

theme that underlies each of the four *satipaṭṭhāna* and indicates which of them is particularly appropriate for dispelling the illusion of beauty, happiness, permanence, or self. Although the corresponding insights are certainly not restricted to one *satipaṭṭhāna* alone, nevertheless this particular correlation indicates which *satipaṭṭhāna* is particularly suitable in order to correct a specific distortion (*vipallāsa*).

In the end, however, all four *satipaṭṭhānas* partake of the same essence. According to the *satipaṭṭhāna* commentary, each of them is capable of leading to realization, like different gateways leading to the same city (*MA*, I, 239). As the commentary to the *Vibhaṅga* points out, the fourfold division is only functional and can be compared to a weaver splitting a piece of bamboo into four parts to weave a basket. (*VibhA*, 222).

According to a set of verses in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Samyutta*, these four *satipaṭṭhānas* form the direct or only path (*ekāyano maggo*) for crossing the flood in past, present, and future times (*S.V.* 168 and *S.V.* 186). The *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* also uses the same expression in order to introduce *satipaṭṭhāna* as the path for the purification of beings and for the realisation of *Nibbāna* (*M. I*, 55). *Satipaṭṭhāna* is indeed a necessary requirement for awakening, since whosoever have escaped, are escaping, or will escape from this world, all of them do so by way of well developing the four *satipaṭṭhānas* (*A.V.* 195). That is, only with *Satipaṭṭhāna* is awakening possible, not without it.

Satipaṭṭhāna stands, however, in necessary interdependence with the other factors of the noble eightfold path, so that it would be a misunderstanding to believe that by practicing only *satipaṭṭhāna*, awakening can be gained. Rather, for *satipaṭṭhāna* to yield its potential fruits, right view and good standards of morality are the indispensable foundations (see *S.V.* 143; *S.V.* 165; *S.V.* 187; and *S.V.* 188).

Another important requirement for successful *satipaṭṭhāna* practice is that it should lead to insight into the arising and passing away of phenomena. This importance is highlighted in the *Vibhaṅga Sutta* of the *Samyutta Nikāya* (*S.V.* 183), according to which it is this insight which marks the distinction between mere establishment of *satipaṭṭhāna* and its complete and full 'development' (*bhāvanā*). This passage indicates

that mere awareness of the various objects listed under the four *satipaṭṭhānas* may not suffice for the task of developing penetrative insight. What is additionally required is to move on to a comprehensive vision of impermanence, to contemplating the arising and passing away of all events, a requirement explicitly mentioned in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* after each of the exercises.

In this way, based on right view and moral conduct and aimed at an understanding of the impermanent and therewith unsatisfactory and selfless nature of reality, *satipaṭṭhāna* forms the path leading to the realisation of the goal supreme, of *Nibbāna*.

See also ĀNĀPĀNA-SATI, ANUPASSANĀ, ASUBHA BHĀVANĀ, CONTEMPLATION, DHAMMĀNUPASSANĀ, KĀYAGATĀSATI, KĀYĀNUPASSANĀ, SATI, SUKKHAVIPASSAKA.

Anālayo.

SATIPATTHĀNA SUTTA is the title of the tenth discourse of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (*M. I*, 55-63). Precisely the same discourse recurs as the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (*D. II*, 305-315), the only difference being that this discourse offers a more extensive treatment of the four noble truths, the last of the *satipaṭṭhāna* contemplations. Apart from these two, there are also three smaller *Satipaṭṭhāna Suttas* at *S. IV*, 360, *S. IV*, 363 and *A. III*, 142. The first two of these three just briefly point out that the four *satipaṭṭhānas* lead to the unconditioned. The third, in some editions also called the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, declares that being mindful of five things, namely the rise and fall of phenomena, the lack of beauty of the body, the lack of appeal in food, the unattractive nature of the whole world, and the impermanent nature of all conditioned phenomena, will enable one to become an arahant or a non-returner. In addition to these discourses, there is also a *Satipaṭṭhāna Samyutta* at *S.V.* 141-192: a *Satipaṭṭhāna Vagga* at *A. IV*, 457-462; a *Satipaṭṭhāna Vibhaṅga* at *Vbh.* 19-207; and a *Satipaṭṭhāna Kathā* at *Kvu.* 155-159 and at *Ps.* II, 232-235. Evidently the topic of *Satipaṭṭhāna* has received ample treatment in the Pali Canon.

Not only the Pali Canon offers descriptions of *Satipaṭṭhāna*, but the Chinese *āgamas* have also

preserved two parallels to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. These come as the ninety-eighth sutra in the Chinese *Madhyama Āgama* (Taish° 1 no. 26 p. 582b) and as the first sutra in the twelfth chapter of the *Ekottara Āgama* (Taish° 2 no. 125 p. 568).

The *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* takes place at *Kammāsadhamma* in the Kuru country, a location corresponding to the area of modern Delhi. Thus the setting of this discourse is somewhat removed from the Ganges valley, suggesting that the discourse was probably delivered at a comparatively later period of the Buddha's life, at a time when his sphere of influence had spread to distant areas such as the Kuru country. The commentary (*MA*, I, 228) draws specific attention to the ability of the inhabitants of the Kuru country to understand deep teachings and their willingness to engage in the practice of meditation, this being the reason why the Buddha chose to explain the topic of *satipaṭṭhāna* in such detail at this location.

The *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* starts with the Buddha's declaration that *Satipaṭṭhāna* constitutes the direct or only path (*ekāyano maggo*) for the purification of beings, for realizing *Nibbāna*. The next section of the discourse offers a short definition mentions four *Satipaṭṭhānas* for contemplation: body, feelings, mind, and phenomena. The definition, also specifies the mental qualities that are instrumental for *Satipaṭṭhāna*, one should be diligent (*āṭāpi*), clearly comprehending (*sampajāna*), mindful (*sati*) and free from desires and discontent (*vineyya lokeabhijjhādomanassa*).

The main body of the discourse then describes the four *Satipaṭṭhānas* (q.v.) in detail. Each of the exercises described in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* is followed by a particular formula, according to which *Satipaṭṭhāna contemplation* should cover internal and external phenomena, and is concerned with their arising and passing away. The same formula also points out that mindfulness should be established merely for the sake of developing bare knowledge and for achieving continuity of awareness, and that proper *Satipaṭṭhāna* contemplation takes place free from any dependency of clinging.

The discourse rounds off this description of the four *Satipaṭṭhānas* with a prediction about the time

period within which realization can be expected and ends by reporting the monks being delighted by the Buddha's exposition.

A comparison of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of the Pali canon with its two parallel versions in the Chinese *āgamas* reveals that all versions agree on the basic scheme of four *Satipaṭṭhānas*. The basic scheme occurs also in numerous discourses in the *Samyutta Nikāya* and the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, which usually mention only the bare outline of this scheme, without going into the details of their possible applications as found in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*. Since one of these briefer discourses took place right after the Buddha's awakening (*S. V*, 167), it becomes clear that this basic scheme must have been a direct outcome of his realization. The details of their practical application, however, were only expounded at a later stage during the Buddha's sojourn in the Kuru country, and thus could represent the outcome of this teaching experience.,

In regard to the various meditations detailed in each area, the Chinese version from the *Madhyama Āgama* describes a total of eighteen body contemplations, against only six types of body contemplations found in the Pali version. Some of the contemplations listed in the *Madhyama āgama*, however, seem to belong rather to contemplation of mental states. Thus various ways of dealing with unwholesome thoughts are found as the third and the fourth of the body contemplations in the discourse, instructions which parallel the first and the last of the antidotes to unwholesome thoughts mentioned in the *Vitakkasaṅṭhāna Sutta* (*M.I.*, 120).

Body contemplations six to nine in the *Madhyama Āgama* offer a detailed description of the development of the four *jhānas* together with the same set of similes as found in the Pali discourses. The positioning of the four *jhānas* under body contemplation does have a parallel in the *Kāyagatāsati Sutta* of the Pali canon, which directs awareness to the effect that these absorptions have on the physical body (*M. III*, 92).

The tenth and eleventh of the body contemplations in the *Madhyama Āgama* version are concerned with developing a brilliant perception and with remembering the contemplation image, expressions which could

correspond to the *aloka-saññā* and the *Samādhī-nimitta* found in the Pali discourses.

Another interesting finding is that the *Madhyama Āgama* version places mindfulness of breathing after the development of awareness of postures and clear comprehension of activities, whereas in the Pali version mindfulness of breathing occupies the first position among the body contemplation. This shift in the position of mindfulness of breathing is a meaningful alternation of the sequence of the body contemplations, since awareness of the four postures and clear comprehension of activities are simpler and more rudimentary forms of contemplation. Thus it seems reasonable to place them at the beginning of a cultivation of *satipaṭṭhāna*, as convenient ways of building up a foundation in *sati*. Moreover, awareness of postures and clear comprehension of activities are predominantly concerned with the body in action, whereas mindfulness of breathing and the remaining body contemplations would probably be carried out predominantly in the stable sitting posture. The proper sitting posture is in fact described in detail only in the instructions for mindfulness of breathing, indicating that its position could fit in well after awareness of postures and clear comprehension of activities.

In the Chinese version found in the *Ekottara Āgama*, however, mindfulness of breathing is not mentioned at all. In this particular exposition contemplation of the body covers only four exercises: contemplation of the anatomical parts, of the four elements, of the various bodily orifices together with the impure liquids discharged by them and of a corpse in decay. The first two and the last of these four are also found in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, whereas the third has parallels elsewhere in the Pali canon, namely in the *Gaṇḍa Sutta* (A. IV, 386) and in the *Vijaya Sutta* (Sn. 197-198).

Thus what is common among the Pali version of body contemplations found in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and its Chinese parallels are the contemplation of anatomical parts, of the four elements and of its decay after death. This agreement among the different versions clearly indicates that a central theme of contemplating the body as a *Satipaṭṭhāna* is to gain an insight into its true nature and constitution.

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Concerning the next two *satipaṭṭhānas*, there is little disagreement between the Chinese and the Pali versions. In addition to the types of feelings listed in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the *Madhyama Āgama* version has feelings connected with desire and feelings related to food; while the *Ekottara Āgama* version directs awareness to the fact that the presence of one type of feeling excludes the presence of the other two, a statement found also in the *Mahānidānasutta* (D. II, 66). In addition to the states of mind found in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, the *Madhyama Āgama* version also instructs to contemplate a state of mind with or without blemishes, while the *Ekottara Āgama* version has craving and mastery of the mind as additional categories.

Additional categories for these two contemplations can also be found in the *Paṭisambidhānagga* of the Pali canon, which includes the six types of feelings and the six types of consciousness, differentiated according to the six senses, in the respective lists for contemplation of feelings and contemplation of states of mind (*Ps.* II, 233 and *Ps.* II, 234).

Concerning the fourth *satipaṭṭhāna*, it is noteworthy that contemplation of the five aggregates and of the four noble truths are absent from both Chinese versions, and even contemplation of the sense spheres is found only in the *Madhyama Āgama* version. Thus what remains as the unanimously accepted core of the fourth *satipaṭṭhāna* in its Pali and Chinese versions are the contemplation of the five hindrances and the contemplation of the seven factors of awakening. The same is also found in the *Vibhaṅga* of the Pali Abhidhamma, which lists just these two meditation practices under the fourth *satipaṭṭhāna* (*Vbh.* 199). This agreement between the different sources throws into relief the importance of abandoning the hindrances and developing the factors of awakening for the path to realization. To overcome the hindrances, to practice *satipaṭṭhāna* and to establish the factors of awakening are indeed, according to several Pali discourses, key aspects of awakening (D. II, 83; D. III, 101 and S.V, 160). This same statement forms also the introductory part of the *Madhyama Āgama* version of *satipaṭṭhāna*.

In drawing to the end of this comparison it may be noted that the prediction of realization in the *Madhyama Āgama* version allows for even quicker

awakening than the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, which reports the Buddha as stating that realization may be gained within a minimum of seven days. The Chinese version, however, has him stating that realization could occur in the evening even if one had only begun to practice that same morning. The potential of *satipaṭṭhāna* to lead to realization within the interval of just one day or night is also recognized by the Pali commentary to the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (MA. I, 302), while the *Bodhirājakumāra Sutta* relates the possibility of such instant realization to the development of the five factors of striving (M. II, 96).

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Anālayo.

SAUNDARĀNANDA. In all probability the earliest extant *mahākāvya* written in Sanskrit, attributed to Aśvaghōṣa, which together with the *Buddhacarita* of the same author and the *Raghuvamśa* and the *Kumārasambhava* of Kālidāsa, provided the model for Dandin in formulating his famous definition of a *Mahākāvya* or poem *par excellence*.

The colophons to his *Kāvya*s describe Aśvaghōṣa as a *bhikṣu* (Buddhist monk) hailing from Sāketa (former Ayodhyā) and the son of Suvarṇākṣi ('the golden-eyed one', being the name of his mother). He probably lived in Puruṣapura (modern Peshawar) in the first century A.C. during the reign of Kaniṣka. According to tradition, he was a brahmin, an adherent of the *Sarvāstivādi* School, who later embraced Mahayanism to become one of the forerunners of that school.

The *Saundarānanda* in 18 cantos relates the popular legend of the conversion of the reluctant

Nanda, his half-brother, by the Buddha. Even after his formal conversion Nanda was not able to forget his beloved, village lass of ravishing beauty named Sundarī (which affair gives the poem its title, i.e. *Saundara+nanda*). The Buddha had to resort to a special ruse to dissuade Nanda from his passion for worldly pleasure.

Although clad in a monk's robe, Nanda was always thinking of his beloved and finding all excuses to return to household life. The Buddha then decided to take a bolder step, that is, to take him to heaven to show him heavenly nymphs who were much more beautiful than Sundarī. On their way to heaven the Buddha showed him in the Himalaya a one-eyed ape of awful appearance and asked Nanda how she compared with his Sundarī. For Nanda there was no comparison for the loveliness of his Sundarī, but when he saw the *apsaras* in heaven he had to change his opinion and admit that the comparison of heavenly nymphs with his Sundarī was similar to that between the latter and the ape they saw in the Himālaya. He now forgets his Sundarī and is infatuated with the nymphs. The Buddha then tells him that he could win heaven only by good deeds. After returning to earth he resolves to continue his ascetic life with the ultimate object of winning a nymph for enjoying sensual pleasure. But he was severely criticized by other monks for leading the life of a recluse with the ulterior motive of realizing worldly pleasure. Ven. Ānanda then had to drive home the fact that heavenly pleasures are fleeting and that one must return to earth when one's merits are exhausted. This made Nanda realize the folly of hankering after worldly pleasure and decided to seek the assistance of the Buddha. On listening to the Buddha, Nanda resolves to tread the nobler path of seeking not only his own salvation but also of preaching the doctrine to others for their emancipation.

This story recounted in brief in the *Mahāvagga* and the *Nidānakathā* does not warrant treatment in a *mahākāvya*, but Aśvaghōṣa seized the opportunity and developed it into a story of absorbing interest. The first part of the poem displays the poetic skills of Aśvaghōṣa, which describes the city of Kapilavastu, King Suddhodana, the birth of princes Siddhārtha and Nanda, the latter's love for Sundarī, the forcible conversion of Nanda, the conflict of his feelings and the lament of Sundarī over her lost fiancé. All this is delineated in elegant *Kāvya* style and possesses

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