



"Some notes towards a history of Early Buddhist & Jaina meditation: *vitakka*, *viynra/-i* and terms referring to mental one-pointedness (*egatta*, *egaggamaṇa* etc)"

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As part of a larger investigation into the description and development of the "Four Meditations" (*catur dhyāna*) pericope in early Buddhist literature, it is methodologically appropriate to examine the preserved canonical corpus of other broadly contemporaneous traditions preserving descriptions indicative of meditative praxis.

A philological examination of the terms *vitarka* and *vicāra* is a desideratum towards a clearer understanding of the function and purpose of the first two meditations as described in early Buddhist texts. This is particularly relevant as the attainment of a state of mental oneness/one-pointedness (Pā. *cetaso ekodibhāva* & cognates) coincides with the absence of *vitarka* and *vicāra* in the second meditation.

In an earlier paper presented at the 2005 IABS meeting, I noted the remarkable similarity between the description of the first two meditations in the early Buddhist literature and the description of the first two "Pure Meditations" (*sukkajjhāna*) as contained in the canonical collection of the Āvetāmbara Jains. Furthermore, I suggested that at least in part, the descriptions of the first two meditations may have been indebted to or share a common ancestor with the description of a meditative path that now appears to be solely preserved in the Jaina canon.

This paper will expand on this discovery by further examining the occurrences of the words *vitakka*, *viyāra/-i* as well as terms and phrases describing mental one-pointedness (*egatta*, *egaggamaṇa* etc) in the relevant texts of the early Jaina canonical collection. It is proposed that via a more thorough examination of the usage of these key terms in the Jaina canon, further light will be shed on their understanding and usage in the early Buddhist context. Finally, this paper will attempt to show the indispensability of Jaina sources for the textual study of Early Buddhist doctrine and praxis.