and upekkhā. Thus the jhānas of the form sphere are considered as a sāṁsāra type of vimokkha only in comparison to more sublime types of deliverances.

2 The Saṅghabhedavastu qualifies the radiation of the four brahmavihāras not only as avaśeṣa and avāḥādhaṇa, but also as āsappaiṇena, "without adversary"; Gnoli: The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu, vol. II, Rome 1978: 206.

3 Lily de Silva: "Cetovimutti, Paññāvimutti and Ubhatobhāgavimutti", Pali Buddhist Review, 3/3, 1978: 124 comments that "perhaps what is meant by this simile is that, just as petty small noises get drowned by the all-pervading sound of a conchshell, petty emotions such as attachment and aversion associated with sense data find no foothold in a well developed mind suffused with infinite benevolence".

4 The presentation in A. V, 300 is rather succinct, but a slightly more detailed description of how to combine mettā cetovimutti with the development of insight required for progress on the path to liberation can be found at M. I, 351, see also M. I, 38 and A. I, 196.

5 The same discourse relates the liberations of the mind developed through the other three brahmavihāras to the first three immaterial attainments.

6 A survey of passages related to animitta can be found in Peter Harvey: "Signless' Meditations in Pāli Buddhism", Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies, vol. 9 no. 1, 1986: 25-52.

7 The same discourse does, however, also list a type of paññāvimutta who is able to attain the immaterial attainments, which would conflict with the definition of the paññāvimutta arahant given elsewhere.

8 This has been pointed out by Bhikkhu Bodhi: "The Susima Sutta and the Wisdom-Liberated Arahant", Journal of the Pali Text Society, vol. 29, 2007 (forthcoming).

9 7. stands for the Taishō edition.


11 Such retrospective knowledge of having reached liberation might also be the implication of the instruction in the Satipatṭhāna Sutta to know when the mind is liberated, 'vimutta ḍaṭṭha pāṭi pājā ṃāti (M. I, 59), though according to the commentarial explanation the reference to the liberated mind in this context includes also temporary types of liberation (M. A, 280).


VIMUTTIMAGGA, the "Path to Liberation", is the title of what could perhaps be reckoned as a 'practice compendium' or 'path manual' that in many aspects is similar to the Visuddhamagga (see also VISUDDHAMAGGA). The present article will at first introduce the extant versions of the "Path to Liberation" and take up the question of its relationship to the Abhayaagiri monastery. This will be followed by a survey of the twelve chapters of the "Path to Liberation", with particular emphasis on differences between this work and the Visuddhamagga.

A complete version of the "Path to Liberation" has been preserved in Chinese translation under the title Jie-tuo dao lun (ām+řa ŚŚ ĬŚ, corresponding perhaps to Vimuktimarga-sāstra or Vimuktimarga-nirdeśā), found in the Taishō edition as entry number 1648 at T. XXXII 399c-461c (Nanjio no. 1293). The compilation of this work is attributed to an arhat by the name of Upatissya, and its translation into Chinese to Seng-qi-e-po-lo (gP=OF2...n) from Fu-nan (in the area of modern Cambodia / Thailand). Seng-qi-e-po-lo, whose name could be reconstructed as Samghapāla, Samghavarman or Samghabhara, was active in the early sixth century.

In addition to this Chinese translation, an extract from the same work has been preserved in the Tibetan canon under the title Rnam par grol ba'i lam las shyangs pa'i yon tan lstan pa zhes bya ba (Derge edition no. 306, Peking edition no. 972), corresponding to Vimuktimarga-dhutagupta-nirdeśā in Sanskrit. The translation of this extract, which describes the ascetic practices, is attributed to Vidyākaraprabha, who was active in the ninth century. The Tibetan text has been edited by Sasaki 1958 and Bapat 1964. Bapat 1944 (also Bapat 1964: XV) notes that in some editions of the Tibetan canon the Vimuktimarga-dhutagupta-nirdeśā contains a spurious passage with some sūtra
quotations from otherwise unrelated works, probably the result of a copyist's error who may have inadvertently taken over this passage from the Sūrasamuccaya.

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

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

What can be said with certainty is that in many respects the "Path to Liberation" shows close similarities to the Visuddhimagga. Of particular relevance to the relationship between these two works is an instance where Buddhaghosa refers to the opinion of "some", according to whom character types are the outcome of previous habits, the elements and humors, tissu caryāyai pubhācāriyānaṁ dhammapanid ānācāryaṁ ekacā eva n'atthi (Vism. 102). Dhammapāla in his commentary on the Visuddhimagga explains that the reference to 'some' intends Upatissa, and that this position is adopted in the Vimuttimagga, 'skacce ti Upatissatheraṁ sandhīvāha, tena hi Vimuttimaggo tathā vuttaṁ (Vism. 1. 1. 123; references to this work are throughout the Burmese edition). His identification is correct, as these three factors as conditions for character types are indeed listed in the Vimuttimagga (T. XXXII 410a12; a correspondence first noted by Nyanatiloka 1931: VIII). On the basis of the testimony of Dhammapāla, Buddhaghosa would have been aware of at least this aspect of the Vimuttimagga. Thus Nagai (1919: 80) could be correct when, right at the inception of scholarly studies of the Vimuttimagga, he suggested that "the Visuddhi-magga, which hitherto has been considered to be entirely [Buddhaghosa's] own work, is in reality a revised version of Upatissa's Vimutti-magga."

The Path to Liberation and the Abhayagiri Monastery

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

(1) According to Buddhaghosa, the ascetic practices should be reckoned as wholesome (except in the case of an arahant, when their undertaking is to be qualified as "undetermined", avyākata). Buddhaghosa considers 'those' who hold that the ascetic practice cannot be classified in this manner as lacking an understanding of the nature of the ascetic practices, vesam pi kusalatitthavinutthanaṁ dhutaṁgaṁ, vesam atthato dhutaṁgaṁ eva n'atthi (Vism. 80). Dhammapāla explains that the reference to 'those' intends the followers of the Abhayagiri monastery, vesam'ī Abhayagiriśaṁke sandhīvāha (Vism. 1. 104). Now the Chinese translation of the Vimuttimagga does consider it inappropriate to reckon the ascetic practices as either wholesome, or unwholesome, or undetermined (T. XXXII 406b19). Though the position taken in the Chinese Vimuttimagga would thus fit Buddhaghosa's criticism, the Tibetan version disagrees in this respect, as it classifies the ascetic practices as "wholesome", a彩色, corresponding to kūšalu (Bapat 1964: 76). Thus the Tibetan version would agree with the position taken by Buddhaghosa, since he also maintains that the ascetic practices are "wholesome", only adding the category "undetermined" in order to cover the case of an arahant.
(2) In the context of a discussion of the first jhāna, Buddhaghosa dismisses an alternative reckoning of the stages of access, full absorption and reviewing that is "held by some", evam eke vaṭṭapayanti (Vism. 148), whom Dhammapāla identifies as the followers of the Abhayagiri monastery, 'eke 'ti Abhayagirivāśino (VismA. I, 172). A view corresponding to Buddhaghosa's description is indeed advocated in the Vīmūttimagga (T. XXXII 417a8).

(3) When treating the aggregate of form, Buddhaghosa rejects the opinion of "some" that torpor should also be included under form, ekaccaṃma matena 'mimādhunā purī evam addhīni pi sāri līkharī (Vism. 450). Dhammapāla explains that this view was held among the inhabitants of the Abhayagiri monastery, ekaccaṃma 'ti Abhayagirivāśino (VismA. II 104). The Vīmūttimagga does include torpor in its listing of the aggregate of form (T. XXXII 445c25). The same position recurs also in the Vīmūttimārga extract in the Sāṃskṛtāṁśi-kā-vinīcāya (Skilling 1994: 189).

(4) In regard to the progress from stream-entry to once-return and from once-return to non-return, Buddhaghosa refers to "those" who believe that the attainment of fruition issues in the next stage of awakening if insight has been established, ye pana vaddati: saṭṭhānaṃ 'phalasamātātipi samāpajjissanti 'ti vipassānaṃ paṭṭhānetvā sakadāgāmi hiti, sa kadāgāmi ca anāgāmi 'ti. Buddhaghosa counters that in this case a non-returner would become an arahant, [then] an arahant a Pacekkabuddha, and [then] a Pacekkabuddha a Buddha, evam sati anāgāmi 'ti arahā bhāvissati, arahā pacekkabuddho, pacekkabuddho ca buddho (Vism. 700). Dhammapāla explains that Buddhaghosa's reference to "those" intends the inhabitants of the Abhayagiri monastery, ye paṇī ti Abhayagirivāśino sandhāvīhā (VismA. II 519). Bapat 1936: 40 (or 1937b: XLII) suggests that the view criticized by Buddhaghosa is "exactly the same" as a position taken in the Vīmūttimagga. Yet, the relevant passage in the Vīmūttimagga only explains that non-returners who attain fruition will not become arahants straightway because their insight lacks the required strength (T. XXXII 461a16). This presentation could either imply that fruition attainment needs to be conjoined with insight in order to lead to full liberation, or else that fruition attainment by its very nature excludes the possibility of developing insight that is sufficiently strong to lead to the final goal. Moreover, the actual view quoted by Buddhaghosa concerns the progression from stream-entry to non-return, whereas the Vīmūttimagga passage only addresses progress from non-return to full liberation.

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

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

- the indications given in the Visuddhimagga-tīkā or the Sinhalese sub-commentary are not confirmed by another external source;
- Dhammapāla does not relate Upanissa or the Vīmūttimagga to the Abhayagiri monastery, but mentions them separately in different contexts;
- several views proposed in the Vīmūttimagga and criticized by Buddhaghosa are not associated by Dhammapāla with the Abhayagiri monastery (see the survey in Bapat 1937b: XXXVII-XLII);
- not all of the positions that Dhammapāla attributes to the Abhayagiri monastery are found in the Vīmūttimagga. This is the case for an affirmation of the momentary concurrence of
telepathic knowledge and its object (Vism. 432: *tāṭika keći 'khāpapaccuppannāṃ cittaṃ cetopariyānāsavasā samayamāhaṃ hetu ti vadanti; Vism. A. II, 66: 'ketti ti Abhayagirī viśeśa), where neither the view nor the accompanying simile about throwing a handful of flowers into the air occurs in the corresponding section of the Visuddhimagga (T. XXXII, 443b).

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

Survey of the Visuddhimagga

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

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

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

The Visuddhimagga distinguishes between three types of *sīla: wholesome, unwholesome and undetermined (T. XXXII, 401a26). The Visuddhimagga does not include this threefold presentation in its analysis of virtue (Vism. 10), referring to it only in a by-the-way manner as a threefold distinction found in the Paññāsāṁbhidāmāgga which Buddhaghosa considers to be not relevant to the present discussion (Vism. 14 in reference to Paññāsī, 1, 44, where this is the only mode of reckoning types of *sīla).

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

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

Regarding the different types of ascetic practices, whereas the Visuddhimagga mentions "taking food in a [single] bowl", *pottapiṇḍika (Vism. 70), the Chinese and Tibetan versions of the Visuddhimagga speak instead of "knowing moderation with food"
corresponding to bhajo jana mattaṁñṇa (T. XXXII 409b5 and Bapst 1964: 8). While a listing of ascetic practices in the Aṅguttara Nikāya mentions patappādika (A. III. 220; see also Min. 359), neither patappādika nor bhajo jana mattaṁñṇa are found in another such listing in the Puggalapāṭhātī (Pug. 69). The same is also the case for a register of the ascetic practices in the Mahāyutpatti (Minyu. 86, §1128-1139). Thus, though there seem to be some fluctuations in listings of the ascetic practices, the presentation in the Vissudhimagga corresponds better to the above Aṅguttara Nikāya discourse than the Vismutto aṣṭa's reference to moderation with food (for a survey of works that also reckon moderation with food as an ascetic practice see Dantine 1991: 61).

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

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

In its fifth chapter, the Vissudhimagga describes how one should approach a teacher, the 'good friend'. Chapter six then surveys the different character dispositions that a pupil may have. The Vissudhimagga lists altogether fourteen types of character dispositions, to which it adds the possibility of character types under the influence of craving, views and conceit (T. XXXII, 409b26). Buddhagaha lists only six character dispositions and rejects the count of fourteen, of which he evidently was aware (as noted above, his dismissal of the attribution of character types to previous habits is identified by Dhammapāla as a reference to the Vissudhimagga). Buddhagaha comments that this fourteen-fold way of reckoning is simply the result of combining some of the basic six types with each other (Vism. 101). Regarding the reference to craving, views and conceit, he explains that since craving and conceit are part of greed, while views are a manifestation of delusion, these are also included in his six-fold reckoning (Vism. 102).

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

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

The Vissudhimagga advocates that, just as in the case of the kasiṇas, the meditative sign of the brahmavihāras can be spatially extended (T. XXXII, 411b11). Though Buddhagaha holds that the brahmavihāras should not be extended (Vism. 112), when examining the actual undertaking of the brahmavihāras he describes how they can be extended either in access or in absorption so as to cover living beings in various spatial directions (Vism. 320). Thus in practical terms the Vissudhimagga and the
Vimuttimagga appear to be intending the same type of practice. In the discourses, a recurrent simile that illustrates the development of the brahmavihāras describes a trumpeter who makes himself heard in all directions (e.g. M. II, 207); a practice that leads to liberation of the mind qualified as "immeasurable", appamāna cetovimutti (M. I, 297). These descriptions show that, from the perspective of the Pāli discourses, brahmavihāra practice does involve a form of meditative extension or spatial pervasion.

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

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

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

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

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

When examining recollection of the Buddha, the Vimuttimagga indicates that such recollection leads to access concentration, but then records an alternative opinion according to which such recollection may lead to the attainment of all four jhānas (T. XXXII, 428a27). The Visuddhimagga only envisages the attainment of access concentration (Vism. 212). Kheminda (in Ehara 1995: XLV) comments that the alternative opinion mentioned in the Vimuttimagga seems to agree with a
the 'appearance of death like an executioner' and the 'inevitability of death' together as its first way (Vism. 230). In the Vīmāntimagga these constitute two distinct approaches, listed as its first and second respectively. The Vissuddhimagga arrives at the same count of eight through the additional reflection of how death will bring to ruin all success gained in life, a point not made in the Vīmāntimagga.

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

For undertaking recollection of peace, the Vīmāntimagga recommends directing awareness to the factors overcome with the attainment of a particular jhāna or immaterial attainment, or to the defilements weakened or destroyed with the attainment of a particular level of awakening (T. XXXII, 434c11). In the Vissuddhimagga, recollection of peace takes instead the qualities of nibbāna as its object, nibbānassa gupā anussartabbā (Vism. 293).

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

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

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

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

For undertaking mindfulness of death, the Vīmāntimagga presents eight ways of approach (T. XXXII, 432a8). The Vissuddhimagga also lists altogether eight ways, differing in so far as it treats
in the *Vimuttimagga*). The difference in emphasis noted above in relation to contemplating the anatomical constitution of the body recurs in regard to the present recollection, as the *Vimuttimagga* merely lists the parts of the body that correspond to the four elements (*T.* XXXII, 438c27), whereas the *Visuddhimagga* offers a detailed description of each part (*Vism.* 353-363).

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

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

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

Chapter ten of the *Vimuttimagga* defines wisdom and analyses its different aspects and manifestations as a basis for turning to the 'five methods' for developing wisdom in its eleventh chapter. These five methods are: the aggregates, the senses, the elements, dependent arising, and the four noble truths.

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

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

In regard to the other aggregates, the analyses given in the two works also show some minor variations. Thus, for example, the *Vimuttimagga* analyses feelings in various ways until it arrives at a count of three times thirty-six and thus altogether one-hundred-and-eight feelings (*T.* XXXII, 447b24), a reckoning with a precedent in the *Bahuvedantiya Sutta* (*M.* I, 398). The *Visuddhimagga* only distinguishes between three and
five types of feelings (Vism. 461). Conversely, in the case of consciousness the Vimuttimagga counts just seven types (T. XXXII, 448a26, arrived at by reckoning mind and mind-consciousness-element separately), whereas the Visuddhimagga lists eighty-nine types of consciousness (Vism. 457). In a later section of the Visuddhimagga, Buddhaghosa applies the eighty-nine-fold reckoning also to feeling (Vism. 566, arrived at by associating feeling with each of the eighty-nine types of consciousness).

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

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

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

The Vimuttimagga completes its survey of the 'five methods' by turning to the four noble truths, whose actual discernment becomes the theme of its last chapter. When expounding this topic, the Vimuttimagga treats the distinguishing of name and form as an implementation of the first truth, which thereby fulfills purification of view (T. XXXII, 454a2). Insight into dependent arising then fulfills the second truth and accomplishes purification by overcoming doubt (T. XXXII, 454a14). The Vimuttimagga continues by describing the insight knowledges as an implementation of the fourth truth, covering:

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

The treatment of the insight knowledges in the Vimuttimagga thus combines several stages that the Visuddhimagga treats separately (see in more detail VIPASSANAṆĀNA). A similar combination of several stages can be found in the Patisambhidamagga (Ps. I, 59 and Ps. I, 60).

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

Another difference is that, instead of adopting the scheme of the four noble truths to treat the progress of insight until awakening, the Visuddhimagga takes the seven purifications from the Rādhamiti Sutta as its point of reference (M. I, 147). As already noted by Nagao 1919: 75, the title of the Visuddhimagga reflects this shift of emphasis from the four noble truths towards the seven purifications. Yet, whereas the four noble truths are a central aspect of the early Buddhist
teachings – in this respect the Vimuttimagga follows the illustrious example of Sāriputta in the Mahākatipadopama Sutta (M. I, 184) – the seven purifications occur only in the Rathavinīta Sutta and in the Dassutara Sutta (D. III, 288).

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

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

Apart from such differences, however, in general terms the two works show a remarkable degree of similarity. From an overall perspective, the Vimuttimagga appears somewhat more practical, whereas the Visuddhimagga has a tendency to be more scholarly. Often the Vimuttimagga is also more open-minded, in the sense that its author rests content with mentioning different opinions side by side, whereas Buddhaghosa has a more pronounced tendency towards refuting what in his view is not correct and establishing a single right opinion. The Vimuttimagga thus takes us back to a less dogmatic strand of Theravāda thought and offers us glimpses at alternative opinions that, had this work not been preserved in Chinese (and partial Tibetan) translation, would have been lost together with the commentarial traditions that have not found a place in Buddhaghosa’s compilation of the Pāli commentaries.

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

Our second interest in this article is to emphasize
that the roots of the Vinaya are to be primarily traced
in the Dhamma whose one and only concern is the
fulfilment of the life of brahmavihāra for the final
attainment of Nirvāṇa. The two statements dharmam
deseti and brahma-cariya pakāsati in the Buddhist
texts always go inseparably, hand in hand. The Vinaya
must necessarily uphold the ideals of the Dhamma
and essentially contribute to their fulfilment. It has to
be soon discovered that one of the primary aims of
establishing the Vinaya, in the wake of the Dhamma,
was for that purpose.

Dhamma and Vinaya, their Corroborative
Continuance

Any study about Buddhism must necessarily
commence with a sense of historical genesis. When
and where and for whose sake did such a system of
thinking which goes under the name of Buddhism
originate? What prompted its genesis and in whose
dhands did it see its development? Over the years,
what has been the pattern of its development etc.
These are relevant questions to face and to be
answered with diligence and detachment. This early
message which Śākyamuni, the Buddha Gautama, is believed
to have delivered to the world in the sixth century
B.C., is what goes today under the name dhamma
[Sanskrit dharman]. It essentially carries within it the
concept of brahma-cariya referred to as the totally
pure and totally complete religious life [kevalaparijñā
parisuddham brahma-cariya m pakāsati... D. 1. 62]. This life
of brahma-cariya leads man out of the painful cyclical
continuance in saṃsāra in which he is caught up,
his final liberation in Nirvāṇa. It is on hearing this
dhamma [saṃ dhamma satya] that the
religiously more mature people [saddhā-
pālāḥ bhīrāḥ sāmanrājyō], both men and women, give
up their household life and take to a totally new and
different life of renunciation or pārajīkā.

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