration between samatha and vipassanā. Despite the fact that the cessation of perception and feeling is usually explained by means of a complete halt of mental activities, a detailed examination reveals that the existence of a superior state of profound happiness contributes to the process. Thus, it can be said, a state of refined spiritual happiness coexists with, and advances along with, the synthetic processes of samatha and vipassanā.

An examination of the two kinds of freedom that are closely related to the destruction of cankers (āsava) argues that samatha and vipassanā are complementary practices and should not be distinguished. Achievement of the ultimate goal of the destruction of cankers depends on the neutralization of the two main cankers, ignorance (avijjā) and craving (taṇhā), by means of the synthesis of samatha and vipassanā. The state of the destruction of cankers (āsava) is related to both types of freedom, cetovimutti and paññāvimutti which correspond respectively with samatha and vipassanā. Even though the result of cetovimutti is sometimes restricted to a temporary release of the mind from the cankers (āsava), the present study argues that it ultimately results in the psychological effect of a thorough nullification of the cankers. Therefore, cetovimutti and paññāvimutti are synonymous expressions for this ultimate state of affairs. The fact that cetovimutti and paññāvimutti present an instance of ubhatobhāgavimutti (freed-both-ways) in their mutual activity of getting rid of cankers provides yet another example of the cooperative nature of the relationship between samatha and vipassanā.
The possible applications of the methodological approach presented here contain possibilities for a better understanding of the psychological interaction between samatha and vipassanā. The relationship between the two processes can be clarified through an expansion of the etymological and contextual analysis of the prominent aspects of samatha and vipassanā, which has been initiated here. It has been argued in this study that to present definitions of this analysis in terms of only one particular type of meditative subject is too narrow. It is predicted that further study of the psychological characteristics of vipassanā and samatha will illuminate the wider theoretical issues surrounding the notion of mental qualities. When samatha is considered in its role as a preparatory element of vipassanā, it becomes clear that, not only does it activate the exercise of vipassanā, but also strengthens vipassanā throughout the entire process leading to Buddhist deliverance. They are to be taken as an interdependent pair of meditative processes leading to the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice, which is the complete eradication of the defilements and corruptions, and the subsequent state of enlightenment.

There are some significant issues this research has not dealt with. Examples include: does the practice of samatha and vipassanā lead to the profound attainment of emptiness (suññatā)? Or, can the practice of samatha and vipassanā eliminate the causes of conditionality, paṭiccasamuppāda (dependent origination), and if so how? Other important issues include, what roles do samatha and vipassanā play in other Buddhist traditions, and how are samatha and vipassanā practiced, particularly in the Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna traditions. A detailed examination of these issues would be valuable further research.
Bibliography

Pāli Texts

Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha of Ācariya Anuruddha, Pali Text originally edited and translated by Mahathera Narada, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993


Reference works


Brahmavamso, Ajahn, "Satipatthana the Fourfold Focus of Mindfulness," Buddhist Society of Western Australia, Newsletter, July-October 1997.


Jhanananda, 2005, "The Lack of Evidence in Support of a Dry Insight Practice" Last updated 28/02/05, URL: http://www.greatwesternvehicle.org/nodryinsight.htm Date of access: 11/09/06.


Ñāṇamoli Thera (tr.), *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, 2nd ed. Colombo, Ceylon A. Semage, 1964; 1st. publ. 1956.


Rhys Davids, Mrs. (tr.), *The Book of Kindred Sayings (Samyutta Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas*, London: Pali Text Society, 1950.


Thanissaro, "The Path of Concentration & Mindfulness," adapted from the course *The Role of the Four Noble Truths*, Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, 1996.


