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Sources and Definitions

Dhyāna and Meditation Theory

An appropriate starting point for our study is to establish some basic definitions of the philosophical concepts that are foundational in the practices of meditation and yoga in the Hindu and Buddhist context. Primary among these are *dhyāna*, "meditation," and *samādhi*, "meditative absorption" or "contemplation." *Dhyāna* and *samādhi* are terms that are well represented in the literature of the study of religion, particularly in the Indo-Tibetan context, but are rarely used by scholars of these religions with significant precision. These terms play crucial roles in both the Hindu and Buddhist meditative systems and the soteriological or liberatory processes of which they are a part. The development of Hindu and Buddhist conceptions of *dhyāna* and *samādhi* demonstrates the ongoing effort within these religious communities to clarify different interpretations of what constitutes liberation and what means are necessary to bring about these ends. In other words, examining the role of these ideas across the Hindu-Buddhist boundary is particularly helpful in understanding how different schools and sects of these traditions have understood the practice of meditation in the context of an assumed plurality of viewpoints. Researching across this boundary clarifies the role of meditation practice in both traditions and weakens the common viewpoint that these traditions are autonomous entities that can be viewed in isolation. The relationship between the Classical Yoga tradition of Patañjali and the development of Buddhist models of meditation also demonstrates the tension between scholastic and ascetic tendencies with meditation that occur in both Hindu and Buddhist contexts. As has been noted by Gerald Larson, it can be argued that

both Hindu and Buddhist conceptions of meditation are based in a pan-Indian "tradition text," a body of knowledge that extends beyond the boundaries of either tradition, into Jainism and other *śramaṇa* traditions such as the Ājīvikas.[1] This "tradition text" can be said to be nuanced by the polemics that these traditions have used to differentiate themselves from one another and by the degree to which yoga was integrated, or *not* integrated, into the soteriological vision that each tradition represents as its own.

For developing definitions, we now examine two paradigmatic texts that represent Hindu and Buddhist attempts to codify the religious path and the role of the practices of yoga and meditation in that liberatory path. These texts are Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*, representing the Hindu Classical Yoga tradition, a text that continues to be used for Hindu self-definition in contemporary practice, and the *Bhāvanākrama* of Kamalaśīla, a text that demonstrates an attempt to codify the religious path according to the Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition, also of import in contemporary religious practice. These two texts are ideal for comparison for a number of reasons, including the fact that both are terse attempts to communicate the essentials of their respective soteriological paths that make descriptions of the role of meditative technique the centerpiece in the discussion of the religious path. The speculative aspects of these traditions are discussed in intimate relationship to the pragmatic presentation of the soteriological path. In this respect, both texts could be argued to be "yoga" texts, aimed at portraying the religious life in the context of the discipline of meditation. Both represent an attempt to validate and synthesize a pragmatic perspective with a scholastic and discursive understanding of the nature of liberation. Both also provide a root text that serves as the foundation for a more detailed exposition on the nature of the religious life that synthesizes and codifies the larger traditions they represent.

Throughout the history of the range of Indian religious life and in contemporary yoga practice, the YS has been reinterpreted in light of greatly varying philosophical and theological systems. The core notion is that the text demonstrates the totality of the path and its variations, and that extended oral and written commentary brings the text to life and reality, as well as specificity. This can be considered an extension of the conception that a *sūtra* provides the underlying "thread," which is the basis for the greater expanse of conceptions that develop around it from oral and textual commentary. Like the YS, which is a terse text that is to be memorized and supported by oral commentary by a teacher and which has been reappropriated by contemporary yoga organizations to introduce meditation, the BK is used by the Gelukpa sect of Tibetan Buddhism in contemporary Buddhism as a foundation for philosophical elaboration and practical instruction.[2] It is utilized by Mahāyāna to provide an introduction to the development of meditation in the Buddhist system, a guide for the Buddhist practitioner that is developed further by the

teacher through oral commentary and through personal practice based upon that instruction. This in itself demonstrates the utility of the BK as a source text for understanding the Mahāyāna Buddhist path and the role of meditation therein. Paul Williams has noted that along with Atiśa's *Bodhipathapradīpa*, the BK serves as one of the most important foundations for Tibetan Buddhist conceptions of the stages on the path to enlightenment.[3]

Issues in Textual Composition

Whether or not these texts were composed for the purpose of instruction in meditation is related to a larger question of whether the YS was put together from another text by a Sāṃkhya composer for the purpose of arguing the Sāṃkhya position. Johannes Bronkhorst has recently argued that the attribution of the Yoga Bhāṣya (YBh) to Vyāsa is inherently problematic, and that it is likely that it was in fact composed by either Patañjali himself or by Vindhyavāsin.[4] The name Vyāsa, according to Bronkhorst, is ascribed to the text solely for the sake of establishing its authority, and it should not necessarily be taken to mean that Vyāsa is the literal name of the author or compiler. Bronkhorst also argues that the author of the YBh was likely the compiler of the YS and one who changed the root text of the YS to argue a view that may be inconsistent with the views of the original author or compiler. According to this theory, the *sūtras* themselves are a truncation and a rearrangement of the components of another text or set of texts that have been placed together to present the Sāṃkhya viewpoint most effectively. In this light, the text of the YS is simply a demonstrative tool for the Sāṃkhya proponent, and the text and commentary are thus not necessarily oriented toward practice, being instead an argument for a particular type of Sāṃkhya theory. This is arguably demonstrated by the fact that the Pātañjala-yoga tradition has no set lineage comparable to other traditions but rather has been adapted in different contexts to serve different traditional goals.[5] The malleability of yogic conceptions is particularly important in this regard, as the text is adapted to fit a range of circumstances and operates on the periphery of other established traditions rather than being its own autonomous tradition. These issues can all be said to be an extension of a long-standing question of whether or not the YS is a composite text, a question that has been of particular interest to a number of influential scholars of Indian philosophy and religion.[6] The question of whether to interpret the YS as a composite or as a unitary text is an important and a legitimate one that further contextualizes the discussion of its overarching structure and function.

It can be argued as well that Kamalaśīla's goal in writing the three *Bhāvanākrama* texts was to provide a concrete basis for arguing against a

subitist position as much as it was presenting a set of practical instructions. The character of Tibetan Buddhist meditation is often discussed as the division between gradual and sudden methodologies, a division that was concretized in Tibetan historiography as the "Great Debate" at the Samye monastery in the eighth century C.E., during the so-called "first propagation" of Buddhism in Tibet.[7] At this debate, Kamalaśīla is said to have represented the "gradualist" approach of the Indian Mahāyāna schools, whereas the Chinese monk, Ho-shang Mahāyāna, represented the subitist Chinese Ch'an school of thought. It is in this context that Kamalaśīla is said to have developed the series of *Bhāvanākrama* texts that elucidates, in abbreviated form, the Buddhist path and development of meditation, *bhāvanā* and *dhyāna*, within it. According to most Tibetan accounts, Kamalaśīla was successful in establishing a gradualist method that incorporated a system of stages on the path leading up to buddhahood, the *bodhisattvabhūmi*, and the meditative practices utilized on that graduated path. The gradualist interpretation of Buddhism has been characteristic of the approach of numerous renowned scholars within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, including Atiśa and Tsongkhapa, who integrated a gradualist perspective into their "stages of the path," or *Lam Rim*, literature. While the Tibetan *Dzogchen* and *Mahāmudrā* systems can be said to embrace the language and *praxis* of a more sudden or natural typology of awakening, even these systems give credence to the *śamatha-vipaśyanā* distinction as demonstrating a dialectic of meditative development. In addition, to the degree that the final state of liberation is understood to be a nondiscursive awareness, these traditions are at least in partial agreement.[8] However, the scholastic Tibetan traditions, such as the Gelukpa, are at pains to demonstrate the validity and necessity of conceptuality on the lower and intermediate stages of the path.[9] The role of Kamalaśīla's text in establishing Mahāyāna conceptions of the Buddhist path and soteriology is therefore quite significant, demonstrating both the doctrinal and yogic character of Mahāyāna conceptions of the path, or *mārga*.

SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS: *DHYĀNA* AND *SAMĀDHI*

In the context of the YS, often considered the foremost authoritative text on the development of meditation in the "Classical Yoga" school of Indian philosophy, the *yoga darśana*, *dhyāna* refers to the process of meditation as a specific stage in yogic development and as a general notion of the process of yoga. *Dhyāna* is often referred to as being the seventh stage of the classical *āṣṭāṅgayoga*, or "eight-limbed yoga," defined by Patañjali in the context of the YS. These eight limbs include observances *(yama)*, restrictions *(niyama)*, posture *(āsana)*, breathing technique *(prāṇāyāma)*, sensory withdrawal

(pratyāhāra), fixation *(dhāraṇā)*, meditation *(dhyāna)*, and meditative absorption *(samādhi)*, and they are often appealed to as the definitive list of stages in the yogic path in the Hindu tradition.[10] This structure closely parallels that of the yogic path found in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad*, which postulates a system that contains key members of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* series, including *dhāraṇā* and *samādhi*. In Patañjali's text, *Dhyāna* is used in the context of developing one-pointedness that prevents the arising of obstacles, *vikṣepa*, to meditation, *yathābhimatadhyānādvā*, "by meditating in the manner agreeable (to the practitioner)," and in the abandonment of the modifications *(vṛtti)* arisen from the afflictions *(kleśa)*, *dhyānaheyās tadvṛttayaḥ*, indicating the notion that the *process* of *dhyāna* is what is at stake.[11] It also appears in the context of describing the state of yoga-constructed minds *(nirmāṇacittāni)* as being without impressions, *tatra dhyānajaṃ anāśayaṃ*, a more technical definition that refers to the effects of *dhyāna* and their lack of residua.[12] Perhaps the most important *sūtra* with regard to the definition of meditation, however, is YS III.2, in which *dhyāna* is defined as *tatra pratyayaikatānatā dhyānam*, "in regard to that, meditation is the coherent continuity [i.e., extension of the unity] of cognition," referring to the previous *sūtra* describing one-pointedness and its referent. Vyāsa further adds the comment that this state is *pratyayāntareṇāparāmṛṣṭaḥ*, "unhindered by other cognitions."[13] This definition, which characterizes the state of meditation *(dhyāna)* as being the extension or continuity of placement *(dhāraṇā)* upon an object, is a clear technical definition of this term, meaning a continuous attentiveness to an object of concentration that does not fall prey to disturbance by other thoughts or ideas. It is not surprising in light of this technical specificity that Patañjali's definitions are used so often with respect to the technical meanings of *dhyāna*, particularly in the broader context of Indian and Hindu philosophy.

The work of Jan Gonda provides a number of insights into the broader development of the concept of *dhyāna* in the range of Indian literature. Viewing the term as being among the word group *dhyā*, developed from the verb *dhī* into the root form *dhyā*, Gonda argues that it is likely that this term is limited to the Indian linguistic context.[14] He notes that *dhyāna* is translated in a variety of ways, including "meditation," "meditative concentration," "méditation extatique," "höhere Beschauung," "deep absorption in meditation," "inward absorption," and "concentrated meditation leading to visualization," among others.[15] The relationship with *dhī* is particularly important for Gonda, as it relates in theory to the extension and reinterpretation of the quality of "vision" *(dhī)* that characterized the Vedic seers *(ṛṣis)* of the ancient Hindu tradition. According to Gonda, this notion of "special vision" is the foundation for a greater part of Indian religious theory and practice, including Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Gonda

argues that the emphasis on the development of the ability not simply to infer but to experience transcendent reality directly that characterizes the Vedic *ṛṣis* is a key soteriological theme that underlies the significance of meditation and, by extension, philosophical theory in the Indian religious context.[16] This is demonstrated for Gonda by the progression of the usage of *dhyā* from simple and nontechnical applications to the more elaborate forms found in the context of the Vedas, *Aitareya* and *Śatapatha Brāhmanas*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, *Śvetāśvatara* and *Maitrī Upaniṣads*, and numerous other texts.[17] However, Gonda notably suggests that the technical yogic usage of *dhyāna* is, in fact, best represented in the YS, in that its definition of *dhyāna* fits well into a broad range of soteriological contexts.[18] Rāmānuja and other Vedānta practitioners who followed the path of *bhakti* held that *dhyāna* was equivalent to *bhakti* and vice versa, a direct visionary experience that held the potential for liberation, and Śaivite thinkers saw *dhyāna* as a method to reach the absolute, which was in essence the intellectual state of Śiva.[19] Śaṅkara developed a conception of *dhyāna* that incorporated insights into the Upaniṣadic literature and the YS with respect to his own philosophical inclinations and interpretations.[20] Similarly, Buddhism and Jainism take up *dhyāna* both as a technical term for the development of stages of meditation and in the manner of defining a special type of direct vision into the nature of reality.[21] It can be added that these facts are complemented by the portrayal of yoga and meditation as a complement or a support for conceptions of ethics and renunciation as intermediate goals of religious practice and as the foundation for ultimate liberation.

In a manner that complements Gonda's work on the term *dhyāna*, Jonathan Bader has clarified the structure of the term *meditation* and its derivation from Latin in order to help bring more nuances to our understanding of both of these terms. According to Bader, "meditation" is derived from the Indo-European root *med*, meaning "measuring out," cognate with the Sanskrit verb *ma*, meaning "to mete out or mark off."[22] Following from this, the Greek term *meletao* also means "to mete out" and extends to signify "attending to, studying, practicing, and exercising" as does the Latin cognate *meditor*.[23] Meditation is thus derived in English from the Latin term, which had developed a denotation that referred it specifically to the exercise of mental or spiritual faculties.[24] And although *meditari*, a Latin cognate of *melete* and *meditor*, is used to indicate spiritual or mental as opposed to physical types of exercise, it is clear that they are terms of activity, thus more appropriately labeled *praxis* as opposed to *theoria*.[25] Bader also states that in the Judeo-Christian context the terms cogitate, meditate, and contemplate demonstrate a remarkable similarity to the notions of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* that characterize the "internal limbs" *(antaraṇga)* that Patañjali proposes in the context of the YS.[26] The analysis of meditation as a precursor to contempla-

tion, or the concept that meditation is the establishment of continuity and the foundation for the operation of contemplation, points comparatively to the heart of the *dhyāna-samādhi* relationship. Bader ultimately defines meditation as "the concentration of the mind on a particular theme or object in preparation for the direct intuition of truth," a definition that captures the broader sense of *dhyāna*, while perhaps hinting at its deeper nuances and viability for comparison.[27]

It also should be made clear that *dhyāna* shares much with another term, *bhāvanā*, which is often translated as "meditation" as well. *Bhāvanā* stems from the root verb *bhū* (to be) and often reflects the notion of bringing something into reality through imagination or contemplation. Patañjali refers to the term *bhāvanā* in several contexts. In YS I.28, *tajjāpas tadarthabhāvanam*, *bhāvanā* refers to meditation or contemplation of the meaning of *praṇava*, the sacred syllable *oṃ*, which was introduced in a previous *sūtra*. In YS II.2, *samādhibhāvanārthaḥ kleśatanūkaraṇārthaś ca*, it refers to the cultivation or establishment of *samādhi*, meditative absorption. YS II.33 demonstrates another context for the use of *bhāvanā*, that of the so-called cultivation of opposites or cultivation of antidotes: *vitarkabādhane pratipakṣabhāvanam*, "for the stoppage of [nonvirtuous] thought, there [should be] cultivation of antidotes." This particular *sūtra* is followed immediately by another one, YS II.34, which further defines the cultivation of opposites. This can be translated as "thoughts of harm and so on, done, caused, or rejoiced in, preceded by greed, anger, or delusion and [being of] mild, medium, or intense [degree], result in endless fruition of pain and ignorance, [and] thus there [should be] the cultivation of antidotes."[28] One last example is in YS IV.25, *viśeṣadarśina ātmabhāvabhāvanāvinivṛttiḥ*, "on the part of one perceiving the distinction [between mind and *puruṣa*] the cultivation of self-existence ceases." Though this last example strays from the meditative context, it demonstrates the extension of *bhāvanā* with the notion of cultivation.

In the Mahāyāna Buddhist context, *bhāvanā* plays a more extensive role in constituting what is considered to fall under the category of *dhyāna* in the Hindu context. This comes out in the notion that self-cultivation occurs in stages, such as the notion of *bhāvanākrama*, "stages of meditation," that play a formative role in Kamalaśīla's attempt to codify the range of meditative practice within the Mahāyāna soteriological framework. In the first *bhāvanākrama*, Kamalaśīla states "on account of this, the one who desires to perceive the nature [of things] should engage in *bhāvanā*," *tasmāt tattvam sākśātkartukāmo bhāvanāyām pravartate*.[29] In the third *Bhāvanākrama*, Kamalaśīla quotes the Buddha as stating *"nimittabandhanāj jantur atho doṣṭhulabandhanāt vipaśyanām bhāvyitvā śamatham ca vimucyate,"* "having cultivated tranquility *(śamatha)* and insight *(vipaśyanā)*, a person is freed from bondage to defilements and bondage to causes."[30] Similarly, Kamalaśīla

quotes the *Āryaratnameghasūtra* as saying *sa evam apakṣālakuśalaḥ sarvaprapañcavigamāya śūnyatābhāvanāyā yogam āpadyate*, "in this manner, for the sake of eliminating all faults in order to escape mental elaboration, that person resorts to the yoga of meditation on emptiness."[31] Throughout Kamalaśīla's work, *bhāvanā* is used interchangeably with the term *dhyāna* and with the verbal form *dhyai*. *Bhāvanā* and *dhyāna* are close approximations, especially as we consider the connection of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* with *bhāvanā*, as they are also connected with *dhyāna* and *samādhi* in many Buddhist contexts, particularly with respect to *śamatha*. This notion of *dhyāna* presupposes the *samāpatti*, "attainment," scheme of the *dhyāna-samāpatti* system, a Buddhist conception that the progression of meditative concentration results in a succession of states, entitled *dhyāna* and *samāpatti*, respectively. This notion of a step-wise progression of mental states is one of the key indicators that similar language is being used to talk about meditation in both traditions. The continuity between the terms *dhyāna* and *bhāvanā* is extended further in Vajrayāna Buddhist sources where *bhāvanā* becomes even more important in that it accommodates the notion of visualization as the heart of meditative practice. Meditation on the image of a deity *(devatā)* is a product of the origination of that figure through the power of recitation *(mantra)* and visualization, an extension of the powers of *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna* in the sense used in the broader yogic context.

The culmination of *dhyāna* and *bhāvanā* is represented in both the Hindu and Buddhist contexts by the concept of *samādhi*. *Samādhi* is formed through the conjunction of *sam-ā-dhā*, having the sense of "placing together," "union," and, by extension, "meditation," "contemplation," and "completion."[32] In both the Classical Yoga and Indian Mahāyāna traditions, *samādhi* appears to represent the perfection of the process of meditation and even at times the supreme goal or culmination of meditation practice. In the YS, *samādhi* is the final member of the *aṣṭāṅgayoga* series, the culmination of the "internal" as well as the "external" limbs of yoga. *Samādhi* is characterized by Patañjali in YS III.3 as *tadevārthamātranirbhāsaṃ svarūpaśūnyam iva samādhiḥ*, "that particular object appearing alone, as if empty of its own form, is *samādhi*." Vyāsa goes so far as to state that yoga itself is *samādhi*, saying in YBh I.1 *yogaḥ samādhiḥ*, "yoga is *samādhi*," implying that the goal of yoga, *cittavṛttinirodha*, "cessation of mental fluctuation," is the product of *samādhi*.[33] The first of the four *pādas* of the YS is aptly titled *samādhipāda*, as it deals with the structure of *samādhi* and its relationship to yogic soteriology. It is thus associated with such terminology as *samāpatti* "attainment" and *nirodha* "cessation," *saṃprajñāta* "cognitive" and *asaṃprajñāta* "noncognitive," and *sabīja* "seeded" and *nirbīja* "seedless," representing roughly the domains of cosmology, perception, and the mental substratum. These represent the progression leading up to cessation,

the shift of perception from mental faculty to basic consciousness, and the presence or lack of seeds of future affliction. The terms *samāpatti* and *nirodha* are remarkably similar in both the Hindu yoga and Buddhist contexts, bearing both technical definitions in the meditative context and more general significance in the social and cultural domain. *Samāpatti* will be translated here as "attainment," though others have suggested definitions such as "unification,"[34] "falling into any state or condition,"[35] or as being "identical with *samādhi*."[36] The three of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi* form the potent *saṃyama*, "binding together," that is the basis for the establishment of the *vibhūti*, or preternatural accomplishments, that are largely the logical subject of the third part of the YS.[37] Whicher has aptly suggested the dynamics of the use of the term *samādhi* as being characterized by what could be called *ecstatic* and *enstatic* characteristics, in contrast to the often used term *enstasis* to refer to *samādhi* as a whole. This is a crucially important distinction that will be explored at greater length later in this work, in that it parallels our own distinction of the functions of *samādhi* and being respectively numinous and cessative.[38] This viewpoint allows for the incorporation of the pairs of corollaries that the YS postulates as the field in which *samādhi* operates, that is, *samāpatti*, *nirodha*, *saṃprajñāta*, *asaṃprajñāta*, *sabīja*, and *nirbīja*. Whicher rightly stresses the rarified character of *samādhi* in comparison to the other "internal" yogic limbs, *dhāraṇā* and *dhyāna*, which culminate in *samādhi*.[39] As such, *samādhi* represents the height of meditative attainment, though within itself bearing various degrees of fruition and mastery.

In the context of Kamalaśīla's work, *samādhi* plays a pivotal role with soteriological concerns as well. The establishment of *dhyāna*, the stages of the four *dhyāna* states, is characterized by the term *samādhi*. On one level, *samādhi* refers to the subject of *śamatha*, or tranquility meditation, and on another level it refers broadly to meditative states that incorporate both *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* and the assumption of particular Buddhist virtues or objects of concentration. The *samādhi* of Mahāyāna Buddhism is distinguished as a uniquely Buddhist soteriological practice, although it is noted that within the families of *śrāvakas*, bodhisattvas, and buddhas, all forms of *samādhi* hinge upon the development of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*.[40] Kamalaśīla states *śamathavipaśyanābhāṃ sarve samādhayo vyāptāḥ*, that "all *samādhis* [implying the variety of terms referring to this condition in the Mahāyāna context] are characterized by *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*."[41] As the culmination of the meditative process, the development of *samādhi* is seen to represent the fundamental meditative accomplishment that is to be attained by Buddhists on the path to liberation, through the union of the dimensions of *śamatha* and *vipaśyana*, in what is referred to as the "yoking of tranquility and insight," *śamathavipaśyanāyuganaddha*. As will be discussed at length later, this distinction

can be understood by the notion of the yoking together of numinous and cessative dimensions of meditation, and it is a critical concept in understanding how meditative traditions within Hinduism and Buddhism conceive of *dhyāna* and *samādhi*.

DEVELOPMENT OF MEDITATIVE CONCEPTS

The development of clearer notions of the concepts of *dhyāna* and *samādhi* benefits from the analysis of the historical development of their usage, making work such as Gonda's valuable in articulating the subtler details and the contextuality of these terms. Complementing Gonda's study of *dhyāna* from the Vedic to the Mahāyāna context are studies that deal more broadly with philosophical and cultural developments characteristic of religious life in the early Indian context. Mircea Eliade, for example, has extensively documented the development of yoga in relation to the ritual forms and practices of the Brahmanical sacrificial traditions. He traces the methodology of the *ṛgveda* ascetic types such as the *ṛsis* and *munis* through the process of "ritual interiorization" toward more recognizable forms of yoga in Hindu and Buddhist sects and traditions such as Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Classical Yoga.[42] He characterizes several historical phases of yoga, including Brahmanical Yoga, Classical Yoga, Buddhist Yoga, and Tantric Yoga, which provide a foundation for understanding the many roles of yoga and meditation in the Indian context. Eliade and others were particularly interested in the issues regarding the possible origins of yoga in the ancient Indus civilization, which for many represents the possibility of a pre-Vedic substratum of Indian culture. The import of the so-called Indus "yoga" seal, and the implication that some type of yoga practice may have been present in the Indus context, is compelling to Eliade, to the degree that he largely accepts the pre-Āryan genesis of yoga.[43] Jean Filliozat, however, has argued in opposition to this that the lack of substantial evidence and insight into yoga in the Indus records, due to the lack of textual or scriptural support, provides little encouragement for pursuing such a grand theory of yoga's origins.[44] Thus according to Filliozat, its controversial nature and the lack of material and textual evidence make it difficult to do anything more than scratch the surface with regard to this ancient culture. Other scholars, such as Karel Werner, have argued that the *munis* and *ṛṣis* of the Vedas demonstrate the substratum of ascetic practices that would later emerge as yoga, making the Indus records, by implication, of little significance. Similarly, David Knipe, in examining the concept of *tapas* as related to symbolism of fire, light, and combustion, has demonstrated the formative nature of numerous Vedic concepts with respect to notions of yoga and asceticism of relevance in both the Upaniṣadic and Pātañjala Yoga contexts.[45] Edward Cran-

gle's recent work on contemplative theory in the Indian context is in many respects representative of a "compromise" or "mainstream" position that argues that parallel yoga and Buddhist systems of meditation developed in a complementary fashion out of a linguistic and cultural substratum that was significantly, but not exclusively, rooted in the Vedic tradition, which likely drew inspiration from non-Vedic sources.[46]

Other approaches, aptly demonstrated by Winston King, have shown at length the common yoga heritage found between the Hindu philosophical and religious systems and those of the Theravāda Buddhist tradition.[47] A key point in this context is that the development of *dhyāna* in Buddhism has hinged upon the distinction between *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* (Pali *samatha/vipassanā*), the "concentration and insight" dynamics of Buddhist meditation. In Theravāda, *samatha* meditation is considered a practice common to both Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions that does not lead to the ultimate soteriological end of the tradition but rather serves as a complement to what is considered the uniquely Buddhist practice *vipassanā*.[48] This is mirrored by the Mahāyāna view that identifies *śamatha* with yoga and states that *śamatha* is merely a suppression of the afflictions, as opposed to *vipaśyanā*, which eliminates them completely.[49] The division of meditation into these two domains appears to be a common current of thought in the Indian schools of Buddhism. However, it has been noted at length that in many of the contemporary sects of Therāvada Buddhism, the practice of *vipassanā* has become central, and *samatha* has become largely a relic of the past, or even a term used to designate meditative practices not in line with the soteriological path of the Buddha. This issue, which hinges on the role of *dhyāna* (Pali *jhāna*) in the soteriological system of the Theravāda, has been addressed by a number of scholars, particularly with respect to the notion of "dry" or "bare insight." This refers to the idea that enlightenment can be attained without recourse to *samatha* meditation, through the development of a "momentary" type of *vipassanā* that analyzes phenomena from instance to instance.[50] Cousins and Griffiths, among others, have noted that the paradigm of the Buddha's own awakening experience as alluded to in treatises such as the *Visuddhimagga* does not appear to be at the heart of modern Theravāda practice.[51] Underlying this discussion is the assumption that these traditions became more scholastic as they moved away from the forest-ascetic *(śramaṇa)* model of religious practice and lost touch with the yogic character of early Buddhism. It might be argued that this situation is due to a combination of factors, including a polemical stance against Hinduism (following King), the development of a scholasticism that depended on analysis as opposed to meditative *praxis*, the socialization of the monastic community and its deepening connection with the "worldly" lay community, and the tradition that liberatory technique should suit the individual. It should be noted that, though it is less visible,

samatha does continue to play an important role in the Theravāda tradition, both in the forest monastic setting and in the context of lay meditation communities.[52] Later we will explore ideas regarding the changing role of the monastic community and the possibility that changing views regarding meditation are related to a shift from *ecstatic* to *scholastic* authority and a subject of continued negotiation and renegotiation in both Theravāda and Mahāyāna contexts.

In the Tibetan tradition, *śamatha* is still considered an important part of the Buddhist path, yet it goes without saying that the *vipaśyanā* aspect of meditation is the goal of meditation practice and the key to liberation. Thus it is said that they are complementary, but not equal in importance, with the process of liberation. The Tibetan case is complicated by the fact that there seems to be a fine line between the scholastic representations of *śamatha* and more specifically pragmatic ones. In some cases, the knowledge of such states may be purely scholastic, and in other cases knowledge is seen as a precursor to the actual practice or attainment of such states.[53] On the one hand, there is an elaborate "phenomenology" of meditation that explains the progression of mental states in a manner far removed from the actual practice of meditation. On the other hand, practice lineages that involve these ideas, particularly the *śamatha-vipaśyanā* typology of meditative development, orient themselves toward the types of nonconceptual and nondiscursive conceptions of liberating knowledge highlighted in the textual and philosophical traditions. The manner in which scholastic perspectives on meditation exist in co-relationship with the more pragmatic interests in meditation demonstrates an ongoing dynamic relationship between text and practice in the Buddhist context, a topic we will examine at length later.

The current discussion can be further extended by noting the degree to which the *śamatha-vipaśyanā* distinction has been sublimated into Buddhist tantric practice. It is clear that the development of concentration and visualization characteristic of deity yoga *(deva-yoga)* and *maṇḍala* practice in the tantric context shares a great deal with practices characterized as *śamatha*, such as the recollection of the Buddha's virtues, an example that we will take up later. Tantric *bhāvanā* demonstrates factors characteristic of *śamatha*, such as the development of supernormal abilities of action and perception that are characteristic of the historical Buddha, bodhisattvas, deities, and other beings. As will be argued, this can be seen as an extension of the *samāpatti* conception of meditation and a foundational concept with respect to *yoga* and *dhyāna*. The attainment of profound concentration and the ability to direct it toward a particular object or virtue and thereby attain the power of a divinity is intimately connected to what will be termed the *numinous* dimension of meditation, or *yoga*. The complement to this is the idea that meditation also can lead to *cessation*, that these divine forms also are a pathway to wisdom

and liberation through insight into the nature of reality and freedom from attachment and affliction. In the tantric context, this distinction can be termed that of "mastery" *(siddhi)* versus "awakening" *(bodhi)*. Thus the paradigm of attainment-cessation *(samāpatti-nirodha)*, or of the *numinous* and *cessative*, can be said to lie beneath the surface of tantric conceptions of *praxis (sādhana)* as well as within Hindu conceptions of *yoga* and Buddhist conceptions of *śamatha-vipaśyanā*. The development of this distinction, of the numinous and the cessative, as a means of interpreting religious experience, specifically those offered by yoga and meditation, will be the primary goal of the next chapter.