

Transcending the Limiting Power of Karma — The Early Buddhist *Appamāṇas*

Giuliana Martini
Dharma Drum Buddhist College, Taiwan

Introduction:

In this paper I look at the early Buddhist ‘immeasurable’ meditative experiences and mental qualities, the *appamāṇas*, to explore how their cultivation relates to the dimension of karma and intentionality and thereby to progress on the path to liberation.

Elsewhere I have already analysed in some detail the meditative dynamics of the *appamāṇas* from the point of view of their soteriological implications, discussing the impact of *appamāṇa* meditation on the possibility of spiritual growth from stream-entry onwards to the higher levels of awakening.¹

Now I focus my presentation on the ethical aspects of the *appamāṇas* and their position in relation to the gradual path. That is, quite apart from their beneficial relational and social effects – the outer facets of this cultivation which would fall more under the rubric of social ethics – how are the *appamāṇas* meant to support the individual’s own growth towards liberation? In early Buddhist thought purity, clarity of mind, and non superficial ethical integrity proceed in parallel, to the extent that the these qualities depend on each other for their maturation. Thus the question on the *appamāṇas* and the gradual path is at also a question of how ethical purification, tackled from the particular standpoint of *appamāṇa* practice, affects and reflects progress on the higher stages of the path.

In short, by ‘ethical’ I mean ‘intentional’ and, within the early Buddhist soteriological perspective, purification of intention, a purification which entails a gradual removal of the deep-seated causes of wrong intention. Such a removal is in fact indissolubly linked to a progressive refinement of right view, once, by dint of stream-entry, eradication of wrong view has been attained by a noble disciple.

I take as a point of reference for my paper an early Buddhist discourse that has been preserved in parallel versions stemming from the Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda reciters traditions. After introducing the text (1), I provide a translation excerpt of the passage most relevant to my present investigation (2). Next, I survey the impact of the practice of *appamāṇa* meditation on karma and intentionality, *cetanā* (3), followed by some conclusive remarks on *appamāṇas* and purification of intention (4).

The sequence of instructions delivered in these discourses stipulates an important correlation between training in clear comprehension and purification of intentions through the gradual path and the *appamāṇa* practice of a noble disciple, hence the particular perspective I choose for my presentation.

The discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*:

I base my understanding of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* on a comparative evaluation of the different extant versions, philologically, and on a close reading of the different components of the discourse, philosophically. As we will see, the titles of the parallel versions differ, hence for the sake of convenience in my paper I

¹ Martini 2011b.

use “discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*” with reference to the main topic and teachings of the discourse(s) in question.² The parallel versions are:

1-3) The two “discourse(s) on intentional [action]” or “discourse(s) on the intentional” (*Sañcetanika-suttas*, AN 10.206 and AN 10.207) and the “discourse on the body made of deeds” (*Karajakāya-sutta*, AN 10.208), at present consecutively located in the *Karajakāya-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* of the Theravādins.³ Anālayo (2009a: 13) has shown that probably these three discourses “were interrelated during oral transmission”, for “in fact the Chinese and Tibetan versions are parallels to all three”, suggesting that “the way the *Karajakāya-sutta* and the *Sañcetanika-suttas* have been preserved in the Pāli canon could be the result of a garbling of what originally was a single discourse”.

4) The “discourse on intention” (*Si jing* 思經, MĀ 15), presently located in the first division of the Chinese *Madhyama-āgama*, a collection generally held to stem from a Sarvāstivāda line of transmission.⁴ This version is abbreviated: the section on the ten wholesome courses of action that in the two Pali *Sañcetanika-suttas* (AN 10.206 and AN 10.207) and probably in the originally single Pali discourse (AN 10.206 and AN 10.207 [= *Sañcetanika-sutta*]) + AN 10.108 [= *Karajakāya-sutta*]) follows (or followed) the section on the ten unwholesome courses of action is not given in full.

5) A complete quotation from the “discourse on accumulated actions” (*bsags pa'i las mdo*) in the fourth chapter of Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā*, a commentary on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* in the form of a repertoire collecting extended or complete extracts of the canonical quotations in the *bhāṣya*, extant only in Tibetan translation and belonging to the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition.⁵ This version is abbreviated at the same point as the Chinese parallel (MĀ 15), i.e., it does not have an exposition of the ten wholesome courses of action.⁶

Notably, the different traditions of reciters have attached to the transmitted discourses titles featuring the related notions of intentionality (AN 10.206 and AN 10.207, MĀ 15, *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*) or of accumulation of actions (*Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā*) or of a ‘body of action’ deriving from one's own previous deeds (AN 10.208).

Śamathadeva introduces the discourse quotation as extracted from the “discourse on accumulated actions” (*bsags pa'i las mdo*).⁷ The underlying Sanskrit title

² I use Pali terminology as I take the four main Pali *Nikāyas* as my main source representative of the early Buddhist teachings in that they are the most completely preserved literary corpus. The broader textual basis I consider as representing the earliest phases of transmission of the Buddhist teachings includes their counterparts in the Chinese *Āgamas* and the corresponding material extant in Sanskrit fragments and in Tibetan translation. Unless dealing with particularly noteworthy differences or controversial points related to my main theme, I do not give in each and every case reference to extant parallels in Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, etc., which would make footnotes and text-critical remarks grow beyond the scope of a conference paper.

³ Alternative title in Woodward 1936: 192: “The Brahma-moods”.

⁴ MĀ 15 ad TI 437b28. On the school affiliation of this *Madhyama-āgama* preserved in Chinese cf. the references in Anālayo 2011a: 7 note 64 and Bingenheimer 2012. According to Chung and Fukita 2011: 12f the current consensus on the Sarvāstivāda origin of the Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* cannot be considered established, a position that is critically reviewed by Anālayo 2012b.

⁵ Q 5595 ad tu 270a3 or Si 161 ad 577,2. On the affiliation of the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā* cf. Sakurabe 1969: 38f, Waldschmidt 1980: 141f, Enomoto 1984: 98 and 107 note 40 and id.: 1986: 22, Mukai 1985, Honjō 1985: 63f and id.: 1987, Schmithausen 1987: 338, Mejer 1991: 63f, Skilling 1997: 99f and 136 note 107, Skilling and Harrison 2005 and Chung 2008: 11f and 26.

⁶ The Pali versions have long been available in the Pali Text Society's English translation by Woodward 1936: 189f and in a more recent rendering by Nyanaponika and Bodhi 1999: 256f. A translation and study of the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel has been recently offered by Anālayo 2009a (republished with minor modifications in id. 2012b), and I have published a complete translation of the discourse extract in Śamathadeva's commentary as a separate article, Martini 2012.

⁷ Q 5595 ad tu 270a3 or Si 161 ad 577,2. Honjō 1984: 68 suggests to read the title of the discourse quotation as given by Śamathadeva as *bsags pa'i >las < mdo*.

could be literally reconstructed as **Upacitakarma-sūtra*, with *bsags pa* most likely rendering *upacita* or an equivalent term. The title takes its cue from the discourse’s presentation of the maturing of the fruits of actions that have been (done and) accumulated. The canonical quotation in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* taken by Śamathadeva as his point of departure gives the title as *Samcetanīya-sūtra*, a title which is likewise supplied by the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*.⁸ This Sanskrit form in turn corresponds to the title assigned to the two Pali *Sañcetanika-suttas* in the Burmese and Ceylonese editions.⁹ Besides, the expression *sañcetanika kamma* appears in the opening statement of both *Sañcetanika-suttas*, as well as in the identical passage of the closely related *Karajakāya-sutta*.¹⁰ The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel has “discourse on intention” (*Si jing* 思經), which equally emphasises the aspect of intentionality.

Closely related to the discrepancy in the titles, and probably accounting for the title given in the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā*, is a major difference found between the discourse versions (Theravāda *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, AN 10.206, AN 10.207 and AN 10.208, and Sarvāstivāda *Madhyama-āgama*, MĀ 15) as well as the discourse quotation in the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* of the Sarvāstivādins versus the quotation in the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā* of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, in that only the former group of texts explicitly qualify actions as being intentional (or unintentional).¹¹ Thus, judging from this difference, it would seem that the Mūlasarvāstivāda recension – as witnessed by the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā* quotation in its Tibetan translation – is unique vis-à-vis both the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda transmission as far as the absence of this particular terminology is concerned.¹²

Other significant differences in sequence and content between the discourse versions can be seen in the following table:

⁸ Abhidh-kh-bh ed. Pradhan 1975: 237,18. cf. Honjō 1984: 68–69 no. 81, transl. de la Vallée Poussin 1924/III: 136; Abhidh-kh-vy: 400,9 and 400,20, cf. also the Tibetan rendering in D 4092 ad ngu 51a6 and 51b1 or N 154 ad 61a6 and 61b1: *ched du bsam par bya ba’i mdo*.

⁹ AN 10.206 ad AN V 292,1 and AN 10.207 ad AN V 297,14 (title from B^c and C^c; E^c does not provide any title, cf. Anālayo 2009a: 1 note 1).

¹⁰ AN 10.206 ad AN V 292,1, AN 10.207 ad AN V 297,14 and AN 10.208 ad AN V 299,11: *nāhaṃ bhikkhave sañcetanikānaṃ kammānaṃ katānaṃ upacitānaṃ appaṭisaṃviditvā vyantibhāvaṃ vadāmi*.

¹¹ Cf., e.g.: *sañcetanikānaṃ kammānaṃ katānaṃ* ..., “intentional actions that have been undertaken ...” (AN 10.206 ad AN V 292,1, AN 10.207 ad AN V 297,14 and AN 10.208 ad AN V 299,11) and *tividhā kāyakammanta-sandosavyāpatti akusalasañcetanikā* ..., “threefold is the defiling fault of intentional unwholesome bodily action ...” (AN 10.206 ad AN V 292,6, AN 10.207 ad AN V 297,19; passage missing in AN 10.208), etc.; 若有故作業 ..., “if [someone] performs deeds intentionally ...” (MĀ 15 ad T I 437b26) and 身故作三業. 不善 ..., “three are the [types] of intentionally-performed bodily deeds that are unwholesome ...” (MĀ 15 ad T I 437b28), etc.; *saṃcetanīyaṃ karma kṛtvā* ... (Abhidh-kh-vy: 400,9) and *saṃcintya* (ed. reads: *saṃcintya*) *trividhaṃ karma kāyena karma karoti* ... (Abhidh-kh-vy: 400,11); cf. also the Tibetan rendering *ched du bsams nas lus kyi las rnam pa gsum byed cing* ... (D 4092 ad ngu 51a7 and 51b5 or N 154 ad chu 61a7). Here and throughout translations of passages from MĀ 15 are with minor modifications after Anālayo 2009a.

¹² For definitions of the terms *sañcetanika* and *upacita* in the *Manorathapūraṇī*, the commentary on the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, cf. Mp V 76,9 and 76,11 respectively. On *saṃcetanīya-karma* in general in the context of the Sarvāstivāda doctrine of karma cf., e.g., Dhammajoti 2007: 539f [§14.3] and 542f [§14.4].

Table 1: Significant differences among the parallel versions of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*¹³

| AN 10.206 & AN 10.207 | MĀ 15 & Abhidh-kh-up | AN 10.208 |
|---|--|---|
| karmic retribution ↓ making an end of <i>dukkha</i> ↓ 10 unwholesome actions ↓ exposition of 10 unwholesome actions ↓ evil rebirth ↓ repetition of the above pattern for the 10 wholesome actions | karmic retribution ↓ 10 unwholesome actions ↓ exposition of 10 unwholesome actions ↓ <i>appamāṇas</i> ↓ fruits of <i>appamāṇas</i> | karmic retribution ↓ making an end of <i>dukkha</i> ↓ <i>appamāṇas</i> ↓ fruits of <i>appamāṇas</i> |

As mentioned above, philological inspection and comparative study strongly suggest that the three Pali discourses – and evidently the Chinese and Tibetan parallels to the *Karajakāya-sutta* – stem from an original single discourse (Anālayo 2009a). The most noteworthy signs of (a) transmission garbling of the Pali *Sañcetanika-suttas* and (b) transmission interrelatedness of the other versions are the following:

1. The doctrinally aberrant statement on the impossibility of reaching the end of *dukkha* unless the whole of karma has been experienced found in the three Pali discourses, formulated differently in the Chinese and Tibetan parallels.¹⁴

2. The loss of the section on the ten unwholesome actions in the *Karajakāya-sutta*.

3. The sudden introduction, in the *Karajakāya-sutta*, of a reference to a ‘noble disciple’ worded in terms of “but that noble disciple...”, which would require such a noble disciple to be already introduced in the preceding part of the discourse.¹⁵ This reference to “that noble disciple...” reads out of place also because the process leading to the condition of having become “in this way free from covetousness, ill will and delusion...”¹⁶ has not been previously expounded. The wording of the Tibetan and Chinese parallels (“a noble disciple” and “that well-taught noble disciple...”)¹⁷ agrees with that of the Pali *Karajakāya-sutta*, but, unlike the Pali discourse, in their case the process of purification of a noble disciple has been thoroughly explained through the

¹³ Adapted from Anālayo 2009a: 13 table 1.

¹⁴ I shall not repeat the discussion and conclusions reached by Anālayo 2009a.

¹⁵ AN 10.208 ad AN V 299,16: *sa kho so ... ariyasāvako*.. With regard to the Pali version, Woodward 1936: 193 note 1 remarks that “[a]pparently all this is borrowed from some other sutta, for it is introduced without apparent reason thus suddenly. Below we have ‘that young man [*kumāro*]’”.

¹⁶ *Evaṃ vigatābhijjho vigatavyāpādo asammūlho ...*, AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,17.

¹⁷ Q 5595 ad tu 271b8: *‘phags pa nyan thos* and MĀ 15 ad T I 438a: 彼多聞聖弟子.

preceding exposition of the abandonment of the ten unwholesome actions, culminating in the abandonment of the last set of them, the mental ones.¹⁸ Further, the Pali *Saṅcetanika-suttas* have additionally preserved an exposition of the ten wholesome actions (although there, as we have seen, the section on *appamāṇa* practice starting with the phrase “but that noble disciple ...” is missing).¹⁹

4. The placement of the *Karajakāya-sutta* in the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* is apparently unsupported, in that in its present form the discourse does not include any aspect or enumeration related to the number ten. If the discourse lost the exposition on the ten unwholesome actions, as indicated by the abrupt shift discussed above (3) and confirmed by comparison with the parallels, this would indicate that at the time of the initial allocation of the discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* the exposition on the unwholesome actions was still present in the text.²⁰

I hope it will become clearer by the end of this paper, that the restoration of the probable original textual situation of the Pali discourses and the emendation to their opening statement suggested by comparative investigation and by the implications of the Buddhist conception of karma, find further support by closer investigation of the purifying role of *appamāṇas* – prepared by the gradual training in wholesomeness – in transcending the limiting power of karma.

In what follows, I translate the *appamāṇas* sequence as found in the Tibetan parallel, noting only significant discrepancies between the different versions directly relevant to my main theme.

Translation of the *appamāṇas* sequence²¹

“Furthermore, monks, a noble disciple abandons unwholesome bodily factors and develops wholesome bodily factors; he abandons unwholesome verbal and mental factors [272a] and develops wholesome verbal and mental factors.”²²

¹⁸ Cf. also Q 5595 ad tu 271b8: *lus kyi mi dge ba'i chos rnams spong zhing lus kyiis* (D reads: *kyi) dge ba'i chos rnams sgom par byed do, ngag dang yid kyiis* (D reads: *kyi) mi dge ba'i chos rnams spong zhing ngag dang yid kyiis* (D reads: *kyi) dge ba'i chos rnams sgom par byed do*, “... abandons unwholesome bodily factors and develops wholesome bodily factors; he abandons unwholesome verbal and mental factors and develops wholesome verbal and mental factors... free from enmity, unsurpassed, free from ill will ...”; and MĀ 15 ad T I 438a3: ... 捨身不善業. 修身善業. 捨口, 意不善業. 修口, 意善業 ... 如是具足精進戒德, 成就身淨業, 成就口. 意淨業, 離恚離諍, 除去睡眠, 無調, 貢高. 斷疑, 度慢. 正念正智, 無有愚癡, “... leaves behind unwholesome bodily deeds and develops wholesome bodily deeds, leaves behind unwholesome verbal and mental deeds and develops wholesome verbal and mental deeds ... being endowed with diligence and virtue in this way, having accomplished purity of bodily deeds and purity of verbal and mental deeds, being free from ill will and contention, discarding sloth-and-torpor, being without restlessness (adopting the 元 and 明 variant 掉 instead of 調) or conceit, removing doubt and overcoming arrogance, with right mindfulness and right comprehension, being without bewilderment...”.

¹⁹ Anālayo 2009a:11 summarises: “the way this sentence is formulated suggests that a loss of a piece of text has taken place, creating a lacuna that can be filled with the help of the parallel versions. In the Chinese and Tibetan counterparts, the initial statement on karmic retribution is illustrated through a detailed exposition of the ten unwholesome actions ... Then these two versions turn to the noble disciple, who abstains from these ten unwholesome actions and develops the *brahmavihāras*. It is at this point that the above-mentioned passage in the *Karajakāya-sutta* seems to fit in, with its reference to ‘that noble disciple’ who is ‘in this way free from covetousness, ill will and delusion’—the last three of the unwholesome actions—and thus able to engage in the practice of the *brahmavihāras*”. It would seem quite likely that this textual loss was due to the dropping of an entire passage that took place in the course of the oral transmission, rather than resulting from a copying mistake.

²⁰ Cf. Anālayo 2009a: 11: “[i]t is noteworthy that precisely at the point where the *Karajakāya-sutta* affirms that to make an end of *dukkha* requires experiencing karmic retribution, a rather substantial loss of text appears to have taken place. This, together with the absence of such a statement in the parallel versions, makes it quite probable that this statement is also the outcome of some error during transmission”.

²¹ The translated extract goes from Q 5595 ad tu 271b8 to 272b5 or Si 161 ad 580,16 to 582,10 [based on D 4094 ad ju 238a2 to 238b5] (with variant readings noted *ibid.*: 738). I use Q as main source and give variants from the other editions.

²² Rather than of bodily, verbal and mental factors (*chos rnams*, Skt. *dharmas*), MĀ 15 ad T I 438a3 talks of bodily, verbal and mental deeds (業), a phrasing that is used in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse as well when the

With a mind imbued with benevolence, free from enmity, unsurpassed, free from ill will, vast, all-pervasive, immeasurable, well-developed, he dwells pervading one direction, and likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth [direction], the quarters above and below, he dwells pervading the whole world with a mind imbued with benevolence, free from enmity, unsurpassed, free from ill will, vast, all-pervasive, immeasurable, well-developed.²³

[He should then] be reflecting in this way: ‘Formerly, my mind was not developed, it was small, [whereas] in this way now my mind has become immeasurable and well-developed’. Monks, for the mind of a well-taught noble disciple [which has been cultivated in this way] it is impossible to be negligent, [the mind] does not fall [into negligence], it does not abide [in negligence], and becomes beyond measurement.²⁴

Monks, suppose there is a small boy or a small girl²⁵ who has [since birth]²⁶ developed the concentration of the mind of benevolence.²⁷ Would [later he or she] change into performing actions of body, speech and mind that are evil and unwholesome actions? Or would [he or she] similarly display for a long time actions

corresponding Tibetan version speaks of actions (*las*). The text of the Tibetan quotation and the Chinese discourse parallel is abbreviated: the section on the ten wholesome courses of action that in the two Pali *Saṅcetanika-suttas* and probably in the originally single discourse follows (followed) the section on the ten unwholesome courses of action is not found, cf. part 1 of this paper. A detailed exposition of the ten wholesome courses of action is found, e.g., in MN 136 (*Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta*) and its parallels; the emphasis of this discourse, probably owing to the didactic purpose of its presentation, is more on the karmic consequences of intentional actions than on the underlying mental tendencies and habits that determine intentionality; for a comparative study of MN 136 cf. Anālayo 2011a: 775f. On the ten wholesome and unwholesome actions and the five precepts cf. Nattier 2002.

²³ For a standard Tibetan rendering of the formula of pervasion with the four immeasurables cf., e.g., *Mahāvīyūtpatti* ed. Sakaki 1926: nos. 1508–1509.

²⁴ This first part of the review phase of the benevolence radiation in the form of a monks’ reflection suggested by the Buddha is found, with differences in wording and details, in the parallel versions: MĀ 15 ad T I 438a11: ... 我本此心少不善修: 我今此心無量善修. 多聞聖弟子其心如是無量善修, 若本因惡知識, 為放逸行, 作不善業, 彼不能將去, 不能穢汙, 不復相隨, “... ‘Formerly my mind was narrow and not well-developed, now my mind has become boundless and well-developed.’ [When] the mind of that well-taught noble disciple has in this way become boundless and well-developed, if because of [associating with] evil friends [that well-taught noble disciple] formerly dwelt in negligence and performed unwholesome deeds, those [deeds] cannot lead him along, cannot defile [him] and will not further follow [him]”; AN 10.208 ad AN V 299,23: *so evaṃ pajānāti: pubbe kho me idaṃ cittaṃ parittaṃ ahoṣi abhāvitaṃ, etarahi pana me idaṃ cittaṃ appamāṇaṃ subhāvitaṃ. yaṃ kho pana kiñci pamāṇakataṃ kammaṃ, na taṃ tatrāvasissati na taṃ tatrāvatiṭṭhāti ti*, “he knows thus: ‘previously this mind of mine was restricted, undeveloped, whereas now this mind of mine is boundless, well-developed. Whatever action has been performed in a limiting way, it neither remains there nor persists there’. For other occurrences of *pamāṇakataṃ kammaṃ* cf., e.g., DN 13 ad DN I 251,7, MN 99 ad MN II 207,25 and SN 42.8 ad SN IV 322,13 (in the first two cases the Chinese parallels, DĀ 26 ad T I 106c17 and MĀ 152 ad T I 669c10 do not have the reference to the effect of *appamāṇas* on limiting actions, whereas in the third case the parallels SĀ 916 ad T II 232b5 and SĀ² 131 ad T II 425b29 do refer to the effect of *appamāṇas*, cf. Anālayo 2009a: 9 note 35).

²⁵ The Tibetan version’s *khye ’u dang bu mo*, agrees with the Chinese version in mentioning a boy and a girl, MĀ 15 ad T I 438a15: 童男, 童女, whereas the Pali version refers only to a boy, AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,2: *kumāro*. As pointed out by Anālayo 2009a: 9 note 34, since all versions later on mention a man and a woman, the presence of a boy and a girl fits the context better.

²⁶ Cf. AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,1: *dahara-t-agge* ..., “if from his youth (or: boyhood) onwards” (cf. also Mp V 77,22: *daharatagge ti daharakā lato paṭṭhāya*) and MĀ 15 ad T I 438a15: 生, “since birth”.

²⁷ Here and below the parallels employ the standard formulations “liberation of the mind through benevolence” (*mettāceto vimutti*, AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,2 etc.; 慈心解脫, MĀ 15 ad T I 438a19 etc.) rather than “development of concentration of the mind of benevolence”, *byams pa ’i sams kyi ting nge ’dzin sgom par byed pa* etc. found in the Tibetan version, which does not seem to occur elsewhere in the *Abhidharmakośaṭīkopāyikā* outside the present discourse quotation, and would seem to render a Sanskrit equivalent of Pali *cetosamādhi-bhāvanā*. On *appamāṇo cetosamādhi* cf. Maithrimurthi 1999: 28f. Dhammajoti 2010: 185 note 39 remarks that “[in the attainment of *mettāceto vimutti*] ... *vimutti* seems to suggest the type of mental liberation/freedom similar to that obtaining in the case of the eight *vimokkhas* (Sanskrit *vimokṣa*)”; for references on the eight deliverances cf. Martini 2011a: 131 note 23.

that are contrary to the Dharma, unbeneficial and [result in] *dukkha* for others?” “It is not so, venerable sir”²⁸.

“Monks, it is well, it is well. Monks, a man or a woman, whether being a householder or one gone forth, should develop the concentration of the mind of benevolence. Why is that, monks? A man or woman, whether being a householder or one gone forth,²⁹ once [he or she] has abandoned this body and will be going to the other world, [272b] monks, [he or she] will enter [the next birth] based on a mind which is determined by the mind that depends on the mental quality that conforms to [that particular] mental state.³⁰ Monks, one says: ‘With this body of mine formerly I performed evil, unwholesome actions, that have been accumulated. With regard to all that has become accumulated, let it be experienced [now] and not be experienced further at the time of birth’.³¹

²⁸ The parallels are formulated in a slightly different way: AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,2: ... *api nu kho pāpakammaṃ kareyyā ti ... akarontaṃ kho pana pāpakammaṃ api nu kho dukkhaṃ phuseyyā ti?*, “would he [i.e., the boy] perform any evil action? ... and not performing any evil action, would he experience *dukkha*?”; MĀ 15 ad T I 438a16: ... 而於後時。彼身。口。意寧可復作不善業耶 ... 自不作惡業，惡業何由生，“later on, would they [i.e., a small boy or a small girl] still perform unwholesome deeds by body, speech or mind?”... [Given that they] do not perform evil deeds themselves, how could evil deeds arise?”. According to the early Buddhist conception, the underlying tendencies to sensual passion and aversion (being both based on sensuality, and thus co-dependent) as well as the other fetters are already present in the case of a newly born baby, even if the infant is not yet capable of conceiving the corresponding notions, cf. MN 64 ad MN I 433,8. This explains why the young children of the example, who are not considered as pristinely ‘innocent’, would still need to develop meditation on benevolence etc. and purify themselves so as to become incapable of evil deeds.

²⁹ The Chinese version agrees with the Tibetan in mentioning “if that man or woman, at home or gone forth ...” (若彼男女在家，出家 ...，MĀ 15 ad T I 438a18), whereas the Pali version only speaks of “a man or a woman” (*itthiyā vā purisena vā. itthiyā vā ... purisassa vā ...*, AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,8). The presentation of the Tibetan and Chinese versions from this point on shifts from rebirth for a practicing man or woman in general to progress prospects for monastics, as noted by Anālayo 2009a: 9 note 35.

³⁰ Besides the difference noted above (no mention of monastics), compared to the other two versions AN 10.208 at this point features a significant variation in wording. The whole passage, AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,7, reads: *bhāvetabbā kho pañāyaṃ ... metāceto vimutti itthiyā vā purisena vā. itthiyā vā ... purisassa vā nāyaṃ kāyo ādāya gamaniyo. cittantaro ayaṃ ... macco. so evaṃ pajānāti: yaṃ kho me idha kiñci pubbe iminā karajakāyena pāpakammaṃ kataṃ, sabban taṃ idha vedaniyaṃ, na taṃ anugaṃ* (with various ms. variant readings in E^c) *bhaviṣṣatī ti*, “indeed, monks, the liberation of mind by benevolence should be developed by a man or a woman. A man or a woman cannot take their body along with them and depart [from this world]. Monks, this mortal [life] is but an intermediate mental state. He knows thus: ‘whatever evil actions I performed before with this physical body, their results will be experienced here and will not follow me’”. After this, the Pali and all versions present the statement of the leading to or the certainty of the attainment either of non-return or of the highest, cf. AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,12: *evaṃ bhāvitā kho ... mettā cetovimutti anāgāmitāya saṃvattatī, idha paññassa bhikkhuno uttarim* (B^c: *uttari vimuttiṃ appaṭivijjhato*, and MĀ 15 ad T I 438a22: 若有如是行慈心解脫無量善[與>修]者，必得阿那含，或復上得，“if liberation of the mind through benevolence has become boundless and well-developed like this, certainly non-return will be attained, or else that which is even higher”. The interpretation of the Pali passage is particularly difficult due to the ambiguity of the phrase that I provisionally render with “this mortal [life/being] is an intermediate state of mind” (rendered by Nyanaponika and Bodhi 1999: 269 as “mortals have consciousness as the connecting link”), and it presents philosophical implications (interim existence or *antarabhāva*, rebirth consciousness and consciousness continuum or *bhavaṅga*, etc.) that go beyond the scope of what is feasible in annotation. Theravāda commentarial explanations of the expression *cittāntaro* are found in Mp V 77,25. Mp V 78,3 on AN 208 ad AN V 300,11 further explains: *sabbaṃ taṃ idha vedaniyaṃ ti diṭṭhadhammavedaniyaṭṭhānavasena vuttaṃ and na taṃ anubhaviṣṣatī ti mettāya upapajjavedaniyabhāvassa upacchinattā upapajjavedaniyavasena na anugataṃ bhaviṣṣatī ti idaṃ sotāpanna-sakadāgāmi-ariyapuggalānaṃ paccavekkgaṇaṃ vediṭṭabbāṃ*, “it will all be experienced here” is said with regard to karma that will be experienced in this present existence; ‘it shall not follow one along’ means that with regard to what should be experienced in the next existence, it will not come about in the future, because the experiencing in the next existence has been cut off through the practice of benevolence: This passage has to be understood as a reflection made by a noble person who is a stream-entrant or a once-returner”. With different degrees of abridgement of the development of compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, the three versions display the same pattern of variation noted here and in the notes below.

³¹ The aspiration to experience the fruits of unwholesome actions resulting from previous negligence entirely now and not in a later world is also found in MĀ 15 ad T I 438a21: 比丘應作是念：‘我本放逸，作不善業。是一切今可受報。終不後世’，“monks, you should reflect like this: ‘Formerly I was negligent and performed unwholesome deeds. Let the fruits of these be experienced entirely now, not in a later world!’”. The direct expression of any aspiration is completely absent from AN 10.208, probably due to a textual loss on the side of the Pali version, cf. also

Monks, if at the present time one is [thus] endowed with the concentration of the mind of benevolence, he will directly know the state of non-retrogression³² or the highest Dharma. Therefore a well-taught noble disciple has abandoned evil and unwholesome bodily [actions] and develops wholesome bodily actions, has abandoned evil and unwholesome verbal and mental [actions] and develops wholesome verbal and mental actions.

By [developing] in sequence one after the other³³ that which is called a ‘mind imbued with compassion, [a mind imbued with] sympathetic joy and [a mind imbued with] equanimity’, monks, one who having done so is endowed with the concentration of the mind of equanimity, will directly know the state of non-retrogression or the highest Dharma”.

Appamāṇas and karma:

In addition to comparative philological evidence, the soteriological principles and dynamics underpinning the individual components of the sequence of the discourse(s) as fully documented by the Chinese and Tibetan versions and the restored single Pali discourse are so closely interrelated that it would make much practical sense if these components had been originally taught as part of a unitary instruction, i.e., delivered in the course of a single occasion, and accordingly recorded in one discourse.

The opening reflection on actions, purification of intentionality and the possibility of spiritual emancipation, followed by an exposition on the ten unwholesome deeds, which, once have been abandoned, properly prepare the mind for *appamāṇas* practice,³⁴ and eventually the certainty of the attainment of either non-return or final liberation by dint of the practice, reflect an integrated practical perspective:

Anālayo 2009a: 9 note 35. A comparable statement is, however, found later on in the Pali text, in the form of a further review phase of the practice of benevolence, worded indirectly as a post-meditative reflection, AN 10.208 ad AN V 300,10: *so evaṃ pajānāti: yam kho me idha kiñci pubbe iminā karajakāyena pāpakammaṃ katam, sabban taṃ idha vedanīyaṃ, na taṃ anugaṃ bhavissatī ti*, “he knows thus: ‘whatever evil actions I performed before with this physical body, all their results will be experienced here and will not follow me’”. Cf. a similar statement found in Th 81 ad Th 12,21: *yaṃ mayā pakataṃ pāpaṃ pubbe aññāsu jātisū, idh’ eva taṃ vedanīyaṃ, vatthu aññaṃ na vijjati*, “whatever evil has been previously done by me in other births, it is to be felt here and now, as there exists no other occasion”. After the aspiration (present only in the Tibetan and Chinese parallels and specifically addressed to monastics, cf. above note 28 and table 2) follows in all three versions a statement of the certainty of non-returning or of the highest goal (Tib. *bla na med pa’i chos*, Chin. 復上, Pali *uttari vimutti*).

³² The directly knowing the state of not being subject to retrogression, i.e., the attainment of irreversibility, *phyir mi ldog par gnas ... so sor rig par byur* (D reads: *gyur*) is more commonly found as the Tibetan literal counterpart to Sanskrit *avaivartika* or *avinivartanīya*, whereas the non-returned (*anāgāmin*), the third type of noble being in the scheme of the four levels of awakening according to early Buddhist texts, is literally translated as *phyir mi ’ong ba*, cf., e.g., *Mahāvīyutpatti* ed. Sakaki 1926: no. 1014. In the present passage the Pali and Chinese versions speak of leading to the attainment of the state of non return, *anāgāmitāya saṃvattati* (AN 10.208 ad AN V 300, 13 and 301,15), and of the certainty of attaining it, 必得阿那含 (MĀ 15 ad T I 438a23 and 438b9), respectively. An epithet related to the irreversibility of a non-returned spoken of in the Tibetan version occurs, e.g., in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, cf. ed. Waldschmidt 1950: 166, § 9.12 (Sanskrit): *anāgāmy anāvṛttidharmā*; DN 16 ad DN II 92,24 (Pali): *anāvattidhammo*; Waldschmidt 1950: 167, § 9.12 (Tibetan): *’mi ’byung ba’i chos nyid ’gyur*. Non-returning qualified as an irreversible condition (*mi ldog pa’i chos can phyir mi ’ong ba zhes bya*), distinctive of those who have abandoned the five lower fetters, is found, e.g., in another discourse quotation in the *Abhidharmakośāṅkopāyikā*, in a standard presentation of the four types of (noble) individuals, Abhidh-kh-up, Q 5595 ad tu 20a2 or Si 161 ad 41,17, parallel to SĀ 61 ad T II 15c14), Q 5595 ad tu 21a5 or Si 161 ad 44,3. Thus compounds such as *anāvartika* or **anāvṛttika* (underlying the rendering *phyir mi ldog par gnas*) and *anāvartikadharmā* or *anāvṛtti(ka)dharmin* etc. (underlying the rendering *phyir mi ldog pa’i chos can*) adopted by Śamathadeva to designate a non-returned chiefly from the standpoint of irreversibility (*phyir mi ldog par gnas*), and especially *phyir mi ldog pa’i chos can*) are part of standard qualifications of an *anāgāmin* featuring across the different early Buddhist textual traditions.

³³ *Snga ma bzhin du* renders Sanskrit *anupūrveṇa* or an equivalent expression.

³⁴ In addition to the ten unwholesome actions, AN 10.206 and AN 10.207 have an exposition on the ten wholesome actions, cf. table 1.

The process of purifying and reshaping karma by means of increasingly pure moral conduct (mirroring, in turn, purification of intentions) would progressively erode unwholesome mental tendencies and reactions that lead to compulsive (re-)generation of karma and to saṃsāric programs and patterns of reactivity. Karma includes chiefly mental intentions and any ensuing action. The ripening of the results of intentions and actions is subject to contextual conditions that fall outside the full control of the individual. Therefore any liberating openings can only be situated in the new intentional response to sense experience and to the present effects of one's own and others' actions. Such a response includes the possibilities of changing the direction of one's intention upon becoming aware of any unwholesomeness that may have arisen present or else of continuing to act according to already present wholesomeness.³⁵

In the case of the instruction of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*, the *appamāṇas* are developed on the basis of a mental condition free from the five hindrances. The process of mental purification is thereby further enhanced: in the absence of mental hindrances – and of the latent tendencies on which they are based – no unwholesome reaction can have a chance to come about. Thus 'perceptive habituation' conditioned by reiterated development of *appamāṇas* mental states 'imitates' and foreruns, experientially, the ideal condition of a free mind, expressing only wholesome responses and avoiding unwholesome intentions and reactions. Through such type of training, the roots of the mind's tendencies to generate deluded karma are deflated from within.

Therefore the training instruction of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* does not seem to point to the type of positivistic or materialistic approach to karma that the initial statement transmitted by the Pali parallels suggests. In fact, such ideas reflect Jain rather than Buddhist tenets.³⁶ In contrast, the point at stake in the discourse(s) appears to be more an organic inner work on the unwholesome roots by way of restraint on the level of not acting them out. In conjunction with the development of wisdom, this will then lead on to liberation.

The *raison d'être* of the meditative approach presented by the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* and the outcome of *appamāṇa* practice do not suggest any expiation of karma, in that the 'cure' is of a radical rather than symptomatic nature, concerned with the cause rather than the fruits.

Therefore in addition to comparative evidence and to an assessment of the early Buddhist conception of karma in general, the proposed restoration of the initial statement – that there is *no need* to experience all results of karma to make an end of *dukkha*³⁷ – is strongly supported by a close inspection of the meditative dynamics that

³⁵ The Abhidharma traditions developed different and in many respect diverging interpretations regarding the definition, functioning, propagation of and moral weight of intention and mental karma, with the Sarvāstivādin developing a distinction between 'informative' (*vijñapti*) and uninformative (*avijñapti*) karma, etc. Given the purposes and source materials of my presentation, I do not take into account these later scholastic developments. As far as the early discourses are concerned, a source representative of the attitude to intentionality is the *Upāli-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, which makes it clear that greater moral weight is placed on acts of the mind in the sense of their capacity to determine intention and actions, rather than on verbal or physical karma per se, and that an act done without prior intention (*asañcetanika*) such as killing small creatures while walking cannot be as blameworthy as if one were to intend to do so (this exposition is given within the context of refutation of the Jain position on the primacy of karma interpreted as resulting acts vis-à-vis karma as a primarily intentional impulse according to Buddhist thought); for a comparative study of the parallel versions of this discourse cf. Anālayo 2011a: 320f.

³⁶ Cf. Anālayo 2009a: 16f with references.

³⁷ AN 10.206 ad AN V 292,4, AN 10.207 ad AN V 297,17 and AN 10.208 ad AN V 299,14: *na tvevāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sañcetanikānaṃ kammānaṃ katānaṃ upacitānaṃ appaṭisaṃveditvā dukkhass' antakiriyaṃ vadāmi*, "yet, monks, I do not say that there is a making an end of *dukkha* without having experienced [the fruits of] intentional actions that have been undertaken and accumulated" (with variants in E^c and B^c reading throughout: *appaṭisaṃveditvā*, cf. Anālayo 2009a: 1 note 2). The passage is also discussed by Vetter 1988: 90, who considers the statement on the need to experience karmic retribution in order to make an end of *dukkha* as original, thereby

underpin the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*. In fact, were it otherwise, the present discourse(s) would contradict the early Buddhist conception of karma, the possibility of emancipation from it, and the meditative enterprise aimed at countering the deep seated drive towards the generation of unwholesome karmic intentions through the powerful tool of *appamāṇas*.

An eminently ethical characteristic – the intention of abandoning the unwholesome and nurturing the wholesome – is continuously evident in all applications of the *appamāṇas*. This holds for the context of formal meditation, as shown by the ‘ethical’ content of the review phase of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*, as well as for activities outside of it.

Interestingly, a discourse that has several elements in common with the *Saṅcetanika-suttas* begins with the question of what is (genuine) purity of body, speech and mind vis-à-vis purity based on rituals upheld by some brahmins.³⁸ The discourse parallels the *Saṅcetanika-suttas* exposition on the three ways in which one is made impure by bodily action, four ways in which one is made impure by verbal action, and three ways in which one is made impure by mental action, followed by their abandonment and the performance of the ten wholesome actions as the ways in which one is instead purified. When a person is endowed with these ten wholesome actions, then no matter what ritualised behaviours are undertaken or not undertaken, the purity is not lost, “because these ten wholesome courses of action are pure and cause purity”.³⁹ In other words, mental purity due to wholesome mental actions is based on non-greed, non-ill-will and non-delusion. As the *Karajakāya-sutta* and its parallels make clear, such ethical purity and clarity of understanding with regard to one’s motivations furnish the necessary pathway that leads from the initial insight gained by the noble disciple with the attainment of stream-entry to the complete fulfilment of non-greed and non-ill-will by reaching non-return as well as the acme of non-delusion on attaining arhatship.⁴⁰

A similar progression mirroring the intimate correlation between ethical purity and practice of the path is found in a discourse in the *Majjhima-nikāya*. This begins with an initial recognition of the presence or absence of mental defilements. Such recognition then leads to the effort to abandon them, followed by a reference to the acquisition of perfect confidence in the three jewels, i.e., the attainment of stream-entry. Then comes concentration based on the happiness derived from such confidence, which is followed by instructions on *appamāṇas* radiation, which in turn leads to insight and eventually to the realisation of final liberation.⁴¹

interpreting the presence of the immeasurables in AN 10.208 as a purposeful effort “to overcome the power of former deeds”, cf. also Anālayo 2009a: 12 note 37.

³⁸ AN 10.176 ad AN V 263,1. On bodily, verbal and mental misconduct as three things endowed with which one is to be recognised as a fool cf. also AN 3.2 ad AN I 102,1; on having done what is admirable and wholesome, having given protection to those in fear, and having done nothing that is evil, savage or cruel as two things that cause no remorse, and having abandoned the three types of misconduct and whatever else is flawed and unwholesome as leading to heavenly birth cf., e.g., It 30 ad It 24,21.

³⁹ AN 10.176 ad AN V 268,21: *ime ... dasa kusalakammāpathā suci yeva honti sucikaraṇā ca*.

⁴⁰ The fact that in the discourse paralleling the *Saṅcetanika-suttas* exposition an explanation is given of the lower fetter of belief in religious rites and ritualised behaviours as if these were in themselves able to lead to liberation, indicates that the teaching is clearly addressed to someone who is not yet a noble disciple (nor, for that matter, a Buddhist disciple as yet, since Cunda, to whom the discourse is addressed, goes for refuge only at the end of the discourse). The perspective of the higher levels of awakening is not mentioned, but as a result of being endowed with the ten wholesome actions, rebirth among the devas and among human beings or “any other good destination” is declared, a mundane perspective that dispenses with higher soteriological pursuits that would require irreversible eradication of the unwholesome roots.

⁴¹ MN 7 ad MN I 37,1; on variations in the parallel versions cf. Anālayo 2011a: 49f.

Progress to non-return or arhatship is related as much to meditative attainment as it is to ethical and emotional purification. Remarkably, the content of the ‘review phase’ of the *appamāṇas* radiation according to the instruction of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* (Table 2) is of an ethical nature: the practitioner becomes aware of the ethical transformation brought about by *appāmāṇa* practice, in its private implication (abandonment of personal negligence, which is a cause of *dukkha* for oneself) as well as in its relational and altruistic aspect (before long one will no longer behave in a way that is not in accordance with the Dharma and causes *dukkha* to others).

Table 2: The *appāmāṇa* sequence in the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*

| AN 10.208 | MĀ 15 & Abhidh-kh-up |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>man or woman</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">all-pervasive radiation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">review:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a) mind qualities (before & after)</p> <p>b) ethical qualities (before & after) with small boy or girl simile</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">knowledge that:</p> <p>a) body made of deeds (<i>karajakāya</i>) will not be taken along</p> <p>b) fruits of accumulated actions must be all experienced here & now (= non-return/highest)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">liberation of the mind through loving kindness</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>attainment of non-return in this life for a wise <i>monastic</i> who has not yet penetrated release beyond that</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">same pattern for other <i>appāmāṇas</i></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>man or woman, at home or gone forth</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">all-pervasive radiation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">review:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">a) mind qualities (before & after)</p> <p>b) ethical qualities (before & after) with small boy or girl simile</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">aspiration:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">not to take body along (= birth above <i>kāmadhātu</i>)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>monastics</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>aspiration to experience fruits of accumulated actions all here & now (= non-return/highest)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>liberation of the mind through loving kindness (MĀ 15) / concentration of the mind of loving kindness (Abhidh-kh-up)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">attainment of non-return / highest</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">same pattern for other <i>appāmāṇas</i></p> |

Although intentionality is central to the Buddhist conception of karma, *cetanā* and karma are not total equivalents, in that once an intention has been conceived, then

acts of body etc. need to actually ‘perform’ karma.⁴² In several discourse passages intention appears alongside longing or yearning (*patthanā*) and wish (*paṇidhi*), which were to be interpreted by commentarial literature as stages of the process of forming and realising intentional action.⁴³ An intention may not be in itself able to completely fulfil its conative momentum and translate into an action – whereby the development of commentarial and Abhidharmic analysis of the psychophysical factors involved in such process – but as far as moral responsibility and ultimate purification from all unwholesomeness are concerned, the early discourses seem to emphasise strongly the importance of mental inclination, of cherishing and then endeavouring to implement it, so that it becomes established as the object of one’s consciousness.⁴⁴ In fact, reiterated intentional decisions and different factors, such as the effort and energy required in endeavouring to undertake any action, during the different phases of the conditioned process, continue to carry their own moral weight.

The Abhidharma traditions developed different and in many respects diverging interpretations regarding the definition, functioning, propagation of and moral bearing of intention and mental karma, with the Sarvāstivādins envisaging a distinction between ‘informative’ (*vijñapti*) and uninformative (*avijñapti*) karma, etc.⁴⁵ As far as the early discourses are concerned, a source representative of the attitude to intentionality is the *Upāli-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, which makes it clear that greater moral weight is placed on acts of the mind in the sense of their capacity to determine intention and actions, rather than on verbal or physical karma per se, and that an act done without prior intention (*asañcetanika*) such as killing small creatures while walking cannot be as blameworthy as if one were to intend to do so. This exposition is given within the context of a refutation of the Jain position on the primacy of karma interpreted as resultant acts, vis-à-vis karma as a primarily intentional impulse according to Buddhist thought.⁴⁶

The crucial importance of *cetanā* stands behind the training sequence of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*. Karma as intentionality is the active force behind *saṃsāra*, feeding on craving and ignorance, which are mutually dependent on deluded intentions and wrong view. If karma were invariably to bear fruits that are precisely commensurate with the deed, i.e., if karma were deterministic, liberation from *saṃsāra* would be impossible, in which case there would be no prospect for the religious life and no opportunity for the complete end of *dukkha*.⁴⁷

A discourse in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* stipulates the possibility of knowing karma, the arising of karma, its consequences, its different varieties, and the way to end it. As in the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*, karma is here divided into intended actions and intended actions that have been carried out; the cause for the arising of karma is contact; the consequences of karma are positive, negative or neutral; the different varieties of karma are those leading to different types of birth; the end of

⁴² AN 6.63 ad AN III 415,7: *cetanāhaṃ, bhikkhave, kammaṃ vadāmi; cetayitvā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā*. Cf. also Abhidh-kh-vy: 400,20 commenting on a quotation from the *Samcetanīya-sūtra*: *cetanā karma cetayitvā ceti vacanāt* and id.: 400,24: *cetanā-mataṃ bhikṣavaḥ karma vadāmi cetayitvā cety etad virudhyate*.

⁴³ E.g., AN 10.104 ad AN V 212,26: *yā ca cetanā yā ca patthanā, yo ca paṇidhi, ye ca saṅkhārā*

⁴⁴ E.g., SN 12.40 ad SN II 67,1: *yañca kho ... ceteti yañca pakappeti yañca anuseti, ārammaṇaṃ etaṃ hoti viññānassa ṭhitiyā, ārammaṇe sati patiṭṭhā viññānassa hoti*; cf. also MN 19 ad MN I 114,19.

⁴⁵ Given the purposes and source materials of my presentation, I do not take into account these later scholastic developments.

⁴⁶ For a comparative study of the parallel versions of this discourse cf. Anālayo 2011a: 320f.

⁴⁷ AN 3.99 ad AN I 249,7.

karma is the coming to an end of contact; and knowing the way leading to the end of karma is to know the noble eightfold path.⁴⁸

This stipulation is complemented by yet another discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* that explains that the goal of the religious life is not to change or end karmic retribution, but to cultivate insight into the four noble truths.⁴⁹ That is, the early Buddhist way of practice is not concerned with any exhaustion of karmic results. Much rather, its aim is the exhaustion and destruction of the influxes. This purpose, which leads all the way to the final goal, translates, in practice, into a gradual purification of intentions and the eventual uprooting of the ‘existential intention’ that generates birth and becoming.

In early Buddhist thought the very existence and field of operation of karma are considered co-extensive with the samsāric existential predicament, in that karma is beginningless but not necessarily endless.⁵⁰ Liberation is not by necessity teleologically intrinsic to such samsāric predicament – not all beings are bound to reach emancipation. Yet the potential for liberation does exist and remains an open possibility. In other words, if and when one reaches complete emancipation depends on the level of purification of one’s view and intentions. The process of purification can be more or less effectively directed, without, however, being mechanically determined or liable to wilful manipulation.

Karma – action with intention, including in a broader sense also its results – remains thus irreducible to mono-dimensional and quantitative models of apprehension and its actual ‘figures’ keep escaping epistemological and psychological totalising interpretations. Yet its principles, as highlighted by the above quoted *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse, falls within the range of direct knowledge. The dependent variables may be uncountable but the result obtains within a scheme operated by fixed principles.

In view of this background, I would now like to look more closely at the relationship between *appamāṇa* practice and the fine dynamics of intentionality. Progress at the higher stages of the path is described in standard terms as the eradication of the fetters. The fetters are mental tendencies that, when present, can be manifest or latent, strong or attenuated. On looking at them in terms of karma, i.e., they can be described as patterns of reactivity to experience that are to some degree present in the mind or else have been left behind forever. This viewpoint helps understand the practical implication of the passages in the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* that set forth a clear correlation between *appamāṇas* and progress on the path. In other words, how do *appamāṇas* have an impact on karma? Since it is said that through the destruction of greed, aversion and delusion the concatenation of karma (*kammanidānasambhavo*) comes to an end (*kammanidānasāṅkhayo*),⁵¹ then how does the set of teachings in question contribute to the actualisation of this soteriological enterprise?

⁴⁸ AN 6.63 ad AN III 415,4; with parallels in MĀ 111 ad T I 600a23 and Abhidh-kh-up at Q 5595 ad tu 228a5 or Si 161 ad 487,6 (on this parallel cf. Hiraoka 2002: 458 note 42); cf. also Abhidh-kh-bh ed. Pradhan 1975: 192,9 (Pāsādika 1989: 73 no. 262).

⁴⁹ AN 9.13 ad AN IV 382. This and similar statements need be put in perspective against the background of the ongoing debate with the contemporary early Jain tradition holding that the chief purpose of the spiritual life is precisely the shaking off of the fruits of past actions. According to a commentarial gloss that does not seem to fit too well with the early Buddhist definition of the purpose of the going forth, the ‘religious life’ (*brahmacariya*) stands for “a religious life lived for the destruction of karma”, Mp II 360,14: *evaṃ santam ... brahmacariyavāso hotī ti kammakkhayakarassa brahmacariyassa khetakammasambhavato vāso nāma hoti, vuttham suvuttham eva hotī ti attho*.

⁵⁰ SN 15.3 ad SN II 180,23.

⁵¹ AN 10.174 ad AN V 262,7.

How can the *appamāṇas* experiences of someone who is (by definition) endowed with right view, i.e., at least stream-entrant, affect the mind's tendencies? How does the necessary restructuring of intention come into place?

Karma is said to be immeasurable and cannot be quantified.⁵² The immeasurable characteristic of these boundless states of mind is able to provide a special treatment to help release the constrictions and afflictions of the condition of being subject to karma: the immeasurables can impact karma in the sense they have an effect of mental tendencies and habits. One perspective on the *appamāṇas* vis-à-vis wholesomeness or unwholesomeness is to contemplate intention from the point of view of the conditioned process of personality building, that is, the five aggregates affected by clinging. Here intention functions as an agent of craving arising as a reaction to sense experience. The special task of the *appamāṇas* in this respect is to re-condition intention with regard to any mental object, making the mind less and less responsive to defilements that arise in relation to objects due to the impulse of craving.

On the other hand, the discourses tell us that, eventually, by dint of sustained *appamāṇa* practice, “no limiting action remains therein”.⁵³ The commentary on the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* explains the implications of this statement in terms of rebirth and progress on the path. That is, limiting actions that would cause one to take birth again in the sense realm are temporarily neutralised and lose their conditioning power because the corresponding mental inclinations have been superseded. In other words, with the attainment and mastery of liberation of the mind through benevolence, the karmic potential of this experience will take precedence over sense-sphere karma and result in rebirth in the form realm.⁵⁴ As I have discussed in detail elsewhere, the *appamāṇas* qua *appamāṇas* fall short of being able to lead to the final emancipation from karma that is full liberation unless they are developed in conjunction with insight and liberating wisdom.⁵⁵

Thus they are instrumental to the final goal in the above described process of purification and transcendence of karma.

Coming back to intentionality, the early Buddhist discourses, as far as I am aware of, do not give a definition of *sañcetanā*. Judging from the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*, *sañcetanā* seems to be the by-product of mental states such as sensual passion or non-sensual passion, ill will or non-ill-will, delusion or non-delusion, prompted by which they occur, and of the conditioning force of *saṅkhārās*, mental reactivity that co-determines the arising of karmically effective volition. The discourses do, however, indicate that all types of actions are based on intentions or motivations that come into being in relation to the body, speech or the mind, and that provide the cause of corresponding actions (of the body, speech and the mind). This

⁵² E.g., MN 14 ad MN I 91,1.

⁵³ Cf. the text excerpt translated in section 2 and the discussion in section 3 of this paper, above notes 23 and 29 and below note 53.

⁵⁴ Cf. Mp V 77,17: *pamāṇakataṃ kammaṃ nāma kāmāvacarakammaṃ*, “limiting karma” refers to sense-sphere karma”, and also the similar gloss at Spk III 105,27: *yaṃ pamāṇakataṃ kammaṃ ti, pamāṇakataṃ kata nāma kāmāvacaraṃ vuccati: appamāṇa-kataṃ kammaṃ nāma rūpāvacaraṃ* (cf. also above notes 23 and 29). As already explained by Anālayo 2009b: 9 note 35, pace Maithrimurthi 1999: 76, the effect of *appamāṇas* practice on limiting actions described in the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* and other parallel passages refers as such to the next rebirth and does not imply complete elimination of karma. By further deepening of the practice through wisdom and insight, full liberation is possible. A discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya* employs the simile of a strong conch-shell blower that can resound a tone to the four directions with just a little effort: in the same way, for one who continually the practices meditative radiation of the four immeasurables in every direction, no limiting action will remain and become established, cf. DN I 251,5; on this passage cf. also Aronson 1980: 62f and esp. 69

⁵⁵ Martini 2011b.

takes place whether a deed is deliberate to the extent that there's clear comprehension and full understanding of its consequences (*sampajāno*) or without it (*asamapajāno*).⁵⁶

A passage in a discourse in the *Sañcetanika-vagga* of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* presents four ways in which a newly reborn being arises in dependence on previous actions based on intention (*sañcetanā*): through fruition of one's own intention (*atta-sañcetanā*), through karmic results produced by another person's intention (*para-sañcetanā*), through the combination of these two, or without either.⁵⁷

Other passages explain that in the presence of a body, with intention related to the body as a cause, pleasure and pain arise within, and likewise with intentions related to speech and the mind.⁵⁸ These contexts throw into relief an intimate relation and continuity between intention and the subsequent act where it becomes manifest. Intentional urge provides the cause for action and for its consequences, in this case pleasure and pain that will be experienced on being reborn. What a person intends, plans or inclines to, that becomes the object that gives shape to the mind, and therefore conditions the arising of a corresponding consciousness.⁵⁹ Consciousness thus carries along the whole inheritance of mental tendencies, habits and inclinations that lead an individual to seek to act, faring on in the round of births and existence.

A practical question to raise at this point is precisely at which juncture of the conditioned response to initial sense input *appamāṇa* training intervenes vis-à-vis intention?

It appears to me that sustained practice with the immeasurables can be considered as yet another means of breaking the self-reproducing cycle of reactivity to sense-objects, which is to varying degrees conscious, semi-conscious or unconscious. Intention is not determined once and for all, and it is part of a mental cycle that requires the ongoing redetermination and reactivation of intention, therefore the liberating possibility of becoming aware of one's motivations is present throughout different stages of the process. The immeasurables have a liberating role to play in order to weaken the unwholesome capacity for reactivity because (a) they positively develop and strengthen qualities opposite to reactions to sense experience in terms of passion or aversion, thereby contributing to cognitive and emotional reorientation based on wholesomeness, and (b) they slowly undermine the fundamental habit to reactivity, in that their mental cultivation results in a *de facto* weakening of reactivity and craving with clinging. In this way they impinge on different junctures of the process of the coming into being of personality afflicted by clinging.

The Pali exegetical work *Nettipakaraṇa*, for example, explaining a discourse passage about the end of *dukkha* and emancipation from any form of dependence or wavering, highlights the positioning of intentionality as dependent on cravings and views and leading in turn to karmic reactivity:

“With regard to ‘for one who is dependent, there is wavering’, dependence is of two types, dependence through craving and dependence through [incorrect] views. Here the intention of one who desires is dependence through craving, the intention of one who is confused is dependence through [incorrect] views. Intentions [become then] volitional formations, dependent on volitional formations consciousness [arises], dependent on consciousness name-and-form

⁵⁶ SN 12.25 ad SN II 40,9.

⁵⁷ AN 4.172 ad AN II 159,6, cf. also DN 33 ad DN III 231,5.

⁵⁸ E.g., SN 12.25 ad SN II 39,33 and AN 4.171 ad AN II 157,31.

⁵⁹ Cf. above note 43.

[arise], thus all dependent arising [comes into being]. This is the descending due to dependent arising”.⁶⁰

Interestingly, another Pali exegetical treatise, the *Peṭakopadesa*, in its exposition of ‘origin’, ‘cessation’ and the ‘path’ (leading to cessation) according to the four truths of the noble,⁶¹ quotes from a so far untraced *Sañcetanīya-sutta* an example of crooked, flawed and faulty bodily, verbal and mental actions opposite to the uncrooked, flawless and faultless as illustrations of the two truths of the origin of *dukkha* and of the path respectively.⁶² Then the *Peṭakopadesa* quotes the same discourse excerpt on independence and unwavering discussed in the *Nettipakaraṇa* as an illustration of what is ‘origin’, ‘cessation’ and the ‘path’, continuing with eleven supportive conditions for liberation from non-remorse etc. up to knowledge-and-vision of liberation as regards the ‘origin’, the being provided with such eleven supportive conditions as regards the ‘path’, and any liberation thus attained as ‘cessation’ (*yā ca vimutti ayaṃ nirodho*).⁶³

This passage reflects the central position of wholesome intentionality within the fundamental soteriological paradigm of the four truths, paralleling a diagnostic scheme that was apparently employed in ancient Indian medicine.⁶⁴

Applied to the context of *appamāṇas* training, the ‘disease’ is the existential karmic predicament itself; the ‘cause’ an ignorant and unwholesome conduct of the body, speech and the mind; ‘cessation’ the noble disciple’s attainment of the liberation of the mind through the immeasurables and eventually the reaching of non-return and of the higher goal through further development of insight; and the ‘appropriate remedy’ wholesome conduct in conjunction with the establishment of right view. Right view, the forerunner and precursor of the four truths as they really are,⁶⁵ in the context of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas* results especially from the abandonment of the last group of unwholesome actions, those entailing mental unwholesome attitudes rooted in the holding of wrong view. Moreover, the dynamics of the practice are in harmony with a liberating shift through which the dependent generation of karmic bondage, *dukkha* and unwholesomeness is replaced by the ‘nirvāṇic dynamics’ of their dependent cessation (i.e., the standard reverse form of dependent origination).⁶⁶

In the light of the sequence of the teachings in the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*, the practical principles underlying the proposed mental training become now more explicitly evident. The practitioner is reminded that unwholesome actions of

⁶⁰ Nett 12 ad Nett 65,2; cf. MN 144 ad MN III 266,6. Cf. also Ud 8.4 ad Ud 81,6.

⁶¹ On the adjective ‘noble’ qualifying the four truths cf. Norman 1982, 1990 and 1997: 16, Anālayo 2006 and Harvey 2009.

⁶² Nānamoli 1964: 21 note 56/1 comments that that “the name ‘*Sañcetanīya-sutta*’ for this sutta remains unexplained” and refers to AN II 112-113 instead of SN II 247 given in the PTS edition (p. 17 note d).

⁶³ Peṭ 57 ad Peṭ 17,21f, transl. Nānamoli 1964: 21f.

⁶⁴ Cf., e.g., de la Vallée Poussin 1903: 580 and Wezler 1984, according to whom, because there is no evidence for this scheme having predated the Buddha’s formulation of the four truths, it cannot be excluded that ancient Indian medicine adopted it from the Buddhist teachings (pp. 312f). The Buddha is the skilled physician who teaches the path to freedom from craving, the destroyer of the dart of craving, SN 8.7 ad SN I 192,6. On a discourse that correlates the four aspects of this scheme with four qualities required of a physician (identification of a disease, diagnosis of its cause, knowledge of the remedy and administering the cure until the disease is over), SĀ 389 ad T II 105a25 and Q 5595 ad thu 32b6 or Si 162 ad 747,3, cf. Anālayo 2011a: 802 note 220 and Anālayo 2011b (forthcoming). Notwithstanding the appellation of the Buddha as ‘the great physician’ and the quasi-thaumaturgic or thaumaturgic qualities and powers attributed to him by later Buddhist religious traditions, in early Buddhist thought it is the Dharma as a medicine that remains the constant point of reference, cf. also the famous Dhammapada stanza according to which “you yourself must strive, the Tathāgathas can only show the way”, Dhṡ 276: *tumhehi kiccāṃ ātappāṃ akkhātāro tathāgatā*, etc.; this is still echoed, for example, by later Tibetan sources, cf. Wangchuk 2007: 33f.

⁶⁵ SN 37.7 ad SN V 442,9, comparing the function of right view as a forerunner and precursor of the breakthrough to the dawn in relation to the rising of the sun.

⁶⁶ E.g., SN 12.2 ad SN II 2,11. Parts of the foregoing discussion have already appeared in Martini 2011b.

the body, speech and the mind are rooted in intentionality. Intentionality entails a certain mental attitude resulting from past conditioning, tendencies, habits, etc. and, ultimately, is formed on the basis of either the wholesome or unwholesome roots (leaving aside neutral intentions which bear no karmic consequence).

Thus, practically speaking, each and every act of abstention from sensual passion and aversion and from behaviours rooted in delusion means that the intention becomes one of non-greed, non-aversion and non-delusion. For an arahant it is impossible to (re-)act under the influence of sensual passion, aversion, delusion or fear.⁶⁷ For a practitioner in training, this effort of abstention needs to be an ongoing cultivation. Positively worded from the perspective of the immeasurables, such intentions are naturally akin to the pure mental abodes. In terms of karma, these acts of abstention indicate that the strength of the patterns of reactivity, i.e., the overpowering activation of *saṅkhāras*, that manifests itself in the performance and reenacting of unwholesome (re-)actions, comes to be gradually ‘compromised’, so to speak. The implications of developing clear comprehension of the purpose and suitability of one’s intentional actions by becoming aware of the arising of *sañcetanā* directly relate to the path factor of right mindfulness.⁶⁸ These implications have consequences on the personal and interpersonal level and are at the same time ethical, cognitive and emotional. For a practitioner well-established in the training, the refinement of the practice of purification of intentionality will then progress to its farthest, that is, to the complete eradication of the purposive conatus for becoming and existence, including any more ‘wanting to be’ in the form and formless spheres.

Concluding remarks on *appamāṇas*

I would now like to close with a few final general considerations on the *appamāṇas*. Because his or her fetters have been worn away and clinging has been destroyed,⁶⁹ a fully awakened being no longer reacts in unwholesome ways during his or her encounters with other beings. Instead, he or she responds from an *appamāṇa* attitude, where inner nuances of benevolence, compassion, sympathetic joy or equanimity, as occasion requires, become prominent when coming into contact with the ‘world’, a world that has, in a way, long been left behind. According to a discourse in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the Buddha’s own being endowed with the qualities of benevolence, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity was precisely the result of his having eradicated the mental defilements that are opposed to *appamāṇas*.⁷⁰ According to another discourse in the same *Majjhima-nikāya*, a noble disciple in higher training with developed faculties dwells in mindfulness with clear comprehension (*sato*

⁶⁷ DN 29 ad DN III 133,14.

⁶⁸ I have discussed the *appamāṇas* in relation to the factors of the noble path (as well as to the factors of awakening) in Martini 2011b. For passages in the early discourses in which clear comprehension of purpose and suitability (*sāttahasampajañña* and *sappāyasampajañña*), commentarial rubrics detailing the implication of clear comprehension (*sampajañña*), Ps I 253,1, Sv-pt I 315,19 etc., are implicitly adumbrated, cf. Anālayo 2003: 143f. The awakening factors of right mindfulness and right comprehension are in fact expressly mentioned in the Chinese version of the discourse(s) on karma and the *appamāṇas*, MĀ 15 ad T I 438a37: 正念正智, as being established through successful relinquishment of the ten unwholesome actions. For any form of liberation of the mind to be able to lead to any of the stages of awakening, it needs to be developed in conjunction with the factors of awakening. I intend to come back to the role of the awakening factors and insight in the *appamāṇas* training in a separate paper.

⁶⁹ Cf., e.g., It 27 ad It 21,4: *yo ca mettaṃ bhāvayati / appamāṇaṃ paṭissato / tanū samyojanā honti / passato upadhikkhayam*, “for one who develops boundless benevolence, mindful, seeing the destruction of clinging, the fetters become weakened”.

⁷⁰ The statement is in response to a reference to Brahmā’s abiding in benevolence, MN 55 ad MN I 370,36: *yena kho ... rāgena yena dosena yena mohena byāpādavā assa so rāgo so doso so moho tathāgatassa pahīno*; the reasons for the Buddha’s abiding in benevolence is absent in the parallel version, cf. Anālayo 2011a: 320.

sampajāno), being able to see what is repulsive as not-repulsive and what is not-repulsive as repulsive or to remain equanimous.⁷¹

The genuine arising of *appamānas* can be quite spontaneous when the negative states they counter are absent, and they can be independent from the presence of real or fictive interactions with individuals or ‘the other’ in a broader sense. One such ‘other’ or perhaps the epitome of ‘other-ness’ in early Buddhist discourse can be said to be ‘oneself’, that is, one’s being subject to self-alienation caused by craving. A recluse gone to a remote and desolate retreat is still haunted by the company of his or her ever-present second and companion, craving, the fundamental root of the *sibi displicere* of *dukkha* whereby all discontent springs forth, which makes a solitary dweller someone who is still accompanied by a partner.⁷² The natural arising of the *appamānas* needs not stem from any internalised perception or mental image of such ‘other(s)’ and of the ‘world’ itself, and in fact, also meditatively, it relies on transcending such duality.

The mental training through the immeasurables is an integral part of the spiritual cultivation of intentionality which is the ethical ‘core’ of early Buddhist teachings, an ethical education that begins with mental training.⁷³ For spiritual progress to happen, full mental-cum-ethical development is mandatory, in that the weakening (once-return) and complete eradication (non-return) of the two fetters of sensual passion (*kāmarāga*) and ill will (*vyāpāda*) are required.

Thus it seems to me that besides their resulting in happy destinations, the *appamānas* are not merely positive social emotions,⁷⁴ nor just the dynamic aspect of an awakened individual’s relationship to the world of his or her inner and outer relationships, nor are their benefits confined to their function as antidotes to anger, irritation, envy, conceit and so on.⁷⁵ As Bhikkhu Dhammajoti (2010: 174) comments:

“the cultivation of the four immeasurables brings about moral transformation. Although in the Śrāvaka tradition, it is generally prescribed for counteracting hatred, and in both the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda, it is subsumed under the *śamatha* practice, its significance in one’s success in ethical alignment has been emphasized since early Buddhism. In fact, for Buddhism, love and compassion are the very foundation of ethical behaviour: A Buddhist observes the precepts fundamentally out of *maitrī* [metta] and *karuṇā*”.⁷⁶

The all-pervasive dimension of boundless *appamānas* radiation in all directions is illustrated with the image of a trumpeter who makes himself heard in all directions.⁷⁷ To my knowledge, this is the only ‘formalised’ way of *appamānas* practice known to the early Buddhist discourses. In terms of theory of meditation, a boundless radiation

⁷¹ MN 152 ad MN III 301,8.

⁷² SN 35.63 ad SN IV 36,25 and Sn 740; cf. also Anālayo 2009: 10.

⁷³ The implications of mental purity as a foundation for Buddhist ethics are discussed in detail by Anālayo 2012b.

⁷⁴ Cf. Pāsādika 2007: 263f, critically reviewing the position of Conze 1962: 80f; a more nuanced statement on the social dimension of the qualities of benevolence etc. is found in Kuan 2008: 56.

⁷⁵ Cf. Anālayo 2003: 196.

⁷⁶ Commenting on a passage in the Chinese parallel to the above-mentioned SN 42.8 ad SN IV 322,31, stipulating the karmic implications of *appamānas* practice, cf. SĀ 914 ad T II 232a20.

⁷⁷ E.g., MN 99 ad MN II 207,22: *seyyathāpi ... balavā saṅkhadhamo appakasiren’ eva cātuddisā viññāpeyya: evam eva kho ... evaṃ bhāvītiya kho ... mettāya cetovimuttiyā, yaṃ pamānakataṃ kammaṃ, na taṃ tatrāvasissati, na taṃ tatrāvatiṭṭhati. ayam pi kho ... brahmānaṃ saḥabyatāya maggo*. The example of the trumpeter is also found in the Chinese parallel, MĀ ad T I 669c10; for differences in the two versions cf. Anālayo 2011a: 578. Aronson 1979: 31 comments that the trumpeter’s “is not a measured performance. Similarly, when one cultivates love and the other attitudes according to the method given ... no measured intentions remain”. Objectless and conceptualisation-free immeasurables as these were to be defined in later scholastic treatises stemming from Sarvāstivāda-Yogācāra meditative milieu, on which cf. Dhammajoti 2010 and Martini 2011a: 169f, seem to me to be particularly akin to this type of earlier non-conceptual meditative development.

independent from the presence of an object to be aroused and extended in consciousness seems to be particularly effective in refining intentionality towards progressively higher levels of freedom from arising as a conditioned, often automatic response, to experience.

Parallel to this affective and cognitive feature, *appamāṇas* ethical self-cultivation focuses on a boundlessly pure ethical dimension independent of restraint or else reaction (negative and unwholesome, but also positive or wholesome) in relation to any inner or outer dimension of the individual. Thus the practitioner's independence from the world is much strengthened, as is his or her insight into the ultimately deluded nature of any fabrication of a subject appropriating its objects and of the perceptual field itself. In this way the movement of identification with and appropriation of a self is all the while de-potentiated by genuine *appamāṇas* practice.

Developing a perception of benevolence and of the other boundless experiences on the basis of a given conceptual object (oneself, a friend, a stranger, an enemy) by directing it to oneself first as an individual and then to other single individuals or to group(s) of individuals as prescribed for example by later Theravāda texts and in popular modern approaches to benevolence etc., seems to be somehow not fully exploring the whole range of this thorough exercise towards independence from 'objects', grasping at and reification of experience, a training in inner independence and kindness by means of which the end of all conceivings, influxes, karma, and *dukkha* become possible. Such an ultimately 'unprompted' quality and fruit of *appamāṇas* squares well with the discourses' 'method' of all-pervasive practice, a method in which the perceptual training seems to be particularly consistent with the soteriological goal and also with the final existential mode of a liberated being who has escaped from any form of conceptual identification and mental impurity.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Bhikkhu Anālayo, Bhikkhu Pāsādika, Letizia Baglioni, Peter Skilling and Alberto Todeschini for discussions and corrections.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Abhidh-kh-bh | <i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i> |
| Abhidh-kh-up | <i>Abhidharmakośaṭṭikopāyikā</i> |
| Abhidh-kh-vy | <i>Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā</i> (ed. Wogihara) |
| AN | <i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i> |
| B ^e | Burmese edition |
| CBETA | Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association |
| C ^e | Ceylonese edition |
| D | Derge edition (Tōhoku) |
| DĀ | <i>Dīrgha-āgama</i> (T 1) |
| Dhp | <i>Dhammapada</i> |
| DN | <i>Dīrgha-nikāya</i> |
| E ^e | European edition (PTS) |
| It | <i>Itivuttaka</i> |
| MĀ | <i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26) |
| MN | <i>Majjhima-nikāya</i> |
| Mp | <i>Manorathapūraṇī</i> |
| N | Narhang edition |
| Nett | <i>Nettipakarāṇa</i> |
| Peṭ | <i>Peṭakopadesa</i> |
| PTS | Pali Text Society |
| Q | Peking (Qianlong) edition (Ōtani) |
| SĀ | <i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 99) |
| SĀ ² | ‘other’ <i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 100) |
| S ^e | Siamese edition |
| Si | Sichuan edition |
| Sn | <i>Sutta-nipāta</i> |
| SN | <i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i> |
| Spk | <i>Sāratthappakāsinī</i> |
| Sv-pt | <i>Sumaṅgalavilāsinī-purāṇaṭṭikā</i> |
| T | Taishō <i>Tripīṭaka</i> (ed. CBETA, 2011) |
| Th | <i>Thera-gāthā</i> |
| Ud | <i>Udāna</i> |

Note

All references to Pali texts are to the PTS editions, unless otherwise indicated. For Pali and other languages, on occurrence, I have adjusted the *sandhi*, punctuation, capitalisations, etc.

References

- Anālayo 2003: *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*, Birmingham: Windhorse.
- 2006: “The Ekottarika-āgama Parallel to the Saccavibhaṅga-sutta and the Four (Noble) Truths”, *Buddhist Studies Review* 23.2: 145–153.
- 2009a: “Karma and Liberation – The Karajakāya-sutta (AN 10.208) in the Light of its Parallels”, *Pāsādikadānam: Festschrift für Bhikkhu Pāsādika*, ed. Martin Straube et al., Marburg: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, pp. 1–24.
- 2009b: *From Craving to Liberation: Excursions into the Thought-world of the Pāli Discourses*, Carmel, New York: The Buddhist Association of the United States.
- 2011a: *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya*, Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation.
- 2011b (forthcoming): “Right View and the Scheme of the Four Truths in Early Buddhism”, *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* 7.
- 2012a (forthcoming): “Purification in Early Buddhist Discourse and Buddhist Ethics”, *Bukkyō Kenkyū 仏教研究 / Buddhist Studies*.
- 2012b (forthcoming): *Madhyama-āgama Studies*, Hamburg: Hamburg University Press.
- Aronson, Harvey B. 1979: “The Relationship of the Karmic to the Nirvanic in Theravāda Buddhism”, *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7.1: 28–36.
- Bingenheimer, Marcus 2012 (forthcoming): “Introduction”, in ed. id., Anālayo and Roderick Bucknell, 2012 (forthcoming): *The Middle Length Discourses*, vol. 1, Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation & Research.
- Choong, Mun-keat 1999: *The Notion of Emptiness in Early Buddhism*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Chung, Jin-il 2008: *A Survey of the Sanskrit Fragments Corresponding to the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama*, Tokyo: Sankibō.
- and Takamichi Fukita, 2011: *A Survey of the Sanskrit Fragments Corresponding to the Chinese Madhyamāgama (Including References to Sanskrit Parallels, Citations, Numerical Categories of Doctrinal Concepts, and Stock Phrases)*, Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin.
- Conze, Edward 1962: *Buddhist Thought in India: Three Phases of Buddhist Philosophy*, London: Allen & Unwin.
- de la Vallée Poussin, Louis, 1903: “Vyādhisūtra on the Four Āryasatyas”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 578–580.
- 1924: *L’Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, Paris: Geuthner, vol. 3 (reprint: *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 16, Bruxelles: Institut Belge des hautes Études Chinoises, 1971).
- Dhammajoti KL 法光, 2007: *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*, Hong Kong: Centre for Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong (third revised ed.).
- 2010: “The Apramāṇa Meditation in the Sarvāstivāda with Special Reference to Maitrī-bhāvanā”, *Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka* 8: 165–186.

Enomoto, Fumio 榎本 文雄 1984: *Agon kyōten no seiritsu* 阿含經典の成立 (The Formation of the Original Texts of the Chinese Āgamas), *Tōyō Gakujutsu Kenkyū* 東洋學術研究 / *The Journal of Oriental Studies* 23.1: 93–108.

—— 1986: “On the Formation of the Original Texts of the Chinese Āgamas”, *Buddhist Studies Review* 3.1: 19–30.

Harvey, Peter 2009: “‘The Four Ariya-saccas as ‘True Realities for the Spiritually Ennobled’- the Painful, its Origin, its Cessation, and the Way Going to This – Rather than ‘Noble Truths’ Concerning These’”, *Buddhist Studies Review* 26.2: 197–227.

Hiraoka, Satoshi 平岡 聡 2002: *Setsuwa no kōkogaku: Indo Bukkyō setsuwa ni himerareta shisō* 説話の考古学・インド仏教説話に秘められた思想 (The Archaeology of Narrative Literature: Uncovering Hidden Thought in Indian Buddhist Literature), Tokyo: Daizō shuppan.

Honjō, Yoshifumi 本庄 良文 1984: *A Table of Āgama Citations in the Abhidharmakośa and the Abhidharmakośopāyikā*, Kyoto.

—— 1985: *Shamathadeva no tsutaeru chū-*, *Sōō-agon* シヤマタデーヴァの伝える中・相応阿含 (The Madhyama and Saṃyukta Āgama as Recorded by Śamathadeva), *Bukkyō Kenyū* 佛教大学 / *Buddhist Studies* 15: 63–80.

—— 1987: *Shamathadeva no tsutaeru ritten* シヤマタデーヴァの伝える律典 (A Vinaya Text as Quoted by Śamathadeva), *Bukkyō Kenyū* 仏教研究 / *Buddhist Studies* 16: 123–134.

Kuan, Tse-fu 2008: *Mindfulness in Early Buddhism: New Approaches through Psychology and Textual Analysis of Pali, Chinese and Sanskrit Sources*, London: Routledge.

Martini, Giuliana 2011a: “*Mahāmaitrī* in a Mahāyāna Sūtra in Khotanese — Continuity and Innovation in Buddhist Meditation”, *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 24: 121–193.

Martini, Giuliana 2011b (forthcoming): “The Meditative Dynamics of the Early Buddhist *Appamāṇas*”, *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* 7.

Martini, Giuliana 2012 (forthcoming): “The ‘Discourse on Accumulated Actions’ in Śamathadeva’s *Abhidharmakośopāyikāṭīkā*”, *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 13.

Maithrimurthi, Mudagamuwe, 1999: *Wohlwollen, Mitleid, Freude und Gleichmut, Eine ideengeschichtliche Untersuchung der vier Apramāṇas in der Buddhistischen Ethik und Spiritualität von den Anfängen bis hin zum Frühen Yogācāra*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

Mejor, Marek 1991: *Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa and the Commentaries Preserved in the Tanjur*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

Mukai, Akira 向井亮 1985: “*Yogashijiron shōjibun to zaagonkyō*” 『瑜伽師地論』撰事分と『雜阿含經』 (The Vastusaṃgrahaṇī of the Yogācārabhūmi and the Saṃyuktāgama), *Hokkaidō daigaku bungakukenyūka kiyō* 北海道大学文学研究科紀要 33.2:1–41.

Ñāṇamoli, Bhikkhu 1964: *The Piṭaka-Disclosure (Peṭakopadesa), According to Kaccāna Thera*, Pali Text Society, London: Luzac & Company.

Nattier, Jan 2002: “The ‘Eleven Precepts’ for Laity in the Ugraparipṛcchā-sūtra”, in *Early Buddhism and Abhidharma Thought, In Honor of Doctor Hajime Sakurabe on His Seventy-seventh Birthday*, ed. Sakurabe Ronshu Committee, Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, pp. 33–44.

— 2003: *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path according to the Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā)*, Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.

Nyanaponika, Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi 1999: *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: An Anthology of Suttas from the Aṅguttara Nikāya*, Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

Norman, K.R. 1982: “The Four Noble Truths: A Problem of Pāli Syntax”, in *Indological and Buddhist Studies, Volume in Honour of Professor J. W. de Jong on his 60th Birthday*, ed. L.A. Hercus, Canberra: Australian National University, pp. 377–391.

— 1990: “Why are the Four Noble Truths called ‘Noble’”, in *Ānanda: Papers on Buddhism and Indology: A Felicitation Volume Presented to Ānanda Weihena Palliya Guruge on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Y. Karunadasa, Colombo: Felicitation Volume Editorial Committee, pp. 11–13.

— 1997: *A Philological Approach to Buddhism (The Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai Lectures 1994)*, London: School of Oriental and African Studies.

Pāsādika, Bhikkhu 1989: *Kanonische Zitate im Abhidharmakośabhāṣya des Vasubandhu*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

— 2007: “‘Friedensforschung’ in Theorie und Praxis im Theravāda”, in *Innerer Friede und die Überwindung von Gewalt*, ed. Hans-Martin Barth and Christoph Elsas, Hamburg: EB-Verlag.

Pradhan, P. 1975: *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute.

Sakaki, Ryōzaburō 榎 亮三郎 1926: 翻譯名義大集 [Mahāvvyutpatti], Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation.

Sakurabe, Hajime 櫻部 建 1969: *Kusharon no kenkyū: kai, konhon 俱舍論の研究: 界, 根品 (A Study of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya: The Chapters on Elements and Faculties)*, Kyoto: Hōzōkan.

Schmithausen, Lambert 1987: “Beiträge zur Schulzugehörigkeit und Textgeschichte kanonischer und postkanonischer buddhistischer Materialien”, in *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hīnayāna-Literatur, Zweiter Teil (Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung, III,2)*, ed. Heinz Bechert, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, vol. 2, pp. 304–406.

Skilling, Peter 1997: *Mahāsūtras*, vol. 2, Oxford: Pali Text Society.

— and Paul Harrison 2005: “What’s in a Name? Sarvāstivādin Interpretations of the Epithets ‘Buddha’ and ‘Bhagavat’”, in *Buddhism and Jainism: Essays in Honour of Dr. Hojun Nagasaki on His Seventieth Birthday*, Kyoto: Committee for the Felicitation of Dr. Hojun Nagasaki’s Seventieth Birthday, Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten, pp. 700–675.

Vetter, Tilmann 1988: *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism*, Leiden: Brill.

Waldschmidt, Ernst 1950: *Das Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra: Text in Sanskrit und Tibetisch, Verglichen mit dem Pāli nebst einer Übersetzung der chinesischen Entsprechung im Vinaya der Mālasarvāstivādins, Auf Grund von Turfan-Handschriften herausgegeben und bearbeitet*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

——— 1980: “Central Asian Sūtra Fragments and their Relation to the Chinese Āgamas”, in *The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition* (Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung, II), ed. Heinz Bechert, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 136–174.

Wangchuk, Dorji 2007: *The Resolve to Become a Buddha: A Study of the Bodhicitta Concept in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies.

Woodward, F.L. 1936: *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya), or More-Numbered Suttas*, Vol. 5 (The Book of the Tens and Elevens), London, The Pali Text Society: Luzac & Company.

Wogihara, Unrai 1932–1936: *Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*, Tokyo.