# Sati (Mindfulness) and the Structure of the Mind in Early Buddhism

by Madawala Seelawimala and Arnold McKinley

# INTRODUCTION

ditational practice, of one sort or antother, plays an essential role in the daily life of Buddhists. Indeed, the meditational practices available are as varied as the Asian cultures from which they sprang. Unfortunately, most of them appear rather odd when seen from a non-Buddhist, American point of view. Americans wonder, for example, what Buddhists do when they sit still for countless hours or what they intend to gain by moving ever so slowly, as those of the Theravadan tradition do while walking in vipassanā meditation. The answers to questions like these lie in the Buddhist scriptures, the suttas-the discourses of the Buddha. There the original methods of sati (mindfulness), from which all later Buddhist meditational practices developed, are described.

"There is this one way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and grief, for the ending of suffering and misery, for winning the right path, for realising *nibbāna*, that is to say, the four practices of *sati* (mindfulness)."<sup>1</sup>

The development of sati, therefore, is considered to be absolutely essential for the realization of *nibbāna*, ultimate peace of mind. Indeed, the Buddha placed sammā-sati (right mindfulness) among the practices of the Noble Eightfold Path. In essence, sati development forms one cornerstone of Buddha's method. He calls sati an 'indriya', a faculty which gives the aspirant of nibbāna control over his own development. Sati shares this distinction with four other faculties.<sup>2</sup> In Early Buddhist thought, one's further progress toward *nibbāna* sprang from sati development and upon it one's future practice depended.

So if Americans are to understand Buddhist forms of meditation and if Buddhism is to be transferred successfully to America, Americans must understand sati development correctly. Unfortunately, such understanding is difficult to attain because of the great differences in language, philosophy and "worldview" which exist between the American and Asian cultures in which Buddhism developed. In fact, the task is difficult even for Indian. Sri Lankan, Thai, Burmese and Tibetan Buddhists who share their cultural roots with the Buddha. Subtleties of the teachings have been lost over the centuries, tending to separate them from the Buddha.

Indian monks arrived in China in the first century A.D. and translated some of the Indian *suttas* and commentaries by the second century, but definitive translations, which successfully overcame the cultural differences and thus prepared the foundation for a critical analysis of Buddha's teaching from a Chinese perspective, did not appear for another 300 years. The American experience of Buddhism is just beginning.

One of the significant barriers to the

transfer of Buddhism presently is the lack of proper English words which carry the subtle meanings intended by Buddhist technical terms. The problems are usually avoided by translators; English words are used as if they captured the full meaning of the technical terms. A continued practice of this sort, without adjacent textual explanations of the nuances, confuses rather than clarifies. Some terms such as 'mental objects' (for sankhāra) or 'emptiness' (for sūnyatā) are utterly foreign and vacuous in meaning to most Americans, since commensurate notions do not exist in Western culture.

We expect this paper to do no more, therefore, than to continue the scholarly discussion on the proper interpretation of sati for Americans using metaphors and models which Americans can understand. We are inferring our interpretations of sati and of the structure of the mind from the Pali Text Society's translations, except where we believe the translations are better rendered elsewhere. The massive work of retranslating all of the pertinent passages with matured interpretations has yet to be done; for now, we are making a first attempt at organizing these passages and forming a usable model which can be tested against future translations and interpretations.

We are guided by two principles in our endeavor: first, that the Buddha seems to have chosen his words very carefully, inasmuch as he strove for clarity in the presentation of his teachings; and second, that much of modern vipassanā meditation practice reasonably reflects the ancient practice itself. Under the first principle, for example, we would not expect a regular appearance in the canon of two different Pali words to refer to the same concept. We feel that the use of the English word 'mind' to translate both citta and mano, as is often done today, is not admissible. Under the second, we would expect modern practice to suggest insights into the more subtle aspects of the translations and thus of the teaching on

sati and the structure of the mind.

Our goal is to find a clear interpretation of the word sati so that the English word 'mindfulness', which has become the standard translation, will carry significantly more meaning for the average American student of Buddhism than it does now.' To do so we will examine some textual material in the canon, identify key concepts, describe the processes which sati, as an indriya, controls, and present a graphical model of these processes. The model in conjunction with our knowledge of vipassanā practice will suggest an interpretation of sati.

## SATI IN THE PALI CANON

The canon, itself, consists of three parts: the Sutta Piţaka (The Basket of Teachings) by the Buddha; the Vinaya Piţaka (The Basket of Rules) by which the followers were to live; and the Abhidhamma Piţaka (The Basket of Philosophical Treatments of the Suttas). The major discourse on sati occurs twice, once as the tenth discourse in the Majjhima Nikāya (The Medium Length Sayings) where it is called Satipațţhāna Sutta, and once as the twentysecond discourse of the Dīgha Nikāya (The Long Sayings) where it is called Mahā-Satipaţţhāna Sutta.<sup>4</sup>

The word sati (or smrti, in Sanskrit) originally carried the meaning 'memory' or 'remembrance', but in Buddhist usage in the canon it refers to the present, perhaps a 'remembrance of the present' and therefore, carries a meaning closer to 'attention' or 'awareness'. It refers particularly to an awareness which is well-placed, good, right, 'skillful' (kusala). Patthāna, from thā, means 'placing right next to, or right in front of'. It sometimes translated 'arousing' or is 'establishment'. The complete title of the sutmay, therefore, be rendered "The ta Discourse on the Immediate Presence or Establishment of Sati".\*

Satipatthāna Sutta gives four Patthānas of sati: "A person lives contemplating the kāya in the kāya . . . he lives contemplating vedanā in the vedanā . . . he lives contemplating citta in the citta . . . he lives contemplating dhamma in the dhamma". "'Lives contemplating ...'x'.. in the ...'x'...'' translates ... anupassi viharati which refers to a very conscious, present abiding and observing awareness or consciousness. The phrase is repeated over and over again as if to emphasize its importance with respect to sati. The sutta follows with a large number of examples as if to explain what "lives contemplating .. 'x' .. in the .. 'x' .. means in actual practice. These provide some meaning to the terms kāya, vedanā, citta, and dhamma. The examples provide the basis of vipassana meditational practice, as well as describing the awareness of the one who has developed sati perfectly.

In these examples,  $k\bar{a}ya$  seems to refer to the body, but in a special way: no reference to an individual is implied anywhere. Rather,  $k\bar{a}ya$  is referred to as a kind of agglomeration of parts. Vedanā, in the examples, seems to refer to 'feelings' or 'sensations'; pleasure, pain, and neither-pleasure-nor-pain are mentioned. Although 'feelings' is its usual translation, we find difficulty with it and will amend it later. Citta and dhamma are more difficult to determine from the readings.

With regard to the last two words, the examples use terms referring to psychological "states", maybe thoughts, and perhaps processes, such as lust, hate, distraction, anger, sloth, and their opposites, but details are missing. Usual translations equate *citta* with 'mind' and *dhamma* with 'elementsof-reality', but 'mind' in English has a specific connotation which only partially reflects the entire meaning of the word *citta*, and 'elements-of-reality' is an ambiguous term given the centuries of Western debate concern ing the nature of 'reality'. We therefore, must search other *suttas* for uses of these terms which may help clarify them.

## THE SALAYATANA (THE SIX 'FIELDS' OR 'SPHERES')

The concepts kāya, vedanā, citta, and dhamma are defined more clearly in several suttas elsewhere in the *piţaka*, particularly in Majjhima Nikāya and in Samyutta nikāya:<sup>7</sup>

The Lord spoke thus: 'Six internal *āyatana* are to be understood, six external *āyatana*, six of vififiāna, six of phassa, six of vedanā, ...'.

Avatana is used to refer to a 'realm', 'field' or 'sphere' of activity. The internal ayatanas include: first, the 'five senses', namely chakkhu (the visual sense), sota (the aural sense), ghāna (the smelling sense), and jivhā (the tasting sense) and kāya (the feeling sense), the last of which is usually translated 'body' but now is seen to be narrower in meaning than that; and second, mano, an ayatana for which Westerners do not have a 'sense' counterpart. The external ayatanas refer to the objects sensed: rupa (visible object), sadda (sound), gandha (odor), photthabba (touched object), and dhamma (the additional sense object related to mano). With each of the six *āyatanas* come related viññāna, phassa, and vedanā in that order (see Figures 1 and 2).

The text of *Majjhima* III. 281 indicates that a vi $n\bar{n}\bar{n}a$  related to a particular sense (let's call it a 'sensory'-vedan $\bar{a}$ ) arises from a dependence on the internal and external sensory- $\bar{a}yatanas$ , that the 'meeting' of these three is sensory-phassa and that from sensoryphassa arises sensory-vedan $\bar{a}$ . So that, for example, the chakkhu (eye-sense), meeting with  $r\bar{u}pa$  (the visible object) generates chakkhuvinintana. These three give rise to chakkhuphassa, where phassa means 'contact' and, in this context, is usually translated 'visual sensory-impingement. From such impingement arises chakkhu-vedanā. Sensory-vedanā, therefore, is the result of a long line of dependencies. Throughout the suttas the phrase, "pleasure, pain, and neither-pleasurenor-pain", is used to ascribe some meaning to the term vedanā.



Figure 1 The First Five Internal and External Ayatanas



Figure 2 The Processes of the Internal Ayatana Example: The Olfactory Sense

Also associated with the senses are six indriyas." The word comes from the old vedic reference to Indra, the highest God of the Vedic system. Therefore, indriva, 'of or pertaining to Indra', may be thought of as a 'controlling faculty'. It is often translated 'senseorgan', but Majihima III. 298 is entitled Indriyabhāvanāsutta (Discourse on the Development of the Indriva) and it seems a more potent concept to develop a 'controlling faculty' than an 'organ'.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the texts (both here and in Samyutta v. 73) indicate that control is to be established over what arises after the object sensed is judged likable, dislikable, or both. Such judgment occurs further down the road of awareness and perception, rather than at the organ where awareness begins.

Important discussions associated with the relationship of the six *indriyas* and  $\bar{a}yatanas$  occur in *Samyutta* v. 217 and *Majjhima* I. 294:<sup>11</sup>

There are . . . these five *indriyas* of different scope and different range, and they do not mutually enjoy each other's scope and range. *Mano-indriya* (the sixth *indriya*) is their *pațisaraņa* (refuge, shelter, resort). It is *mano-indriya* that profits by their scope and range.

This text is pivotal in understanding Buddha's structure of the human organism. It suggests that the sixth *āyatana* synthesizes the results of the other five *āyatanas*. It develops concepts, thoughts and ideas from a hodgepodge of sensory data and, as shall be shown in the discussion on *vipassanā* meditation, provides the basis for mental awareness (see Figure 3).

A clue as to how this synthetic processing occurs appears in Buddha's alternative description of the human organism as an agglomeration of 'five *khandhas*'. In particular, he warns the monks of the danger of identifying any one of the *khandhas*, or all of them taken together, with a 'self'. These are  $r\bar{u}pa$ , vedanā, samkhāra, and viāfāāna. The scripture gives the following explanations for the etymology of these terms.



	Figure 3				
The	Sixth	Internal	and	External	Avalana

"Rūpa (form) is used," says the scripture, "because one is affected by the touch of cold and heat, hunger and thirst, gnats and mosquitoes, wind and sun and snakes."12 Rupa refers to the form constituted by the four essential natural elements, air, heat, water, and earth. It is derived from the root rup (to break). "Rūpa breaks, monks; therefore it is called rūpa."" Used with the senses, rūpa would refer to the organ itself. For example, ghāna-rūpa would refer to the organ of the olfactory sense. Note that the word rūpa is also used for the external āyatana of the eye-sense, that is, for 'that which is seen'. This strengthens our interpretation of its use in reference to that part of an internal *āyatana* which can be seen, the organ itself.

Vedanā is used "because one feels pleasure, pain and neither-pleasurenor-pain." The root is *vid* (to know). When used in conjunction with the senses, the term implies 'perception as the experience of the senses'.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the term implies more than just sensation or feeling; there is a knowledge associated with it. Recall that the sensory-*vedanās* arise last in a line of dependencies on other sensory-characteristics. These *vedanās*, therefore, are the results of sensory processing. We believe that the term *vedanā*, used singularly without a sensory prefix, refers to the six *vedanās* taken together.

Saħħā is used "because one 'perceives' (samjānāti) blue-green, yellow, red or white." The translation does not get to the heart of the matter.<sup>15</sup> The passage seems to express a recognition (of some aspects of outside objects) which are more complicated than the 'pleasure, pain and neither-pleasure-nor-pain' of the sensory-vedanās. Saħħā refers to a processing of vedanā which distinguishes characteristics of the external object against its background.

The Pali Text Society's translation of the text concerning samkhāra (activitiescompound) holds little meaning in English. Another translation proposes, "they are called samkhāra because they renew what had been undergoing renewal in the past."<sup>16</sup> We prefer a meaning which points to an activity by which concepts, acquired in the past (brown, purple, red, etc.), are brought to the fore for comparison with the present recognitions made during safifia processing (bluegreen, yellow, red, etc.). In a broader context we would have it refer to the rapid, ongoing flow of comparisons required to make correct pattern matches with patterns already stored. We are not aware of a word for this in English, so we prefer to keep samkhāra without translation.

Viñhāņa is used "because one is conscious . . . of sour or bitter, acrid or sweet, alkaline or non-alkaline, saline or non-saline." The translation seems to confuse safifiā with vififiāna. One translator equates vififiāna with 'passive consciousness'.<sup>17</sup> For us, the six sense-vififiānas refer to the processes which complete the recognition of those aspects of the external object which relate to the specific sense. For example, the chakkuvififiāna refers to the visual processing which recognizes the visual aspects of the external object. Chakkhu-vedanā is the result.

Most of the terms which have been introduced so far from the suttas have been assigned some meaning; dhamma, citta, mano, and of course, sati, still remain undefined.

#### THE GRAPHICAL MODEL

The texts discussed above hint at a rather sophisticated model of human psychological processes which the Buddha seems to have explained only to the extent of supporting his teaching concerning the need to abandon all attachments and repulsions which these processes might engender.18 In summary, the texts suggest that mental processes involve six internal and external ayatanas (six spheres related to the six senses), six indrivas (controlling faculties), six viññāņas, and six phassas; the result of the processing of all these is the six vedanās. The texts say that five khandhas, namely, rūpa, vedanā, samkhāra and viññāna, generate full concepts from initial sensory contact with the sense objects. They say that five indrivas do not overlap or share their region of control or operation, but rather share common ground with a sixth indriva; that is, that mano-indriva controls the common concerns of the other five. The structural model which we believe synthesizes these ideas appears in Figure 4.

The internal and external *āyatanas* (spheres) are identifiable, as are the *rūpa*, *viāfāna* and *indriya* of each sense sphere. The six *phassas* are represented by long, thin arrows piercing the external and internal *āyatanas*. The six vedanās are represented by short, thin arrows. Dhamma, the sixth external *āyatana*, appears 'external' to mano. Dhamma will be discussed shortly.



Figure 4 The Graphical Representation of the Citta

Modern science has illuminated the details of the sensory processes, making a direct comparison with the *āvatanas* possible. In the sense of smell, for example, odor molecules (gandha, the external avatana) bind to receptors on the surface of the olfactory epithelium in the nose. Chemical changes stimulate these neurons to send electrical impulses to the brain's olfactory bulbs. Mitral neurons send information directly into the limbic system of the brain which, in turn, activates the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland. The limbic system also reaches into the neocortex, site of the brain's higher processes, to stimulate conscious thoughts and reactions.19

Ghāna-rūpa refers to the material parts of the sense in the above example. Ghāna-viñānā refers to the chemical and electrical processing and depends upon the conjunction of the odor molecules and the internal *āyatana* (ghāna). Ghāna-phassa refers to the 'meeting' of gandha, ghāna, and ghānaviñfiāna. Ghāna-vedanā refers to the messages sent to the limbic system, the pituitary gland and the neocortex. Here safifiā processing combines these vedanās with the vedanā of the other senses and distinguishes characteristics of the external object from the background. Samkhāra processing compares these characteristics with others already stored in memory so that the object can be identified.

Similarly, mano, the sixth ayatana for which no "sense" counterpart exists in English, has an organ, the mano-rūpa, which we believe must refer to the brain. We suggest that the five vedanās share their common ground the processing in called mano-viññāņa; the processes, saññā and samkhāra, are prior to mano-vififiāna processing. Therefore, when the term viAnana appears alone, without a sensory prefix, it refers to mano-viAflana processing. The end result is a concept of the external object called manovedanā. Samkhāra also refers to memory processes.

In summary, the model works like this: The saññā process draws together the various sensory-vedanās to form a primitive notion of the sensed object. Samkhāra recalls concepts already stored in memory and compares them with the results of saññā. Mano-viññāṇa puts them all together to produce, eventually, a conception of the external object, manovedanā.

Recall that the text of Samyutta v. 217 indicates that mano-indriya is the palisaraha (refuge, shelter, resort) of the other five sensory indriyas. Therefore, the task of the mano-indriya is to share in the control of the other senses. Each of the sensory indriyas has some control over its native viñfiāna processing, but mano-indriya steps in from time to time to exercise a more central control. We learn from a study of vipassanā meditation just what mano-indriya is, experientially, and just how it exercises central control.

As with the other five  $\bar{a}yatanas$ , manoviāhāna arises due to a dependence on the internal sixth  $\bar{a}yatana$ , mano, and the external sixth  $\bar{a}yatana$ , dharmma. Mano-phassa arises from the meeting of these three and from this mano-vedanā arises. But what is dhamma? What is its source? What sort of an external  $\bar{a}yatana$  is it? Our studies have not yet provided a clear answer; we are still working with the text.

Dhamma may refer to the commands sent from mano-indriya to the mano-viñfiāṇa and to the other sensory indriyas and in this way may be the principle vehicle of control over the entire system. There are two problems with this: 1) such commands do not appear to be "external" to mano, and 2) we would also expect to see terms which refer to the commands generated by the other sensory indriyas as well, but we do not.

Dhamma may refer to the concepts, ideas and thoughts which mano-indriya works with and creates. This makes mano-indriya the 'presently aware consciousness' and dhamma the moment-to-moment focus of its operation. But this idea also suffers from the same two criticisms.

Or, dhamma may refer to the six vedanās taken together; some textual material seems to justify this notion. In this case then, manovedanās may be injected into the manoindriya whence they become dhammas; but not all mano-vedanās are dhammas since some are immediately stored in memory (samkhāra) without ever entering manoindriya. This distinguishes the mano-vedanās from dhammas.

Therefore, our model of human psychological processes, as we believe it appears textually in the *Nikāyas* of the Pali Canon, consists of Figure 4 and the accompanying description given above. We believe that the Buddha referred to the entire model by the term *citta*. This may be seen particularly in *Samyutta* ii. 2. The English term 'mind', therefore, refers in its technical meaning to the same processes referred to by *citta* but, in its common usage, only to *mano*; thus the confusion over the translation of these two terms.

It is important to note that great difficulties exist in English because of the Western tradition of assigning 'places' to the processing. 'The consciousness', for example, is spoken of as if it were a place where awareness abides. In the *suttas*, we find *viAAānas* to be processes, not places or processors; *indriyas* are faculties of control, not places, as terms like 'consciousness' tend to imply. The subtleties are important, but it is difficult to remain faithful to them in every instance of translation or explanation.

### VIPASSANĂ MEDITATION AND THE MODEL

Recalling the Satipatthana Sutta's four patthanas of sati: "A person lives contemplating the kāva in the kāva ... he lives contemplating vedanā in the vedanā . . . he lives contemplating *citta* in the *citta* . . . he lives contemplating the citta . . . he lives contemplating dhamma in the dhamma". Using the four patthanas one peers inward (anupassi viharati-a very conscious, present abiding and observing) toward finer and finer activities of the human organism, first toward the kāya (the feeling sense), then the vedanā (the sense-vedanā), then the citta (the activity of the 'mind' as represented by the model given above), and lastly toward the dhamma. This is the essence of vipassana practice.

In common practice today, the beginner is introduced to *vipassanā* with two meditations—a 'walking meditation' and a 'sitting meditation'. In the first, one moves the feet very, very slowly, keeping track of four parts to the movement-a lifting, a moving, a setting down and a shifting of weight into the next step. One is told to look carefully at the 'mind's activity' during this walking. Soon after starting practice, the meditator realizes that before each part there come several preludes. Let us say for argument that these are: a motivation to move, a desire to move, a choice, an intention, and finally the issuance of a command to move. Meditators soon realize that in order to really watch these 'preludes of the mind' between parts of the walking movement, they must deliberately move their feet very slowly; the watching is not easy. Serious beginners move slowly because they do not 'observe' these preludes when these preludes first occur and therefore must 'request' a replay of them a second and perhaps a third or more times in order to observe them clearly.

Interestingly enough, just as the beginners start to observe these preludes and begin to move faster as a result, they discover that each of the four parts consists of a very large number of 'sub-parts', The 'lifting part', for example, consists of a large number of lifting parts and each of these has associated motivations, desires, choices, intentions, and commands. This is indeed a very large number of activities to watch, so the beginners, who are now more advanced in the practice, must move even more slowly. Continued practice of this leads the beginners to . . . anupassi viharati (careful observing) of the body at every instant of time in all of their daily routine.

In sitting meditation, *sati* development begins in a similar fashion; here, however, the beginners first observe the passage of the breath in and out of the body. They soon discover that the lessons learned while walking apply equally well to breathing. Soon the teachers suggest different foci for bodily attention, and the beginners learn that they can interrupt the flow of desires, choices, intentions, etc., *at will*. They learn to interject alternative desires, choices, intentions, etc., at will.

In terms of our model, what seems to be happening may be described in the following way: Mano-indriva, the faculty of direct control over the entire citta, seems capable of acting on only one dhamma at a time; moreover, comprehension of that dhamma seems to be relatively slow-slow in comparison to the generation of other activities (desire, choice, etc.). Indeed, much parallel processing occurs in the citta simultaneously, because each of the sensory-viññāna operates independently of the others, feeding their resulting vedanā to the central processing of mano-viññāņa. While the mano-indriya abides with one dhamma at a time, much complex mano-viññāna (and five sensory-viññāna) processing occurs simultaneously. Mano-viññāna processing is done very rapidly.

Mano-indriya, being a 'faculty of control', can intervene during mano-viħħāna processing, registering any command it wishes. The same may be said of each of the independent sensory-indriya with respect to their viħħāna. In this way the indriyas interrupt the normal proceedings of their respective viħħāna. This is the means by which meditators directly control the walking or the breathing movement at will.

This latter part of the model suggests several very interesting phenomena which must be occurring in the *citta*.

First, the six sensory-viānāṇas (including the mano-viānāṇa) must be the center of some 'automatic' activities of their own. In the case of the chakkhu (visual sense) this would be the movement of the muscles during focusing, or of the lens in inverting the image onto the retina and similar processes. The chakkhuindriya is not normally involved in issuing commands for the performance of these actions; they occur 'automatically' and come from the chakkhu-viñhāna. On the other hand, chakkhu-indriya does issue commands such as moving the eyeball to the left or to the right when the organism (the person) makes a conscious decision to do so; this conscious decision is put into effect through a request by the mono-indriya to the chakkhu-indriya. These requests are shown in Figure 4 as thick arrows.

In the case of the mano-viññāṇa, such 'automatic' behavior is evidenced when, for example, the entire organism walks. In walking, there is no need for a direct command to be issued by the central mano-indriya to all the other five indriyas in order to effect a step forward. The motions are already prescribed and embedded in the mano-viññāṇa for fast, effective dispersal to the important centers of control without the need for that sort of central intervention. A 'lifting of the arm' is a similar motion.

Where might these 'automatic' activities come from? Some are clearly learned. For example, a baby must move very slowly when learning to walk. Each step is repeated over and over again until certain patterns are established so that walking via mano-vinfiana processing can become automatic. The processes saññā and samkhāra are involved in forming these patterns in memory. The same may be said of many patterns which we recognize as learned patterns. The word sankhata, a past participle, refers to these automatic 'instructions'; we might use the English word 'pre-programmed', drawn from computer language, in translating it. The tradition teaches that all, not just some, of these patterns are learned.

Second, one part of *mano-vififiāna* activity is the feeding of information to *manoindriya* periodically; this keeps *mano-indriya* informed of the organism's activities. There seems to be no clear-cut rule for the type of information passed. One experiences this periodic flow of information directly as an incoming flow of mano-vedanā, an 'on-going flow' of dhamma, which seems to overtake and sometimes dominate one's attention without clear direction. The English term for this is 'day-dreaming'. Sometimes these dhammas seem to clamor for attention. The Mandupindika Sutta uses the term Papañcasaññā-sankhā to refer to this continual flow of dhammas to the extent of causing conflict. If some purposeful direction exists to the flow, the English term used is 'thinking'.

This implies that one mano-viAAāna activity is the instigation of creative endeavor in the citta; as mano-indriya controls the flow of these dhammas, it relates them in odd ways depending upon how they are received, and fashions new dhamma, then sends these results back to storage for future use by saāhā, samkhāra, and mano-viāhāna.

Third, mano-indriya can explicitly direct mano-viññāna and other viññāna processing of the senses. It can initiate the flow of manovedanā and of dhamma, prevent the sending of dhamma, or request mano-viññāna to prefilter the dhamma before sending them. It may, for example, request only certain types of dhamma (let's call them 'messages') having to do with sounds, or having to do with walking actions.

So, in walking meditation what happens is this: mano-indriva requests no interruptions with messages from mano-vififiana processing, except those having to do with the four parts of the walking movement. It then issues a command for the foot to move a short distance. The activity of the body required for this short movement is already preprogrammed (sankhata), so there is no problem in carrying out the request. However, mano-vififiana processing is so rapid that the creative process begins anew while the foot carries out the instructions. If sati is not well developed, the request for no interruptions is not obeyed, and *dhammas* are again injected into mano-indriya. Without persistent control, mano-indriya loses track of the moving foot and the foot continues along its preappointed path while the mano-indriya remains so preoccupied. It is one purpose of vipassanā meditation to recognize this interruption and to bring the mano-indriya back to its focus, the foot. Sati refers to the faculty of control which is improved by this recognition.

It appears to be the case that preprogrammed instructions are exercised by mano-viñhāna processing until deflected by direct request of the mano-indriya.

#### SATI

With this teaching on the structure of the citta, Buddha prepared the foundation for his teachings concerning the nature of mental suffering and of the path toward ending that suffering. These citta processes, he says, form the whole world as we know it:

The [*āyatanas*] are transitory by nature . . . the [various vififiānas] are transitory . . . [so is] mano-vififiāna . . . whatsoever pleasure or pain or neutrol experience which arises . . . all are transitory by nature. What is thus transitory is called 'the world'.<sup>20</sup>

He says that one must investigate so that the viññāna is not confused.

Monks, a monk should investigate so that, as he investigates, his viññāna . . . may be undistracted, not confused . . . for him who is thus undisturbed by grasping there is in the future no . . . anguish.<sup>21</sup>

Buddha's point is that the results of the citta processes may or may not be an accurate representation of the external object. Indeed none of the vedanās carries an accurate representation of the external object unless the sensory-indriyas and the sensory-viñfānas have been developed, through, for example, the *patthānas* (the practices) of *sati*. Grasping after these *vedanās*, or being repulsed by them, as if they represented the external object accurately, would be tantamount to living in fantasy. The result of such graspings and repulsions is suffering.

It is the business of *sati* (and the other four *indriyas*) to develop the *citta* processes so that this does not occur. With their development, one has complete and correct knowledge (*abhiñħā* and *pariħħā*), not only of external objects, but also of the sources of one's attachment to, or repugnance for, those objects. One also has the knowledge that suffering, which arises from these attachments and repugnances, can cease and that the eightfold path is the method for doing this. This is the core of Buddhist teaching.

#### CONCLUSIONS

We have presented a model of the structure of the mind as we believe it appears in the Pali suttas and have explained some important points concerning sati. Several Pali terms were given clearer connotations, and several details concerning their interaction were suggested based on the model. The English term traditionally used to translate sati, 'mindfulness', is not completely accurate, because sati is an indriya, not a state. It is noted that the text implies processes of the organism, not places in the organism where activities occur as the English translations tend to do. Finally, some aspects of vipassanā meditation were described using the model.

It is interesting to report that the model has similarities to modern computer architecture. Just how far the analogy may be taken has yet to be studied.

#### FOOTNOTES:

1. Majjhima Nikāya, (The Collection of the Middle-Length Sayings) trans. I.B. Horner for the Pali Text Society, vol. 1-3 (London: Luzac and Company, 1954-59). See Majjhima 55.

2. Samyutta Nikāya, (The Book of the Kindred Sayings), vol. 1 trans. Mrs. Rhys Davids and vol. 2-5 trans. F.H. Woodward for the Pali Text Society. (London: Luzac and Company, 1950-80). See Samyutta v. 229 and 230; we shall have more to say about the word indriya later. The other four indriyas are saddhā (confidence), viriya (effort), samādhi (concentration), and paħħā (full and complete wisdom).

3. Sometimes sati is translated 'awareness' or 'introspective awareness'.

4. Also see Nyanaponika Thera, The Heart of Buddhist Meditation (London: Rider and Company, 1962), p. 9.

5. Ibid.

6. The tanslation is by Soma Thera, *The Way of Mindfulness* (Kandy, Sri Lanka: The Buddhist Publication Society, 1975), p. 16.

7. Majjhima I. 294-295, III. 137 in the Pali Text Society's work, III. 148 281, III. 287 and Samyutta v. 217. When the Buddha taught, he answered question which were asked by the people present before him, and he spoke with words and stories which they understood. As with all great teachers, there is reason to believe that he spoke according to the capacity of those listening to understand. One finds that one teaching which is presented sketchily in one place in the canon can be found in another place in greater detail.

8. Majjhima III. 281.

9. Majjhima III. 298-299 and Samyutta v. 205.

10. Contrary to footnote l, p. 346 of the Pali Text translation of *Majjhima* III 298-299.

11. p. 192 and p. 355, respectively, of the

Pali Text Society's translation.

12. Samyutta iii. 87; this translation is from the Pali Text Society's work as are the first translations in each of the next paragraphs.

13. From the same text in the canon, but translated by Dickwela Piyananda. *The Concept of Mind in Early Buddhism*. A dissertation. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, 1974), p. 89.

- 14. Also see Piyananda, p. 93.
- 15. As Piyananda notes, p. 97.
- 16. Piyananda, p. 104.
- 17. Piyananda, p. 105.
- 18. See Samyutta iv. 52, 86-87 and Maj-

*jhima* I. 260-261; "Even so, Bikkhus, of what I have known I have told you only a little, what I have not told you is very much more. And why have I not told you [those things]? Because that is not useful . . . not leading to *nibbāna*." Samyutta v. 437 quoted from Sri Rahula Walpola. What the Buddha Taught (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1959), p. 12.

19. See "Sensory Reception", Macropaedia, Vol. 27 (London: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1987), p. 114-221 and Boyd Gibbons, "The Intimate Sense of Smell", National Geographic, 170, no. 3. (Sept. 1986), p. 324 for straightforward descriptions of the processes involved.

20. Samyutta iv. 53.

21. Majjhima III. 223-225.