

The *Wu-T'ing-Hsin-Kuan* in Abhidharma Texts

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It was only in Buddhism that the meanings of “teaching” and “thing to be experienced” were applied to the word *dharmā*. They have gradually become the most important meanings of the word in Buddhism. And it is very interesting that these two meanings seem to have become closely related through the tradition of Yogācāra practice.

It is well known that there are many kinds of Yogācāra practice. They are discussed in detail in *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā* and *Yogācārabhūmi*. In order to get a sufficient understanding of the meaning of the word *dharmā* in Yogācāra practice, we must investigate how and which *dharmas* are meditated upon in each steps of the practice. However, this is far beyond the scope of this essay. Instead we will focus on the preliminary steps of practice and examine them carefully to grasp how the *dharmas* are practised.

As is generally known, Yogācāra practice begins with preliminary steps designed to prepare the mind and body for practice. They are called “the purification of the vessel” 身器清淨. That is to say, the Yogācāra practitioner should live alone apart from people, and keep various kinds of passion and want away from his mind and body. He must also refrain from desires and be satisfied with little material. Thus he has to get rid of desires

and master the behavior of a saint (聖種, *āryavaṃsa*).

When he has completed his preparations, he undertakes seven kinds of practice (七加行) consisting successively of three steps of *mokṣabhāgīya* (順解脫分) and four steps of *nirvedhabhāgīya* (順決択分). At the beginning of the seven kinds of practice, the Yogācāra practitioner must choose a method of meditation among the five forms of contemplation according to his character and inclination. These five forms of contemplation are called the *wu-t'ing-hsin-kuan* (五停心觀), which we are going to examine in this essay.

The five items of the *wu-t'ing-hsin-kuan* are enumerated as follows in *Yogācārabhūmi*; *aśubhā*-contemplation to purify lust (*rāga*), *maitrī*-contemplation to subdue hatred (*dveṣa*), *pratītyasamutpāda*-contemplation to heal stupidity (*avidyā*), *dhātuprabheda*-contemplation to heal conceit (*māna*), and *ānāpānasṃṛti*-contemplation to suppress discursive thinking (*vitarka*). However, as is already indicated by Dr. Sakurabe (*INDIANISME ET BOUDDHISME* 23, 1980) etc., these five items are not fixed, but vary in the Āgama, Nikāya and Darśana texts. Some texts have *buddhānusmṛti*-contemplation instead of *dhātuprabheda*-contemplation, others *asthisamkalā*-contemplation instead of *dhātuprabheda*-contemplation or *buddhānusmṛti*-contemplation.

The term *wu-t'ing-hsin-kuan* does not appear in Indian Buddhist texts. Probably it was, as Dr. Sakurabe also pointed out, employed by Hui-yüan (慧遠, 523-592 A.D.) in his main work *Ta-ch'êng-i-chang* (大乘義章). In the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* Vasubandhu (4-5 th century A.D.) enumerated only two of them, *aśubhā*-contemplation and *ānāpānasṃṛti*-contemplation.

He calls them “ the two entrance gates to the practice ” 入修二門. It cannot be known from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* whether or not he chose these two contemplations from the above mentioned five items. Neither can it be known from Yaśomitra’s (6-7th century A.D.) commentary on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.

We suppose that Vasubandhu’s enumeration is not his own innovation, but is a product of the development of the theory of the Yogācāra practice in the Sarvāstivāda school to which he belonged. This supposition can be affirmed by the facts that Dharmatrāta (4th century A.D.) also enumerated these two items as “ the two gates into the beatitude ” 二甘露門 and that his enumeration was quoted in the *Mahāvibhāṣā* to which Vasubandhu referred in his *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. It is supposed that the fivefold contemplation has been simplified into “ the two entrance gates to the practice ”. The aim of this essay is to trace the process of the simplification.