

**“An Analytical Study of “Jhāna” in Early Buddhism
and Theravāda”**

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The dissertation submitted to
The Postgraduate Institute of Pāli and Buddhist Studies
University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka,
in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy

2011

Abstract

An attempt is made in this thesis to critically examine the Early Buddhist concept of *Jhāna* and to find out its standpoint in comparison and in contrast with the *Theravāda* Buddhist concept of *Jhāna*.

Early Buddhism always speaks of four-*jhānas* (*catutthajjhāna*). In the first *jhāna*, four-factors are illustrated: applied thought (*vitakka*), sustained thought (*vicāra*), rapture (*pīti*), and happiness (*sukha*). Nowhere is there any mention of one pointedness (*ekaggatā*) at all. For the meditators who attain the first *jhāna* up to the fourth *jhāna*, four factors have to be eliminated one to one. In the second *jhāna*, applied thought and sustained thought have to be abandoned, in the third *jhāna*, rapture is eliminated, and in the fourth *jhāna*, happiness is abandoned, replaced by neither- perception- nor- non- perception (*upekkhā*).

From the *Theravāda* point of view, mention is made of the four-*jhānas*, whereas in some places, the number is extended to fivefold-*jhānas*, one to be added between the first and second *jhāna* of the *Sutta* account. In the first *jhāna*, both the fourfold-*jhānas* and fivefold-*jhānas* lists include applied thought, sustained thought, rapture, happiness, and add a new special factor: one- pointedness. In the process of moving into higher *jhānas*, we note the elimination of four of the five factors which constitute the first *jhāna*. In the second *jhāna*, just applied thought is eliminated. The sustained thought is to be abandoned in the third *jhāna* as well. In the fourth *jhāna*, the rapture factor is eliminated, and finally, in the last, the fifth *jhāna*, the happiness factor is given up, to be replaced by *upekkhā*. Only the factor of one pointedness remains throughout.

The thesis is divided into five chapters, in which the content of the research is explained accordingly. Chapter one is concerned with the background and significance of the study. Chapter two focuses on the context of *Jhāna* in Early Buddhism. Chapter three explains the concept of *Jhāna* in *Theravāda* Buddhism and including other Buddhist scholars' views. Chapter four attempts a comparison between the concept of *Jhāna* in Early Buddhism and the *Theravāda* Buddhist concept of *Jhāna*. Chapter five, the last section, will conclude with a summary of the content and findings of the previous chapters, what has been mention from beginning and to end.