

Situating the Concept of Mindfulness in the Theravāda Tradition

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Abstract

Mindfulness plays a prominent role in traditional and modern Buddhist meditation practice. This paper examines the theoretical background of the concept of mindfulness (*sati*) as presented in the early Buddhist sources, recorded in Theravāda Buddhism. It outlines the definitions and presentations of mindfulness (*sati*) in the Pāli Canon and examines how it is embedded within the fundamental models of Buddhist discourse. Then it investigates mindfulness within the philosophical framework of the *Abhidhamma*, where it is presented as one of the mental factors (*cetasika*) involved in cognitive processes; it outlines its characteristics, functions, conditions, and compatibility with other mental factors, which occur as components within the interdependent processes of consciousness (*citta*). The article shows how mindfulness has a special role as a component on the Buddhist path to liberation from suffering (*dukkha*) and how it is integrated within the soteriological and ethical goals of Buddhist practice.

Keywords: mindfulness, *sati*, early Buddhism, ethics and Buddhist meditation, Buddhist psychology

Izveček

Čuječnost ima pomembno mesto v tradicionalni in moderni budistični meditaciji. Prispevek preučuje teoretične osnove in izhodišča koncepta čuječnosti (*sati*) v zgodnjih budističnih virih theravādskega budizma. Najprej opiše definicije in predstavitev čuječnosti (*sati*) v pālijskih kanoničnih besedilih in prikaže, da je čuječnost sestavni del vseh glavnih modelov budističnega diskurza. Nato raziskuje čuječnost v filozofskem okviru *Abhidhamme*, kjer je predstavljena kot eden od mentalnih dejavnikov (*cetasika*), udeleženih v kognicijskih procesih, ter oriše njene glavne značilnosti, funkcije in povezave z drugimi, soodvisnimi komponentami kognicije (*citta*). Prispevek prikaže, na kakšen način je čuječnost integralni del soterioloških in etičnih ciljev budistične prakse, ki naj bi prepeljala do osvoboditve od trpljenja in nezadovoljivosti bivanja (*dukkha*).

Ključne besede: čuječnost, *sati*, zgodnji budizem, etika in budistična meditacija, budistična psihologija

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Defining Mindfulness

The word “mindfulness” is the English translation of the Pāli term *sati*¹ (Sanskrit *smṛti*), which refers to an important concept in Buddhist doctrine and a central component of Buddhist meditation. The term was rendered into English as mindfulness in the 1880s, firstly introduced by T. W. Rhys Davids in his translations of the Pāli Canonical texts (Gethin 2011, 263–4). Since then, the term has become well established in English translations of Buddhist literature and, later on, started to refer primarily to a particular meditation method. The Pāli term *sati* is attested in a range of meanings such as “memory, recollection, recognition, mindfulness, wakefulness, alertness.”² Although the Sanskrit equivalent *smṛti* is most commonly translated as “memory,”³ it seems that already in the earliest Vedic texts the term encompassed a range of connotations similar to those in Buddhist contexts (i.e., “memory, attention, awareness”), as convincingly argued by Klaus (1992, 77–86). The semantic scope of this term is rather wide and, consequently, its English translation has not been fully standardised.⁴

In the Pāli Buddhist Canon, the term *sati* occasionally refers to remembering past events⁵ and, more often, in meditation contexts, to the recollection (*anussati*) of wholesome objects such as the qualities of the Buddha.⁶ However, most frequently, *sati* refers to meditative awareness, rendered into English as “mindfulness”, often attested in conjunction with the term “clear comprehension” (*sampajañña*). The predominant occurrences of *sati* in meditation contexts reflect the main aims of the Buddhist teachings presented in the Pāli Canon, which largely focus on the soteriological goals to be achieved through ethical and meditative training; hence, the Buddhist doctrine is not much concerned with the mundane events or their remembrance. Although the conditions for recollective memory and mindful awareness are linked within the semantic range of *sati*, as discussed

1 Interpretations of mindfulness that have evolved in modern Buddhism very frequently refer back to Theravāda sources. The overview of the concept of mindfulness in this article therefore draws from the Theravāda Buddhist canon, with the technical terms for mindfulness and the related concepts given in Pāli.

2 Pāli *sati* is rendered in PED (s.v.) into English as “memory, recognition, wakefulness, mindfulness, alertness”.

3 Sanskrit *smṛti* is translated in MW (s.v.) as “remembrance, reminiscence, calling to mind, memory”.

4 A good overview of the concept of memory in different Buddhist textual traditions and various contexts is given in Gyatso (1992).

5 AN V 14 5.

6 E.g., the recollections (*anussati*) listed in the *Visuddhimagga* (Vism 197–228) include remembering of the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, virtues, generosity and deities.

by several scholars (Cox 1992, 67–108), *sati* occurs in the Pāli Canon primarily as a meditational term.

In the Pāli Canon, *sati* is often described as a particular kind of remembering, indicating non-forgetfulness, wakefulness, presence; for example, in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the faculty of mindfulness (*satindriyam*) is defined as: »... remembering, recollection, mindfulness as memory, bearing in mind, not wobbling, not forgetting; mindfulness as faculty, power, right mindfulness ...«. ⁷

Non-forgetfulness refers to mindful attention towards meditation objects from an ethical perspective—as to whether the objects are wholesome or not; hence, Gethin (2011, 265) describes *sati* as a kind of “ethical intuition”. The function of ethical watchfulness of *sati* is illustrated in many texts through similes such as the well-known comparison of mindfulness to a gatekeeper who is guarding the city’s six gates (representing the six senses) from strangers (i.e. unwholesome mental states). ⁸ In the *Visuddhimagga*, Buddhaghosa summarises the characteristics and functions of mindfulness in the following passage:

By [mindfulness] they remember (*saranti*), or it remembers by itself, or it is just only remembering (*saraṇa*), this is mindfulness (*sati*). Its characteristic is not wobbling (*apilāpana*), its function is non-confusion, it is manifested as guarding, or as facing the object. Its proximate cause is firm perception (*thirasaññā*), or its proximate cause is the foundation of mindfulness of the body, and so on (*kāyādisatipaññāna*). Because it is firmly supported, it should be viewed as a pillar, or as a gate-keeper because it guards the eye-door, and so on. ⁹

This definition and characterisation of mindfulness has often served as a foundation for its interpretations in modern Buddhism from the late nineteenth century onwards, particularly in Burmese Buddhism, where meditation was positioned at the centre of Buddhist teachings and thus provided the grounds and conditions for the subsequent popularisation and secularisation of mindfulness in the late twentieth century (Braun 2013).

7 Dhs 11; 16: ... *anussati paṭissati sati saraṇatā dbāraṇatā apilāpanatā asammussanatā sati satindriyam sati balaṃ sammāsati* All translations from Pāli into English are by the author of this paper (Cf. Rhys Davids 2012, 14).

8 SN IV 194.

9 Vism 464: *Saranti tāya, sayam vā sarati, saraṇamattam eva vā, esā ti sati. Sā apilāpanalakkaṇā, asammoharasā, ārakkhapaccupaṭṭhānā, visayābbhimukhabbhāvapaccupaṭṭhānā vā; thirasaññāpadaṭṭhānā, kāyādisatipaññānapadaṭṭhānā vā. Ārammaṇe dalhapatiṭṭhitattā pana esikā viya, cakkhuvārādirak-khaṇato doṅṅāriko viya ca daṭṭhabbā.* (Cf. Nāṇamoli 1994, 524)

As indicted by Buddhaghosa in the passage above, mindfulness is a wakeful, ethical guarding, a gate-keeper for the cognitive processes arising through the six senses, and thus serves as a foundation for meditative cultivation (*bhāvanā*). Its proximate cause or condition are the four foundations of mindfulness, the four *satipaṭṭhānas*.¹⁰ There are several texts in the *Tipiṭaka*¹¹ that describe or prescribe the practise of the four *satipaṭṭhānas*; the longest and most detailed ones are the two versions of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*.¹² In the beginning of this *sutta* mindfulness is clearly situated as a component of meditation training, prescribing how a monk should practice it:

A monk abides contemplating the body as a body, diligent (*ātāpī*), clearly comprehending (*sampajāno*) and mindful (*satimā*), having abandoned desires and discontent (*vineyya abhijjhādomanassaṃ*) regarding the world (*loke*).¹³

The same formula is repeated for contemplation of the body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), the mind (*citta*), and mental phenomena (*dhamma*). Mindfulness is to be practiced in conjunction with other qualities: the meditator needs sustainable effort or diligence (*ātāpī*), explained in the Buddhaghosa's commentary, the *Papañcasūdanī*, as the energy required to burn defilements (*kilesa*).¹⁴ Another quality to accompany mindfulness is clear comprehension (*sampajañña*), which is presented in several passages in the canonical texts; it functions as an understanding that conditions cultivation of wholesome qualities and abandons those that are unwholesome.¹⁵ In the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) is defined as the faculty of wisdom (*paññā*), which encompasses understanding, insight, analytical discrimination, wise reflection, etc.¹⁶ The practise of the four *satipaṭṭhānas*

10 Vism 464; the four *satipaṭṭhānas* include mindfulness of the body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), the mind (*citta*) and mental phenomena (*dhamma*).

11 The following are identified in the *Suttapiṭaka* (by the Digital Pali Reader); AN III 450; DN II 290–315; MN I 55–63; MN III 111–2; SN V 143, 294–7; Nidd 1 1, 28, 63, 72, 78, 99; 340, 354, 370, 387; Nidd 2 78, 124, 128.

12 I.e. the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* in the *Majjhima Nikāya* (MN I 55–63) and the *Mahāsatiṭṭhānasutta* in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (DN II 290–315).

13 MN I 56; DN II 290: *ātāpī sampajāno satimā vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassaṃ*.

14 Ps I 244: *ātāpīti tisu bhavesu kilese ātāpetīti ātāpo*.

15 AN I 13.

16 Dhs 16: *Katamaṃ tasmim samaye sampajaññaṃ hoti? Yā tasmim samaye paññā pajānanā vicayo pavicayo dhammavicayo sallakkhaṇā upalakkhaṇā paccupalakkhaṇā pañḍiccam kosallaṃ nepuññaṃ vebhavyā cintā upaparikkhā bhūri medhā pariṇāyikā vipassanā sampajaññaṃ patodo paññā paññindriyam paññābalaṃ paññāsattaṃ paññāpāsādo paññā-āloko paññā-obhāso paññāpajoto paññāratanaṃ amobo dhammavicayo sammādiṭṭhi—idaṃ tasmim samaye sampajaññaṃ hoti*. The same definition is given in Dhs 11 for *paññindriyam*. (Cf. Rhys Davids 2012, 16)

also requires that the meditator has overcome (*vineyya*) desires and discontent (*abhiṅghādomanassam*) concerning the world (*loke*). The world refers to the body, the feelings, the mind and phenomena,¹⁷ or in other words, according to the *Vibhaṅga*, the five aggregates of clinging which represent the world of experience.¹⁸

Thus, mindfulness (*sati*) is not practised on its own but in conjunction with other qualities, such as wisdom, and requires (temporary) absence of desire and aversion. As will be discussed later on, *sati* is presented in the Pāli *Abbidhamma* as one of the universal wholesome or ethical (*kusala*) mental components (*cetasika*) and, consequently, it can occur only in the company of other wholesome components. Hence, it is not compatible with aversion, desire, delusion and other unwholesome or ethically unskilful mental components (*akusala cetasika*). Mindfulness, together with other components, can see and understand unwholesome conditions for objects that may arise; however, the process of cognition itself of the object is wholesome when mindfulness is present. Thus in the practise of the four *sati-paṭṭhānas* the focus is not only on what is experienced (although the object itself is conditioned and conditioning other components within cognitive processes) but primarily on how the object is cognised, which depends on the *cetasikas* accompanying cognition: if mindfulness is present in the cognition (*citta*), then the cognition itself is wholesome, ethical and provides the necessary conditions for knowledge, clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) or wisdom (*paññā*) to arise.

Mindfulness is firmly embedded and integrated within the doctrinal structure of the Pāli Canon, which is underpinned by the fundamental premise that non-satisfactoriness and suffering (*dukkha*) of human existence—as a response to life experiences—can be completely overcome or transcended through ethical and meditation training, leading to insight or wisdom (*paññā*) and, ultimately, to *nibbāna*. The term *paññā* is usually translated into English as wisdom, intuitive understanding, or an insight into the nature (i.e. impermanence, non-satisfactoriness and non-self) and conditionality of all mental and physical phenomena comprising human experience. It is presented as a component in cognitive processes which directly sees the experiences as a flow of momentary, interlinked and impersonal phenomena and conditions. It is described as discriminative knowledge, intuitive intelligence, absence of delusions, right view,¹⁹ and is often linked to or

17 Ps I 244: *loketi tasmimyeva kāye. kāyo hi idha lujjanapalujjanatṭhena lokoti adhippeto.*

18 Vibh 195: *pañca pi upādānakkhandhā loko: ayaṃ vuccati loko.*

19 Dhs 11: *katamaṃ tasmim samaye paññindriyaṃ hoti? yā tasmim samaye paññā pajānanā vicayo pavicyayo dhammarvicayo sallakkhaṇā upalakkhaṇā paccupalakkhaṇā pañḍiccam kosallaṃ nepuññaṃ vebhabyā cintā upaparikkhā bhūri medhā pariñāyikā vipassanā sampajaññaṃ patodo paññā paññindriyaṃ paññābalaṃ paññāsatthaṃ paññāpāsādo paññāloko paññāobhāso paññāpajoto paññāratanaṃ amoho dhammarvicayo sammādiṭṭhi — idam tasmim samaye paññindriyaṃ hoti (Cf. Dhs 12; 13; 14).*

equated with clear comprehension (*sampajañña*).²⁰ In the *Visuddhimagga* the term *paññā* is explained in the following way:

Paññā is insight knowledge (*vipassanāñāṇam*), associated with wholesome cognition (*kusalacitta*) ... it is knowing (*jānana*) which is different from perceiving (*sañjānana*) and cognizing (*vijānana*) ... *Paññā* knows the object, bringing up understanding of the characteristics (*lakkhaṇapaṭivedha*).²¹ (*Vism XIV, 3*)²²

The attribute *kusala*, usually rendered into English as “wholesome, skilful, good, right”,²³ refers here to those components involved in cognitive processes that are skilful, ethically wholesome or appropriate for the path to liberation from suffering (*dukkha*). All such ethical or wholesome states, free from delusion, desire and aversion, are viewed as states of mental health,²⁴ which is presented as the foundation and necessary condition for knowledge or insight to arise. According to the *Abhidhamma*, wisdom always arises in conjunction with mindfulness (*sati*), which can in turn only occur in the “good company” of other ethical components (*kusalacetāsika*) of cognition (*citta*).

To summarise, mindfulness is presented in the Pāli Canon in conjunction with several other mental components or qualities that are to be cultivated together in meditative training, aiming to develop wisdom and liberation from suffering. Although this paper does not aim to discuss or compare Buddhist presentations of mindfulness with its contemporary interpretations in new secular contexts,²⁵ it will briefly touch upon some relevant issues. It may be argued that the presentation of mindfulness in the Buddhist context is significantly different—in its definition, aims, characteristics, functions and the entire underpinning discourse—from its modern definitions and secular applications. In the new secular contexts, mindfulness is to a large extent perceived as a therapeutic tool, helpful for a wide

20 Dhs 16.

21 Here the text refers to the three characteristics (*tilakkhaṇa*): impermanence (*anicca*), non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*).

22 *Vism 436–7: Kusalacittasampayuttaṃ vipassanāñāṇaṃ paññā.... Sañjānana-vijānanākāraṇavisiṭṭhaṃ nānappakārato jānanaṃ. ... Paññā vuttanaya-vasena ārammaṇaṃ ca jānāti, lakkhaṇapaṭivedhaṃ ca pāpeti.*

23 PED, s.v.

24 As 62–63: *kilesāturatāya kilesagelaññassa ca kilesabyābhino abhāvena ārogyaṭṭhena kusalaṃ veditabbam ... kilesavajjassa pana kilesadosassa kilesadarathassa ca abbāvā anavajjaṭṭhena kusalaṃ.* (Cf. Tin 2013, 83).

25 A number of papers has been published in the last decades, exploring modern interpretations of mindfulness; e.g., Sharf 1995; Gethin 2011; Kirmayer 2015; Ditrich 2016.

spectrum of problems and disorders, or for enhancing general well-being. It is typically defined in its new functions as “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgementally” (Kabat-Zinn 2003, 145). The common denominator of the new definitions of mindfulness is non-judgemental attention to the present moment. Within the Buddhist doctrinal models of cognition, the closest correlative concept for this new interpretation of mindfulness would be the term *manasikāra*, usually rendered into English as “attention”.²⁶ According to the *Abhidhamma*, *manasikāra* is one of the mental components, present in every moment of cognition (*citta*); it may arise in conjunction with ethically wholesome, unwholesome or neutral mental states. In the *Visuddhimagga*, it is defined as:

... the maker in the mind (*manamhi kāro*) ... the supporter of the object (*ārammaṇapaṭiṭṭhako*), the supporter of cognitive processes (*vīthi-paṭiṭṭhako*) and the supporter of apperception (*javanapaṭiṭṭhako*)... Its characteristic is directing (*sāraṇa*), its function is bonding (*saṃyojana*) associated states to the object, its manifestation is facing an object (*ārammaṇābhimukha*) and its proximate cause is an object.²⁷

In the Pāli Canonical texts, attention is presented in two distinct modes: it can be skilful, wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) or non-skilful, non-wise attention (*ayoniso manasikāra*). In the context of Buddhist path of ethical and meditational training, only wise attention is to be cultivated, in conjunction with other wholesome components such as mindfulness, whereas unwise attention should be averted from and overcome; for example, in the *Sabbāsavasutta* it is explained that through wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) the deepest defilements (*āsava*) can be extinguished.²⁸

In distinction to modern understanding of mindfulness as paying attention non-judgementally, meditation training in the Buddhist teachings does not aim to develop attention on its own but only cultivation of skilful, wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*), i.e. attention that is accompanied by other skilful components of cognition, allowing wisdom to be present. In other words, as stated in the *Dhammasaṅgani*, skilfulness in attention is equated to “wisdom, understanding, non-delusion, wise discrimination, right view.”²⁹

26 PED, s.v.

27 Vism 466: *Kiriyākāro, manamhi kāro manasikāro ... ārammaṇapaṭiṭṭhako, vīthi-paṭiṭṭhako, javanapaṭiṭṭhako ... So sāraṇalakkhaṇo, sampayuttānaṃ ārammaṇe saṃyojanaraso, ārammaṇābhimukhabhāvapaccupaṭṭhāno, ārammaṇapadaṭṭhāno.*

28 MN I 7–2.

29 Dhs 229: *Tattha katamā manasikārakusalatā? Yā tāsam dhātūnaṃ manasikārakusalatā paññā pajānanā ... amoho dhammavīcayo sammādiṭṭhi--ayaṃ vuccati manasikārakusalatā.*

Furthermore, wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) is directly linked to mindfulness (*sati*). For example, in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (*Yamaka-Vagga*) it is said that when wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) is achieved, mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) are accomplished; these two being accomplished lead in turn to sense restraint (*indriyasamvara*), which leads to ethical conduct (*tīṇi sucaritāni*), the establishment of the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), to seven factors of awakening (*satta bojjhaṅgā*), and to the knowledge and final liberation (*vijjāvimutti*).³⁰ Thus, definitions, interpretations and practical applications of mindfulness (*sati*) in the Pāli Canon are embedded in all the main domains of Buddhist ethical and soteriological discourse.

Positioning of Mindfulness in the Main Doctrinal Models in the *Suttapiṭaka*

Buddhist teachings are succinctly presented through the “four noble truths”, which encompass pragmatic, ethical and epistemological aspects of the doctrine.³¹ The four truths outline non-satisfactoriness of existence (*dukkha*), identifying craving (*taṇhā*) as its cause, pronouncing the possibility that one can be completely liberated from suffering (through *nibbāna*), and outlining the eightfold path, which leads to liberation. The four truths are presented in the *Tipiṭaka* through several interrelated models which, from various perspectives, delineate and articulate Buddhist doctrine; they all situate mindfulness (*sati*) as one of their integral components.

The first truth defines non-satisfactoriness of existence (*dukkha*) as a way of response to experiences, stemming from ignorance about the impermanent nature of all mental and physical phenomena (*anicca*) and absence of any intrinsic self or identity (*anattā*). In the *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta*, non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) is described as experiences of:

... birth, aging, illness, death; to be connected to unpleasant circumstances and separated from pleasant ones; not to get what one wants;

30 AN V 115: *yonisomanasikāro pariṭṭhāro satisampajaññaṃ pariṭṭhāro, satisampajaññaṃ pariṭṭhāraṃ indriyasamvaraṃ pariṭṭhāro, indriyasamvaraṃ pariṭṭhāro tīṇi sucaritāni pariṭṭhāro, tīṇi sucaritāni pariṭṭhāraṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhāne pariṭṭhāro, cattāro satipaṭṭhānā pariṭṭhāro satta bojjhaṅge pariṭṭhāro, satta bojjhaṅgā pariṭṭhāro vijjāvimuttiṃ pariṭṭhāro.*

31 According to the tradition, the Buddha explained the four truths already in the *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta* (SN V 420–424), which is considered to be his first sermon.

in short, non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) is clinging to the five aggregates (*pañcupādānakkhandhā*).³²

The five aggregates or five groups of conditions and events, which comprise physical and mental phenomena of existence, are described as: (1) materiality (*rūpa*), encompassing physical or material components; (2) feelings (*vedanā*), which occur at every moment of cognition and may be pleasant, unpleasant or neither; (3) perception (*saññā*), which recognises and labels experiences; (4) numerous mental formations (*saṅkhāra*), which arise together with cognition itself and determine how an object is cognised, e.g., with desire, compassion, equanimity, etc.; and (5) cognition (*viññāṇa*), which arises at any of the six sense-doors and knows the object of experience.³³ The five groups or aggregates (*khandha*) are comprised of interrelated material and mental components participating in the flow of experiences, which we identify with and perceive as a person. They represent the most prominent aspects of experience and each component may be an object of mindful contemplation. Thus, the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* describes or prescribes³⁴ contemplation of impermanence of the five aggregates as an area of mindfulness practise, within the section on contemplation of mental phenomena (*dhammas*).³⁵ Development of mindfulness of the five aggregates is considered to enhance and condition the arising of insight into their impermanent nature (*anicca*), non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and absence of intrinsic self or identity (*anattā*)—an insight which in turn leads to liberation (*nibbāna*).³⁶

Although there are numerous components involved in cognitive processes,³⁷ one is singled out in the context of the second truth about the origination of suffering, namely, craving or desire (*taṇhā*), which is considered to be the cause of non-satisfactoriness or suffering (*dukkha*). Hence, only through overcoming this craving is one liberated from ignorance and, consequently, from suffering. Craving is positioned as a component in the formula of interdependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), perhaps the most important model of Buddhist doctrine, discoursed

32 S V 421: *Jāti pi dukkhā jarā pi dukkhā vyādhi pi dukkhā maraṇam pi dukkham sokaparidevadukkhadomanassupāyāsāpi dukkhā appiyeḥi sampayogo dukkho piyeḥi vippayogo dukkho yam picchaṃ na labhati tam pi dukkham samkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā pi dukkha.*

33 For discourses on the five aggregates, see the *Khandhavagga*, SN III; English translation by Bodhi (2000, 853–983).

34 Scholars have different views as to whether Buddhist texts on meditation are of descriptive or prescriptive nature (Cf. Sharf 1995, 228–83).

35 MN I 61; DN II 301–2.

36 SN III 1–5; 16–25.

37 The *Abhidhamma* lists fifty-two mental components (*cetasikas*) that can occur in various combinations together with every moment of cognition; for the list of *cetasikas*, see Bodhi 1993, 79.

upon in numerous Canonical texts and commentaries, expressing the four truths in a dynamic manner.³⁸

The formula of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) is comprised of the following twelve links in a manner that each conditions the following one:

(1) ignorance (*avijjā*) → (2) mental formations (*saṅkhāra*) → (3) cognition or consciousness (*viññāṇa*) → (4) the mind and the body (*nāmarūpa*) → (5) sense bases (five physical senses and the mind, and their objects) (*salāyatana*) → (6) contact with objects or experiences (*phassa*) → (7) feelings (pleasant, unpleasant or neutral) (*vedanā*) → (8) craving (*taṇhā*) → (9) clinging (*upādāna*) → (10) being (*bhava*) → (11) birth (*jāti*) → (12) aging and death (*jarāmaraṇa*).³⁹

This formula describes interlinked conditionality for the arising of suffering (*dukkha*) and rebirth; in reverse order (*paṭiloma*), it presents the way to liberation from suffering. The formula is not to be interpreted in a linear manner since all components are interlinked and interdependent. In the process of cognition, consciousness (link 3) which arises every moment, is conditioned by past mental formations (link 2), i.e., past conditions and reactions, stemming from ignorance (link 1); here, ignorance refers to not knowing that all the phenomena, conditions, and processes are impermanent, subject to suffering and without an intrinsic self or, in other words, not knowing the four truths.⁴⁰ The process of cognition takes place within the framework of the body and mind (link 4),⁴¹ which is repeatedly in contact (link 6) through its six senses, with their objects (link 5)⁴² and experiences, which in turn condition the feelings (link 7). Feelings can be pleasant, unpleasant or neither, depending on past conditions and responses (link 2) to similar experiences. The first seven links are interpreted as unavoidable results of the past, which conditions the experience of the present.

If mindfulness and clear comprehension are not present in the cognitive process, one responds to feelings (link 7) with craving (link 8) to keep pleasant experiences or get rid of the unpleasant ones; or in other words, craving for sensual

38 For discourses on causation, see the *Nidānavagga*, SN II 1–133; D II 55–71.

39 SN II 1–2: *Katamo ca bhikkhave paṭiccasamuppādo? Avijjāpaccayā bhikkhave saṅkhārā, saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ, viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ, nāmarūpapaccayā salāyatanaṃ, salāyatanaṃ paccayā phasso, phassapaccayā vedanā, vedanāpaccayā taṇhā, taṇhā paccayā upādānaṃ, upādānapaccayā bhavo, bhavapaccayā jāti, jātipaccayā jarāmarāṇaṃ.*

40 SN II 4: *Katamā ca bhikkhave avijjā? Yaṃ kho bhikkhave dukkhe aññāṇaṃ dukkhasamudaye aññāṇaṃ dukkhanirodhe aññāṇaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya aññāṇaṃ. Ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave avijjā.*

41 Consciousness (link 3) and the mind and body (link 4) condition and are conditioned by each other (cf. DN II 32); the two links represent the five aggregates, discussed earlier in this paper.

42 The six sense bases include the five physical senses and the mind, and their corresponding objects.

pleasures, for being and for not being, which is the origin of suffering.⁴³ Craving in turn leads to clinging (link 9),⁴⁴ and consequently, to developing certain ways of being or living (link 10), repeated births (link 11), bringing about aging, death, and non-satisfactoriness (link 12). This in turn generates further ignorance (link 1) about the impermanent nature and emptiness of phenomena, creating new mental formations (link 2), which condition future experiences. The stronger the clinging (link 9), the greater the ignorance (link 1), as well as mental habits and reactions (link 2), which condition and perpetuate new responses to experiences (links 8–10).

The aim of the Buddhist praxis can be articulated as a disentanglement from the web of interdependent origination. One of the key conditions for the reversal of the order of its links is mindfulness, which protects one from responding to continuously arising feelings (link 7) with craving (link 8) and clinging (link 9). The importance of mindfulness of feelings is reflected in the texts on the practise of the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*); for example, in the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*,⁴⁵ one whole section is dedicated to the contemplation of feelings (*vedanānupassanā*),⁴⁶ as well as a subsection under contemplation of mental components (*dharmānupassanā*),⁴⁷ which focuses on the impermanent nature of feelings.

As presented in the formula of dependent origination, mindfulness protects—by its mere presence—from craving and conditions arising of wisdom (*paññā*), which in turn prevents ignorance (link 1) to arise. Wisdom (*paññā*) understands the feelings “as they are” (*yathā bhūtam*), i.e., impermanent, momentary, empty of intrinsic identity.⁴⁸ Since mindfulness and wisdom are mental factors (link 2), by their very nature they are not different from any other phenomena or components of experience—they are also impermanent, empty, and can be subject to suffering when clung to. This insight into the nature of all phenomena leads to the liberation from ignorance (link 1). Complete uprooting of ignorance is presented in the third truth as “blowing away” (Pāli *nibbāna*,⁴⁹ Sanskrit *nirvāṇa*), extinction of suffering, the possibility of attaining the state of *nibbāna*, which is unconditioned, not subject to change and non-satisfactoriness.

43 MN I 48–49: *kāmatanḥā bhavatanḥā vibhavatanḥā, ayaṃ vuccat’ āvuso dukkhasamudayo*.

44 Four kind of clinging are listed in SN II 3: to sensual pleasures (*kāmapādāna*); to views (*diṭṭhupādāna*); to rules and rituals (*silabbatupādāna*); and to belief in self (*attavādupādāna*).

45 MN I 55; DN II 290.

46 MN I 59; DN II 298.

47 MN I 61; DN II 301–2.

48 Cf. Vism 436–7.

49 For discussion on the semantic range of the term *nibbāna*, see PED (s.v.).

According to the fourth truth, this liberation can be achieved by following the eightfold path, divided into three interlinked sections: wisdom, ethics and meditation. Wisdom (*paññā*) is presented by two components, right⁵⁰ understanding (*sammā dīṭṭhi*) and right intention (*sammā saṅkappa*). Here, right understanding (*sammā dīṭṭhi*) refers to direct insight into the nature of all phenomena and their independent conditionality,⁵¹ or, in other words, understanding of the four truths.⁵² Right intention (*sammā saṅkappa*) is a resolve to cultivate wholesome mental states, without anger or cruelty, and develop renunciation.⁵³ These two are further interlinked with the second group of the eightfold path, which is concerned with ethics (*sīla*), comprising right speech (*sammā-vācā*), right action (*sammā kam-manta*), and right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*), i.e., it focuses on the speech and way of life that are not harmful to oneself or others.⁵⁴ The ethical components of the eightfold path are conditioned as well as conditioning the first two (*paññā*) and the last three, concerned with meditation practice (*samādhi*).

The meditation section comprises: right effort (*sammā vāyāma*) to develop and maintain ethical (*kusala*) mental states, and avoid and undercut non-ethical ones (*akusala*);⁵⁵ right mindfulness (*sammā sati*); and right concentration (*sammā samādhi*), which focuses on a chosen object of contemplation, leading to deep states of absorption (*jhāna*).⁵⁶ As it was discussed above, right mindfulness (*sammā sati*) is defined as ethical attention directed to the ever-changing flow of interrelated physical and mental phenomena or events.⁵⁷

Among the various structural representations of the Buddhist teaching, one of the most pragmatic ones, focusing on mindfulness, is the model of the four

50 PED (s.v.) gives the following English equivalents for the Pāli term *sammā* “thoroughly, properly, rightly, in the right way, perfectly”; in the context of the eightfold path it refers to the development of its components “appropriately”—for achieving liberation from non-satisfactoriness or suffering (*dukkha*).

51 MN I 46–55.

52 Vibh 235: *Dukkhe nāṇaṃ dukkhasamudaye nāṇaṃ dukkhanirodhe nāṇaṃ dukkhanirodhabagāminiyā paṭipadāya nāṇaṃ: ayaṃ vuccati sammādīṭṭhi.*

53 Vibh 235: *Nekkhammasaṅkappo, avyāpādasāṅkappo, avihimsāsaṅkappo: ayaṃ vuccati sammāsaṅkappo.*

54 Vibh 235: *Musāvādā veramaṇī, piṣuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī, pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī, samphap-palāpā veramaṇā: ayaṃ vuccati sammāvācā. Pāṇātipātā1 veramaṇī, adinnādānā veramaṇī, kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī: ayaṃ vuccati sammākammanto. Idha ariyasāvako micchā-ājīvaṃ pahāya sammā-ājīvena jīvitam kappeti: ayaṃ vuccati sammā-ājīvo.*

55 Vibh 235: *idha bhikkhu anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ anuppādāya chandaṃ janeti vāyamati vīriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṅhāti padabati ... vāyamati vīriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṅhāti padabati.*

56 Vibh 236.

57 Ibid.

foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*), recorded in several texts of the *Tiṭṭhaka*.⁵⁸ As already mentioned above, the most well-known among them, positioned in modern Buddhism as the *ur*-text on mindfulness, is the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*—a brief, succinct outline of the main aspects, areas and modes of mindfulness practise. The four *satipaṭṭhānas* articulate, describe or prescribe mindful contemplation in four areas: the body (*kāya*), feelings (*vedanā*), cognition (*citta*), and mental components (*dhamma*). The sequence of the four areas may indicate that the practise of mindfulness starts with the body, i.e. to a large extent at the conceptual level, and ends with the contemplation of *dhammas* at a non-conceptual level; although, as often underlined by modern scholars, all four areas are interlinked and may occur alternatively as objects of mindful practise (Anālayo 2006, 23–26). The last section of the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta* outlines mindfulness of *dhammas*, considered in the Abhidhammic analysis to be the fundamental components of experience (Nyanatiloka 2008, 244–6); however, the texts on the four *satipaṭṭhānas* do not list all *dhammas* that are listed and discussed in the *Abhidhamma*, but focus only on those that seem to be the most relevant or pivotal for the development of the awakening factors, facilitating the awakening. The presentation and structure of the four *satipaṭṭhānas* is interrelated and linked to the other main models of Buddhist teachings (i.e. the five aggregates, the formula of interdependent origination, the four truths), which are included in this *sutta* as objects of mindfulness, especially in the section on contemplation of mental components (*dhammas*).⁵⁹

Mindfulness in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*

In the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, a collection of texts usually dated in the third century BCE, the Buddhist doctrine is systematized and articulated and, unlike in the *Suttapiṭaka*, without the background narrative or references to historical context (Gethin 1998, 48). The *Abhidhamma* texts are concerned with the fundamental structure of Buddhist teachings, attempting to identify a “deep structure” of human experience. In this endeavour, the *Abhidhamma* follows, at least to some degree, structural models developed by the ancient Indian culture probably several centuries earlier, most notably in linguistics, such as the Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, a kind of structural-generative grammar, which establishes the fundamental (analytical and dynamic) structure of Sanskrit for description and generation

58 DN II 290–315; MN I 55–63; MN III 111–112; SN V 143, 294–297; AN III 450; Nidd1 1, 28, 63, 72, 78, 99; 340, 354, 370, 387; Nidd2 78, 124, 128; cf. Anālayo 2006, 28–30.

59 E.g., mindful contemplation of the five aggregates (*pañcakkhandha*), twelve sense-spheres (*salāyatanā*), seven factors of awakening (*bojjhaṅga*), four truths (*catusacca*) (DN II 301–13; MN I 61–63).

of the language in its many aspects and modes of expression. Similarly, the *Abhidhamma* texts systematically present the structure of Buddhist teachings, define key concepts and technical terminology, and analyse dynamics of human experience, always with the fundamental aim of the entire doctrine—the liberation from suffering. In terms of Western categories, the *Abhidhamma* is concerned mainly with the areas of philosophy, psychology, and ethics. It is a collection of seven texts with rather unclear chronology; according to the Buddhist tradition, the oldest text is the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*,⁶⁰ followed by the *Vibhaṅga* and others. However, several modern scholars believe the *Vibhaṅga* to be the oldest (Frauwallner 1971, 69–121; Bronkhorst 1985, 305–20). These two texts dedicate considerable attention to mindfulness as one of the components of certain cognitive processes.

The *Abhidhamma* can be portrayed as a systematic articulation of all the main doctrinal models discussed above, i.e., the five aggregates (*khandha*), the formula of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), the eightfold path (*aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*), the four foundations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhāna*), and others. It aims to establish a cognitive structure, comprised of constituents that are the fundamental conditions for arising of interdependent momentary phenomena, which generate, condition or construct what we call “lived experience”. In a systematic manner, it lists, defines and classifies the constituents, events or conditions, called *dhammas*, which underline and participate in the flow of mental and physical phenomena or events (Warder 1971, 272–95). It analyses their links and interdependence, and presents them as momentary, impermanent, without an intrinsic self or identity. Through the analysis of *dhammas*, the conceptual world is deconstructed; however, this analysis does not aim for a theoretical investigation or search for knowledge *per se*, motivated by curiosity, but has a rather distinct pragmatic goal, namely that of attaining knowledge or insight that brings deliverance from non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*), achieved through ethical development and meditation (Bodhi 1993, 4). The *Abhidhamma* provides theoretical premises that articulate, through well-defined terminology, primarily those constituents or events that are related to cultivation of ethics and meditation. Thus, the first book, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, introduces in the very first sentence, like many other ancient Indian texts (e.g. the *Yogasūtra*), the entire topic and aim of the *Abhidhamma* through the question: “Which *dhammas* are wholesome or ethically skilful (*kusala*)?”⁶¹ Then, with reference to ethics, the text presents various types of cognition (*citta*) which are listed, classified and analysed; more than half of them refer to higher stages of

60 Buddhaghosa lists the texts of the *Abhidhamma* in the following order: *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, *Vibhaṅga*, *Dhātukathā*, *Puggalapaññatti*, *Kathāvatthu*, *Yamaka*, and *Paṭṭhāna* (As 3, 21–23).

61 Dhs 9: *katame dhammā kusalā?*

concentration (*jhāna*), insight and *nibbāna*, indicating the pivotal role of meditation in the Buddhist path to liberation.⁶²

Cognitive models, presented in the *Abhidhamma*, are comprised of very complex, interlinked structures which integrate analytic, synthetic and dynamic approaches. Here, only those features will be briefly outlined that are relevant for situating mindfulness within them. As mentioned earlier, the *Abhidhamma* represents the structure of cognitive processes or experiences from the fundamental, non-conceptual level through four basic categories, which are all called *dhammas*: cognition (*citta*), mental constituents (*cetasika*), materiality (*rūpa*) and *nibbāna* (Bodhi 1993, 25). The first three categories are viewed as momentary phenomena, impermanent, without intrinsic self, interrelated, conditioned and conditioning, whereas the last one, *nibbāna*, is unconditioned, beyond space and time. From an epistemological point of view, *dhammas* are the fundamental constituents or events of knowing; however, direct insight into their nature, links and conditionality can be achieved by penetrating beneath the conventional reality. Since *dhammas* are momentary, rapidly changing, and very subtle, they can be noted only when mindfulness and wisdom are well developed.

Cognition (*citta*) is the category characterised by knowing; it is defined as: “that which knows its object, which cognizes.”⁶³ At the conventional level cognition or consciousness (*citta*) seems continuous, whereas at the fundamental level (*paramattha*) it is considered to be constituted of a series of momentary *cittas*, which follow and condition one another so rapidly that they create an impression of continuity (Bodhi 1993, 29). Cognition (*citta*) does not occur on its own but always together with several mental components (*cetasika*) that determine, label, and affect the cognition of an object; in short, they determine how the objects of cognition are cognised or experienced. Cognition (*citta*) cannot occur without mental components (*cetasika*) and vice versa: they always arise together, are interlinked, momentary, impermanent, and conditioned; there is no reference point or observer outside this interlinked structure which is called lived experience. The *Abhidhamma* lists over fifty different mental constituents (*cetasika*), which occur in various groupings together with each *citta*, at every moment.⁶⁴ Not all of them are compatible and thus cannot appear in the same group in a given moment of cognition; for example, anger or greed cannot occur in a group together with mindfulness or compassion.

62 Dhs 9–133.

63 As 63: *Cittanti ārammaṇaṃ cintetīti cittaṃ vijānātīti attho.*

64 Dhs 9, 75–76; 87; 120.

The *Abhidhamma* classifies, from an ethical perspective,⁶⁵ different types of cognition (*citta*) in relation to the types of accompanying mental components (*cetasikas*) which can be ethically variable, unwholesome or wholesome.⁶⁶ According to the *Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha*, there are thirteen *cetasikas* that are ethically variable, i.e. they can arise together within ethical or non-ethical *cittas*; among these, seven are “universal” *cetasikas* which arise with every *citta*.⁶⁷ The non-ethical mental components (*akusala cetasikas*) arise in various combinations with unwholesome cognition (*akusala citta*) and are always accompanied by unpleasant mental feeling (*domanassa*); for example, in the moments of unethical cognition (*akusala citta*) there are always present delusion (*moha*) and restlessness (*uddhacca*), which can occur in different combinations with greed (*lobha*), conceit (*māna*), dullness (*thīna*), confusion (*vicikicchā*), or anger (*dosa*), envy (*macchariya*), selfishness (*macchariya*), etc.⁶⁸ The largest number of *cetasikas* listed appear with ethical cognition (*kusala citta*), and mindfulness (*sati*) is one of them, occurring only in the “good company” of other wholesome or ethical *cetasikas*, such as trust (*saddhā*), understanding of consequences (*hiri* and *ottappa*), non-greed (*alobha*), non-aversion (*adosa*), mental equilibrium (*tatramajjhataṭā*), peace (*passaddhi*), lightness (*lahutā*), gentleness (*mudutā*), etc.⁶⁹ Mindfulness is compatible with all other ethical *cetasikas*, such as compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*),⁷⁰ and incompatible with unethical (*akusala*) ones, such as greed, fear, and aversion. Thus the presence of mindfulness indicates and is indicated by other mental constituents (*cetasikas*) that arise with it, such as peace, trust, lightness, etc.

The *Abhidhamma* presents the processes of cognition as complex, ever-changing mental structures, comprised of sequences of rapid, extremely brief moments of cognition (*citta*) that appears in conjunction with many mental constituents (*cetasika*): these construct what we call lived experience. Mindfulness is one of the mental constituents: it arises in conjunction with other wholesome constituents

65 Therefore the title of first text from the *Abhidhamapiṭaka*, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, is translated by Caroline Rhys Davids as *A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics* (2012).

66 The first book of the *Abhidhamma*, the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (Dhs), comprises a detailed analysis of various types of cognition (*citta*), classified in reference to the mental components (*cetasikas*) which arise together with that particular type of *citta*.

67 The seven “universal” *cetasikas* are: contact (with an object) (*phassa*); feeling (*vedanā*); perception (*saññā*); volition (*cetanā*); one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*); life faculty (*jīvitindriya*); and attention (*manasikāra*) (Cf. Bodhi 1993, 79).

68 Dhs 75–87.

69 Dhs 9.

70 Dhs 54–55.

(*cetasikas*),⁷¹ and acts together with others as a required condition for the occurrence of wisdom (*pañña*), which is an insight into the three characteristics⁷² of all phenomena and processes, leading to liberation from suffering (*dukkha*), to *nibbāna*.⁷³

As outlined above, in the first book of the *Abhidhamma*, in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the typology and analysis of cognition (*citta*) and mental constituents (*cetasika*) are given, followed by the analysis of material components (*rūpa*) and their links with the first two categories.⁷⁴ The following book, the *Vibhaṅga*, based on the analysis and structure given in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, focuses on the analysis of the main models of Buddhist doctrine, altogether eighteen in number, such as the five aggregates and the formula of dependent origination, and analyses them with different methods (Thiṭṭila 2010, xv–lxxi). It dedicates a whole section, the *Satipaṭṭhānavibhaṅga*, to the four foundations of mindfulness. However, the text differs, to some extent, in its structure and content from the *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*;⁷⁵ it delineates the main areas of mindfulness and then analyses them according to the *Abhidhamma*, relating them to higher states of cognition.⁷⁶ In the last and the largest book the *Abhidhamma*, the *Paṭṭhāna*, the entire dynamics of cognitive processes is discussed in the light of the formula of interdependent origination. This is the most complete presentation of the interdependent conditionality, presented not through the twelve links but through twenty-four conditions, or modes of conditionality (*paccaya*), governing all the interrelated *dhammas*.⁷⁷

To summarise, the *Abhidhamma* aims to identify, classify, characterise, and analyse all the constituents and conditions involved in Buddhist praxis, aiming for liberation from suffering (*dukkha*), and one of those conditions is the presence of mindfulness. It is considered that meditation generates insight and understanding that all the processes and phenomena comprising lived experience are without a permanent intrinsic nature, and that ignorance and clinging to them create an illusionary identity that is based on and perpetuates delusions and suffering (*dukkha*).

71 The *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* lists at least eighteen wholesome mental constituents (*sobhanacetasika*) which always occur together with mindfulness; (cf. Bodhi 1993, 79).

72 The three characteristics are: impermanence (*anicca*), non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anattā*).

73 MN III 245; SM II 32.

74 Dhs 125–79.

75 DN II 290–315; MN I 55–63.

76 Vibh 193–207.

77 This highly technical text is outside the scope of this paper; for an introduction to the text, see Ledi 1986.

One of the required conditions for liberation from suffering is wisdom (*paññā*), which in turn is conditioned by mindfulness and other ethical components.

Conclusion

This paper defined the concept of mindfulness and presented its embedded nature in the main models of Buddhist doctrine as portrayed in the Pāli Canon. It was shown that, on its own, mindfulness could not be presented as a method of self-observation but is considered one of the constituents or conditions involved in cognitive processes, which, in conjunction with other (ethical) components, creates appropriate circumstances for the generation of insight and wisdom (*paññā*). Since the basic presumption of Buddhism is that there is no intrinsic self, mindfulness cannot be interpreted as a kind of reference point or observer who witnesses phenomena and develops insights into the nature of experience. Buddhist meditation is primarily concerned with the nature (characterised by impermanence, no self, and non-satisfactoriness) and conditionality of cognitive processes; the cognition (*citta*) itself is also one of the momentary phenomena conditioning and being conditioned by these processes.

Mindfulness is regarded as a mental constituent that always appears only in the “good company” with other constituents and opens the door for wisdom (*paññā*) to enter on the path to awakening. With the presence of wisdom, which is equated with insight that there is no permanent person or observer, contemplation enters the level of *dhammas*, viewed to be beyond the conceptual level. In Pāli sources, such meditation practice is called *bhāvanā*, the term that may be rendered into English as “cultivation”, referring to cultivation of ethical mental states and the seven factors of awakening (*bojjhaṅga*).⁷⁸ A well-established mindfulness is accompanied by other components such as joy and tranquillity; however, these are not presented as the goal of practice. As frequently reiterated in the *Tiṭṭhaka*, the goal is the development of insight that all *dhammas* are empty of self (*sabbe dhammā anattā*),⁷⁹ and this includes mindfulness, wisdom, the entire doctrine with its path and goals, and *nibbāna*.

78 The seven factors of awakening are: mindfulness (*sati*); investigation of *dhamma* (*dhammavicaya*); energy (*virīya*); joy (*pīti*); tranquility (*passaddhi*); concentration (*samādhi*); equanimity (*upekkhā*).

79 MN 1 230; AN I 286; S 3 133; Dh 279.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations and the quotation system of Pāli sources follow the *Critical Pāli Dictionary* (Epilegomena to vol. 1, 1948, pp. 5*–36*, and vol. 3, 1992, pp. II–VI). The numbers in the quotations of Pāli sources refer to the volume and page of the PTS edition (e.g., MN I 21 refers to the *Majjhima Nikāya*, vol 1, p. 21)

- AN *Āṅguttaranikāya*. [1885–1900] 1999–2013. Edited by R. Morris, E. Hardy. 5 vols. PTS.
- As *Atthasālinī*. [1897] 2011. Edited by E. Müller, revised by L. S. Cousins. PTS.
- DN *Dīghanikāya*. [1890–1911] 1995–2007. Edited by T. W. Rhys Davids and J. E. Carpenter. 3 vols. PTS.
- Dhs *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*. [1885] 2001. Edited by Edward Müller. PTS.
- KN Dhp *Dhammapada*. 1994. Edited by O. von Hinüber and K. R. Norman. PTS.
- MN *Majjhimanikāya*. [1888–1902] 2013. Edited by V. Trenckner, R. Chalmers. 3 vols. PTS.
- MW M. Monier-Williams, [1899] 1988. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Reprinted, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Nidd I *Mahānidessa*. [1916–1917] 2001. Edited by L. de la Vallée Poussin and E. J. Thomas. PTS.
- Nidd II *Cullanidessa*. [1918] 1988. Edited by W. Stede. PTS.
- PED *Pāli-English Dictionary*. 1921–1925. T. W. Rhys Davids and W. Stede. PTS.
- Ps *Papañcasūdanī, Majjhimanikāyāṭṭhakathā of Buddhaghosa*. [1922–1938] 1976–1979. Edited by J. H. Woods, D. Kośambi, I. B. Horner. 5 vols PTS.
- SN *Samyuttanikāya*. [1884–1898] 1975–2006. Edited by L. Feer. 5 vols. PTS.
- Vibh *Vibhaṅga*. [1904] 2003. Edited by C. A. F. Rhys Davids. PTS.
- Vism *Visuddhimagga*. [1920–1921] 1975. Edited by C.A.F. Rhys Davids. PTS.

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