

## 7 *Iddhividhā*

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After the *manomayakāya*, the *iddhividhā* is probably the second most controversial category among the extraordinary capacities. Just as the term ‘*manomaya*’, the term ‘*iddhi*’ is quite problematic and, therefore, after the introduction of the canonical pericope (§ 7.1), the reasons to adopt the compound *iddhividhā* and translate it as ‘a variety of psychophysical power’ will be discussed (§ 7.2). Unlike the *manomayakāya*, for the *iddhividhā* I have not found a corresponding meaningful term in the Vedic texts to systematically search for and analyse. However, this does not mean that there are no linguistic similarities at all. By way of example and suggestion for future studies, the first *iddhi* concerns the multiplication of the body, a performance that is described by the phrasing *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti* (D I 78) “having been one, he becomes many” and, similarly, cosmogonic myths in the Upaniṣads deal with a primordial being that multiplies itself: *bahu syāṃ prajāyeyeti* (CU 6.2.3). This linguistic similarity is even more striking if we compare the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* with the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*.<sup>1</sup> When we consider the sequence of the stages in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*’s Buddhist path of liberation, we may note that after the creation of the *manomayakāya* the practitioner attains the ability to perform psychophysical feats: the so called *iddhis*. The first among these powers is the capability to multiply the physical body. Similarly, we can note that the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, after the presentation of the five levels of inner embodiments (among which there is a *manomaya-ātman*), reports a significant passage:

**1** A wider comparison between Buddhism and *Taittirīyopaniṣad* has been presented in De Notariis forthcoming-b, which also includes the analysis of the common narrative pattern incorporated in the present book (and which will be exhibited shortly). Further observations on the relevance of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* for the study of Buddhism were made in De Notariis 2025, 56-9.



He desired: “Let me be many! Let me get progeny!” So, he developed ascetic fervour, and once developed, he emanated everything.<sup>2</sup>

In the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, we thus find the same narratological pattern: after a kind of shifting from denser levels to subtler ones, the practitioner can multiply himself. In Buddhism, the levels of embodiments are simplified, there are only two: the coarse physical body and the subtler body made of mind. Notably, the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* reports the Sanskrit expression *bahu syām*, which resembles in its structure and meaning the Pāli *bahudhā hoti*. Therefore, we may wonder whether it is really by chance that the first power in the Buddhist canonical list of *iddhis* is the multiplication of the body.<sup>3</sup>

Another linguistic similarity concerns the *iddhi* of becoming manifested or concealed, which is conveyed by the phrasing *āvibhāvaṃ tirobhāvaṃ* (D I 78), a couple of terms echoed by the Upaniṣadic *ātmata āvirbhāvatirobhāvau* (CU 7.26.1).

In the present chapter, the Vedic texts have been used to examine the speculative idea sustained by some scholars that would see the body made of mind (*manomayakāya*) as the base of and tool with which to perform *iddhis* and *abhiññās* (§ 7.3). This is a means of investigating the interconnections among the extraordinary capacities. Finally, the exegetical accounts concerning the *iddhividhā* will be analysed (§ 7.4), treating each power individually. The study of the first *iddhi* will involve the Cūḷapanthaka’s story (§ 7.4.4.2), which provides the opportunity to inquire into possible connections between the power of the multiplication of the body and the *manomayakāya*. Generally speaking, the diachronic study from the canon to the commentaries of the *iddhividhā* will be predominantly focused on the analysis of the method to perform these powers. Therefore, we shall start with the canonical pericope that introduces our object of study.

## 7.1 Pericope (Basic Formula + Simile)

The performance of the *iddhividhā* is the fifteenth of the twenty elements of the path of liberation in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, according to our classification (see Chapter 2). The pericope runs as follows:

### Basic formula

When the mind is concentrated in this way, purified, cleaned, unblemished, deprived of impurities, malleable, fit for work, steadfast, having attained impassibility, he directs and turns the mind to the variety of *iddhis*. He experiences a variety of *iddhis* in many ways: having been one he becomes many, having been many he becomes one, he becomes manifested, he becomes concealed, he goes beyond walls, ramparts, mountains not sticking to them just as he were in the ether, he sinks into and emerges from earth just as he were in the water, he walks on the water without sinking in it just as he were on the earth, he goes cross-legged through the ether just as he were a winged bird, he touches and strokes with the

2 so *’kāmayata | bahu syām prajāyeyeti | sa tapo ’tapyata | sa tapastaptvā | idaṃ sarvamasṛjata* (TU 2.6.1; see also TU 3.4.1).

3 A possible connection between the *manomayakāya* and the first *iddhi* was also suggested by Gombrich (1974, 228), without mentioning the Upaniṣadic evidence.

hand the sun and the moon which have so great power and splendour, he exercises bodily power as far as the Brahmā world.<sup>4</sup>

### Simile

Just as, O great king, an adroit potter or a potter apprentice would make and produce with well-prepared clay precisely the earthenware product that he wanted. Just as, O great king, an adroit ivory worker or an ivory worker apprentice would make and produce with well-prepared ivory precisely the ivory product that he wanted. Just as, O great king, an adroit goldsmith or a goldsmith apprentice would make and produce with well-prepared gold precisely the golden product that he wanted.<sup>5</sup>

As it might be noted, I left the term *iddhi* untranslated. The reason lies in the controversial nature of this Pāli term, to which no English term perfectly corresponds (see PED s.v. “iddhi”). Therefore, the next section will serve as a reconsideration of the issue of translating *iddhi*, in an attempt to find a satisfying solution.

## 7.2 The Terminology Reconsidered

Among the various Indian terms used to denote extraordinary capacities achieved through meditation or yogic practice, the Buddhist term ‘*iddhi*’ in Pāli language (Sanskrit: *ṛddhi*) is particularly interesting.<sup>6</sup> In fact, this term is often connected with other kinds of achievements which are not extraordinary or miraculous in our sense of the term. King Mahāsudassana, for instance, was endowed with four *iddhis*: beauty, long life, good health, and he was beloved by brāhmaṇas and householders (D II 177-8). The young

<sup>4</sup> so evaṃ samāhite citte parisuddhe pariyodāte anaṅgaṇe vigatūpakkilese mudu-bhūte kammaniye ṭhite ānejjapatte iddhi-vidhāya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti. so aneka-vihitaṃ iddhi-vidhaṃ paccanubhoti - eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti, āvibhavaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ tiro-kuḍḍaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ asajjamāno gacchati seyyathā pi ākāse, paṭhaviyā pi ummujjanimmujjaṃ karoti seyyathā pi udake, udake pi abhijjamāno gacchati seyyathā pi paṭhaviyaṃ, ākāse pi pallānkena kamati seyyathā pi pakkhī sakuṇo, ime pi candima-suriye evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve pāṇinā parimasati parimajjati, yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena va saṃvatteti [vasaṃ vatteti] (D I 78). Anālayo (2016, 15, n. 16) prefers the alternative way of breaking words *vasaṃ vatteti* in place of *va saṃvatteti* in the last phrase. The first should be preferred because: (1) it is supported by the Sanskrit parallel (*vasē vartayati*; SBhV II 246); (2) this is clearly how the commentaries read the passage (Vism 401); (3) it makes better sense syntactically.

<sup>5</sup> seyyathā pi mahā-rāja dakkho kumbha-kāro vā kumbhakārantevāsī vā suparikammakatāya mattikāya yaṃ yad eva bhājana-vikatiṃ ākaṅkheyya taṃ tad eva kareyya abhinippādeyya. seyyathā pi pana mahā-rāja dakkho danta-kāro vā dantakārantevāsī vā suparikammakatasmim dantasmim yaṃ yad eva danta-vikatiṃ ākaṅkheyya taṃ tad eva kareyya abhinippādeyya - seyyathā pi pana mahā-rāja dakkho suvaṇṇa-kāro vā suvaṇṇakārantevāsī vā suparikammakatasmim suvaṇṇasmim yaṃ yad eva suvaṇṇavikatiṃ ākaṅkheyya taṃ tad eva kareyya abhinippādeyya (D I 78).

<sup>6</sup> Jacobsen (2012, 2-3) provides a list of some Sanskrit terms used in India to indicate extraordinary powers. In the *Yogasūtra*, words such as *jñāna*, *aśvarya*, *siddhi* are used, as well as *vibhūti*; in *haṭhayoga* the word *guṇa* is often used; in some Tantric Śaiva texts appears *guṇāśṭaka*; in Buddhism, in addition to *ṛddhi/iddhi*, we find that *abhijñā* (Pāli: *abhiññā*), *adhiṣṭhāna* (Pāli: *adhiṭṭhāna*), and *vikurvaṇa* (Pāli: *vikubbana*) are frequently used; in Digambara Jainism *ṛddhi* is common; whereas Svetāmbara Jainism prefers *labdhi*. In this regard, there is a small clarification to be made: Jacobsen wrote in his exposition that “[i]n Mahāyāna Buddhism *iddhi/ṛddhi* is often replaced by *adhiṣṭhāna* and *vikurvaṇa*” (2012, 3), however I should specify that the equivalent Pāli terms *adhiṭṭhāna* and *vikubbana* are also commonly used in Pāli texts, at least from the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* onwards.

Gotama, during his life as a prince, was endowed with some materialistic *iddhis*: a beautiful garden with lotus ponds, pleasant garments, different houses for different seasons, and good food (A I 145). *Iddhi* is also the craft of a hunter (M I 151-2) and the ability of the hunted animal to escape (M I 155). The ability of geese to fly is also called *iddhi* (Dhp 175). This term could also mean a sort of richness since its opposite (*aniddhi*) means 'poor', 'poverty' (DOP s.v. "iddhi").<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that although *iddhi* is a term used to refer to extraordinary capacities, it has an incredibly broad range of applications. So, it is not surprising that there are many kinds of translations, each of which stresses a different aspect of the term. According to the etymology, the root  $\sqrt{rdh}$ , from which the cognate Sanskrit term *ṛddhi* derives, means 'to grow, increase, prosper, succeed'.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it is common to find *iddhi* translated as 'accomplishment' and 'success' (e.g. Gombrich 1997, 176; Gethin 2011, 221), or it is remarkable the eclectic 'wondrous gifts' by Rhys Davids (1899, 88). These translations could be applied when the term is referring to the extraordinary capacities achieved through meditation and the translator wants to remain close to the etymological root of the term. Other translation attempts try to contextualise the term a little more when it occurs in passages involving extraordinary performances. The result consists of expressions such as 'psychic powers' (PED s.v. "iddhi"), 'supernatural accomplishment' (DOP s.v. "iddhi"), and 'superhuman quality or characteristic' (Fiordalis [2010] 2011, 386, n. 13). So, it seems that there are two different kinds of possible translations: 1) the etymological translation, which tries to convey as many meanings as possible at the same time; and 2) the contextualising translation, which primarily stresses the context in which the term appears. However, there might be a solution to avoid the situation in which the translator has to take an arbitrary decision. This solution is not applicable to all occurrences of the term *iddhi*, but only to the passages in which it introduces the basic formula describing some varieties of extraordinary abilities. A person who develops these abilities is able to multiply his physical form or return to a single unit, can become invisible or visible, can pass through physical obstacles, can dive in the earth and walk on the water, can fly through the air, can touch the moon and sun and, lastly, can exercise bodily power as far as the Brahmā world (e.g. D I 77-8). This basic formula is not introduced by the term *iddhi*, but rather by the compound *iddhividhā* (e.g. *so aneka-vihitaṃ iddhi-vidhaṃ paccaṇubhoti*; D I 78). So, checking all occurrences of the compound *iddhividhā* within the *Tipiṭaka*, it is possible to state that in almost 100% of the cases this compound is in connection with the basic formula describing the extraordinary capacities.<sup>9</sup> This might solve in part the ambiguity due

<sup>7</sup> Various applications of the term *iddhi* in different contexts are also mentioned by Rhys Davids (1899, 88, n. 4); Fiordalis (2008, 123-4); French (1977, 43-4); Gethin (2011, 221). See also the s.v. "iddhi" in PED; DOP; and CPD.

<sup>8</sup> SED s.v. " $\sqrt{rdh}$ ".

<sup>9</sup> *Iddhividh\** in the *Tipiṭaka*:

1. *iddhividhaṃ*: D I 78 (D 2; abbreviated in D 3-8, 10-12); D I 212-13; D II 213; D III 112; D III 281; M I 34; M I 69; M I 494; M II 18; M III 11; M III 98; S II 121; S II 126; S II 212; S V 264; S V 267; S V 271; S V 274-5; S V 276; S V 280; S V 282; S V 283-4; S V 286 (*paṭhamānanda*); S V 286 (*dutiyānanda*); S V 287 (*paṭhamabhikkhū*); S V 287 (*dutiyabhikkhū*); S V 288; S V 289; S V 303; A I 170-2; A I 255; A I 258; A III 17; A III 28; A III 82; A III 280; A III 425-6; A IV 421; A V 199; Paṭis I 111; Paṭis II 207; Paṭis II 227; Mil 359;
2. *iddhividhaññaṃ*: Tikap II 166;

to the action of translating. Therefore, unlike the term *iddhi*, the compound *iddhividhā* does not have a wide range of applications because it is used in only one context. This context concerns the extraordinary capacities and so a ‘contextualising translation’ could be applied to *iddhividhā*, which, however, does in this case include all possible meanings and applications of the term (namely only one). Obviously, there is still a certain degree of arbitrariness in translating the compound since it contains the term *iddhi*, but at any rate it has a univocal context. The translation itself is an enterprise that conveys a certain degree of arbitrariness and it often constrains the translator to make a choice within a range of possible translations. One possible option is to translate *iddhividhā* as ‘a variety (*vidhā*) of psychophysical powers (*iddhi*)’. I like this translation because the reference to the psychic component highlights the fact that this is an action made through the mind: “when the mind is concentrated in this way [...] he directs and turns the mind to the variety of psychophysical powers” (*so evaṃ samāhite citte [...] iddhi-vidhāya cittaṃ abhinīharati abhininnāmeti*; D I 77-8, see also below at § 9.2). I also think that the word ‘power’ is particularly appropriate, considering it as the ability to do something or to act in a particular way.<sup>10</sup> The psychic component is involved in the *abhiññās* as well, since they are likewise performed through the mind, whereas the word power is definitely more appropriate for *iddhis*, since, as it will be shown, for the *abhiññās* it may seem reasonable to highlight the cognitive characteristic. Therefore, one of the most peculiar characteristics of the *iddhividhā* conceived as meditation attainments is that the emphasis is on the physical performance and experiential factors. *Iddhis*, in this context, are something that one can experience: *paccanubhoti* (D I 78). Another peculiarity concerns the fact that the power which is a product of the mental activity involves a body (*kāya*); this fact might justify the adjective “psychophysical”. The word *kāya* occurs in the last phrase of the stock passage, which was handed down in two variants (although the first seems likely to be an editorial misreading by the editor):

1. *yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena va saṃvatteti* “he goes even with the body as far as the Brahmā world”;
2. *yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena vasaṃ vatteti* “he exercises bodily power as far as the Brahmā world”.

3. *iddhividhañāssa*: Dukap 10; Dukap 42; Dukap 43; Dukap 62; Dukap 75; Dukap 76; Dukap 96; Dukap 97; Dukap 112; Dukap 127; Dukap 140; Dukap 159; Dukap 182; Dukap 210; Dukap 226; Dukap 251; Dukap 270; Dukap 296; Dukap 329; Dukap 343; Tikap II 154; Tikap II 156; Tikap II 157; Tikap II 165; Tikap II 166;
4. *iddhividhañāya*: Paṭis I 111;
5. *iddhividhā*: Nett 149;
6. *iddhividhāya*: D I 77-8 (D 2; abbreviated in D 3-8, 10-12);
7. *iddhividhāyo*: alternative reading at D III 112 (note 1) in place of *iddhiyo*;
8. *iddhividhāsu*: D III 112-13;
9. *iddhividhe*: Paṭis I 2; Paṭis I 111; Vibh 334.

**10** Fiordalis, for instance, prefers the translation ‘superhuman power’ since the term *iddhi* is sometimes glossed with *uttarimanussa-dhamma* (2008, 122; [2010] 2011, 386, n. 13), he also wrote his reasons against the translation ‘psychic power’ (2008, 123), which I have already discussed in De Notariis 2019a, 238. Regarding *uttarimanussa-dhamma*, which, according to Fiordalis, “can be translated more literally as a superhuman quality or characteristic” ([2010] 2011, 386, n. 13), I would suggest that a more literal translation could be ‘things/qualities which are beyond [the average reach of] human beings’. In fact, since these acts are performed by human beings, they are not, strictly speaking, out of the reach of all human beings, but just of most of them.

The first variant would seem, at first, to involve the body only with regard to the performance of going up to the Brahmā world. However, the other performances that precede this last one can certainly involve, somehow, the body: a monk can multiply his body or reduce it to a single unit, can become visible or invisible, can overpass physical obstacles, can walk on water or sink into the earth, he can fly, or he can touch the sun and the moon. The second variant seems to summarise the whole stock passage, highlighting that the corporeal power can reach the Brahmā world, implying that the whole stock passage is dealing with a bodily power. It is worth noting that from the stock passage is not clear if the body (*kāya*) is only the physical one or if it might be mental (*manomaya*). As the *Samyuttanikāya* would remind us, the Buddha was able to go to the Brahmā world with both the physical body (*cātumahābhūtikena kāyena*, lit. the body composed of the four great elements) and the body made of mind (*manomayena kāyena*).<sup>11</sup> The *Vibhaṅga* provides some synonyms for *iddhi* which clearly indicate the connection of *iddhi* with the field of corporeal experience, such as ‘*phusanā*’ and ‘*sacchikiriyā*’.<sup>12</sup> The word *phusanā* is connected with the verb *phusati* ‘to touch’ (PED s.v. “*phusanā*”), and the word *sacchikiriyā* with the verb *sacchikaroti*, which means ‘to experience’ in the sense of ‘to see with one’s eyes’ (PED s.v. “*sacchikaroti*”). The record provided by the \**Vimuttimaggā* corroborates the hypothesis that would see a preeminent corporeal dimension involved in the concept of *iddhi*. In fact, when in the \**Vimuttimaggā* the five *abhiññās* (wǔ shéntōng 五神通) are listed, the *iddhis* are called *shéntōng* 身通 which can be literally translated as the ‘power (通) of the body (身)’ or the ‘physical (身) power (通)’ (T1648.32.0441a27).

In this regard, translations such as ‘psycho-kinetic activity’ adopted by Jayatilleke (1963, 422), or ‘psychokinesis’ by Kalupahana (1975, 104), seem to comply, to some extent, with my reading but I think they are a little misleading. The word ‘kinetic’ indicates a kind of movement (most likely a physical one) which is in agreement with some North Indian Buddhist sources offering some classifications of *iddhi/ṛddhi* which stress the act of moving. The \**Mahāvibhāṣā* reports that “there are three kinds of spiritual activity (神用): 1) transportation of the body (運身); 2) resolve (勝解); 3) speed of mind (意勢)”.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, with its commentary (*bhāṣya*), the *Abhidharmakośa* subdivides (Abhidh-k-bh 424-5) the *ṛddhis* into two categories one of which concerns the movement (*gamaṇa*) and the other the act of creating (*nirmāṇa*). The first category involves a threefold way of displacement (*gatistridhā*) which consists of the classification of *ṛddhis* provided by the \**Mahāvibhāṣā*, namely: 1) transportation of the body (*śarīravāhini*); 2) resolve (*ādhimokṣikī*); 3) speed of mind (*manojavā*).<sup>14</sup> These sources testify that the act of moving is quite a widespread action, but is unable to cover the whole range of power that the word *iddhi/ṛddhi* encompasses. Even in the story of Cūḷapanthaka we find an example of an *iddhi* power that does not involve, specifically, a

11 *abhiññāti nu kho bhante Bhagavā iddhiyā manomayena kāyena Brahmālokaṃ upasaṅkamitā* [...] *abhiññāti kho pana bhante Bhagavā iminā cātumahābhūtikena kāyena iddhiyā Brahmālokaṃ upasaṅkamitā* (S V 282).

12 The full passage is *iddhī ti: yā tesam dhammānaṃ iddhi samiddhi ijghanā samijghanā lābho paṭilābho patti sampatti phusanā sacchikiriyā upasampadā* (Vibh 217).

13 復有三種神用：一運身，二勝解，三意勢。(T1545.27.0725b23-24).

14 For a discussion on these sources, see Fiordalis 2008, 129-32.

movement: “when a clean bit of rag was created through the psychic power (*iddhi*) [...]”.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, a translation such as ‘psychophysical power’ for *iddhi* in the context of the Buddhist path of liberation in which the practitioner attains some meditational powers can be of some convenience. It is descriptive enough of the kinds of performance involved, but at the same time, it somehow remains a generic category. ‘Psychophysical’ can indicate both the human mind (psycho-) and body (-physical), meaning the individual and microcosmic dimensions of being in the world and, simultaneously, suggests orders of reality. ‘Physical’ can refer to the body but can also indicate the tangible and material reality. Similarly, we may argue that there is a dimension of being which is purely mental. Correspondences between microcosm and macrocosm have been often highlighted in the field of Buddhist studies,<sup>16</sup> and what is attained at the individual meditative level can have a cosmological rebound. The *manomayakāya* is, indeed, a body created through a mind (*citta*) purified by the meditative practice and also the way of existence of some beings in certain cosmological realms, such as the gods known as the Radiant ones (*ābhassara*) in the cosmological world of form (*rūpadhātu*), which corresponds, on a psychological level, to the four *jhānas* belonging to the so-called form-sphere (*rūpāvacara*).<sup>17</sup> Therefore the term ‘psychophysical’ can be understood as referring to the individual mind and body involved in such practices and, simultaneously, the mental and physical dimensions in which such performances can occur.

Hence, having shed some light on the meaning and translation of *iddhi/iddhividhā* in the context of this study, we will explore how the use of the Vedic texts will help us to gain some valuable insight into a scholarly issue.

### 7.3 The Vedic Background with Particular Reference to the Upaniṣadic Context

The *iddhis*<sup>18</sup> are marvellous performances made through the power of a mind trained in meditation.<sup>19</sup> Since in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* the performance of *iddhis* is preceded by the creation of the body made of mind (*manomayakāya*), some scholars argue that the performance of extraordinary capacities is realised through this mental body.<sup>20</sup> However, the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* does not explicitly state it, and this assumption seems to be based on the fact that the body made of mind is created before attainment of the ability to

<sup>15</sup> *iddhiyā abhisañkhatam parisuddham pilotikakhaṇḍam* (Paṭis-a II 658).

<sup>16</sup> In this regard, see the often-quoted work of Gethin (1997).

<sup>17</sup> See De Notariis 2019b, 66-70. We can also consider a passage in the *Majjhimanikāya* (already quoted at § 6.3.1.3), which clearly states that “gods which have a form are mind-made” (*devā rūpino manomayā*; M I 410) and its commentary which specifies that “mind-made means made through the mind in meditative absorption” (*manomayā ti jhānacittamayā*; Ps III 122).

<sup>18</sup> This paragraph is mainly based on part of my previous article, see De Notariis 2019a, 240-5.

<sup>19</sup> This will be more thoroughly discussed later in § 9.2.

<sup>20</sup> This opinion is supported by Swearer (1973, 449); Harvey (1993, 36); Hamilton (1996, 162-3); Radich (2007, 257); Clough ([2010] 2011, 417); Lee (2014, 67); Buswell, Lopez (2014, 528) Anālayo (2016, 16).

perform *iddhis*.<sup>21</sup> This argument, however, could be subject to the logical fallacy named *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, namely the assumption that what happens before is the cause of what follows after. As a matter of fact, the temporal connection does not necessarily imply a causal one. However, it should be noted that on the one hand, many steps of the path of liberation in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* seem to be connected with each other, such as the elimination of the five hindrances (*pañca-nīvaraṇa*) which seems to lead to the attainment of the first level of meditative absorption (*paṭhamajjhāna*) (D I 73). Yet, on the other hand, some steps are not directly influenced *prima facie* by each other, such as the knowledge by comprehension of the minds [of others] (*cetopariyañāṇa*) which is not attained thanks to the previous one, the element of the divine ear (*dibbasotadhātu*).<sup>22</sup> Obviously, the *iddhis* and the other *abhiññās* could be considered in a very scholastic and synchronic way as only one step, the *chālabhiññā*, but this interpretation would not take into account the fact that this classification might have not yet been developed when this passage was composed, since the word ‘*abhiññā*’ does not even appear within this *sutta* with this kind of meaning.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, there is a paradox, namely that later texts regard the creation of the mind-made body as an *iddhi* (e.g. Paṭis II 205 and Vism 378), and not a requisite to perform *iddhis*. In conclusion, it is likely that there is reasonable doubt as to whether the extraordinary capacities are performed through the body made of mind since it is not clearly stated what its function is.<sup>24</sup>

**21** This is the argumentation, for instance, of Radich (2007, 257) and partly of Anālayo (2016, 16), although the latter presents it as a possibility (as he restated in Anālayo 2021b. Cf. my rejoinder in De Notariis 2021).

**22** However, later in Chapter 9, I will highlight a possible connection of the stages from a narrative point of view which involves a crescendo.

**23** All these attainments are listed in a section that could be a “coherent and separate work, which occurs in many other sutras both in the Pali and non-Pali traditions” (MacQueen 1988, 179). The term ‘*abhiññā*’ occurs in the phrasing *sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedeti* (D I 62), but here it is just a short form of the absolute *abhiññāya* (from the verb *abhijjānāti*). Finally, I should specify that I do not rule out the possibility that the stages – or at least some of them – in the path of liberation are connected to each other (see below Chapter 9), but I think that more nuanced interpretations should be considered as well. In fact, even other stages such as the practice of the monk to be mindful and fully aware in all his activities (*sati-sampajañña*; D I 70-1) and the fact that the monk becomes content with his frugal life (*santutṭha*; D I 71) are not strongly linked to each other. Another instance is when the monk finds a secluded dwelling (*vivittam senāsanaṃ bhajati*; D I 71), he does this endowed with (*samannāgata*) many factors earlier developed, not just the previous one. These examples highlight that it is too simplistic to assume that a stage is developed only on the basis of the previous one.

**24** This is also evident from the way in which scholars have asserted that the *iddhis* are performed by means of the body made of mind. I will consider by way of example three recent works. Hamilton wrote that: “though it is not explicitly stated in the text, it would appear that it is the mind-made body which is subsequently directed by the mind to perform the *iddhis*, use its divine hearing and seeing, have insight into the minds of others, and recall former existences, and ultimately eradicate the *āsavas*” (1996, 162-3). The fact that this statement is not certain is due to the modal verb ‘would’, which implies that Hamilton considered it a possibility and not a certainty. Radich wrote that “[n]ow, I suggest that, though the text never explicitly says so, there is a clear implication here that the sequence we have just rehearsed is a sequence of *necessary prerequisites* for the elaboration of each successive step on the path [...] it is only on the basis of this thorough and clear-sighted disillusionment with the fleshy body that it is possible to elaborate the *manomayakāya*; it is only on the basis of the elaboration of the *manomayakāya* that it is possible to attain the superpowers” (2007, 257). As previously stated, this argument could be affected by the logical fallacy named *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Lee wrote, concerning the body made of mind, that “[t]his special body has the ability to perform many supranormal activities” (2014, 67), without providing any reference or justification for this statement. In brief, it seems that there was a deficiency in past academic research on this topic.

A solution to this problem may require further attention and consideration of the Vedic texts, whose descriptions of extraordinary capacities are likely earlier than Buddhist ones. A very interesting example is found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* in a passage that deals with a self (*ātman*) which is “the person made of consciousness (*vijñānamaya*) among the breaths, the brightness inside the heart” (*vijñānamayaḥ prāṇesu hr̥dy antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ*; BU 4.3.7). This self is able to move in the intermediate world, which is an oneiric state that connects this world with the other world:

He, being common to both worlds, moves across them, just so he contemplates them, just so he oscillates [among] them. Thus, having fallen asleep, he goes beyond this world, these forms of death.<sup>25</sup>

The oneiric state is the intermediate state between this world and the other:

For this or that person there are indeed two states: this [world] and the state of the other world. The state of dream is the third and it is the junction point. Staying in this rendezvous point, he looks at both states: this [world] and the state of the other world.<sup>26</sup>

In this dreamlike state, this person made of consciousness displays the creative power of the mind<sup>27</sup> and so is able to manipulate matter to create objects and parts of the landscape:

When he falls asleep, having taken away the matter of this entire world, having taken apart from his own, having created by his own, he dreams with his own splendour, with his own light. Then this person becomes his own light. In that place there are no chariots, there are not what is yoked to chariots (i.e. horses), there are no roads. Then he emits chariots, what is yoked to chariots, and roads. In that place there is no happiness, delight, gladness. Then he emits happiness, delight, gladness. In that place there are no ponds, tanks, and rivers. Then he emits ponds, tanks, and rivers. Hence, he is the creator.<sup>28</sup>

This passage is also quoted by Sue Hamilton, who seems to suggest that, all in all, *vijñānamaya* and *manomaya* could be synonyms to indicate the subtle body (*liṅgaśarīra*) in the early Upaniṣads.<sup>29</sup> However, it seems that she has

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**25** *sa samānaḥ sann ubhau lokāv anusaṃcarati dhyāyatīva lelāyatīva | sa hi svapno bhūtveṃaṃ lokam atikrāmati mṛtyo rūpāṇi* (BU 4.3.7).

**26** *tasya vā etasya puruṣasya dve eva sthāne bhavata idaṃ ca paralokasthānaṃ ca | sandhyaṃ tṛtīyaṃ svapnasthānaṃ | tasmin sandhye sthāne tiṣṭhann ete ubhe sthāne paśyatīdaṃ ca paralokasthānaṃ ca* (BU 4.3.9).

**27** As it was pointed out by Hamilton (1996, 147).

**28** *sa yatra prasvapity asya lokasya sarvāvato mātrām apādāya svayaṃ vihatya svayaṃ nirmāya svena bhāsā svena jyotiṣā prasvapiti | atrāyaṃ puruṣaḥ svayaṃjyotir bhavati || na tatra rathā na rathayogā na panthāno bhavanti | atha rathān rathayogān pathaḥ sṛjate | na tatrānandā mudāḥ pramudo bhavanti | athānandān mudāḥ pramudaḥ sṛjate | na tatra veśāntāḥ puṣkarīnyaḥ sṛvantyo bhavanti | atha veśāntān puṣkarīṇīḥ sṛvantīḥ sṛjate | sa hi kartā* (BU 4.3.9-10).

**29** After arguing that in the Upaniṣads there is a subdivision of reality according to three modes of existences (quoting CU 6.5.1-4, see Hamilton 1996, 146), she writes, with reference to the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*'s passage: “[i]n this context, the term *manomaya* is not used to describe the intermediate level of sleep/dream, but three levels are nevertheless indicated. [...]

underestimated the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*'s account in which the *vijñānamaya* self is a level more rarefied than the *manomaya* self. In fact, in this text it appears in a list which develops from the grossest element to the most rarefied (e.g. TU 3.10.4-5). The list exhibits five kinds of self and each of them is made (-*maya*) of a different substance: food (*anna*), breath (*prāṇa*), mind (*manas*), consciousness (*vijñāna*), and bliss (*ānanda*). Hamilton (1996: 146) proposes the existence of a theory in the Upaniṣads according to which reality and human existence is divided into three modes of existence; she relies upon the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* only to reinforce her argument, since the central part of the list of the five kinds of self (*prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya*) resembles a list found in *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 4.4.5 (*vijñānamaya*, *manomaya*, *prāṇamaya*).

Moreover, it may seem that in the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*'s passage - in which the person made of consciousness is able to move in an intermediate oneiric world between this world and the other - *vijñānamaya* has a very peculiar application. What I am arguing here is that in this passage the word *vijñāna* was not used to indicate the mind by chance. In this regard, within another *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* passage concerning a dialogue between Ajātaśatru and Gārgya, the one who is able to move in the oneiric state is, indeed, a person (*puruṣa*) made of consciousness (*vijñānamaya*):

Ajātaśatru told him: "When he has fallen asleep, this person made of consciousness (*vijñānamaya*), having taken consciousness by means of consciousness of these vital functions (*prāṇa*), settles down in the empty space inside the heart. When he takes these [functions], then this person is called 'sleeping'. The vital breath is seized, seized is the speech, seized is the sight, seized is the hearing, seized is the mind (*manas*). Wherever he roams into the dream, these worlds become his own, he becomes also a great king or a great brāhmaṇa, he settles in high and low [worlds]. Just as a great king, having seized the population (*jānapada*), would roam wherever he wants in his own country (*janapada*), exactly in the same way he, having seized the vital functions (*prāṇa*), roams by himself wherever he wants in his own body".<sup>30</sup>

Once again, in this latter passage, which concerns the oneiric world, a person made of consciousness (*vijñānamaya*) is involved. One might be tempted to speculate about an equivalence between the terms used to indicate the 'mind': *citta*, *manas*, and *vijñāna*. Buddhist texts, indeed, often lack a clear distinction between these terms. In the *Samyuttanikāya* there is even a passage which states directly the equivalence of these terms: *cittaṃ iti pi mano iti pi viññānaṃ iti pi* (S II 94; quoted also in C.A.F. Rhys Davids 1914, 17). Moreover, Buddhaghosa also accords in a specific context the same meaning to these expressions used to designate the mind: *viññānaṃ, cittaṃ, mano*

In the early Upaniṣads, it is the terms *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* (and possibly dreams) which suggest the subtle self" (Hamilton 1996, 147).

**30** *sa hovācājātaśatruḥ | yatraiṣa etat supto 'bhūd ya eṣa vijñānamayaḥ puruṣas tad eṣaṃ prāṇānāṃ vijñānena vijñānam ādāya ya eṣo 'ntar hṛdaya ākāśas tasmiṅ chete | tāni yadā grhṇāty atha haitat puruṣaḥ svapiti nāma | tad grhīta eva prāno bhavati | grhītā vāk | grhītaṃ cakṣuḥ | grhītaṃ śrotam | grhītaṃ manaḥ || sa yatrāitat svapnyayā carati te hāsya lokāḥ | tad uteva mahārājo bhavaty uteva mahābrāhmaṇaḥ | utevoccāvacaṃ nigacchati | sa yathā mahārājo jānapadān grhītvā sve janapade yathākāmaṃ parivartetaivam evaiṣa etat prāṇān grhītvā sve śarīre yathākāmaṃ parivartate* (BU 2.1.17-18).

*ti atthato ekaṃ* (Vism 452). However, although these terms are sometimes synonyms, it seems that in Buddhist texts they frequently also have specific applications. In the partial investigation made by Johansson<sup>31</sup> it is shown how *citta*, *manas*, and *viññāṇa* have some attributes in common, but also differ in some aspects (Johansson 1965, 209).<sup>32</sup> For instance, in the Pāli canon the term *manas* is only used to indicate that a body (*kāya*) is made of mind: *manomaya*. Alternative options such as *\*citta/ceto-maya* and *\*viññāṇamaya* are not attested within neither the canon nor its commentaries.<sup>33</sup> This could also be the case in the examined Upaniṣadic passages, wherein the mention of a person made of consciousness (*viññānamaya*) might reveal a specific way to indicate the personification or embodiment which acts in the oneiric state. It is worth noting that this person seizes the vital functions and among them there is also the **mind (manas)**: *tad grhīta eva prāṇo bhavati | grhītā vāk | grhītaṃ cakṣuḥ | grhītaṃ śrotram | grhītaṃ manaḥ* (BU 2.1.17). Therefore, *viññāna* and *manas* should not be regarded as synonyms in this context since they carry out different functions.

So, if *viññānamaya* and *manomaya* are not perfect synonyms it would seem that to demonstrate that the extraordinary performances were really made through the body made of mind, we should find a direct reference to it. In this regard, it might be useful to quote a passage from the *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*, a text probably older than the Upaniṣads. The text states:

He should meditate on the *ātman* which is made of mind (*manomaya*), whose body is vital breath, with a luminous appearance (*bhārūpa*), with an ethereal essence, which has the form it desires, which is swift as thought, which has the desire of the truth, which supports the truth, which consists of all odours, which consists of all tastes, which extends and pervades throughout the whole regions, which is speechless, which is disinterested.<sup>34</sup>

This self made of mind exhibits mastery of physical matter, since it ‘has the form it desires’ (*kāmarūpin*), it is endowed with a super-velocity since it ‘is swift as thought’ (*manojuvas*), and also ‘extends and pervades throughout the whole region’ (*sarvā anu diśaḥ prabhūtaṃ sarvam idam abhyāptam*);

<sup>31</sup> I wrote ‘partial’ since Johansson stated that: “[a]s this is not a statistical investigation, no completeness was aimed at, but an attempt was made to include as many different contexts as possible: I aimed at semantic completeness” (1965, 166).

<sup>32</sup> It seems that although these terms correspond to different mental functions, they are also strongly connected to each other. Therefore, Swearer writes: “in the Pāli suttas the terms *citta*, *mano*, and *viññāṇa* were used either synonymously or as essentially related aspects of the same empirical consciousness” (1972, 258). Years later, a similar statement was written by Somaratne: “[i]n sum, *citta*, *manas* and *viññāṇa*, though notionally, can separately be identified on the basis of their specific mental functions, though the three are aspects of the same mind” (2005, 201). On this argument, also see Skorupski 2014, 54-5.

<sup>33</sup> It is remarkable that the term *viññānamaya* is found in late sub-commentarial literature, such as in the *purāṇaṭīkā* of the *Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā*, in which, however, it appears in a passage which is an Upaniṣadic quotation: *annamayo pāṇamayo manomaya ānandamayo viññānamayo ti pañcadhā attānaṃ vedavādino vadanti* (Sv-pt I 202). The sub-commentary refers here to the doctrine of the five kinds of *ātman* presented in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, oddly inverting *ānandamaya* and *viññānamaya*.

<sup>34</sup> *sa ātmānam upāsita manomayaṃ prāṇasarīraṃ bhārūpam ākāśātmanāṃ kāmarūpiṇaṃ manojuvasaṃ satyasaṃkalpaṃ satyadhṛtiṃ sarvagandhaṃ sarvarasaṃ sarvā anu diśaḥ prabhūtaṃ sarvam idam abhyāptam avākkam anādaraṃ* (ŚB 10.6.3.2).

basically, it is free to move wherever it wants, such as the monk who performs *iddhis* “goes beyond walls, ramparts, mountains unattached by them just as he was in the ether” (*tiro-kuḍḍaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ asaḷḷamaṇo gacchati*; D I 78).

This *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*’s passage shows an *ātman* made of mind (*manomaya*) which is endowed with extraordinary capacities, just like the person made of consciousness (*vijñānamaya*) in the oneiric state within the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*’s passage. So, it would seem that *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* could actually represent similar functions, although the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*’s account and the peculiar presence of the person made of consciousness (*vijñānamaya*) in the accounts concerning the oneiric state do not allow them to be regarded as perfect synonyms. It could be stated that at least part of the Vedic tradition would justify a connection between an *ātman* made of mind and the acquisition of capacities that are extraordinary. Therefore, the linguistic similarity of the term *manomaya* among distinct traditions reveals some shared features, though the contexts in which it occurs should always be carefully analysed in order to avoid a levelling of its function and use within different Indian traditions and different contexts within the same tradition. Now, shall we continue our analysis with the exegetical accounts on the *iddhividhā*.

#### 7.4 From the Canon to the Commentaries

Immediately after the consciousness of resolution,  
he becomes [in a certain way]  
according to the resolution  
*saha adhiṭṭhānā yathādhiṭṭhitam eva hoti*;  
(Vism 390)

This becomes just what one desires  
*yaṃ yaṃ icchati, taṃ tad eva hoti*;  
(Vism 394)

In order to better analyse the development of the *iddhividhā*, it may be useful to treat each element in the list of these various psychophysical powers separately. But, how many powers are listed? Unfortunately, it is not so easy to find an answer since the *iddhis* are not explicitly divided within the root text. Therefore, it is possible to find different opinions among scholarly treatments of this topic. For instance, Fiordalis (2008, 124) divides the *iddhis* involved into a list of eight items, the *Pali-English Dictionary* counts up to ten *iddhis* (PED s.v. “iddhi”), Gethin (2001, 82, n. 6) suggests that the list within the Nikāyas implies only seven *iddhis*, whereas the *Visuddhimagga* takes *āvibhāvaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ* as involving a distinct *iddhi*. I divide the list into eight elements as follows:

(1) *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti*, (2) *āvibhāvaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ* (3) *tiro-kuḍḍaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ asaḷḷamaṇo gacchati seyyathā pi ākāse*, (4) *paṭhaviyā pi ummuḷḷa-nimmuḷḷaṃ karoti seyyathā pi uduke*, (5) *udake pi abhijamāno gacchati seyyathā pi paṭhaviyaṃ*, (6) *ākāse pi pallaṅkena kamati seyyathā pi pakkhī sakuṇo*, (7) *ime pi candima-suriye evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve pāṇinā parimasati parimajjati*, (8) *yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena va saṃvatteti/vasaṃ vatteti*.

### 7.4.1 Some Preliminary Remarks Concerning the Exegeses

The exegeses of the *iddhividhā* occur in Paṭiṣ I 111; Paṭiṣ II 207-10; \**Vimuttimaggā* (T1648.32.0442a23-c05); Vism 373-406; Sv I 222-3 (translated in Appendix 2); Paṭiṣ-a I 343-51; Paṭiṣ-a II 656-63 (translated in Appendix 5). The exegeses are chronologically (and often logically) connected to each other in the following way:

1. Paṭiṣ I 111 → \**Vimuttimaggā* → Paṭiṣ-a I 343-51
2. Paṭiṣ II 207-10 → \**Vimuttimaggā* → Vism 373-406 → Sv I 222-3 → Paṭiṣ-a II 656-63

The second sequence of exegeses is the most interesting since it involves the long explanation reported in the *Visuddhimaggā*. But how do we know that these exegeses are linked to each other? We know this because the *Visuddhimaggā*'s starting point is, indeed, the list of ten *iddhis* present in Paṭiṣ II 207-10, Sv I 222-3 refers directly to the *Visuddhimaggā* and Paṭiṣ-a II 656-63 is the comment upon Paṭiṣ II 207-10. Although the second sequence of exegeses is the one mainly treated in the present work, the first sequence is also worthy of consideration, especially the *Paṭisambhidāmaggā*'s account.

### 7.4.2 Paṭiṣ I 111 on the *Iddhividhā*

The account in Paṭiṣ I 111 seems to have influenced the \**Vimuttimaggā* explanation. A particular emphasis on the development of the 'bases of psychic powers' (*iddhipāda*) occurs in the *Paṭisambhidāmaggā*'s account, which does not occur in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta*, but is quite common in the *Iddhipādasamyutta* of the *Samyuttanikāya*.<sup>35</sup> The text begins with a question to which an answer will follow.

How is it that understanding (*paññā*) by way of approaching both perceptions of pleasure and lightness by determining (*adhiṭṭhāna*) body and mind to be one is knowledge of the *iddhividhā*?<sup>36</sup>

A connection between the *iddhipāda* and the *iddhividhā* is highlighted: "He develops the bases of psychic powers [...] He, with the mind developed in this way, purified, cleaned, directs and turns the mind to the variety of *iddhis*".<sup>37</sup> The text basically borrows the treatment of the *iddhividhā* from the *Iddhipādasamyutta* of the *Samyuttanikāya*. The *Paṭisambhidāmaggā*, then, presents a similar kind of exegesis for the *abhiññās*,<sup>38</sup> which will be essential for the treatment of the *abhiññās* in the present work, considering that there is no other exposition of the *abhiññās* in the *Paṭisambhidāmaggā*. However,

<sup>35</sup> *evaṃ bhāvitesu kho bhikkhu catusu iddhipādesu evaṃ bahulīkatesu anekavihitā iddhidham paccanubhoti* (S V 264).

<sup>36</sup> *kathaṃ kāyaṃ pi cittaṃ pi ekavavatthānatā sukhasaññaṃ ca lahusaññaṃ ca adhiṭṭhānavasena ijghanatṭhe pañña iddhidhe ñāṇaṃ?* (Paṭiṣ I 111).

<sup>37</sup> *iddhipāda bhaveti [...] so tathā bhāvitena cittena parisuddhena pariyodātena iddhidhaññāyā cittaṃ abhinirarati abhininnāmeti* (Paṭiṣ I 111).

<sup>38</sup> See below Chapter 8.

concerning the *iddhividhā*, the sequence of exegeses which includes Paṭis II 207-10 has been preferred, given that it consists of a quite long and detailed exposition.

#### 7.4.3 Paṭis II 207-10 and the *Visuddhimagga*: An Overview

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (at Paṭis II 207-10) behaves like a real commentary. Therefore, after having quoted the canonical text, it comments upon each single phrase. The comment follows more or less the same structure in commenting on each *iddhi* except for the last one, which receives a longer explanation. The basic structure is as follows:

1. The text provides a method to perform the *iddhi* under analysis. This explanation is sometimes preceded by an explanation of the terms involved, or the explanation of the method to perform the *iddhi* contains itself an enrichment of the terminology involved.
2. The text often mentions a simile or a story to better explain the power.

The same commentarial method of exegesis seems to have also been adopted by the *Visuddhimagga*, which, however, splits the first item of the above list into two discrete phases:

1. A brief explanation of the phrasings which compose the *iddhividhā* basic formula and/or analysis of the terms one by one.
2. Explanation of the method used to perform the *iddhi* power.
3. Narration of stories (often even canonical) in which the *iddhi* power would be involved (even if it is not explicitly mentioned). If a story is not reported, supplementary material to better understand the *iddhi* at stake is anyway present.

**Table 7.1** Exegetical explanation of the *iddhividhā* in the *Visuddhimagga*

<i>Visuddhimagga</i> explanation of the <i>iddhividhā</i>			
	<b>Brief explanation of the passage and/or analysis of the terms</b>	<b>Explanation of the method used to perform the <i>iddhi</i> power</b>	<b>Narration of stories (often even canonical) in which the <i>iddhi</i> power would be involved (even if it is not explicitly mentioned), or supplementary material to better understand the <i>iddhi</i> at stake</b>
(1) <i>eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti</i>	Vism 384	Vism 384-7, in particular at 386-7 and 389-90	Cūḷapanthaka's story in Vism 387-9
(2) <i>āvibhāvaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ</i>	Vism 390	<i>āvibhāva</i> : Vism 390; <i>tiro-bhāva</i> : Vism 392-3	<i>āvibhāva</i> : story of the Blessed one who performs the miracle in Vism 390-2 + Sri Lankan story in Vism 392; <i>tiro-bhāva</i> : in Vism 393-4, the main stories are the one concerning the Blessed one, and the one of the Elder Mahinda; there are many references to the canon and other commentaries
(3) <i>tiro-kudḍaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ asajjamāno gacchati seyyathā pi ākāse</i>	Vism 394	Vism 394	Report of a wrong view of the monk Tipiṭaka-Cūḷābhaya in Vism 394-5
(4) <i>paṭhaviyā pi ummujja-nimmujjaṃ karoti seyyathā pi udake</i>	Vism 395	Vism 395, mainly quoting Paṭis II 208	Report of some variations of the transformation of the earth into water in Vism 395-6
(5) <i>udake pi abhijjamāno gacchati seyyathā pi paṭhaviyaṃ</i>	Vism 396	Vism 396	Report of some variations of the transformation of the earth into water in Vism 396
(6) <i>ākāse pi pallānkena kamati seyyathā pi pakkhī sakuṇo</i>	Vism 396	Vism 396-7	It is stated that a monk who wants to travel in the space should attain the divine eye; there is a report of a different opinion stated by another Elder (maybe the monk Tipiṭaka-Cūḷābhaya) in Vism 397
(7) <i>ime pi candima-suriye evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve pāṇinā parimasati parimajjati</i>	Vism 397-8	Vism 398 is mainly the explanation given in Paṭis II 208-9	Report of a different opinion stated by the Elder Tipiṭaka-Cūḷābhaya. In order to understand better this opinion, it is narrated the story in which Mahā-Moggallāna defeats the snakes' king Nandopananda in Vism 398-401, plus the variation of this power and the example of several hundred thousand monks that see the moon into different vessels in Vism 401
(8) <i>yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena va saṃvatteṭi/vasaṃ vatteti</i>	Vism 401	The method is provided by commenting on Paṭis II 209-10: <i>dūre pi santike adhiṭṭhāti</i> [...] at Vism 402 and in other passages after some stories at Vism 404-5. There occurs also a question asked by a monk concerning the way to go with an invisible body which is followed by an answer (it is clearly involved the doctrine of <i>cittavithi</i> )	There are many stories starting from the one concerning the Blessed one in Vism 402-4

It seems that the kernel of what would be the commentarial structure of the *Visuddhimagga* was already present within the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. Bearing in mind these preliminary remarks on the exegetical macrostructure, we shall start with the analysis of the *iddhividhā* one by one.

#### 7.4.4 (1) *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti*; Detailed Analysis on the Multiplication of the Body

The exposition of this power within the canonical literature is expressed by a very brief statement: *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti* (e.g. D I 78). This statement is taken on by the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and expanded:

**Having been one, he becomes many.** Naturally one, he adverts to multiplicity, he adverts to a hundred, or a thousand, or a hundred thousand. Having adverted, he resolves with the knowledge “Let me be many”, and he becomes many. Just as Cūḷapanthaka having been one becomes many, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, having been one becomes many.

**Having been many, he becomes one.** Naturally many, he adverts to the unity. Having adverted, he resolves with the knowledge “Let me be one”, and he becomes one. Just as Cūḷapanthaka having been many becomes one, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, having been many becomes many.<sup>39</sup>

As previously noted, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* basically expands the phrasing, providing some details concerning the method to perform the power, and mentions a narrative which is supposed to include the *iddhi* at stake. The method to perform the power is a very basic one, it consists of only two steps. At first, the performer should turn (the mind) towards the expected result, and then secondly expresses a formal resolution which will turn to be true:

(1)	he adverts to multiplicity  <i>bahulaṃ āvajjati</i>	+	(2)	he resolves with the knowledge “Let me be many”  <i>ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti bahulo homī ti</i>	=	he becomes many  <i>bahulo hoti</i>
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In this regard, the *Visuddhimagga* introduces, at first, a method which is almost the same, just slightly expanding the wording:

*tattha pakatiyā eko (1) bahukaṃ āvajjati, satam vā sahassam vā satahassam vā āvajjitvā (2) ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti bahuko homī ti.* (Vism 378)

In this context, naturally one (1) he adverts to the multiplicity, having adverted to hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands (2) he resolves with the knowledge “Let me be many”.

<sup>39</sup> *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti ti. pakatiyā eko bahulaṃ āvajjati, satam vā sahassam vā satahassam vā āvajjati; āvajjitvā ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti bahulo homī ti, bahulo hoti. yathāyasmā Cūḷapanthako eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti. bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti ti. pakatiyā bahulo ekaṃ āvajjati; āvajjitvā ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti eko homī ti, eko hoti. yathāyasmā Cūḷapanthako bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti* (Paṭis II 207).

The *Visuddhimagga*, however, also provides a slightly different basic method as an answer to the question: “how does he do it [i.e. the *iddhi* of the multiplication of the body]” (*kathaṃ paṇāyam evaṃ hoti?*; Vism 384).<sup>40</sup>

(1) *Iddhiyā catasso bhūmiyo, cattāro pādā, aṭṭha padāni, soḷasa ca mūlāni* (Paṭis II 205) *sampādetvā* + (2) *ñāṇena adhiṭṭhahanto*. (Vism 384)

The second stage here is identical to the second stage in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, with just slightly different wording, whereas the first stage, however, seems quite dissimilar. The first stage is prescribing to first accomplish (*sampādetvā*) the four grounds (*catasso bhūmiyo*), four bases (*cattāro pādā*), eight steps (*aṭṭha padāni*) and sixteen roots (*soḷasa ca mūlāni*) of the power.<sup>41</sup> These groups of things that should be accomplished are listed at the beginning of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*'s *Iddhikathā* and are said to lead to the attainment of the *iddhis* (Paṭis II 205-6). Therefore, the *Visuddhimagga* compares the initial part of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*'s *Iddhikathā* with the initial part of the basic canonical formula. As a result, according to the *Visuddhimagga*, the canonical statement “when the mind is concentrated in this way” (*evaṃ samāhite citte*; D I 78) is the equivalent of the accomplishment (*sampādetvā*) of the four grounds, the four bases, the eight steps, and sixteen roots, reported within the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

And, according to preference, this meaning is already established by the phrasing ‘when the mind is concentrated in this way’ (D I 78), but, for what begins with the first *jhāna* etc., it is stated again in order to indicate the condition of grounds, bases, steps, and roots of the psychic power. And the first [method] is the one given in the *suttas*, this one [is given] in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. Then, the meaning of both is stated again for the sake of clarity.<sup>42</sup>

It seems that there is an attempt to reconcile the canonical explanation with the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*'s one. This might mean that Buddhaghosa recognises a difference between the *suttas* and *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. In fact, the *Visuddhimagga*'s exposition of the method of performing the power is not only quite different and longer than the one expounded in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, but is also a little odd as it is expounded more than once with different formulations. The basic *Paṭisambhidāmagga* process composed of *āvajjati* + *adhiṭṭhāti* was subjected to a more detailed exegesis. The process in the *Visuddhimagga* is expounded as follows in what we can call Method 1:

**Resolving with the knowledge.** He - having accomplished these factors consisting of grounds, bases, steps, and roots of his own psychic power - having attained the *jhāna* that is the foundation of the higher

<sup>40</sup> I followed the reading of Be and Vism Ae, whereas Ee reads *kathaṃ paṇāyam evaṃ hoti?*

<sup>41</sup> The four grounds are the four *jhānas* (Vism 384), the four bases are the four *iddhipādas* (Vism 385), the eight steps are the four *iddhipādas* each one considered as two steps (Vism 385-6), the sixteen roots are the state of imperturbability of the mind through sixteen modes (Vism 386).

<sup>42</sup> *kāmañ c' esa attho evaṃ samāhite citte ti* (D I 78) *ādinā pi siddho yeva, paṭhamajjhānādinam pana iddhiyā bhūmipāda-pada-mūlabhāvadassanatham puna vutto. purimo ca suttesu āgatanayo; ayaṃ Paṭisambhidāyam. iti ubhayattha asammohattham pi puna vutto* (Vism 386).

knowledges (*abhiññā*), after having emerged [from it], if he desires [to be] a hundred: “Let me be a hundred, let me be a hundred!”, having done the preparatory work (*parikamma*), having attained again the *jhāna* that is the foundation of the higher knowledges, after having emerged [from it], he resolves (*adhiṭṭhāti*). He verily becomes a hundred immediately after the *adhiṭṭhānacitta* (resolution-consciousness).<sup>43</sup>

In addition, there would be another exposition which we will call Method 2:

Then, in this context as well ‘*āvajjati*’ is said precisely on account of the preparatory work (*parikamma*).<sup>44</sup> ‘*āvajjitvā nānena adhiṭṭhāti*’ is said on account of the knowledge of the higher knowledges, that is why he adverts to multiplicity. Then, he also attains [the *jhāna*] at the end of these consciousnesses of the preparatory work (*parikammacitta*). Having emerged from the attainment (*samāpatti*), having adverted again to “Let me be many”, after this, he resolves with only one knowledge belonging to the higher knowledges (*abhiññānāna*), which comes to be called ‘*adhiṭṭhāna*’, on account of the fact that it brings [the process] to completion (*sanniṭṭhāpanavasena*), which arises between the three or four preceding consciousnesses (*pubbabhāgacitta*) that occurred. Here, the meaning should be understood in this way.<sup>45</sup>

These two methods can be compared with the short method set out in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and schematised in Table 7.2.

Here, some details are worthy of consideration. The words ‘*āvajjati*’ and ‘*parikamma*’ seem interchangeable or equivalent,<sup>46</sup> although *āvajjati* is used on one occasion after the *parikamma*: *parikammacittānaṃ avasāne samāpajjati. samāpattito vuṭṭhahitvā puna bahuko homī ti āvajjitvā* (Vism 387). This latter passage is quite odd for another reason, namely that it relates the phrase ‘*bahuko homī*’ to ‘*āvajjati*’, whereas in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* is related to ‘*adhiṭṭhāti*’: *nānena adhiṭṭhāti bahulo homī ti* (Paṭis II 207). Another controversial point is, in my opinion, the presence of the word ‘*puna*’ that should indicate either that the process of entering in and going out from the *jhāna* occurs twice or that the text is providing another similar explanation for the same phenomenon.<sup>47</sup> In this regard, it would seem that the commentary on

**43** *nānena adhiṭṭhahanto ti svayam ete iddhiyā bhūmipāda-padamūlabhūte dhamme sampādetvā abhiññāpādakaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya, sace satam icchatī, satam homī satam homī ti parikammaṃ katvā puna abhiññāpādakaṃ jhānaṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya adhiṭṭhāti adhiṭṭhānacittena sah’ eva satam hoti* (Vism 386-7).

**44** Cf. *yadi evaṃ āvajjitvā nānena adhiṭṭhāti ti paṭisambhidāvacaṇaṃ kathan ti āha yampī ti ādi. tatrā pi ti paṭisambhidāyamaṃ pi. āvajjati ti bahukaṃ āvajjati ti idaṃ pāṭhapadaṃ parikammavasena’ eva vuttaṃ, na āvajjanavasena* (Vism-mhṭ II 21).

**45** *tatrā pi āvajjati ti parikammavasena’ eva vuttaṃ. āvajjitvā nānena adhiṭṭhāti ti abhiññānānavasena vuttaṃ, tasmā bahukaṃ āvajjati. tato tesam pi parikammacittānaṃ avasāne samāpajjati. samāpattito vuṭṭhahitvā puna bahuko homī ti āvajjitvā tato paraṃ pavattānaṃ tiṇṇaṃ catunnaṃ vā pubbabhāgacittānaṃ anantarā uppannena sanniṭṭhāpanavasena adhiṭṭhānaṃ ti laddhanāmena eken’ eva abhiññānānena adhiṭṭhāti ti evam ettha attho datṭhabbo* (Vism 387).

**46** *tatrā pi āvajjati ti parikammavasena’ eva vuttaṃ* (Vism 387); *āvajjati ti bahukaṃ āvajjati ti idaṃ pāṭhapadaṃ parikammavasena’ eva vuttaṃ, na āvajjanavasena* (Vism-mhṭ II 21); *āvajjitvā nānena adhiṭṭhāti ti evaṃ parikammaṃ katvā abhiññānānena adhiṭṭhāti* (Paṭis-a II 657).

**47** “*tu, kiṃ tu, paraṃ tu, punar*, and the like share the meaning ‘but’ and often introduce a slightly different idea or (more strongly) a modification or correction of what has been said before” (Tubb, Boose 2007, 257).

**Table 7.2** Comparison among the various methods to perform the multiplication of the body

Comparison among the various methods to perform the multiplication of the body	
<i>Paṭisambhīdāmagga</i>	
<i>bhūmipāda- padamūlabhūte</i>	<i>āvajjati</i>  <i>adhīṭṭhāti</i>
<i>Visuddhimagga Method 1</i>	
<i>bhūmipāda- padamūlabhūte dhamme sampādetvā</i>	<i>sataṃ homi sataṃ homīti</i>  <i>abhiññāpādakam jhānaṃ samāpajjitvā</i>  <i>parikkammam katvā samāpajjitvā</i>  <i>adhīṭṭhāti</i>
<i>Visuddhimagga Method 2</i>	
<i>parikkammacittānam avasāne</i>	<i>[Jhāna] samāpajjati āvajjitvā</i>  <i>bahuko homi ti pubbabhāga- citta</i>  <i>pubbabhāga- citta</i>  <i>pubbabhāga- citta</i>  <i>pubbabhāga- citta</i>  <i>pubbabhāga- citta</i>  <i>adhīṭṭhāti</i>

the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* understands the process assuming two attainments of the *jhāna*: “here, having done the preparatory work, the attainment of the *jhāna* which serves as foundation is not stated again. Whatever is not stated [here], then [it is stated] in the commentary (*aṭṭhakathā*)”.<sup>48</sup> Finally, it is worth noting that in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*’s account the access to the *jhāna* does not occur,<sup>49</sup> whereas in the *Visuddhimagga* it seems to be a central stage. In order to fully understand the presence of the *jhāna* stage within the method to perform the power, it is useful to consider another text, namely the *\*Vimuttimagga*. So, the method to perform the power is reported in the *\*Vimuttimagga* in the following way:

Through the *iddhi* (變)<sup>50</sup> [he becomes] either a hundred or a thousand or a hundred thousand (lit. a myriad, viz. 10.000, 萬), etc. He enters the fourth *jhāna* and serenely emerges from it, immediately after he resolves (受持 = *adhiṭṭhāti*) with the knowledge “Let me be many” and becomes many, just as Arahant Cūlapanthaka [did].<sup>51</sup>

This text clearly highlights the necessity to attain the *jhāna* and to emerge from it, a fact that does not occur in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, but is well attested in the *Visuddhimagga*. As will be highlighted later (in Chapter 9), the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* already explains how the *iddhis* are achieved on the basis of the mind trained in the fourth *jhāna*. However, the early canonical account does not establish a necessary sequence through a clear statement which declares that the power is performed immediately after the emergence from the *jhāna*. Furthermore, the *\*Vimuttimagga* identifies the *iddhipādas* ([四]如意足) as a prerequisite to perform these marvellous abilities:

How *iddhi* (變) is developed? Here a monk cultivates the *iddhipāda* (如意足) which is endowed with forces of endeavour and with concentration due to the desire to act (欲 = *chanda*), concentration due to the effort (精進 = *virīya*), concentration due to the mind (心 = *citta*), concentration due to the investigation (慧 = *vīmaṃsā*).<sup>52</sup>

48 *ettha parikkammaṃ katvā puna pādakajjhānasamāpajjanaṃ na vuttaṃ. kiñcā-pi na vuttaṃ, atha kho Aṭṭhakathāya* (Paṭis-a II 657). Here, the quotation from the ‘*aṭṭhakathā*’ is actually a quotation from the *Visuddhimagga* (387).

49 The *jhānas* are mentioned in the *catasso bhūmiyo* (Paṭis II 205), albeit they seem, here, prerequisites and not stages.

50 This term is quite difficult to translate because, on the one hand, the *\*Vimuttimagga* states that it is a synonym of the term that actually could be the translation of *iddhi*, namely 身通: “the term 身通 means 變” (身通者變義, T1648.32.0441a28). On the other hand, in the *\*Vimuttimagga* there are ten 變, a fact that would resemble the ten *iddhis* of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and *Visuddhimagga*. Radich (2007, 273) also found the term hard to translate. In my interpretation, we should understand 身通 as *iddhi* in contexts in which the term is opposed to *abhiññā* (= 神通), whereas 變 is the rendition of *iddhi* when more specific kinds of *iddhi* are involved, such as the *adhiṭṭhāna iddhi* (受持變). In effect, we cannot ignore the fact that the *\*Vimuttimagga* seems to translate the Pāli *aneka-vihitaṃ iddhi-vidhaṃ* (D I 78) through the phrasing 不一種變 (T1648.32.0442a24), namely “many (不一種 = *aneka-vihitaṃ*) varieties of psychophysical power (變 = *iddhi-vidhaṃ*)”.

51 或一百或一千或一萬等以變。入第四禪安詳出，次第以智受持：“我當多”成多，如小路阿羅漢。(T1648.32.0442a29-b02).

52 問云何當起變？答此比丘修欲定勝行相應如意足，精進定，心定，慧定。(T1648.32.0441c17-19).

It seems that all accounts are sharing the same macrostructure, which is, however, formulated in a slightly different way within the accounts. This macrostructure may be expressed as follows: 1) the attainment or development of some prerequisites; 2) a preparatory phase; 3) a resolution that will result in the performance.

**Table 7.3** Macrostructure of the multiplication of the body in the sources

MACROSTRUCTURE			
	Attainment or development of some prerequisites	Preparatory phase	Resolution that will result in the performance
<b>Paṭisambhidāmagga</b>	<i>catasso bhūmiyo, cattāro pādā, aṭṭha padāni, soḷasa ca mūlāni</i>	<i>āvajjati</i>	<i>ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti bahulo homī ti</i>
<b>*Vimuttimagga</b>	<i>iddhipādas</i> ([四]如意足)	He enters the fourth <i>jhāna</i> and serenely emerges from it (入第四禪安詳出)	He resolves (受持 = <i>adhiṭṭhāti</i> ) with the knowledge “Let me be many” and becomes many (以智受持: “我當多” 成多)
<b>Visuddhimagga</b>	<i>catasso bhūmiyo, cattāro pādā, aṭṭha padāni, soḷasa ca mūlāni</i>	<i>āvajjana/parikamma</i> : entering into and emerging from the fourth <i>jhāna</i> twice, he adverts to the multiplicity	<i>adhiṭṭhāti</i>

It would seem that the *Visuddhimagga* in its ‘preparatory phase’ is combining the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*’s and *\*Vimuttimagga*’s accounts together since it mentions both *āvajjana* (*Paṭisambhidāmagga*) and the *jhāna* (*\*Vimuttimagga*): *samāpattito* [i.e. the *jhāna*] *vuṭṭhahitvā puna bahuko homī ti āvajjitvā* (*Vism* 387). *Jhāna* occurs under the guise of the word *samāpatti*, which indicates a ‘[meditative] attainment’.

The occurrence of the *jhāna* stage is not meaningless, and an analysis of what happens in the cosmological and psychological levels might be useful to better understand some stages of the process. It is evident from the account that there is a shifting between different cosmological/psychological levels, and the access to a higher level allows the marvellous phenomena to take place. The desired result becomes the object of the mind which enters the fourth *jhāna*, the object in the fourth *jhāna* is just the mental reflex (*nimitta*) of the object, which turns again into the normal object when the meditator comes out from the *jhāna* state and, although it was initially a mental object, it gains a sort of objectivity and so comes into existence in some ways. The *Visuddhimagga* makes clear what the object is in some stages of the process, and the comparison with its *ṭīkā* would reveal an odd process. The text states that:

In this context, the consciousness of the *jhāna* which serves as foundation (*pādakajjhānacitta*) has the sign (*nimitta*) as object. But the consciousnesses of the preparatory work (*parikammacittāni*) have hundred as objects or thousand as objects [...] Also the *adhiṭṭhānacitta*, likewise, has hundred as object or thousand as object in this way. This

[the *adhiṭṭhānacitta*],<sup>53</sup> is like *appanācitta*, which immediately follows the *gotrabhū* which arises once only, as stated previously, and belongs to the fourth *jhāna* in the sphere of the pure form (*rūpāvacaracattajjhānika*).<sup>54</sup>

The *ṭīkā* specifies that:

**‘Having performed the preparatory work’**: he emerges from the *jhāna* which serves as foundation, making here the preparatory work, thinking only with the consciousness of the *kāmāvacara* starting as “Let it be hundred”, and then there is adverting (*āvajjana*).<sup>55</sup>

This data results in the following chart portraying the implications of the alternation of the stages on the cosmological level:

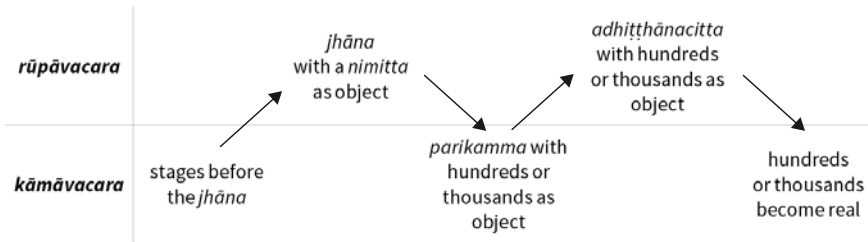


Figure 7.1 Alternation of the stages on the cosmological level

The *adhiṭṭhānacitta* seems to be equivalent to the *jhāna*, but interestingly enough it has the same object of the *parikamma*. It is as if the *adhiṭṭhānacitta* takes the object of the preparatory work and brings it up to the *rūpāvacara*, the divine realms - which are from a cosmological point of view the realms of the gods, realms that are also connected with the *manomayakāya*.<sup>56</sup> After the *adhiṭṭhānacitta*, the same object magically becomes a reality in our world, in the *kāmāvacara*. This parallelism between the *jhāna* (in which the *appanācitta* arises) and the *adhiṭṭhānacitta* can help us to understand the reason why the *Visuddhimagga* states that the arising of the *adhiṭṭhānacitta* is preceded by three or four past mental moments, namely the *pubbabhāgacittas* ‘the preceding consciousnesses’. These mental moments would be three or four, so adding the *adhiṭṭhānacitta* it would result in a maximum number of five mental moments. Here, to understand the significance of these five mental moments, it is worth considering the *Visuddhimagga*’s explanation of how the *jhāna* is achieved, occurring in the *Paṭhavīkasiṇaniddesa* (Explanation of

53 *taṃ adhiṭṭhānacittam* (Vism-mhṭ II 21).

54 *tattha pāḍakajjhānacittam nimittārammaṇaṃ. parikammacittāni satārammaṇāni vā sahaṣṣārammaṇāni vā [...] adhiṭṭhānacittam pi tath’ eva satārammaṇaṃ vā sahaṣṣārammaṇaṃ vā. taṃ pubbe vuttaṃ appanācittam iva gotrabhū anantaraṃ ekam eva uppajjati rūpāvacaracattajjhānikaṃ* (Vism 387).

55 *parikammaṃ katvā ti pāḍakajjhānato vuṭṭhāya kāmāvacaracittena sataṃ homi ti ādinā cintanam ev’ ettha parikammakaraṇaṃ, tath’ āvajjanam eva ca āvajjanaṃ* (Vism-mhṭ II 20).

56 Although there are *kāmadhātu devas* and *rūpadhātu devas* (= *brahmās*), only the latter are more openly connected with the *manomayakāya* (in this regard, see above Table 6.1 in § 6.3.1.3).

the Earth *kasiṇa*; IV chapter). This explanation involves the consciousness process theory (which was discussed in Chapter 4). The account is as follows:

[Then knowing:] “Now the absorption will succeed!” (*idaṃ appanā ijjhissati*), having interrupted the *bhavaṅga*, making the earth *kasiṇa* the object, which is established through the method [of repeating] “Earth! Earth!”, the adverting in the mind door (*manodvārāvajjana*) arises. Thereafter, only four or five *javanas* impel on this object, at their end one *rūpāvacara* [*javana* occurs], the rest [of them] belongs to the *kāmāvacara* [...]. Avoiding repetitions,<sup>57</sup> here the first is the *parikamma*, the second is the *upacāra*, the third is the *anuloma*, the fourth is the *gotrabhu*. Or also, the first is the *upacāra*, the second is the *anuloma*, the third is the *gotrabhu*. The fourth or fifth [as appropriate] is the mental moment of absorption (*appanā cittaṃ*).<sup>58</sup>

Therefore, in this account describing how to enter into the *jhāna* (from the perspective of the consciousness process theory) there is an *appanācitta* preceded by three or four moments (i.e. *parikamma*, *upacāra*, *anuloma*, *gotrabhu*), whereas in the methodology to develop the first *iddhi* there is an *adhiṭṭhānacitta* preceded by three or four *pubbabhāgacittas*. The parallelism is even more evident if we consider another couple of elements. First, the access to the *jhāna* state is attained through a kind of repetition: ‘Earth! Earth!’, in the same way the *adhiṭṭhānacitta* is preceded by another kind of repetition: ‘*bahuko homi*’. Second, the parallelism is strengthened by the *Visuddhimagga* itself, which reports that “this [i.e. *adhiṭṭhānacitta*] is like *appanācitta*, which immediately follows the *gotrabhū* which arises once only, as stated previously, and belongs to the fourth *jhāna* in the sphere of the pure form (*rūpāvacaracattutthajjhānika*)”.<sup>59</sup>

It seems that there is actually equivalence between the action of entering into an absorption state and the performance of the power:

[...]	( <i>parikamma</i> )	<i>upacāra</i>	<i>anuloma</i>	<i>gotrabhu</i>	<i>appanācitta</i>
[...]	( <i>pubbabhāgacitta</i> )	<i>pubbabhāgacitta</i>	<i>pubbabhāgacitta</i>	<i>pubbabhāgacitta</i>	<i>adhiṭṭhānacitta</i>

**Figure 7.2** Comparison between the attainments of the absorption state and *adhiṭṭhānacitta*. Note: since there can be either four or five moments, the stages in brackets are omitted in the case of the occurrence of only four *javanas*

The presence of the *pubbabhāgacitta* is only justified by the comparison with the action of entering into the *jhāna* state. An in-depth analysis of the relationship between the extraordinary capacities and the state of *jhāna* will be provided in § 9.4.1.

**57** Here, I followed Nāṇamoli’s ([1956] 2011, 579, n. 35) interpretation of the compound *agahitaggahaṇa*.

**58** *idāni appanā ijjhissatī ti bhavaṅgaṃ upacchinditvā paṭhavī paṭhavī ti anuyogavasena upaṭṭhitam tad-eva paṭhavīkasiṇaṃ ārammaṇaṃ katvā manodvārāvajjanaṃ uppajjati. tato tasmim̐ yev’ ārammaṇe cattāri pañca vā javanāni javanti, tesu avasāne ekaṃ rūpāvacaraṃ, sesāni kāmāvacarāni, [...] agahitaggahaṇena paṇ’ ettha paṭhamaṃ parikammaṃ, dutiyaṃ upacāraṃ, tatiyaṃ anulomaṃ, cattuthaṃ gotrabhu. paṭhamaṃ vā upacāraṃ, dutiyaṃ anulomaṃ, tatiyaṃ gotrabhu, cattuthaṃ pañcamaṃ vā appanā cittaṃ* (Vism 137-8).

**59** *taṃ pubbe vuttaṃ appanācittam iva gotrabhū anantaraṃ ekam eva uppajjati rūpāvacaracattutthajjhānikaṃ* (Vism 387).

#### 7.4.4.1 *Saddhammappakāsinī*: Further Additions and Justifications

The *Saddhammappakāsinī* specifies the *kaṣiṇa* involved during the performance of this *iddhi*: “having attained the fourth *jhāna* that is the foundation of the higher knowledges and has the earth *kaṣiṇa* as object [...]”.<sup>60</sup> The *kaṣiṇa* used is the earth *kaṣiṇa* (*paṭhavikaṣiṇa*). It is worth noting that the specification of the *kaṣiṇa* involved is a kind of exegesis that occurred also for the *manomayakāya* (Paṭis-a II 666, see § 6.4.7).

A further interesting point is that the *Saddhammappakāsinī* provides conciliation between the short and long methods used to perform the psychophysical power. The *Saddhammappakāsinī*, indeed, comments upon the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* using the innovations reported in the later *Visuddhimagga*. Since the two versions of the process differ from each other in terms of length and detail, it seems that it was felt necessary to justify the existence of the two different expositions. Therefore, the commentary states that:

As when it is said “Having eaten, he lies down (*bhuñjivā sayati*)”, the meaning is not that “Having not drunk the beverage, having not washed the hands, he lies down immediately after eating”, but what is said is that “Although there are other closely following activities in the interval [between the two actions], he lies down after having eaten”. Here also it should be understood in this way. For although the first is the attainment of the *jhāna* which serves as foundation, this was not stated in the text (*pāli*).<sup>61</sup>

Here, there is, it seems, a process that could be defined as an ‘interpretative accretion process’, in which a simple topic (i.e. *eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti*) collects, during the centuries, more sophisticated explanations, which, however, need to be justified. This is consistent with the findings of the chapter concerning the *manomayakāya* (see Chapter 6). In this context, the commentator tries to explain the reason why the canonical version is shorter than the *Visuddhimagga*’s one. Therefore, he suggests that the *Visuddhimagga*’s explanation was already included in the canonical text, although it was not explicit. This means that the commentator does not see the *Visuddhimagga*’s explanation as a modification, but only as a further specification.

#### 7.4.4.2 Notes on the Cūḷapanthaka’s Story: Is there a Hidden Continuity with the Canonical Tradition?

The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* makes use of the Cūḷapanthaka’s story as an example of the multiplication of the body. A similar mention occurs in the \**Vimuttimagga*, which ascribes the power of multiplication to the Arahant (阿羅漢) Cūḷapanthaka (小路).<sup>62</sup> The *Visuddhimagga* provides the full story of Cūḷapanthaka (Vism 387-9) and so does the *Saddhammappakāsinī* (Paṭis-a II 657-60, see Appendix 5). These accounts seem to connect this kind of *iddhi*

<sup>60</sup> *paṭhavikaṣiṇārammaṇaṃ abhiññāpādakaṃ catutthajjhānaṃ samāpajjivā* (Paṭis-a II 657).

<sup>61</sup> *yathā bhuñjivā sayati ti vutte pāṇiyaṃ apivitvā, hatthadhovanādāni akatvā bhuttānantaram eva sayati ti attho na hoti, antarāsannesu pi aññesu kiccesu bhutvā sayati ti vuccati; evam idhā-pi ti daṭṭhabbaṃ. paṭhamaṃ pādakajjhānasamāpajjanam pi hi pāliyaṃ avuttam evā ti* (Paṭis-a II 657).

<sup>62</sup> 如小路阿羅漢 (T1648.32.0442b02).

with the creation of a body made of mind. To be more specific, it seems that the multiplication of the body is nothing more than the creation of many mind-made bodies. The *Saddhammappakāsinī* seems quite explicit about it since it states that “he became one who has attained *manomaya*[-*kāya*] and *jhānas* (*manomaya-jhāna-lābhin*), he became able to become many after having been one, and one after having been many”.<sup>63</sup> Successively, after having finished narrating the story, the *Saddhammappakāsinī* goes on to write:

Other monks, having created a body made of mind (*manomaya*) through the resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*), create three or four [mind-made bodies]. Having made only many identical ones, they create [creations that] do only a type of action. But the Elder Cūlapanthaka turning [the mind] (*āvajjana*) only once, created a thousand of monks. He did not make two people identical and they did not perform only one type of action. For this reason, he has become the foremost among the monks who create a body made of mind.<sup>64</sup>

This last passage seems to refer to the canonical account of the *Āṅuttaranikāya*, in which it is stated that Cūlapanthaka is the foremost among the disciples of the Buddha in creating a mind-made body.<sup>65</sup> The connection between the creation of the mind-made body and the psychophysical power (*iddhi*) of either multiplying the physical form or returning to a single unit could also be supported by the reported account in the canonical *Theragāthā* (557-66). This seems to be a shorter version of the story found in the *Visuddhimagga* and *Saddhammappakāsinī*. In the *Theragāthā* as well, Cūlapanthaka creates one thousand copies of himself.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, although a more direct reference to the *manomayakāya* in the Cūlapanthaka’s story occurs in the post-canonical literature, the character of Cūlapanthaka was already connected with the *manomayakāya* as early as the canonical literature. It might be possible that this story already existed during the period of formation of the first canonical texts, but it was transmitted in a less authoritative channel and was officially embedded only later. Therefore, it is possible to find a full canonical account within the *jātaka* called *Cullakasetṭhijātaka* (Ja I 114-23).<sup>67</sup> The *Jātaka*’s account reports the same verses which occur in the *Theragāthā* in which copies of Cūlapanthaka are created (Ja I 118 = Th 563). So, it actually makes sense to understand the *Āṅuttaranikāya* (A I 24) in the light of the *Jātaka*’s account. However, we should recognise that the connection with the *manomayakāya*

**63** *so manomaya-jhānalābhī hutvā eko hutvā bahudhā, bahudhā hutvā eko bhavitum samattho ahoṣi* (Paṭis-a II 659).

**64** *aññe bhikkhū adhiṭṭhānena manomayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimminivā tayo vā cattāro vā abhinimminanti. bahuke ekasadiṣe yeva ca katvā nimminanti ekavidhaṃ eva kammaṃ kurumāne. Cūlapanthakatthero pana ekāvajjanen’ eva bhikkhusahassaṃ māpesi! dve ’pi jane na ekasadiṣe akāsi na ekavidhaṃ kammaṃ kurumāne. tasmā manomayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimminantānaṃ aggo nāma jāto* (Paṭis-a II 660).

**65** *etad aggaṃ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ manomayaṃ kāyaṃ abhinimminantānaṃ yadidaṃ Culla-panthako* (A I 24).

**66** *sahassakattthum attānaṃ nimminivāna Panthako | nisīdi ambavane ramme yāva kālappavedanaṃ* (Th 563).

**67** For additional references, see Malalasekera 1974, 897-8.

is only explicit in post-canonical literature, whereas in canonical literature it was, perhaps, taken for granted.

#### 7.4.5 (2) *āvibhāvaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ*

Concerning this *iddhi*, the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* does not provide any explanation regarding the method used to perform the power. It only provides clarifications for the terms *āvibhāva* and *tirobhāva*:

**Becomes manifested (*āvibhāva*)**, it is not veiled by something, not covered, exposed, evident.

**Becomes concealed (*tirobhāva*)**, it is veiled by something, it is covered, hidden, enclosed.<sup>68</sup>

The explanation of the method to perform the power is reported in the *Visuddhimagga*:

Then, the possessor of psychic power who desires to make a manifestation, illuminates (*ālokaṃ karoti*) the darkness, or exposes what is covered, makes perceivable what is not perceivable. How? He, who desires to make visible - although covered or being distant - himself or another, having emerged from the *jhāna* which serves as foundation, having adverted in this way: “Let this condition of darkness become bright” or “Let what is covered become exposed” or “Let what is not perceivable become perceivable”. Then, having done the preparatory work, he resolves in the way already explained. Immediately after the resolution, he becomes [in a certain way] according to the resolution. Others, although being distant, see; he also, desiring to see, sees.<sup>69</sup>

The method can be summarised as follows:

**68** *āvibhāvan ti. kenaci anāvaṭaṃ hoti appaṭicchannaṃ vivaṭaṃ pākaṭaṃ. tirobhāvan ti. kenaci āvaṭaṃ hoti paṭicchannaṃ pihitaṃ paṭikujjitaṃ* (Paṭis II 207).

**69** *tatrā 'yaṃ iddhimā āvibhāvaṃ kātukāmo andhakāraṃ vā ālokaṃ karoti, paṭicchannaṃ vā vivaṭaṃ anāpāthaṃ vā āpāthaṃ karoti. kathaṃ? ayaṃ hi yathā paṭicchanno pi dūre ṭhito pi vā dissati, evaṃ attānaṃ vā paraṃ vā kātukāmo pādakajjhānato vuṭṭhāya: idaṃ andhakāraṭṭhānaṃ ālokajātaṃ hotū ti vā: idaṃ paṭicchannaṃ vivaṭaṃ hotū ti vā: idaṃ anāpāthaṃ āpāthaṃ hotū ti vā āvajjitvā parikkammaṃ katvā vuttanāyena' eva adhiṭṭhāti, saha adhiṭṭhānā yathādhiṭṭhitam eva hoti. pare dūre ṭhitā pi passanti, sayam pi passitukāmo passati* (Vism 390). The explanation of *tirobhāva* is almost the same: “But he who desires to make a concealment, darkens the light, or covers what is uncovered, or makes not perceivable what is perceivable. How? He, who desires to make invisible - although not covered or being close - himself or another, having emerged from the *jhāna* which serves as foundation, having adverted in this way: ‘Let this condition of luminosity become dark’ or ‘Let what is not covered become covered’ or ‘Let what is perceivable become not perceivable’. Then, having done the preparatory work, he resolves in the way already explained. Immediately after the consciousness of resolution, he becomes [in a certain way] according to the resolution. Others, although being close, do not see, he also, desiring to not see, does not see” (*tirobhāvaṃ kātukāmo pana ālokaṃ vā andhakāraṃ karoti, appaṭicchannaṃ vā paṭicchannaṃ, āpāthaṃ vā anāpāthaṃ karoti. kathaṃ? ayaṃ hi yathā appaṭicchanno pi samipe ṭhito pi vā na dissati, evaṃ attānaṃ vā paraṃ vā kātukāmo pādakajjhānato vuṭṭhāya: idaṃ ālokaṭṭhānaṃ andhakāraṃ hotū ti vā, idaṃ appaṭicchannaṃ paṭicchannaṃ hotū ti vā, idaṃ āpāthaṃ anāpāthaṃ hotū ti vā āvajjitvā parikkammaṃ katvā vuttanāyena' eva adhiṭṭhāti; saha adhiṭṭhānacittena yathādhiṭṭhitam eva hoti. pare samipe ṭhitā pi passanti, sayam pi appassitukāmo na passati*; Vism 392-3).

having emerged from the <i>jhāna</i> which serves as foundation	+	having adverted in this way: "Let it be X"/ having done the preparatory work	+	he resolves in the way already explained
<i>pādakajjhānato vuṭṭhāya</i>		[X hotu] <i>āvajjitvā/parikkammaṃ katvā</i>		<i>vuttanāyena'eva adhiṭṭhāti</i>

The \**Vimuttimagga* treatment of this *iddhi* is connected with the next *iddhi* and, therefore, we will examine this exegetical evidence below. Concerning the *Saddhammapakāsinī*, the text does not provide further useful information (Paṭis-a II 260-1).

#### 7.4.6 (3) *tiro-kuḍḍaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ asajjamāno gacchati seyyathā pi ākāse*

*Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

Naturally (at first), he is one who has obtained the attainment (i.e. meditative absorption: *samāpatti*) through the space *kaṣiṇa* (*ākāsakaṣiṇa*), he adverts (*āvajjati*) beyond walls, ramparts, mountains; after having adverted, he resolves with the knowledge "Let there be space!" [and so] there is space. He goes beyond walls, ramparts, mountains unattached<sup>70</sup> by them. Just as men who naturally are not possessors of psychic powers go unattached when [the place] is not obstructed and enclosed by something, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, goes beyond walls, ramparts, mountains unattached by them.<sup>71</sup>

*Visuddhimagga*:

Then, for one who desires to go in this way, having attained the [*jhāna* produced by the] space *kaṣiṇa* (*ākāsakaṣiṇa*), emerged, adverted to wall, or rampart, or also to certain mountain such as Sineru and the Cakkavāla mountains, through the preparatory work which was done, he should resolve "Let there be space". The space really exists. It becomes hollow for him who wants to descend or ascend; it becomes perforated for him who wants to go penetrating. He goes there freely.<sup>72</sup>

\**Vimuttimagga*:

This meditator, having practiced the space (虚空) *kaṣiṇa* (一切入), enters the fourth *jhāna* and serenely emerges from it. Having adverted (已轉 =

<sup>70</sup> In the translation of this term, I followed Be: *asajjamāno*.

<sup>71</sup> *pakatiyā ākāsakaṣiṇasamāpattiyā lābhī hoti, tirokuṭṭaṃ tiropākāraṃ tiropabbataṃ āvajjati; āvajjitvā nānena adhiṭṭhāti ākāso hotū ti, ākāso hoti. so tirokuṭṭaṃ tiropākāraṃ tiropabbataṃ āvajjamāno [Be asajjamāno] gacchati. yathā manussā pakatiyā anidhimanto kenaci anāvaṭe aparikkhitte asajjamānā gacchanti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto tirokuṭṭaṃ tiropākāraṃ tiropabbataṃ asajjamāno gacchati, seyyathāpi ākāse* (Paṭis II 208).

<sup>72</sup> *evaṃ gantukāmena pana ākāsakaṣiṇaṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya kuḍḍaṃ vā pākāraṃ vā Sineru-cakkavālesu pi aññataraṃ pabbataṃ vā āvajjitvā kataparikkamma: ākāso hotū ti adhiṭṭhātabbo, ākāso yeva hoti; adho otaritukāmassa uddhaṃ vā ārohitukāmassa susiro hoti; vinivijjhitvā gantukāmassa chiddo. so tattha asajjamāno gacchati* (Vism 394).

*āvajjitvā* = 成轉 = *āvajjitvā*)<sup>73</sup> to go beyond walls, ramparts, mountains, he resolves (受持 = *adhiṭṭhāti*) with the knowledge “Let there be space” and the space is attained. This yogin in space goes beyond walls, ramparts, mountains, he moves unattached as he would be in space.<sup>74</sup>

It would seem that the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, *Visuddhimagga*, and *\*Vimuttimagga* transmitted the same method to perform this specific *iddhi*. Furthermore, the same terminology seems to also be involved. The comparison is summarised in the following table:

**Table 7.4** Comparison of sources

	<b><i>Jhāna</i> attained through the space <i>kaṣiṇa</i> (<i>ākāsa</i><i>kaṣiṇa</i>/虚空一切入)</b>	<b><i>Āvajjati</i> <i>āvajjitvā</i>/已轉成轉</b>	<b><i>Adhiṭṭhāti</i> <i>adhiṭṭhātabbo</i>/受持</b>
<b><i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i></b>	He is one who has obtained the attainment (i.e. meditative absorption: <i>samāpatti</i> ) through the space <i>kaṣiṇa</i> ( <i>ākāsa</i> <i>kaṣiṇa</i> )	He adverts ( <i>āvajjati</i> ) beyond walls, ramparts, mountains	He resolves with the knowledge “Let there be space!” [and so] there is space
<b><i>*Vimuttimagga</i></b>	Having practiced the space (虚空) <i>kaṣiṇa</i> (一切入), enters the fourth <i>jhāna</i>	Having adverted (已轉 = <i>āvajjitvā</i> = 成轉 = <i>āvajjitvā</i> ) to go beyond walls, ramparts, mountains	He resolves (受持 = <i>adhiṭṭhāti</i> ) with the knowledge “Let there be space” and the space is attained
<b><i>Visuddhimagga</i></b>	Having attained the space <i>kaṣiṇa</i> [ <i>jhāna</i> ]	He adverted to wall, or rampart, or also to certain mountain such as Sineru and the Cakkavāḷa mountains	Through the preparatory work undertaken, he should resolve “Let there be space”. The space really exists

Concerning these three accounts we can note that the use of *parikamma* in the *Visuddhimagga* (*kataparikamma*) is reasonably referring to the previous stages, namely the attainment of the *jhāna* and the action of adverting (*āvajjati*). Moreover, it seems that the *\*Vimuttimagga* connects this *iddhi* with the one that is previous in our subdivision of *iddhis*, namely the ability to become manifested or concealed (*āvibhāvaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ*):

What does ‘he becomes manifested (或現 = *āvibhāva*)’ mean? [It means]

**73** This is translated by Ehara et al. ([1961] 1995, 215) as “[i]n going along”. In my interpretation, the character 轉 indicates *āvajjati*/*āvajjana*, just as in the phrasing *zhuanjiàn-xīn* 轉見心 (T1648.32.0449b07-08), which reports two stages, *āvajjana* (轉) and *dassana* (見), of the consciousness process as expressed in the *\*Vimuttimagga* (the passage seems to be corrupted as it should be 轉心見心; in this regard, see Kim 2018, 758). It is also possible that the phrasing 已轉成轉 is the equivalent of *āvajjati āvajjitvā* (this seems to be the reading also adopted in Nyanatusita 2021, 524), although both characters 已 and 成 seem to indicate a past or a completed action. I am basing my reading on the *Paṭis* II 208 *tirokuṭṭaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ āvajjati; āvajjitvā nāṇena adhiṭṭhāti ākāso hotū ti, ākāso hoti*; and *Vism* 394 *kuḍḍaṃ vā pākāraṃ vā Sineru-cakkavāḷesu pi aññataṃ pabbataṃ vā āvajjitvā kataparikamma*: *ākāso hotū ti adhiṭṭhātabbo, ākāso yeva hoti*. It may be possible that there was an inversion of characters as in 成轉. 已轉 (T1648.32.0442c25), in which 成 is a verb which refers to the former phrase, 轉 is *āvajjati* and 已轉 is *āvajjitvā*.

**74** 彼坐禪人，如是以修行虚空一切入，入第四禪安詳出。徹過壁徹過牆徹過山已轉成轉，以智受持：“此當成虚空”已成虚空。彼坐禪人於虚空徹過壁徹過牆徹過山，行不障礙猶如虚空。(T1648.32.0442b05-09).

‘to open (開)’. What does ‘he becomes concealed (或不現 = *tirobhāva*)’ mean? [It means] ‘to not open (不開)’. The meditator opens what is not open, and he goes beyond walls, ramparts, mountains.<sup>75</sup>

It seems that the passage implies that the meditator is able to create a breach or an opening in the physical obstacle. This might explain why the *Visuddhimagga* states: “it becomes hollow for him who wants to descent or ascent; it becomes perforated for him who wants to go penetrating” (*adho otaritukāmassa uddhaṃ vā ārohitukāmassa susiro hoti; vinivijjhitvā gantukāmassa chiddo*; Vism 394). Furthermore, this passage would highlight that the *\*Vimuttimaggā* endorsed a different and otherwise unknown exegesis of the canonical *āvibhāvaṃ tiro-bhāvaṃ* (cf. § 7.4.5).

Concerning the *Saddhammapākāsinī*, the only further information detected regards the *kasiṇa* involved. The text specifies that only the space *kasiṇa* is allowed to develop this power (*idha ākāsakasiṇass’ eva vuttattā tattha-bhāvitam eva jhānaṃ ākāsakasiṇassa paccayo hoti, na aññaṃ*; Paṭis-a II 661).

#### 7.4.7 (4) *paṭhaviyā pi ummujja-nimmujjaṃ karoti seyyathā pi udake*

*Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

Naturally, he is one who has obtained the attainment (i.e. meditative absorption: *samāpatti*) through the water *kasiṇa* (*āpokasiṇa*), he adverts (*āvajjati*) to the earth (*paṭhavī*). Having adverted, he resolves with the knowledge “Let there be water!” [and so] there is water. [Then,] he sinks and emerges from the earth. Just as men who naturally are not possessors of psychic powers sink and emerge from the water, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, sinks and emerges from the earth as if it were water.<sup>76</sup>

*Visuddhimagga*:

He attains the [*jhāna* produced by the] water *kasiṇa* (*āpokasiṇa*) – desiring to perform in this way – and emerges [from the *jhāna*]. Having determined (*paricchinditvā*) “Let the earth in this quantity become water”, having done the preparatory work, he should resolve precisely in the way already explained. Therefore, immediately after the resolution the quantity of earth determined (*paricchinna*) becomes water, then he sinks and emerges.<sup>77</sup>

**75** 或現者何? 義開。或不現者何? 義不開。彼坐禪人不開令開, 徹過壁徹過牆徹過山。(T1648.32.0442 b09-11). Nyanatusita (2021, 523-4) translates T1648.32.0442b09-11 before T1648.32.0442b05-09.

**76** *pakatiyā āpokasiṇasamāpattiyā lābhī hoti, paṭhavim āvajjati; āvajjitvā nāṇena adhiṭṭhāti udakaṃ hotū ti, udakaṃ hoti. so paṭhaviyā ummujjanimmujjaṃ karoti. yathā manussā pakatiyā aniddhimanto udake ummujjanimmujjaṃ karonti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto paṭhaviyā ummujjanimmujjaṃ karoti, seyyathāpi udake* (Paṭis II 208).

**77** *evaṃ kātukāmena āpokasiṇaṃ samāpajjitvā utṭhāya: ettake thāne pathavi udakaṃ hotū ti paricchinditvā parikkammaṃ katvā vuttanayen’ eva adhiṭṭhātābbaṃ; saha adhiṭṭhānena yathā paricchinne thāne pathavi udakaṃ eva hoti, so tattha ummujjanimmujjaṃ karoti* (Vism 395).

\**Vimuttimagga*:

He sinks in and emerges from the earth as if it were water. Thus, the meditator, through the mind cultivated in the water *kaṣiṇa*, enters the fourth *jhāna*. He emerges serenely and adverts (轉) to a delimited (作隔 = *paricchinna*) [amount of] earth, he resolves with the knowledge “Let there be water”. The meditator sinks and emerges from earth as if it were natural water.<sup>78</sup>

It is worth noting that the *Visuddhimagga* quotes the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* as canonical evidence for the method used to perform the power (*tatrā 'yaṃ pāli*; Vism 395), quoting Paṭis II 208, although its exegesis is strongly connected with the \**Vimuttimagga* account. Both *Visuddhimagga* and \**Vimuttimagga* prescribe to delimit the portion of earth on which the power will be applied. The *Visuddhimagga* states: “having determined ‘Let the earth in this quantity become water’” (*ettake thāne pathavi udakaṃ hotū ti paricchinditvā*), whereas the \**Vimuttimagga* reports “he emerges serenely and adverts to a delimited (作隔) [amount of] earth” (安詳出轉地作隔). My translation from the Chinese passage is based on the fact that the character 隔 can mean something like *parichinna*.<sup>79</sup> The method used to perform this specific *iddhi* seems to be the same in all three texts:

entering the <i>jhāna</i> through the water <i>kaṣiṇa</i> and emerging from it (N.B. the act of emerging from the <i>jhāna</i> does not occur in Paṭis)	+	he adverts to the earth	+	he resolves with the knowledge “Let there be water!”	=	there is water
<i>āpokasiṇaṃ samāpajjitvā utthāya</i>		<i>paṭhaviṃ āvajjati</i>		<i>ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti udakaṃ hotū ti</i>		<i>udakaṃ hoti</i>

Paradoxically, the method explained in the *Visuddhimagga* is less clear than in the other texts. The *Saddhammappakāsinī* does not provide further useful information and quotes the *Visuddhimagga* almost *verbatim* (Paṭis-a II 661 does not mention the power and Paṭis-a I 349 quotes the Vism).

#### 7.4.8 (5) *udake pi abhijamāno gacchati seyyathā pi paṭhaviyaṃ*

*Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

Naturally, he is one who has obtained the attainment (i.e. meditative absorption: *samāpatti*) through the earth *kaṣiṇa* (*paṭhavikaṣiṇa*), he adverts (*āvajjati*) to the water (*udaka*). Having adverted, he resolves with the knowledge “Let there be earth!” [and so] there is earth. [Then,] he walks on the water without sinking in it. Just as men who naturally are

<sup>78</sup> 於地令作出沒猶如在水。彼坐禪人如是，以心修行水一切入，入於第四禪。安詳出轉地作隔，以智受持：“此當成水”。彼坐禪人於地成出沒猶如性水。(T1648.32.0442b12-15).

<sup>79</sup> See Hirakawa 1997, 1216 and DDB s.v. “隔”. Nyanatusita translates: “Emerging mindfully from it, he adverts to earth, demarcates [an area of earth]” (2021, 524).

not possessors of psychic powers go on the earth without sinking in it, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, goes on the water without sinking in it as if it were in the earth.<sup>80</sup>

*Visuddhimagga:*

He attains the [*jhāna* produced by the] earth *kasiṇa* (*paṭhavīkasiṇa*) – desiring to go in this way – and emerges [from the *jhāna*]. Having decided “Let the water in this quantity become earth”, having done the preparatory work, he should resolve precisely in the way already explained. Therefore, immediately after the resolution the quantity of water decided becomes earth, then he goes.<sup>81</sup>

*\*Vimuttimagga:*

Thus, the meditator, through the mind cultivated in the earth *kasiṇa*, enters the fourth *jhāna*. He emerges serenely and adverts (轉) a delimited (作隔) [amount of] water, he resolves with the knowledge “Let there be earth” and there is earth. The meditator goes on the water not obstructed, as if it were going on natural earth.<sup>82</sup>

The *Saddhammappakāsini* does not provide further useful information and quotes the *Visuddhimagga* almost *verbatim* (Paṭis-a II 661 does not mention the power and Paṭis-a I 349-50 quotes the *Vism*). This *iddhi* resembles the previous one, inverting the earth with the water.

#### 7.4.9 (6) *ākāse pi pallaṅkena kamati seyyathā pi pakkhī sakuṇo*

*Paṭisambhidāmagga:*

Naturally, he is one who has obtained the attainment (i.e. meditative absorption: *samāpatti*) through the earth *kasiṇa* (*paṭhavīkasiṇa*), he adverts (*āvajjati*) to the space (*ākāsa*). Having adverted, he resolves with the knowledge “Let there be earth!” [and so] there is earth. He walks, stands, sits, and lies down in the empty space, in the atmosphere. Just as men who naturally are not possessors of psychic powers walk, stand, sit, and lie down on the earth, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, walks, stands, sits, and

<sup>80</sup> *pakatiyā paṭhavīkasiṇasamāpattiyā lābhī hoti, udakaṃ āvajjati; āvajjitvā nāṇena adhiṭṭhāti paṭhavi hotū ti, paṭhavi hoti. so abhijjamāne udake gacchati. yathā manussā pakatiyā aniddhimanto abhijjamānāya paṭhaviyā gacchanti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto abhijjamāne udake gacchati, seyyathāpi paṭhaviyaṃ* (Paṭis II 208).

<sup>81</sup> *evaṃ gantukāmena pana paṭhavīkasiṇaṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya: ettake ṭhāne udakaṃ pathavi hotū ti paricchinditvā parikkammaṃ katvā vuttanayen’ eva adhiṭṭhātabbaṃ; saha adhiṭṭhānena yathā paricchinnatṭhāne udakaṃ pathavi yeva hoti, so tattha gacchati* (*Vism* 396).

<sup>82</sup> 彼坐禪人如是，以心修行地一切入，入第四禪。安詳出轉水作隔，以智受持：“此當成地”已成地。彼坐禪人於水行不障礙，如行性地。(T1648.32.0442b16-19).

lies down in the empty space, in the atmosphere as if it were a winged bird.<sup>83</sup>

*Visuddhimagga:*

He attains the [*jhāna* produced by the] earth *kaṣiṇa* (*paṭhavīkaṣiṇa*) - desiring to perform in this way - and emerges [from the *jhāna*]. If he desires to go seated, having determined an area of the size of a sofa, having done the preparatory work, he should resolve precisely in the way already explained. If he desires to go lying down [should determine an area of] the size of a bed. If he desires to go on foot [should determine an area of] the size of a road. Then, having determined an area in this way, he should resolve precisely in the way already explained: "Let it be earth". Immediately after the resolution, it becomes earth.<sup>84</sup>

\**Vimuttimagga:*

He goes in the space as a winged bird (飛鳥). In this context, there are three kinds of movement: 1) movement on foot, 2) movement on air, 3) movement through the mind. Then, the meditator attains the concentration with the earth *kaṣiṇa*, resolves (受持 = *adhiṭṭhāti*) for a path in the space and goes on foot. Or if [the meditator] attains the concentration with the air *kaṣiṇa*, he resolves for the air and so just as cotton wool he goes on air. To move by mind, he suffuses mind and body with perceptions of pleasure and lightness (或樂想或輕想 = *sukhasaññañ ca lahusaññañ ca*). With the body permeated [by these perceptions], the body becomes buoyant, and he goes through the mind-movement just as a winged bird. Like this is the movement through the mind.<sup>85</sup>

The account in the \**Vimuttimagga* reports three kinds of movement. The first one (viz. movement on foot) is the one also treated in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* and *Visuddhimagga*, whereas the other two (viz. movement on air and movement through the mind) seem to recall the canonical account in the *Iddhipādasamyutta* (S V 282-4). Here, I report an example:

Just as, Ānanda, a tuft of cotton wool or wadding, which is light, supported by the wind, with little difficulty, from the earth rises up into the sky, so in the same way, Ānanda, on the occasion when the Tathāgata unifies the body in the mind and the mind in the body, he dwells having reached perceptions of pleasure and lightness in the physical body, on that

**83** *pakatiyā paṭhavīkaṣiṇasamāpattiyaṃ lābhī hoti, ākāsaṃ āvajjati; āvajjitvā nāpene adhiṭṭhāti paṭhavi hotū ti, paṭhavi hoti. so ākāse antalikkhe caṅkamati pi tiṭṭhati pi nisīdati pi seyyaṃ pi kappeti. yathā manussā pakatiyā anidhimanto paṭhaviyā caṅkamanti pi tiṭṭhanti pi nisīdanti pi seyyaṃ pi kappenti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto ākāse antalikkhe caṅkamati pi tiṭṭhati pi nisīdati pi seyyaṃ pi kappeti, seyyathāpi pakkhī sakuṇo* (Paṭis II 208).

**84** *evaṃ kātukāmena pana pathavīkaṣiṇaṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya, sace nisīno gantum icchati, pallankappamāṇaṃ ṭhānaṃ paricchinditvā parikkammaṃ katvā vuttanayen' eva adhiṭṭhātābbaṃ; sace nipanno gantukāmo hoti mañcappamāṇaṃ; sace padasā gantukāmo hoti maggappamāṇaṃ ti evaṃ yathānurūpaṃ ṭhānaṃ paricchinditvā vuttanayen' eva: pathavi hotū ti adhiṭṭhātābbaṃ; saha adhiṭṭhānena pathavi yeva hoti* (Vism 396-7).

**85** 行於虛空猶如飛鳥。於是三行：步行，風行，心行。於是坐禪人得地一切入定，於虛空受持道路以步行。若得風一切入定，受持風如綿纒如風行。以心行令滿身心，或樂想或輕想。以著身，身已輕，以心行，行如飛鳥。如是心行。(T1648.32.0442b19-24).

occasion the Tathāgata's body with little difficulty, from the earth rises up into the sky.<sup>86</sup>

This passage can be compared with the \**Vimuttimaggā* account in order to highlight the similarities between the two accounts:

**Table 7.5** Comparison between the \**Vimuttimaggā* and *Iddhipādasamṃyutta*

* <i>Vimuttimaggā</i>	<i>Iddhipādasamṃyutta</i> (S V 284)
Just as cotton wool he goes on air 如綿縷如風行 (T1648.32.0442b22).	A tuft of cotton wool or wadding, which is light, supported by the wind, with little difficulty, from the earth rises up into the sky ( <i>tūlapicu vā kappāsapicu vā lahuko vātupādāno appakasireneva pathaviyā vehāsam abbhuggacchati</i> ).
To move by mind, he suffuses mind and body with [...] 以心行令滿身心 (T1648.32.0442b22-23).	He unifies the body in the mind and the mind in the body ( <i>kāyaṃ pi citte samādahati cittam pi kāye samādahati</i> ).
Perceptions of pleasure and lightness. With the body permeated [by these perceptions] [...] 或樂想或輕想。以著身 (T1648.32.0442b23).	He dwells having reached perceptions of pleasure and lightness in the physical body ( <i>sukhasaññaṃ ca lahusaññaṃ ca kāye okkamitvā viharati</i> ).
The body becomes buoyant and he goes through the mind-movement just as a winged bird 身已輕，以心行，行如飛鳥 (T1648.32.0442b23-24).	The body, with little difficulty, from the earth rises up into the sky ( <i>kayo appakasireneva pathaviyā vehāsam abbhuggacchati</i> ). Notably, there is also the phrasing: “the body becomes even lighter” ( <i>kāyo lahutaro ceva hoti</i> ; S V 283).

The comparison might indicate that the account in the *Iddhipādasamṃyutta* (S V 282-4) actually reports a method to perform the powers or that, at least, the \**Vimuttimaggā* drew material from this or a similar account to compose its exegesis.<sup>87</sup>

It is also worth analysing another passage reported in the *Visuddhimaggā*:

And the monk who desires to go in the space should be also one who possesses the divine eye. Why? There may be in between mountains, trees, etc. originated by temperature (*utusamuṭṭhāna*) or envious *nāgas*, *supaṇṇas*, etc. create them; so, the purpose is to see them. But after seeing them what should be done? Having attained the *jhāna* that is the foundation, having emerged from it, having done the preparatory work thus: “Let there be space”, he should resolve. But the Elder [Tipiṭaka

<sup>86</sup> *seyyathāpi Ānanda tūlapicu vā kappāsapicu vā lahuko vātupādāno appakasireneva pathaviyā vehāsam abbhuggacchati evam eva kho Ānanda yasmim samaye Tathāgato kāyaṃ pi citte samādahati cittam pi kāye samādahati sukhasaññaṃ ca lahusaññaṃ ca kāye okkamitvā viharati tasmim Ānanda samaye Tathāgatassa kayo appakasireneva pathaviyā vehāsam abbhuggacchati* (S V 284).

<sup>87</sup> See also De Notariis 2022b, 404-9.

Cūḷa-Abhaya]<sup>88</sup> said: “O Friend(s), what is the purpose to have attained the [meditative] attainment? Is his mind not concentrated? Then, all areas on which he resolves: ‘Let it be space’, it, therefore, becomes space”. Although he spoke in this way, the method already explained in the miracle of [going beyond] walls should be followed, nevertheless. Moreover, he should become one who has obtained the divine eye for the purpose of descending in a suitable space (*okāsa*). Therefore, if he descends in an unsuitable space (*anokāsa*), such as a bathing ford or a village gate, he would be visible to the crowd. For this reason, having seen with the divine eye and abstained from an unsuitable space, he descends in a suitable space.<sup>89</sup>

According to this passage, the development of the divine eye (*dibbacakkhu*) would seem to be a prerequisite to perform this specific *iddhi*. This fact would indicate that for Buddhaghosa *iddhis* and *abhiññās* are not developed in sequence. So, we can infer that Buddhaghosa did not regard the path of liberation in the *Sāmaññaphalasutta* as a progressive list of attainments, or at least he did not regard *iddhis* and *abhiññās* as stages developed on the basis of the previous stage within the list (this stage is treated in more detail below at § 9.2). Another interesting part of this passage regards the fact that the monk should use the divine eye to find in advance a suitable place (*okāsa*) to descend by flying. This need is justified by the text stating that “if he descends in an unsuitable space (*anokāsa*), such as a bathing ford or a village gate, he would be visible to the crowd” (*sace anokāse nahānatitthe vā gāmadvāre vā orohati, mahājanassa pākaṭo hoti*; Vism 397). In this regard, it is worth remembering the *Vinaya* rule that forbids to the monks to show the miraculous power of the *iddhis* to the lay people: “O monks, the miracle of the *iddhis* which is something beyond [the average reach of] human beings should not be shown to the householders”.<sup>90</sup> It would seem, indeed, that the use of the divine eye is necessary in order to not break the monastic rule.

The *Saddhammapakkāsini* does not provide further useful information (Paṭis-a II 661 barely mentions the power and Paṭis-a I 350 quotes the Vism).

#### 7.4.10 (7) *ime pi candima-suriye evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve pāṇinā parimasati parimajjati*

*Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

Here, the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, either sitting or lying down, adverts to the moon and sun. Having

<sup>88</sup> According to Vism-mhṭ II 27.

<sup>89</sup> *ākāse gantukāmena ca bhikkhunā dibbacakkhu-lābhinā pi bhavitabbaṃ. kasmā? antare utusamuttāhānā vā pabbatarukkhādayo honti, nāgasupaṇṇādayo vā ussuyantā māpentī nesam dassanattam. te pana disvā kiṃ kātābbaṃ ti? pādakajjhānaṃ samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya: ākāso hotū ti parikkammaṃ katvā adhiṭṭhātabbaṃ. thero pan’ āha: - samāpatti-samāpajjanam, āvuso, kimatthiyam? nanu samāhitam ev’ assa cittaṃ, tena yaṃ yaṃ thānaṃ: ākāso hotū ti adhiṭṭhāti, ākāso yeva hotī ti. kiñcāpi evam āha, atha kho tirokuḍḍapāṭihāriye vuttanayen’ eva paṭipajjitabbaṃ. api ca okāse orohanattam pi iminā dibbacakkhu-lābhinā bhavitabbaṃ. ayaṃ hi sace anokāse nahānatitthe vā gāmadvāre vā orohati, mahājanassa pākaṭo hoti; tāsmā dibbacakkhunā passitvā anokāsaṃ vajjetvā okāse otarāti ti (Vism 397).*

<sup>90</sup> *na bhikkhave gihīnaṃ uttarimanussadhammaṃ iddhipāṭihāriyaṃ dassetabbaṃ (Vin II 112).*

adverted, he resolves with the knowledge “Let it be at hand (*hatthapāsa*)” and it becomes at hand. He, either sitting or lying down, handles, touches and strokes with the hand the sun and the moon. Just as men who are not naturally possessors of psychic powers handles, touches and strokes whatever physical form at hand, so in the same way the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, either sitting or lying down, handles, touches and strokes with the hand the sun and the moon.<sup>91</sup>

*Visuddhimagga:*

But here, if he desires to touch them, sitting or lying down, he resolves: “Let it be at hand”. He either touches [them] through the power of resolution when they, after having come, stay at hand just as a fruit of Palmyra tree released by the stalk, or after having extended the hand. But when he is extending, does he extend what is animate (*upādinnaka*)? Or what is inanimate (*anupādinnaka*)?<sup>92</sup> He extends what is inanimate (*anupādinnaka*) for the sake of what is animate (*upādinnaka*). In this regard, the Elder Tipiṭaka-Cūlanāga said: “O Friend(s), but does not what is animate (*upādinnaka*) become big and small as well? Is it not that when a monk comes out from a keyhole, etc., then what is animate (*upādinnaka*) becomes small? When he makes his body big, then does he not become big, just as in the case of Elder Mahā-Moggallāna?”<sup>93</sup>

*\*Vimuttimagga:*

He touched with the hand the sun and moon, which have so great power and might.<sup>94</sup> The meditator is a possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, having cultivated the mind in this way, enters the fourth *jhāna*, emerges serenely and touches with the hand the

**91** *idha so iddhimā cetovasippatto nisinnako vā nipannako vā candimasūriye āvajjati; āvajjitvā nāpēna adhiṭṭhāti hatthapāse hotū ti, hatthapāse hoti. so nisinnako vā nipannako vā candimasūriye pāṇinā āmasati parāmasati parimajjati. yathā manussā pakatiyā aniddhimanto kiñcid eva rūpagaṭaṃ hatthapāse āmasanti parāmasanti parimajjanti, evamevaṃ so iddhimā cetovasippatto nisinnako vā nipannako vā candimasūriye pāṇinā āmasati parāmasati parimajjati* (Paṭis II 208-9).

**92** According to the exegetic understanding, *upādinnaka* is matter (*rūpa*) in one’s body that is produced by one’s *kamma*; *anupādinnaka* is matter that is not produced by *kamma* (for further details see Karunadasa 1967, 103-7). Concerning *upādinnaka*, “[t]he idea to be conveyed is that of the material-form of the physical body, in other words ‘organic matter’, which owes its peculiar mode to the effect or ripening of the past clinging (*upādāna*) that constituted action (*kamma*). In the Commentaries the body is also called ‘action-born’ (*kammaja, karaja*). Stones, trees, etc. are called *anupādinnaka*” (Ñāṇamoli 1978, 63, n. 51). Therefore, in this regard I see the contraposition between the organic matter (animate) and the physical matter (inanimate).

**93** *yadi pana idh’ eva nisinnako vā nipannako vā parāmasitukāmo hoti: hatthapāse hotū ti adhiṭṭhāti, adhiṭṭhānabalena vaṇamuttatālapalaṃ viya āgantvā hatthapāse ṭhite vā parāmasati, hatthaṃ vā vaḍḍhetvā, vaḍḍhentassa pana kiṃ upādinnakaṃ vaḍḍhati? anupādinnakan ti? upādinnakaṃ nissāya anupādinnakaṃ vaḍḍhati. tattha Tipiṭaka-Cūlanāgathero āha: - kiṃ pan’ āvuso upādinnakaṃ khuddakam pi mahantam pi na hoti? nanu yadā bhikkhu tālacchiddādīhi nikkhamati, tadā upādinnakaṃ khuddakaṃ hoti, yadā mahantaṃ attabhāvaṃ karoti, tadā mahantaṃ hoti, Mahā-Moggallānatherassa viyā ti* (Vism 398).

**94** The Chinese passage 如是神通, 如是神力 is the equivalent of *evaṃ mahiddhike evaṃ mahānubhāve* (D I 78) and is translated by Ehara et al. ([1961] 1995, 216) as: “[i]n the (greatness of) supernormal power and might”. Oddly, Nyanatusita translates “such is his great power, such is his great might” (2021, 525), although it is clear from the Pāli passage that the adjectives refer to the sun and moon and not to the meditator. Remarkably, the Chinese rendition of *mahiddhika* seems to be 神通, which in other parts of the *\*Vimuttimagga* is used to translate *abhiññā* (see 五神通; T1648.32.0441a27).

sun and the moon. He resolves with the knowledge “Let it be at hand” and it becomes at hand. The meditator, either sitting or lying down, touches and strokes with the hand the sun and the moon.<sup>95</sup>

Given that the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* does not specify any *kaṣiṇa*, in the *Visuddhimagga* it is written that there is not any specific *kaṣiṇa* attainment.<sup>96</sup> This is sustained also by the *Saddhammappakāsinī* (Paṭis-a II 661). The *Saddhammappakāsinī* does not provide further information on this power.

The *Visuddhimagga* narrates a method to perform this power that seems to involve the enlargement of the sun and the moon (the *anupādinnaka* ‘inanimate’ things). The text specifies that it is not the body of the meditator (the *upādinnaka* ‘animate’) that becomes bigger. However, before this explanatory passage, there is a phrase that would suggest the existence of another method that can be adopted in order to touch the sun and the moon. That is the possibility to go, perhaps either with the physical body or with the mind-made body, up to the sun and the moon to touch them. The *Visuddhimagga* introduces this possibility as follows: “if he desires to go and touch [the sun and the moon], he goes and touches”.<sup>97</sup> This method seems to be the application of the previous *iddhi*, namely the power to go through the ether as a winged bird, to the task of touching the sun and the moon. This case portrays that there were disputes about how these powers actually came into being. Exegetes seem to ask questions such as: “What actually happens when the text says that the monk touches the sun and the moon?” “Does the monk touch the sun and the moon by extending his arm?” “Does he bring the sun and the moon within his reach of touch?” “Does he go to them and touch them?”, etc. These powers were, therefore, the object of theoretical investigation and one could almost argue that they were taken seriously.

#### 7.4.11 (8) *yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena va saṃvatteti/vasaṃ vatteti*

*Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

He exercises the bodily power as far as the Brahmā world. If the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, desires to go to the Brahmā world, although far he resolves on closeness “Let it be close” and it becomes close, although close he resolves on farness “Let it be far” and it becomes far; although many he resolves on the paucity “Let it be few” and it becomes few, although few he resolves on the abundance “Let it be many” and it becomes many; he sees the form of Brahmā through the divine eye, he hears the sounds of Brahmā through the divine ear, he understands the mind of Brahmā through the knowledge by comprehension of the minds [of others]. If the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, desires to go to the Brahmā world with a visible body, he changes the mind according to the body, he fixes the mind according to the body; having changed the mind according to the body, having fixed the

<sup>95</sup> 行已手摸日月，如是神通，如是神力。彼坐禪人有禪人有神通，得心自在，以是修行心，入第四禪，安詳出，手\*摸日月。以智受持：“此當成近手”彼成近手。彼坐禪人，或坐或臥，以手\*摸捫日月。(T1648.32.0442b24-29).

<sup>96</sup> *n’ atth’ ettha kaṣiṇasamāpattiniyamo* (Vism 398).

<sup>97</sup> *svāyaṃ yadi icchati gantvā parāmasitūṃ, gantvā parāmasati* (Vism 398).

mind according to the body, having reached perceptions of pleasure and lightness he goes to the Brahmā world with a visible body. If the possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, desires to go to the Brahmā world with an invisible body, he changes the body according to the mind, he fixes the body according to the mind; having changed the body according to the mind, having fixed the body according to the mind, having reached perceptions of pleasure and lightness he goes to the Brahmā world with an invisible body. He creates, in front of Brahmā, a physical form which is made of mind, with all limbs and [bodily] parts, without defect of any faculties. If the possessor of the psychic power walks up and down, then the creation as well walks up and down; if the possessor of the psychic power stands, then the creation as well stands; if the possessor of the psychic power sits, then the creation as well sits; if the possessor of the psychic power lies down on the bed, then the creation as well lies down on the bed; if the possessor of the psychic power emits smoke, then the creation as well emits smoke; if the possessor of the psychic power flames, then the creation as well flames; if the possessor of the psychic power expounds the Doctrine, then the creation as well expounds the Doctrine; if the possessor of the psychic power asks a question, then the creation as well asks a question; if the possessor of the psychic power answers to the asked question, then the creation as well answers to the asked question; if the possessor of the psychic power stands in front of Brahmā, talks with him, enters into a conversation with him, then the creation as well stands in front of Brahmā, talks with him, enters into a conversation with him; therefore, whatever the possessor of the psychic power does, verily, the creation does the same.<sup>98</sup>

*Visuddhimagga:*

The text explains the method commenting upon the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*:

In this context, **‘although far he resolves on closeness’** [means that] having emerged from the *jhāna* which serves as foundation, he adverts to

**98** *yāva Brahmālokā pi kāyena vasaṃ vatteti ti. sace so iddhimā cetovasippatto Brahmālokaṃ gantukāmo hoti, dūre pi santike adhiṭṭhāti santike hotū ti santike hoti, santike pi dūre adhiṭṭhāti dūre hotū ti dūre hoti; bahukaṃ pi thokaṃ adhiṭṭhāti thokaṃ hotū ti thokaṃ hoti, thokaṃ pi bahukaṃ adhiṭṭhāti bahukaṃ hotū ti bahukaṃ hoti; dibbena cakkhunā tassa Brahmuno rūpaṃ passata, dibbāya sotadhātuyā tassa Brahmuno saddaṃ suṇāti, cetopariyāñāṇena tassa Brahmuno cittaṃ pajānāti. sace so iddhimā cetovasippatto dissamānena kāyena Brahmālokaṃ gantukāmo hoti, kāyavasena cittaṃ pariṇāmeti, kāyavasena cittaṃ adhiṭṭhāti; kāyavasena cittaṃ pariṇāmetvā kāyavasena cittaṃ adhiṭṭhahitvā sukhasaññaṃ ca lahusaññaṃ ca okkamitvā dissamānena kāyena Brahmālokaṃ gacchati. sace so iddhimā cetovasippatto adissamānena kāyena Brahmālokaṃ gantukāmo hoti, cittavasena kāyaṃ pariṇāmeti, cittavasena kāyaṃ adhiṭṭhāti; cittavasena kāyaṃ pariṇāmetvā cittavasena kāyaṃ adhiṭṭhahitvā sukhasaññaṃ ca lahusaññaṃ ca okkamitvā adissamānena kāyena Brahmālokaṃ gacchati. so tassa Brahmuno purato rūpaṃ abhinimmināti manomayaṃ sabbaṅgapaccaṅgaṃ ahinindriyaṃ. sace so iddhimā caṅkamati, nimmito pi tattha caṅkamati; sace so iddhimā tiṭṭhāti, nimmito pi tattha tiṭṭhāti; sace so iddhimā nisīdati, nimmito pi tattha nisīdati; sace so iddhimā seyyaṃ kappeti, nimmito pi tattha seyyaṃ kappeti; sace so iddhimā dhūpāyati, nimmito pi tattha dhūpāyati; sace so iddhimā pajjalati, nimmito pi tattha pajjalati; sace so iddhimā dhammaṃ bhāsati, nimmito pi tattha dhammaṃ bhāsati; sace so iddhimā pañhaṃ pucchati, nimmito pi tattha pañhaṃ pucchati; sace so iddhimā pañhaṃ puṭṭho visajjati, nimmito pi tattha pañhaṃ puṭṭho visajjati; sace so iddhimā tena Brahmunā saddhimā santiṭṭhāti sallapati sākacchaṃ samāpajjati, nimmito pi tattha tena Brahmunā saddhimā santiṭṭhāti sallapati sākacchaṃ samāpajjati; yaṅ nāda eva hi so iddhimā karoti, taṃ tad eva hi so nimmito karoti ti. ayaṃ adhiṭṭhāna iddhi (Paṭis II 209-10).*

the farness of either the gods' world or the Brahmā world [thus:] "Let it be close"; having adverted, having done the preparatory work, he attained again [the *jhāna*] and resolves with the knowledge "Let it be close" and it becomes close. This is the method also concerning the remaining passages.<sup>99</sup>

The method seems to be as follows:

emerging from the <i>jhāna</i> which serves as foundation	+	he adverts to the target in order to change it (this act seems to be defined as 'preparatory work')	+	he attains again [the <i>jhāna</i> ]	+	he resolves with the knowledge "Let it be Y"	=	it becomes Y
<i>pādakajjhānato vuṭṭhāya</i>		[X] <i>āvajjati</i> (= <i>parikamma</i> ) [Y <i>hotu</i> ]		<i>puna samāpajjitvā</i>		<i>ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti</i> [Y <i>hotu</i> ]		[Y] <i>hoti</i>

This method resembles the one exposed to the multiplication of the body, in which the meditator enters into and emerges from the *jhāna* twice (see above § 7.4.4).

\**Vimuttimagga*:

The body rises up to the Brahmā world. The meditator is a possessor of psychic powers, who has attained mastery over the mind, and goes to the Brahmā world at will. Having cultivated the mind with the four *iddhipādas*, although far he resolves on closeness, although close he resolves on farness, although many he resolves on the paucity, although few he resolves on the abundance. He sees the form of Brahmā through the divine eye, he hears the sounds of Brahmā through the divine ear, he understands the mind of Brahmā through the knowledge by comprehension of the minds [of others]. The meditator has three kinds of movements, but he goes to the Brahmā world through two movements. This is the teaching of the power of resolving (受持變 = *adhiṭṭhāna iddhi*) [explained] in full.<sup>100</sup>

My translation of this \**Vimuttimagga*'s passage significantly differs in some points from the one made by Ehara et al. ([1961] 1995, 216-17). For instance, I assume that the Indian form behind the Chinese translation of 如是四如意足, 以如是修行心 (T1648.32.0442c01-02) was something like \**ye cattāro iddhipādā, tehi bhavetvā*. This is supported by textual passages such as: *so imesu catūsu iddhipādesu cittaṃ paribhāvetvā* (Paṭiṣ I 111). My translation highlights the influence of Paṭiṣ I 111 on the \**Vimuttimagga*, whereas the expression is less common in the *Visuddhimagga*. I should also highlight that the translation by Ehara et al. ([1961] 1995) does not make any sense and so it strongly requires a revision. In the former translation, after having

<sup>99</sup> *tattha dūre pi santike adhiṭṭhāti ti pādakajjhānato vuṭṭhāya, dūre devalokaṃ vā Brahmālokaṃ vā āvajjati: santike hotū ti, āvajjitvā parikammaṃ katvā puna samāpajjitvā ñāṇena adhiṭṭhāti: santike hotū ti santike hoti. esa nayo sesapadesu pi* (Vism 402).

<sup>100</sup> 起身乃至梵世。彼坐禪人有神通得心自在, 樂行梵世。如是四如意足, 以如是修行心, 於遠受持近, 於近受持遠, 或多受持少, 或少受持多。以天眼見梵天色, 以天耳聞梵天聲, 以他心智知梵天心。彼坐禪人三行, 以二行, 行於梵世。是法於一切受持變 (T1648.32.0442b29-c05).

declared that the meditator can reach the Brahmā world, it is stated that “[t]hese are the four bases of supernormal power. By training the mind thus, he resolves [...]” (Ehara et al. [1961] 1995, 216). However, this is wrong since the action of reaching the Brahmā world or the other *iddhis* are, at the very most, *iddhividhā* and not *iddhipādas*. Therefore, it would make sense to assume a relative-correlative construction for 如是 [...] 以如是. Furthermore, in having to hypothesise the Indian form which underpins the Chinese translation, it would seem that *bhavetvā* or something similar is the best choice to translate 修行. Nyanatusita’s translation is closer to my interpretation: “with such [development of the] four bases of supernormal power, and with such development of mind” (2021, 525), although in mine it is clearer that the cultivation of mind concerns the *iddhipādas*.

Another important correction concerns the passage 彼坐禪人三行, 以二行, 行於梵世 (T1648.32.0442c04-05), which I have translated as: “the meditator has three kinds of movements, but he goes to the Brahmā world through two movements”. This passage was translated in English as: “That yogin has three formations. He goes to the Brahmā’s world through two formations” (Ehara et al. [1961] 1995, 216) and “The meditator, having three formations, goes to Brahmā’s world through two formations” (Nyanatusita 2021, 526). Moreover, footnote 4 of Ehara et al. specifies that ‘formations’ is the translation of *sankhārā*, an interpretation somewhat supported by Nyanatusita (2021, 526 n. 45). Nonetheless, these interpretations are not entirely convincing. Therefore, it makes more sense to assume that the characters 三行 indicate the three kinds of movement just as in T1648.32.0442b20: 於是三行步行風行心行 “In this context, there are three kinds of movement: 1) movement on foot, 2) movement on air, 3) movement through the mind”. Furthermore, the *\*Vimuttimaggā* states that the meditator goes to the Brahmā world with two kinds of movement and in the *Visuddhimaggā*’s section concerning the power to go up to the Brahmā world it is written that:

And when he goes, if he wishes, he can go by walk after having created a path in the space through the power of the earth *kaṣiṇa*. If he wishes, he can go through the air just as a tuft of cotton wool after having resolved for the air through the power of the air *kaṣiṇa*.<sup>101</sup>

This passage resembles the first two kinds of movement exposed in the *\*Vimuttimaggā* in the section concerning the possibility to go through the space as a winged bird:

<sup>101</sup> *evaṃ gacchanto ca sace icchati, pathavīkaṣiṇavasena ākāse maggaṃ nimminivā padasā gacchati. sace icchati vāyokaṣiṇavasena vāyuraḍḍhahitvā tūlapicu viya vāyuna gacchati* (Vism 404).

**Table 7.6** Comparison between the \**Vimuttimaggā* and *Visuddhimaggā*

* <i>Vimuttimaggā</i>	<i>Visuddhimaggā</i> 404
Then the meditator attains the concentration with the earth <i>kaṣiṇa</i> , resolves for a path in the space and goes on foot 於是坐禪人得地一切入定，於虛空受持道路以步行 (T1648.32.0442b20-21).	He can go by walk after having created a path in the space through the power of the earth <i>kaṣiṇa</i> ( <i>pathavikaṣiṇavasena ākāse maggam nimminivā padasā gacchati</i> ).
Or if [the meditator] attains the concentration with the air <i>kaṣiṇa</i> , he resolves for the air and so just as cotton wool he goes on air 若得風一切入定，受持風如綿縷如風行 (T1648.32.0442b21-22).	He can go through the air just as a tuft of cotton wool after having resolved for the air through the power of the air <i>kaṣiṇa</i> ( <i>vāyokaṣiṇavasena vāyuma adhiṭṭhahitvā tūlapīcu viya vāyunā gacchati</i> ).

Interestingly enough, it seems that in the account concerning the possibility of rising up to the Brahmā world, the *Visuddhimaggā* reports in full the two kinds of movement that are only mentioned within the parallel passage in the \**Vimuttimaggā*. However, the \**Vimuttimaggā* reports all three kinds of movement in the account which concerns the possibility to go through the space as a winged bird (§ 7.4.9), whereas the *Visuddhimaggā* does not mention them at all. It seems to me that both texts borrowed this passage from a common source, which may be the *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā*.<sup>102</sup> The reasons for this hypothesis are as follows:

1. The *Visuddhimaggā* in its *Iddhividhāniddesa* shows to make use of the *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā* to explain what a meditator should do in case the expected marvellous performance does not succeed the first time (Vism 387; see below § 7.5). This is evidence that in the old *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā* there was a treatise concerning *iddhis* (notably, it seems that the same account is not reported in the actual *Sāratthappakāsinī*).
2. The three kinds of movement in the \**Vimuttimaggā*, as it has been already shown above (§ 7.4.9), are connected with an account in the *Iddhipādasamyutta* (S V 284). This account that involves the unification of the body in the mind and *vice versa*, and the reaching of perceptions of pleasure and lightness, occurs only in the *Samyuttanikāya* among the four principal Nikāyas (*Dīgha-*, *Majjhima-*, *Samyutta-*, *Aṅguttara-*). This allows us to assume that a comment on this passage was originally part of the *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā*.
3. The *Visuddhimaggā* reports the account concerning the kinds of movement, whereas the \**Vimuttimaggā* just mentions it and does not report it when the *Visuddhimaggā* does. These facts allow us to assume that the *Visuddhimaggā* did not borrow the account from the \**Vimuttimaggā*, but from another source, and the fact that the

<sup>102</sup> Here, I do not mean the actual Pāli commentary known to us also as *Sāratthappakāsinī*, but the old commentary (*sīhaḷa-aṭṭhakathā*) that served as a source for the writing down of the actual Pāli commentary. Concerning the problem of the names of the commentaries, see Endo 2013, 8. Therefore, in what follows, I will use *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā* for the lost commentary that served as a source, whereas the *Sāratthappakāsinī* is called *Samyutta-aṭṭhakathā*.

*Visuddhimagga* reports two kinds of movement that are the first two kinds of movement exposed in the \**Vimuttimagga* would allow us to think that the source was the same.

The exegesis of the *Saddhammappakāsinī* (Paṭis-a II 656-63) can be found translated in full in Appendix 5. We may note that the commentary seems to suggest many methods to perform the power. It is possible, indeed, to physically go to the Brahmā world, using the power of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*). Alternatively, it is possible to remain in the sitting position of meditation and communicate with Brahmā using the *abhiññās*. Moreover, it is mentioned that it is possible to send a creation (*nimmita*). Finally, the *Saddhammappakāsinī* reports a query (Paṭis-a II 662-3), asking if the practitioner goes to the Brahmā world by himself (viz. with the physical body) or if he sent a creation (*nimmita*; viz. sent a *manomayakāya*). An Elder answered that he does as he likes, but what has been handed down is the first, probably referring to the short description of the *Dīghanikāya*, according to which the practitioner exercises bodily power. Thus, in this way, the commentary provides a justification of the expanded explanation provided by *Paṭisambhidāmagga*.

## 7.5 Conclusion on the Iddhividhā

At first, this chapter has highlighted that when in the Buddhist texts the pericope occurs concerning some extraordinary performances, the term *iddhividhā* (rather than the plain *iddhi*) is always involved. Therefore, *iddhividhā* is less ambivalent than *iddhi*, since it occurs in only one context. Its translation can be something like ‘a variety (*vidhā*) of psychophysical powers (*iddhi*)’, considering that ‘power’ indicates the ability to do something, a performance, which is ‘psychophysical’ because it is an act that involves the body (*kāya*) and is produced through the action of the mind (*citta*). Furthermore, the thorny problem concerning the involvement of the body made of mind (*manomayakāya*) in the execution of the extraordinary capacities has been analysed. Although many scholars sustained that these kinds of marvellous performances were thought to be performed through the body made of mind, no one provided strong evidence to support this thesis. A glance into the Vedic texts that deal with similar topics has shown that it could be reasonable to believe that the body made of mind is involved in these kinds of extraordinary performances. However, it should be stressed that this does not mean that the use of the body made of mind is mandatory to perform these extraordinary acts. In the *Samyuttanikāya* (i.e. S V 282), the Buddha can go up to the Brahmā world with either the body made of mind (*manomayena kāyena*) or the physical body (*cātumahābhūtikena kāyena*). A possible interconnection among powers is also highlighted by the Cūḷapanthaka’s story. The cross reference of the literary records has shown that when Cūḷapanthaka performs the first *iddhi* of the multiplication of the body he creates mind-made bodies (*manomayakāya*). Although this is only made explicit in the exegetical literature, there is evidence that would suggest that this interconnection could have already been in existence at the time of the canonical texts. Therefore, this could be a good example of how the exegetical literature made explicit something implicit. Here, in the process of adding information, the exegetical literature reported the story of Cūḷapanthaka which could have also already been in existence, however,

it would have been transmitted only orally and in a less authoritative channel as well as in connection to a more performative context.<sup>103</sup> This case study shows a virtuous interaction between canon and commentaries in reconstructing the reliability and antiquity of a story. Turning to the diachronic study of the *iddhividhā*, it must be specified that the analysis of Cūḷapanthaka's story was part of the diachronic analysis of the first *iddhi*, the multiplication of the body (*eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti*), and was a short digression from the main purpose of the section. Indeed, the analysis of the *iddhividhā* from the canon to the commentaries has been mainly narrowed to some relevant accounts concerning the methodology to perform the powers. The first *iddhi*, the multiplication of the body, involved some difficulties, which were due to the idiosyncratic exegetical formulation of the *Visuddhimagga*. The analysis showed the involvement of part of the consciousness process doctrine (*cittavīthi*) and allusions to the Buddhist cosmology; the result was an exegetical account that underlined the transformative power of the fourth *jhāna*. It is interesting to note that despite how the exegesis provides explanations involving both the microscopical (i.e. *cittavīthi*) and macroscopical (i.e. cosmology) levels, it does not really explain how it is possible that these supernatural feats can occur. From the analysis of the *Visuddhimagga's* account, it seems that the meditator brings the object of meditation, which is the expected result, up to the divine realm, called *rūpāvacara*, and this act ensures that the expected result would then become real in the humankind realm, which is part of the *kāmāvacara*. How this is possible, however, is not explained. After the *adhiṭṭhānacitta*, which seems to have the same nature of the *jhāna* and belongs to the *rūpāvacara*, the desired feat almost magically becomes real in the *kāmāvacara*, in our world. It is like the meditator's act of getting in touch with the subtler and more rarefied divine realm of the *rūpāvacara* (which corresponds to the cosmological *rūpadhātu*, the realm with mind-made gods) would provide access to some of the divine power, which can be – metaphorically for us but factually from the perspective of the Buddhist narrative – brought down to our coarser world. The body made of mind, *manomayakāya*, belongs to that same rarefied level of existence, the *rūpadhātu*, and thus it may make sense that, before being able to perform extraordinary psychophysical feats in this world, the meditator must come into contact with its own body belonging to another and higher divine realm. What seems clear is that in the performance of these extraordinary capacities there is an interaction between different levels of existence which conflate one into the other; the boundaries between different realms of existence get blurred.<sup>104</sup>

Turning to a more general overview of the exegetical accounts, the comparison between the sources highlighted both differences and similarities in the expositions of the method to perform *iddhividhā*. On the one hand, we have the similarities which might lead us to believe that the sources are recounting the same method. This is exemplified by the third *iddhi* (*tiro-kuḍḍaṃ tiro-pākāraṃ tiro-pabbataṃ asajjamāno gacchati seyyathā pi ākāse*), for which the same method is prescribed in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*,

**103** On the performance of narrative, see for instance Brancaccio 2022.

**104** A study on the boundaries between the human and divine worlds that blend in relation to festive activities is provided in De Notariis 2024.

\**Vimuttimaggā* and *Visuddhimaggā*. In this case, we even find the use of *āvajjati/āvajjitvā* (已轉成轉) in the \**Vimuttimaggā*, which often omits it. On the other hand, there are sometimes so many differences in the expositions that might lead us to believe that the methods recounted in the sources are different. This is exemplified by the fact that on some occasions the *Visuddhimaggā* seems to prescribe a double entrance in the *jhāna* state. This is the case for two *iddhis*: the first (*eko pi hutvā bahudhā hoti, bahudhā pi hutvā eko hoti*) and the eighth (*yāva Brahma-lokā pi kāyena vasaṃ vatteti*). In the case of the latter, given the paucity of information in the *Paṭisambhidāmaggā* and \**Vimuttimaggā* concerning the method, we would have difficulties in determining whether the *Visuddhimaggā* is moving a step further away from previous sources, or whether it is just providing an ancient exegesis. However, in the case of the *iddhi* concerning the multiplication of the body (the first one), a departure from the previous sources is quite clear since they report the full process with only one occurrence of the action of entering into the *jhāna*. Therefore, we may wonder why the *Visuddhimaggā* enlarged the exposition. The definitive answer probably lies in the sources used by Buddhaghosa to write it, although the *Visuddhimaggā* itself provides some hints to construct a hypothesis. In this regard, there indeed occurs a prescription about what the practitioner should do in the case that the method to perform *iddhis* does not provide the expected results:

If he does not succeed (*ijjhati*) in this way, having done again the preparatory work (*parikamma*), having attained also for the second time [the *jhāna* that is the foundation of the higher knowledges], emerged, he should resolve a second time. Therefore, it is stated within the *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā*: “He continues to attain [the *jhāna*] once, twice”.<sup>105</sup>

This passage provides evidence that an older source (i.e. the *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā*) preserved an account in which the action of entering into the *jhāna* more than once is significant. As it has already been highlighted in the section concerning the eighth *iddhi* (§ 7.4.11), the lost *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā* was reasonably an exegetic source used by Buddhaghosa to write his treatise on the *iddhis*. Then, perhaps we may assume that the methods used to perform *iddhis* with a double entering into the *jhāna*, is the result of a reshaping of older sources in which some accounts prescribing multiple attainments of the *jhāna* state (like the one cited above) are conflated with the basic method to perform the *iddhis*.

Furthermore, in the *Visuddhimaggā* we find a lexicon change that might affect the comprehension. The *kaṣiṇas*, for instance, are used metonymically to indicate the *jhāna* state attained through them. The *Visuddhimaggā* also makes extensive use of the word *parikamma*, which does not occur in the *Paṭisambhidāmaggā* and \**Vimuttimaggā*'s accounts. The term seems to be mostly used as a synonym for *āvajjana*. In the case of the fourth *iddhi* (*paṭhaviyā pi ummuja-nimmujjaṃ karoti seyyathā pi udake*), for instance, the *Visuddhimaggā*'s explanation seems to be even less clear than the previous ones, since it loses the stage of *āvajjana*, replacing it with *parikamma*. The term *āvajjana* seems, however, to survive in the \**Vimuttimaggā*: “adverts

<sup>105</sup> *sace evaṃ na ijjhati, puna parikammaṃ katvā dutiyam pi samāpajjitvā vuṭṭhāya adhiṭṭhātabbam. Samyuttaṭṭhakathayaṃ hi ekavāraṃ dvevāraṃ samāpajjitum vaṭṭati ti vuttam* (Vism 387).

(轉 = *āvajjati*) a delimited [amount of] earth” (轉地作隔; T1648.32.0442b14).<sup>106</sup> The *\*Vimuttimaggā* turned out to be, in fact, a source of paramount importance for understanding the Theravāda process of developing psychophysical powers. It connects the canonical explanation of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* with the more elaborated version provided by the *Visuddhimaggā*. It testifies, for instance, to a narration of the process in which the action of entering into and exiting from the *jhāna* state is explicitly included. Generally speaking, the *\*Vimuttimaggā* often provides justification of some *Visuddhimaggā* statements, showing that they are actually based on older sources and are not a mere addition by Buddhaghosa. Moreover, the comparison between the *\*Vimuttimaggā* and *Visuddhimaggā* reveals that these two texts can provide complementary information for the study of the Theravāda exegesis. An example is the three kinds of movement to travel in the air. The list of the three movements (三行) is only given in full in the *\*Vimuttimaggā*’s account concerning the sixth *iddhi* (*ākāse pi pallāṅkena kamati seyyathā pi pakkhī sakuṇo*), but the kinds of movement are also attested within the *Visuddhimaggā*, which, however, does not provide the full list when it mentions some of them.<sup>107</sup> Cross-checking data, it would seem reasonable to believe that the two texts had independently drawn material from a third source, which was most likely the old and nowadays lost *Samyuttaṭṭhakathā*. This would demonstrate that the *\*Vimuttimaggā* should be taken into account in the study of the Pāli commentarial literature, and more generally in the diachronic study of the Theravāda exegesis.

Finally, we should highlight that this chapter on the *iddhividhā* also reconfirms a tendency already noted in the previous chapter concerning the *manomayakāya*, namely the propensity of the commentarial literature to increasingly add exegetic material over time. It has been decided to provide it with a name: the ‘interpretative accretion process’. During this process, the innovations are seen, from an emic point of view, as further specifications, despite the fact that they can deeply affect the actual interpretation of a topic. Notwithstanding the presence of innovations, we may note that the inner structure of the method remains the one provided by the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, which once again proves to be a key text in the exegetic development of Theravāda Buddhism.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. “having decided (*paricchindivā*) ‘Let the earth in this quantity become water’, having done the preparatory work (*parikkammaṃ katvā*) [...]” (*ettake thāne pathavī udakaṃ hotū ti paricchindivā parikkammaṃ katvā*; Vism 395).

<sup>107</sup> Incidentally, we found reference of a movement towards the world of Brahmā also in the *\*Vimuttimaggā*’s account concerning the *manomayakāya* (see § 6.4.4). This, I suppose, is referring to the movement through the mind (心行) given that the description of that kind of movement (see *\*Vimuttimaggā*’s account at § 7.4.9) resembles the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*’s account (§ 7.4.11) in which the meditator creates, in front of Brahmā, a physical form which is made of mind.