BUDDHIST STUDIES

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with the viññānakkhandha — as we are generally told in the Pāli Canon — but rather with the ‘objects’ of different ‘consciousnesses.’ Now the three words, diṭṭham, sutam, mutam, are repeatedly used in that old text, the Suttapāta. The word viññātam (as in the text quoted above) is sometimes added. The words diṭṭhi-, sutti-, muti- or hāga- also are used. The four words, diṭṭham, sutam, mutam, viññātam, to which is sometimes added (as in the Majjhima text quoted above) pattam pariyesitaṁ anuvicaritaṁ manasā, are also found elsewhere. They are explained in Saṁyutta-Nikāya XXXV, 95, which was, no doubt, the starting point of the traditional interpretation. Diṭṭham, of course, is explained as that which is ‘seen’ by the eye (cakkhunā diṭṭham, or rūpāyatanam), sutam as that which is ‘heard’ by the ear (sotena sutam, or saddāyatanam), and viññātam as that which is ‘known’ by the mind (manasā viññātam); but, surprisingly, mutam is said to be that which is ‘smelt’ by the nose, ‘tasted’ by the tongue, and ‘touched’ by the body (ghānaṁ ghāyitaṁ, jīvitaṁ sāyatitaṁ, kāyena phutthitaṁ, or gandhaṇyataṁ, rāsyataṇaṁ, poṭṭhabbāyaṇaṁ) — an interpretation that will later be worked out in detail by Buddhaghosa in his different commentaries as well as in the Visuddhimagga. The four words are thus understood to comprise the experiences brought about by all the six ‘faculties.’ Theragathā 1216 (= Saṁyutta-Nikāya I, p. 186) adds between diṭṭha-sute and mute patigha, which has been differently interpreted by Buddhaghosa and by Dhammapāla. While for Buddhaghosa patigha- means that which is smelt and tasted, and muta- that which is touched, Dhammapāla, who quotes the Sāratthapakkāsini in this connection, says just the reverse: patigha tī gaṭṭhane poṭṭhābe. mute ti vuttavasese mute; gandharihasa tī vuttam hoti. Sāratthapakkāsiniyaṁ (cf. PTS edition, Vol. I, p. 270) ‘patigha-saddena gandharaśa gahita, muta-saddena poṭṭhabbha gahita’ ti vuttam.9

Be that as it may, I have the impression that muta- originally meant ‘thought of’, ‘known’ (cf. the parallelism between muta- or muti- and hāna-: Suttapāta 839-40 and 846, 1078 and 1082). But this is not the point that I wanted to make here. Before I come to my point I should like to draw attention to the fact that the empirical means of knowledge indicated by the four terms under consideration — let us say, ‘seeing’, ‘hearing’ ‘thinking’, ‘understanding’ — are regarded as useful in that they help us in attaining the Truth by paving the way for it; but, in the ultimate analysis, they are false and hence to be abandoned:

na diṭṭhiyā na sutiyā na hānena
Māgandiyā ‘ti Bhagavā
stilabbatenāpi na suddhiṁ āha/
adīṭṭhīyā assutiya anāṭṭhā
aslatā abbatā no pi tena/
ete ca nissajja anugghāya
santo anissayā bhavām na jappe|| (Suttapāta 839). — sambhārā ime
Dr. K. N. Jayatilleke, who discusses some of the passages quoted above in his remarkable work, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London, 1963), observes (p. 60, § 72) that they ‘criticise’ ‘Upanaśadic doctrines of the ātman. In the preceding paragraph Dr. Jayatilleke cites quite a number of Upanaśadic passages in which the doctrines in question occur. Speaking of the famous passage of the *BRhadārānyaka-Upaniṣad* (II, 4, 5; IV, 5, 6): ātmā vā are draṣṭavyāḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nīdhyāśītavyāḥ, he writes: ‘It is said that the ātman should be perceived (draṣṭavyaḥ), learnt of (śrotavyaḥ), conceived of (mantavyaḥ) and rationally understood (nīdhyāśītavyaḥ)’ (Brh. 2.4.5, 4.5.6). This is put in the mouth of Yājñavalkya, who is soon going to prove by rational arguments that the ātman cannot be apprehended by any of these standard ways of knowing (Brh. 2.4.14, 4.5.15), but if we consider this passage in the light of other passages bearing on it in this stratum of thought, we see that there were thinkers at this time who believed that the ātman could be known by all these usual ways of knowing. The ātman could be seen or empirically perceived if it was a matter of seeing your figure in a pan of water (Ch. 8.8.1) or of perceiving the warmth of the body (Ch. 3.13.8). It could be heard or heard of, if it was a case of hearing the sound as of a fire blazing on closing one’s ears (Ch. 3.13.8) or of hearing about it from a teacher when ‘what was not heard of’ (āsrutam) presumably in the sacred scriptures becomes heard (śrutam bhavati) (Ch. 6.1.3). It could likewise be metaphysically conceived of and rationally understood by thinking (e.g. vijayaṁ, Ch. 6.16.3). It is significant that even Śaṅkara’s comment on ‘mantavya nīdhyāśītavyaḥ’ (Brh. 4.5.6) is that it can be known through ‘argument and reasoning’ (tarkenaṇopapattyā). This was the ātman of the Early Upaniṣads, that could be known by the then accepted ways of knowing, that is by perceiving empirical instances, by instruction, or by metaphysical reasoning or rationally demonstrated to be unknowable in these ways.

Let us examine, first, the *BRhadārānyaka* passage. It is difficult. But the most sensible interpretation seems to be that given by the Indian tradition itself. Thus Śaṅkara, commenting on the sentence, ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ mantavyaḥ nīdhyāśītavyaḥ, writes (Commentary on II, 4, 5): śrotavyaḥ pūrvam acarṣyata āgamanaḥ ca paścām mantavyasya tarkataḥ. tato nīdhyāśītavyaḥ nīcācyena dhyātavyaḥ. evam hy asaṃ dṛṣṭaṁ bhavati śramaṇo mananāhidhyāśītayaṁ nirvarttaṁ yadatvatvam etāṁ upagati tam tado samyagdarsanam brahmaikavatvaviṣayam prastatati, nānyathā śravanaṁś. In his commentary on IV, 5, 6 (which is essentially identical with II, 4, 5), Śaṅkara interprets the next sentence, ātmano dṛṣṭe śrutē mate vijñāte idam sarvam viditaṁ, as follows: kathan dṛṣṭa ātmanī tam? ucayaṁ: pūrvam acarṣyagamābhyāṁ śrutē punas tarkenaṇopapattyā mate vicāre, śravanaṁ tv āgamamātretāṁ, mata upapattyā paścād vijñāte evam etan nānyatheti nirdhārite. kiṁ bhavattī? ucayaṁ: idam viditaṁ bhavati. idam sarvam iti yad ātmano ‘nyat. ātmaṇyatirekeṇaḥ bhavat.

As will be seen, in the last passage, Śaṅkara’s gloss *tarkenaṇopapattī* refers only to *mate*. *nīcācyena dhyātavyaḥ* is glossed in his comment on II, 4, 5: *nīcācyena dhyātavyaḥ*.

According to this interpretation, this passage of the *BRhadārānyaka* refers to the four stages of spiritual knowledge: śravana-, i.e. ‘hearing’ from the teacher or from the scriptures, manana-, i.e. ‘reflection’ by reasoning, nīdhyāśana-, i.e. continuous meditation, and dasana-, ‘vision’. As Śaṅkara says in his comment on *BRhadārānyaka* II, 4, 5, it is only when the first three steps have been accomplished as one (yadatvatvam etāṁ upagati) that the ‘right vision having for its object the unity of the brahma- (= ātman-) shines forth’ (tadā samyagdarsanam brahmaikavatvaviṣayam prastatā): this ‘vision’ cannot be attained by ‘hearing’ alone (nānyathā śravanaṁśa). This interpretation, therefore, suggests that the term *draṣṭavyaḥ*, in the series *draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ mantavyaḥ nīdhyāśītavyaḥ*, represents not the beginning but rather the end of the process. The ‘vision’ is the goal to which lead the three preliminary stages of ‘hearing’, etc., conceived as one.

Now, as Dr. Jayatilleke himself shows (pp. 431-2, § 742), ‘If we take the words for “seeing” we find that they are used in the Nikāyas to denote normal as well as extrasensory perception.’ And stages of spiritual knowledge, similar to those just spoken of, are also mentioned in the Nikāyas. Thus in the *Caṅk-Sutta* we read:

. . . dhammaṁ suṇāti, sutvā dhammaṁ dhāreṇi, dhāritanam dhammaṁ attham upaparikkhati, attham upaparikkhato dhammaṁ nījhaṁ khamanti, dhammanijjhāṅkchantīya sati chando jāyati, chandajāto ussahati, ussahīti tuleti, tulayīvā padsahati, paḥitatta samāṇo kāyena c eva paramasaṅcaṁ sacchikaroti paññāya ca taṁ ativijjhī passati.

The ‘Vision’ of which Yājñavalkya speaks in the *BRhadārānyaka* is not an ordinary vision, but the Vision of the Truth, which is beyond the subject-object split, which, therefore, cannot even be properly called a ‘vision’. There is thus no contradiction between this statement and the one that follows, namely that the Ātman cannot be objectively ‘known’. Our ordinary ‘seeing’, ‘hearing’, ‘reasoning’, ‘understanding’, and so on, operate only in the empirical world of subjects and objects; but when this apparent duality (dvaītan iva) is transcended, these no longer exist:

yatra hi dvaitam iva bhavati . . . tad itara itaraṁ śrūṇaṁ . . . tad itara itaraṁ manute, tad itara itaraṁ vijñāṇī. yatra vā asya sarvāṁ ātmavābhūt . . . tat kena kāṁ paśyāt, tat kena kāṁ śrūṇaṁ . . . tat kena kāṁ manvīta, tat kena kāṁ vijñāṇītā?16
The three preliminary stages of spiritual knowledge, also, are transcended in the ultimate Vision, where there is neither a seeing subject nor an object to be seen. From all this, therefore, we can conclude: The Pāli Canon admits an ultimate 'Vision' of Truth and denies an ultimate value to our empirical 'seeing', 'hearing', 'reasoning', 'understanding', just as Yājañavalkya does. In other words, there is not the slightest opposition between the Pāli Canon and the great Upaniṣadic thinker so far this point is concerned.

Now about the other Upaniṣadic passages quoted by Dr Jayatilleke. No importance should evidently be attached to the Chāndogya passage, VIII, 8, 1; for the 'seeing' of the Ātman, mentioned in this passage, is rejected later as false, in the course of Prajñāpāti's higher and higher instruction to Indra. Nor should we, it seems to me, attach any importance to that figurative passage, Chāndogya III, 13, 8. Chāndogya VI, 1, 3: yenādriṣṭaṃ śrutam bhavaty amatam matam avijnātāṃ vijnātām, does not say anything about the 'hearing', 'reasoning' and 'understanding' in relation to the Ātman: it only means to say that when the Ātman — the One — is realised, even those things which lie beyond the reach of these ordinary 'ways of knowing' become in a way 'heard', 'thought of', 'understood' — because there is nothing apart from the Ātman, the One: atmayatireketābhyāvāt. 17

Finately, the sentence (Chāndogya VI, 16, 3) that brings to a close the famous discourse on tat tvam asi:... atidādāmyam idam sarvam, tat satyam, sa ātmā, tat tvam asi, Śvetaketi iti tad dhāsa yavijnāt iti vijnāhāv iti, only means that Śvetaketu understood the teaching of his father.

I shall be the last person to say that the Pāli Canon only restates the teachings of the Upaniṣads; but it seems to me that the difference between the two has too often been exaggerated. 18

NOTES
2 Cf. K. Bhattacharya, L'Ātman-Brahman dans le Bouddhisme ancien, Paris 1973 (Publications de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, vol. XC). — The theory, so loko so atta... criticized here (cf. also Saṁyutta-Nikāya III, pp. 98, 182), has been discussed by the Venerable Rāhula in his wonderful book, What the Buddha Taught (second edition, Bedford 1967), p. 59 & n. 1. Cf. also L'Ātman-Brahman... p. 9, n. 4; p. 14, n. 7; p. 15, n. 1; p. 67, n. 3. "La doctrine critique... nous fait plutôt penser à la fameuse doctrine de Śāntideva, ou l'on a reconnu l'influence des anciennes représentations ritualistes-théistes".
5 Here are some references, which may not be exhaustive: Dīgha-Nikāya III, p. 232 (= Aṅguttara II, p. 246; cf. IV, p. 307); Majjhima I, p. 3; III, pp. 29-30, 261; Saṁyutta III, pp. 203ff.; Aṅguttara II, pp. 23-4 (= Itivuttaka, p. 121), 25; Udāna, p. 8.
6 Cf. Cullānīdēsa 298 (on Suttanipāta 1086); Suttavibhāga, Pācittiyā I, 2, 1 (Vinaya, ed. Oldenberg, Vol. IV, p. 2); Dhammasaṅgiti 94 (Vinaya, p. 429.
7 XIV, 76; cf. 46 (warren-Kosambi, Harvard Oriental Series 41).
8 Cf. the discussion on this point in Abhidharmakośa IV, pp. 160ff. (La Vallé Poussin's translation). The Sanskrit original of the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya, published in Patna, is not available to me, but the relevant portion is reproduced by P. S. Jaini in his edition of the Abhidharmadipika with Vihaśāprabhāvṛttī (= Tibetan Sanskrit Works Series, Vol. IV), Patna 1959, p. 161, n. 3. See also Abhidharmadipika with Vihaśāprabhāvṛttī, pp. 161-2, where the Vihaśājīva point of view is set forth. — In the Aṣṭasāhasrika Prajñāpāramitā, the Bārhnadāṃ dharmatāt is said to be na prātesha:— He Haribhadra explains: ghrāṇaśvākāvatvaśvājīnān anubhavitān matā (Aṣṭasāhasrika Prajñāpāramitā with Abhissamayālmākārālas, edited by P. L. Vaidya, Darbhanga 1960, pp. 95 & 407).
10 It is also found outside Vedanta, Cf. Gaṅgeśa, Tatvācintāmāṇa, Muktivāda, in Gāḍādhara (Varanasi, Chowkhamba, 1970, p. 2055).
11 In his commentary on the Bhaṇgaṣṭīdī (III, 41, etc.), Saṁkarā interprets jña-ṇa as general theoretical knowledge, obtained from the scriptures and from the teacher (sāstrāta āyamataś ca mādāminā akṣaravadbhavah), and vihaśā as 'particular experience' (viheṣēta tādeva bhavah). But here, as well as in his comment on Chāndogya-Upanisad VI, 1, 3 (discussed below), where Saṁkarā glosses avihaṭṭhaṃ vihaśāṃ by aniccam nisīcam bhavati, it does not seem to me that he understands vihaśā in the sense of 'une intuition simple et indifférenciée' (O. Lacombe, Jñānaṃ savjñāhan, in Mélanges d’indologie au mémoire de Louis Renou, Paris 1968, pp. 439-43). Vihaśā in these Upaniṣadic passages means for Saṁkarā — so far as can be seen — 'rational understanding' and nothing else (differently L’Ātman-Brahman... p. 32 & n. 2, p. 33). Of course, this 'rational understanding' has to be transcended in the ultimate Vision (darśana)...
12 'Anhaltende Meditation', O. Böhtlingk’s translation of Saddāntasūtra § 207 (Sanskrit-Croatian dictionary reprint: 1967, p. 220). — Nidālayasanaa... (from the Sādhanasūtra) does not seem to me the same as Pāli jñāhana in diṣṭa-or dhamma-nijāhānakhanti (Jayatilleke, p. 275, § 440).
13 Majjhima-Nikāya II, p. 173 (cf. I, p. 480). Cf. L’Ātman-Brahman... p. 120, n. 2. I have understood that kāyena paramāsaccaṃ saccakacchari, in this series, corresponds to nidālayasanaa, which has been defined, e.g., as manomahaparbhāvāyatvāvahavyasgāv tubhāvā (Padmapāla, Pañca-padhikā, p. 353 [Madras Government Oriental Series No. CLV, Madras 1958]).
15 Cf. on this passage L’Ātman-Brahman... p. 52.
17 Saṁkarā, quoted p. 13 above. Cf. also Muṇḍaka-Upanisad I, 1, 3... na tañhām adhiṣṭhan asatuṃ-natam vah... "atho avēhiśāṃ kilkacaman athi loke i. Suttanipāta 1122.
18 Professor Jaini also, in his edition of the Abhidharmadipika (cf. p. 15, n. 8 above), p. 162, n. 2, cites in connection with dṛṣṭam, śrutam, matam, vihaśām, the Bhradāranya passage, atām ārāmataśa... apparently to indicate an opposition between the Upaniṣad and Buddhism. He refers to P. V. Bapat: Arthapada-sutra, Introduction, pp. 4-6 — a book which, unfortunately, is not available to me.

There are other works which I have not been able to consult. In the Abhidharmasamuccaya, translated by the Venerable Rāhula, I find only a brief mention of dṛṣṭa-śruta-mata-vijñāta (samākhā nidānapratimahābhāgā rūpabhedāvah, yayā dṛṣṭa-śrūta-mata-vijñātaḥ atītān evaḥvaharati, p. 2 in Pradhana’s edition).

Note 7 June 1979: In the Abhidharmasamuccaya-bhāṣya (p. 2), published in Patna in 1976, matam and vihaśām are thus interpreted — against the tradition recorded above — matam yat svaṃyaḥ abhyūhitam evam caivaṃ ca bhavanti iti, vihaśām yat pratyaṣṭaṃ amucchātum iti.