

Remarks on the *Bhāvanāmayī Bhūmiḥ*

And its Treatment of Practice *

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The *Bhāvanāmayī Bhūmiḥ* (BhāvBh) forms part of the main section of the *Yogācārabhūmiśāstra* (or *Yogācārabhūmi* for short), that is, it is a *maulī bhūmiḥ*, more precisely the twelfth *maulī bhūmiḥ*. It follows upon the *Śrutamayī Bhūmiḥ* and the *Cintāmayī Bhūmiḥ*, with which it may be viewed in unison according to the threefold scheme of knowledge gained from hearing, reflecting, and contemplation, i.e. *śrutamayī prajñā*, *cintāmayī prajñā* and *bhāvanāmayī prajñā*. It precedes the *Śrāvakabhūmi* (ŚrBh) with which it is closely related. The Sanskrit text is preserved as part (folios 139a-153a) of the *Yogācārabhūmi* manuscript discovered and microfilmed by Rahul SĀMKRṬYĀYANA in 1938 in Tibet. It has not yet been published, but SUGAWARA Yasunori has edited the Sanskrit text and collated it with the Tibetan and Chinese translation as part of a Ph.D. thesis at Hamburg University. SUGAWARA has also contributed a paper to the present volume that deals in detail with the formation of the BhāvBh and its relationship to other parts of the *Yogācārabhūmi*. My present paper is more modest in scope. I will make some general remarks on the BhāvBh and then deal in more detail with what I regard to be the principal agenda of the BhāvBh, namely the mapping of obstacles and their antidotes, and of techniques and factors to be fostered on the path of practice. To illustrate this, I will show how listening to the *dharma* and receiving personal instruction is listed at various junctures of the path as an important form of practice. I will then deal with one specific obstacle, namely the lingering sense of self (*asmimāna*) that besets the advanced practitioner and prevents him from plunging into the first realization of the four noble truths (*satyābhisamaya*). I will present the terse passage laying out the appropriate antidote, namely the self-reflexive penetration of the acts of contemplation (*manasikāraprativedha*) undertaken by the meditator, and the knowledge it generates, namely the so-called *samasamālambyāmbakajñāna* that is grounded in turning each perceiving act of cognition (*ālabhaka*) into the object (*ālambya*) of the immediately following act of cognition, so that each cognitive event functions in turn equally (*samasama*) as subject and object. In a further step, I will compare this passage to the correspond-

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ing section in the ŚrBh and show how there are subtle but significant differences. I will subsequently make the same point by comparing how the two *bhūmis* treat the conditions that need to be met to allow for the practice of Buddhism. Finally, I will return to my discussion of the BhāvBh's principal agenda and show, as a further example of its structure, how food features as a recurrent theme along the path.

Like the ŚrBh the BhāvBh's orientation is clearly Śrāvakayānist. It teaches how to become an *arhant* and obtain *nirvāṇa*, first with remainders in this life, and then without remainders upon death when the adept is freed once and for all from the cycle of rebirth. The path to achieve this is standard Yogācāra: an initial realization of the four noble truths (*satyābhisamaya*) signals the path of seeing (*darśanamārga*) and the attainment of the trainee-level liberation (*śaikṣavimuktī*), which turns the adept into a noble hearer, an *āryaśrāvaka*. It is brought about by the cultivation of insight (*vipaśyanā*) that is grounded in calmness (*śamatha*), but it requires no deeper state of absorption than the preliminary stage (*sāmantaka*) bordering on the first *dhyāna*,¹ a state the BhāvBh apparently equates with the "fixation of the mind" (*cittasthiti*).² In the course of the subsequent path of cultivation (*bhāvanāmārga*), this insight into the four noble truths is cultivated and deepened until also all latent defilements (*anuśaya*) have been eradicated in their entirety, a state that translates into the complete and ultimate liberation (*vimuktiḥ*) characteristic of the non-trainee (*aśaikṣa*). Be it noted that also in the treatment of the *bhāvanāmārga* I do not find any clear indication that the attainment of the *maula dhyāna* (i.e. one of the four *dhyānas*) would be a prerequisite for final liberation.³

The path sketched here is given in a nutshell in the third section of the BhāvBh (140b₂-141a₁), entitled "turning towards *nirvāṇa*" (*nirvāṇapramukhatā*). It identifies ten *dharma*s that orient and propel the practitioner towards *nirvāṇa*, starting with the firm convictions (*saṃpratyaya*), based on knowledge gained from hearing (*śrutamayī prajñā*), that 1) the path and its fruit really exist, that 2) they are worthy, and that 3) they are realizable; it continues with 4) meditative seclusion and 5) the entry into the knowledge based on reflection (*cintāmayajñānānupraveśa*), followed by 6) the constant application to contemplation (*bhāvanā*) and 7) the resultant deepened understanding that *saṃsāra* is imperfect and *nirvāṇa* worthy; and it culminates in 8) the *darśanamārga* with the gnosis of the noble truths (*satyābhi-*

¹ BhāvBh 149b₁ allows for the supramundane realization of the truths (*satyābhisamaya*) by an adept who has only achieved the "obtainment of meditative concentration" (*samādhi-lābha*), which in 145a₃ is defined as "obtaining the preliminary stage bordering on the first *dhyāna* (*prathamadhyānasāmantakalābha*), and who has not "completed *samādhi*" (*samādhiparipūri*), that is, attained to a *maula dhyāna*, i.e. one of the four principal meditative states of absorption (cf. 145b₂), let alone achieved mastery over the practice of *samādhi* (*samādhivaśītā*), which would allow him to enter and exit such states at will. Likewise, BhāvBh 150b₅-151a₁ allows for the practice of "expanding delight in meditation" (*samādhiratibahulikāra*) by an *āryaśrāvaka* who has only obtained the *samādhi* of the *sāmantaka* stage of the first *dhyāna*.

² Cf. the compound *samyakcittasthitisamādhi-lābha* in BhāvBh 145a₂, and see also BhāvBh 149b₁-150a₂.

³ BhāvBh 152a₂ states that in the final stage the "learner's *samādhi* completes cultivation by reaching up to the *vajra*-like (*samādhi*)" (*śaikṣah samādhiḥ vajropama-paryantagamanād bhāvanāparipūriṃ gacchati*), where all *kleśas* and *anuśayas* are destroyed and final liberation is obtained, but it does not specify that this *samādhi* has to correspond to a *maula dhyāna*.

samaya), and in 9) the subsequent practice of the *bhāvanāmārga* as well as 10) the resultant complete supramundane liberation of the non-trainee, the *asaikṣa*, as the tenth *dharma*, which leads to entry into *nirvāṇa* without remainders upon death.

In the BhāvBh's treatment of the path of liberation, I do not detect any elements that would reflect the *bodhisattva* ideal. Nor are there any allusions that would point to a Mahāyānistic conception of reality. The concept of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) is evoked only once in the compound *śūnyatāpraṇihitānimittaprayoga-manasikāra*, where it occurs in the standard combination with the other two gates to *nirvāṇa*, namely wishlessness (*apraṇihita*) and signlessness (*ānimitta*) as a form of contemplation conducive towards the realization of the four noble truths. Nor is there a passage in the BhāvBh – and this includes the section dealing with the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna* – that could be interpreted as an allusion to an idealistic conception of reality. Finally, there is in the BhāvBh also no indication of the concept of the *ālayavijñāna*, a form of subliminal consciousness often known in English as store-house consciousness because it carries karmic impressions. All this, of course, does not mean that the BhāvBh would have been oblivious of the Mahāyāna. By contrast, besides its familiarity with the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, which it cites more than once, it mentions *vaipulya* when it gives a comprehensive list of the genres that constitute the formalized teachings of the Buddha (*sāṃketikadharmā*). While the precise referent of the term *vaipulya* has been variable, it can be safely presumed that the ŚrBh's unequivocal equation of this genre with the literature propounding the *bodhisattva* path⁴ holds good for the BhāvBh, too, which therefore acknowledges this path to be an authentic teaching of the Buddha.

The BhāvBh covers all stages of the path, starting with the conditions for the cultivation of practice (*yogabhāvanāpada*), continuing with the foundation for the cultivation of practice (*yogabhāvanopaniṣat*) and the subsequent cultivation of practice (*yogabhāvanā*), and ending with its result (*bhāvanāphala*), namely the comprehensive, unsurpassed worldly purification (*sarvākārā niruttarā laukikī viśuddhiḥ*) and the comprehensive supramundane purification (*sarvākārā lokottarā viśuddhiḥ*). While the BhāvBh covers all stages of the *śrāvaka*'s path, it does so from one particular angle, namely that of the cultivation of practice. It offers absolutely no doctrinal teachings or discussions of controversial issues. By contrast, it clearly presupposes a detailed and correct knowledge of the Buddha's teachings and does not make it its business to provide this. One way to account for this is to view the BhāvBh in conjunction with the immediately preceding *Śrutamayī Bhūmiḥ* and *Cintāmayī Bhūmiḥ* as a correlative part that presupposes the content of these two *bhūmis*.

Maybe more surprisingly, with the exception of the aforementioned generation of the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna* that I will return to below, the BhāvBh also does not offer any instructions on how to engage in meditative practice. (I use this expression in a broad sense that is meant to encompass any form of contemplative/concentrative practice, be they more analytical or absorptive.) Rather, the BhāvBh again presupposes detailed knowledge of such matters. More precisely, as

⁴ Cf. the definition of *vaipulya* given by ŚrBh 138_{1ff} for the corresponding passage: "What is *vaipulya*? Where the path of the *bodhisattvas* is taught, [leading to] unsurpassed, perfect awakening and the realization of the ten powers (*bala*) and of unobstructed knowledge, that is called *vaipulya*. (*vaipulyaṃ katamat | yatra bodhisattvānāṃ mārgo deśyate 'nuttarāyai samyaksambodhaye daśabalānāvarenañjñānasamudāgamāya | idam ucyate vaipulyam |*)

various references to the ŚrBh and the *Samāhitā Bhūmiḥ* suggest, it takes detailed knowledge of these parts of the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the meditation techniques taught there for granted.⁵ For instance, while the contemplation of impermanence and the other aspects (*ākāra*) of the first noble truth is laid out in the ŚrBh over more than twenty pages (in SHUKLA's edition), the BhāvBh has the simple phrase "he contemplates (the object) as it really is under the aspects of (being) impermanent, etc."⁶

Instead of dealing with doctrinal points or meditation techniques per se, it is the BhāvBh's agenda to list the (often recurring) obstacles and challenges the adept has to cope with during the various stages of the path, and to mention (but not explicate) what the practitioner has to do, besides overcoming these obstacles, in order to progress, be it cultivating certain forms of practice or behavior, fostering particular attitudes, and so on. This particular perspective with its emphasis on negative factors and obstacles continues right to the end. Thus the attainment of *arhant*-hood is defined negatively by the absence of ten defects (*doṣa*) (152a₅-b₃), and this includes such prominent obstacles as not restraining the sense organs (*indriyāsaṃvaradoṣa*), indulging in blissful meditational states (*sukhavihārāsvādoṣa*), and negligence (*pramādoṣa*), as well as faulty speech, reflection, and seeking brought about by wrong views particular to the non-Buddhists (*asaddṛṣṭisamutthāpitā vāgvitarkaīṣaṇādoṣās trayah*).

In its treatment, the BhāvBh does not aim to provide a comprehensive *abhidharma*-style analysis of the factors at stake (knowledge of which it again takes for granted). Nor does it provide precise and detailed instructions on how to tackle the obstacles and difficulties the practitioner encounters, or on how to foster the positive factors that it lists. Rather, concrete knowledge of how to deal with these matters is again presupposed, and at most the BhāvBh names the appropriate antidote (*pratipakṣa*) to particular obstacles. Instead, what our text does provide, and this seems to be its principal purpose, is a listing of the sets of concrete issues and concerns relevant at particular junctures of the path. Its original contribution is, therefore, not the systematic treatment of these issues – as mentioned, the BhāvBh merely lists them without providing any details or analysis – but an overview of their occurrences that lays out at which stages of practice and in which contexts they become relevant. This brings with it that many points recur again and again, simply because they continue to be relevant as the practitioner advances.

There is, of course, nothing new in the realization that obstacles are not overcome once and for all but continue to trouble the practitioner as he progresses along the path. However, unlike other parts of the YBh, the BhāvBh foregrounds their recurrence and in the process sheds light on the down-to-earth reality of a practitioner's quest, on the sometimes banal but very real challenges he again and again has to cope with. This link with actual practice is reinforced by the fact that the BhāvBh does not restrict itself to such standard items as the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), but also mentions concrete situations. For instance, the text mentions the sexual desire for one's wife or the attachment to one's family among obstacles

⁵ Lambert SCHMITHAUSEN and other scholars have shown that the *Yogācārabhūmi* is not a coherent work by a single author (Asaṅga) but the result of a complex and drawn out process of compilation uniting a body of material that reflects different stages of development and is not always homogenous. Hence, the question poses itself how its constituent parts are related to each other.

⁶ BhāvBh 149a₃; *manasikaroti yathābhūtam anityādibhir ākārāiḥ*.

standing in the householder's way of renunciation; or it lists the need to attend *samgha* meetings (see below) and other distractions of monastic life as factors that hinder the advanced adept in his pursuit of solitary meditation.

The tendency to mention particular points and concerns again and again is reinforced by the structure of the BhāvBh, which offers more than a simple linear treatment of the path. Rather, in its first two parts (*sthāna*) it deals with the path's prerequisites and covers from different angles the basis and fundamentals of practice. This approach continues in the next *sthāna*, which again does not cover a particular segment of the path but deals with obstructions encountered at all stages of the path, that is, by the (potential) beginner, i.e. the householder, by the renunciant, and by the advanced practitioner engaged in solitary meditation. Also in other contexts when the BhāvBh deals with particular topics, its treatment may span the whole path, or large parts of it. I have already mentioned above that the enumeration of the ten *dharma*s that orient and propel the practitioner towards *nirvāṇa*, which entails the summary of the entire path including entry into *nirvāṇa* without remainder. Similarly, the BhāvBh covers much of the path when it deals with the ten factors that bring about "the ripening of the understanding that is conducive towards liberation" (*vimukti-paripācīnyāḥ prajñāyāḥ paripākāḥ*). The same happens again in a later part when listing the twelve obstacles that obstruct the cultivation of the notion that the body is impure (*aśubhasamjñābhāvānā*). Moreover, when dealing with the mastery of absorptive meditation (*samādhivaśītā*) and with the realization of the noble truths (*satyābhisamaya*), the BhāvBh does not only mention the immediately relevant practices but also lists circumstantial factors that are only indirectly relevant at these two stages. For instance, in the former case (i.e., regarding *samādhivaśītā*) it refers to the need to suffer the deprivations of renunciation, and the concomitant abandonment of family, friends and kin, and of material goods, and of such forms of entertainment as songs, dances, etc. (145b₅ - 146a₂); and in the latter case (i.e., in the part dealing with the first realization of *satyābhisamaya*), it mentions, for example, the need to overcome regard for alms-food (*piṇḍapāta*), and seating and bedding (*śayanāsana*) (149b₃). In this way the BhāvBh treats particular issues, even when they are not of immediate relevance to the practice under consideration, because they form the basis in which the practice should be grounded. This approach, too, entails that certain points and factors are mentioned repeatedly in the BhāvBh.

A good example for the foregoing is the repeated emphasis on listening to the holy *dharma* and receiving oral instructions. Our text refers to this theme already in the first part (*bhāvanāpadasthāna*) when it mentions recourse to the formal teachings of the Buddha (*sāṃketika saddharma*) and to personal instruction (*avavādānuśāsanī*) as a prerequisite needed for cultivating the thirty-seven factors conducive to awakening (*bodhipakṣya dharma*) and realizing the fruits of ascetic practice (*śrāmaṇyaphala*) (139b_{5f}). In the next part (*sthāna*) of the BhāvBh, which is dedicated to the basis for the cultivation of practice (*yogabhāvanopaniṣat*), the process of receiving the holy *dharma* and learning through instruction plays a particularly prominent role. The first of the three sections (*aṅga*) making up this part (*sthāna*) is even dedicated entirely to this theme, which it treats as "the accomplishment of listening to the holy *dharma*" (*saddharmaśravaṇasamṃpat*). However, in typical fashion, instead of offering its own treatment of this topic, the text only summarizes the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*'s categorization in the shortest possible way, and otherwise refers to that *bhūmi*'s treatment of this subject under

twenty-four (right teaching) and sixteen (right listening) aspects without listing these aspects or reproducing other details.

The BhāvBh returns to the same theme already in the next section (*aṅga*) dealing with the aforementioned ten *dharma*s that orient the practitioner towards the attainment of *nirvāṇa* (*nirvāṇapramukha*). Here the text highlights the process of learning by mentioning the benefits (*anusāṃsā*) of listening to the teaching on this topic. It specifies that the disciple does not only benefit himself, but also pleases the instructor if he listens with the appropriate attitude and if later, when practicing, he comes to achieve realization (141a₁₋₄).

The importance of receiving teaching features even more prominently in the subsequent section (141a₅b₂), which concludes the second *sthāna*. It lists the factors that bring about "the ripening of the understanding that is conducive towards liberation" (*vimuktiḥparipācinyāḥ prajñāyāḥ paripākaḥ*). It starts with the need for good friends (*sanmitra*) in order to bring about 1) the "will to realize the true nature that needs to be known" (*jñeyatattvābodhāya cchandaḥ*). In this context it also lists 2) the ability to tolerate criticism from one's peers (*vacana-kṣamatā*). The mentioned will is to generate 3) the desire to listen to teaching (*śrotukāmatā*), which in turn should lead to 4) inquisitiveness (*paripṛcchatā*) and the resultant 5) learning of new things (*aśrutapūrvasyārthasya śravaṇam*). By constantly, again and again listening (*punaḥ punaḥ śravaṇasātatyāt*), 6) the practitioner's understanding will be purified and his doubts laid to rest. After the proper absorption of the Buddhist teaching by way of listening has been set forth in this way, the BhāvBh continues, in a much more cursory manner, with the remaining process inclining the mind towards the destruction of negative factors and the purification of the mind.

The need to listen to the *dharma* and receive instruction is also a recurrent theme in the subsequent *sthāna* dedicated to the cultivation of practice (*yoga-bhāvanā*), though it does not feature quite as prominently. This *sthāna* treats the ten obstacles (*vīpakṣa*) and their antidotes (*pratīpakṣa*) (which occur in the same form in ŚrBh 268₁₂-270₁₄ as *sikṣāviloma* and *sikṣānuloma dharmas*). The first obstacle is the aforementioned sexual desire for one's wife (*svadāragato maithuna-pratisaṃyukto rāgaḥ*) (BhāvBh 142a₁), which has as its counteragent the cultivation of the notion that the body is impure (*aśubhasaṃjñābhāvanā*). This antidotal cultivation is dealt with in characteristic form, namely by providing no content or other details except for listing twelve further hindrances (*vīpakṣa*) that obstruct its practice.⁷ These *vīpakṣas* include lack of expertise in contemplation of practice

⁷ The BhāvBh treats only three of the ten *pratīpakṣas* ('antidotes') enumerated in the third *sthāna* as antidotes to the ten obstacles (*vīpakṣa*) that form this *sthāna*'s subject of the first order. It does so by listing the factors obstructing the practice of these three *pratīpakṣas*. In the other seven cases, it only mentions the *pratīpakṣa* without providing any further details. The reason for this might be that the obstacles (*vīpakṣa*) to which the ten *pratīpakṣas* relate are classified as pertaining to the state of a householder (*āgārikāvasthā*) (*pratīpakṣa* 1-2), to renunciation (*pravrajyāvasthā*) (*pratīpakṣa* 3-6), and "to contemplation of the practice of withdrawal by one who is solitary" (*praviviktasya pratisaṃlayanayoga-manasikārāvasthā*) (*pratīpakṣa* 7-10). The BhāvBh treats the first *pratīpakṣa* of each of the three groups, namely the cultivation of the notion that the body is impure (*aśubhasaṃjñābhāvanā*) relating to the householder, the cultivation that regards the impermanent as entailing suffering (*anitye duḥkhasaṃjñābhāvanā*) relating to the renunciant, and the cultivation of the notion of light (*ālokasaṃjñābhāvanā*) relating to the solitary practitioner. It does so by listing the obstacles encountered in turn when practicing these antidotes

(*yogamanasikārākuśalatā*) that "follows from not being eager to listen and (as a consequence) not being inquisitive" (*aśuśrūṣām aparipṛcchām āgamyā*) (142b₅-a₁). When dealing with the third *vipakṣa*, namely laziness and indolence (*ālayakauśīdyā*) in applying oneself constantly to the cultivation of wholesome *dharma*s (*kuśaladharmabhāvanāsātatyābhiyoga*) (142a₃), the BhāvBh mentions six obstructions to the practice of its antidote, namely the contemplation that regards the impermanent as entailing suffering (*anitye duḥkhasaṃjñābhāvanā*). Among these six obstructions, the BhāvBh lists not being constant in one's eagerness to listen to teachers and to approach and question them (*guruśuśrūṣopasaṃkramaṇa-paripṛcchāsv asātatakarītā*) (143a₄). Related to this, it also mentions the lack of trust in teachers as an obstacle that prevents constant practice (*guruṣu vaiśraddhyaṃ yad vaiśraddhyam āgamyāsātat[y]akārī bhavati*) (143a₄).

The BhāvBh also returns to the need for instruction in the next and final *sthāna*, entitled "the fruit of cultivation" (*bhāvanāphala*), which is dedicated to the first realization of the four truths and the subsequent *bhāvanāmārga* resulting in final liberation. The first of the two sections (*aṅga*) of this *sthāna* deals, again through the lens of obstacles, with the ability to enter *samādhi* (*samādhilābha*), that is to attain the stage immediately preceding the first *dhyāna* (*prathamadhyānasāmantaka*) (145a_{2f}), and then to bring *samādhi* to fulfillment (*samādhiparipūri*) by entering one of the main (*maula*) *dhyānas* and finally to master absorptive meditation (*samādhivaśītā*), which allows entry into and exit from these *dhyānas* at will. To start with, there is a bipartite list of twenty obstacles that hinder initial entry into *samādhi* (144a₅-145a₁). It starts with 1) ascetic companions that lack the will for abandoning/exertion (*prahāṇavicchandakasabrahmacārisahāyadoṣa*), and 2) continues with faults of teachers who teach the means of *samādhi* (*samādhyupāyopadeśakācāryadoṣa*), and not grasping the teaching (*agrahaṇadoṣa*) 3) because of inattention due to lacking desire to listen to the means for realizing *samādhi* (*samādhyupāyāśrotukāmatām ārabhya mandacchandasya cittavikṣepādī*), or 4) due to dim-wittedness from stupidity (*jaḍatvān mandabuddhivād*). It concludes that even if the prior obstacles are not operative and the practitioner does have the intellect to grasp the teaching, there is yet the danger that 5) he may be driven by the preponderance of desire for fame and recognition (*lābhasatkārasprhābhāhulyadoṣa*). Although the list's second segment of fifteen items obstructing the attainment of *samādhi* is not dominated by the need to receive instruction properly, it, too, gives space to this concern and mentions as obstacles a) not accepting teaching because of pride and hostility, presumably regarding the teacher, whom one either finds inferior or dislikes (*mānāghātadoṣād upadeśāgrahaṇadoṣaḥ*), b) imagining things that are at odds with the teaching (*upadeśaviparītakalpanādoṣa*), and c) forgetting the teaching that one has received (*saṃpramoṣadoṣa*).

Also the subsequent step, namely to bring the practice of absorptive meditation to fulfillment (*samādhiparipūri*) and advance from the *sāmantaka* stage of the first *dhyāna* to the realization of the main (*maula*) *dhyānas*, gives space to the importance of receiving individual teaching. As "the practitioner is absorbed in meditation with *dharma* as its object, he rises from time to time (from this meditative state) and questions and interrogates in order to hear the holy *dharma* regarding the

(*pratīpakṣa*). In each case the listed obstacles are not specific to only the given *pratīpakṣa*, but are of more general relevance. This may be the reason why there is no separate treatment of each antidote.

perfection of *samādhi*, thereby quickening his understanding.⁸ This will allow him to enter the main *dhyānas* and master the practice of *samatha* and *vipaśyanā* meditation.

The treatment of the next and final preparatory step before progressing to the realization of the four truths (*satyābhisamaya*), namely the mastery of *samādhi* (*samādhivaśītā*) that allows the adept to enter and leave these states of deep absorption at will, makes likewise mention of the process of receiving and absorbing the teaching. It teaches that the practice includes "enjoying from time to time the offerings that others have given out of faith by one who is firmly dedicated to good practice as a result of studying, discussing the content, and ascertaining (the truth of) the teaching."⁹

The subsequent section of the fourth *sthāna* concluding the BhāvBh – it treats the first realization of the four truths and the subsequent *bhāvanāmārga* resulting in liberation – also highlights the continued need to receive teaching. It contains a passage that deals with five major factors leading to *satyābhisamaya*. Among them, it lists the acquisition of means (*upāyaparigraha*), which includes one's own engagement with the Buddha's teaching and personal instruction received from a teacher. More precisely, it mentions, on the one hand, "expertness with regard to such items (*vastu*) as the *skandhas*, which follows from reflection based on one's own recourse to the formal teachings of the Buddha as found in the *sūtras* and so on."¹⁰ And, as corollary, it mentions, on the other hand, "reliance upon teachers (*guru*), such as instructors (*śāstrī*), masters (*ācārya*) and preceptors (*upādhyāya*)" (*parigrahāya gurusamñīśrayaḥ, tadyathā śāstur ācāryasyopādhyāyasya vā*) from whom one from time to time receives personal teachings (*avavādānuśāsānī*) (150a₁).

Finally, the need for instruction also forms part of the treatment dedicated to the *bhāvanāmārga*. Dealing with the obstacles that the noble *śrāvaka* has to negotiate at this phase, the text mentions as "defect pertaining to the practice of *vipaśyanā* not listening to others (teaching) the good *dharma* conducive to *vipaśyanā*, because one considers oneself already knowledgeable."¹¹ The benefit of receiving teaching also features under another aspect of practice mapped onto the *bhāvanāmārga*, namely the generation of joy (*prāmodya*). Besides reflecting on the values of the three jewels and rejoicing in one's own spiritual accomplishments, "the practitioner arouses gladness by recollecting gratefully the help received from his supportive teacher, which is instrumental in doing away with suffering and obtaining happiness."¹²

I have shown in some detail how the BhāvBh returns repeatedly to the issue of listening to the holy *dharma* and receiving instruction in different contexts and at

⁸ BhāvBh 145b₁: *sa tathā dharmanimittānusārī samāpadya vyutthāya kṣiprabhijñātāyai samādhiparipūrim ārabhya saddharmaśrotukāmatām upādāya kālena kālaṃ paripreçchati pariprasñīkaroti.*

⁹ BhāvBh 146a_{4f}: *kālena kālam uddeśasvādhyāyasāmkathyavinīscayakuśalapakṣa-prayuktasya parataḥ śraddhādeyaparibhogaḥ.*

¹⁰ BhāvBh 149b₅-150a₁: *svayam eva sūtrādīdharmoddeśam āgamya manasikārānvayāt skandhādivastukauśalyaṃ.*

¹¹ BhāvBh 150b₃: *vijñātvatmasaṃgrahāt parato vipaśyanānukūlasaddharmāśravaṇaṃ vipaśyanāṅgavaiguṇyaṃ.*

¹² BhāvBh 151b_{1f}: *kṛtajñātāṃ cārabhyopakāriṇaḥ śāstur upakārānusrīmanasikārato pi prāmodyam utpādayati yaduta sahetukaduḥkhāpakarṣaṃ sahetukasukhopasaṃhāraṃ cārabhya.*

different stages of the path. It is of course no surprise that recourse to the Buddha's teachings and to personal instruction is of relevance at all junctures of the path right until the attainment of final liberation. Even so, it is instructive to learn of precise contexts and situations (their enumeration is clearly not meant to be exhaustive) in which the reception of teaching features as a prominent concern, and of possible obstacles to this reception such as pride, hostility, lack of trust in teachers, forgetfulness, or the mistaken belief to know it all. This sheds particular light on this theme – light that to my mind reflects something of the reality of practice on the ground – and it is this light that constitutes the particular contribution of the BhāvBh, rather than a comprehensive treatment of the right way of "listening" to the holy *dharma*, which the BhāvBh takes for granted and does not provide.

This being said, the BhāvBh's contribution cannot be reduced to the mapping of obstacles and their antidotes onto the path. Rather, in some instances it also differs importantly in its treatment of the material that it derives either directly or indirectly from other *bhūmis*. In order to illustrate this, I want to deal in the following with one particular obstacle, namely the lingering sense of self (*asmīmāna*)¹³ and the intimately related, existential fear about what will become of oneself in the state of extinction,¹⁴ which beset the advanced practitioner and prevent his mind from stabilizing and plunging into the realization of the four noble truths (*satyābhisamaya*) and from embracing *nirvāṇa*. Reflecting the crucial

¹³ The presence of this lingering sense of self engaging in practice is expressed in ŚrBh 497₉₋₁₆ in the following way: "I myself have transmigrated and I myself am to transmigrate. I myself will enter complete extinction. I myself cultivate wholesome dharmas for the attainment of complete extinction. I myself view suffering as suffering, the origin (of suffering) as origin, the cessation (of suffering) as cessation. I myself view the path (resulting in this cessation) as path. I myself view the empty as empty, the wishless as wishless, the signless as signless. Mine these *dharmas* are." (*aham asmi saṃsṛtavān, aham asmi saṃsariṣyāmi. aham asmi parinirvāsyāmi. aham asmi parinirvāṇāya kuśalān dharmān bhāvayāmi. aham asmi duḥkhaṃ duḥkhataḥ paśyāmi, samudayaṃ samudayato, nirodhaṃ nirodhataḥ. aham asmi mārgaṃ mārgataḥ paśyāmi. aham asmi śūnyaṃ śūnyato, 'praṇihitaṃ apraṇihitataḥ, ānimittam ānimittataḥ paśyāmi. mamaite dharmāḥ.*) A canonical precursor (to which Daniel STUART drew my attention) can be found in the *Pañcattayasuttaṃ* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (II 237), where the perception "I myself am calm, I myself am extinguished, I myself am without clinging" is identified as the final form of clinging that separates the nearly realized practitioner from the attainment of liberation through complete non-clinging (*yañ ca kho ayam āyasmā – 'santo 'ham asmi, nibbuto 'ham asmi, anupādāno 'ham asmi' ti samanupassati tad api imassa bhoto samaṇassa brāhmaṇassa upādānam akkhāyati*).

¹⁴ Cf. BhāvBh 148b_{4f}: "... for five reasons ... (the practitioner) fixes quicker and quicker upon the exhaustion of thirst, cessation, *nirvāṇa*, and does not turn back his mind in terror (thinking) 'what then will in that situation become of myself?' For which five reasons? [1] Because of the penetration of (the meditator's) acts of contemplation (*manasikāraprativedha*), immediately upon which without interval he descends into perfection and faultlessness, realizes the (four noble) truths and touches the noble vision of knowledge." (... *pañcabhiḥ kāraṇair ... tṛṣṇāḥsaye nirodhe nirvāṇe tvaritatvaritaṃ saṃtiṣṭhate, na pratyudāvarttate mānasaṃ paritasanam upādāya 'athas kas tarhy ātmā?' ... katamaih pañcabhiḥ kāraṇaiḥ. manasikāraprativedhato yasya manasikāraprativedhasyāntaram sahitam eva samyaktvaṃ nyāmam avakrāmati satyāny abhisamāgacchati sprṣaty āryaṃ jñānadarśanaṃ.*)

importance of this moment – it transforms the practitioner into a noble listener (*āryaśrāvaka*), corresponding to the stream winner (*sotāpanna*) in the Theravāda tradition, who is certain to become an *arhant* – this is the sole instance where the BhāvBh outlines a particular meditative technique (rather than merely mentioning it), namely the self-reflective analysis of the process of contemplation (*manasikāraprativedha*), which is to generate the aforementioned *samasamālambyālam-bakajñāna* and overcome the obstructing innate sense of self. More precisely, the elimination of this sense is achieved by making the preceding act of analysis the object of the current analysis, thereby realizing (*jñāna*) that each act of analysis (*ālambaka*) is itself as its object (*ālambya*) impermanent, unsatisfactory, and hence selfless. This mode of introspection eliminates the basis for the illusion of a subject that engages in analysis and replaces it by the correct understanding of the activity of analysis, namely that it consists in nothing but a series of impersonal acts of analysis that themselves are each as impermanent and selfless as their object, the immediately preceding act of analysis. This elimination of the *asmimāna* hindering transmudane realization (*abhisamayaviḅhna-kāraka*) and distracting the mind (*cittavikṣepakara*) allows the mind to become one-pointed (*cittaikāgryam sprṣatī*). In continuation of the method employed to eliminate *asmimāna*, the state of one-pointedness is then objectified in turn (*sprṣtam me cittaikāgryam iti ca yathābhūtam prajānāti manasikarotī*).¹⁵

This technique is found in largely the same form and with the same function in the ŚrBh. While the BhāvBh is much terser and compresses the complex technique into one convoluted sentence (quoted in n. 15) that needs unpacking, the wording is closely related and leaves no doubt that the BhāvBh draws upon the ŚrBh or a common third source. However, the BhāvBh differs in an important detail insofar

¹⁵ BhāvBh 149a₂₋₄: "He correctly penetrates and contemplates as meditation object (*nimitta*) the thought engaged in the contemplation applied to emptiness, wishlessness, and the state free of a mental object (i.e., the three doors to *nirvāṇa*). (This thought) is in a subtle state and proceeds with or without interruption; it is accompanied by the conceit 'I am' and (hence) forms an obstacle to gnosis. Penetrating the thought accompanied by this contemplation (i.e., the contemplation applied to emptiness, wishlessness, and the state free of a mental object) in this way and letting go of it as it perpetuates itself spontaneously (and thereby eludes its objectification), he contemplates with a newly and newly arisen (mind, that is, act of cognition) upon the (immediately preceding) mental act, which has perished without interval (after its origination). (He does so by viewing it) as it truly is under the aspects of 'impermanent' and so on. And, as a consequence of the application to this concentration, and as a consequence of its cultivation, and as a consequence of doing this more and more, the knowledge arises in which the object and the subject are the same. By the (resultant) destruction of the conceit 'I am,' which forms an obstacle to gnosis and makes the mind distracted, he touches one-pointedness of mind; and he realizes and analyzes correctly 'one-pointedness of mind has been touched by me.' This penetration of contemplation is known as conducive towards the gnosis of the truths (*satyābhisamaya*)." (*sūnyatāpraṇihitānimittaprayogamanasikārānupraviṣṭasya sūkṣmasamudācāriṇaḥ sāntaravyanatarānūvartti[no] smimānasahagatasya cittanimittasyābhisamayāntarāyikasya samyakprativedhāt manasikārāt pratividhya ca tanmanasikārasahagataṃ cittaṃ svarasavāhitāyāṃ samutsrjyānantaraniruddhaṃ cittaṃ navotpannaṃ navotpannaṃ manasikarotī yathābhūtam anityādibhir ākārāiḥ. tasya ca manasikārasyāsevanānvayād bhāvanānvayād bahulikārānvayāt samasamālambyālam-bakajñānam utpadyate. tasya cābhisamayaviḅhna-kārasyāsmimānasya cittavikṣepakarasya prahāṇāc cittaikāgryam sprṣatī, sprṣtam me cittaikāgryam iti ca yathābhūtam prajānāti manasikarotī. ity ayaṃ manasikāraprativedhaḥ satyābhisamayāya veditavyaḥ.)*

as here the acquisition of the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna* and the concomitant one-pointedness of mind is the last step separating the practitioner from the first transmudane insight into the four truths (*satyābhisamaya*) and the attainment of the *darśanamārga*. As the passage cited in n. 14 puts it: "Immediately upon penetrating the acts of contemplation (*manasikāraprativedhataḥ*)," in the mentioned way, "without interval the practitioner descends into perfection and faultlessness, realizes the (four noble) truths and touches the noble vision of knowledge." This is in marked contrast to the ŚrBh (499_{17ff}). Here the practitioner first employs the same technique of introspection to eliminate his *asmimāna* and generate the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna*, thereby ensuring that his mind does not turn away from *nirvāṇa* because of existential fear.¹⁶ However, unlike in the BhāvBh, he does not immediately upon this plunge into the realization of the four noble truths (*satyābhisamaya*). Rather there is an intervening phase where he brings all mental activities (*abhisamskāra*) to a total standstill. This amounts to a mental state free from conceptualizations and discursiveness (*nirvikalpa*).¹⁷ In this state, "his mind appears as if it has ceased but it actually has not; it appears as if without object, but it actually is not; it appears as if it has been set to rest and done

¹⁶ See ŚrBh 497₁₈₋₄₉₈₇ and 499₆₋₁₁: "The (yogin) lightly and easily penetrates with insight the conceit 'I am' that functions as obstacle, (recognizing it) to be functioning as obstacle. He lets go off mental activity as it perpetuates itself spontaneously (and thereby eludes its objectification), turns away from the external object of knowledge and undertakes the contemplation of the truths engaging with his mental activity (as object) and following it. He views the newly and newly arisen thought as it is being suppressed as being dislodged by the immediately subsequently arisen thought because of the operation of concatenation within the (mental) stream. In this way (the yogin) with thought makes thought an object and rests upon it, so that this delusion 'I am,' which had taken possession of (his) mental activity and functioned as obstacle, does not have the opportunity to arise with him again. ... As a consequence of his application to this insight in this way, and as a consequence of its cultivation, and as a consequence of doing this more and more, the knowledge in which the object and the subject are the same arises. By this (knowledge) his gross delusion 'I am,' which obstructs delighting in *nirvāṇa*, is eliminated as it occurs. And with complete commitment he sets his thought upon *nirvāṇa* and moves forward, (and) his mind does not turn back in terror." (*sa tv asmimānaṃ vibandhakaraṃ vibandhakara itī laghu laghv eva prajñayā pratividhya, svarasānupravṛtau manaskāraṃ utsṛjya, bahirdhā jñeyālabanād vyāvarttya, manaskārapraviṣṭam manaskārānugatām satyavyavacāraṇam ārabhate. sa utpannotpannaṃ cittaṃ nirudhyamānam anantarotpannenacittena bhajyamānaṃ paśyati pravāhānuprabandhayogena. sa tathā cittena cittaṃ ālabanikaroty avaṣṭabhate, yathāsya yo 'sau manaskārānupraviṣṭo 'smimāno vibandhakarāḥ sa tasyāvakāśaḥ punar nna bhavaty utpattaye. ... tasyaivam āsevanānvayād bhāvanānvayāt <bahulikārānvayāt> tasyāḥ prajñayāḥ samasamālambyālabakam jñānam utpadyate, yenāsyaudārikaś cāsmimāno nirvāṇābhirataye vibandhakarāḥ samudācārataḥ prahīyate. nirvāṇe cādhyāśayataś cittaṃ pra<ni?>dadhataḥ praskandati, na praṭyudāvarttate mānasam paritasanām upādāya.*) The Sanskrit text of the ŚrBh provided here and in the subsequent notes incorporates Prof. SCHMITHAUSEN's extensive emendations of SHUKLA's edition, which he has generously shared with me.

¹⁷ ŚrBh 499₁₇₋₂₀: "Having in this way abandoned the delusion 'I am,' which is functioning as an obstacle, and having with complete commitment embraced delight in *nirvāṇa*, he abandons the very mental activity that successively examines thought, and casts his thought into a state free of mental activity (so that it) is free of conceptualizations (*nirvikalpa*)." (*sa evam vibandhakaraṃ asmimānaṃ prahāya nirvāṇe cādhyāśay<to 'bhi>ratim parigrhya yo 'sāv uttarottaraś cittaparikṣābhisamskāraḥ tam abhisamskāraṃ samutsṛjya anabhisamskāratāyām nirvikalpaṃ cittaṃ upanikṣipati.*)

away with, but it actually has not. It is not the case that at this time [the mind] has become enveloped by the sleepiness of the dengue fever; *rather, this is a state of translucent tranquility (where the mind is) in neither high nor in low spirits.*¹⁸ Only after having emerged from this lofty absorption, which the ŚrBh is careful to characterize as still mundane (*laukika*) (500₉₋₁₃), the practitioner directs his mind again towards the noble truths and now attains to their supramundane realization and hence the *darśanamārga* (500₁₃₋₅₀₁).

Lambert SCHMITHAUSEN, who has dealt with this crucial ŚrBh passage in detail,¹⁹ has argued that this objectless state of utter tranquility preceding *satyābhisamaya* may correspond phenomenologically to the transcendental liberating experience of the Mahāyāna. He concedes the possibility that this passage on the state of untainted tranquility may have been inserted into the ŚrBh in an inclusivistic vein, in order to incorporate the liberating experience of the Mahāyānists, while relegating it to a soteriologically inferior position as an element ancillary to the realization of the truths. But SCHMITHAUSEN also urges not to assess this as a purely scholastic move, but to view it also as a position that reflects genuine experience.²⁰ It is noteworthy that the BhāvBh at this point does not replicate the ŚrBh and its inclusion of a phase of complete mental tranquility intervening between the removal of *asmimāna* and the first realization of the noble truths. This is clearly a deliberate departure from the scheme found in the ŚrBh – indeed, it seems the strong wording *anantaram sahitam eva* ("without interval, immediately connected") serves specifically to rule out the intervention of a non-discursive phase of absorption. It indicates that for the BhāvBh a state of utter absorption in which all ordinary mental activities have come to a standstill does not form an integral part of the process of liberation. As for the mention of the one-pointedness of mind (*cittaikāgrya*) that the practitioner "touches" as a result of the aforesaid practice, this state does allow for content, for it includes, as mentioned above, the discursive realization of its own one-pointedness, and hence is treated as

¹⁸ ŚrBh 499₂₀₋₅₀₀₃: *tasya tac cittaṃ tasmin samaye niruddham iva khyāti, na ca taṃ niruddhaṃ bhavati. anālambanam iva khyāti, na ca tad <an>ālambanam bhavati. tasya tac cittaṃ praśāntaṃ vigataṃ iva khyāti, na ca tad vigataṃ bhavati. na ca punas tasmīṃ samaye madhurakamiddhāvaṣṭabdham api <bhavati>, ...* The Sanskrit manuscript has a lacunae here, but the Tibetan (Peking vol. 110, wi 230a₇) and Chinese (T1579.475c_{17f}) translation preserve the lost consecutive phrase, which I have included in my translation in italics. (Peking vol. 110, wi 230a₇: *rnam par gsal zhing zhi gnas kyi rnam pa las mi mtho mi dma' ba* (so Derge. Peking: *mi dga' ba*) *kho na yin no.* T1579.475c_{17f}: 唯有分明 無高無下奢摩他行。

¹⁹ See SCHMITHAUSEN (1982:79ff.). A convenient English-language summary of the arguments made in this article and relevant for the present discussion can be found in SCHMITHAUSEN'S more recent paper (2007).

²⁰ SCHMITHAUSEN (1982:83f.): "Sure, one gains the impression that the ŚrBh attempts to subsume the mystical transcendental experience of the Mahāyāna in its Hīnayānistic version of the path of liberation, just as conversely other parts of the Yogācārabhūmi aim to integrate and subordinate a Hīnayānistic perspective into their essentially Mahāyānistic concept of liberating experience. This is not to say, however, that the ŚrBh's attempt to incorporate the Mahāyānistic transcendental experience into its Hīnayānistic path must have been a purely speculative move. ... (Rather) I find it difficult to doubt that the passage points to a real, lived experience, given the characteristics of this state of 'mental peace,' and particularly given the all but stereotypical phraseology with its manifold comparisons and its employment of near-synonymous expressions to capture (this experience)." Note that this is my free rendering of the German original.

forming part of the "penetration of acts of contemplation" (*manasikārapravedha*). In other words, it is clear that *cittaikāgrya* does not correspond to a contentless mental state beyond dichotomization, but is simply a focused state of mind that eliminates the distractedness of the mind (*cittavikṣepa*) brought about by the conceit 'I am,' and thereby allows for the unhindered analysis of mental acts, which in turn triggers the ensuing entry into *satyābhisamaya*. One might conclude on this basis that the ŚrBh's inclusion of such a state was motivated by scholastic considerations, i.e., the desire to incorporate and relegate the Mahāyānistic form of liberating gnosis, and pace SCHMITHAUSEN not because it reflected real experience on the ground. However, the BhāvBh's elimination of an intervening state of non-discursive calmness may itself be viewed as a scholastic move to streamline the process of gnosis and rid it of suspect elements that served no clear soteriological function in terms of the Śrāvaka path. Ultimately, the BhāvBh simply reflects a more conservative stance that did not allow for such a state. Hence, its testimony does not allow us to settle whether the ŚrBh's inclusion of a non-discursive raptness was solely a calculated scholastic move, or whether it also reflected genuine experience.²¹ Even though the evidence of the BhāvBh is not conclusive, its deviation from the ŚrBh here is clearly significant. This goes to show that the BhāvBh does not only map material culled from other *bhūmis* onto the path of

²¹ In a later stratum of Yogācāra texts than represented by the *Śrāvakabhūmi*, the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna* serves to overcome the erroneous dichotomy of an apprehending subject (*grāhaka*) and an apprehended object (*grāhya*). This allows for the penetration of the true nature of phenomena, which instead of the realization of the four noble truths signals the *darśanamārga* in this tradition. (See, for example, Asaṅga's *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* [76₁₉: *darśanamārgo laukikāgradharmānantaram nirvikalpaśamathavipaśyanālakṣaṇo veditavyaḥ. samasamālambyālabakajñānam api tad iti tena grāhyagrāhakābhāvatathatāpravedhāt.*] and his *Mahāyānasamgraha* [edition LAMOTTE, p. 53₅₋₈: *byang chub sems dpa' de'i dmigs par bya ba dang | dmigs par byed pa mnyam pas mnyam pa'i ye shes rnam par mi rtog pa 'byung ste | de ltar na byang chub sems spa' 'di yongs su grub pa'i ngo bo nyid la zhugs pa yin no //*], as well as Sthiramati's *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya* on *Triṃśikā* 26 [p. 43: *samasamālambyālabakam nirvikalpaṃ lokottaram jñānam utpadyate, grāhyagrāhakābhīniveśānuśayāḥ prahīyante svacittadharmatāyān ca cittam avasthitam bhavati.*]) Though these texts reflect a more advanced stage in the development of Yogācāra doctrine than found in the ŚrBh, I find it possible that the *samasamālambyālabakajñānam* already had a similar thrust at an earlier stage of development as found in the ŚrBh. To repeat, in this text (and in the BhāvBh) this knowledge is triggered by objectifying each thought moment as an act of concentration that is unmasked by the immediately subsequent thought moment as impermanent and so on. Although this is not spelled out in the ŚrBh or BhāvBh, I find it conceivable that the sustained application to and cultivation of this practice, with its treatment of thought as both perceiving subject and perceived object, was found already in a Śrāvakayāna context to give rise to a cognition in which subject and object truly coalesce, destroying the notion of a distinct self and transcending the dichotomizing mind by replacing it with a rapt state of undifferentiated oneness. Note that both the BhāvBh and ŚrBh emphasize that it is sustained practice that brings forth the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna*. Also, note that the ŚrBh characterizes the state of mental tranquility following upon the *samasamālambyālabakajñāna* as *nirvikalpa*, an attribute which in later Yogācāra works becomes standard when qualifying the Mahāyānistic insight into true reality. However, in the ŚrBh *nirvikalpa* has not yet assumed its specific technical Mahāyānistic meaning, and hence this characterization carries less weight than might appear.

liberation, but that it also deviates in its interpretation of these materials in interesting and meaningful ways.

I would like to illustrate this point by a further example and turn to the BhāvBh's treatment of the five conditions that need to be met by an individual (*ātmasaṃpat*), in addition to the five external conditions (*bāhyasaṃpat*), in order to be in a position to follow the Buddhist path with the possibility of success. The first condition called *nikāyasaṃpat* refers to the need to be human. While the formulation in the ŚrBh includes men and women, the near-identical formulation in the BhāvBh deviates by omitting *strīś ca* ("and a woman"), which effectively precludes women.²² Though only consisting in the omission of two *akṣaras*, I presume that this divergence (which is attested in both the Chinese and Tibetan translation) is significant and not merely the result of an accident in the textual transmission. To be sure, it is also possible that the original formulation did preclude women (and hence introduced the gender issue in the first place), and that the reading adopted in the ŚrBh is a modification with *strīś ca* added on, so as to allow for women. Even if so, I conjecture that the BhāvBh would have been familiar with this modification and that it would have taken the deliberate liberty not to follow the ŚrBh in this instance.

There is no difference in the treatment of the second and third condition – namely 2) to be born in the middle lands (or in the realm of the nobles) among the right people and not among "barbarians" (*mleccha*, *dasyu*),²³ and 3) to have a body that is not defective physically or mentally²⁴ – which are set forth in closely matching wording. By contrast, there is again some difference in the treatment of the fourth (or fifth according to the sequence of the ŚrBh) condition, namely to be free from the karmic obstruction that results from having committed one of the five cardinal sins leading to a rebirth in hell immediately after the present existence

²² ŚrBh 5_{3ff} (= (I)-A-II-4-b-(1)-i; Ms-2a1L): *tatra manuṣyatvaṃ katamat / yathāpīhaikatyō manuṣyāṇāṃ sabhāgatāyāṃ pratyājāto bhavati / puruṣaś ca puruṣendriyeṇa samanvāgataḥ strīś ca / idam ucyate manuṣyatvaṃ //* BhāvBh 139_{a4f}: *nikāyasaṃbhāgasamṃpat katamā. yathāpīhaikatyō manuṣyeṣu pratyājāto bhavati, puruṣaś ca bhavati, puruṣendriyena sam-anvāgataḥ.*

²³ BhāvBh 139_{a5f}: *deśasaṃpat katamā. yathāpīhaikatyō manuṣyeṣv eva pratyājāyamāno madhyeṣu janapadeṣu pratyājāto bhavati, na pratyantikeṣu yatrāgatiś catasṛṇāṃ parśadāṃ bhikṣubhikṣunyupāsakopāsikānām, yatra punar gatiś catasṛṇāṃ parśadāṃ adasyuṣv amleccheṣu tatra tatra pratyājāto bhavati, yatra gatiḥ āryāṇāṃ samyagātānāṃ samyak-pratipannānāṃ satpuruṣāṇāṃ. ŚrBh 5_{8ff} (= (I)-A-II-4-b-(1)-ii; Ms.2a1R): *āryāyatane pratyājātīḥ katamā / yathāpīhaikatyō madhyeṣu janapadeṣu pratyājāto bhavati, pūrvavad yāvad yatra gatiḥ satpuruṣāṇāṃ / iyam ucyate āryāyatane pratyājātīḥ //* With *pūrvavad*, the ŚrBh refers back to a passage pertaining to the Gotrabhūmi (D. dzi 2b6f: *de la mi khom par skyes pa gang zhe na / smras pa / gang du 'khor bzhi bo rnam dang / dam pa rnam dang / yang dag par song ba rnam dang / skyes bu dam pa rnam mi 'gro ba'i mtha' 'khob kyi mi rkun ma rnam dang / kla klo rnam su skyes pa yin te / de ni mi khom par skyes pa zhes bya'o //*)*

²⁴ BhāvBh 139_{a6-b1}: *āśrayasaṃpat katamā. yathāpīhaikatyō madhyeṣv api janapadeṣu pratyājāyamāno na caḥsurvikalo bhavati, na śrotravikalāḥ, nāpy anyatamānyatamāṅga-pratyāṅgavikalāḥ. ajaḍo 'neḍamūkaḥ, pratibalaḥ subhāṣitadurbhāṣitānām dharmānām artham ājñātum. ŚrBh 6_{1ff} (= (I)-A-II-4-b-(1)-iii; Ms-2a2L): *indriyair avikalatā katamā / yathāpīhaikatyō jaḍo bhavaty aneḍaka iti vistaraḥ / aṅgapratyāṅgavikalō vā yadrūpeṇāṅga-pratyāṅgāvaikalyena śrotrāvaikalyādikena bhavyaḥ kuśalapakṣasamudāgamāya / idam ucyate indriyāvaikalyam //**

(*ānantarya*), viz. killing one's mother, or father or an *arhant*, causing a schism in the *saṃgha*, or shedding the Tathāgata's blood with bad intentions.²⁵ The ŚrBh specifies that it is "in this very life" (*dr̥ṣṭa eva dharme*) that those who have committed one of these five sins "become unfit for the generation of the noble path that leads to *parinirvāṇa*" (*abhavyo bhavati parinirvāṇāyāryamārgasyotpattaye*). The BhāvBh, by contrast, only hints in the corresponding passage at the restriction that an *ānantarya* crime disqualifies a practitioner for this life alone.²⁶ Moreover, this limitation is missing entirely further down in the text, when the BhāvBh instructs the practitioner, in order to stir his mind into action, to consider, *inter alia*, that the five sins "with immediate retribution do not allow for a bridge" that would connect to monastic renunciation (*pravrajyā*) and the subsequent fruits of practice.²⁷ By not spelling out clearly that the commitment of an *ānantarya* sin disqualifies for this life alone, the BhāvBh hints that the adverse consequences of such a crime last into the distant future, and thereby ensures that they are viewed with due terror. If a deliberate choice, this was to improve upon the formulation of the ŚrBh, which, while technically correct, may have been perceived to be lacking in emotive impact.

There is one further detail in which the BhāvBh differs here from the ŚrBh, namely by having the non-obstruction of *ānantarya* karma precede rather than follow upon the karmically conditioned possession of faith and inclination towards the realm of Buddhism,²⁸ as is the case in the ŚrBh. This modified sequence makes more sense, as the five conditions to be met by an individual build upon each other. The question of right faith and aspiration does not pose itself when someone has disqualified himself already as the perpetrator of an *ānantarya* crime, and hence should only be considered after it has been ascertained that no such sin has been committed in this life.

²⁵ BhāvBh 139b₁: *karmānāvarenaṣaṃpat katamā. yathāpīhaikatyenāśrayasaṃpannenā-pi pañcānām ānantaryāṇām anyatamānyatamad ānantaryaṃ naiva kṛtaṃ bhavati na kāritaṃ, yaśya kṛtatvād ayam abhājanabhūta eva syād āryadharmapratilābhāyaibhir eva skandhaiḥ. ŚrBh 6_{13ff} (= I 12) (I)-A-II-4-b-(1)-v; Ms.2a4L): *aparivṛttakarmāntatā katamā/ yena pañcānām ānantaryāṇām karmaṇām, tadyathā mātṛvadhāt pītṛvadhāt arhadvadhāt saṃghabhedāt tathāgatasyāntike duṣṭacittarudhīropādād anyatamānyatamād ānantaryaṃ karma dr̥ṣṭa eva dharme na kṛtaṃ bhavati nādhyācaritam iyam ucyate parivṛtta-karmāntateti / imāni pañcānantaryāṇi karmāṇi kṛtopacitāni dr̥ṣṭa eva dharme parivartyā-bhavyo bhavati parinirvāṇāyāryamārgasyotpattaye / tasmād etāni parivṛttakarmāntatety ucyate //**

²⁶ It does so by saying that "these very *skandhas*" (i.e., of this life) become unfit for reception of the noble *dharma* (cf. the text in the preceding note).

²⁷ BhāvBh 148a_{3f}: *vyavadānavisaṃyogādīnavaḥ pañcavidho draṣṭavyaḥ. ... gṛhapakṣe cānantaryāṇām karmaṇām setvakaraṇatā ... ity ebhiḥ pañcabhir ākārair vyavadānavisaṃyogādīnavaṃ ātmānaṃ samanupaśyan mānasam udvejayati.*

²⁸ BhāvBh 139b_{1f}: *adhimuktyanāvarenaṣaṃpat katamā. yathāpīhaikatyo 'samanvāgato 'py ānantaryaiḥ karmabhiḥ, na kadāyatanādhimukto bhavati na kadāyatanābhiprasannaḥ, yaduta vicitreṣu devāyataneṣu vicitreṣu ca tīrthyāyataneṣu. tathāgataśāsanavāyatanagatena prasādenāśya paribhāvītā pūrvajanmasaṃtatīḥ, tena ca hetunā tena pratyayenāsyaitarhi tasminn evāryāyatane prasādasahagato 'dhimokṣaḥ saṃtiṣṭhate. ŚrBh 6_{6ff} (= (I)-A-II-4-b-(1)-iv; Ms.2a3L): *āyatanagataḥ prasādaḥ katamaḥ / yathāpīhaikatyena tathāgatapravedite dharmavinaye śraddhā pratilabdhā bhavati cetasaḥ prasādaḥ / ayam ucyate āyatanagataḥ prasādaḥ / tatrāyatanam tathāgatapravedito dharmavinayaḥ sarveṣāṃ laukikalokottarāṇām śukladharmāṇām utpattaye / yā punar atra śraddhā tena pūrvaṅgamenādhipatyena sa āyatanagataḥ prasādaḥ/ sarvakleśamalakalusyāpanayanāt //**

These further examples drawn from the BhāvBh's treatment of the conditions necessary for the practice of Buddhism shall suffice to show that the BhāvBh does not simply duplicate the material of the ŚrBh, but also deviates in significant details. Though the deviations of the BhāvBh from the ŚrBh and other parts of the Yogācārabhūmi are significant, the principal contribution of our *bhūmi* to the Yogācārabhūmi does not consist in this, but in its identification and correlation of obstacles and salutary factors with particular stages of the path to emancipation. To repeat, the focus is not on the treatment of these obstacles or factors *per se*, but to chart their often repeated occurrences on the path of liberation. As a further example to illustrate this I would like to return to the theme of food (*āhāra*) already touched upon above. It first features in the BhāvBh as an external prerequisite (*bāhyasaṃpat*) for the practice of Buddhism, namely in form of the aforementioned need to have dedicated lay supporters who provide alms food and other requisites for practice.²⁹ Thereafter, the theme of nourishment recurs more than once, often with the text warning against indulging in food lest the overfed body become unfit for the practice of meditation, but occasionally also stressing the need of nourishment to maintain a body that is in good health in order to engage in practice. A good example for this treatment is found in the aforementioned third *sthāna* dedicated to the ten antidotes (*pratīpakṣa*) counteracting the matching ten obstacles (*vipakṣa*) to practice (*yogabhāvanā*). The text first sets forth the need for the renunciant to collect alms so as to maintain the body (*kāyasthiti*) and assure its strength (*bala*) and fitness (*kalyatā*) to engage continuously in the cultivation of wholesome *dharma*s (*kuśaladharmabhāvanāsātatyābhīyoga*). It then warns against the "craving for taste" (*rasarāga*) as an obstacle (*vipakṣa*), and enjoins as an antidote (*pratīpakṣa*) the cultivation of the notion of food as disgusting (*āhāre pratikūlasaṃjñābhāvanā*) (142a₄-b₂). Shortly afterwards, when dealing with potential obstacles faced by the practitioner cultivating the aforementioned notion that the body is impure (*aśubhasaṃjñābhāvanā*), the text lists "not knowing the right measure when eating (*amātrajñatā*), which renders the body unfit" for meditation (*kāyākarmaṇyatā*).³⁰ The same problem of disabling the body by overeating is mentioned again (in slightly rephrased form) a little further on, this time as an obstacle to cultivating the notion that has as its object the light of the *dharma* (*dharmālokālambana-ālokaṣaṃjñābhāvanā*) (143b₃). In the

²⁹ BhāvBh 139b₆-140a₂: "What is the fulfillment of the condition of favorable sustenance? The devout brahman householders know that a mode of life conducive towards the enjoyment of *dharma* is (possible) by way of the four means for this enjoyment being made present. With the (aspiration) 'may there be for one who is yoked to the enjoyment of *dharma* not be the cessation of the enjoyment of *dharma* because of a lack of the enjoyment of sustenance' they care (for such practitioners) by way of (providing) abundantly the (four) equipments, namely robes, alms food (and bowls), bedding and stools, and medicine against illness." (*ānulomikopakarāṇasaṃpat katamā. yathāpi tad ebhis caturbhir dharmasaṃbhogakāraṇaiḥ pratyupasthitair dharmasaṃbhogāya pravṛttiṃ viditvā śrāddhā brāhmaṇagrhapatayo 'mā bhūd asya dharmasaṃbhogāya prayuktasyāmiśasaṃbhoga-vaikalyād dharmasaṃbhogajyānir' iti te 'syātyarthaṃ cīvarapiṇḍapātaśayanāsanaglāna-pratyayabhāṣajayapariṣkāraiḥ pratyānukampante.*) Cf. ŚrBh 8_{10ff} (= (I)-A-II-4-b-(2)-v; Ms.2b2R): *parataḥ pratyānukampā katamā / para ucyante dāyakadānapatayah te yāni tasyānulomikāni jīvitopakarāṇāni taiḥ pratyānukampante, yaduta cīvarapiṇḍapātaśayanāsanaglānapratyayabhāṣajayapariṣkārair, iyam ucyate parataḥ pratyānukampā //*

³⁰ BhāvBh 143a₁: *bhojane cāmātrajñatām āgāmya kāyākarmaṇyatā.*

subsequent section (*aṅga*) dedicated to the comprehensive, unsurpassed worldly purification (*sarvākārā niruttarā laukikī viśuddhiḥ*), the fault of being hard to satiate (*duṣṣoṣadurbharatāsaṃtuṣṭidoṣa*) and the consequent fault of being distracted by manifold activities (*vicitravyāpāradoṣa*), presumably undertaken in order to procure nourishment, feature among the obstacles to entry into meditative absorption (*samādhilābha*) (144b₂). A little bit down in the same list "unbalanced eating and the consequent heaviness and unfitness for meditation" occur as further obstacle.³¹ When treating the mastery of absorptive meditation (*samādhivaśītā*) towards the end of the same *aṅga*, begging for alms at other families (*parakuleṣu bhaikṣacaraṇatā*) features as a humbling practice, and the ban on storing food obtained from others is mentioned as a further depravation in this context (145b₅-146a₁). More importantly, at this stage the BhāvBh also inserts a passage on the need not to be beguiled by alms-food (and robes, and seating and bedding), but to bring the understanding to bear that these requisites are merely there to sustain the body, stop hunger, and benefit practice.³² Again, instead of providing more details, the BhāvBh alludes to the treatment of the knowledge of measure in food (*bhojane mātrajñatā*) elsewhere. With this, the BhāvBh probably refers to the ŚrBh, where this subject is treated at considerable length.³³ The aforementioned passage treating five major factors leading to *satyābhisamaya* includes a closely matching passage that again warns not to be enticed by alms-food (and seating and bedding), but to overcome one's regard for such possessions (*lābhasatkāra*).³⁴ Similarly, when listing the obstacles the practitioner has to face on the *bhāvanā-mārga* after his first realization of the noble truths, the BhāvBh lists among the seven obstacles relating to behavior outside meditation (*cāragata*) attaching great importance to food (*bhojane gurukatā*) when abiding by way of alms-food (*piṇḍapāṭikatvena viharataḥ*).³⁵ This follows upon the obstacle mentioned first (and included in the citation of the preceding note), namely the need to attend meetings dedicated to affairs of the *saṃgha* that force the practitioner who does

³¹ BhāvBh 144b₄: *bha[kṣ]yavaīṣamyanaimittikāḥ kāyagauravākarmaṇyadoṣaḥ*.

³² BhāvBh 147a_{3f}: *itaretareṇa cīvareṇa saṃtuṣṭo bhavati. yathā cīvareṇaivaṃ piṇḍapātena śayanāsanena. sa tathā tuṣṭaḥ saṃtuṣṭa evaṃ saṃprajānam paribhūṅkte. itīme jīvitaparīṣkāra etadārthaṃ, yāvad evāsya kāyasya sthītaye yāpanāyāi jighatsoparataye brahmacaryānugrahāyete vīstareṇa tadyathā bhojane mātrajñatāyām*.

³³ Cf. ŚrBh 10_{aff} (= (I)-A-II-4-b-(7)): *bhojane mātrajñatā katamā / sa tathā saṃvṛten-driyaḥ pratisaṃkhyāyāhāram āharati, na d[rav]jārthaṃ (edition: darpārthaṃ), na madārthaṃ na maṇḍanārthaṃ na vibhūṣaṇārthaṃ, yāvad evāsya kāyasya sthītaye yāpanāyāi jighatsoparataye brahmacaryānugrahāya iti / paurāṇam ca vedanām prahāsyāmi, navām ca notpādayiṣyāmi / yātrā ca me bhaviṣyati balaṃ ca sukhaṃ cānavadyatā ca sparśavīhāratā ca / iyam ucyate bhojane mātrajñatā // ŚrBh pp. 73-97 offers a detailed treatment of this passage. It treats the knowledge of measure in food (*bhojane mātrajñatā*) in that context as a requisite (*saṃbhāra*) for the *śīkṣāmarga*.*

³⁴ BhāvBh 149b₃: *sacet punar itaretareṇa piṇḍapātena śayanāsanena saṃtuṣṭaḥ, utpannotpannam lābhasatkāram abhibhavati*.

³⁵ BhāvBh 150a_{4f}: (An obstacle relating to conduct) for the noble listener who lives in a (monastic) community is the meeting of that community whenever affairs of the *saṃgha* come up, for which he again and again has to abandon the constant application to wholesome practice (i.e., solitary meditation). But if instead he lives (solitarily) by collecting alms, the weight attached to nourishment (becomes an obstacle relating to conduct). (*āryaśrāvakasya gaṇe saṃnivasata utpannotpanneṣu saṃghakaraṇīyeṣu vihāya vihāya kuśalapakṣam abhīkṣṇam gaṇasaṃnipātāḥ. piṇḍapāṭikatvena vā punar viharato bhojane gurukatā.*)

not live in isolation to again and again interrupt his practice. Clearly, abiding by way of alms-food, which is one of the ascetic practices (*dhutāṅga*) monks take voluntarily upon themselves, features here as an alternative for living in a monastic community, which is a constant source of distraction but apparently offers the advantage that food is provided and hence not a concern.³⁶ It is noteworthy that the necessity to attend to the demands of the laity, including performing rituals on their behalf, does not feature as a further distraction that monks living in a monastic setup have to suffer. This omission is suggestive given that catering for the laity's needs tends to be a prominent and time-consuming duty in both Theravāda and Mahāyāna communities. On the other hand, it would be precarious to conclude on such a slender basis that ministering to the laity played only a minor role in the monastic milieu underlying the *Yogācārabhūmi*.

It is remarkable that the issue of food and the disruption of practice by *saṃgha* meetings are discussed as part of the treatment of the *bhāvanāmārga* that follows upon the obtainment of the first supramundane realization of the noble truth.³⁷ Instead of describing in detail how the practitioner should reenact and deepen this first realization so as to do away also with all latent defilements, the text takes knowledge of these matters for granted and instead focuses on the obstacles he may face, and the positive attitudes and sentiments he should cultivate. Among the seven obstructions that relate to conduct more generally (*cāragata*), it not only mentions the distraction of *saṃgha* meetings and the concern for food, but also other down-to-earth issues, namely delight (*ārāmatā*) in dealing with robes and alms bowls etc.,³⁸ "delight in sleeping at night" (*rātrivihāragatasya nidrārāmatā*) (150a₅-b₁), "delight in impure stories about kings, thieves, etc., during the day" (150b₁) (*divāvihāragatasya rājacorādisaṃkliṣṭakathārāmatā*) (150b₁), and finally reluctance to move away from one's home area and part with company.³⁹

I find this list particularly interesting because it occurs at a very advanced stage of practice after the first supramundane realization of the first noble truth. It portrays the *āryaśrāvaka* – this is the explicit wording used by the BhāvBh in this context – as human and fallible, susceptible as he is to cravings and attachments, to delight in company and entertainment, and so on. To my mind, this bears out that the BhāvBh does not provide an idealizing path-account that is purely theoretical and entirely divorced from real practice. On the contrary, to portray a highly

³⁶ In accordance with this interpretation, I understand *ubhayatra* in the immediately following phrase (*ubhayatra cīvarapātrādīkarmetikaraṇīyaprayuktasya vā tadārāmatā*) to mean "in both situations," i.e., whether living in a monastic community or on one's own on alms food. For the translation of this phrase see n. 38.

³⁷ BhāvBh 147b₁ identifies these obstacles as pertaining to a practitioner who already has realized the four noble truths (*abhisamitasatyasyāntara*).

³⁸ BhāvBh 150a₅: "In both cases (i.e. whether living in a monastic community or living alone but as a result interacting with lay supporters) for someone engaged with what is to be done regarding the correct action relating to robes, alms bowl, etc., delight in them (is an obstacle relating to conduct)." (*ubhayatra cīvarapātrādīkarmetikaraṇīyaprayuktasya vā tadārāmatā*). The delight may not only refer to the objects of concern, i.e., the robes, alms bowl, etc., but also to the pleasure of fussing over them.

³⁹ Our text (150a₅) also mentions as an obstacle relating to conduct "delight in explanation when engaged in self-study" (*svādhyāyaprayuktasya bhāsyārāmatā*). Does this intriguing obstacle refer to delight in commentarial literature, or is this about the proclivity to expound texts to others instead of persevering with private study, or is this more generally about engaging in conversation instead of studying?

advanced practitioner who is close to the threshold of becoming an *arhant* as susceptible to common cravings and likings only makes sense if this reflects a genuine concern that is ultimately based in real-life experiences on the ground. To be sure, I am not claiming that this has anything to do with the personal experiences of the author or compiler. Rather, I want to suggest that the obstacles that the BhāvBh summarizes and systematizes in a scholastic manner are real, that practitioners do indeed encounter them, and that hence they bear some witness to the difficulties that may arise on the arduous path of practice. To my mind, this bears out that that even though Buddhist texts treating meditative practice are in many ways scholastic treatises, there is yet at least a tenuous link that connects these texts, however indirectly, with genuine practice. To repeat, the BhāvBh seems to be a poignant example for this. The way it foregrounds common and seemingly banal obstacles and temptations and does not hesitate to assign them to advanced and partially realized practitioners makes little sense if the scholastic tradition simply imagined them. By contrast, this treatment makes a lot of sense, if the text captures something of the difficulties and challenges that practitioners really did encounter.

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