

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INSIGHT MEDITATION IN THERAVĀDA AND MAHĀYĀNA TRADITION

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Abstract

Insight meditation (*Vipassanā*) was found by Gotama Buddha over 2500 years ago. Buddhism believed that it is the only way to end suffering. Insight meditation is the enlightened knowledge of the process of five aggregate and true phenomena. In *Mahasatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* of *Dīghā Nikāya* and *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya*, both suttas mentioned that Insight meditation is the only way for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of *Nibbāna*. From Theravāda school, there are two kinds of meditations: *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. *Samatha* can be divided into forty means which develop the concentration and purify mind sect and *Vipassanā* is to eradicate all the defilements becoming *Arahat*. How the training of insight meditation keeps the mind on the impermanence, suffering, and non-self and the understanding of four noble truths. The final goal of Theravāda is that the four candidates and four fruits with the goal of becoming an *Arahat*. In the Theravādin tradition, the goal of practice is to attain *Nibbāna* for self by cutting off all defilements. After enlightenment, the practitioner has accomplished and helped others.

The meditation technic in Mahāyāna is no different from Theravada concepts. They accept four noble truths (*cattāri ariyā saccāri*), noble eightfold path (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*), the dependent origination (*paticca-samuppāda*), and the three characteristics such as impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*). But they argued that practicing meditation (*Samatha* and *Vipassanā*) is to give a hand to others, the arising of Mahāyāna school was made possible by the development of the doctrine of non-substantiality (*sunyata*) and new interpretation of the concepts of the middle way and dependent origination that diverged from the Theravādā teaching. Entering nirvana was seen as nothing more than an expedient means to help save sentient beings.

Keywords: *Kammaṅgāna*, *Vipassanā*, *Samatha*, *Nibbāna*, *Arahanta*, *Bodhisattava*, *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna*.

I. INTRODUCTION

Buddhism was established by the Gotama Buddha in the 5th centuries B.C, he got enlightenment at 35 years old and became a religious mendicant. He discovered the path to freedom from suffering especially the suffering of *Samsāra*. All beings are most afflicted by the fear of death. The Buddha discovered an answer to this problem, a path of liberation from suffering. He shared this path to his disciples. This is called the Noble Eightfold Path or the

way to practice meditation. At 80 years old, He had delivered all the *Dhamma* (*Tipitaka*) what he found to disciples and passed away. The *Dhamma* being propagated by his disciples through generation to generation until the present.

Unfortunately, after 100 years of the Buddha's passing away, some controversial points, as well as philosophy concept, emerged among the *Saṅgha* community. Therefore, Buddhist schools arose. The emerging of Buddhist school was between second and third Buddhist council. They gave a various interpretation of the *Dhamma*, what they understood and composed

into the books. For example, the concept of *Nirvāna*, the concept of the *Buddha*, the *Bodhisattva*, the *Arahant* are the difference between Theravāda and Mahāyāna school.

As the result, some spiritual training is diversity among two sects. *Theravādin* school attempt to attain *Arahant* while *Mahāyānism* try to become a *Bodhisattva*. The *Dhamma* can be divided into two sections: early teaching and later development: Early teaching can be said four books of *Vinaya Pitaka*, four *Nikāya* or *Āgama* and some parts of *Kuddhaka Nikāya*. The rest of the *Pitaka* is later development. Due to the different interpretation of the *Dhamma*, the practicing of meditation or the way to train is multicolored.

This dissertation will analyze the different concept of the *Arahanta*, the *Buddha*, and the *Bodhisattva* between two schools. The diversity of meditation technics will be examined with the reference to early teaching and both school literature. It thus is anticipated that this study will be beneficial and advantages to both school readers.

The analysis of insight meditation from both schools is so deep and hard to understand vividly. Because they consist of profound and deep philosophical teachings. For instance, the practicing of eight negation or voidness (*sunyata*) is rarely to practice for laypeople and monks and the concept of mindfulness is one of a profound awareness of insight meditation. To realize insight meditation vividly, he has to learn and practice both schools for a long time. However, I am going to try answering above the problems.

II. INSIGHT MEDITATION BETWEEN TWO SCHOOLS

The tools of insight meditation were discovered by the *Buddha* 2500 years ago in India. At 35 years of the age, he got enlightenment through training meditation under the bodhi tree at Buddha Gaya. After two months of enlightenment, he gave the first sermon to five ascetics in the Deer Park at Isipatana near Benares. The first sermon is the explanation of four noble which is the central teaching of Buddhism and the way to practice meditation as well. Having based on four noble truths, the Buddha had developed a thousand meditation technics for his disciples according to their knowledge through the entire *Tipitaka* or *Tripitaka* to realize the enlightenment. At the age of 80 years old, having left three baskets of *Dhamma* for future generations to guideway to happiness and end suffering, he attained the *Nibbāna* or *Nirvāna*.

After the demise of him, the *Saṅgha* community was divided into two main groups: Theravāda and Mahāyāna. Two schools are following the same concept of what the *Buddha* taught. However, there are slightly different interpretation especially philosophical concepts regarding the *Dhamma*. For instance, in Mahāyāna school, it maintains that a person must save himself by saving others. But the only *Bodhisattva* has the attitude of helping others. Therefore, Mahāyāna Buddhism encouraged his followers or practitioner an

attitude based on the premise that the practitioner already possessed necessary to realize Buddhahood for the original nature of mind is purification. *Mahāyānism* believes that only the Buddha is able to attain the *Nirvāna* through training six *Paramitas* and guide the sentient beings who are in the dark of wisdom. However, the final goal of *Theravādin* is that the four candidates and four fruits to become an *Arahanta*. In the *Theravādin* tradition, the goal of practice is to attain *Nibbāna* for oneself by cutting off all defilements. After enlightenment, the practitioner has accomplished and helped others. through training insight meditation, both schools believe that the final goal of *Nibbāna* or *Nirvāna* will be attained.

Meditation is continuous thought or musing upon one subject or serious of the subject: serious and sustained reflection or mental contemplation. The term of *Bhavana* is translated as by meditation, embracing the various methods of mind-culture or instruments of meditation which has two types: *Samatha* which leads to the quietude of heart and mind, experience in the states of mental absorption and *Vipassanā*, insight meditation which is the inward vision into the real nature of all phenomena as impermanent, suffering and without substance. *Vipassanā* is promoted by a mind that is got rid of from disturbance of the evil emotions whiles *Samatha* tries to remove the mental prejudices and biases for the proper direction of the mind of insight. To get the enlightenment of the Buddhist goal, the methods of mental training lead to tranquility as well as lead to the insight that should be practiced. Because they mutually support each other.

The term of *Vipassanā* can be divided into two: “vi” and “passanā”. Vi is “special, intensive”. Passanā is seeing, understanding, finding. Thus, *Vipassanā* is a special understanding, special seeing of insight. The popular translation of this term is insight meditation. What special seeing is seeing the intuitive insight into the impermanent (*anicca*), suffering or miserable (*dukkha*) and impersonal (*anatta*) nature of all bodily and mental phenomena of existence. The aim of *Vipassanā* is to develop vision, understanding, and insight regarding formations and lead to the destruction of ignorance. Then, *Vipassanā* leads to the arising of super forms of delight and happiness. It means the way to *Nibbanā* while *Samatha* aimed at the destruction of passion. But both *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* are required for the eradicating passion and a whole host of mental defilements. And both of them can be developed by higher knowledge as integral parts of the noble eightfold path.

Samatha and *Vipassanā* can be developed through mindfulness of breathing. The basic difference between *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* is that *Vipassanā* is observing three characteristics such impermanence, suffering and non-self on the sight and all the phenomena to cut samsara and attain *Nibbāna* and *Samatha* is to develop the concentration to get rid of hindrances. The instruction of *Vipassanā* meditation is from the *Mahāsatipatṭhāna sutta* of *Digha Nikāya* and other early texts. In this *sutta*, four foundations of mindfulness are discussed based on three characteristics:

1. Contemplation of the body (*Kāyanupassanā-Satipaṭṭhāna*)
2. Contemplation of feelings (*Vedanānupassanā-Satipaṭṭhāna*)
3. Contemplation of mind (*Cittānupassanā-Satipaṭṭhāna*)
4. Contemplation of mind-objects (*Dhammānupassanā-Satipaṭṭhāna*)

For the observation of the body, it is divided into six parts: the contemplation of mindfulness of breathing, of four posture, of clear awareness, of reflection on the repulsive (parts of the body), of the four elements, and the nine charnel-ground. The feeling also has nine kinds of contemplation while the contemplation of mind-objects has five types of observation. It mentions that a meditator should observe body as body or feelings as feeling or mind as mind or mind-object as mind-object ardent, clearly aware, and mindful, having put aside hankering and fretting for the world. The *Mahānidāna sutta* also explains the contemplation of feeling which based on impermanent, conditioned, dependently-arisen, bound to decay, to vanish to fade away, to cease.

In the *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Mūlapariyāya sutta*, *Ānāpānasati sutta*, *Kāyagatāsati sutta* also mention the concept of meditation and procedure of training insight meditation. In the Mahāyāna texts such as the *Prajnaparamita sūtra*, *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka sūtra*, and *Amitābha sūtra* explain the concept of Mahāyāna insight meditation and how to train it.

III. THERAVĀDA MEDITATION

Theravāda school maintains that *Samatha* has forty kinds of objects to develop concentration leading to the attainment of *Jhāna* states. *Samatha* is to settle the mind, to make the mind steady, quiet, one-pointed and concentrated. It means focusing on a single object to develop the mind or its power of concentration. The *Buddha* stated vividly, those who live in a quiet place and develop *Samatha* are, indeed, living following the Dhamma. The disturbance for *Samatha* is the five hindrances. According to the *Visuddhimagga* (the path of purification) by Venerable Buddhaghosa, there are forty kinds of *Samatha* which can be trained according to personal character. They are:

1. Ten *Kasiṇa*
2. Ten impurities or corpses (*Asubha*)
3. Ten Reflections (*Anussati*)
4. Four sublime states (*Brahma vihāra – appamaññā*)
5. *Āhāre paṭikūlasaññā*
6. Four the four immaterial spheres (*Arūpajhānas*)
7. *Catudhatu-vavatthāka*

In *Mahārāhulovāda sutta*, the perfect one asked Ven. Rahula to cultivate *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* meditation on such as the four great elements, the four sublime states, the foulness, the perception of impermanence, the mindfulness of breathing. Developing loving-kindness will abandon ill will. Meditation on compassion will remove cruelty. Development of altruistic joy gets rid of any discontent. Training in equanimity will eradicate any discontent. Foulness is

the way to abandon lust and desire. the perception of impermanence will abandon the concept “I am”. Finally, developing meditation on mindfulness of breathing is to enhance the concentration (*samādhi*).

All forty meditation objects belong to *Samatha* meditation. The aim of *Samatha* is to calm down the five hindrances and to develop the higher *Jhāna-samadhi* which can calm down the lower *Jhāna* factors such as thought (*Vitakka*), investigation (*Vicāra*), delight (*Pīti*) and happiness (*Sukha*).

The term of *Vipassanā* is popular among *Theravāda* countries. The Buddhist claim is that *Vipassanā* was discovered originally by the *Buddha* himself. It means *Samatha* has existed before the *Buddha*. According to early Buddhism, *Vipassanā* is closely connected with wisdom. The main task of *Vipassanā* is the development of wisdom which leads to the eradication of ignorance and sensual desire. The development of wisdom requires *Vipassanā* into impermanence in particular. The final goal of this meditation is to be free from all *dukkha* and to attain *Nibbāna*.

In the Theravāda tradition, as presented in the *Visuddhimagga*, in practicing *Vipassanā* meditation, the seven purifications need to be developed in hierarchical stages observing noble eight-fold path. The seven *Visuddhi* are:

1. *Sīla-visuddhi* (purity of morality)
2. *Citta-visuddhi* (purity of mind)
3. *Diṭṭhi-visuddhi* (purity of view)
4. *Kaṅkhā-vitarāṇa-visuddhi* (purity by transcending doubt)
5. *Maggāmagga-ñānadassana-visuddhi* (purity of vision in discerning the path and non-path)
6. *Patipadā ñānadassana visuddhi* (purity of vision of the path-progress)
7. *Ñānadassa visuddhi* (purity of vision of the knowledge)

The seven purities depend on each other like in the process of dependent origination. In the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Rathavinīta Sutta* (Sutta No. 24) gives the explanation of the hierarchy of seven purifications with a simile of one who covers a journey in gradual stages using different means of transportation. One mounts the first coach at the first point and travels to the second point. Then one mounts the second coach and travels to the third point, and so on. In the same way, one purifies morality to get to the point of purification of the mind. therefore, before training meditation, the meditator should observe the presents.

Instruction relating to training in *Vipassanā* is given in the *Mahāsatiṭṭhāna sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* in the Theravāda canon. In this *sutta*, the four areas for the growth of *Vipassanā* through the deployment of mindfulness cover the body, feelings, mental states, and the *Dhammas*.

According to *Mahāsatiṭṭhāna sutta*, the *Buddha* also said: practitioner chose the quiet place such as the forest, or the root of a tree or an empty place. Then, he sits down cross-legged, holding his body erect, having established mindfulness before him. Next, he is aware of breathing in and out. He should know when he breathes in a long breath or in short breath and knows when he

breathes out a long breath or out a short breath. Having thinking himself, I will breathe out, conscious of the whole body or I will breathe in and out, calming the whole bodily process. He dwells contemplating the body as the body internally and externally. He dwells contemplating arising phenomena in the body or contemplating vanishing phenomena in the body, or contemplating both arising and vanishing phenomena in the body. He is mindful that “there is a body” is present to him just to the extent necessary for knowledge and awareness. And he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world. In the same way, For the feeling, when feels a pleasant feeling the yogi knows that he feels a pleasant feeling; feeling a painful feeling he knows that he feels a painful feeling; feeling a feeling that is neither - painful nor pleasant he knows that he feels a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant; He abides contemplating arising phenomena in the feelings, vanishing phenomena and both arising and vanishing phenomena in the feeling. In the mind section, one knows a lustful mind as lustful, a mind free from lust is free from lust; a hating mind as hating, a mind free from hate as free from hate; a deluded mind as deluded, an undeluded mind as undeluded, etc. it means the meditator should be aware of the processes of each aggregate with mindfulness and then realizes that all are momentary, suffering or un-satisfactoriness and selfless.

According to the Theravāda concept, having developed the insight meditation, the four stages can be attained: *Sotāpaṭṭi magga*, *Sakadāgāmi magga*, *Anāgāmi magga*, and *Arahanta*. The first attainment, *Sotāpaṭṭi magga* free from three of the fetters such as the delusion of self-hood, doubt about the efficacy of religious life, and belief in rules and vows are destroyed. The *Appahāya* sutta of *Anguttara Nikāya* states that one is capable of realizing accomplishment in view, having abandoned six things such as personal existence view, doubt, wrong grasp of behavior and observance, lust leading to the plane of misery, hatred leading to the plane of misery, and delusion leading to the plane of misery. Theravādā maintains that he will be born only seven times in the worlds of devas and men. After attaining the first state, he is able to attain the second state following the same methods of meditation. He is called *Sakadāgāmi* which attenuates sensuous desire, and ill-will. He is also called Once Returner because he is bound to attain the final emancipation after being born in the sensual plane only once more. One who attains the fruit of Once-Returner, he will attain the third state in the near future following the same method of meditation. He destroys the residue of both sensuous desire and ill will. If he does not attain the final emancipation in this very life, he will be born in a *Brahmā* world. This school said that he will attain *Nibbāna* in *Brahman* world. He is called *anāgāmi* (non-returner) for the reason that he will never return to the sensuous plane anymore. He who has attained the fruit of Non-Returner will attain the final state of sainthood following the same method of meditation. This state destroys the remaining five fetters: attachment to existence in the fine-material and immaterial planes, conceit,

excitement, and delusion. He is called *Arahanta*, a worthy one in this state, because he frees himself from all the mental suffering and attains *Nibbāna* destroying all defilements. This is the final goal of the Theravāda school.

IV. MAHĀYĀNA INSIGHT MEDITATION

In Mahāyāna, an important insight meditation technique is the four foundations of mindfulness which is the same as what is described in the Theravāda school namely:

1. The mindfulness of the body
2. The mindfulness of feelings
3. The mindfulness of mind
4. The mindfulness of phenomena.

The four foundations of mindfulness lead us to the right way so that we do not mistake impurity for purity, suffering for happiness, impermanence for permanence, and what has no independent self for something that does. To the contemplation of the body, with thought fixed to one object, one may concentrate one's own body with threefold contemplation: *Aśuba*, *Ānāpāna*, and *Dhātu*. He acts with full attention to his comings and goings; with full attention to his forward looks and his backward looks; with full attention to his bends and stretches; with full attention to eating, drinking, chewing, tasting, defecation, urination, sitting, standing, sleeping, walking, talking and keeping silent.

This body is made up of the six elements. Having developed concentration, he will realize that the earth element does not crumble when moistened by the water element; that the water element cannot flow when restrained by the earth element; that body does not rot when kept in motion by the wind element; that food can enter and leave the body by passing through the element of space; that the body can do things when united with element of consciousness. This body is to be a collection of filth, subject to change as easily as a heap of sand can be blown about by wind. This leads him to the gateway of deliverance called the empty. If a meditator dwells in mindfulness of the body, observing the body, and if, after he has dwelt in mindfulness of the body, observing the body, his thought does not take leave of desire or other defilements. He will understand that this body has the four characteristics of impermanence, woe, emptiness, and selflessness.

In the contemplation of sensation or feeling, thought and *dharma*, concerning inner feeling, one dwells in observation and mindfulness of feelings arising anywhere in the body, with the refined striving and by resort to devices, with the right knowledge and in right mindfulness, taming cares and owes of the world. In the same way, he understands the mind affected by five obstacles such as greed, anger, torpor, regret, and doubt or ignorance. On the other hand, he is aware of the mind unaffected by the five obstacles. the contemplation of the *Dharma* is that concerning internal *dharmas*, to external *dharmas*, to *dharmas* both internal and external, he contemplates on observation and mindfulness, with the refined striving and by resort to devices,

in right mindfulness and right knowledge of the *dharma*s. The *Dharma* is the mind-objects such as the five hindrances, five aggregates, six bases, seven enlightenment factors, and four noble truths.

It means a mendicant should be aware of the arising of sensation or thought and the *dharma* mindfully. Then he will understand that all the *dharma* are impermanence, woe, emptiness, and selflessness. After realizing that, he abides independent, not clinging to anything in the world.

The meditator should be exhorted to acquire three kinds of wisdom: *Śrutamayī* (wisdom by learning), *cintāmayī* (wisdom by investigation), and *Bhāvanāmayī parijñā* (wisdom by meditation). the second wisdom contains the investigation of by reasoning and by reference to the authority of scripture, discrimination between the implicit and explicit meanings of the teachings in the sutras, and so on. After realizing the wisdom of investigation, meditation, the basis of the third kind of wisdom should be practiced in the following way:

1. By mastering *Samatha* or the tranquilization of mind through the observation of moral and yogic rules, nine stages of *Samatha*, four *dhyānas* and so on.

2. By *Vipaśyanā* which is the analysis of the object of meditation from what has been studied by the investigation.

It means that Mahāyāna also believed that only the tranquilization (*Samatha*) meditation is unable to destroy moral defilements and false knowledge. When a yogi succeeds in mastering tranquilization, he moves to practice the wisdom of analysis (*Vipaśyanā*) meditation. when he succeeds in this analysis or insight meditation (*Vipaśyanā*), he is placed in the preliminary state called *Adhimutikaryābhūmi* for the ten stages of a *Bodhisattva*. In each of ten stages, he repeats *Samatha*, *Vipaśyanā*, and *Yuganaddha* to annihilate his defilements more completely and to attain to wisdom regarding various doctrines and supernatural powers. After these ten stages of a *bodhisattva*, he finally gets Buddhahood.

The process of investigation is as follows: In the first stage, the meditator should examine those material things which ordinary people imagine to be external objects. When the yogi examines, analyzing atoms into their segments, he does not find the existence of the objects and all things are mind only, external objects being totally nonexistent. It advises him to abandon the habit of imagining the existence of material things because all conditions of their perception of being satisfied, they are not seen because of his careful examination.

On the other hand, he should examine immaterial things which are called “mind-only”. When it examines it carefully, it can be found mind-only which is devoid of subject and object and neither objects nor subject which is in relation to object. Everything is imaginary created by a deluded mind or *Moha*. The deluded mind must be replaced with wisdom mind training morale, concentration, and wisdom. In abiding thus in the meditation of having suchness as its object and being characterized by nonduality, he should go

beyond that mind-only too. It means surpassing the image of the subject, he should abide in the knowledge of nonduality (neither subject nor object) in which the two (subject and object part) is manifested. Having realized the concept of suchness, he will understand that things arise neither from their selves nor from other things and that when subject and object are unreal, he will abandon attachment to ascribing reality to cognition of nonduality and abide in the knowledge of non-manifestation of even nondual knowledge. This is the way of investigation. After realizing the true nature, he converts his concentration to insight meditation to abandon all the attachment and defilements.

According to the *Prajnaparamita sutra*, our distorted thought is at the root of our failure to escape from the cycle of birth and death. Every thought has its conversion into birth and death. Due to feeling, conception, volition, and consciousness, every thought has its conversion into birth and death. Every rise and fall of delusive thoughts mark this conversion into birth and death. To stop the rise and fall or birth and death, to practice *Dharma* correctly, one should endeavor to liberate one’s thought from delusion through wisdom or *prajna*. Having realized the concept of the deluded mind, on the other hand, he should penetrate the five aggregates as empty. The body is composed of four elements: earth, water, fire, and air which have the character of solidity, viscosity, temperature, and vibration. This matter changes under physical conditions and illness and death are caused by an imbalance of the elements or their scarcity or absence. In the same way, death and birth are the natural results of the body’s being compounded from the four elements. The rest of the four aggregates are mind which is the characteristic of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and knowing which arise through conditions. Five aggregates are generated by craving and clinging assisted by delusion.

According to this *sutta*, two types of craving are mentioned: the craving to form and craving to mind. Clinging to form is the domain of the form *Skandhas* while the remaining four *skandhas* constitute the domain of the mind. All grasping, manifested in attachments and aversions, is generated and developed due to the activity of these four *skandhas*. The initial clinging is ego-bound which is the anchor of our volition to grasp and to possess, the root of our attachments and aversions and, via these, the very root of our suffering. In the five aggregates, there is no self or the five aggregates are not the self. our real self is our original nature. It depends on the body only temporarily and the body has birth and death and the period between them.

Due to craving and attachment, all the action takes place and then, it emerges at birth and suffering. Actually, all the five aggregates and the defilements manifest the three characteristics of existence: temporary, suffering and selfless. As obscured by delusion, the craving comes to be existence. all the phenomena including the root suffering, desire and ignorance arise and pass away through the meeting of cause and condition. Therefore, one should realize that *skandhas* are empty of self and everything is empty but

cause and condition. Let me explain further the concept of emptiness according to this sutra. Emptiness is the substance of our nature. The form is nature and nature are formed. The form is eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Nature is seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and knowing. The form is not separate from nature, and nature cannot separate from form. For the reason that without form, there is no nature because form and nature are of the same substance and there is no insider or outside, so form and mind-nature are the same. For instance, a mirror is made to reflect whatever is in front of it. The mirror will reflect all with equal clarity. But without a mirror, there is no reflection and it is not a mirror, without reflecting.

In the same way, everything has nature such as earth, fire, water, and wind. Our true nature is also like that. Seeing is the nature of the eye organ, hearing is the nature of the ear organ, smelling is the nature of the nose organ, tasting is the nature of the tongue organ, touching is the nature of the body and knowing is the nature of the mind. The six organs do not dwell on the six types of data for they arise and pass away immediately. The aggregates are also composed of the eighteen realms, consisting of six sense-organs, six sense-data and six kinds of consciousness. The eye has two aspects: organ of sensation and faculty of sensation. The eye is the organ. The faculty also has two parts: seeing and form. The capacity of the eye to see or the subject of seeing is called the seeing nature. The form of seeing is related to the object of seeing: it is always connected to an object, and, the eye is always seeing something, whether a thing or a shape, a color or a size. The object of seeing is most confusing, and the uninstructed can easily fall into self-deception by believing in the independent existence of whatever they are looking at. Thus, the process of experience gets so twisted that it suits volition to grasp and possess the objects.

However, nothing arises independently or everything is selfless. The remaining five sense-doors can be inferred from the example of the eye organ. Everything depends on nature and form or cause and condition. It is called dependent arising or emptiness. Yet most people are always confusing illusion with reality, beings quite unaware of their true nature. Thus, they grasp at and cling to reflections and dust. Actually, reflections in the mirror are impermanent but the mirror nature is constant. Reflections come and go, but the reflectivity of the mirror remains. The different concept of emptiness between two schools is that Theravāda holds that form and mind to be distinct and separate while the Mahāyāna school views that form and mind are inseparable. The great school said “to realize this path and to complete the Enlightenment, it is attainable only utilizing mindfulness, by being observant, and by awakening to the Ultimate Truth.

Enlightened utilizing perceiving the nature of the void, he comprehended the nature of five senses as non-abiding and mind freed of grasping attain the wonderful dharma of the inconceivable. The *Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara* attained enlightenment by perceiving the original nature which abandons the

duality inherent in subject and object, whereupon, he attained the middle way perfectly and completely. Therefore, *Bodhisattva Nagarjuna* said the characteristics of the void-ness of all dharmas are non-arising, non-ceasing, non-defiled, non-pure, non-increasing, non-decreasing, non-birth and non-death and dependent only on each other. In order to have correct practice, it is not necessary to apply the method of Theravāda, the middle Vehicle or Mahāyāna. Anyone can become a *Buddha* spontaneously by deeply comprehending that “all existence is void”. This is the wisdom of investigation from the *Prajnaparamita sutra*. It said that if the practice is based on this point of view, the only partial void can be attained as well as it can also be termed enlightenment. The realizing of emptiness is one of the central training of insight meditation in Mahāyāna school. Guidance on the following lines is given for practicing insight meditation in Mahāyāna Buddhism:

1. Initially, one is expected to establish concentration as mentioned earlier, because without establishing concentration, the mind cannot observe the actual process of natural phenomena. Therefore, beforehand, it is necessary to establish pure *Samādhi*.

2. One is expected to observe the body is not belonging to oneself, as something “not mine”

3. One is expected to observe that things are neither subject to annihilation or eternity

4. One needs to reflect on the teaching of causality observing that everything arises through cause and condition

5. One needs to reflect on the Skandhas (five aggregates) as arising and passing away

6. One should conceive of the sense doors as an empty city

7. One should reflect on the aggregates and others as selfless

8. One should reflect on everything of the earth as impermanent, suffering, and non-self.

Mahāyāna insight meditation describes such practice as leading to the attainment of Buddhahood in the future.

The attainment of Mahāyāna

In Mahāyāna school, *Nirvāna* cannot be attained by anyone except by reaching *Samyaksambodhi*. That state can only be attained by making all dharmas the basis of meditation. Because *Arahat, Śrāvaka Bodhi* or *Pratyekabodhi* is concerned only with the individual person (*Puṅgava Nimitta*) as its basis for meditation it does not realize the *Dharmanairātmya*. Therefore, persons who follow those ways cannot attain *Nirvāna*. *Dharmanairātmya* is the realization of the non-existence of things whatsoever, of the universe.

According to the Theravāda doctrine, everything is originated from causes and conditions and things are in a state of flux and devoid of any substance. Everything included under mental and physical constituents is impermanent and is in a state of constant flux. *Nirvāna* is the realization of the

non-existence of an *Ātman* either identical with one of the *khandhas* or apart from them. In the Mahāyāna school, however, everything is non-existent and it exists only in the imagination. Due to ignorance, beings suffer from defective vision. The true existence is *Śūnyatā* or *Dharma Nairātmya*. According to the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*, one who realizes the dharma as devoid of *Ātman* knows the truth.

Śrāvaka or *Pratyekabodhi* does not have this knowledge. Only *Samyaksambodhi* and *Bodhisattva* realize both *Padgalanairātmya* and *Dharmanairātmya*. To get the attainment of emancipation (*Mokṣa*) and omniscience (*Sarvajñatā*), two screens have to be removed. They are the screen of passion and the screen that covers *Jñeya*. Passion is the obstacle to the attainment of emancipation and that which conceals *Jñeya* is the obstacle to the functioning of knowledge. One is called a person who has reached Bodhi or attained of omniscience or emancipation after removing two screens and attaining *Nirvāna*.

In contrast, Theravāda believes that the *Arahat* who destroys the screen of actions (*Karmāvaraṇa*), of the effects of *Karma* (*Vipākāvaraṇa*) and the affliction (*Kleśāvaraṇa*) attains knowledge and *Nirvāna* as he eliminates all affliction (*Kleśāvaraṇa*) from mind including the *Avijjā*.

However, Mahāyāna argues that an *Arahat* cannot attain *Nirvāna* for the reason that his aim is not the realization of *Dharmanairātmya* or *Śūnyatā*. The *Lankāvatāra* says that there is no real emancipation (*Mokṣa*) without the realization of *Dharma-nairātmya*. It means *Nirvāna* is the realization of *Śūnyatā* veiled by ignorance. To attain Nirvana, one has to realize this concept and become a *Buddha* or a *Bodhisattva*. Mahāyāna says that *Nirvāna* is: “what neither is released nor is ever reached, what neither is annihilation nor eternity, what neither never disappears nor has been created, what can neither be extinguished as defilements nor can be attained as a reward for renunciation, what neither can be annihilated as all the active elements of life nor is everlasting as a non-relative absolute principle, what neither can disappear nor can be created.”

One who realizes the concept of *Śūnyatā* attains *Nirvāna*. One should realize that nothing is really suppressed in *Nirvāna*, and nothing is annihilated. Everything is imagination. We are haunted by illusion. *Nirvāna* consists merely in the suppression of absolutely all the false construction of our imagination. Before attaining *Nirvāna*, we have to get rid of illusion or *Moha*.

V. CONCLUSION

The basic foundation of Theravāda meditation is derived from the *Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta* as well as some *Pāli* Suttas such as *Mahānidāna*, *Satipatṭhāna*, *Mūlapariyāya*, *Sabbāsava* and *Sammādiṭṭhi Suttas*. But *Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta* explains the practice of *Samatha* as well as *Vipassanā* meditation in detail. Many common aspects can be found in the meditation training methods of both schools. However, Theravāda *Vipassanā* meditation aims to attain Arhathood and *Nibbāna*, not the attainment of *Bodhisattva* state,

which is a characteristic difference between the positions of the two sects. The object of insight meditation is to liberate from suffering such as birth, aging, illness, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, despair, imperfection, impermanence, emptiness, and insubstantiality. There are slightly different between two sects regarding the concept of meditation, the objective of meditation. The different are:

1. Theravāda seeks to attain *Arahanth* while Mahāyāna attempt to become as a *Bodhisattva*. Because Mahāyāna said that *Arahanth* could not attain *Nirvāna* and *Arahanta* still has some defilements (*kilesa*). In contrast, the elder school accepts that *Arahanta* emancipates from defilements.

a. The procedure of training insight meditation is the same but the aim is different.

b. Theravāda maintains that *Samsāra* and *Nibbāna* are different while the great school believes that *Samsāra* and *Nirvāna* are same. Due to ignorance, people thought they are different.

c. The numbers of technical and practical meditation subjects are the same between the two sects.

2. On the other hand, some agreements can be found between the two schools.

a. They aim to get rid of desire, hatred, and delusion

b. They accept that the world has neither beginning nor end

c. Both schools accept the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path, Dependent Origination, or *Āryasatyas*

d. They have recognized that all the phenomena are transient, momentary and are in a state of perpetual flux and are without any real substance.

e. They are agreed that the law of causation is universally valid.

f. Non-violence is accepted by them

g. They have maintained that insight meditation discovered by the perfect One

However, meditation is the way of nobleman which leads to the cessation of suffering, accepted by Buddhist schools. Insight meditation is the realizing thing as they really are, so that it is able to get rid of the unwholesome mind. Thus, one who becomes a monk is compulsory to practicing meditation: *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. The path that leads to insight meditation is the noble eightfold path. Having based on the noble path, four foundations of mindfulness as four objects of insight meditation is offered by the *Buddha*. Training one of four objects, the practitioner will get the emancipation and the true happiness found by the enlightened one. Therefore, though there are some colorful idea regarding insight meditation, if the meditator practice what the Buddha taught, is able to attain the enlightenment whether Theravāda or Mahāyāna practitioner.

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