

- and *upekkhā*. Thus the *jhānas* of the form sphere are considered as a *sāmi* type of *vimokkha* only in comparison to more sublime types of deliverances.
- 2 The *Saṅghabhedavastu* qualifies the radiation of the four *brahmavihāras* not only as *avaireṇa* and *avyābādhena*, but also as *asapatnena*, "without adversary"; Gnoli: *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu*, vol. II, Rome 1978: 206.
  - 3 Lily de Silva: "Cetovimutti, Paññāvimutti and Ubhatobhāgavimutti", *Pali Buddhist Review*, 3/3, 1978: 124 comments that "perhaps what is meant by this simile is that, just as petty small noises get drowned by the all-pervading sound of a conch-shell, petty emotions such as attachment and aversion associated with sense data find no foothold in a well developed mind suffused with infinite benevolence".
  - 4 The presentation in *A. V.*, 300 is rather succinct, but a slightly more detailed description of how to combine *mettā cetovimutti* with the development of insight required for progress on the path to liberation can be found at *M. I.*, 351, see also *M. I.*, 38 and *A. I.*, 196.
  - 5 The same discourse relates the liberations of the mind developed through the other three *brahmavihāras* to the first three immaterial attainments.
  - 6 A survey of passages related to *animitta* can be found in Peter Harvey: "'Signless' Meditations in Pāli Buddhism", *Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies*, vol. 9 no. 1, 1986: 25-52.
  - 7 The same discourse does, however, also list a type of *paññāvimutta* who is able to attain the immaterial attainments, which would conflict with the definition of the *paññāvimutta arahant* given elsewhere.
  - 8 This has been pointed out by Bhikkhu Bodhi: "The *Suśīma Sutta* and the Wisdom-Liberated Arahant", *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, vol. 29, 2007 (forthcoming).
  - 9 *T.* stands for the Taishō edition.
  - 10 Fragment K 484m2 Rb in Stache-Rosen: *Dogmatische Begriffsreihen im Älteren Buddhismus II*, Berlin 1968: 35; fragment 679 folio 23 R4 in Schlingloff: *Dogmatische Begriffsreihen im Älteren Buddhismus I*, Berlin 1962: 12.
  - 11 Such retrospective knowledge of having reached liberation might also be the implication of the instruction in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* to know when the mind is liberated, '*vimuttaṃ cittaṃ'ti pajānāti*' (*M. I.*, 59), though according to the commentarial explanation the reference to the liberated mind in this context includes also temporary types of liberation (*MA. I.*, 280).
- 12 E.g. Gombrich: "Retracing an Ancient Debate", in *How Buddhism Began*, London 1996: 114.
- VIMUTTIMAGGA**, the "Path to Liberation", is the title of what could perhaps best be reckoned as a 'practice compendium' or 'path manual' that in many aspects is similar to the *Visuddhimagga* (see also VISUDDHIMAGGA). The present article will at first introduce the extant versions of the "Path to Liberation" and take up the question of its relationship to the Abhayagiri monastery. This will be followed by a survey of the twelve chapters of the "Path to Liberation", with particular emphasis on differences between this work and the *Visuddhimagga*.
- A complete version of the "Path to Liberation" has been preserved in Chinese translation under the title *Jie-tuo dao lun* (ā%+ S̄ ÖŠ, corresponding perhaps to *Vimuktimārga-sāstra* or *Vimuktimārga-nirdeśa*), found in the Taishō edition as entry number 1648 at *T. XXXII* 399c-461c (Nanjio no. 1293). The compilation of this work is attributed to an *arhat* by the name of *Upatisya*, and its translation into Chinese to Seng-qie-po-lo (çP=OFZ...n) from Fu-nan (in the area of modern Cambodia / Thailand). Seng-qie-po-lo, whose name could be reconstructed as *Samghapāla*, *Samghavarman* or *Samghabhara*, was active in the early sixth century.
- In addition to this Chinese translation, an extract from the same work has been preserved in the Tibetan canon under the title *Rnam par grol ba'i lam las sbyangs pa'i yon tan bstan pa zhes bya ba* (Derge edition no. 306, Peking edition no. 972), corresponding to *Vimuktimārga-dhutaguṇa-nirdeśa* in Sanskrit. The translation of this extract, which describes the ascetic practices, is attributed to *Vidyākara*prabha, who was active in the ninth century. The Tibetan text has been edited by Sasaki 1958 and Bapat 1964. Bapat 1944 (also Bapat 1964: XV) notes that in some editions of the Tibetan canon the *Vimuktimārga-dhutaguṇa-nirdeśa* contains a spurious passage with some *sūtra*

quotations from otherwise unrelated works, probably the result of a copyist's error who may have inadvertently taken over this passage from the *Sūtrasamuccaya*.

Extracts from the *Vimuktimārga* can also be found in the *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛta-viniścaya*, a compendium of tenets of various school that has similarly been preserved in Tibetan (for a survey of this text see Skilling 1987: 7). A Pāli version of the *Vimuttimagga*, 'found' in the Asgiriya monastery in Sri Lanka and published in Sinhalese script in 1963, has turned out to be inauthentic (see Bapat 1972, Bechert 1989 and Endo 1983).

The original language and the geographical provenance of the text of the *Vimuktimārga*/*Vimuttimagga*, upon which the Chinese translation was based, have so far not been determined with certainty. Nagai 1919: 70 assumed that it originated from Ceylon or Cambodia. Bapat 1937b: LIV, however, highlighted the absence of any reference to Ceylonese names or places; the use of transcriptions of medical terminology that points to Sanskrit originals; and the existence of the above-mentioned extract on the ascetic practice preserved in Tibetan translation. These together prompted him to assume an Indian origin for the work. Yet, the absence of references to Ceylonese names or places might be due to the nature of the work, which unlike the *Visuddhimagga* does not contain stories (see Kheminda in Ehara 1995: XXXVIII). Furthermore, the use of Sanskrit medical terminology does not appear to have been uncommon in Ceylon (ibid. and Crosby 1999: 510); and in later times other works of Ceylonese provenance have also been rendered into Tibetan (see the survey in Skilling 1993). Hence the points mentioned by Bapat do not seem conclusive and the question of the provenance of the "Path to Liberation" remains unresolved.

What can be said with certainty is that in many respects the "Path to Liberation" shows close similarities to the *Visuddhimagga*. Of particular relevance to the relationship between these two works is an instance where Buddhaghosa refers to the opinion of "some", according to whom character types are the outcome of previous habits, the elements and humours, *tisso cariyāpubbācīṇṇanidānā dhātudosanidānācā ti ekacce vadanti* (*Vism.* 102). Dhammapāla in his commentary on the *Visuddhimagga* explains that the reference to 'some' intends Upatissa, and that this

position is adopted in the *Vimuttimagga*, 'ekacce' ti *Upatissatheraṃ sandhāyāha, tena hi Vimuttimagge tathā vuttaṃ* (*Vism.A.* I, 123; references to this work are throughout to the Burmese edition). His identification is correct, as these three factors as conditions for character types are indeed listed in the *Vimuttimagga* (*T.* XXXII 410a12; a correspondence first noted by Nyanatiloka 1931: VIII). On the basis of the testimony of Dhammapāla, Buddhaghosa would have been aware of at least this aspect of the *Vimuttimagga*. Thus Nagai (1919: 80) could be correct when, right at the inception of scholarly studies of the *Vimuttimagga*, he suggested that "the *Visuddhi-magga*, which hitherto has been considered to be entirely [Buddhaghosa's] own work, is in reality a revised version of Upatissa's *Vimutti-magga*".

#### The Path to Liberation and the Abhayagiri Monastery

The above instance is not the only point where the *Vimuttimagga* differs from the *Visuddhimagga*, and it is noteworthy that several such instances are associated by Dhammapāla with the Abhayagiri monastery. Bapat (1936: 38-40) notes four such cases:

(1) According to Buddhaghosa, the ascetic practices should be reckoned as wholesome (except in the case of an *arahant*, when their undertaking is to be qualified as "undetermined", *avyākata*). Buddhaghosa considers 'those' who hold that the ascetic practice cannot be classified in this manner as lacking an understanding of the nature of the ascetic practices, *yesam pi kusalattikavinimuttaṃ dhutaṅgaṃ, tesam atthato dhutaṅgaṃ eva n'atthi* (*Vism.* 80). Dhammapāla explains that the reference to 'those' intends the followers of the Abhayagiri monastery, 'yesan'ti *Abhayagirivāsike sandhāyāha* (*Vism.A.* I, 104). Now the Chinese translation of the *Vimuttimagga* does consider it inappropriate to reckon the ascetic practices as either wholesome, or unwholesome, or undetermined (*T.* XXXII 406b19). Though the position taken in the Chinese *Vimuttimagga* would thus fit Buddhaghosa's criticism, the Tibetan version disagrees in this respect, as it classifies the ascetic practices as "wholesome", *dge ba*, corresponding to *kuśala* (Bapat 1964: 76). Thus the Tibetan version would agree with the position taken by Buddhaghosa, since he also maintains that the ascetic practices are "wholesome", only adding the category "undetermined" in order to cover the case of an *arahant*.

(2) In the context of a discussion of the first *jhāna*, Buddhaghosa dismisses an alternative reckoning of the stages of access, full absorption and reviewing that is "held by some", *evam eke vaṇṇayanti* (*Vism.* 148), whom Dhammapāla identifies as the followers of the Abhayagiri monastery, '*eke 'ti Abhayagirivāsino* (*VismA.* I, 172). A view corresponding to Buddhaghosa's description is indeed advocated in the *Vimuttimaggā* (*T.* XXXII 417a8).

(3) When treating the aggregate of form, Buddhaghosa rejects the opinion of "some" that torpor should also be included under form, *ekaccānaṃ matena 'middharūpan'ti evaṃ aññāni pī rūpāni āharitvā* (*Vism.* 450). Dhammapāla explains that this view was held among the inhabitants of the Abhayagiri monastery, '*ekaccānan'ti Abhayagirivāsinaṃ* (*VismA.* II 104). The *Vimuttimaggā* does include torpor in its listing of the aggregate of form (*T.* XXXII 445c25). The same position recurs also in the *Vimuktimārga* extract in the *Saṃskṛtāsaṃskṛta-viniścaya* (Skilling 1994: 189).

(4) In regard to the progress from stream-entry to once-return and from once-return to non-return, Buddhaghosa refers to "those" who believe that the attainment of fruition issues in the next stage of awakening if insight has been established, *ye pana vadanti: sotāpanno 'phalasaṃpattiṃ samāpajissāmi 'ti vipassanaṃ paṭṭhapetvā sakadāgāmi hoti, sakadāgāmi ca anāgāmi 'ti*. Buddhaghosa counters that in this case a non-returner would become an *arahant*, [then] an *arahant* a *Pacceka*buddha, and [then] a *Pacceka*buddha a Buddha, *evaṃ sati anāgāmi arahā bhavissati, arahāpacceka*buddho, *pacceka*buddho ca buddho (*Vism.* 700). Dhammapāla explains that Buddhaghosa's reference to "those" intends the inhabitants of the Abhayagiri monastery, '*ye panā'ti Abhayagirivāsino sandhāyāha* (*VismA.* II 519). Bapat 1936: 40 (or 1937b: XLII) suggests that the view criticized by Buddhaghosa is "exactly the same" as a position taken in the *Vimuttimaggā*. Yet, the relevant passage in the *Vimuttimaggā* only explains that non-returners who attain fruition will not become *arahants* straightaway because their insight lacks the required strength (*T.* XXXII 461a16). This presentation could either imply that fruition attainment needs to be conjoined with insight in order to lead to full liberation, or else that fruition attainment by its very nature excludes the possibility of developing insight that is sufficiently strong to lead to the final goal. Moreover, the actual view quoted by Buddhaghosa concerns the

progression from stream-entry to non-return, whereas the *Vimuttimaggā* passage only addresses progress from non-return to full liberation.

In sum, of the altogether four instances taken up above, in the first case the Tibetan version disagrees with the Chinese text, while the last case seems uncertain. This leaves two unambiguous cases where views upheld in the *Vimuttimaggā* are criticized by Buddhaghosa and are associated by Dhammapāla with the Abhayagiri monastery (above cases 2 and 3). An additional passage of relevance would be Buddhaghosa's criticism of attempts to relate the nature of the sense-organs to an excess of a particular element (*Vism.* 444). Dhammapāla does not identify the source of the version of this view that is found in the *Vimuttimaggā* (*T.* XXXII, 445c29; see below), only indicating that an alternative position on the same matter, also criticised in the *Visuddhimaggā*, was upheld by the Mahāsāṅghikas (*VismA.* II 91). Yet, judging from Gunawardana 1979: 29 it seems as if the position taken in the *Vimuttimaggā* has been identified as an Abhayagiri tenet in a Sinhalese sub-commentary on the *Visuddhimaggā*, written in the thirteenth century.

These instances certainly point to a considerable degree of affinity between the *Vimuttimaggā* and views attributed to the Abhayagiri monastery. Yet, that the *Vimuttimaggā* "contains some minor points accepted by the Abhayagiri Monastery does not necessarily imply that it had any special connexion with that centre" (Ñāṇamoli 1991: XLI). Points that mitigate against coming to a firm conclusion about the school affiliation of the *Vimuttimaggā* would be (see in more detail Crosby 1999 and Norman 1991):

- the indications given in the *Visuddhimaggā-tīkā* or the Sinhalese sub-commentary are not confirmed by another external source;
- Dhammapāla does not relate Upatissa or the *Vimuttimaggā* to the Abhayagiri monastery, but mentions them separately in different contexts;
- several views proposed in the *Vimuttimaggā* and criticized by Buddhaghosa are not associated by Dhammapāla with the Abhayagiri monastery (see the survey in Bapat 1937b: XXXVII-XLII);
- not all of the positions that Dhammapāla attributes to the Abhayagiri monastery are found in the *Vimuttimaggā*. This is the case for an affirmation of the momentary concurrence of



telepathic knowledge and its object (*Vism.* 432: *tattha keci 'khaṇapaccuppannaṃ cittaṃ cetopariyañāpassa ārammaṇaṃ hoti' ti vadanti; Vism.A. II, 66: 'kecī ti Abhayagirivāsino*); where neither the view nor the accompanying simile about throwing a handful of flowers into the air occurs in the corresponding section of the *Vimuttimagga* (*T.* XXXII, 443b).

Thus what can be safely concluded, at the present state of our knowledge, would only be that the *Vimuttimagga* shows a partial overlap with positions that according to the testimony of commentaries on the *Visuddhimagga* were held by the inhabitants of the Abhayagiri monastery.

#### Survey of the *Vimuttimagga*

In what follows, a survey of the twelve chapters of the *Vimuttimagga* will be given (see also ABHIDHARMA LITERATURE p. 78), with particular emphasis on differences between this work and the *Visuddhimagga*. In order to provide a background to several such differences, the perspective taken in other works, especially in the Pāli discourses, will also be taken into account. For a more detailed comparison of the *Vimuttimagga* and the *Visuddhimagga* the reader is invited to consult the study by Bapat 1937b, to which the following lines are much indebted.

The first chapter of the *Vimuttimagga* introduces the threefold training (*T.* XXXII, 399c15), based on a verse found in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* (*D.* II, 123; also *A.* II, 2 or *A.* IV, 106). These three trainings, according to the *Vimuttimagga*, lead to three purifications: purification of virtue, purification of the mind and purification of view (*T.* XXXII, 400b6).

Chapter two turns to the topic of virtue, explaining its basic meaning and analysing virtue into various types. The *Vimuttimagga* indicates that the significance of *sīla* is comparable to the 'head' of a human being, without which it is impossible to live, or to the 'cooling' effect of sandalwood on someone who has fever, as observing virtue allays any feverishness or fear that could arise due to breach of the precepts (*T.* XXXII, 401a17). Buddhaghosa refers to this explanation in his treatment of *sīla* as a proposition advanced by 'others', *aññe pana ... vaṇṇayanti* (*Vism.* 8; Dhammapāla does not identify the 'others').

The *Vimuttimagga* distinguishes between three types of *sīla*: wholesome, unwholesome and undetermined (*T.* XXXII, 401a26). The *Visuddhimagga* does not include this threefold presentation in its analysis of virtue (*Vism.* 10), referring to it only in a by-the-way manner as a threefold distinction found in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* which Buddhaghosa considers to be not relevant to the present discussion (*Vism.* 14 in reference to *Paṭis.* I, 44, where this is the only mode of reckoning types of *sīla*).

The notion of unwholesome types of *sīla* occurs not only in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, but also in the discourses, where a treatment of *akusala sīla* can be found in the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā Sutta* (*M.* II, 25). Moreover, the observance of behaving like a cow or like a dog - the *gosīla* and *kukkurasīla* - lead according to the *Kukkuravatika Sutta* to a lower rebirth (*M.* I, 388), instances that would be illustrative instance of *akusala sīla* (the *Vimuttimagga* in fact refers to these two as instances of *sīla* under the influence of delusion, *T.* XXXII, 402a19).

The theme of the scope of *akusala* recurs again in chapter three on the ascetic practices where, as already mentioned above, the *Vimuttimagga's* suggestion that ascetic practices could be unwholesome meets with Buddhaghosa's criticism. In his discussion, Buddhaghosa takes up a potential counterargument based on a discourse in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, which describes how someone might undertake ascetic practices out of evil wishes (*A.* III, 219). The position taken in the *Vimuttimagga* would in fact do justice to this reference, whereas Buddhaghosa's counterargument is mainly based on his etymology of the term *dhutaṅga*, whereby he comes to the conclusion that one who undertakes ascetic practices must necessarily be engaging in wholesome activity (*Vism.* 80). In view of the canonical support for instances of *sīla* and *dhutaṅga* that can be reckoned as *akusala*, the position taken by Buddhaghosa almost gives the impression as if his presentation intentionally sets a contrast to the way the same theme was handled in the *Vimuttimagga*.

Regarding the different types of ascetic practices, whereas the *Visuddhimagga* mentions "taking food in a [single] bowl", *pattapiṇḍika* (*Vism.* 70), the Chinese and Tibetan versions of the *Vimuttimagga* speak instead of "knowing moderation with food",

corresponding to *bhojane mattaññutā* (T. XXXII 405b5 and Bapat 1964: 8). While a listing of ascetic practices in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* mentions *pattapiṇḍika* (A. III, 220; see also Miln. 359), neither *pattapiṇḍika* nor *bhojane mattaññutā* are found in another such listing in the *Puggalapaññatti* (Pug. 69). The same is also the case for a register of the ascetic practices in the *Mahāvīyutpatti* (Mhvuyt. 86, §1128-1139). Thus, though there seem to be some fluctuations in listings of the ascetic practices, the presentation in the *Visuddhimagga* corresponds better to the above *Aṅguttara Nikāya* discourse than the *Vimuttimagga*'s reference to moderation with food (for a survey of works that also reckon moderation with food as an ascetic practice see Dantine 1991: 61).

Chapter four of the *Vimuttimagga* explains the meaning of concentration and distinguishes between its different manifestations. To the four benefits of concentration listed in the *Vimuttimagga* (T. XXXII, 407a14), the *Visuddhimagga* adds the attainment of cessation as a fifth benefit (*Vism.* 372). This additional benefit does, however, not involve a substantial difference, since the listings of benefits in both works begin by mentioning a pleasant abiding in the present moment, of which the attainment of cessation would be a particular instance.

Another difference, somewhat in line with the above-noted positions taken by the two works in regard to virtue and the ascetic practices, is that the *Vimuttimagga* distinguishes between wrong and right types of concentration (T. XXXII, 407b13). Such a distinction is not found in the *Visuddhimagga*, whose analysis appears to be based on the premise that concentration is by nature wholesome, since Buddhaghosa defines concentration as "one-pointedness of a wholesome state of mind", *kusalacittekaggatāsamādhi* (*Vism.* 84). The discourses often refer to wrong types of concentration, *micchāsamādhi* (e.g. D. II, 353; M. I, 44; S. II, 168; A. V, 212), as does the *Visuddhimagga* itself in the context of a listing of what will be left behind with the different stages of awakening (*Vism.* 683).

In its fifth chapter, the *Vimuttimagga* describes how one should approach a teacher, the 'good friend'. Chapter six then surveys the different character dispositions that a pupil may have. The *Vimuttimagga* lists altogether fourteen types of character dispositions, to which it adds the possibility of

character types under the influence of craving, views and conceit (T. XXXII, 409b26). Buddhaghosa lists only six character dispositions and rejects the count of fourteen, of which he evidently was aware (as noted above, his dismissal of the attribution of character types to previous habits is identified by Dhammapāla as a reference to the *Vimuttimagga*). Buddhaghosa comments that this fourteen-fold way of reckoning is simply the result of combining some of the basic six types with each other (*Vism.* 101). Regarding the reference to craving, views and conceit, he explains that since craving and conceit are part of greed, while views are a manifestation of delusion, these are also included in his six-fold reckoning (*Vism.* 102).

The type of combining through which the *Vimuttimagga* arrives at fourteen types of disposition reckons those whose character is under the influence of both lust and hate, or lust and delusion, or hate and delusion etc., as types in their own right. The same pattern occurs also in the *Peṭakopadesa*, which speaks of *rāgadosacarito*, *rāgamohacarito*, *dosamohacarito* (*Peṭ.* 140; noted by Bapat 1937a: 744). The present case is not the only such instance, as elsewhere the exposition in the *Vimuttimagga* tends to show agreement with the *Peṭakopadesa* (see Bapat 1937a and Hayashi 2003-2005).

Chapter seven of the *Vimuttimagga* gives a survey of meditation subjects. This survey includes the ten *kasiṇas* listed also in the *Mahāsakuludāyī Sutta* (T. XXXII, 411a10 and M. II, 14). The corresponding listing in the *Visuddhimagga* differs in so far as, instead of boundless space and boundless consciousness, it mentions light and limited space, *ālokakasiṇa* and *paricchīnākāsakasiṇa* (*Vism.* 110). Another minor difference is that the *Vimuttimagga* counts thirty-eight subjects, to which it adds another two, whereas the *Visuddhimagga* from the outset speaks of forty subjects.

The *Vimuttimagga* advocates that, just as in the case of the *kasiṇas*, the meditative sign of the *brahmavihāras* can be spatially extended (T. XXXII, 411b11). Though Buddhaghosa holds that the *brahmavihāras* should not be extended (*Vism.* 112), when examining the actual undertaking of the *brahmavihāras* he describes how they can be extended either in access or in absorption so as to cover living beings in various spatial directions (*Vism.* 320). Thus in practical terms the *Visuddhimagga* and the

*Vimuttimagga* appear to be intending the same type of practice. In the discourses, a recurrent simile that illustrates the development of the *brahmavihāras* describes a trumpeter who makes himself heard in all directions (e.g. *M. II*, 207); a practice that leads to liberation of the mind qualified as "immeasurable", *appamāṇa cetovimutti* (*M. I*, 297). These descriptions show that, from the perspective of the Pāli discourses, *brahmavihāra* practice does involve a form of meditative extension or spatial pervasion.

As part of its survey of meditation subjects, the *Vimuttimagga* indicates that the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is not suitable for the development of insight (*T. XXXII*, 411b15). It explains that once perception is no longer of a distinct nature, it is not possible to attain the path of insight; adding that the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception cannot be analysed due to its subtlety and hence will not lead to the destruction of the influxes (*T. XXXII*, 422a25). The *Visuddhimagga* at first sight appears to take a different position, as at the conclusion of a listing that contains the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception Buddhaghosa proposes that all the attainments mentioned are suitable for insight (*Vism.* 114). As in the above case of the *brahmavihāras*, however, a later section in the *Visuddhimagga* indicates that Buddhaghosa's position is not as different from the *Vimuttimagga* as one might at first have thought. When describing the actual undertaking of the immaterial attainments, Buddhaghosa notes that it is not possible to attain liberating insight based on the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception alone, since even Sāriputta could not develop direct insight into its constituent states, this particular attainment being of a particularly subtle nature (*Vism.* 338, referring to *M. III*, 28).

In the discourses, the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is in fact often absent from insight related contemplation of states of deep concentration (e.g. *M. I*, 352 or *M. I*, 436), and a discourse in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* explicitly indicates that penetration to liberating knowledge is only possible as far as there is an attainment of perception, *yavatā saññāsamāpatti, tavatā aññāpaṭivedho* (*A. IV* 426).

Chapter eight of the *Vimuttimagga* turns to the actual undertaking of meditation practice. This topic

seems to lie at the very heart of the *Vimuttimagga*, as could be concluded from the circumstance that chapter eight covers altogether five fascicles out of the twelve fascicles taken up by the work as a whole (*T. XXXII* 412b-441a). With the example of the earth *kaṣiṇa*, the first of the meditation subjects in its listing, the *Vimuttimagga* describes how the four *jhānas* and the four immaterial attainments can be developed, after which it takes up the remaining subjects of meditation.

Regarding the *jhānas*, the *Vimuttimagga* reckons the first *jhāna* to have five factors, the second *jhāna* to have two factors (on this case see also Bapat 1937b: 51 note 3), the third *jhāna* to have five factors, and the fourth *jhāna* to have three factors (*T. XXXII*, 416b4, 418c20, 419c20, 420b23). Buddhaghosa agrees on the first *jhāna*, but reckons the second *jhāna* as having three factors, the third *jhāna* as having two factors, and the fourth *jhāna* as having two factors (*Vism.* 146, 155, 159, 165). These variations do not concern the actual nature of the four *jhānas*, but only involve differing perspectives on which factors should be reckoned explicitly.

Another difference involves the analysis of equanimity, given by both works in the context of their treatment of the third *jhāna*. While the *Vimuttimagga* distinguishes between eight types of equanimity (*T. XXXII*, 419a23), the *Visuddhimagga* lists altogether ten, adding "equanimity about formations", *saṅkhārupekkhā*, and "equanimity as balance", *tatramajjhātupekkhā* (*Vism.* 160, see also UPEKKHĀ). Since the same *Visuddhimagga* (*Vism.* 161) considers "equanimity as balance" to be an umbrella term for several other types of equanimity (found in both works), and since it explains that "equanimity about formations" corresponds to equanimity of insight (also found in both works), the listing given by Buddhaghosa does not involve a major difference from the presentation in the *Vimuttimagga*.

When examining recollection of the Buddha, the *Vimuttimagga* indicates that such recollection leads to access concentration, but then records an alternative opinion according to which such recollection may lead to the attainment of all four *jhānas* (*T. XXXII*, 428a27). The *Visuddhimagga* only envisages the attainment of access concentration (*Vism.* 212). Kheminda (in Ehara 1995: XLV) comments that the alternative opinion mentioned in the *Vimuttimagga* seems to agree with a



description of the potential of recollecting the Buddha given in a discourse in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (A. III, 285).

The development of mindfulness of breathing leads, according to the *Vimuttimaggā*, to a *nimitta* similar to the touch of silk or cotton (T. XXXII, 430a29). Buddhaghosa quotes this comparison as a proposition made by "some", *ekacce āhu*, contrasting it to the position in the commentaries, which he prefers (*Vism.* 285). Dhammapāla explains that the reference here is to "some teachers", *'ekacce 'ti eke ācariyā* (*VismA.* I, 335).

The *Vimuttimaggā* recommends four aspects for approaching the practice of mindfulness of breathing (T. XXXII, 430b17), whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* lists altogether eight aspects (*Vism.* 278), of which the additional four are related to the development of insight based on mindfulness of breathing (*Vism.* 287). This is to some extent unexpected, since this part of the *Visuddhimaggā* is dedicated to explaining the development of concentration, the practice of insight being a topic treated only in a later part of the work.

The third of the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing requires experiencing the whole body, *sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī* (M. III, 82). In relation to this step, the *Vimuttimaggā* seems to describe a pervasion of the whole body and mind with joy and happiness, explaining that by means of such pervasion with joy and happiness one experiences the whole body (T. XXXII, 430c12). The *Visuddhimaggā* instead recommends directing attention to the beginning, middle and final stages of each breath (*Vism.* 273).

A minor difference between the two works can also be found in relation to the injunction to liberate the mind as the twelfth step in the sixteen-step scheme of mindfulness of breathing. While the *Vimuttimaggā* takes this injunction to simply intend liberating the mind from any defilement that may have arisen in the course of practice (T. XXXII, 431a20), the *Visuddhimaggā* understands 'liberating' to refer to the mental factors left behind with each *jhāna* attainment, or to the development of insight subsequent to *jhāna* attainment (*Vism.* 289).

For undertaking mindfulness of death, the *Vimuttimaggā* presents eight ways of approach (T. XXXII, 432a8). The *Visuddhimaggā* also lists altogether eight ways, differing in so far as it treats

the 'appearance of death like an executioner' and the 'inevitability of death' together as its first way (*Vism.* 230). In the *Vimuttimaggā* these constitute two distinct approaches, listed as its first and second respectively. The *Visuddhimaggā* arrives at the same count of eight through the additional reflection of how death will bring to ruin all success gained in life, a point not made in the *Vimuttimaggā*.

When treating contemplation of the body, the *Vimuttimaggā* briefly lists the different anatomical parts (T. XXXII, 432c23), while the *Visuddhimaggā* offers a detailed treatment of each of these parts (*Vism.* 248-265). The *Vimuttimaggā* instead takes up in some detail the stages of development of a foetus in the womb, followed by listing various worms that live in the body (T. XXXII, 433b5 and 433b20; on the last see also Bapat 1934).

For undertaking recollection of peace, the *Vimuttimaggā* recommends directing awareness to the factors overcome with the attainment of a particular *jhāna* or immaterial attainment, or to the defilements weakened or destroyed with the attainment of a particular level of awakening (T. XXXII, 434c11). In the *Visuddhimaggā*, recollection of peace takes instead the qualities of *Nibbāna* as its object, *nibbānassa guṇā anusaritaḅbā* (*Vism.* 293).

Regarding the potential of the *brahmavihāras*, the *Vimuttimaggā* and the *Visuddhimaggā* agree that loving kindness, compassion and sympathetic joy lead only to the third *jhāna*, whereas equanimity can produce the fourth *jhāna* (T. XXXII, 438a12 and *Vism.* 322). The *Vimuttimaggā* records an alternative opinion, according to which each of the four *brahmavihāras* can lead to the fourth *jhāna* (T. XXXII, 438a17). Both works refer to a discourse in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* that seems to suggest this possibility (A. IV, 300).

For the purpose of recollecting the four elements, the *Vimuttimaggā* lists ten ways of approach, whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* presents thirteen ways (T. XXXII, 439a6 and *Vism.* 364). Notable differences in the respective treatments are that the *Vimuttimaggā* compares the human body made up of the four elements to a puppet (T. XXXII, 440a21, a point not made in *Vism.*); whereas Buddhaghosa draws attention to the difference between internal and external manifestations of the four elements and to their lack of self-awareness (*Vism.* 368 and 369, not mentioned

in the *Vimuttimaggā*). The difference in emphasis noted above in relation to contemplating the anatomical constitution of the body recurs in regard to the present recollection, as the *Vimuttimaggā* merely lists the parts of the body that correspond to the four elements (*T. XXXII*, 438c27), whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* offers a detailed description of each part (*Vism.* 353-363)

Recollection of the repulsive nature of food can, according to the *Vimuttimaggā*, be undertaken from altogether five perspectives, whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* speaks of ten (*T. XXXII*, 440b25 and *Vism.* 342). Though differing in their enumeration, the two works nevertheless agree on the main themes of such recollection being the effort required to get food, the repulsive nature of food once it is chewed, once it is being digested, and once it leaves the body as excrement, as well as the potential of food to cause diseases.

With its ninth chapter the *Vimuttimaggā* turns to the five higher knowledges: supernormal powers, knowledge of the mind of others, the divine ear, recollection of past lives, and the divine eye. The treatment of these five higher knowledges in the *Visuddhimaggā* is similar. A minor difference in regard to knowledge of the minds of others is that the *Vimuttimaggā* describes altogether six states of mind that manifest a distinct colour, which then can be perceived by one who exercises this higher knowledge. These six comprise a joyful, a sad and an equanimous state of mind, as well as a mind under the influence of greed, hatred or delusion (*T. XXXII*, 443b14). The *Visuddhimaggā* takes up only the joyful, sad and equanimous states of mind, differing also from the *Vimuttimaggā* on which colours correspond to these three (*Vism.* 409).

The two works also show some variations in regard to the prerequisites for developing the five higher knowledges. Thus in the case of supernormal powers, for example, the *Vimuttimaggā* simply stipulates ability to attain the four *jhānas*, whereas the *Vimuttimaggā* speaks of ability to attain the four *jhānas* and the four immaterial attainments in various orders and combinations (*T. XXXII*, 441c15 and *Vism.* 374).

Chapter ten of the *Vimuttimaggā* defines wisdom and analyses its different aspects and manifestations as a basis for turning to the 'five methods' for developing

wisdom in its eleventh chapter. These five methods are: the aggregates, the senses, the elements, dependent arising, and the four noble truths.

The *Vimuttimaggā* and the *Visuddhimaggā* differ in their respective listings of derived forms of matter, given in the context of examining the aggregate of form. As already mentioned above, the *Vimuttimaggā* includes torpor in its listing, an inclusion strongly objected to by Buddhaghosa (*T. XXXII*, 445c25 and *Vism.* 450). When evaluating this point, it needs to be kept in mind that the listing of derived matter in both works includes such items as verbal intimation; the lightness, malleability and wieldiness of matter; its growth, continuity, ageing and death; as well as its impermanent nature. Thus to consider torpor as another quality to be accommodated under the heading of 'derived matter' would be in keeping with a general tendency of including items that are not necessarily self-evident as manifestations of material form.

The position taken in the *Vimuttimaggā* regarding torpor would also be in keeping with a suggestion made in the *Milindapañha*, which mentions several conditions that accompany the physical body, *kāyānugatā dhammā*, and are outside of the control of an *arahant* – one of which is *middha* (*Mil.* 253). The *Peṭakopadesa* explicitly remarks that bodily fatigue of an *arahant* should not be reckoned a hindrance, *atthi pana arahato kāyākilesamiddhañca okkamati na ca taṃ nīvaraṇaṃ* (*Peṭ.* 161; Bapat 1937a: 745). A discourse of relevance to the same theme would be the *Mahāsaccaka Sutta*, according to which the Buddha would at times take a nap in the afternoon, which should not be mistaken as an expression of delusion (*M. I*, 249). Thus the *Vimuttimaggā's* inclusion of torpor under derived matter, though dismissed by Buddhaghosa, would reflect a concern with allocating this particular quality in a way that reflects its ambivalent nature as a 'hindrance', taking a lead in this respect from the *Peṭakopadesa* and the *Milindapañha*.

In regard to the other aggregates, the analyses given in the two works also show some minor variations. Thus, for example, the *Vimuttimaggā* analyses feelings in various ways until it arrives at a count of three times thirty-six and thus altogether one-hundred-and-eight feelings (*T. XXXII*, 447b24), a reckoning with a precedent in the *Bahuvedanīya Sutta* (*M. I*, 398). The *Visuddhimaggā* only distinguishes between three and



five types of feelings (*Vism.* 461). Conversely, in the case of consciousness the *Vimuttimaggā* counts just seven types (*T.* XXXII, 448a26, arrived at by reckoning mind and mind-consciousness-element separately), whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* lists eighty-nine types of consciousness (*Vism.* 457). In a later section of the *Visuddhimaggā*, Buddhaghosa applies the eighty-nine-fold reckoning also to feeling (*Vism.* 566, arrived at by associating feeling with each of the eighty-nine types of consciousness).

In its treatment of the sense organs, the *Vimuttimaggā* considers the distinct nature of each organ to be due to an excess of a particular element. Thus it relates the eye to an excess in the element of fire, the ear to space, the nose to air, the tongue to water and the body to earth (*T.* XXXII, 445c29, 446a5, 446a8, 446a12, 446a15). As already mentioned above, Buddhaghosa rejects this opinion since no discourse can be quoted in support (*Vism.* 444).

Regarding the way the sense organs relate to their objects, the *Vimuttimaggā* and the *Visuddhimaggā* agree that the eye and the ear do not come in direct contact with their objects, unlike the nose, tongue and body (*T.* XXXII, 449a13 and *Vism.* 445). The *Vimuttimaggā* records an alternative position in this respect, which points out that hearing can be obstructed by a close-by object (that intervenes between the ear and the source of the sound), and that the eyes are not able to see the back of a wall, hence for these two senses to function some direct contact with the object would also be required.

After expounding the eighteen elements, the *Vimuttimaggā* presents the twelve links of dependent arising in forward and reverse order, followed by a series of illustrative similes (*T.* XXIII, 450a17). Notably, the *Vimuttimaggā* also applies the entire series of twelve links to a single mind moment (*T.* XXXII, 450c12), a perspective not found in the *Visuddhimaggā*, which instead analyses the twelve links with the help of the twenty-four conditions listed in the *Paṭṭhāna* (*Vism.* 532). An application of dependent arising to a single mind moment can already be found in the *Vibhaṅga* (*Vibh.* 144).

The *Vimuttimaggā* completes its survey of the 'five methods' by turning to the four noble truths, whose actual discernment becomes the theme of its last chapter. When expounding this topic, the

*Vimuttimaggā* treats the distinguishing of name and form as an implementation of the first truth, which thereby fulfils purification of view (*T.* XXXII, 454a2). Insight into dependent arising then fulfils the second truth and accomplishes purification by overcoming doubt (*T.* XXXII, 454a14). The *Vimuttimaggā* continues by describing the insight knowledges as an implementation of the fourth truth, covering:

- comprehension of the three characteristics (*T.* XXXII, 454b1);
- insight into rise and fall (*T.* XXXII, 454c3);
- dissolution (*T.* XXXII, 455c16);
- fear (*T.* XXXII, 456c11);
- desire for deliverance (*T.* XXXII, 456c20);
- knowledge of conformity (*T.* XXXII, 457a5);
- change of lineage (*T.* XXXII, 457a18);
- knowledge of the path (*T.* XXXII, 457a25);
- knowledge of the fruit (*T.* XXXII, 458a1).

The treatment of the insight knowledges in the *Vimuttimaggā* thus combines several stages that the *Visuddhimaggā* treats separately (see in more detail VIPASSANAÑĀṆA). A similar combination of several stages can be found in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (*Ps.* I, 59 and *Ps.* I, 60).

Regarding the abilities of noble ones to enter fruition experience, the *Vimuttimaggā* records alternative opinions, according to which either all noble ones have this ability, or else only non-returners and *arahants*. A third opinion appears to imply that noble ones who are accomplished in concentration are able to enter fruition experience (*T.* XXXII, 460c23). The *Visuddhimaggā* accepts only the first of these alternatives, according to which all noble ones can enter the attainment of fruition, rejecting the suggestion made by 'some', *keci*, that such attainment might not be available to stream-enterers and once-returners (*Vism.* 699).

Another difference is that, instead of adopting the scheme of the four noble truths to treat the progress of insight until awakening, the *Visuddhimaggā* takes the seven purifications from the *Rathavinā Sutta* as its point of reference (*M.* I, 147). As already noted by Nagao 1919: 75, the title of the *Visuddhimaggā* reflects this shift of emphasis from the four noble truths towards the seven purifications. Yet, whereas the four noble truths are a central aspect of the early Buddhist

teachings – in this respect the *Vimuttimaggā* follows the illustrious example of Sāriputta in the *Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta* (M. I, 184) – the seven purifications occur only in the *Rathavināta Sutta* and in the *Dasuttara Sutta* (D. III, 288).

The circumstance that the *Vimuttimaggā* refers to the first four purifications could easily have been the starting point for a revision that completes the scheme of purifications. Yet, if this is indeed what Buddhaghosa did, it remains somewhat puzzling that he would employ the scheme of seven purifications for that purpose, which in its original context in the *Rathavināta Sutta* functions as a scheme of stages that fall short of arrival at the final goal. The same is the case in the *Dasuttara Sutta*, where the seven are part of a scheme of altogether nine purifications, with the additional stages of "purification of wisdom" and "purification of liberation". As a result of having recourse to the seven-fold scheme only, instead of availing himself of the complete scheme of nine purifications, Buddhaghosa treats awakening under the heading of "purification by knowledge and vision" (*Vism.* 672), even though "purification of liberation" as the ninth purification would certainly have been more appropriate in this respect (see in more detail RATHAVIN\*TA SUTTA).

The present instance thus exemplifies what appears to be a general tendency discernible when comparing the *Vimuttimaggā* and the *Visuddhimaggā*. On the highly probable supposition that Buddhaghosa knew a version of the *Vimuttimaggā*, a comparison of the two works time and again gives the impression as if he deliberately departed from the model set by his predecessor, even though on a number of occasions this involves him in having to depart from the canonical sources.

Apart from such differences, however, in general terms the two works show a remarkable degree of similarity. From an overall perspective, the *Vimuttimaggā* appears somewhat more practical, whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* has a tendency to be more scholarly. Often the *Vimuttimaggā* is also more open-minded, in the sense that its author rests content with mentioning different opinions side by side, whereas Buddhaghosa has a more pronounced tendency towards refuting what in his view is not correct and establishing a single right opinion. The *Vimuttimaggā*

thus takes us back to a less dogmatic strand of Theravāda thought and offers us glimpses at alternative opinions that, had this work not been preserved in Chinese (and partial Tibetan) translation, would have been lost together with the commentarial traditions that have not found a place in Buddhaghosa's compilation of the Pāli commentaries.

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#### Anālayo

**VINAYA (I)** This Encyclopaedia article on Buddhist *Vinaya* is not meant to be a complete history of Vinaya literature of any school of Buddhism, neither Theravāda nor Mahāyāna. Our main interest in this article shall be twofold. We shall first deal with the genesis of the body of literature that has, through a considerable period of time, come to be finally established as the main body of the *Vinaya*. We look upon this process as a purposeful creation and as being organic in its evolution. We work via literary evidence found embedded in Canonical Pali texts themselves [*tantim ārūhā*] like the record of the first Buddhist Council or *Pañca-satī Saṅgīti* [*Vin. II. 287*].

Our second interest in this article is to emphasize that the roots of the *Vinaya* are to be primarily traced in the *Dhamma* whose one and only concern is the fulfilment of the life of *brahmacariya* for the final

attainment of Nirvāna. The two statements *dhammaṃ deseti* and *brahma-cariyaṃ pakāseti* in the Buddhist texts always go inseparably, hand in hand. The *Vinaya* must necessarily uphold the ideals of the *dhamma* and essentially contribute to their fulfilment. It has to be soon discovered that one of the primary aims of establishing the *Vinaya*, in the wake of the *Dhamma*, was for that purpose.

#### Dhamma and Vinaya, their Corroborative Continuance

Any study about Buddhism must necessarily commence with a sense of historical genesis. When and where and for whose sake did such a system of thinking which goes under the name of Buddhism originate? What prompted its genesis and in whose hands did it see its development? Over the years, what has been the pattern of its development etc. These are relevant questions to face and to be answered with diligence and detachment. This early message which Śākyamuni, the Buddha Gautama, is believed to have delivered to the world in the sixth century B.C. is what goes today under the name *dhamma* [Sanskrit *dharma*]. It essentially carries within it the concept of *brahma-cariya* referred to as the totally pure and totally complete religious life [*kevala-paripuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahma-cariyaṃ pakāseti - D. I. 62*]. This life of *brahma-cariya* leads man out of the painful cyclical continuance in *saṃsāra* in which he is caught up, into his final liberation in Nirvana. It is on hearing this *dhamma* [*taṃ dhammaṃ sutvā*] that the religiously more mature people [*saddhā-paṭilābhena samannāgato*], both men and women, give up their household life and take to a totally new and different life of renunciation or *pabbajjā*.<sup>1</sup>

As the years rolled on [and this period is believed to be nearly from twelve to twenty years], the extension and expansion of this monastic institution called the Saṅgha also began to witness signs of decay and decadence. This necessitated the establishment of a codified legal disciplinary system called the *Vinaya*. The *Vinaya*, primarily is the legal machinery in Buddhism whereby the discipline of the monastic community, i.e. of the men and women who have chosen to renounce their life in the world, is established and maintained. Within it, are contained two areas of literary activity called



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