

## Buddhist Meditation Practices

*Dr. Wangchuk Dorjee Negi  
Principal, Central Institute of Buddhist Studies  
Choglamsar, Leh-Ladakh, J&K, India*

If we do not believe that a spiritual state of mind is something more than material constituted of physical particles, then there is no way to think about sentient beings and we can treat them as material substances. But Buddhists believe that the mind is more than the sub-atomic particle and there is much to think about the mind, hence meditation and spiritual practice is essential. Given the existence of mind, just as body need washing, feeding and medicating, mind needs similar things too, washing the mind through tranquility or calm abiding meditation, feed the mind with morality and medicate the mind with supreme wisdom or the insight meditation. Morality, concentration and wisdom or insight meditation are indeed the three tools for nurturing the mind. Similarly, body needs clothing to cover nakedness and mind needs discipline to prevent its mental nakedness.

Bhāvanā or meditation means mind culture or mental development. It aims at clearing the impurities and disturbances such as desire, hatred, ill-will, worry, doubts etc. and cultivating qualities such as concentration, awareness, intelligence, tranquility. Eventually, the realization of ultimate truth or the reality is in fact the goal of the meditation in Buddhism. Meditation is a vast subject and there are many variations among the different religious traditions. According to Nyanaponika, Thera, “It is a significant fact and worth pondering upon the words found in major religious scriptures, for instance, it is said in the Bible ‘In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth...’, while in Dhammapada, the Buddha says ‘Mind precedes things, dominates them, creates them’. These momentous words are quiet and uncontending, but unshakable reply by the Buddha to that biblical belief. Here the roads of these two religions part: the one leads far away into an imaginary beyond, the other leads straight home, into man’s very heart”<sup>1</sup>

In this manner, we can divide it in to two forms. The latter is those teachings and methods which are concerned with the discovery of the nature of existence and its reality, and the former concerns communication with external or universal concept of God. Where there is a concept of an external higher being, there also is an internal personality which is known as soul or self. In this case, meditation practice becomes a way of developing communication with an external being. This means that one feels oneself inferior and is trying to contact something higher or greater. Such meditation is based on devotion and they are mainly found in the teachings of Hinduism, Christianity and Islam, hence, meditation is the only way to put the teaching into practice.<sup>2</sup>

In this paper, I would like to discuss the form of meditation that deals with the discovery of the reality as it is according to different major Buddhist traditions. Because of people’s

---

<sup>1</sup> Nyanaponika, Thera. *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation: Satipatthna: A Handbook of Mental Training Based on the Buddha’s Way of Mindfulness*. BPS, Candy, 1996. p. 21

<sup>2</sup> Trungpa, Chogyam. *Meditation in Action*. Anv. Shambhala, 2010. p.1

varying disposition and capacity, that which is appropriate to one may not be appropriate to the other, therefore, in Buddhism there are three vehicles - Sravakayana, Pratekabuddhayana and Bodhisattvayana and four tenets Vaibhasika, Sautrantika, Cittamatin and Madhyamaka.<sup>3</sup> According to their different views on phenomena, the natures of their meditative practices are slightly different. For example, among the four tenets, the philosophical view of the first two aligns with the substantialist's view, the view of the third tenet aligns to idealism and the fourth asserts a centralist view and they are known as the sunyavads.<sup>4</sup> All eighteen schools<sup>4</sup> starting from Theravada comes under the substantialist view following the Dhammapada's words that talks of the fundamental principles that are, all compounded phenomena are impermanent, all contaminated phenomena are suffering, all phenomena are selflessness, those who realize these principles through wisdom attain Nirvana.<sup>5</sup> The followers of the eighteen schools strictly follow the above principles and in fact their practices largely depend on them as they carry their meditative practice based on the discourse on the Satipatthana or foundation of mindfulness.

The Buddha's original 'Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness' (Satipatthāna Sutta) occurs twice in the Buddhist scriptures: (1) as the 10<sup>th</sup> Discourse of the 'Middle Collection of Discourses': (Majjhima Nikāya), (2) as the 22<sup>nd</sup> Discourse of the 'Long Collection' (Dīgha Nikāya). Satipatthāna Sutta is the sole way for the purification of beings and they are the four Foundations of Mindfulness. "What are the four? Herein a monk may dwell practicing body-contemplation on the body... practicing feeling-contemplation on feelings... practicing mind-contemplation on mind.... practicing mind-object contemplation on mind-objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world."<sup>6</sup> The Satipatthana based vipasyana meditative practice is very popular and well-known in Burma, Sri Lanka and Thailand and I will not elaborate on it here. I personally have sat a couple of ten-day courses on Vipasyana and I found that the mindfulness techniques there is exactly the same as found in Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakośa as per Sarvastivada tradition.

The Abhidharmakosa discusses of six steps in the breathing meditation<sup>7</sup> - 1. The first is simply to count our breath a certain number of times say 1 to 10 times, by inhaling for 5 seconds, abiding for 5 seconds, exhaling for 5 seconds, gradually increasing the duration. Once the mind becomes a little still we should go on to the second step, which is to watch the breathing, at this stage we are not counting the breath anymore but simply watching the breath in and out. Here do not conceptualize it; all we have to do is observe the breathing. 3. The third step is not only watching exhalation and inhalation of our breath but also observing its rhythmic movement. 4. At the fourth step we observe the feeling and sensation accompanying the movement of the

<sup>3</sup> Yatra tr̥i yanani Iravakayanaṃ Pratyekabuddhayanam / Mahayanam ceti. Sthitayascatasra' Vaibhasika Sautrantika-Yogacaramadhyamakabhedenā. (Advayavajrasaṃgraha p.14)

<sup>4</sup> (1) Mahāsthaviras, (2) Haimavatas, (3) Sarvāstivādins, (4) Vātsiputrīyās, (5) Dharmottarīyas, (6) Bhadrāyanīyas, (7) Sammatīyas, (8) Kukkulikās, (9) Mahīśāsikas, (10) Dharmaguptas, (11) Kāśyapīyas; (12) Sautrāntikas, (13) Ekavyavahārikās, (14) Mahāsāṃghikās, (15) Lokottaravādins, (16) Gokulikas, (17) Bāhuśrutīya, (18) Uttaraśāila

<sup>5</sup> Sabbe sankhārā aniccā'ti yadā paññāya passati, Atha nibbindatī dukkhe: esa maggo visuddhiyā. [15] Sabbe sankhara dukkhā'ti yadā paññāya passati, Atha nibbindatī dukkhe: esa maggo visuddhiyā. [16] Sabbe dhamma anattā'ti yadā paññāya passati, Atha nibbindatī dukkhe: maggo visuddhiyā. [17]

<sup>6</sup> Nyanaponika, Thera. *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation: Satipatthana: A Handbook of Mental Training Based on the Buddha's Way of Mindfulness*. BPS, Candy, 1996. p. 139

<sup>7</sup> It has six aspects, counting, following, fixing, observing, modifying and purifying

Poussin, L. De LA Vallee. *Abhidharmakosabhāsyam Vol.3*, 4th ed. Asian Humanities Pr, 1990. Chapter 6 - The Path and the Saints, p. 922

breath throughout the body. 5. The fifth step is to analyze how the breathe changes from moment to moment. 6. The last step is called the stage of shifting; here we shift from mediation on breath to meditation on feeling, meditation on impermanence, arising-ceasing and selflessness of the body which is known as Insight or Vipasyana Meditation.

However, certain people have problem with anger, while other have problem with desire, jealousy and attachment. We should try to practice meditation focusing on specific object that directly counteract the particular delusion. The object must be natural; if it evolves any strong felling of lust, hatred etc., then it cannot calm your mind but will only make it restless and agitated. Object can be either internal or external.<sup>8</sup> It is said that the mind is a ramping elephant, tie it fast with the rope of mindfulness to the steady post of topic, and settle the mind in calm. Internal object is inside you, like breathing, focusing on the middle of eyebrow, looking on the tip of nose, visualizing oneself as divine deity, watching, sensation, etc. External object may be a statue of Buddha, a flower, a syllable, a dot, candle flame, gazing moon, etc. The object must be pleasing and acceptable to the mind. By focusing the mind on the object, it will slowly become calm and relaxed. Meditation on ugliness is the antidote to the feeling of lust and attachment, meditating on skeleton is the antidote for all categories of craving,<sup>9</sup> meditation on love and kindness is the antidote to anger, meditation on interdependent origination is antidote to ignorance and meditation on breathing is antidote to discursive mental thoughts. There are so many methods for developing single pointed meditation, but many experienced Buddhist practitioners recommend breathing meditation as being very effective method for controlling discursive thoughts. Obviously, the reason is that the mind and inner psychic wind are inseparably interrelated. Therefore, when we pacify this inner wind by meditating on the breath, the mind naturally becomes still.

According to Mahayana Tradition, among the three special trainings, the second is the training in meditative stabilization. The mind abiding one-pointedly, without distraction on any virtuous object is called meditative stabilization. In order to cultivate calm abiding, one must abandon the five faults<sup>10</sup> and utilize the eight antidotes.<sup>11</sup> The eight antidotes abandon these faults in the following way, the first of the five faults laziness – it has four antidotes, and the others have one each. The four antidotes to laziness are faith, aspiration, effort, and pliancy. The antidote to the second fault forgetting is mindfulness, to the third, laxity and excitement, is introspection, to the fourth, not applying the antidotes, is an intention of application. The antidote to the fifth, over-applying the antidotes, is the equanimity to leave the mind naturally. In short, in

---

<sup>8</sup>Object is of two types, the ones with sign and without sign, signs that are internal and signs that are external. The internal are again twofold, topics on the body and topics that support the body. There are five topics on the support of the body; the breathe, the subtle sign, the drop, the limbs of the light rays and joy and bliss. Signs that are external are of two kinds; the special and ordinary, the special topics are either a Buddha's body or Buddha's words. Without sign is the same as investigative insight. Sherburne, Richard. *A Lamp for the Path and Commentary*, 1982, p. 122

<sup>9</sup>Poussin, L. De LA Vallee. *Abhidharmakosabhasyam Vol.3*, 4th ed. Asian Humanities Pr, 1990. Chapter 6 - The Path and the Saints, p. 918

<sup>10</sup>Laziness, forgetting the advice, laxity and excitement, non-application, and application - 4/48 Maitriya's Discrimination of the Middle and Extremes, as cited in Jr, Donald S. Lopez, and The Dalai Lama. *Opening the Eye of New Awareness*. Rev Sub. Wisdom Publications, 1985. p.65

<sup>11</sup> The aspiration seeking meditative stabilization which is the sources of exertion, depending on that, the faith seeing the good qualities of meditative stabilization which is the cause of aspiration, and the pliancy which is the effect of exertion, not forgetting the object of observation, realizing laxity and excitement, the application abandoning them, and proceeding naturally when pacified - 4/49 Maitriya's Discrimination of the Middle and Extremes, as cited in Jr, Donald S. Lopez, and The Dalai Lama. *Opening the Eye of New Awareness*. Rev Sub. Wisdom Publications, 1985. p.65

the Maitriya's Discrimination of Middle and Extreme, the above mentioned five faults of calm abiding and eight antidotes of removing those five faults are explained in detail.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, in Maitriya's Ornament for the great vehicle sutra, in order to achieve perfection in calm abiding, nine mental abiding<sup>13</sup>, six powers<sup>14</sup> and four mental engagements<sup>15</sup> are mentioned.<sup>16</sup> The nine mental abiding function in the following ways; for instance setting the mind etc. functions having directed the mind at the object<sup>17</sup> of observation, not allowing its continuum to be distracted, having noticed distraction quickly return the mind to that object. The awareness also withdraws the mind inside more and more and seeing the good qualities, tame the mind in meditative stabilization. Through seeing the faults of distraction pacify dislike for meditative stabilization. Desire and so forth as well as discomfort and so forth likewise should be pacified immediately upon arising. Then, those who make effort at restraint make endeavor in the mind. Eventually, natural arising is attained and calm abiding is established. Similarly, the functions of six powers and four mental engagements can be known from the same text and its commentary by Asanga.

Vipasyana or Insight Meditation according to Mahayana tradition as described in the ninth chapter of Shantideva's Bodhicaryavatara from verse 79-106<sup>18</sup> is as follows; the four mindfulness are of, kaya/body, vedana/feeling, citta/mind and dharma/phenomena. First, kayasmrityupasthāna/mindfulness of body - generally, the human body is regarded as a single entity, whereas, in actual fact, it is not so. None of the many parts of the body can be called the body. It is only their 'samudāya' or collection which is erroneously termed as the body. There is no truly existent body in any of these parts because the parts have their own name, for example hands and feet, we do not call a hand a body and neither a foot a body. Likewise, the hands and feet are merely a collection of fingers; again fingers, in themselves, are a collection of joints; the joints too comprise different elements or parts. How can, therefore, the hands and feet or other joints be credited with true existence? Even the parts of fingers consist of atomic particles which are further divisible. These atomic particles have their own directional parts, some having a pull in the east, some in the west or north or south or even downward or upward according to their nature. They are 'śunya' like space itself in the ultimate analysis. There is no atom, no particle of atom; there is only 'śunyatā' or energy like. Śunyatā does not mean nothingness, if it so, there will not be any arising and, yet it cannot be pointed as to what it is, but it is not like a sky flower or a unicorn, it is simply beyond words. Śantideva says, 'śunyatā is unattainable by intelligence'.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, no wise man should, therefore, be attached to forms which are just dream and illusory like.

---

<sup>12</sup>Madhyanta Vibhanga ; Discourse on Discrimination Between Middle and Extremes Ascribed to Bodhisattva Maitreya and Commented by Vasubandhu and Sthiramati. Oriental books Reprint Corporation, 1978.

<sup>13</sup>1. Setting the mind, 2. Continuous setting, 3. Re-setting, 4. Close setting, 5. Disciplining, 6. Pacifying, 7. Thorough pacifying, 8. Making one-pointed, 9. setting in equipoise As cited in Jr, Donald S. Lopez, and the Dalai Lama. *Opening the Eye of New Awareness*. Rev Sub. Wisdom Publications, 1985. p.65

<sup>14</sup>1. the power of hearing, 2. the power of thinking, 3. the power of mindfulness, 4. the power of introspection, 5. the power of effort, 6. the power of familiarity

<sup>15</sup> 1. forcible engagement, 2. interrupted engagement, 3. uninterrupted engagement, 4. effortless engagement

<sup>16</sup> Chapter 4, Verse 48-49

<sup>17</sup> As mentioned in p. 3 earlier

<sup>18</sup> Sharma, Parmananda. *Santideva's Bodhicharyavatara*, Aditya Prakashan, Delhi, 2001 pp. 424-438

<sup>19</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> chapter 2<sup>nd</sup> verse, Bodhicaryavatara of Śantideva

Second, ‘vedanā smṛityopsthāna’ - Neither suffering nor joy is real or truly existent; if suffering were real it should affect everyone including those in a state of so-called joy. ‘vedanā’ or feeling is of three kinds; the feelings of joy, of suffering and of neither joy nor suffering. Therefore, both happiness and grief must be regarded as only by fancy super-imposed on the mind. On the other hand, vedana or feeling is born of contact, contact or touch is born of three factors: the object, the senses and consciousness. All contacts are born of six situations<sup>20</sup>; if the six-fold contact from the three-fold factors does not occur, the requisite situational material for feeling would be obviated. If there is a gap between the sense faculties (like eyes) and their objects or seen form, the chances of contact would be nullified. Not only that, there is no contact between atomic particles either, that is, atomic particles of the sense faculty and those of the objects. There is no union of atomic particles and they have no space inside of them. They are also equal in size. How can these partless atomic particles merge? Consequently, there is no meeting and hence no question of a contact. Without having contact, there is no feeling as the contact is the cause of feeling. Furthermore, only a physical object can contact another physical object. A physical object cannot contact a non-physical thing like consciousness. Hence, in the absence of contact, all the bother about obtaining pleasure and discarding pain is meaningless, because both joys and sorrows have no true existence.

Third, citta-smṛitupasthāna: There are two things in terms of mindfulness of mind, the senses that cognize and the objects of their so called cognition. Does cognition, if any, come about simultaneously with or prior to or after the disappearance of objects? If simultaneous, knowing and knower will not be interdependent, if prior or after, there will be a knower without knowing or there will be a knowing without a knower. Therefore, there is no independent or intrinsic knowing and knower. Ratnakuta-sutra says, “What does please, antagonize or attract that mind? Is it the past or the future or the present? That which is past is dead, that which is future is not yet present, and that which is present will not stay. O Kaśyapa! The mind is illusory and seems to grasp different aspects from imagination.”<sup>21</sup>

Fourth, dharma-smṛitupasthāna: No phenomena exist truly or intrinsically at the ultimate level. Nagarjuna says, “Never are things born, nor do things exist by themselves, nor from other or from both, nor from no cause.”<sup>22</sup> Similarly, all that appears as real are not in fact real but like dreams, mirages and magical illusion, because all phenomena come into existence only when the necessary causes and conditions get together. “Whatever that appears depending on others is emptiness. There is nothing that arises without depending on others.”<sup>23</sup> None that exists because of causes and conditions can ever be truly existent and independent. Take for instance a reflection, there needs to be certain things like a mirror, light and a thing for the appearance of a reflection of that particular thing. Similarly, all phenomena depend upon certain causes and conditions to arise and they do not exist inherently in reality. As Nagarjuna says in the Precious Garland, “all Phenomena are selfless just as a banana tree with nothing inside when all its parts are torn apart”.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, it is said, Everything is dependently co-arisen and that is to be the

<sup>20</sup> contact of six organs and six objects and six consciousnesses

<sup>21</sup> Sharma, Parmananda. *Santideva’s Bodhicharyavatara*, Aditya Prakashan, Delhi, 2001 p. 438.

<sup>22</sup> Muladhayamakakarika, 1<sup>st</sup> chapter 3<sup>rd</sup> verse

<sup>23</sup> Mulamadhyamikakarika 22:18-19

<sup>24</sup> Verse 101-102, Nagarjuna. *Nagarjuna’s Precious Garland: Buddhist Advice for Living and Liberation*. Snow Lion Publications, 2007

emptiness. There isn't anything that is not dependently arisen, thus a non-empty thing does not exist.<sup>25</sup> In this way, the practice of mindfulness or insight meditation according to Madhyamaka tradition is to indeed to see and realize that form is empty and empty itself is form, thereafter realizing that all suffering comes from cherishing the self and phenomena as well as knowing that those who have not come to the realization of such as suffering. With such a realization comes the aspiration to benefit all those sentient beings as long as space endures, this is the result of vipasyana or insight meditation.

According to the Mahamudra practitioners or the 84 Siddhas' tradition, all sentient beings possess Buddha nature which is only adventitiously covered by defilements, hence in this tradition it is emphasized that we maintain the uncontrived nature of body, speech and mind. Similarly, it is said in the sutra that neither there is anything that needs to be cleared nor anything to be maintained, view things as it is, because seeing everything as it is will free you from all obscurations.<sup>26</sup> The way of maintaining the uncontrived nature of mind is as explained below with analogies. The guarding of mind is as described through the analogy of a lion and a dog, for instance, if a person throws a stone on the lion, the lion will react to the person who threw the stone and not to the stone. But an ordinary dog will chase the stone and not the person who threw it, in the same way, a good practitioner will chase the source of the discursive thoughts and not the thoughts themselves. When chasing the source, the thoughts will disperse naturally, for example, it is like snowing in the ocean where snows get dispersed with the water as soon as it falls into the oceanic water. Similarly, one way is to actually look at the thoughts themselves instead of suppressing or trying to ignore them. This prevents us from being carried away by a train of thoughts, if we act like an ordinary dog; each thought leads into another and takes us far away from our original nature. By simply watching the thought in this fashion it will dissolve back into the mind just as waves eventually dissolve back into the ocean. Another method is to "spy" on the invading thoughts: "Where did it come from?" "Where is it going" "What is its nature?" By investigating it in this way it loses its power to captivate our attention and it dissolves back into the mind. Furthermore, mahamudra practitioners meditate upon the mind as shown below through six analogies.

The first is meditation like the sky illuminated by brilliant sunshine and which is completely unobscured by the slightest disturbance. The second is meditation like a child staring at the complex frescoes found in temples. Older people generally begin to analyze the paintings immediately according to their own tastes, but a child stares at them without judgment or evaluation. The third method is likened to an eagle soaring in the sky – flying long way without having to flap its wings often. In the same way, practitioners need slight analysis occasionally only for preventing sinking and agitation of lucid nature as well as maintain the lucid nature of the primordial mind. The fourth example is the stillness of a great ocean. In the same way as small fishes move about in the depth of an ocean without disturbing it, distracting thoughts may arise in our meditation but they do not have the power to overcome the profound stillness of the mind. The fifth example is a bird which flies through the sky without leaving the slightest trace behind it. In the same way if we experience a pleasurable sensation during meditation we cling to it and attachment arises or if we experience an unpleasant sensation, aversion arises. But when

---

<sup>25</sup> Aprat'tayasamutpanno dharma' kascinna vidyate / yasmattasmadasEnyo hi dharma' kascinna vidyate/(Madhyamakasastra 24.19)

<sup>26</sup> Abhisamayalankara 5<sup>th</sup> chapter verse 21

engaged in the actual fruit of calm-abiding no such trace remains to indicate our feelings since there is a complete lack of attachment, aversion or indifference. The sixth method is to meditate in the same way as a piece of fluff floats on the breeze, very soft and light. When we are absorbed in concentration on the nature of the mind, we will experience a sensation of physical and mental lightness and suppleness. These are some of the famous examples how to guard our mind as said by the Siddhas in order to achieve the perfection of meditation. In short, by keeping our body, speech and mind relaxed without any fabrication, as said by Gampopa, not stirring the water will keep the water clear; similarly, not contriving the mind will bring the manifestation of its primordial nature.

According to Tantra, all sentient beings possess Buddha nature or divine qualities, if the nature of the sentient beings is not divine then they can never be transformed into divine beings. For example, as said in various Tantric Literatures, one can only get sesame oil from sesame seed and butter from milk; one cannot get butter from water and oil from sand. Therefore, if all sentient beings do not have buddha nature, they cannot become buddhas, so sentient beings are indeed have the nature of buddha. In fact, Tantra literally means 'continuity' or 'continuum' of innate nature, Primordial nature, Tathāgatagarbha, Samantabhadra, Mahāmudrā, Great Consummation, Tantra, Great Śūnyatā and so on. Tantra is the inseparable subtle wind and luminosity, which is the base of all appearances. I think this is the main crux of Tantra. Sometimes, this is referred as wisdom and wind or energy, which cannot be separated from the clarity/mind and wind/its dynamic nature. It is like the fire and its warmth or flower and its odor. In Tibetan, we use the term *rlung/energy-sems/mind-dbyer-med/inseparable*. This is the tantra, which is continuous from the beginning less time. In Tantra tradition there is no mention of terms such as calm abiding and insight meditation, instead of that there appears two stages of meditation known as generation stage and completion stage. Generation stage is to generate oneself or one's subtle energy and mind in the form of divine deity and this is an alternate to calm abiding meditation. To see and realize this generated divine deity lacking inherent existence etc. is the completion stage and this is as same as insight meditation.

The practice of generation stage according to Guhyasamaja Tantra is done in the form of approach, close-approach, accomplishment and great accomplishment.<sup>27</sup> According to Krishnayamari Tantra, it is practiced through yoga, anu-yoga, ati-yoga and maha-yoga.<sup>28</sup> In Hevajra Tantra, generation stage is practiced through four parts/branches.<sup>29</sup> According to Mahamaya Tantra, it is practiced through three yogas<sup>30</sup> and according to Kalachakra Tantra, it is done through four yogas.<sup>31</sup> The completion stage is practiced through six-fold yoga, yoga of psychic heat, yoga of clear light, yoga of illusory body, yoga of intermediate rebirth, yoga of dream, yoga of consciousness transference.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Sevidhanaṃ prathamam dvitīyamupasadhanam /Sadhanam tu tṛtīyam vai mahasadhanam caturthakam // (Guhyasamajatantra 18.135)

<sup>28</sup>Prathamam bhavayed yogamnyogam dvitīyakam /Atiyogam tṛtīyam tu mahayogam caturthakam // (KRS`ayamar`tantra 17.8)

<sup>29</sup>Prathamam sEnyatabodhiṃ dvitīyam b`jasaṃgraham /TRtīyam bimbaniSpattiscaturtham nyasamakSaram // (Hevajratantra 1.3.2)

<sup>30</sup>Sa yogstrividhstriprakara` mantra-saṃsthana-dharmatma.(Mahamayatantra gu`avat`ka)

<sup>31</sup>Buston collecton vol. 14, p. 888, Lokesh Chandra, Delhi 1980

<sup>32</sup>Vajrayana darsana evam sadhana: theory and practice of Buddhist tantra, by Wangchuk Dorjee Negi, CIHTS, Sarnath, 1999. pp. 254-266

Conclusion: Theravada, Vaibhasika, Sautrantika assert atom as existing in reality and hence view the four noble truths as the object of knowledge of the noble beings. Therefore, the noble beings see the cyclic existence as in the nature of suffering, impermanence, impure and emptiness of self and practice this in their meditation. It is just as one has a very good friend and is usually very fond of the friend but when suddenly one day one comes to know that the friend is cheating and since then generates a feeling of aversion towards that friend. Similarly, from the beginning less time we have befriended with the cyclic existence and we are very attached to it. But once we start practicing samatha meditation and gain through the vipasyana or insight the faults of cyclic existence in the form of suffering, impermanence, dreamlike and so on, that insight makes us turn away from the cyclic existence and leads to Nirvana.

From the Mahayana point of view, all phenomena are of interdependent nature, for instance, the existence of a piece of paper depends in the following manner, it has come from tree, tree has its origin in earth, open space, light of sun, oceanic vapor, wind etc. Tree cannot come into existence on its own without depending on these elements, as if all these elemental contributions are reduced, there will not be something as a tree existing. Hence, all phenomena are dependently arisen and whatever is dependently arisen is empty of intrinsic existence. So, from the Madhayamaka point of view, body, feeling, mind and phenomena are viewed as not existing inherently but merely as an illusion and practicing meditating on this is the insight meditation. In Tantra, it is the practice of generation and completion stages and for the Siddhas it is to maintain the uncontrived nature of mind. These are some of the fundamental principles in terms of meditative practice in Buddhism.

Meditative Attainment: the ultimate result of such meditative practices is to attain Liberation and Buddhahood. From the mundane view, as said by His Holiness the Dalai Lama “Modern world creates excitement but not happiness. This excitement disturbs our mind and upsets our nervous system. Meditation is the only way to calm the mind and nervous system and in order to help us to lead a healthy life through spiritual development. Health is highest gain if we neglect our health no matter what we gain. We will lead a very miserable life. It is already established that meditation is the remedy for physical and mental sickness. So medical science or therapy are not so effective in helping a person to eradicate mental disturbances such as frustration and worries because they arise not only as a result of organic disorders, but are mind created. Therefore the remedy for these problems is meditation.”

The result of meditation is something that cannot be measured by a physical scale; it can only be individually experienced by analyzing the changes after the meditation practice by seeing how our delusion is decreasing and how the loving kindness is increasing. The detail results of the Vipasyana meditation can be read in ‘Impact of Vipasyana in Government, A research report.’<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Published by Vipasyana Research Institute , Dhammagiri, Igatpuri, Maharashtra, India, 2005