

THE SIX DHARMA GATES TO THE SUBLIME

六妙法門

By Śramaṇa Zhiyi (Chih-i)
From Tiantai Mountain's Dhyāna Cultivation Monastery

天台山修禪寺沙門智顓述

English Translation by Bhikshu Dharmamitra

比丘恆授法友英譯

No. 1917

六妙法门

天台大师于都下瓦官寺略
出此法门

[0549a06] 六妙门者。盖是
内行之根本。三乘得道之
要迳。故释迦初诣道树。
跏趺坐草。内思安般。一
数。二随。三止。四观五
还。六净。因此万行开
发。降魔成道。当知佛
为物轨示迹若斯。三乘正
士。岂不同游此路。所言
六者。即是数法。约数明
禅。故言六也。如佛或约
一数辩禅。所谓一行三
昧。或约二数。谓一止。
二观。或约三数。谓三三
昧。或约四数。所谓四
禅。或约五数。谓五门
禅。或约六数。谓六妙
门。或约七数。谓七依
定。或约八数。谓八背
舍。或约九数。谓

No. 1917

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內行之根本。三乘得道之
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數。二隨。三止。四觀五
還。六淨。因此萬行開
發。降魔成道。當知佛
為物軌示跡若斯。三乘正
士。豈不同遊此路。所言
六者。即是數法。約數明
禪。故言六也。如佛或約
一數辯禪。所謂一行三
昧。或約二數。謂一止。
二觀。或約三數。謂三三
昧。或約四數。所謂四
禪。或約五數。謂五門
禪。或約六數。謂六妙
門。或約七數。謂七依
定。或約八數。謂八背
捨。或約九數。謂

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THE SIX DHARMA GATES TO THE SUBLIME¹

The Great Master of Tiantai Mountain set forth these Dharma gates in this summary form at the Capital's Wakuan Monastery.

Dhyāna Master Zhiyi's Preface

As for the "six gates to the sublime (*praṇīta*)," they constitute the very root of one's internal practice and the essential route to realization of the paths of the Three Vehicles.² Hence, when Shākyamuni first arrived at the Bodhi Tree³ and sat down in lotus posture on the cushion of grass, "He directed his thought inwardly to *ānāpāna*:⁴ first, counting (*gaṇanā*); second, following (*anugamaḥ*); third, stabilization (*sthānam*), fourth, contemplation (*upalakṣaṇā*); fifth, turning (*vivartanā*); and sixth, purification (*pariśuddhiḥ*)."⁵ It was because of this that the myriad practices⁶ opened forth and took effect, resulting in the subduing of the demons and the realization of the Path.

One should realize that the Buddha is the model for beings. Since he pointed out his own tracks in this fashion, how then could the orthodox personages of the Three Vehicles fail to all travel together along this road?

As for the "six," it is simply a dharma of enumeration. One explains dhyāna meditation by resort to a numerical formula. Hence we refer here to "six." This is just as when the Buddha sometimes discoursed on dhyāna according to a singular enumeration, namely the so-called "single-practice" samādhi, or did so according to a two-fold enumeration, namely first, calming (*śamatha*), and second, insight (*vipaśyanā*).

Sometimes he explained according to a threefold enumeration, namely the three samādhis. Sometimes, it was according to a four-fold enumeration, specifically, according to the four dhyānas. Sometimes it was according to a five-fold enumeration, the so-called "five-gate" dhyāna.⁷ Sometimes, it was according to a six-fold enumeration, namely these six gates to the sublime. Sometimes, it was according to a seven-fold enumeration, the so-called "seven dependable absorptions."⁸ Sometimes, it was according to an eight-fold enumeration, namely the eight liberations (*vimokṣa*). Sometimes, it was according to a nine-fold enumeration, namely according to

九次第定。或约十数。谓十禅支。如是等。乃至百千万亿阿僧只不可说诸三昧门。悉是约数说诸禅也。虽数有多少。穷其法相。莫不悉相收摄。以众生机悟不同故。有增减之数分别利物。今言六者。即是约数法而标章也。妙者其意乃多。若论正意。即是灭谛涅槃。故灭四行中。言灭止妙离。涅槃非断非常。有而难契。无而易得。故言妙也。六法能通。故名为门。门虽有六。会妙不殊故经言泥洹真法宝。众生从种种门入。此则通释六妙门之大意也。六妙门大意有十

[0549a27] 第一历别对诸禅
六妙门 第二次第相生六
妙门 第三随便宜六妙门

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[0549a27] 第一歷別對諸禪
六妙門 第二次第相生六
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the nine sequential absorptions.⁹ Sometimes, it was according to a ten-fold enumeration, namely according to the ten branches of dhyāna.¹⁰ In a manner such as this, it may reach even to a hundred thousand myriads of *koṭis* of *asaṃkhyeyas* of indescribably numerous gateways to samādhi.

All of these are instances of discussing the dhyānas according to numerical categories. Although the numerical categories may be either greater or lesser in number, when one exhausts all of the characteristic aspects of these dharmas, not a one of them fails to be mutually subsumed by the others. It is because of differences in the teaching opportunities presented by different beings and the differences in their levels of awakening that there is this increase and decrease in numerical discriminations set forth for their benefit.

Now, when we speak of “six,” it is simply a case of using a dharma of enumeration to title the topics discussed. As for “sublime” (*praṇīta*), its meanings are numerous. If one wishes to discuss its orthodox primary meaning, it is just the nirvāṇa associated with the truth of cessation. Hence, among the four “practice-aspects” associated with [the truth of] cessation, we speak of: cessation (*nirodha*); tranquility (*śānta*); the sublime (*praṇīta*); and abandonment (*niḥsaraṇa*).¹¹ It is not the case that “nirvāṇa” involves either an instance of “cutting off” or an instance of “permanence.” Though it might be [conceived of as] “existent,” it would thus be a difficult thing to mesh with. Though it might be [conceived of as] “non-existent,” it would thus be more easily realized. Hence it is described as “sublime.”

Because these six dharmas facilitate one's ability to penetrate on through, they are therefore referred to as “gates.” Although there are six of these gates, they are no different in their ability to facilitate one's encounter with the sublime. Thus the scriptures declare, “As for nirvāṇa, the true Dharma jewel, beings enter it through many different gates.”¹²

This is but a general explanation of the greater meaning of the six gates to the sublime. This treatment of the greater meaning of the six gates to the sublime shall consist of ten sections:

1. The six gates to the sublime in relation to the dhyāna absorptions.
2. The six gates to the sublime in terms of sequential development.
3. The six gates to the sublime in accordance with suitability.

<p>第四随对治六妙门 第五相摄六妙门 第六通别六妙门 第七旋转六妙门 第八观心六妙门 第九圆观六妙门 第十证相六妙门</p>	<p>第四隨對治六妙門 第五相攝六妙門 第六通別六妙門 第七旋轉六妙門 第八觀心六妙門 第九圓觀六妙門 第十證相六妙門</p>
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4. The six gates to the sublime as means of counteraction.
5. The six gates to the sublime in terms of mutual inclusion.
6. The six gates to the sublime in terms of identities and differences. [549b]
7. The six gates to the sublime in accordance with the "reversed" orientation.
8. The six gates to the sublime according to contemplation of the mind.
9. The six gates to the sublime according to the perfect contemplation.
10. The six gates to the sublime in accordance with the signs of realization.

[0549b03] 释第一历别对诸禅定明六妙门。即为六意。一者依数为妙门。行者因数息故。即能出生四禅。四无量心。四无色定。若于最后非非想定。能觉知非是涅槃。是人必定得三乘道。何以故。此定阴界入和合故有。虚诳不实。虽无龕烦恼。而亦成就十种细烦恼。知己破折不住不着。心得解脱。即证三乘涅槃故。此义如须跋陀罗。佛教断非非想处惑。即便获得阿罗汉果。数为妙门。意在于此也。二者随为妙门者。行者因随息故。即能出生十六特胜。所谓一知息入。二知息出。三知息长短。

[0549b03] 釋第一歷別對諸禪定明六妙門。即為六意。一者依數為妙門。行者因數息故。即能出生四禪。四無量心。四無色定。若於最後非非想定。能覺知非是涅槃。是人必定得三乘道。何以故。此定陰界入和合故有。虛誑不實。雖無龕煩惱。而亦成就十種細煩惱。知己破折不住不著。心得解脫。即證三乘涅槃故。此義如須跋陀羅。佛教斷非非想處惑。即便獲得阿羅漢果。數為妙門。意在於此也。二者隨為妙門者。行者因隨息故。即能出生十六特勝。所謂一知息入。二知息出。三知息長短。

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CHAPTER ONE

The Six Gates in Relation to the Dhyāna Absorptions

I. THE SIX GATES IN RELATION TO THE DHYĀNA ABSORPTIONS

There are six associated concepts here, as follows:

A. COUNTING

First, “counting” as a gate to the sublime: Through relying on counting the breaths, the practitioner gains the ability to manifest the four dhyānas, the four immeasurable minds, and the four formless absorptions. Upon reaching the very last one, the one known as the “neither perception nor non-perception” absorption, so long as he remains aware that [this absorption] does not qualify as nirvāṇa, this person will definitely be able to gain realization in the paths of the Three Vehicles.

How might this be so? This absorption exists on account of a conjunction of the aggregates, the sense realms, and the sense bases. It is false, deceptive, and unreal. Although one remains free of the coarse afflictions [in this absorption], still, one has nonetheless developed ten types of subtle afflictions. If, having realized this, one analyzes the situation so that one does not continue to abide therein and does not become attached to it, one’s mind will succeed in gaining liberation and one will straightaway gain realization of the nirvāṇa associated with the Three Vehicles.

This concept is illustrated by the case of Subhadra: The Buddha taught him to sever the delusions inherent in the station of neither perception nor non-perception. Consequently he gained the realization of the fruit of arhatship. As for the ability of “counting” to serve as a “gate to the sublime,” the conceptual basis for it resides in this.

B. FOLLOWING

Second, “following” as a gate to the sublime: On account of following the breath, the practitioner becomes able to manifest the sixteen superior phenomena, namely:

1. Awareness that the breath is entering.
2. Awareness that the breath is exiting.
3. Awareness that the breath is long or short.

四知息遍身。五除诸身行。六心爱喜。七心受乐。八受诸心行。九心作喜。十心作摄。十一心作解脱。十二观无常。十三观出散。十四观离欲。十五观灭。十六观弃舍。云何观弃舍。此观破非想处惑。所以者何。凡夫修非想时。观有常处如癰如疮。观无想处如痴也。第一妙定名曰非想。作是念已。即弃舍有想无想。名非有想非无想。故知非想即是两舍之义。今佛弟子观行破折。义如前说。是故深观弃舍。不着非想能得涅槃。随为妙门。意在此也。三者止为妙门者。行者因止心故。即便次第发五轮禅。

四知息遍身。五除諸身行。六心爱喜。七心受樂。八受諸心行。九心作喜。十心作攝。十一心作解脫。十二觀無常。十三觀出散。十四觀離欲。十五觀滅。十六觀棄捨。云何觀棄捨。此觀破非想處惑。所以者何。凡夫修非想時。觀有常處如癰如瘡。觀無想處如癡也。第一妙定名曰非想。作是念已。即棄捨有想無想。名非有想非無想。故知非想即是兩捨之義。今佛弟子觀行破折。義如前說。是故深觀棄捨。不著非想能得涅槃。隨為妙門。意在此也。三者止為妙門者。行者因止心故。即便次第發五輪禪。

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正體字

4. Awareness that the breath permeates the body.
5. Relinquishing all physical actions.
6. The mental experience of joy.
7. The mental experience of bliss.
8. The experiencing of all mental actions.
9. The mental production of joy.
10. The mental development of concentration.
11. The mental generation of liberation.
12. The contemplation of impermanence.
13. The contemplation of dispersion.
14. The contemplation of abandonment of desire.
15. The contemplation of cessation.
16. The contemplation of renunciation.

What is meant here by “the contemplation of renunciation”? This contemplation demolishes the delusions inherent in the station of neither perception nor non-perception. How is this the case? When the common person cultivates the station of neither perception nor non-perception, he looks upon the stations “possessed of thought”¹ as being like a boil or as being like an open wound, looks upon the station devoid of thought as being like stupidity, and looks upon the station of neither perception nor non-perception as the foremost sublime absorption. After he has had this thought, he then relinquishes both having thought and not having thought. This then is the basis of [the station of] “neither perception nor non-perception.” One should realize therefore that [the station of] “neither perception nor non-perception” inherently involves the concept of a two-fold relinquishment.

Now, as for the analysis employed in contemplative practice by the disciples of the Buddha, the concept is as discussed above. Therefore they engage in a deep contemplation, exercise renunciation, and refrain from becoming attached to the station of neither perception nor non-perception. Consequently, they are able to achieve realization of nirvāṇa. As for the ability of “following” to serve as a gate to the sublime, the conceptual basis abides in this.

C. STABILIZATION

Third, “stabilization” (*sthānam*) as a gate to the sublime: On account of stabilizing the mind, the practitioner then generates in sequence the “five-wheel” dhyānas,² as follows:

一者地轮三昧。即未到地。二者水轮三昧。即是种种诸禅定善根发也。三者虚空轮三昧。即五方便人觉因缘无性如虚空。四者金沙轮三昧。即是见思解脱。无著正惠如金沙也。五者金刚轮三昧。即是第九无碍道。能断三界结使。永尽无余。证尽智无生智入涅槃。止为妙门。意在此也。四者观为妙门者。行者因修观故。即能出生九想。八念。十想。八背舍。八胜处。十一切处。九次第定。师子奋迅三昧。超越三昧。练禅。十四变化心。三明。六通。及八解脱。得灭受想。即入涅槃。观为妙门。意在此也。五者还为妙门者。行者若用惠行。善巧破折。反本还源。是时即便出生空

一者地輪三昧。即未到地。二者水輪三昧。即是種種諸禪定善根發也。三者虛空輪三昧。即五方便人覺因緣無性如虛空。四者金沙輪三昧。即是見思解脫。無著正惠如金沙也。五者金剛輪三昧。即是第九無礙道。能斷三界結使。永盡無餘。證盡智無生智入涅槃。止為妙門。意在此也。四者觀為妙門者。行者因修觀故。即能出生九想。八念。十想。八背捨。八勝處。十一切處。九次第定。師子奮迅三昧。超越三昧。練禪。十四變化心。三明。六通。及八解脫。得滅受想。即入涅槃。觀為妙門。意在此也。五者還為妙門者。行者若用惠行。善巧破折。反本還源。是時即便出生空

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First, there is the samādhi of the wheel of earth. This is just the “preliminary ground” (*anāgamya*).

Second, there is the samādhi of the wheel of water. This is just the bringing forth of roots of goodness associated with the various types of dhyāna absorptions.

Third, there is the samādhi of the wheel of empty space. This is just where [any of] five classes of “provisional-teaching” practitioners may awaken to [dharma based in] causes and conditions as devoid of any inherent nature and as comparable to empty space.³

Fourth, there is the gold-dust (lit. “gold-sand”) samādhi. This is just the liberation from both view and thought [delusions]. One comes to possess herein right wisdom⁴ devoid of any attachment and analogous in character to gold dust.

Fifth, there is the vajra-wheel samādhi. This is just the ninth station on the irresistible path (*ānantāryamārga*). It is able to cut off the fetters of the three realms so that they are eternally put to an end and leave no residue. [549c] One realizes here the knowledge of destruction (*kṣaya-jñāna*), realizes the knowledge of non-production (*anutpāda-jñāna*), and enters nirvāṇa.

As for the ability of “stabilization” to serve as a gate to the sublime, the conceptual basis for it abides in this.

D. CONTEMPLATION

Fourth, “contemplation” (*upalakṣaṇā*) as a gate to the sublime: On account of cultivating contemplation, the practitioner is then able to bring forth the nine reflections, the eight recollections, the ten reflections, the eight liberations, the eight bases of ascendancy (*abhibhāvāyatana*), the ten universal bases (*kṛtsnāyatana*), the nine sequential absorptions, the lion-sport samādhi, the “over-leaping” samādhi, the “practice” dhyānas, the fourteen transformational minds, the three clarities, the six superknowledges, and also the eight liberations (*sic*).⁵ One achieves the cessation of feeling and perception and then enters nirvāṇa. As for the ability of “contemplation” to serve as a gate to the sublime, the conceptual basis for it abides in this.

E. TURNING

Fifth, “turning” (*vivartanā*) as a gate to the sublime:⁶ In a case where the practitioner employs wisdom in his practice, he engages in a skillful reductive analysis whereby he turns back to the root and returns to the source. At this time he generates emptiness,

无想无作。三十七品四
 谛。十二因缘。中道正
 观。因此得入涅槃。还为
 妙门。意在此也。六者净
 为妙门者。行者若能体识
 一切诸法本性清静。即便
 获得自性禅也。得此禅
 故。二乘之人。定证涅槃。
 若是菩萨。入铁轮
 位。具十信心。修行不
 止。即便出生九种大禅。
 所谓自性禅。一切禅。难
 禅。一切门禅。善人禅。
 一切行禅。除恼禅。此世
 他世乐禅。清静禅。菩萨
 依是禅故。得大菩提果。
 已得今得当得。净为妙
 门。意在此也

無想無作。三十七品四
 諦。十二因緣。中道正
 觀。因此得入涅槃。還為
 妙門。意在此也。六者淨
 為妙門者。行者若能體識
 一切諸法本性清淨。即便
 獲得自性禪也。得此禪
 故。二乘之人。定證涅槃。
 若是菩薩。入鐵輪
 位。具十信心。修行不
 止。即便出生九種大禪。
 所謂自性禪。一切禪。難
 禪。一切門禪。善人禪。
 一切行禪。除惱禪。此世
 他世樂禪。清淨禪。菩薩
 依是禪故。得大菩提果。
 已得今得當得。淨為妙
 門。意在此也

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signlessness,⁷ and wishlessness, the thirty-seven wings, the four truths, the twelve causes and conditions, and the correct contemplation characteristic of the Middle Way. On account of this, he succeeds in gaining entry into nirvāṇa. As for the ability of “turning” to serve as a gate to the sublime, the conceptual basis for it abides in this.

F. PURIFICATION

Sixth, “purification” (*pariśuddhiḥ*) as a gate to the sublime: In a case where the practitioner is able to realize the fundamental purity of all dharmas, he then gains the realization of the dhyāna of [cognition of] the fundamental nature. On account of gaining this dhyāna, Two-Vehicles practitioners experience an absorption-based realization of nirvāṇa. In the case of a bodhisattva, he enters the “iron-wheel” position and embodies the mind-states inhering in the stations comprised by the ten faiths.

In a case where one continues to cultivate without stopping, he subsequently generates the nine kinds of great dhyāna, namely: the dhyāna of [cognition of] the fundamental nature, the all-encompassing dhyāna, the difficult-to-access dhyāna, the universal-gateway dhyāna, the good-person dhyāna, the dhyāna of all practices, the dhyāna which dispenses with affliction, the dhyāna of bliss in this world and other worlds, and the dhyāna of purity.

Through relying on these dhyānas, the bodhisattvas realize the fruit of the great bodhi. They have realized it before, they realize it now, and they will realize it in the future. As for the ability of “purification” to serve as a gate to the sublime, the conceptual basis for it abides in this.

[0549c19] 次释第二次第相生六妙门者。次第相生。入道之阶梯也。若于欲界中。巧行六法。第六净心成就。即发三乘无漏。况复具足诸禅三昧。此即与前有异。所以者何。如数有二种。一者修数。二者证数。修数者。行者调和气息。不澁不滑。安詳徐数。从一至十。摄心在数。不令驰散。是名修数。证数者。觉心任运。从一至十。不加功力心住息缘。觉息虚微。心相渐细。患数为鹿。意不欲数。尔时行者。应当放数修随。

[0549c19] 次釋第二次第相生六妙門者。次第相生。入道之階梯也。若於欲界中。巧行六法。第六淨心成就。即發三乘無漏。況復具足諸禪三昧。此即與前有異。所以者何。如數有二種。一者修數。二者證數。修數者。行者調和氣息。不澁不滑。安詳徐數。從一至十。攝心在數。不令馳散。是名修數。證數者。覺心任運。從一至十。不加功力心住息緣。覺息虛微。心相漸細。患數為鹿。意不欲數。爾時行者。應當放數修隨。

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CHAPTER TWO

The Six Gates in Terms of Sequential Development

II. SIX GATES CULTIVATION IN TERMS OF SEQUENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The sequential occurrence wherein each gives rise to another serves as a sequence of steps leading to one's entry into the Path. If one skillfully cultivates these six dharmas while within the desire realm, then, upon perfecting the purified mind associated with the sixth [gate], not only will one directly generate the non-outflow state common to the Three Vehicles, one will additionally succeed in perfecting all of the dhyāna samādhis.

A. COUNTING

This process has certain inherent differences relative to the preceding section. How is this the case? Take for example "counting." Here we distinguish two categories: The first consists in the "cultivation" of counting, whereas the second involves the "realization" of counting.

1. CULTIVATION

As for the cultivation of counting, the practitioner regulates and harmonizes the breath so that it is neither too rough nor too subtle. One proceeds in an unhurried fashion, slowly counting, going from "one" on up to "ten." One focuses the mind on the counting and does not allow it to run off and become scattered. This is what is meant by the "cultivation" of counting.

2. REALIZATION

As for the realization of counting, the mind imbued with awareness exercises control from "one" on up to "ten." Without having to put forth any particular effort, the mind abides in the objective conditions associated with the breath.

When one becomes aware that the breath has become insubstantial and faint, the mind becomes gradually more subtle along with it. One subsequently becomes concerned that counting has become a coarse activity. One's state of mind is such that one does not wish to engage in counting. At just such time, the practitioner should let loose of the counting and then proceed to cultivate "following."

随亦有二。一者修随。二者证随。修随者。舍前数法。一心依随息之出入。摄心缘息。知息入出。心住息缘。无分散意。是名修随。证随者。心既微细。安静不乱。觉息长短遍身入出。心息任运相依。意虑恬然凝静。觉随为鹿。心厌欲舍。如人疲极欲眠不乐众务。尔时行者。应当舍随修止。止亦有二。一者修止。二者证止。修止者。息诸缘虑。不念数随。凝寂其心。是名修止。证止者。觉身心泯然入定。

隨亦有二。一者修隨。二者證隨。修隨者。捨前數法。一心依隨息之出入。攝心緣息。知息入出。心住息緣。無分散意。是名修隨。證隨者。心既微細。安靜不亂。覺息長短遍身入出。心息任運相依。意慮恬然凝靜。覺隨為鹿。心厭欲捨。如人疲極欲眠不樂眾務。爾時行者。應當捨隨修止。止亦有二。一者修止。二者證止。修止者。息諸緣慮。不念數隨。凝寂其心。是名修止。證止者。覺身心泯然入定。

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B. FOLLOWING

“Following” is itself of two different sorts: The first is the cultivation of following whereas the second is the realization of following.

1. CULTIVATION

As for the cultivation of following, one relinquishes the previous dharma of counting. One then relies single-mindedly on following the coming in and going out of the breath. One focuses the mind, taking the breath as an object. One becomes aware of the coming in and going out of the breath. [550a] The mind abides in the objective conditions associated with the breath, remaining free of any distraction or scattering of one’s point of attention. This is what is meant by cultivating following.

2. REALIZATION

As for the realization of following, since the mind has become fine and subtle, it becomes peaceful, still, and free of any disorderliness. One becomes aware of the breath, as now long, as now short, as now pervading the body, as now coming in, and as now going out. The mind and the breath carry on in a state of mutual interdependence. The deliberations of the mind become tranquil and fixed in a state of stillness.

Next, one becomes aware of following as a coarse activity. The mind becomes averse to it and wishes to relinquish it. This is analogous to when a person has become exhausted and desires to sleep, thus causing him to be disinclined to deal with his many tasks. At this time, the practitioner should relinquish following and then cultivate stabilization.

C. STABILIZATION

“Stabilization” is itself of two different sorts: The first is the cultivation of stabilization. The second is the realization of stabilization.

1. CULTIVATION

As for the cultivation of stabilization, one puts to rest all thought taking anything as an objective condition. One does not engage in either counting or following. One fixes his mind and makes it still. This is what is meant by the cultivation of stabilization.

2. REALIZATION

As for the realization of stabilization, one becomes aware of the body and mind seeming to vanish entirely as he then enters into meditative absorption.

不見內外相貌。定法持心。任運不動行者是時。即作是念。今此三昧。雖復無為寂靜安隱快樂。而無惠方便。不能破壞生死。復作是念。今此定者。皆屬因緣陰界入法和合而有。虛誑不實。我今不見不覺。應須照了。作是念已。即不着止。起觀分別。觀亦有二。一者修觀。二者證觀。修觀者。於定心中。以惠分別。觀於微細出入息相。如空中風。皮肉筋骨。三十六物。如芭蕉不實。心識無常。剎那不住。無有我人。身受心法。皆無自性。不得人法。定何所依。是名修觀證觀者。如是觀時。覺息出入遍諸毛

不見內外相貌。定法持心。任運不動行者是時。即作是念。今此三昧。雖復無為寂靜安隱快樂。而無惠方便。不能破壞生死。復作是念。今此定者。皆屬因緣陰界入法和合而有。虛誑不實。我今不見不覺。應須照了。作是念已。即不著止。起觀分別。觀亦有二。一者修觀。二者證觀。修觀者。於定心中。以惠分別。觀於微細出入息相。如空中風。皮肉筋骨。三十六物。如芭蕉不實。心識無常。剎那不住。無有我人。身受心法。皆無自性。不得人法。定何所依。是名修觀證觀者。如是觀時。覺息出入遍諸毛

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One does not observe any inward or outward appearances. The dharma of absorption embraces the mind as it remains continuously unmoving. At this time, the practitioner reflects thus: “Although this samādhi is unconditioned, quiescent, secure, and blissful, nonetheless, it is devoid of any skillful means associated with wisdom. Thus it remains unable to bring about the destruction of [the cycle of] births and deaths.”

One then has another thought: “This absorption belongs entirely to the sphere of causes and conditions. Its existence depends entirely on the conjunction of those causes and conditions associated with the aggregates, sense realms, and sense bases. It is false, deceptive, and not reflective of reality. I am not now exercising any perceptive acuity or any form of conscious awareness. I must bring illuminating intelligence to bear here.” Having reflected thus, one then immediately becomes free of any attachment to “stabilization” and subsequently engages in the analysis associated with contemplation.

D. CONTEMPLATION

“Contemplation” is itself of two different sorts. The first is the cultivation of contemplation. The second is the realization of contemplation.

1. CULTIVATION

As for the cultivation of contemplation, in the midst of the mind immersed in absorption, one employs wisdom to make distinctions. One contemplates the fine and subtle features of the breath as it goes forth and comes in. It is like a wind in the midst of space. The skin, the flesh, the sinews, the bones, the thirty-six categories of things [making up the body]—are all just as devoid of substantiality as the [coreless] plantain. Even the consciousness of one’s mind is impermanent. It does not abide even for a *kṣaṇa*.¹ Neither oneself nor anyone else exists. The dharmas of the body, feeling,² and the mind are all devoid of any inherently existent nature. One is unable to ultimately apprehend [the existence of] any person or any dharma. On what then could meditative absorption [possibly] depend? This is what is meant by the cultivation of contemplation.

2. REALIZATION

As for the realization of contemplation, when one is contemplating in this manner, one becomes aware of the breath entering, exiting, and pervading [the entire body, extending even] to all of the hair

孔。心眼开明。彻见三十六物。及诸虫户。内外不净。刹那变易。心生悲喜。得四念处。破四颠倒。是名证观。观相既发。心缘观境。分别破折。觉念流动。非真实道。尔时应当舍观修还。还亦有二。一者修还二者证还。修还者。既知观从心生。若从折境。此即不会本源。应当反观观心。此观心者。从何而生。为从观心生。为从非观心生。若从观心生。即已有观。今实不尔。所以者何。数随止等三法中。未有即观故。若从不观心生。不观心为灭生。

孔。心眼開明。徹見三十六物。及諸虫戶。內外不淨。刹那變易。心生悲喜。得四念處。破四顛倒。是名證觀。觀相既發。心緣觀境。分別破折。覺念流動。非真實道。爾時應當捨觀修還。還亦有二。一者修還二者證還。修還者。既知觀從心生。若從折境。此即不會本源。應當反觀觀心。此觀心者。從何而生。為從觀心生。為從非觀心生。若從觀心生。即已有觀。今實不爾。所以者何。數隨止等三法中。未有即觀故。若從不觀心生。不觀心為滅生。

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pores. The mind's eye opens with clarity and one thoroughly sees the thirty-six things [composing the body] as well all of the organisms therein, the inward and outward impurity, and the changes occurring even in every *kṣaṇa*. The mind becomes both saddened and delighted. One gains realization of the four stations of mindfulness and destroys the four inverted views. This is what is meant by the "realization" of contemplation.

Once the characteristic features of contemplation have developed, the mind takes the domain that is contemplated as an objective condition and proceeds then to make distinctions and deconstructing analyses with regard to it. One consequently becomes aware that [allowing] the onward-flowing movement of thought does not amount to a reality-based path. At such a time, one should then relinquish the process of contemplation and proceed instead to cultivate "turning."

E. TURNING

"Turning" is itself of two different sorts. The first is the cultivation of turning. The second is the realization of turning.

1. CULTIVATION

As for the cultivation of turning, once one has realized that contemplation itself arises from the mind and once one has also understood that, if one continues to follow along with analysis of the objective sphere, this does not by itself directly bring about convergence with the original source, one should then turn back the direction of one's contemplation so that one now contemplates that very mind that is engaged in contemplation.

As for this mind which engages in contemplation, from what does it arise? Is it generated by contemplative thought or is it generated by something other than contemplative thought? If it is the case that it is generated by contemplative thought, then it should also be the case that there was a pre-existing contemplation process already underway. But in the present situation, this is certainly not the case. Why not? Because there was not yet anything in the midst of the three [immediately preceding] dharmas of "counting," "following," "stabilization," and so forth that was identifiable with this [process of] "contemplation."

If it is the case that [contemplative thought] arose from a mind not involved in contemplation, is it the case that the mind not involved in contemplation generated it when [that non-contemplating thought]

为不灭生。若不灭生。即二心并。若灭法生灭法已谢。不能生观。若言亦灭亦不灭生。乃至非灭非不灭生。皆不可得。当知观心本自不生。不生故不有。不有故即空。空故无观心。若无观心。岂有观境。境智双亡。还源之要也。是名修还相。证还相者。心惠开发。不加功力。任运自能破折。反本还源。是名证还。行者当知。若离境智。欲归无境智。不离境智缚。以随二边故。尔时当舍还门安心净道。

為不滅生。若不滅生。即二心並。若滅法生滅法已謝。不能生觀。若言亦滅亦不滅生。乃至非滅非不滅生。皆不可得。當知觀心本自不生。不生故不有。不有故即空。空故無觀心。若無觀心。豈有觀境。境智雙亡。還源之要也。是名修還相。證還相者。心惠開發。不加功力。任運自能破折。反本還源。是名證還。行者當知。若離境智。欲歸無境智。不離境智縛。以隨二邊故。爾時當捨還門安心淨道。

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had already ceased or instead produced it when [that non-contemplating thought] had not yet ceased? If it is the case that it produced it when [that non-contemplating thought] had not ceased, then this would be a case of two thoughts existing simultaneously.

If [one were to posit that] it was generated by a dharma which had already ceased to exist, [one should realize that], once an extinct dharma has already disappeared, it is no longer able to generate any contemplative [thought process]. [550b]

If one were to claim that it was generated from that which had ceased and yet not ceased, or if one were to go so far as to claim that it was generated from that which had neither ceased nor not ceased, in all such cases, those [antecedent causes] cannot ultimately be apprehended. One should therefore realize that the contemplative mind itself was originally unproduced. Because it was unproduced, it does not exist. Because it does not exist, it is just “empty” [of any inherent existence]. Because it is empty [of any inherent existence], there is no mind engaged in the process of contemplation.

If there is no contemplative mind, how could there be an objective sphere which serves as the object of contemplation? This perishing of both the objective sphere and the faculty of knowing is the essential factor in turning back to the source. This is the characteristic feature of the cultivation of turning.

2. REALIZATION

As for the characteristic feature of the realization of turning, the wisdom of the mind opens forth and develops in a way no longer requiring one to bring to bear additional skillful effort. It carries on in a way allowing one to naturally be able to invoke analyses, turn back towards the origin, and return to the source. This is what is meant by the realization of turning.

The practitioner should realize that, if he desires to retreat into [a circumstance involving] an absence of both objective sphere and knowing faculty utterly apart from an objective sphere and a knowing faculty, he would thereby fail to leave behind being tethered to [the duality inherent in] an objective sphere and a knowing faculty. This is because, in such a case, one would still simply be coursing along in the sphere of duality-based extremes. At just such a time, one should then relinquish the gateway of turning and establish the mind in the path of purification.

净亦有二。一者修净。二者证净修净者。知色净故。不起妄想分别。受想行识。亦复如是。息妄想垢。是名修净。息分别垢。是名修净。息取我垢。是名修净。举要言之。若能心如本净。是名修净。亦不得能修所修及净不净。是名修净。证净者。如是修时。豁然心惠相应。无碍方便。任运开发。三昧正受。心无依恃。证净有二。一者相似证。五方便相似无漏道惠发。二者真实证。苦法忍乃至第九无碍

淨亦有二。一者修淨。二者證淨修淨者。知色淨故。不起妄想分別。受想行識。亦復如是。息妄想垢。是名修淨。息分別垢。是名修淨。息取我垢。是名修淨。舉要言之。若能心如本淨。是名修淨。亦不得能修所修及淨不淨。是名修淨。證淨者。如是修時。豁然心惠相應。無礙方便。任運開發。三昧正受。心無依恃。證淨有二。一者相似證。五方便相似無漏道惠發。二者真實證。苦法忍乃至第九無礙

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F. PURIFICATION

“Purification” itself is of two sorts. The first is the cultivation of purification. The second is the realization of purification.

1. CULTIVATION

As for the cultivation of purification, through realizing the purity of the form [aggregate], one refrains from generating false thoughts about it and does not course in discriminations regarding it. “The same is true with respect to [the aggregates of] feeling, perception, formative factors (*saṃskāras*), and consciousness.”³

One puts to rest the defilement of false thinking. This constitutes the cultivation of purification. One also puts to rest the defilement of coursing in discriminations. This too qualifies as the cultivation of purification. One puts to rest the defilement of grasping at a self as well. This is also what is intended by “the cultivation of purification.”

To state what is essential: If one is able to bring it about that his mind conforms to its fundamental purity, this qualifies as the cultivation of purification. If one does not ultimately apprehend any subjective entity which is able to cultivate, any objective sphere which is cultivated, or anything which qualifies as either “pure” or “impure,” this qualifies as the cultivation of purification.

2. REALIZATION

As for the realization of purification, when one is cultivating in this manner, one experiences a sudden penetration through to a circumstance wherein the mind accords with wisdom. Unimpeded skillful means continuously manifest and, abiding in the “direct experiencing” of *samādhi*,⁴ the mind remains free of any dependence on anything at all.

a. SEMBLANCE REALIZATION OF PURIFICATION

This realization of purification is of two sorts: The first is a semblance of realization. This refers to the generation of a semblance of the wisdom of the non-outflow path gained through implementation of the five categories of skillful means.⁵

b. GENUINE REALIZATION OF PURIFICATION

The second is genuine realization. This refers to the generation of true non-outflow wisdom as it occurs in such circumstances as the achievement of the dharma-knowledge-of-suffering patience (*duḥkhe dharmajñānakṣānti*) on up to the ninth station of the irresistible

道等真无漏惠发也。三界垢尽。故名证净。复次观众生空故名为观。观实法空故名为还。观平等空故名为净。复次空三昧相应故名为观。无相三昧相应故名为还。无作三昧相应故名为净。复次一切外观名为观。一切内观名为还。一切非内非外观名为净。故先尼梵志言。非内观故。得是智慧。非外观故。得是智慧。非内外观故。得是智慧。亦不无观故。得是智慧也

道等真無漏惠發也。三界垢盡。故名證淨。復次觀眾生空故名為觀。觀實法空故名為還。觀平等空故名為淨。復次空三昧相應故名為觀。無相三昧相應故名為還。無作三昧相應故名為淨。復次一切外觀名為觀。一切內觀名為還。一切非內非外觀名為淨。故先尼梵志言。非內觀故。得是智慧。非外觀故。得是智慧。非內外觀故。得是智慧。亦不無觀故。得是智慧也

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path (*ānantāryamārga*). [Under these circumstances], the defilement characteristic of the three realms is brought to an end. Hence this is referred to as the “realization” of purification.

G. ALTERNATIVE CATEGORIZATIONS

Then again, [one might also explain that] it is on the basis of contemplating the emptiness of beings that one defines “contemplation,” that it is on the basis of contemplating the emptiness of dharmas associated with reality that one defines “turning,” and that it is on the basis of contemplating uniform emptiness that one defines “purification.”

Then again, [one might also explain that] it is correspondence with the samādhi of emptiness which defines “contemplation,” that it is correspondence with the samādhi of signlessness that defines “turning,” and that it is correspondence with the samādhi of wishlessness which defines “purification.”

Then again, [one might also explain that] all outwardly-directed contemplations qualify as “contemplation,” that all inwardly-directed contemplations qualify as “turning,” and that all contemplations which are neither inwardly nor outwardly directed qualify as “purification.” Hence Śreṇika, the Brahmācarin, stated, “It is not by virtue of an inwardly-directed contemplation that one gains this wisdom. It is not by virtue of an outwardly-directed contemplation that one gains this wisdom. It is not by virtue of a contemplation which is both inwardly-directed and outwardly-directed that one gains this wisdom. Nor is it the case that one gains this wisdom in the absence of any contemplation whatsoever.”