

 PRIFYSGOL CYMRU Y Drindod Dewi Sant UNIVERSITY OF WALES Trinity Saint David		
--	--	--

Faculty of Humanities

MA Dissertation Approval Form

Student Name	Wenyuan Guan
Degree Scheme	MA Chinese Buddhist Textual Studies
Start date	25/11/2024

I have completed Part 1 of my degree.

*Please delete as appropriate.

Title of Dissertation: Suffering, Not Pleasure: An Inquiry into Why the Nature of Pleasurable Sensations is Suffering
Aims and Objectives: This article focuses on the concept of "pleasurable sensations" (sukhavedanā) as described in Buddhist scriptures. It begins by compiling and summarising the definitions and discussions of "pleasurable sensations" found across various Buddhist texts. Subsequently, it explores and consolidates modern Western and Eastern scholarly research on the physiological and psychological aspects of pleasurable experiences. This serves to support the Buddhist teaching that pleasurable sensations are ultimately a form of suffering. The aim is to uncover the truth about "pleasurable sensations," enabling practitioners to see through and let go of them, thereby pursuing a higher state of existence.
Abstract (approximately 500 words): As ordinary beings, we experience countless forms of suffering in the world, too numerous to describe in full. Precisely because of this, people tirelessly seek pleasurable experiences. However, according to Buddhist teachings, the cessation of pleasurable sensations (sukhavedanā) is itself a form of suffering known as vipariṇāma-dukkha (the suffering of change). If what we pursue so fervently ultimately turns out to be suffering, is this not absurd? Thus, this paper centres on pleasurable sensations—specifically their nature as the suffering of change—to explore why they are essentially a form of suffering, with the hope of benefiting those who are futilely chasing after fleeting pleasures.

The dissertation is structured into four chapters:

Introduction (1,200 words)

This chapter reviews previous research, summarises the definitions and discussions of "pleasurable sensations" in various Buddhist scriptures, and elucidates the special significance of studying this topic.

Chapter Two: Scriptural Evidence for the Suffering of Pleasurable Sensations (4,000 words)

This chapter examines Buddhist scriptures from the perspectives of impermanence and emptiness, summarising their arguments to demonstrate that pleasurable sensations are a form of suffering.

Chapter Three: Scientific Corroboration of the Suffering of Pleasurable Sensations (4,000 words)

This chapter consists of several sections that draw on modern physiological and psychological research by Eastern and Western scholars to provide scientific evidence supporting the Buddhist view that pleasurable sensations are suffering.

Chapter Four: Conclusion (800 words)

Through the study of pleasurable sensations, it becomes evident that they lack inherent essence and merely represent the temporary cessation of pain. As beings advance to higher levels of existence, their desires gradually diminish, and what was once experienced as pleasure may transform into suffering. Thus, the pursuit of pleasurable sensations is as futile as grasping at the moon's reflection in water, destined to end in disappointment. Only by relinquishing desires and elevating one's state of being can one achieve eternal liberation from suffering.

Short Introductory Bibliography:

1. *Buddha Speaks on the Emptiness of the Five Aggregates*, Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 2, No. 102, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppansha.
2. *The Mahayana Treatise on the Six Perfections of Wisdom*, Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 8, No. 261, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppansha.
3. *The Mahāratnakūṭa Sūtra*, Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 11, No. 310, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppansha.
4. *The Sutra of the Union of Father and Son*, Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 11, No. 320, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppansha.
5. *The Sutra on the Great Vehicle of Fearlessness Bestowed in Answer to Questions*, Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 12, No. 331, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppansha.

6. *The Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, Taisho Tripitaka, Vol. 12, No. 374, Tokyo: Daizo Shuppansha.
7. Wang Jiaxuan. The Causes and Conditions of Suffering and Joy—Escaping Suffering to Attain Joy. American Buddhist Association News, 2013, Issue 143.
8. Yao Fuquan. An Analysis of the Implications of Suffering and Origin in the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism. Jieti (Revealing the Truth), January 2022.

Proposed Supervisor:

Shengmiao

Please indicate whether ethical approval for project is needed – NO

Please indicate whether sufficient resources are available for the project – YES

The above topic, proposal, and supervisor have been agreed:

Chen, Sufan

Signed :

.....Programme Director

Date: 2024/12/6.....

Please return this form to your Programme Director

	PRIFYSGOL CYMRU Y Drindod Dewi Sant UNIVERSITY OF WALES Trinity Saint David		
---	--	--	--

Faculty of Humanities

MA Dissertation Approval Form

Student Name	Wenyuan Guan
Degree Scheme	MA Chinese Buddhist Textual Studies
Start date	25/11/2024

I have completed Part 1 of my degree.

*Please delete as appropriate.

Title of Dissertation: 題目 是苦非樂——探究樂受緣何為苦
Aims and Objectives: 研究目的 本文以佛經中的「樂受」為研究對象，首先匯整、歸納諸佛經中對於「樂受」的定義及論述，再探索、匯整中西方現代學者對於「快樂感受」的生理學、心理學研究，以輔證佛經所述之樂受實則為苦的道理。希望揭開關於「樂受」的真相，使行者得以看破、放下，追尋更高層次的生命境界。
Abstract (approximately 500 words): 摘 要 身為凡夫，可以體會到世間的種種苦受，說之不盡。正因為此，人們才會孜孜不倦地追尋快樂體驗。但依佛家所言，所謂樂受滅時即為壞苦。若苦苦追尋之物實則仍然為苦，豈不荒謬。故本文將以樂受、亦即壞苦為中心，探討為何其實質為苦，希以裨益徒然追尋快樂的眾生。 論文主要分為四章進行研究：

緒論（1200 字）

本章綜述前人研究成果，歸納諸佛經中對於「樂受」的定義及論述，闡發研究「樂受」的特殊意義。

第二章 樂受為苦之佛經明證（4000 字）

本章擬從無常及空性的角度，總結佛教經文的論述，證明樂受是苦。

第三章 樂受為苦之科學輔證（4000 字）

本章擬分數節，根據中西方現代學者對於「快樂感受」的生理學、心理學研究，輔證樂受是苦。

第四章 結語（800 字）

透過對樂受的研究，可知樂受沒有其實在的本質，只是苦痛的暫時停止。隨著生命層次的提升，眾生的欲望會越發淡薄，原本的樂受也可能轉變為苦受。是故眾生對於樂受的追求實則如水中撈月般虛無縹緲，注定落空。唯有將欲念放下、提升境界，才可能獲得脫離痛苦的永恆。

Short Introductory Bibliography:

古籍：

- 《佛說五蘊皆空經》，《大正藏》冊 2，第 102 號，東京：大藏出版株式會社。
《大乘理趣六波羅蜜多經》，《大正藏》冊 8，第 261 號，東京：大藏出版株式會社。
《大寶積經》，《大正藏》冊 11，第 310 號，東京：大藏出版株式會社。
《父子合集經》，《大正藏》冊 11，第 320 號，東京：大藏出版株式會社。
《佛說無畏授所問大乘經》，《大正藏》冊 12，第 331 號，東京：大藏出版株式會社。
《大般涅槃經》，《大正藏》冊 12，第 374 號，東京：大藏出版株式會社。

期刊論文：

- 王家軒：〈苦與樂的因緣—離苦得樂〉，《美佛慧訊》，2013 年第 143 期。
姚富全：〈佛教四聖諦中苦集二諦意涵之解析〉，《揭諦》，2022 年 1 月。

Proposed Supervisor:

勝妙

Please indicate whether ethical approval for project is needed – NO

Please indicate whether sufficient resources are available for the project – YES

The above topic, proposal, and supervisor have been agreed:

Signed :  Programme Director

Date: 2024/12/6.....

Please return this form to your Programme Director