294.3 AMA.

The Direct Path an Exploration of the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta

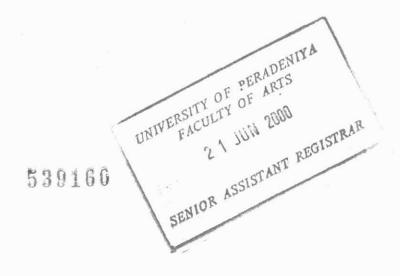
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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

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2) Thesis Abstract

"The direct path - an exploration of the Satipatthāna Sutta" submitted by ven Anālayo (T.P. Steffens) to the Department of Pāli and Buddhist Studies Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya for a degree of Doctor of philosophy

The present paper proposes an exploration of the $Satipatth\bar{a}na$ Sutta within its early Buddhist canonical and philosophical context. Foremost in this exploration is the understanding to be gained by evaluating each passage from the $Satipatth\bar{a}na$ Sutta in the light of relevant discourses recorded elsewhere in the Suttapitaka of the $P\bar{a}li$ canon. At the same time, whenever opportune, certain key terms are further explored within their historical context and in the light of early Buddhist philosophy as described by a variety of academic articles and monographies. In addition to this, selected material from the Abhidhamma and the commentarial traditions has been considered, together with the practical approaches to $satipatth\bar{a}na$ described by a variety of modern-day meditation teachers.

The first half of this thesis examines general aspects of $satipatth\bar{a}na$ contemplation. This is followed by an exploration of the individual $satipatth\bar{a}na$ meditations. In addition to investigating key terms and the various meditations of the discourse itself, the following issues are discussed in this thesis: comparison of the $P\bar{a}li$ discourse with Sanskrit and Chinese versions; significance of the term ' $Nibb\bar{a}na$ '; role of effort; early Buddhist approach to knowledge; role of $sam\bar{a}dhi$ in relation to the development of insight; $paticcasamupp\bar{a}da$; early Buddhist analysis of ditthi; importance of joy for meditation; theory of karma; $anatt\bar{a}$; early Buddhist analysis of the perceptual process; gradual and sudden as-

pects of realisation. In the conclusion central aspects of $satipatth\bar{a}na$ are set into the general context of the $P\bar{a}li$ canon. The research outlook examines some features of the commentarial exeges and of the Zen traditions, in the hope of stimulating further research.