

**A COMPARATIVE INVESTIGATION OF SAMATHA AND VIPASSANĀ
IN THE VISUDDHIMAGGA AND THE ŚRAVAKABHŪMI
OF THE YOGĀCĀRABHŪMI-ŚĀSTRA**

J.Y. Shao^{1*}, B.L. Chin¹, P.D. Premasiri¹
¹PGIHS, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
*zhengjiantara@gmail.com

The *Pāli* term "*samatha*" (Sanskrit: *śamatha*) is meditation focused on cultivating deep concentration and mental tranquillity, and the *Pāli* term "*vipassanā*" (Sanskrit: *vipaśyanā*) is meditation aimed at gaining profound insight into the nature of reality and achieving liberation. Both the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Śrāvakabhūmi* section of the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* serve as manuals of practice on *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* for *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, respectively. This research attempts to explore the similarities and differences in the theoretical basis and specific practice methods of the two classics on *Samatha-vipassanā*. The research adopts a comparative textual analysis, focusing on the doctrinal and practical aspects of *Samatha-vipassanā* as delineated in these two texts. In examining the *Visuddhimagga*, the results reveal that the analysis focuses on the systematic and detailed exposition of the seven kinds of purification and sixteen aspects of insight knowledge, which integrates both *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* as essential components of the Buddhist path to liberation. The results reveal that the *Śrāvakabhūmi* is examined for its unique contributions to the *Yogācāra* school's understanding of meditative practices, particularly in its nuanced treatment of consciousness and cognitive processes, such as the seven mental contemplations, nine stages of mental abiding, four types, three gates and six entities of *Vipassanā*. Additionally, the *Śrāvakabhūmi* provides an in-depth analysis of the objects of meditation (*ālambana*), which play a crucial role in guiding the practitioner through different stages of *Samatha* and *Vipassanā*. Both texts combine systematic doctrinal exposition and introspective analysis. They are not merely products of speculative or theoretical construction, but reflect a close and perceptive analysis of introspective experience. This introspective methodology differs fundamentally from the empirical methods of modern science, which focus on external observation and analysis of the biological organism. In contrast, the Buddhist analysis prioritizes the inner processes of experience and recognizes the profound significance of introspective observation in understanding the mind and its workings. This research offers a more diversified perspective on contemporary meditation practice through a comparative study of two texts on the *Samatha* and *Vipassana* comparison.

Keywords: *Samatha*, *Vipassanā*, *Visuddhimagga*, *Śrāvakabhūmi*, *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra*